Ghana

The British Documents on
the End of Empire Project
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BRITISH DOCUMENTS ON THE END OF EMPIRE

General Editors D J Murray and S R Ashton
Project Chairman D A Low

Series B Volume 1

Ghana

Editor
RICHARD RATHBONE

Part I
1941–1952

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Foreword

The main purpose of the British Documents on the End of Empire Project (BDEEP) is to publish documents from British official archives on the ending of colonial and associated rule and on the context in which this took place. In 1945, aside from the countries of present-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burma, Britain had over fifty formal dependencies; by the end of 1965 the total had been almost halved and by 1985 only a handful remained. The ending of Britain's position in these formal dependencies was paralleled by changes in relations with states in an informal empire. The end of empire in the period at least since 1945 involved a change also in the empire as something that was more than the sum of its parts and as such formed an integral part of Britain's domestic affairs and international relations. In publishing official British documents on the end of empire this project is, to a degree, the successor to the two earlier series of published documents concerning the end of British rule in India and Burma which were edited by Professors Mansergh and Tinker respectively.[1] The successful completion of *The transfer of power* and *The struggle for independence*, both of which were based on British records, emphasised the need for similar published collections of documents important to the history of the final stages of Britain's association with other dependencies in Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, South-East Asia and the Pacific. In their absence, scholars both from sovereign independent states which emerged from colonial rule, as well as from Britain itself, lack an important tool for understanding and teaching their respective histories. But BDEEP is also set in the much wider context of the efforts made by successive British governments to locate Britain's position in an international order. Here the empire, both in its formal and informal senses, is viewed as an instrument of the domestic, foreign and defence policies of successive British governments. The project is therefore concerned with the ending of colonial rule in individual territories as seen from the British side at one level, and the broader political, economic and strategic considerations involved in that at another.

BDEEP is a sequel, not only to the India and Burma series but also to the still earlier series of published Foreign Office documents which continues as Documents on British Policy Overseas (DBPO). The contemporary volumes in DBPO appear in two parallel series covering the years 1945 to 1955. In certain respects the documents published in the BDEEP volumes will complement those published in DBPO. On issues where there is, or is likely to be, direct overlap, BDEEP will not provide detailed coverage. The most notable examples concern the post-Second World War international settlements in the Far East and the Pacific, and the immediate events of the Suez crisis of 1956.

[1] Nicholas Mansergh et al, eds, *Constitutional relations between Britain and India: the transfer of power 1942–47*, 12 vols, (London, 1970–1983); Hugh Tinker, ed, *Constitutional relations between Britain and Burma: the struggle for independence 1944–1948*, 2 vols, (London, 1983–1984).

Despite the similarities, however, BDEEP differs in significant ways from its predecessors in terms both of presentation and content. The project is of greater magnitude than that undertaken by Professor Mansergh for India. Four major differences can be identified. First, the ending of colonial rule within a dependent empire took place over a much longer period of time, extending into the final years of the twentieth century, while having its roots in the Second World War and before. Secondly, the empire consisted of a large number of territories, varying in area, population, wealth and in many other ways, each with its own individual problems, but often with their futures linked to those of neighbouring territories and the growing complexity surrounding the colonial empire. Thirdly, while for India the documentary record for certain matters of high policy could be encapsulated within a relatively straightforward 'country' study, in the case of the colonial empire the documentary record is more diffuse because of the plethora of territories and their scattered location. Finally, the documents relating to the ending of colonial rule are not conveniently located within one leading department of state but rather are to be found in several of them. As the purpose of the project is to publish documents relating to the end of empire from the extensive range and quantity of official British records, private collections and other categories of non-official material are not regarded as principal documentary sources. In BDEEP, selections from non-official material will be used only in exceptional cases to fill gaps where they exist in the available official record.

In recognition of these differences, and also of the fact that the end of empire involves consideration of a range of issues which operated at a much wider level than that normally associated with the ending of colonial rule in a single country, BDEEP is structured in two main series along with a third support series. Series A represents the general volumes in which, for successive British governments, documents relating to the empire as a whole will be published. Series B represents the country or territory volumes and provides territorial studies of how, from a British government perspective, former colonies and dependencies achieved their independence, and countries which were part of an informal empire regained their autonomy. In addition to the two main documentary series, a third series – series C – will be published in the form of handbooks to the records of the former colonial empire which are deposited at the Public Record Office (PRO). The handbooks will be published in two volumes as an integral part of BDEEP and also as PRO guides to the records. They will enable scholars and others wishing to follow the record of the ending of colonial rule and empire to pursue their inquiries beyond the published record provided by the general studies in series A and the country studies in series B. Volume One of the handbooks, a revised and updated version of *The records of the Colonial and Dominions Offices* (by R B Pugh) which was first published in 1964, is entitled *Records of the Colonial Office, Dominions Office, Commonwealth Relations Office and Commonwealth Office.* It covers over two hundred years of activity down to 1968 when the Commonwealth Office merged with the Foreign Office to form the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Volume Two, entitled *Cabinet, Foreign Office, Treasury and other records*, focuses more specifically on twentieth-century departmental records and also includes references to the records of inter-departmental committees, commissions of inquiry and international organisations. These two volumes have been prepared under the direction and supervision of Dr Anne Thurston, honorary research fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in the University of London.

The criteria which have been used in selecting documents for inclusion in individual volumes will be explained in the introductions written by the specialist editors. These introductions are more substantial and contextual than those in previous series. Each volume will also list the PRO sources which have been searched. However, it may be helpful to outline the more general guiding principles which have been employed. BDEEP editors pursue several lines of inquiry. There is first the end of empire in a broad high policy sense, in which the empire is viewed in terms of Britain's position as a world power, and of the inter-relationship between what derives from this position and developments within the colonial dependencies. Here Britain's relations with the dependencies of the empire are set in the wider context of Britain's relations with the United States, with Europe, and with the Commonwealth and United Nations. The central themes are the political constraints, both domestic and international, to which British governments were subject, the economic requirements of the sterling area, the geopolitical and strategic questions associated with priorities in foreign policy and in defence planning, and the interaction between these various constraints and concerns and the imperatives imposed by developments in colonial territories. Secondly, there is investigation into colonial policy in its strict sense. Here the emphasis is on those areas which were specifically – but not exclusively – the concern of the leading department. In the period before the administrative amalgamations of the 1960s,[2] the leading department of the British government for most of the dependencies was the Colonial Office; for a minority it was either the Dominions Office and its successor, the Commonwealth Relations Office, or the Foreign Office. Colonial policy included questions of economic and social development, questions of governmental institutions and constitutional structures, and administrative questions concerning the future of the civil and public services and of the defence forces in a period of transition from European to indigenous control. Finally there is inquiry into the development of political and social forces within colonies, the response to these and the transfer of governmental authority and of legal sovereignty from Britain to its colonial dependencies as these processes were understood and interpreted by the British government. Here it should be emphasised that the purpose of BDEEP is not to document the history of colony politics or nationalist movements in any particular territory. Given the purpose of the project and the nature of much of the source material, the place of colony politics in BDEEP is conditioned by the extent to which an awareness of local political situations played an overt part in influencing major policy decisions made in Britain.

Although in varying degrees and from different perspectives, elements of these various lines of inquiry appear in both the general and the country series. The aim in both is to concentrate on the British record by selecting documents which illustrate those policy issues which were deemed important by ministers and officials at the time. General volumes do not normally treat in any detail of matters which will be fully documented in the country volumes, but some especially significant documents do appear in both series. The process of selection involves an inevitable degree of

[2] The Colonial Office merged with the Commonwealth Relations Office in 1966 to form the Commonwealth Office. The Commonwealth Office merged with the Foreign Office in 1968 to form the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

sifting and subtraction. Issues which in retrospect appear to be of lesser significance or to be ephemeral have been omitted. The main example concerns the extensive quantity of material devoted to appointments and terms of service – salaries, gradings, allowances, pension rights and compensation – within the colonial and related services. It is equally important to stress certain negative aspects of the official documentary record. Officials in London were sometimes not in a position to address potentially significant issues because the information was not available. Much in this respect depended on the extent of the documentation sent to London by the different colonial administrations. Once the stage of internal self-government had been reached, or where there was a dyarchy, the flow of detailed local information to London began to diminish.

Selection policy has been influenced by one further factor, namely access to the records at the PRO. Unlike the India and Burma series and DBPO, BDEEP is not an official project. In practice this means that while editors have privileged access (in the form of research facilities and requisitioning procedures) to the records at the PRO, they do not have unrestricted access. For files which at the time a volume is in preparation are either subject to extended closures beyond the statutory thirty years, or retained in the originating department under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act of 1958, editors are subject to the same restrictions as all other researchers. Where necessary, volume editors will provide details of potentially significant files or individual documents of which they are aware and which they have not been able to consult.

A thematic arrangement of the documents has been adopted for the general volumes in series A. The country volumes in series B follow a chronological arrangement; in this respect they adopt the same approach as was used in the India and Burma series. For each volume in both series A and B a summary list of the documents included is provided. The headings to BDEEP documents, which have been editorially standardised, present the essential information. Together with the sequence number, the file reference (in the form of the PRO call-up number and any internal pagination or numeration) and the date of the document appear on the first line.[3] The second and subsequent lines record the subject of the document, the type of document (letter, memorandum, telegram etc), the originator (person or persons, committee, department) and the recipient (if any). In headings, a subject entry in single quotation marks denotes the title of a document as it appears in the original. An entry in square brackets denotes a subject indicator devised by the editor. This latter device has been employed in cases where no title is given in the original or where the original title is too unwieldy to reproduce in its entirety. Security classifications and, in the case of telegrams, times of despatch and receipt, have generally been omitted as confusing and needlessly complicating, and are retained only where they are necessary to a full understanding. In the headings to documents and the summary lists, ministers are identified by the name of the office-holder, not the title of the office (ie, Mr Creech Jones, not secretary of state for the colonies).[4] In the same contexts, officials are identified by their initials and surname. Ambassadors,

[3] The PRO call-up number precedes the comma in the references cited. In the case of documents from FO 371, the major Foreign Office political class, the internal numeration refers to the jacket number of the file.

[4] This is an editorial convention, following DBPO practice. Very few memoranda issued in their name were actually written by ministers themselves, but normally drafted by officials.

governors and high commissioners are given in the form 'Sir E Baring (South Africa)'. Footnotes to documents appearing below the rule are editorial; those above the rule, or where no rule is printed, are part of the original document. Each volume provides an initial select list of which principal offices were held by whom, with a separate series of biographical notes (at the end) for major figures who appear in the documents. Minor figures are identified in editorial footnotes on the occasion of first appearance. Link-notes, written by the volume editor and indented in square brackets between the heading and the beginning of a document, are sometimes used to explain the context of a document. Technical detail or extraneous material has been extracted from a number of documents. In such cases omission dots have been inserted in the text and the document is identified in the heading as an extract. Occasional omission dots have also been used to excise purely mechanical chain-of-command executive instructions, and some redundant internal referencing has been removed, though much of it remains in place, for the benefit of researchers. No substantive material relating to policy-making has been excised from the documents. In general the aim has been to reproduce documents in their entirety. The footnote reference 'not printed' has been used only in cases where a specified enclosure or an annex to a document has not been included. Unless a specific cross-reference or note of explanation is provided, however, it can be assumed that other documents referred to in the text of the documents included have not been reproduced. Each part of a volume has a list of abbreviations occurring in it. In country volumes in series B, a consolidated index for the whole volume is repeated at the end of each volume-part.

One radical innovation, compared with previous Foreign Office or India and Burma series, is that BDEEP will reproduce many more minutes by ministers and officials.

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* * * *

BDEEP has received assistance and support from many quarters. The project was first discussed at a one-day workshop attended by over thirty interested scholars which, supported by a small grant from the Smuts Memorial Fund, was held at Churchill College, Cambridge, in May 1985. At that stage the obstacles looked daunting. It seemed unlikely that public money would be made available along the lines provided for the India and Burma projects. The complexities of the task looked substantial, partly because there was more financial and economic data with which to deal, still more because there were so many more territories to cover. It was not at all clear, moreover, who could take institutional responsibility for the project as the India Office Records had for the earlier ones; and in view of the escalating price of the successive India and Burma volumes, it seemed unlikely that publication in book form would be feasible; for some while a choice was being discussed between microfilm, microfiche and facsimile.

A small group nevertheless undertook to explore matters further, and in a quite remarkable way found itself able to make substantial progress. The British Academy

adopted BDEEP as one of its major projects, and thus provided critical support. The Institute of Commonwealth Studies served as a crucial institutional anchor in taking responsibility for the project. The Institute also made office space available, and negotiated an administrative nexus within the University of London. Dr Anne Thurston put at the disposal of the project her unique knowledge of the relevant archival sources; while the keeper of the Public Records undertook to provide all the support that he could. It then proved possible to appoint Professor Michael Crowder as project director on a part-time basis, and he approached the Leverhulme Trust, who made a munificent grant which was to make the whole project viable. Almost all those approached to be volume editors accepted and, after consultation with a number of publishers, Her Majesty's Stationery Office undertook to publish the project in book form. There can be few projects that after so faltering a start found itself quite so blessed.

Formally launched in 1987, BDEEP has been based since its inception at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies. The work of the project is supervised by a Project Committee chaired by Professor Anthony Low, Smuts professor of the history of the British Commonwealth in the University of Cambridge, with Professor Shula Marks, director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, as his deputy. Professor Michael Crowder became general editor while holding a visiting professorship in the University of London and a part-time position at Amherst College, Massachusetts. Following his untimely death in 1988, Professor Crowder was replaced as general editor by Professor David Murray, pro vice-chancellor and professor of government at the Open University. Mrs Anita Burdett was appointed as project secretary and research assistant. She was succeeded in September 1989 by Dr Stephen Ashton who now holds the position of executive editor. Dr Ashton previously worked with Professors Mansergh and Tinker during the final stages of the India and Burma series. When BDEEP was launched in 1987, eight volumes in series A and B were approved by the Project Committee, and specialist scholars were commissioned to research and select documents for inclusion in each. Collectively, these eight volumes represent the first stage of the project, which begins with an introductory general volume covering the years between 1924 and 1945, but which concentrates on the period from the Second World War to 1957, when Ghana and Malaya became independent.

It is fitting that the general editors should begin their acknowledgements with an appreciation of Professor Crowder's contribution. The late Professor Crowder supervised the launch of the project, ensuring in the process that it was speedily transformed from a theoretical concept into a practical proposition. His death was a grievous loss but the published volumes in Stage One bear testimony to his resolve and dedication during the project's formative phase. The project benefitted from an initial pump-priming grant from the British Academy. Thanks are due to the secretary and Council of the Academy for this grant and for the decision of the British Academy to adopt BDEEP as one of its major projects. The principal funding for the project has been provided by the Leverhulme Trust and the volumes are a tribute to the support provided by the Trustees. We are deeply indebted to the Trustees. In addition to their generous grant to cover the costs of the first stage, the Trustees agreed to a subsequent request to extend the duration of the grant, and also provided a supplementary grant which enabled the project to secure Dr Ashton's appointment.

Members of the Project Committee, who meet annually at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, have provided valuable advice and much needed encouragement. Professor Low, chairman of the Committee, has made a singular contribution, initiating the first exploratory meeting at Cambridge in 1985 and presiding over subsequent developments in his customary constructive but unobtrusive manner. In addition to the annual meeting of the Project Committee, the project holds an annual seminar to discuss issues arising from the research of the editors. Valuable comments have been received from academic colleagues attending the seminars by invitation. Professor Marks and the staff of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies have provided administrative support and the congenial surroundings within which the general editors work. The editors of volumes in Stage One have profited considerably from the researches undertaken by Dr Anne Thurston and her assistants during the preparation of the records handbooks. Although BDEEP is not an official project, the general editors wish to acknowledge the support and co-operation received from the Historical Section of the Cabinet Office and the Records Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. They wish also to record their appreciation of the spirit of friendly co-operation emanating from the editors of DBPO. Dr Ronald Hyam, editor of the volume in series A on *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, played an important role in the compilation of the house-style adopted by BDEEP and his contribution is acknowledged with gratitude. Thanks also are due to HMSO for assuming publishing responsibility and for their expert advice on matters of design and production. Last, but by no means least, the editors wish to thank the keeper of the records and the staff, both curatorial and administrative, at the PRO. Without the facilities and privileges afforded to BDEEP editors at Kew, the project would not be viable.

S R Ashton
D J Murray

BDEEP Stage One[5]

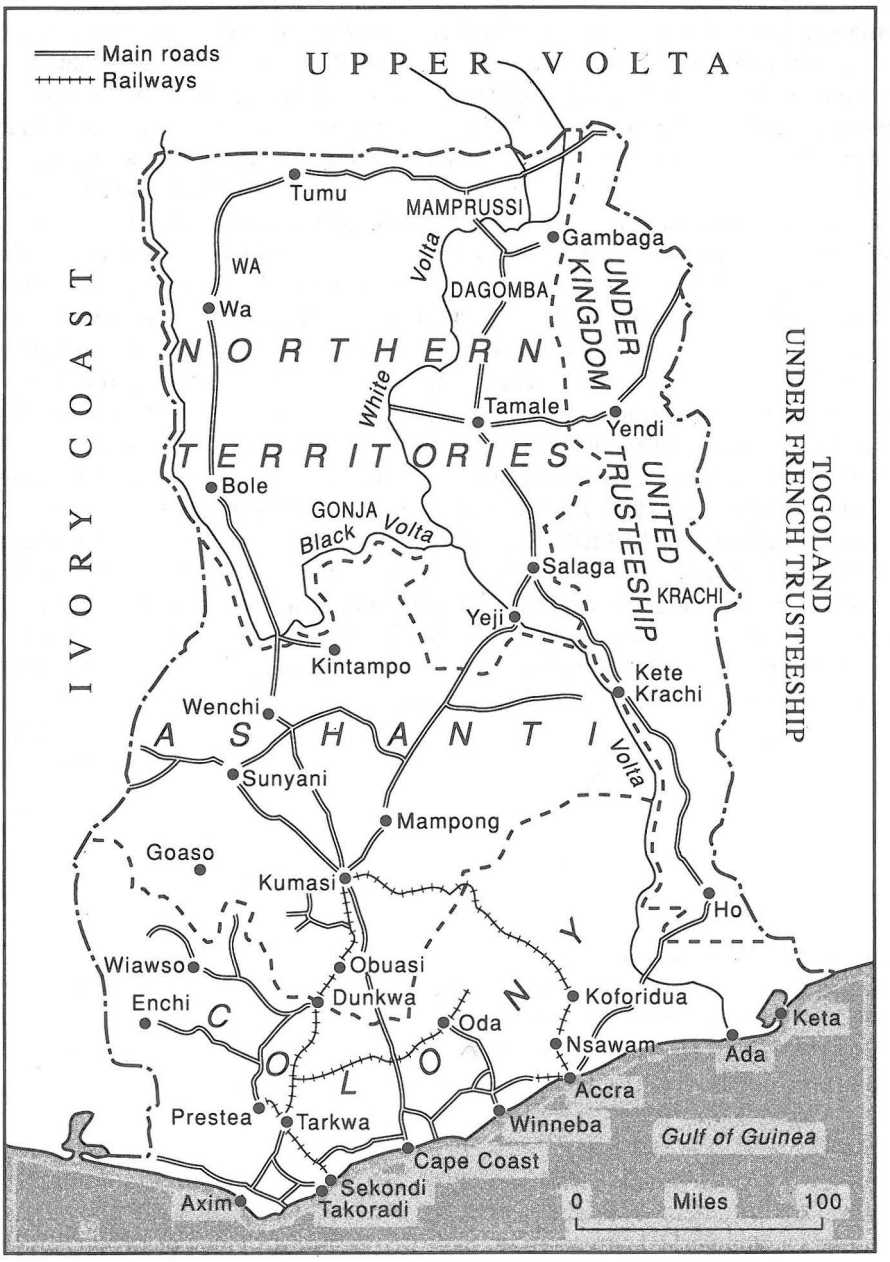
Series A

Volume 1 *Colonial policy and practice 1924–1945* (J M Lee and P B Rich)
Volume 2 *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951* (Ronald Hyam), published 1992
Volume 3 *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951–1957* (David Goldsworthy)

Series B

Volume 1 *Ghana* (Richard Rathbone)
Volume 2 *Sri Lanka* (K M de Silva)
Volume 3 *Malaya* (A J Stockwell)
Volume 4 *Egypt and the defence of the Middle East* (John Kent)
Volume 5 *Sudan* (Douglas H Johnson)

[5] Volume 1 in series A is a single-part volume; volumes 2 and 3 and the five volumes in series B are multi-part volumes.



The Gold Coast *circa* 1950

Ghana

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Document numbers 252–292

Abbreviations: Part I

AG	acting governor/attorney-general
AGC	African Governors' Conference
appt	appointed
AWAM	Association of West African Merchants
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDEEP	British Documents on the End of Empire Project
BNC	Brasenose College, Oxford
CBE	Commander Order of the British Empire
CCTA	Council for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara
CDC	Colonial Development Corporation
CDFC	Colonial Development Fund Committee
CD(&)W	Colonial Development and Welfare (Act)
C&F	cost and freight
CO	Colonial Office
Col	Colonial
Con	Conservative (Party)
CPP	Convention People's Party
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CWS	Co-operative Wholesale Society
DC	district commissioner
Dept	Department
dft	draft
ECA	Economic Co-operation Administration (United States)
educ	educated
est	established
Ex Co	Executive Council

FAO	French Overseas and Associated Territories
FO	Foreign Office
FOB	free on board
GC	Gold Coast
GCP	Ghana Congress Party
GHQ	General Headquarters
GOC	general officer commanding
GOC-in-C	general officer commanding-in-chief
gov	governor
gov-gen	governor-general
govt	government
H of C Debs	*House of Commons Debates* (Hansard)
HE	His Excellency
HM	His Majesty
HMG	His Majesty's Government
ICS	Indian Civil Service
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IUS	International Union of Students
JPC	Joint Provincial Council
KBE	Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire
Kt	Knight Bachelor
LA	Legislative Assembly
Lab	Labour (Party)
Leg Co	Legislative Council
lt-gov	lieutenant-governor
MA	Master of Arts
MBE	Member of the Order of the British Empire
memo	memorandum
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	member of parliament
MRCP	Member of the Royal College of Physicians, London
MRCS	Member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England

MWT	Ministry of War Transport
NLM	National Liberation Movement
NPP	Northern People's Party
NT	Northern Territories
OAG	officer administering the government
OBE	Officer of the Order of the British Empire
OEEC	Organisation of European Economic Co-operation
PRO	Public Record Office/Public Relations Office(r)
PWD	Public Works Department
RAF	Royal Air Force
Sec	secretary
S of S	secretary of state
tel	telegram
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UAC	United Africa Company
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UK	United Kingdom
UN(O)	United Nations (Organisation)
US(A)	United States (of America)
WACRI	West African Cocoa Research Institute (at Tafo in the southern Gold Coast)
WANS	West African National Secretariat
WASU	West African Students Union
WFDY	World Federation of Democratic Youth
WFTU	World Federation of Trades Unions
WIDF	Women's International Democratic Federation

Principal Holders of Offices 1941–1952: Part I

UNITED KINGDOM

1. *Colonial Office ministers*

(a) *Wartime coalition (10 May 1940 – 23 May 1945) and Conservative caretaker government (23 May – 26 July 1945): prime minister Mr W S Churchill*

Secretary of state	Lord Moyne (8 Feb 1941) Viscount Cranborne (23 Feb 1942) Mr O F G Stanley (24 Nov 1942)
Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Mr M H Macmillan (4 Feb 1942) Duke of Devonshire (1 Jan 1943)

(b) *Labour governments (26 July 1945 – 26 Oct 1951): prime minister Mr C R Attlee*

Secretary of state	Mr G H Hall (3 Aug 1945) Mr A Creech Jones (4 Oct 1946) Mr J Griffiths (28 Feb 1950)
Minister of state	Earl of Listowel (4 Jan 1948) Mr J Dugdale (28 Feb 1950)
Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Mr A Creech Jones (4 Aug 1945) Mr I B Thomas (4 Oct 1946) Mr D R Rees-Williams (7 Oct 1947) Mr T F Cook (2 Mar 1950)

(c) *Conservative government (from 26 Oct 1951): prime minister Mr W S Churchill*[1]

Secretary of state	Mr O Lyttelton (27 Oct 1951)
Minister of state	Mr A T Lennox-Boyd (2 Nov 1951) Mr H L D'A Hopkinson (8 May 1952)
Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Earl of Munster (5 Nov 1951)

2. *Civil servants*

(a) *Secretary to the Cabinet*	Sir Norman Brook (1947–1962)

[1] Details to July 1952, the concluding date for part I of this volume.

(b) *Colonial Office*

(i) Permanent under-secretary of state	Sir Cosmo Parkinson (1940–1942) Sir George Gater (1942–1947) Sir Thomas Lloyd (1947–1956)
(ii) Deputy under-secretary of state	Sir William Battershill (1942–1945) Sir Arthur Dawe (1945–1947) Sir Sydney Caine (1947–1948) } joint Sir Charles Jeffries (1947–1956) } joint Sir Hilton Poynton (1948–1959) } joint
(iii) Assistant under-secretary of state, responsible for the West Africa Department and, from 1947, the Africa Division[2]	A J Dawe (West Africa, 1938–1943) G H Creasy (West Africa, 1943–1946) A B Cohen (Africa, 1947–1951) W L Gorell Barnes (Africa, 1952–1954)
(iii) Assistant secretary, head of West Africa Department	O G R Williams (1938–1946) K E Robinson (1946–1947) L H Gorsuch (1947–1951) T B Williamson (1952–53)

GOLD COAST

1. *Governors*	Sir Alan Burns (6 Nov 1941) Sir Gerald Creasy (13 Jan 1948) Sir Charles Arden-Clarke (12 Aug 1949)
2. *Executive Council (to Feb 1951)*	
President	Governor
Colonial secretary	(Sir) George London (1935–1944) H L G Gurney (1944–1946) R Scott (1947–1950) R H Saloway (1950–1951)
Chief commissioners (chief regional officers from June 1952)	
Ashanti	E G Hawkesworth (1941–1946) (Sir) Charles Butler (1946–1951) W H Beeton (1951–1954)
Northern Territories	G H Gibbs (1941–1946) W H Ingrams (1947–1948) E Norton-Jones (1948–1950) G N Burden (1950–1953)
Colony (from 1945)	(Sir) Thorleif Mangin (1945–1950) A J Loveridge (1950–1953)

[2] See p. xxxii–xxxiii of the editor's introduction for an explanation of departmental responsibilities at the levels of assistant under-secretary of state and assistant secretary.

Attorney-general	A W Lewey (1943–1948) P F Branigan (1948–1951)
Financial secretary	G N Farquhar (1941–1943) B J Surridge (1943–1945) G M Puckridge (1945–1948) R P Armitage (1948–1951)
Unofficial members[3]	Nana Sir Ofori Atta I (1942–1943) (Sir) K A Korsah (1942–1945) (Sir) James Henley Coussey (1943) Nana (Sir) Tsibu Darku IX (1943–1951) C W Tachie-Menson (1946–1951) Dr I B Asafu-Adjaye (1946–1949) Nana Kwame Gyebi Ababio (1949–1951)

3. *Executive Council from Feb 1951 and Cabinet from Mar 1952 (to July 1952)*

President	Sir Charles Arden-Clarke
Chief secretary and minister of defence and external affairs	R H Saloway
Leader of government business, minister of development (Feb 1952) and prime minister (Mar 1952)	(Dr) K Nkrumah
Minister of finance	R P Armitage
Minister of justice and attorney-general	P F Branigan
Minister of commerce, industry and mines	T Hutton-Mills K A Gbedemah (from Feb 1952)
Minister of education and social welfare	K Botsio
Minister of agriculture and natural resources	A Casely-Hayford
Minister of communications and works	Dr Ansah Koi J A Braimah (from June 1951)
Minister of health and labour	K A Gbedemah T Hutton Mills (from Feb 1952)
Minister of housing and town and country planning	Dr Ansah Koi (from June 1951)
Minister of local government	E O Asafu-Adjaye
Minister without portfolio	J A Braimah

[3] Dr F V Nanka-Bruce was a member of the Executive Council during Tachie-Menson's absence in 1950. The director of medical services was also a member of Council in the period to 1951.

Chronological Table of Principal Events: Parts I–II

	1941
Feb	Lord Moyne appointed S of S for colonies
Nov	Sir Alan Burns appointed gov of Gold Coast
	1942
Feb	Lord Cranborne appointed S of S for colonies
June	Lord Swinton appointed resident minister, West Africa
July	A L Adu and K A Busia appointed as first African assistant district commissioners in Gold Coast
Sept	Nana Sir Ofori Atta I and K A Korsah appointed as first African members of Gold Coast Executive Council
Nov	Oliver Stanley appointed S of S for colonies
	1943
Sept	Members of Joint Provincial Council of the Colony, the Confederacy Council of Ashanti and African unofficial members of the Legislative Council submit memorandum on constitutional reform
Sept	Stanley visits Gold Coast
	1944
June	Native Authority (Colony) Ordinance 21, 1944 enacted
July	*General Plan for Development in the Gold Coast* (SP no II, 1944) published in Accra (26 July)
Oct	Stanley tells House of Commons of his acceptance of the need for constitutional reform in Gold Coast
	1945
Apr	Post of secretary for native affairs in Gold Coast abolished
May	Allied defeat of Germany
July	General election in Britain; Labour Party victory under Clement Attlee
Aug	George Hall (1st Viscount Hall 1946) appointed S of S for colonies
Aug	Allied defeat of Japan
Oct	Pan–African Congress in Manchester, England
Oct	'Cutting out' campaign to control swollen shoot disease inaugurated
Nov	Real wage index in Gold Coast (100 in 1939) falls to 66

1946

World price for cocoa £49.8 per ton (farm gate price £27 per ton)

Mar	Burns Constitution for Gold Coast published
July	Burns Constitution inaugurated after municipal and territorial council elections
Oct	Arthur Creech Jones appointed S of S for colonies
Dec	Northern Territorial Council meets for first time

1947

World price for cocoa £155 per ton (farm gate price £51.3 per ton)

Feb	Creech Jones circulates despatch on local government to African governors
Aug	United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) founded at Saltpond
Aug	Asante Youth Association formed in Kumase
Sept	First meeting of UGCC Working Committee
Nov	African Governors' Conference in London
Nov	Nkrumah returns to Gold Coast to take up appointment as general secretary of UGCC
Dec	Real wage index in Gold Coast stands at 86

1948

World price for cocoa £238 per ton (farm gate price £74.7 per ton)
Census year in Gold Coast

Jan	Sir Gerald Creasy appointed gov of Gold Coast
Jan	Nii Kwabena Bonne II (Osu Alata Mantse) and his Anti-Inflationary Campaign Committee inaugurate boycott of imported goods in Gold Coast (24 Jan)
Feb	Agreement reached (28 Feb) between Anti-Inflationary Committee, Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs and Chamber of Commerce to end boycott as from 28 Feb in return for reduction in profit margins of 50–70 per cent on certain imported commodities
Feb	Ex-servicemen's rally in Accra (28 Feb); outbreak of rioting in Accra which spreads to other towns (to 16 Mar)
Mar	Six members of UGCC Working Committee detained without trial (11 Mar)
Apr	Appointment of Watson Commission
June	Report of Watson Commission published
Aug	Nkrumah forms Committee on Youth Organisations
Aug	Real wage index in Gold Coast stands at 74
Sept	Nkrumah launches *Evening News*
Sept	Lancaster House Conference of official and unofficial members of African legislative councils held in London
Nov	Creech Jones visits West Africa
Dec	Appointment of Coussey Committee on Constitutional Reform

1949

World price for cocoa £139 per ton (farm gate price £121.3 per ton)

Mar	Sir Gerald Creasy leaves Gold Coast
June	Convention People's Party (CPP) established
Aug	Sir Charles Arden-Clark appointed gov of Gold Coast
Oct	Report of Coussey Committee published

1950

World price for cocoa £190 per ton (farm gate price £84 per ton)

Jan	CPP inaugurates campaign of 'Positive Action'
Jan	Nkrumah arrested (21 Jan) and subsequently sentenced to three years' imprisonment
Feb	James Griffiths appointed S of S for colonies
May	General election in Britain; Labour Party returned with narrow majority
Sept–Oct	Delimitation of constituencies in Gold Coast
Nov	Registration of electors in Gold Coast begins
Dec	Gold Coast government announces (28 Dec) dates for forthcoming elections (5 and 6 Feb 1951 for primary elections, 8 Feb 1951 for rural electoral colleges and municipalities, 10 Feb 1951 for territorial councils)

1951

World price for cocoa £208 per ton (farm gate price £130.7 per ton)

Jan	CPP issues election manifesto, 'Towards the Goal'
Jan	UGCC issues election manifesto, 'Plan for the Nation'
Feb	General election in Gold Coast
Feb	Nkrumah released from prison (12 Feb) and invited to become leader of government business
Feb	First meeting of new Legislative Assembly in Gold Coast (20 Feb)
Feb	*Regional Administrations, Report by the Commissioner* (Sir S Phillipson) published in Accra
Apr	Suspension of cocoa cutting out campaign
June	Nkrumah visits London and discusses constitutional reform with Griffiths at CO
Aug	CPP holds second annual conference at Ho
Oct	General election in Britain; Conservative victory under Winston Churchill; Oliver Lyttelton appointed S of S for colonies
Dec	Libya becomes independent

1952

World price for cocoa £285 per ton (farm gate price £148.3 per ton)

Mar	Nkrumah becomes prime minister; Gold Coast Executive Council becomes known as the Cabinet (21 Mar)
May	Ghana Progress Party established with Dr K A Busia as leader

May–June	Lyttelton visits Gold Coast
Oct	Resumption of cocoa cutting out campaign
Oct	Nkrumah's statement to Legislative Assembly outlines features of constitution requiring consideration and invites interested bodies and individuals to submit views (16 Oct)

1953

World price for cocoa £301 per ton (farm gate price £130.7 per ton)

Feb	Anglo–Egyptian agreement on self-government and self-determination for the Sudan sets target date for independence of Sudan
Apr	West African Forces Conference held at Lagos
July	Publication of Gold Coast White Paper on new constitution
July	Nkrumah moves 'Motion of Destiny' in Legislative Assembly proposing that action should be taken to declare Gold Coast a sovereign and independent state within Commonwealth
Oct	Publication of report of Van Lare Commission on representational and electoral reform
Oct	Cheddi Jagan and his Progressive Party (elected Apr 1953) dismissed and constitution suspended in British Guiana
Oct	Turkson Ocran, general secretary of Ghana TUC, and Anthony Woode suspended from CPP
Nov	J A Braimah resigns from Cabinet following allegations of personal corruption

1954

World price for cocoa £450 per ton (farm gate price £130.7 per ton)

Jan	Muslim Association Party established
Apr	Northern People's Party established at Tamale
Apr	Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council 1954 (SI 1954, no 551) promulgated
Apr	Report of Korsah Commission on Braimah's resignation published
June	CPP expels 81 'rebel' candidates who had not been approved by the party's Central Committee
June	General election in Gold Coast; all African Cabinet appointed
July	Alan Lennox-Boyd appointed S of S for colonies
Aug	Cocoa price paid to farmers fixed by Gold Coast Cabinet at 72 shillings per load of 60lbs for a further four years
Sept	National Liberation Movement (NLM) established under leadership of Bafuor Osei Akoto and K A Busia
Dec	Nkrumah invites opposition leaders to constitutional discussions in Accra

1955

World price for cocoa £302 per ton (farm gate price £130.7 per ton)

Jan	Opposition reject Nkrumah's invitation to discussions on constitution

Jan	Three leading CPP activists, J E Appiah, R R Amponsah and Victor Owusu, defect to NLM
Feb	F E Cumming-Bruce appointed adviser to governor on external affairs
Mar	Nkrumah announces that Gold Coast government is considering the establishment of a Brong-Kyempem Council, independent of the Asanteman Council
Apr	Sir Anthony Eden replaces Churchill as prime minister in UK
Apr	Select Committee of Gold Coast Legislative Assembly established to examine question of a federal system of government
July	By-election in Atwima Nwabiagya; B F Kusi takes this CPP seat for NLM
Aug	NLM publishes proposals for a federal constitution
Sept	NLM launches its newspaper, *The Liberator*
Sept	Sir F Bourne appointed constitutional adviser
Dec	State Council (Ashanti) Amendment Ordinance enacted

1956

World price for cocoa £221 per ton (farm gate price £130.7 per ton)

Jan	Sudan becomes independent
Feb–Mar	Achimota Conference under chairmanship of C W Tachie-Menson
May–June	Completion of Gold Coast electoral re-registration
June	UN plebiscite in Togoland
July	General election in Gold Coast
Aug	Nkrumah introduces independence motion in Legislative Assembly (3 Aug); opposition boycott debate (motion carried by 77–0)
Aug	Publication of report of Jibowu Commission into affairs of Cocoa Purchasing Company
Sept	Lennox-Boyd announces (18 Sept) that HMG will introduce into UK parliament a bill to accord independence to Gold Coast; subject to UK parliamentary approval, date of independence confirmed as 6 Mar 1957
Oct	Inconclusive constitutional talks held between government and opposition in Gold Coast
Oct–Nov	Suez crisis
Nov	Gold Coast government publishes revised constitutional proposals; proposals approved in Legislative Assembly by 70–25

1957

World price for cocoa £247 per ton (farm gate price £130.7 per ton)

Jan	Harold Macmillan replaces Eden as prime minister in UK Lennox-Boyd visits Gold Coast (24–30 Jan)
Feb	White Paper, *The Proposed Constitution of Ghana* (Cmnd 71) published in UK
Mar	Gold Coast becomes independent as Ghana (6 Mar)

Introduction

This collection of documents is intended to illuminate some of the processes which led to the end of British colonial rule in the Gold Coast on 6 March 1957. Whilst South Africa and then the Sudan had paved the way to independent status for African dependencies and protectorates, Ghana, as the Gold Coast was to be renamed by its government at independence, was the first tropical African state to achieve full nation–statehood after a colonial period which in the case of the littoral of the Gold Coast had lasted for just over a century.

This sequence of documents is, of course, only a selection. It is drawn from the extensive archive of official British materials held at the Public Record Office. The source material held there concerning the Gold Coast is rich and copious. Some of it has already been usefully presented in edited volumes of documents.[1] Those collections, as well as this present selection, can do little more than sample the huge extent of this official documentation.[2]

The organising principles which were used in putting this collection together were relatively simple. Basically the selection addresses the issues which were considered at the time to be of major significance by those who made British colonial policy. With the privilege of hindsight we can discern that matters which we might now see as vital were sometimes perceived as being of little importance by policy-makers. No less importantly there are issues which received considerable and even obsessive attention which we would now view as more trivial or even as red herrings. For example the CO was, like all government departments and corporations, crucially concerned with matters affecting its own establishment and that of the Colonial Service; accordingly staff postings, pensions, pay and transfers were time-consuming and important elements of the work of the Office. Such concerns have been ruthlessly pruned on the grounds that they are of marginal interest to all but the most specialist modern scholar.

It was assumed that most users of this collection would be interested essentially in the *politics* of the ending of colonial rule in the Gold Coast as perceived by the British policy-makers. It is after all the exciting political story which gives Ghana its particularity.[3] What were felt at the time to be the significant events and policies leading to the emergence of Ghana are therefore the concerns of this collection and that, by definition, excludes some wider themes. British strategic and economic concerns, for example, were couched within wider parameters such as West Africa, the colonial empire or the South Atlantic.[4] Such matters certainly informed policy-making but most of the documents reproduced below relate to the more intimate and frequently volatile political relationship between the Gold Coast and Britain.[5]

While it was always tempting to impose an editorial argument, it must be made clear that the documents were not selected to illustrate nominated 'themes', although a degree of editorial subjectivity in such selections is obviously impossible to avoid totally. Other criteria adopted for selection have necessarily included the

legibility of the material,[6] and the editor's sense of the need to attempt at least to recreate the ever-changing 'mood' and style of the CO and its officials. It perhaps needs stressing once again that the underlying criterion of selection was what was perceived by policy-makers in London, often in interaction with the governor in the colony, to be central to those concerns. Inevitably these criteria and this selection will not satisfy the needs of each and every individual scholar with their particular interests; without reproducing the entire collection, an enterprise which would run to hundreds of such volumes, it would be physically impossible to meet such concerns.

The very nature of the PRO collection relating to Ghana also determined the focus. It firstly consists of material generated in London in the course of policy-making. Some of this discussion and decision resulted in the drafting of communications to the authorities in Accra which directed them to perform, or authorised them to carry out, certain actions or asked them for information. Copies of this outgoing correspondence and signals 'traffic' are preserved on file, alongside the original responses from Accra.[7]

The documents included in this volume were prepared as working papers in the course of handling matters dealing with the Gold Coast. Their printed form disguises substantial differences in the originals. Some are hurriedly, and sometimes badly, scribbled notes intended for the eyes of only one other official. At the other extreme, some have passed through successive drafts and are considered, carefully composed papers in a typed or printed form intended for wide circulation. The significance of each of these documents needs to be assessed in the light of its individual nature. One guide to this can be provided by an appreciation of the organisation, the working practices and the status of those who generated such material.

Within British government, the geographical West Africa Department in the CO had primary responsibility for Gold Coast affairs. An assistant secretary was the immediate head of the department. In 1954, when the department was divided into a West Africa Department 'A', responsible for Nigeria, and a West Africa Department 'B', responsible for the Gold Coast, Gambia and Sierra Leone, two assistant secretaries were appointed to each section.

Before 1947, the assistant secretary reported to an assistant under-secretary of state who combined supervisory responsibility for the West Africa Department with similar responsibility for other geographical or subject departments of the CO. In 1947 responsibility for all African geographical departments was vested in a single assistant under-secretary of state as head of the Africa Division. In 1955 supervision was again divided and two assistant under-secretaries were appointed, one for West Africa and another for Central Africa, Aden and East Africa.

A principal in the West Africa Department had the Gold Coast desk and that official recorded the first comment on incoming communications and provided the first draft of papers and outgoing communications. As papers travelled up the official hierarchy, comments became briefer and at the same time more authoritative. The assistant secretary settled much routine business himself; he also exercised his judgment on whether matters needed to go beyond the department to involve CO subject departments, to be referred upwards within the CO, or to involve some other department of state outside the CO. Where the assistant secretary referred papers upwards, they passed firstly to the supervising assistant under-secretary (a position of considerable influence, especially during the period of A B Cohen's appointment

between 1947 and 1951); if they were to go further upwards, their next destination was the permanent under-secretary of state or his deputy; further upward referral took the file, which grew thicker at every stage, to the ministerial team comprising the parliamentary under-secretary of state and the secretary of state; after 1948 the ministerial team was augmented by the appointment of a minister of state to assist the secretary of state. Some of the minute sequences on the Coussey Report reproduced in this volume provide illustrations of a paper moving upwards within the CO in just this fashion (see eg document no 48).

Policy-making might shift outside the CO. The CO had its defined 'patch' but those of other departments impinged on and overlapped with it and did so most frequently in matters of money, foreign and Commonwealth affairs, and on defence but did so on other topics as well. Papers went to Cabinet or Cabinet committees not only when a matter was judged to be of central significance but also when the matter involved co-ordinating – or solving a dispute between – two or more departments. Successive papers on the constitution provide examples of the former (eg 64, 115), and the question of which department should be responsible for the Gold Coast's external affairs in advance of its independence illustrates the latter (136). In many cases when major constitutional and political issues were under consideration, the governor of the Gold Coast returned to London for discussions at the CO with the secretary of state and his officials (eg 15, 53). Parliament has only a shadowy presence on the margin of the documents in this volume (eg 97, 105, 268) but that does not quite reflect its importance in the process of policy-making; it was only when matters passed into the parliamentary arena that they became public and the record of those debates and decisions is already available.

The PRO files also contain original material generated in Accra but the parallel policy-making process in the Gold Coast is not so evident in the PRO and hence in the documents in this volume. The papers in the PRO are, for the most part, those that emerged out of the generation of policy within the colony and do not usually include those produced as part of internal decision-making in Accra. The issues and hence the papers from the Gold Coast relate to matters which were felt by their drafters to be of sufficient importance to be transmitted to London. These criteria were not fixed but, rather, varied over time. For example, as can be seen from this collection, the constitutional changes brought about in 1951 and 1954 altered the bureaucratic relationship between the CO and the government of the Gold Coast.

From 1951, and especially after 1954, when internal self-government was granted, very much more of the detailed day-to-day decision-making rested with the elected government and the governor in Accra than before.[8] While the governor and his senior officers still owed the secretary of state and his advisors the obligation to keep them informed of events, much policy which did not legally require the assent and intervention of London was by then made in the Executive Council, later the Cabinet, and the Legislative Assembly of the Gold Coast. It is largely in matters over which London retained control in those years – foreign and inter-colony relations, constitutional progress, defence, law and order, the future of the public service, expenditure under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act and, especially between 1951 and 1954, 'grand' financial policy[9] – that there is internal CO discussion with a view to policy-making or policy assessment. This is in marked contrast with the years before 1954, and even more with those before 1951, when the

Gold Coast material in the PRO is far more copious, extremely detailed and often concerned with the minutiae of every-day governance.[10]

The records of the PRO consist of official material only, although many of the files contain enclosures of unofficially generated material like private letters and newspaper cuttings. In accordance with the objectives of BDEEP, the selection of documents reproduced here does not and could not pretend to comprehensively illustrate the history of nationalism and political organisations in the Gold Coast itself, although a great deal can be learnt about such themes from these contemporary sources. That exciting history can only be fully reconstructed by a use of PRO materials alongside the copious resources of the National Archives of Ghana in Accra and the regions, and the papers of political parties and individuals in Ghana itself.

The selection begins with documents dating from September 1941. No starting point can possibly be fully satisfactory. In looking at the political history of the transfer of power in the Gold Coast, perfectly good arguments could, for example, be advanced for going back to the constitutional reforms during the governorship of Sir Gordon Guggisberg in the 1920s; similarly viable arguments would suggest beginning the collection with the repercussions of the riots of February 1948. From the point of view of economic history, the first Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1929, the 'cocoa hold-up' of 1937 and the ensuing *Report of the Commission on the Marketing of West African Cocoa* (Cmd 5845, 1938), or the beginning of war-time central planning in 1944, all commend themselves as logical points of departure.

The documents included for the years 1941–1947 have been selected to illustrate the beginnings of a process of evaluation which led to reforms in the constitutional basis of British rule in the Gold Coast. While, as in any historical sequence, these events have a context whose history can be pushed further and further back chronologically with no lack of logic, the tentative steps apparent at the beginning of this collection demonstrate an important concern with the longer-term future of colonial rule in the Gold Coast. This was not merely evaluative surveying but was also to result in real shifts in policy. As a great deal of the writing on this period of the history of Ghana has consigned the 'colonial factor' to an essentially reactive role in a drama dominated by nationalism, it is important to place the exciting and historically important events taking place on the ground in the Gold Coast against the policy changes being contemplated in London and enacted by the government in Accra. So far as the history of the transfer of power is concerned, the latter can be clearly dated from the middle of the war years.

The Gold Coast to which Sir Alan Burns was appointed as governor in 1941 was a complex, multiple dependency. It comprised the Gold Coast Colony, the legally and administratively separate colony of Ashanti, the Northern Territories protectorate, and Togoland under British mandate, the northern part of which was administered as part of the Northern Territories and the southern section as part of the Eastern Province of the Colony. For government, there was an Executive Council, a single institution but one established under multiple legal authority, serving the Gold Coast as a whole. The Legislative Council, on the other hand, had authority only in relation to the southern third of the country, the Colony. Despite this geographical restriction of authority, the annual estimates for the whole of the Gold Coast had to be passed by the Legislative Council. Consequently, debate was allowed on the vote of supplies where direct questions of finance outside the Gold Coast Colony were concerned, but the actual administration of finance was deemed beyond the

Council's jurisdiction. Legislative authority for Ashanti, the Northern Territories and the mandated territory of Togoland lay with the governor. Under the existing constitution for the Gold Coast Colony there was an official majority in the Legislative Council. Among the minority of unofficials were nine indirectly elected members, of whom three were elected for municipalities and six chosen by provincial councils of chiefs. The establishment of provincial councils had been a significant feature of the reforms introduced in 1925. The councils served as electoral colleges and, at the same time, as consultative bodies on provincial affairs. As colleges for electing members of the Legislative Council, paramount chiefs had votes in relation to the number of inhabitants in their states. The Joint Provincial Council of the Colony was consulted on Colony-wide matters.

Local government in the Gold Coast was an amalgam of direct and indirect administration. In the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti the government had recognised that kings and chiefs with their councils had authority to hold tribunals, to enact by-laws and to levy local taxation. In the Northern Territories the powers of local rulers were more constrained.

* * * *

Burns, the Gold Coast's governor between 1941 and 1947, enthusiastically attempted to 'sell' the Gold Coast as a 'model colony'.[11] That did not quite accord with the CO view. In CO terms it was certainly seen as an 'advanced' colony. Its people were, largely through their own efforts, probably the best western-educated population in Africa.[12] They had built an extensive infrastructure, although the increasing needs of economic development found too much of it increasingly ill-suited to modern, intensive motor-lorry transport.[13] The Gold Coast enjoyed a thriving African-led economy, based for the most part on agricultural exports and cocoa in particular; the rewards for all that effort and enterprise were being reaped in a steadily increasing world-price for cocoa after the 1942 season.

But despite all of this and, more accurately, because of all of this, the Gold Coast also had a reputation for being politically 'difficult' from the colonial point of view, as is apparent from the first documents in this collection. From the beginning of the colonial period Africans had struggled against virtually every government imposition. Such determined opposition had been mounted from the nineteenth century by a growing, highly articulate and effective 'modern elite', largely based in the coastal towns and their immediate hinterlands. But by the 1930s anti-colonial opposition was being mounted by a wider and wider constituency. The most notable example of this in the years immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War was the sequence of cocoa crop-retentions which culminated in the famous 'cocoa hold-up' during the 1937 season which forced government, against its wishes, to intervene to attempt to break the European buyers' monopsony.[14] The rural kingdoms or chieftaincies especially in the south were, moreover, constantly racked by crises brought about by attempts by commoners to 'destool' or depose unpopular kings and chiefs. While such jacqueries may not have been formally 'nationalist', they certainly constituted serious challenges to colonial rule in the countryside not least because 'traditional rulers' had been formally co-opted by the colonial state.

The eve of the Second World War also saw serious labour unrest with, for example, a bitter strike on the railways.[15] Strikes persisted throughout the war period on the railways, in the docks and in the mines.[16] The Gold Coast was not therefore perceived in London or in the secretariat in Accra as the quiescent, co-operative and productive colony that its governor wished to present it as in 1946.

The initial sequence of documents suggests precisely this ambiguity. The Gold Coast was seen as the kind of well-equipped dependency in which constitutional reform could be and should be attempted. But part of the purpose of doing so was to forestall criticism and opposition. Reforms argued for by Burns before his departure to take up the governorship of the Gold Coast in 1941 and, from within the CO itself, by O G R Williams, the assistant secretary in the West Africa Department, were also designed to absorb what Williams described as the probability of 'considerable agitation' after the war (1–2, 12). What seemed to be the fair wind given to Burns's initial proposals by the CO appears to have somewhat diminished by June 1942 (3, 5). The secretary of state's apparent rejection of Burns's arguments, as well as those subsequently put forward by Sir Bernard Bourdillon, the governor of Nigeria, owed much to Lord Cranborne's fears that concessions might lead to demands for similar changes in less well-endowed territories; they also risked incurring the disapproval of the grand old man of colonial affairs, Lord Hailey, whose unofficial authority still counted for a great deal and who continued to stress the importance of development from below through native authorities. Cranborne also argued that there was no irresistible clamour for such reform in the Gold Coast of 1942.[17] But it is clear from Burns's sturdy prosecution of his case (6–7) that he felt that not the least potential function of such reforms was the active heading-off of such demands when they emerged, as he knew they would, after the end of the war. The minute sequence that followed indicates that Burns's ideas commanded substantial support in the CO and his policy eventually prevailed (8).

Burns also proposed that two qualified Gold Coasters should be recruited to the district administration. Burns saw this step as an initial move towards Africanising the district administration – the 'political service'; his aim was both to anticipate criticism of discrimination against Africans in civil service recruitment and to create for well-educated young Africans an avenue for advancement which would be an alternative to involvement in the anti-colonial politics of the local intelligentsia. This proposal prompted a discussion with fellow West African governors and with the CO about both tactics and strategy. The governors of Nigeria and the Gambia saw it as a tactical move which should only be interpreted as dealing with the specific circumstances of the Gold Coast. On the other hand, the governor of Sierra Leone regarded the proposal as contrary to the strategy of directing effort towards the strengthening of native authorities. Cranborne supported the move but on the different grounds that it could be seen as further evidence of the association of subject people in the administration of the British empire (4). The first two Africans joined the Gold Coast's 'political service' as assistant district commissioners in July 1942.[18]

Burns attempted to establish the notion that nationalist demands were best pre-empted by reform rather than fought. In this he was struggling against the judgment of extremely influential voices, most notably that of Lord Hailey. Burns's case had three limbs. First, he wished to gain time to build up native authorities as more effective instruments for both local administration and for promoting local

economic and social development.[19] Secondly, he wanted to use participation in native administration and municipal councils as the means by which Gold Coasters would gain experience in responsible self-government upon which further political advance would be built. Lastly, African rulers and those connected with native authorities, already thoroughly associated with colonial government, were seen by Burns as a continuing counterbalance to nationalist politicians. These perceptions were broadly shared by officials in the CO.[20]

The addition of African members to the Executive Council, the appointment of Africans to the 'political service' and municipal reform (9), show Burns's concern to use the power to initiate reforms in order to steer change in a way that both anticipated agitation and at the same time attempted to safeguard the position of those associated with indirect rule institutions. It was with these concerns in mind that Burns returned in December 1942 to the issue of an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council. This was a subject he had raised at the CO before he left for Accra. The timing now was perhaps also influenced by his concern to deflect African opposition to the recent decision taken by the CO, against his advice, that an income tax should be introduced into the Gold Coast.[21] With the governor exercising adequate reserve powers (reflecting Burns's experience of similar provisions in Caribbean territories) and with the composition of the legislature reflecting a distribution of power among representatives of the native authorities, Burns believed an unofficial majority to be workable. The CO, however, advised caution. Officials were anxious not to encourage what they described as 'power without responsibility' (10–11). A decision on this matter was deferred pending a visit to West Africa by Oliver Stanley, the new secretary of state.

As part of the preparation for this visit, scheduled for the autumn of 1943, Williams drafted a memorandum on 'Constitutional development in West Africa' for discussion. It was based on the confidential reports of Lord Hailey and particularly relied on his 'General report on native administration and African political development'. Williams drew particular attention to a paragraph from Hailey's general conclusions:

> Measures for improving the physical and social condition of the people must now have a claim on our attention which should take precedence over other considerations. It is no disparagement of those whose chief interest lies in furthering political advance to say that the satisfaction of the ambition of what is still a small minority of Africans can be no substitute for the expenditure of the protracted effort and considerable financial sacrifice which may be needed to meet the more elemental need of the great majority of the people. But the two conceptions are fortunately not mutually exclusive; the situation only demands that we should not allow our pursuit of political ideas to detract from the attention which must be given to the pre-eminent needs of social advance. In the political sphere, the most important of our immediate problems is to interest Africans in measures designed to further social and economic development, and to secure their full cooperation in them. The solution suggested in this Memorandum is, on the one side, a resolute development of local institutions combined with progressive admission of Africans to all branches of government services, and on the other, a policy of caution in political matters which, while leaving an opening for advanced opinion to play its part, would keep the substance of power in the hands of the official government, until experience has shown us under what constitutional forms the dependencies can move most securely towards the final stages of responsible government.[22]

In an appendix to his memorandum, Williams sketched five stages which might lead to eventual reform of central government. The first combined the modernisation of native authorities and increased African representation on municipal councils; it is also envisaged the formation of regional councils, themselves based upon modernised native authorities, and increased representation of African interests by elected and nominated members on legislative councils. In subsequent discussion Hailey surprisingly suggested extending this first stage by advocating that, as an 'education in responsibility', Africans should be appointed as heads of groups of departments and sit as such on the executive councils without, however, being ministers; only when the stage of full parliamentary government was reached would they then become ministers. The second and third stages in Williams's plan consisted of extending the functions of regional councils and simultaneously making both the municipalities and legislative councils more representative. The fourth stage envisaged African unofficial majorities in legislative councils. On this key point, however, the CO was still anxious to avoid encouraging what it viewed as 'power without responsibility'. Williams described the fifth stage as 'towards self-government'. Beyond the progressive Africanisation of the colonial administrations, he considered it unwise to foreshadow the form which self-government was likely to take; he was no happier to lay out the methods by which it would be acquired. He simply advocated, therefore, an extensive round of conferences 'of all African interests involved with representatives of the British Government'. Williams's memorandum concluded: 'A good many years (perhaps a good many generations though it would be impolitic to say so openly) must elapse before the possibilities of stages 1, 2 and 3 have been at all fully exploited . . .'.[23]

Stanley's visit to West Africa in 1943 was the first undertaken by a secretary of state. He took no specific proposals for reform with him. That had not been the purpose of Williams's memorandum which had, rather, sought to provide Stanley with elements of political reassurance which could be offered to the African deputations he was about to receive. But before Stanley arrived in the Gold Coast in September 1943, the five stages of Williams's memorandum were implicitly challenged by an African initiative in the Gold Coast.

During that month a memorandum intended for presentation to the secretary of state was drawn up and signed by members of the Joint Provincial Council, the Ashanti Confederacy Council and the African unofficial members of the Legislative Council. The memorandum asked for elected majorities in the Executive and Legislative Councils; it also asked for the appointment of an elected minister for home affairs responsible to the Legislative Council and removable only by an address from the Council upon a vote of the majority. The memorandum called for Ashanti to be represented in the Legislative Council as well. This move took Burns and Stanley by surprise; no question of representation from Ashanti in the Legislative Council had arisen when Burns had raised with the Asantehene, the paramount of Ashanti, the question of establishing an Ashanti Advisory Council in the previous February. The governor and the secretary of state believed that the Asantehene had been 'got at' by the lawyers and especially by Dr J B Danquah. Danquah represented the Joint Provincial Council in the Legislative Council and it was he who presented the memorandum to Stanley. He was believed to covet the proposed post of minister for home affairs. Officials in London were told that the Asantehene's support for this memorandum had put the Gold Coast position 'completely in the melting pot'.

Burns used the African initiative to press his own proposals further. The memorandum, he argued, was unacceptable but a complete rejection would run the risk of compromising the Asantehene in the eyes of the 'educated elements' and might undermine the basis of co-operation so recently established in Ashanti. Burns advocated therefore 'a complete break with the existing set-up'. He suggested that the Gold Coast should be reorganised on the basis of three regions, each with a regional council. Members of these councils, themselves representative of native authorities, would elect members to the Legislative Council upon which it would now be possible to concede an unofficial majority. Burns urged Stanley to accept an unofficial majority, describing it as 'the one demand that will really satisfy the politically minded people in this country'. On returning to London, Stanley told his officials that 'the governor thought there might be a chance of securing agreement to a scheme of this kind with the creation of an unofficial majority as an inducement' (13).

Burns further elaborated his proposals at the CO whilst on leave in May 1944. CO officials raised the problem of political reactions in East Africa; a concession on official majorities in the Gold Coast might lead to a demand for an unofficial European majority in Kenya. Burns stressed that the Gold Coast's circumstances were different, not merely from Kenya but from other parts of West Africa too (14). Oliver Stanley was now persuaded by Burns's arguments and authorised the governor to open negotiations with African political leaders (15).

There followed two years of negotiation. Burns made concessions to African opinion but remained committed to the basic priorities he had established at the beginning of his governorship. The new Gold Coast constitution, which was to bear Burns's name in the press when published in March 1946, provided for a Legislative Council whose jurisdiction now included Ashanti but not the Northern Territories. The Council was to be chaired by a president who was initially to be the governor. There were to be six *ex-officio* members, eighteen elected members and six nominated members representing special interests. Of the eighteen elected members only five were to be directly elected by the enfranchised populations of Accra (which had two seats), Cape Coast, Sekondi and Kumasi. The remaining thirteen members were to be indirectly elected, nine by the Joint Provincial Council and four by the Ashanti Confederacy Council. The constitution involved no significant shift in the executive, but replacing an official majority with an unofficial majority which was also an elected majority, albeit both indirectly and directly, was seen at the time as a great constitutional advance for an African dependency. George Hall, the new secretary of state for the colonies, described it as a 'landmark in British tropical Africa'.[24]

Constitutional reform was, however, not the CO's most pressing concern in war-time for obvious reasons. CO thinking on constitutional development in the colonies – and not only in West Africa – came increasingly to be treated as part of a planning process for what was usually referred to as 'post-war reconstruction' (12). In certain respects the preoccupations of the home government might be thought to have provided additional scope for a reform-minded governor to act with more liberty than he enjoyed in peace-time. But in pursuing his concern for constitutional change, Burns, like other West African governors, had to contend with an evolving war-time structure of command in West Africa which threatened elements of the statutorily recognised independence of individual governors.

In war-time a wide variety of matters were supposed to come before the co-ordinating body, the West African Governors' Conference, or 'WAGON' as it was more familiarly known. Initially conceived as a forum without executive functions shortly before the outbreak of war, its functions were changed in 1940. A permanent secretariat was created under the chairmanship of the governor of Nigeria. Part of its remit was the co-ordination of shipping, which had become notably sparse after the fall of France.[25] In 1941 a West African Supply Centre under the direction of WAGON's secretariat was set up which regulated the distribution of consumer goods between West African colonies. These arrangements were ramshackle; the West African Supply Centre met, for example, only once – in March 1942. Accordingly, in May 1942 the War Cabinet decided to appoint a resident minister for West Africa along the lines already established for the Middle East. The resident minister and his staff were charged with the co-ordination of the war-effort with special reference to the production drive in West Africa and to ensure efficient liaison between military and civilian authorities.

The arrival of Lord Swinton as the resident minister led to an overhaul of the system. His headquarters were in Accra and he presided over the West African War Council which comprised the four West African governors and the local commanders of the three fighting services. A member of the Cabinet in London and a former secretary of state for the colonies (1931–1935), Swinton had considerable powers and could act without the consent of the governors although there is no clear evidence that he ever did so. The West African Council worked through three sub-committees: the Service Committee which was responsible for military affairs; the Production and Supply Committee which was responsible for the co-ordination of supply matters and production programmes; and the Civil Members Committee which discussed, *inter alia*, commodity pricing and the future of state marketing systems. The West African Supply Centre was absorbed into the resident minister's organisation. Burns and other West African governors were in a constant state of tension with the resident minister (16). While Burns acknowledged the need for co-ordination, he strongly resented 'interference' in what had traditionally been a relatively autonomous domain.

The appointment of a resident minister reflected the importance attached to West Africa's role in the war effort. New demands were made on the colonies and there was a growing emphasis on economic planning. Burns's budget addresses to the Gold Coast Legislative Council were burdened by complaint about the impossibility of achieving what was being asked of him and the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast, he argued, lacked sufficient skilled manpower and materials but was being asked, as were all colonies, to enhance production, to improve the infrastructure and to propose economic policies which conformed to the new CO demands for 'development', a word that recurs with increasing frequency in official material from late 1942. Burns and his government were ill-thought of by the CO's economic specialists. That criticism drew attention to the piecemeal quality of the proposals for economic development received from the Gold Coast and to the emphasis in them on social policy rather than upon projects for increased production.

The focus on development highlighted the uneven quality of the relationship between Accra and London. The Gold Coast government boasted no real economic expertise, nor did it have a capacity for undertaking economic planning.[26] The CO's economic expertise grew throughout the war as more demands were placed upon it

and as it increasingly involved economists of stature. On the other hand, as seen from the Gold Coast, the economic advice at the disposal of the CO appeared to take little account of the probable political and social ramifications of the suggestions put forward and the requests made.

Much of the CO's criticism of the Gold Coast government's planning exercises centred around Accra's intention to spend an increasing volume of the Gold Coast's own growing revenue on social and educational provisions. There was pressure on the CO, which was relayed onwards onto the Gold Coast government, to do all in its power to improve the empire's holdings of gold and foreign exchange. But in tension with that pressure was the Gold Coast government's perceived need to rule by incorporation and concession rather than by confrontation. This led to episodes of mutual inability to perceive each others' problems.[27] For the Gold Coast government, expenditure under welfare heads was politically desirable if nationalism was to be outfaced by incorporation and reform. For the CO there was too little attention to desired priorities in the sphere of development. Burns's capacity to run slightly ahead of the field whilst retaining fundamental support from the CO in constitutional matters was not matched in his relationship with the CO in economic matters.

The CO was, itself, somewhat marginalised by the metropolitan economic crisis in this period. This in some senses can be dated to the appointment of the resident minister in West Africa. On receipt of a written question from a prominent Labour Party MP asking what that appointment meant, Cranborne had a reply drafted within the CO which openly acknowledged that: 'Recent events have transformed West Africa into an important field of action for many of the Home Departments ...'.[28] Future policy in West Africa was to be more obviously subjected to perceived metropolitan imperatives than to local exigencies alone. The resident minister was the British government's agent in West Africa and he actively supported a policy of intervening to promote local economic and social goals whilst attaching less importance to political developments.

After the war, when the post of resident minister had been abolished,[29] it remained the case that the CO's responsibilities were still subordinated to wider government concerns. It has been a commonplace in historical writing on the British colonial empire that the two Labour governments between 1945 and 1951 were verbally bolder than their predecessors when it came to any discussion of political liberalisation in the colonies. But ironically the dire economic circumstances of post-war Britain determined that these *soi disants* socialist governments were more eager than their predecessors to use the colonial empire both to earn and to save precious foreign exchange.

Burns's governorship was one of rapid reform. Trades unions, although strongly in evidence in an informal sense, were legalised and recognised in 1941, not least because of CO reflections on the causes of the major disturbances in the West Indies in the mid-1930s.[30] From 1942, Africans sat for the first time on the Executive Council, a Council which had previously been entirely official. In the same year, the first King's Commissions were awarded to African servicemen in modern times and the first two Africans were appointed as assistant district officers in the colonial holy of holies, the field administration. Town councils with elected majorities were established in Accra, Cape Coast and Sekondi. The scope of local government was further regularised.[31] In 1944, the first development plan which included items

identified for funding by the British government under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act had been prepared and had been submitted to the CO. In June 1945, in accordance with the recommendations of the Elliot Commission on Higher Education in West Africa, the first steps were taken towards creating a university college in the Gold Coast.[32] Also in 1944, a refurbished and more urgent Africanisation policy was defined which aimed at giving preference to Africans for appointments in the senior service over overseas officers. Partly for manpower reasons, but also because of deeply held principles, Burns pressed his civil servants to be aware of the changing nature of their role in an era in which the Africanisation of the public service had become settled policy. His confidential minute of 14 February 1947, towards the end of his stewardship, captures much of what he thought the period was about (17).

Burns left the Gold Coast in August 1947. His departure occurred at a politically sensitive moment in the Gold Coast. While the most prominent nationalists had initially welcomed the constitutional reforms of 1946, that rapture had turned, for many reasons, to resentment. In August 1947 at Saltpond, the United Gold Coast Convention was founded demanding 'Self-government in the shortest possible time' (19). War-time and post-war inflation stimulated wage strikes in the public sector as well as more general disaffection. The loss of the strategically important role the Gold Coast had occupied in war-time and the consequent closure of the large American air-staging base in Accra resulted in a loss of jobs in and around the capital. Then the gradual and late demobilisation of the Gold Coast's approximately 50,000 servicemen, many of whom had served with great distinction in North Africa and South-East Asia, worsened a growing unemployment problem.[33] In the countryside two years of lower-than-average rainfall had helped to force food prices up. In cocoa-growing areas the ravages of the 'swollen shoot' virus disease had prompted the government to direct the felling of both infected trees and trees in the vicinity of the infection.[34] While replanting grants were authorised, no compensation was paid to farmers.[35] Growers in some cases had resisted 'cutting-out' with force and in some areas protest had come close to open revolt. The gravity of this concatenation of circumstances was manifestly not fully appreciated by the 'men on the spot'. When mild warnings were received in Whitehall, the CO, by then under considerable pressure from the Treasury, appears to have taken the disease of cocoa, which after all threatened the bedrock of the Gold Coast economy, more seriously than the possible social or political implications of the policy of cutting-out diseased trees. In the matter of swollen shoot disease, as in so much else, there is no evidence which suggests that colonial officials in London or Accra were at all prepared for the storm which was about to break.

A new governor, Sir Gerald Creasy, did not arrive until January 1948, a full six months after Burns's departure. The inter-regnum, like all inter-regna, was not a period in which new local initiatives were much discussed let alone adopted. It was essentially a holding operation. With a career background which included service in the war-time Ministry of Supply as well as in the CO and the Resident Ministry in West Africa, Creasy was expected to be the man who would get the Gold Coast's economy moving in the right direction. The definition of the right direction was considerably dictated by Treasury demands (37).

So far as accompanying practical political change was concerned there was, in fact, little more than the proposals of the new Labour secretary of state, Arthur Creech

Jones, for replacing the native authority system with elected and representative local government.[36] Both the African Governors' Conference of November 1947 (18) and Creech Jones were committed to constitutional reform but that reform was seen as ideally emerging from 'the bottom upwards'. The governors and the secretary of state were implicitly apprehensive about the capacity of the majority of Africans, and especially rural Africans, to exercise the right to vote directly. Overt paternalism coupled with political apprehension were inherent in previous constitutional change in that the majority of African members of the newly constituted Gold Coast Legislative Council had been returned, not by direct voting, but by councils of chiefs acting, in effect, as electoral colleges. The commitment to constitutional reform from the grass-roots of local administration upwards was also informed by enhanced fears of the largely town-based upsurge of agitation which was manifest in West Africa after 1945.[37] Such reasoning drew upon the widespread and implicitly conservative credo amongst many senior field administrators that rural Africans, who were highly significant actors as the direct producers of the country's wealth, were naturally quiescent and only became fractious or even politically aware when stirred by the smooth-talking but ultimately unrepresentative urban intelligentsia.

This dated view of African society prevailed in Accra and was thence conveyed to Whitehall.[38] It owed a great deal to the influence of the opinions of important, which is to say trusted, kings and chiefs in the Gold Coast upon senior field administrators and especially the provincial commissioners. It was a crucial element in the continuing claim of these traditional rulers to control rural areas to ascribe any outbreak of local disturbances to trouble-making 'malcontents' who were often supposed to be stimulated by 'outsiders'. Such partisan intelligence was presented as unbiased and accurate by senior field administrators and accepted as such by the secretariat in Accra and, thereafter, also in Whitehall. At this juncture in the Gold Coast's colonial history, colonial political knowledge was constructed upon the foundation of rather thin political intelligence.

By the end of 1947, discontent with a wide range of issues, not all of which were by any means within the capacity of government to redress, was extensive. It was a restless unhappiness which a more assertive and better organised nationalism was to harness. The analyses of Williams and Burns in the early 1940s which pragmatically understood this relationship seem to have been momentarily set aside but not altogether forgotten.

The outbreak of rioting in first the capital, Accra, and then the other municipalities in the Gold Coast which erupted on 28 February 1948 created impressive shock-waves (21, 23). Tragically, lives were lost, some of them to police bullets; private and commercial property was extensively damaged. The riots came as a major embarrassment to an already overburdened British government. Internationally it faced criticism over the bloody events from the Soviet Union and the United States of America who, for decidely different reasons, were both explicitly anti-colonial. It also had to endure criticism from the United Nations Trusteeship Council, a more radical body than its weak predecessor (the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission) and upon which the newly independent Indian state had a significant voice (26). Domestically the British Conservative Party in opposition could, and did, portray the events as additional proof of the unfitness of the Labour Party to manage the empire. In turn, for some on the governing Labour Party benches, the very existence of that colonial empire was anachronistic and the riots were deployed as

evidence of the sour fruits of oppression and of the need to devolve power rapidly if similar harvests were to be avoided in future years.

For an understanding of what had happened, the British government was basically reliant on the accounts it was receiving with great frequency from the governor and his staff. The long narrative provided by the governor for the secretary of state (25) provided a sequence of proximate events and an analysis of them as seen from the point of view of the Executive Council and the secretariat;[39] some of its reasoning as well as some of its 'facts' were to be called into question by the subsequently appointed commision of inquiry into the causes of the disturbances.

The CO was no less taken by surprise by the riots than the governor. The governor's and some of the CO's reactions seem to indicate not merely that they were shocked by the unpredicted violence. They also hint at a major change in the perception of nationalism. From 1947 it becomes clear that the conceptual vocabulary of the Cold War had begun to inform the analysis of African political protest or organisation. A far higher degree of information-sharing between British-based intelligence gatherers and the Gold Coast police was one of the repercussions of the riots, as were attempts to isolate African students from communist influence whilst studying in Britain. So far as the events of 28 February and early March 1948 were concerned, the initial conclusion was that while the rioters as a whole might have been inflamed by social discontent, rioting on such a scale must, perforce, have been organised. Such organisation, by this period, tended to be seen as communist-inspired if not actually communist-led (28; also 85).

The CO's immediate public response was, however, the appointment of the Watson Commission of Inquiry (24, 27, 30). Once embroiled in their investigation it is clear that the three commissioners exceeded their brief in the eyes of the CO, let alone in those of the government in Accra. But the Watson Report itself is, without doubt, one of the most important documents produced in the colonial period of not only Ghanaian but also of modern African history. It threw doubt on many assumptions which under-pinned colonial policy as well as questioning the competence of this particular colonial government (32). Some of its recommendations were based, as CO officials were quick to point out privately, on skimpy evidence and understanding (33–35). But it would have been inflammatory in an already tense situation to have attempted to suppress the report in part or in full and such a course was not seriously considered. Given that its speedy publication was necessary for international, domestic and Gold Coast political reasons, many of the CO's private misgivings about some areas of the report were to be set aside in the *Statement by His Majesty's Government* which followed.[40]

There was already some general support in the CO and the secretariat in Accra for elements of the Watson Commission's recommendations about the future of local and regional government. While the British government's statement defended the chiefs, it was clear that they and their councils were increasingly despaired of as the instruments of economic development; they were therefore being gradually abandoned as long-term political allies (39). Much more radical was the Commission's insistence that the 1946 constitution was 'outmoded at birth' and 'conceived in the light of pre-war conditions',[41] two years after Margery Perham had celebrated it as 'a most impressive constitutional advance'.[42] After less than two years of life, this most advanced constitution in British Africa, the Watson commissioners insisted, 'must be reshaped as to give every African of ability an opportunity to help govern the

country, so as not only to gain political experience but also to experience political power. We are firmly of the opinion that anything less than this will only stimulate national unrest.'[43]

It was politically unfeasible for the CO to struggle against each and every aspect of the report which it disliked. It was even less expedient to resist the most significant thrusts of the report. The Commission's recommendations included proposals to increase the size of the Legislative Council and to extend its jurisdiction over the entire country, to give Africans executive responsibility in government, to introduce some measures of decentralisation to three regional councils,[44] and to extend the franchise. It also maintained that the British government had a continuing moral duty to remain in the Gold Coast until some corresponding degree of cultural, political and economic achievement had been attained by all three areas of the Gold Coast. Creech Jones informed Prime Minister Attlee that the proposal to give Africans executive responsibility was 'in line with existing policy and broadly acceptable' (36). Indeed, the Commission's recommendations *were* clearly *generally* in line with the policies which had emerged in the war-time and immediate post-war years. The crucial and inherent argument of the commissioners about the inevitability of eventual self-government was widely accepted in the CO. What was much more radical was the impact of the surrounding circumstances of the riots, and the Watson commissioners' reactions to them, on the *timing* of such policy. The CO Agenda Committee on the Conference of African Governors had concluded in May 1947:

> It is clear that in Africa the period before self-government can be granted will be longer than in most other parts of the Colonial Empire. Prophesy as to the length of this period is idle, but it may be said in the Gold Coast, the territory where Africans are most advanced politically, internal self-government is unlikely to be achieved in much less than a generation. ... [45]

The February rioters and the Watson Commission Report were together to decisively destroy that complacent timetable.

One strand of thinking in the CO favoured prior attention being given to political and economic development. It was also supportive of more radical political change. Many officials had not welcomed the virtual demotion of the CO to being, in part at least, an agency of those key home ministries busily trying to repair the British economy. There were those who also felt frustrated by the somewhat conservative reactions of some African governors to notions of radical or even moderate structural change.[46] Governors conventionally enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy and, after the demise of the Resident Ministry, had regained much of their earlier authority. Following the publication of the Watson Commission Report, the CO was to place greater emphasis on political and constitutional development and, in the process, was ironically to devolve even greater powers to local governors and their executive councils especially in West Africa. But the new and potentially dangerous political situation had radically altered the context within which those governors worked; gradualism was now manifestly unfitted to the task of governing.

As some of the internal minute sequences in this collection make clear, CO officials seldom spoke with one voice. Their opinions were shaped partly by their official departmental specialisms. But they were also shaped by personal ideology. Younger senior officials such as Andrew Cohen, head of the Africa Division,

generated and then dominated a good deal of this internal debate. There is no doubt that some favoured relatively rapid change and their hands were greatly strengthened by what had happened and what might happen in the Gold Coast. In broad terms, the major recommendations of the Watson Commission were accepted by the CO and that acceptance was signalled to the government of the Gold Coast. As a result, policy was now exposed to the urgency of politics. The discussion was no longer theoretical but immediate and managerial. The riots of 1948 and all that had followed in their train imposed a sense of urgency upon the CO. Colonial rule was no longer a matter of theory, the generation of plans and their gradual application. It was now a matter of immediate management and, given the widespread apprehension about 'the red menace' on the Gold Coast, it was also a matter of control and containment. Radicalism had to be checked, political change had to be steered in the direction of moderation. For the first time in years the CO, which alone was thought to have the knowledge to achieve such ends, was freed from the domination of its affairs by other departments of state.

The CO responded to the Watson Commission's recommendations with the appointment of a Committee composed entirely of Africans to formulate proposals for a new constitution. The Committee was to present its recommendations to the governor, and through him, to the secretary of state for the colonies who retained discretion to decide upon the steps which would follow. This was agreed to without, at least documented, demur.[47] There was no major discussion about the implications of this in the CO, perhaps because the secretary of state enjoyed the ultimate sanction of rejecting the proposals in part or in full. While it was clear that this would have been politically undesirable and even dangerous in the tinder-box that the Gold Coast had become, it was a decision that would not have to be taken until many months after the Committee began its huge task. By then perhaps the political temperature would have cooled. Additionally the Committee, like all committees, was somewhat dependent upon its secretariat. In imposing two of the cleverest of the Gold Coast's senior but younger administrative officers, one of whom was African, as secretaries to the Committee, the government in Accra had ensured that they would have early warning of future storms.[48] Lastly, the Committee members were appointed by the Executive Council. In some senses it was a 'packed' Committee and therefore in some important respects a not entirely representative one.

In the first place no trades union officials were appointed although some of them had come to prominence on the left of the nationalist movement. Even more strikingly, the increasingly popular general secretary of the UGCC, Kwame Nkrumah, had not been invited to join the Committee. Whilst the UGCC in general had been, in effect, exonerated from playing any serious role in the fomenting of the February riots by the Watson Report, Nkrumah's radicalism and his flirtation in the United Kingdom with 'communism' attracted the Commission's special condemnation. The secretariat was well aware that his radicalism embarrassed the largely liberal–conservative and 'respectable' Working Committee of the UGCC and attracted the disfavour of the African members of the Executive Council. Omitting Nkrumah from the invitation list was almost an inducement for the UGCC invitees to join and six of them did so.[49]

In some respects policy had shifted to reflect the emergence of a more radical and, it was feared, a more insurrectionary brand of nationalism in the Gold Coast. While Danquah in particular and other long-term anti-colonial activists were hardly

revered either in Whitehall or in the secretariat in Accra, their brand of nationalism was perceived as infinitely more palatable than the more radical alternative. As their leadership was being challenged, as was that of the 'traditional rulers', by Nkrumah and his supporters, not least in the pages of their daily news-sheet, *the Evening News*,[50] the Committee on Constitutional Reform came to look like something of an alliance. So far as Whitehall and the secretariat in Accra were concerned, this essentially political development was intended to strengthen the hand of those deemed to be 'the more responsible Africans'. Support for those African politicians described as 'moderates' was to be settled policy in the Gold Coast until the end of 1950 (42).

In the Gold Coast there were of course other policy imperatives. Not surprisingly the most important of these was perceived to be the restoration of law and order. At the same time as constitutional policy moved further down the road towards self-government, the apparatus of colonial control was considerably extended. Police numbers were increased, new security technology was deployed and major reviews of policing and information-gathering were undertaken. Subversion and especially communist subversion were taken extremely seriously both in Whitehall and in Accra and such apprehensions haunted a good deal of British government, CO and, later, CRO reactions throughout the terminal colonial period. This was also an important element in the decisions which were to be taken as to the extent of devolution. Worry about externally inspired radicalism was, similarly, one of the many concerns which informed the unshakeable insistence on the maintenance of the gubernatorial control over the police force right up to the last minute of colonial rule (74, section 4).

Such concerns undoubtedly influenced more personal decisions. The events of February 1948, which had ambushed the new governor within weeks of his arrival, had taken their toll on Creasy's confidence and health. He was moreover something of a broken reed as decisions for which he had direct responsibility had been criticised, not only in the Watson Commission Report, but also more privately within the CO. He had, on advice from his attorney-general, exceeded his legal powers in detaining officers of the UGCC without charge or trial at the outbreak of the rioting (22). For much of the second half of 1948 Creasy was on sick-leave and in 1949 he was appointed to the governorship of Malta.[51] The officers who administered the government in yet another inter-regnum were again those who had acted during the period between Burns and Creasy. Robert Scott and Thorleif Mangin at various times acted as the officer administering the government; both sought to convey the 'smack of firm government' but were more open to direct dictation from Whitehall as a result of being in an acting capacity (44).[52]

Creech Jones was looking for a stronger governor. These attributes were found in Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, then governor of Sarawak. Arden-Clark was a highly experienced colonial officer who combined long field experience as a younger man, with more recently proven diplomatic and administrative skills in the secretariat and Government House.[53] As a South-East Asian governor he had had first-hand experience of communist insurgency – indeed his immediate successor in Sarawak was to be tragically assassinated only weeks after his arrival in Kuching. Arden-Clarke was close to Malcolm Macdonald, the commissioner-general in South-East Asia, who had strongly recommended him to Creech Jones.

While he was on leave from Sarawak, Arden-Clarke had had the Gold Coast pressed

upon him by Creech-Jones. Arden-Clarke remembered Creech-Jones insisting on the urgency of the posting: 'The country is on the edge of revolution. We are in danger of losing it . . .'.[54] Even allowing for poetic licence, this was a considerable exaggeration. He was, however, expected to be a man who could shake up the Gold Coast administrative service at a crucial period of transition whilst facing down threats to the political stability of the colony from whatever source.[55]

Arden-Clarke did not arrive in the Gold Coast until August 1949. In the meantime, the caretaker administration continued to bombard Whitehall with rather alarmist reports of the political scene in the Gold Coast and requests for advice on drafting new legal measures to contain political activists; such messages accompanied rather calmer accounts of the more practical steps they were taking (45–47, 50). Recognising the volatile nature of the situation, CO officials took a generally 'wait and see' line. Internal security was certainly reinforced but in general they seemed reasonably confident that the Coussey Committee would ultimately recommend a constitution which they could broadly accept and which, as importantly, would command support in the Gold Coast. Moreover, the less obviously politically contentious aspects of the life of the colonial state and its inhabitants gave some grounds for optimism.

The policy to integrate into the Gold Coast that part of Togoland administered under mandate and subsequently trusteeship was slowly advanced (43). The Gold Coast's economy was sound and growing stronger (41). The educational system, both private and government-financed, was producing large numbers of highly trained and adaptable young people. There were increasing numbers of Africans qualified to take over posts currently held by Europeans.[56] On the eve of the major reforms which would inevitably be heralded by the Coussey Committee's recommendations, the government in Accra cautiously began to condition the administration for an environment in which there would be both greater African participation and in which government in general would be required to at least appear more accountable than it had in the past. One of the major concerns of senior figures in Accra and Whitehall was the whole question of expatriate staff morale which, for a variety of reasons, was widely acknowledged to be extremely low (71).

The CO had the chance to work over the final report of the Coussey Committee from mid-August 1949. But the general drift of debate in the Committee and its evolving conclusions had been consistently made known to the secretariat in Accra and the CO (48). While there is strong evidence of resistance to some clauses and enthusiasm for others, the CO's role remained essentially advisory. While decisions about acceptance or rejection of the report's recommendations in whole or in part ultimately lay with the secretary of state and the Cabinet, the CO recognised the political importance of local negotiation and the need to carry popular support. The CO accordingly signalled its delights and despairs and in particular indicated the legal implications of some of the canvassed reforms to Accra. But it was officials in Accra rather than the CO directly who attempted to influence the Committee's decision-making (49, 51–61).

The CO was of course concerned with the ways in which decisions reached for the Gold Coast would be picked up and used as precedents in other colonial territories. Cohen's concern over the timetable for considering the Coussey Report proposed by the governor and his advisers was based on the view that the constitutional issue at stake was the most important which had so far arisen in any African colony, and that decisions taken would affect the course of events not only in the Gold Coast but also

in other territories 'for a long time to come' (57). But withal the intense, local political pressures were such as to reduce the impact of demands for caution from other regional desks in the CO which worried lest all colonies became engulfed in political clamour for identical treatment. To fend off such arguments, the Gold Coast and to some extent Nigeria were increasingly presented by the CO as *sui generis*.

The discussions within the CO, between the CO and senior figures in the colonial government, and finally in Cabinet (62, 64–66) which preceded the simultaneous publication of the report and the *Statement by His Majesty's Government* [thereon][57] were of crucial importance not merely for the Gold Coast and the United Kingdom government but also for the rest of British Africa. From the British government's point of view a variety of themes emerged. First, there was a recognition of the impossibility of reversing the process initiated by the riots and by the Watson Commission's recommendations. History had been made and could not be re-written. Secondly, there was frank acknowledgment that 'nationalist aspirations' were an everyday fact of political life in the Gold Coast. Some of these aspirations, at least, had to be satisfied if the tenuous calm that had been re-established since March 1948 was to be maintained. It was seen as vitally important to contain such political activity and to prevent it becoming actually revolutionary. At the same time the CO and the governor were at pains to arrive at strong negotiating positions which would enable them to retain ultimate power.

In deciding how best to attain those goals, the CO and the colonial government had been assisted by the political concerns and personal interests of the Coussey Committee members. Whilst the Committee was sitting, politics in the Gold Coast had, of course, not been in abeyance. The rift between the Working Committee of the UGCC and its general secretary, Kwame Nkrumah, had broadened to the point of rupture. Since July 1948, Nkrumah and his growing following had developed a 'party within a party' in the shape of the Committee on Youth Organisation which in time split from the UGCC and became the Convention People's Party in June 1949. Deeply enmeshed in the Coussey Committee's demanding work, the older members of the UGCC's Working Committee were forced by this commitment to declare their faith in its ability to produce a new constitution which would, in effect, institute a measure of self-government. Nkrumah and his followers, free of this encumbrance, denounced the gradualism of the process: 'If by the first of April [1949] we haven't got self-government we shall begin to free ourselves according to our planned programme of action.'[58]

While this sort of tough talking was designed to put pressure on government, it also put pressure on the moderate politicians, notables and 'traditional rulers' who were giving so much of their time to the Coussey Committee's proceedings. While this all-African Committee wanted genuinely to secure a substantial measure of self-government in its recommendations, it is clear that it also sought to ensure that it was people like themselves who would wield future political power and not the 'wild men' of the CPP, the trades unions and the youth associations who followed Kwame Nkrumah and other radical leaders. Accordingly the Coussey Committee proposed, for example, a high minimum age for candidates, indirect voting outside towns and, by a narrow majority, a second chamber to ensure the continued sway of chiefs and 'elder statesmen' amongst other recommendations. The notion of bi-cameralism went too far in the direction of conservatism for officials at the CO and was accordingly rejected by them. But withal, the political inclinations of both Whitehall

and the governor were to applaud the Coussey recommendations as much as was possible so as to 'empower' those African politicians whom they regarded as moderate. In the event such a calculation was to prove ill-founded. The 'moderates' were to prove that they lacked both energy and popular appeal. Even this highly politicised constitution was not proof against the efficient and popular political machine the CPP was becoming by the end of 1949.

The changes to be introduced were far-reaching. While the focus of much of documentation is upon the constitution itself, a revolution was occurring at the level of administration. The new constitution was to introduce ministerial government. This effectively meant that the old departmental structure of government in the Gold Coast was to be transformed. The previous offices of heads of departments were now to conform more closely to United Kingdom practice. Departmental heads, many of whom had been previously legislative as well as executive officers through their membership of the Executive and Legislative Councils, were to become the senior civil servants charged with advising and serving their ministers, many of whom would be Africans.

The Executive Council, on which some of these elected ministers would serve, was to be serviced by a Governor's Office which paralleled the institution of the Cabinet Office in London. Long despatches between Cohen, Sir Thomas Lloyd, the CO permanent under-secretary of state, and the governor on the minutiae of how this new system would work were exchanged. While much of this documentation has the dullness of meticulous planning and attention to legal niceties, it is easy to discern a degree of excitement in both London and Accra about these new developments. Civil servants were enjoying the novelty of building an entirely new kind of colonial state, even if they were occasionally thrown by the demands of navigating this completely new terrain.

A senior British official destined to be the secretary to the Governor's Office was sent to London to sit in the Cabinet Office to learn from the secretary to the Cabinet how the office worked (81). At the same time the CO was involved in negotiations with the French colonial authorities over the future of the United Nations Trust Territory of Togoland whose western sector had been administered as part of the Gold Coast. The new constitution would inevitably push further towards the integration of the region which was to be known as Trans-Volta-Togoland from 1952 on the assumption that it would eventually become independent as part of the Gold Coast. This proposition had to be squared with the French, who administered the other half of the Trust, and also within the United Nations Trusteeship Council, in the face of a strong irredentist challenge which sought to reunify the Ewe speaking people whose heartland was bisected by the Gold Coast–Togo frontier (80).

The Accra secretariat successfully advocated the establishment in London of a Gold Coast Trade Commission (70). Memoranda on parliamentary procedure, ministerial responsibility and privilege were drafted and letters were exchanged (73–74, 76, 79, 82). In the Gold Coast, expansive schemes of community development and the establishment of local development committees were devised. By December 1949, the Legislative Council had appointed a Select Committee to report on the whole question of electoral procedure and constituency delimitation.[59] The West Africa Department of the CO was kept busy and this innovative role clearly excited those involved. It was clearly much more exciting and fulfilling than collating the figures on shea-nut production or cocoa-butter exports.

This enthusiasm was not shared by the directors of the British companies which had trading and mining interests in the Gold Coast. In response to the widespread suspicion about the role and activities of expatriate enterprise in the Gold Coast,[60] the majority of the Coussey Committee had recommended the elimination of the representation of such interests in the new Legislative Assembly[61] and the restriction of their voice to two seats, one for the Chamber of Commerce, the other for the Chamber of Mines, in the proposed second chamber. The firms protested and demanded more seats in the Assembly. They received some weary support from the CO but very little from the governor whose task it would have been to convince the Gold Coast population of the virtues of a revision upwards (63, 72, 75). Although the importance of the firms had to be acknowledged, successive governors and many officials in Whitehall had been resentful of the firms' attempts to wring concessions by threats and backstairs politics. They were no less resentful of the attitudes of some managing directors who talked as though their concerns were beyond the government's writ. Suggestions that government worked hand in glove with expatriate commerce misjudge what was a generally abrasive and unfriendly relationship.

More worrying for the CO and the governor was the manifest discontent in the Gold Coast's civil service. While the origins of this unhappiness can be clearly dated back to the war years,[62] these were unsettling times for these officers. Some officers had been understandably un-nerved by the violence of the events of 1948. Following the riots, racial tension was a part of everyday life and for many of them this was a new experience. The Colonial Service in general, as well as named, individual officers were denounced almost daily at political meetings and in the radical press.[63] Each and every policy and action undertaken by the still largely expatriate colonial administration was widely presented as inherently suspicious. No less viscerally, many officers, especially the younger ones, saw the evolving policy of expedited Africanisation[64] as threatening to their careers whilst at the same time personally devaluing them and reducing the standing of the civil service; this was a set of worries considerably calmed by the evolving functioning of a Public Service Commission.[65] The success of the major constitutional changes rested considerably on the active co-operation of senior civil servants and they were not slow to use this dependence as leverage to assure themselves of improved pay, conditions, pensions and guarantees of reasonable rates of compensation for loss of jobs (68–69; also 113–114, 117). The civil service was largely successful in achieving these ends.

The busy bureaucratic calm in both Whitehall and the secretariat in Accra belied the volatility of Gold Coast politics. Whilst the UGCC was committed to supporting the new constitution to which they had greatly contributed, their quondam general secretary Nkrumah was free of such compromised restraint. His new party denounced the constitution as 'bogus and fraudulent'. The CPP declared its intention to boycott the elections which would eventually inaugurate the new constitution and which were scheduled for early 1951. At this stage the CO's view of this often repeated threat was conditioned by the governor's appraisals of the situation (77). His policy, thoroughly endorsed by Whitehall, was to encourage moderate opinion and leadership to wrest the centre-stage from the infinitely more showy and headline-grabbing CPP. In the estimation of officials, the Gold Coast's old guard intelligentsia were convinced that this task presented them with few problems. Comfortingly for the colonial authorities, they denounced Nkrumah and his party as

essentially arriviste and representative of only the 'hooligan element'. This, the intelligentsia insisted, was apparent to the vast majority of responsible and reasonable Gold Coasters; with time to reflect on recent events, the population would continue to respect the old nationalist leadership and, in the country areas, their chiefs. The CPP was represented as a nine days' wonder.

The CO was in regular receipt of political intelligence from the Gold Coast which suggested that, with appropriate discreet support from the colonial government, the 'moderates' would prevail. That support included the colonial government's keeping a tight rein on radical politicians. While there was no formal censorship of the press, for example, there was a flurry of prosecutions of pro-CPP journalists for libel. In an attempt to divorce labour issues from politics new legislation was enacted which made it illegal for civil servants, who by then constituted the majority of the membership of organised labour, to strike without breaching their contracts and hence losing their posts. Arden-Clarke presented himself as a bluff governor who would stand no nonsense and would come down with all the force at his disposal on any attempt to breach the peace or subvert the political process initiated by the Coussey Committee.

Despite the upheavals inaugurated in 1948, the planning process in both London and in Accra was so focused on structure that internal discussion often reads as though it was almost a-political in orientation. Between mid-1949 and the elections of 1951, significant elements of the formal apparatus of this colonial state were to be utterly reconstructed. Inherent in that period of radical change was the fact that from 10 February 1951 Africans would be more than merely sharing the government of the Gold Coast. The old colonial political structure with its largely unaccountable system of fused legislative and administrative functions would, in large measure, pass away. The implicit risk in that jump into the unknown was minimised by a number of factors. The Coussey Constitution was to make significant changes but there remained serious constraints and restraints on those African politicians who would gradually come to control and direct important aspects of national goverment.

First, the new constitution did not usher in self-government; that was not to arrive, albeit in incomplete form, until 1954. The Executive Council remained essentially answerable to the governor and hence to the Crown. The governor retained his veto and whilst policy could not be thus controlled it could certainly be delayed and often contained; moreover, key ministries, especially those concerning law and order and finance, were to remain in British hands.[66] Secondly, the constitution could, *in extremis*, be withdrawn. Thirdly, it was clear from the very calm and even conservative conduct of the Coussey Committee and the Legislative Council that Africans could be trusted to adhere to procedural rules; even more importantly, their sober conduct of affairs showed that they had a well-informed sense that gradual political change was on offer whilst very rapid and radical change was not. Fourthly, management of the public service was not to be transferred to the new ministers but remained with the chief secretary and the Public Service Commission; moreover parts of government, managed through departments such as those responsible for railways, harbours and electricity, were intentionally taken out of the political arena by the establishment of new public authorities. Lastly, the advent of a ministerial system, in some senses the most radical of the reforms, meant that the civil service permanent secretaries, like senior civil servants in all political

systems, would of necessity enjoy a considerable amount of control over their relatively inexperienced and initially less informed African ministers.

The palpable calm also owed a great deal to an implicit set of assumptions in the Accra secretariat and in the CO about what the newly elected Legislative Assembly and Executive Council would look like and hence how they would perform. Under the new constitution the Legislative Assembly was to have jurisdiction over the whole of the Gold Coast and, for the first time, there were to be representatives in it from the Northern Territories and the Togoland Trust Territory. There were to be three *ex-officio* members of both the Executive Council and the Legislative Assembly. These civil servants would retain the portfolios for defence and external affairs, justice and finance. The governor would chair the Executive Council. For the Legislative Assembly, each of the thirty-three rural areas would return members through the two-stage process of the electoral colleges. Eighteen members were to be elected by the Joint Provincial Council, the Southern Togoland Council and the Asanteman Council; a further nineteen seats were to be allocated by electoral colleges in the Northern Territories. There were to be five municipal members elected by direct voting. Lastly, there were to be two voting and four non-voting members representing the Chambers of Commerce and Mines.[67]

The extremely varied methods of election and selection of members appeared to guarantee an equally varied membership of the Assembly.[68] That very variety was assumed to guarantee unbridgeable internal divisions amongst the membership. It was also assumed that the bulk of the members of the Assembly would inevitably be *local* opinion leaders and hence more concerned with local matters than with national affairs. They would above all be relatively conservative. This perception of the docility of rural areas had a long provenance in the thinking of the Gold Coast administration. Kings and chiefs were assumed by officials, not without some justification, to be almost pathologically at loggerheads with radical urban politics and politicians. Their subjects, with much less justification, were assumed by the same officials to have decidedly narrow horizons, to be supporters of their 'natural rulers'; they would, it was felt, vote at the end of the day as instructed by their local rulers.

These sweeping and unsubstantiated assumptions, which by 1950 represented something of a triumph of hope over experience, were largely responsible for the initial failure to see the force of the CPP's appeal. Once again the assurances of chiefs and chief commissioners that everything was under control and that unrest in the countryside owed everything to the intercession of urban politicians in rural affairs were broadly accepted. If this was correct then the CPP had virtually no base in the countryside. These attitudes moreover made the Gold Coast administration and, on the basis of its information, Whitehall, assume that the moderate politicians would ultimately hold the ring even in the towns. This was an opinion held against the mounting evidence that members of the old UGCC were investing little time and even less personal effort in the building-up of either palpable political organisation or of their personal political reputations in the wider Gold Coast.[69]

Nkrumah and his CPP attempted a political general strike in January 1950 which they called 'Positive Action' (78). The evidence suggests that for a variety of reasons Nkrumah and some of his closest advisors were uneasy about so radical a course.[70] In contrast with the situation in February 1948, the colonial government was by now well prepared for trouble. A state of emergency was declared on 11 January. The use

of heavy and very visible mobile policing and a night curfew reduced violence to a minimum. The country did not grind to a halt. Arden-Clarke adopted a confident and high profile stance. By 21 January those deemed to be ring-leaders, including Nkrumah, had been arrested. They were rapidly brought before the courts, charged with either incitement to illegal striking or sedition and, through due process, received sentences of imprisonment (see Appendix to part 1, pp 381–411).

This was in many senses a crucial moment in Ghanaian history. At a stroke the bulk of the CPP and the trades union leadership had been physically isolated from their followers and excluded from the political process by imprisonment. It was a period of great potential weakness for the CPP and one in which energetic 'moderates' were expected by officials to move into the partial political vacuum created by these dramatic events. So far as the CO was concerned, Nkrumah and his party had been successfully contained.

This assumption, coupled with the CO's faith in the force of the 'moderates', proved to be part of a collection of seriously flawed judgments. Not all of the CPP's leadership was in jail. Its regional organisation based on a legion of voluntary associations created, for the most part, before the birth of the party itself, proved to be vibrant and even inspired by the imprisonment of its leaders. That regional organisation had, moreover, successfully spread the CPP message in even the remotest parts of the countryside. That message, set out in the CPP's manifesto, made wide-ranging and attractive promises of jobs for all, industrialisation, free primary education and a national health service.

One leading member of the CPP executive, K A Gbedemah, had not been arrested[71] and whilst at liberty kept the central organisation running. Nkrumah and his lieutenants were, moreover, not as isolated as the authorities might have intended. Nkrumah remembered that he was well-briefed in James Fort Prison in Accra and smuggled long messages out to Gbedemah throughout his term.[72] The party maintained its momentum not least by the clever use of the political 'martyrdom' of its leadership; and very soon imprisonment in this period became a powerful local symbol of courageous activism.[73]

The 'moderates' appear to have continued to assume that it was, in effect, their manifest destiny to be the heirs to the British and that as destiny usually prevails, little serious political work on their part was called for. By the latter part of 1950 the error of these assumptions on the part of the colonial government, the chiefs and moderate politicians was evident in the cumulative results of municipal elections held in Accra (in April), Cape Coast (in June) and Kumasi (in November). In each of these contests, as well as in a Legislative Council by-election in Cape Coast, the CPP was hugely successful and its moderate opponents' performances correspondingly disastrous (86).

The colonial administration and the CO were having to revise their ideas. It was growing apparent that longer term planning could not assume the continuing local power of traditional rulers; accordingly the chiefs needed support. At Arden-Clarke's suggestion, provisions to safeguard the position of chiefs were written into the constitution because, as the governor explained to Cohen: '... the chief in his traditional role still has a great part to play. The chiefs have for the most part stood loyally by the Government in times of difficulty and we feel we owe it to them, to put it at its least, that their future should not be handed over for determination by the Legislative Assembly' (87).

But a more significant revision in thinking concerned the constructed view of the CPP. Firstly, it was clearly far more politically skilful than any mere 'hooligan element' could have been. The governor, who remained sceptical about the 'red menace' throughout his period in the Gold Coast, was also afforded support in his rejection of some of the wilder claims about the revolutionary intentions of the party. Secondly, despite its rhetoric and its posture of non-co-operation, the CPP was proving to be of positive assistance to an administration organising a structure for a general election in a country whose adult population had never before exercised the vote outside the three municipalities.

By July 1950 the report of the Select Committee entrusted with delimiting constituencies and making proposals about electoral practicalities was on the floor of the Legislative Council. By August, under the authority of an order in council, an ordinance had been passed to provide for elections.[74] The elections were to begin in the first week of February 1951. The task ahead was monumental. Despite having a fresh (1948) census to work with, the administration had, amongst other daunting tasks, to register qualified electors,[75] a good two-thirds of whom had never before been eligible to exercise a vote and very many of whom were also unable to read or write. This process of registration was greatly assisted by local CPP officials. Such officials were of no less assistance in the campaign of political education mounted by the colonial government which was designed to apprise the population of their rights and of the importance and significance of exercising those rights as voters.

While it remains impossible to tie this to a specific decision or to a particular date, it became clear that the CPP's view of the Coussey Constitution as 'bogus and fraudulent' had also undergone gradual change. The party would hardly have urged its supporters to register with the vigour it widely adopted had it not intended to contest the election despite its earlier forthright condemnation. This was by no means its policy a year previously. But this significant shift was matched by the increasing volume of praise for the party's officers coming in from the district officials grateful for their assistance in the nuts and bolts preparations for the forthcoming elections. While there is no evidence to suggest that officials in the colonial government had any expectation that the CPP would sweep the board quite so comprehensively in February 1951 as it was to do, they had at least learned to live with it. In this both British officials and CPP activists began a process of cautious co-operation which was to extend until the end of colonial rule itself.

Although the electoral preparations and the entwined political concerns absorbed a great deal of administrative time, the less obviously dramatic aspects of running the colonial state had to be maintained. Supporting this objective in what undoubtedly felt like a time of transition when most peoples' eyes were more on the future than on the present was the work of the Legislative Council. The African majority were here seen, at least in British eyes, to be operating more and more as a government and less and less as an opposition (84).

This was nowhere more apparent than in financial affairs where African involvement in budgeting and fiscal planning became deeper and more esteemed. The background to this was not only the breath-taking political developments of the years between 1948 and 1951 but also the rapidly growing economy of the Gold Coast. The balance of visible trade was strongly positive. This owed a great deal to the fate of the cocoa industry, the Gold Coast's major export earner. The world price had continued to climb steadily after the mid-1940s and despite the fact that cocoa production was

still well below its best, prices rose dramatically. As most of the tax base continued to rest upon import and export taxation, revenue rose healthily despite huge relative increases in state expenditure and stayed in solid surplus until 1955. The only serious cloud on this particular horizon was that of inflation. This was a healthy environment for planning and in the course of 1950 the colonial government's Finance Department was busy drafting an ambitious ten-year plan, much of whose thrust and detail was to be taken over by the incoming elected African government after February 1951 (90).

The results of the general election produced a triumph for the CPP. As expected, the party had won the directly elected urban seats with a poll fully ten times that of the combined vote of their opponents. But, much more surprisingly, it had also secured a further twenty-nine seats through the collegiate electoral system. It was clear by 9 February that the CPP had won a 'famous victory' (91). The manifest emergence of a dominant party in the new Legislative Assembly posed both the colonial government and the CO with a series of immediate problems. First, both had to recognise that the intentions of the Coussey Committee, and hence British expectations, had been swept aside by proximate events. The Assembly was not, after all, to be a collection of individuals representing all shades of opinion and local interests as the Coussey proposals had assumed and on which they had planned. It was, rather, to be an Assembly dominated by one, reasonably well-disciplined, national political party. Secondly, that recognition brought with it the major problem of creating a new Executive Council. This had been originally conceived of as being a Cabinet of all the talents. Instead, all of Arden-Clarke's considerable negotiating skills were required when dealing with the victorious party over which members of the Legislative Assembly were to become ministers. The CPP, as the majority party, wanted only CPP members on the Executive Council, although it was forced by the constitution itself to accept the voting presence of three British *ex-officio* members. After long negotiation the governor was ultimately able to dilute the CPP's demands (93–94).

A further and even more dramatic problem arose from the fact that the leader of the victorious party, now the member for the Accra Central constituency, remained a convicted prisoner in an Accra jail. As early as December 1950, an active debate about how and when Nkrumah would be released had been conducted both within the CO and with the Accra government (88–89). On 12 February 1951 Nkrumah was released;[76] the next day in the imposing governor's residence of Christiansborg Castle he was invited by Arden-Clarke to become the Gold Coast's first leader of government business, a title dreamed up by the Coussey Committee. A remarkable set of events which would have been unthinkable eighteen months previously had taken place in a remarkably calm fashion.

Day-to-day political events had clearly shaped the eventual outcome of a process which dated back to at least the February riots of 1948 every bit as much as policy had. Political reality had become part of policy with an ease which was startling. Accommodating to political reality with apparent flexibility was the strength of both CPP and British policies in 1950 and 1951; and such accommodation and adaptation owed a great deal to two unusually gifted statesmen, Nkrumah and Arden-Clarke, whose personal relationship as it emerged over the following six years was of considerable importance in the history of Ghana.

The documents throw new light on the relationship between Nkrumah and

Arden-Clarke and the constraints under which both operated. While earlier accounts have emphasised that this relationship was based upon personal trust, it is as important to recognise how pragmatic and politically astute both men were. Both clearly understood that the other had to carry his constituency with him. Nkrumah had the political problem of contriving to continue to command support from a party in which political ideologies ranged from conservative nationalism to outright revolutionary socialism; Arden-Clarke would have no less of a problem in maintaining the support of his political masters in Westminster, the mandarin bureaucrats of Whitehall and, no less importantly, his subordinates in the Gold Coast's administrative service. The history of the CPP in these years and also the governor's struggles with Whitehall and Westminster, especially after 1954, demonstrate that both men faced serious if different challenges from, as it were, their 'own sides'. Both African and British ambitions in the period of dyarchy which led to the grant of internal self-government in 1954 and full independence in 1957 had to recognise these constraints. Almost without exception the leaders of both 'sides' did comprehend these problems.

What emerged in this process was a relationship between African ministers, the colonial administration and Whitehall which, whilst not free of problems, was far less strained than anyone could have predicted.[77] Nkrumah retained the attractive activist fiction of 'Tactical Action', the successor to positive action, which suggested grudging co-operation coupled with overt anti-colonial resistance. In the event, apart from token boycotts of harmless imperial rituals like the King's birthday celebrations and sherry parties at the governor's residence, this was practically meaningless. Elements of the CPP manifesto which were not always welcome to the *ex-officio* ministers were nonetheless accepted on the Executive Council as a necessary political price to be paid for the government's continued popular appeal and its control over the legislature.[78] Nkrumah and his ministers were increasingly perceived, for the most part, as competent and reasonable if still inexperienced politicans. In May 1951, conscious of the party pressures to which his ministers were subject, Arden-Clarke urged the CO to begin thinking about the next stage of constitutional reform (99). Attention focused on Nkrumah's title – it was now proposed that he should become prime minister – and on the position of the *ex-officio* ministers. Nkrumah's assumption of the premiership was agreed in principle when he visited London in June 1951 and held discussions at the CO with James Griffiths, Creech Jones's successor (100–101, 103–104).

Fiscal and general economic policy remained sound if more ambitious given the combination of political necessity – Nkrumah had to be seen to be dramatically 'delivering the goods' – and the increasing wealth of the country (95, 102; also 97). The ten-year development plan was overhauled in 1952 in the light of new economic and political circumstances and whilst adhering to the general principles of that drafted before the CPP's accession to power the plan now envisaged an expenditure over its duration of £120 million. The notion of harnessing the River Volta's hydro-electrical potential to power a smelter to convert the Gold Coast's bauxite into alumina became settled policy and this ambitious scheme fell initially under Nkrumah's direct control.[79]

Local and regional government were now closely examined. The government had inherited the reports of three committees on local government in the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories. The committees, with majority African

membership, had been appointed to follow up the recommendations on local government in the Coussey Report. They were to make plans to replace native authorities with representative local government on the English model. The Coussey recommendations on regional government had also been reviewed. In his report on regional administrations, the commissioner went further than the local government committees in drawing a sharp line between the new local government councils and the old traditional councils which survived with only limited traditional functions, powers in relation to customary law and as electoral bodies:

> The traditional councils based on the institution of chieftaincy are not to disappear, but apart from certain electoral functions they will be concerned only with the traditional way of life; all the responsibilities of a modern progressive community are to be entrusted to entirely new councils with a majority of elected members. The first reaction of a detached and sympathetic outsider is to feel some disappointment that the new is not to develop out of the old as the framers of past policy must have hoped and to feel some fear lest the parallelism may produce damaging friction. . . .[80]

For this reason the commissioner recommended that there should be a clear definition of the respective roles of the traditional councils and the new councils. He recommended that there should be no question of superiority or subordination between them. His report rejected the Coussey Committee's recommendations for statutory regional authorities as being inconsistent with a unitary state; instead he recommended regional councils with largely advisory roles (98, 111). After the elections the recommendations in these reports on local and regional government were considered by a working party. Legislation was passed to provide the basis for overhauling local government; the proposals on regional councils were not pursued.[81] In a process sold as democratisation the power of the chiefs was further reduced (105).

Despite strong objections from an irredentist movement in the Ewe-speaking section of the British administered part of the Togoland Trust Territory, the further integration of that territory into what would become an independent Gold Coast was hotly defended both by Nkrumah and by the British permanent representative on the United Nations Trusteeship Council (106). In virtually all of these developments undertaken by the new Gold Coast government, the CO stood aside from any directive role and, rather, added its support in terms of expert advice and guidance when and where the Gold Coast government solicited such (107).

It was a progressive period, in which, contrary to CPP apprehensions (101), general policy was not to be thrown off-course by the fall of the second post-war Labour administration in 1951 (110). Insofar as the Gold Coast was concerned, the new Conservative secretary of state, Oliver Lyttleton, was to maintain the general policy lines adopted by his Labour predecessors. Conservative ministers certainly had reservations about the reform process in the Gold Coast. Alan Lennox-Boyd, the new minister of state at the CO, expressed regret that the recent changes in local government had followed and not preceded what he described as 'virtual self-government at the centre' (111). But having summoned Arden-Clarke home for consultation, Lyttleton was persuaded, albeit reluctantly, to recommend to Cabinet acceptance of the changes agreed in principle when Nkrumah visited London in 1951. From March 1952 Nkrumah became prime minister and in consequence the Executive Council became known as the Cabinet (112–116).

The duration of the dyarchic government of the Gold Coast was perceived by both the CO and the CPP as needing to be both short and essentially transitional. The next step was to be that of internal self-government; this in turn was seen as a preparation for the even more dramatic step of full independence within the Commonwealth. With Cabinet backing for the changes he had proposed, Lyttleton visited the Gold Coast in May–June 1952. In discussions on internal self-government with Nkrumah and other Gold Coast ministers, the secretary of state insisted that defence and external affairs should remain in the hands of an *ex-officio* minister and that, in this connection, the police should be regarded as coming under the heading of defence. He also insisted that any major changes in the constitution would have to be preceded by 'proper consultations' with the chiefs and the people. The Gold Coast government would then have to lay proposals before the British government and there would then have to be a general election (118).

In a statement in the Legislative Assembly in October 1952, the details of which were finalised after a series of 'prolonged "off the record" discussions' with Arden-Clarke (119), Nkrumah outlined the features of the constitution that needed to be considered; he invited interested bodies and individuals to submit their views. Over a quarter of a million copies of the prime minister's statement were distributed throughout the Gold Coast.[82] The views which emerged covered a wide range of matters from demands for a second chamber to the position of the civil service. Arden-Clarke subsequently reported growing pressure in the Gold Coast for an all-African Cabinet (120). The implications, particularly in relation to defence and external affairs, were discussed at the CO when Arden-Clarke visited London in February 1953 (121–122). The governor made a further visit to London in April 1953, where he was joined by Sir John Macpherson, the governor of Nigeria. When consulted by the CO, Macpherson had expressed grave concern over what he saw as the likely effect in Nigeria of the reforms being contemplated for the Gold Coast (123–125, 127–128, 131–132).

Nigerian considerations did not deflect the momentum of reform in the Gold Coast but the CO wanted reassurance on other issues before agreeing to further constitutional change. Foremost amongst these was familiar concern over the question of communist activity. Intelligence reports reaching the CO suggested that communist infiltration of trades unions in the Gold Coast was 'increasing in amount and effectiveness' (135). Arden-Clarke kept what he described as a 'close watch on communist trends' but did not regard the situation as serious (145–146). In response to further prompting from the CO he was able to report in January 1954 that the Gold Coast Cabinet had agreed a series of measures to contain communism. These included an extended ban on communist literature, a system of close control over the issue of passports and visas to Gold Coasters intending to visit communist countries, and a number of expulsions of leftists from the CPP (147–149). Nkrumah's readiness to resort to discriminatory legislation was not simply an attempt on his part to placate the CO and the Conservative government. Whatever his personal feelings he was, above all, a consummate party politician. He had outflanked his old allies in 1949 and was now happy to use not only the discipline and rules of the CPP but also legislative power to make the lives of those who now threatened him from the left decidedly uncomfortable.

Seen from the vantage point of Whitehall the Gold Coast had much to commend it. The stature of its African ministers had grown in office. The party had successfully

maintained an essentially moderate, and even on occasions an amazingly conservative stance despite provocation from sections of its membership. The economy was more than merely sound[83] and Whitehall clearly saw the political importance of aiding, where possible, the Gold Coast's considerable momentum of economic growth (108–109). Its government's revenue was beginning to shoulder more of the residual expenses borne by the British taxpayer as costs as well as power were being transferred. Defence costs, however, remained a bone of contention (129; also 151). While back-benchers in Accra complained about the rate of Africanisation (126) and even disrupted the CPP government's gradualist policy on this matter,[84] the public service was recruiting and training highly qualified Africans with some degree of urgency.

The days of the 1951 constitution were drawing to a close by 1953. In June 1953, after receiving submissions from the public which had been solicited the previous October, the Gold Coast government published its proposals for constitutional reform (133). Its most important element proposed a single chamber of 104 members, all of whom were to be directly elected; a Cabinet to consist solely of ministers appointed by the governor on the prime minister's advice; the governor to retain his reserve powers and to be responsible for the British Trust Territory of Togoland, external affairs, defence and 'certain police matters'. The proposals in the White Paper broadly accorded with the generality of the views which had been received except in one matter; the government did not propose the creation of a second chamber. The Legislative Assembly debated and approved the government's proposals and passed a motion requesting the British government to enact legislation to declare the Gold Coast a sovereign independent state within the Commonwealth. The constitutional recommendations were formally accepted by the British government in September 1953 (141–143).

Consistent with the proposal that the Legislative Assembly should be directly elected, a Commission of Inquiry into Representational and Electoral Reform was appointed under the chairmanship of the distinguished Gold Coast judge, Mr Justice W B Van Lare.[85] In April 1954 an order in council was made incorporating the proposals as a new constitution and the major part was brought into operation in May.[86] The apparently smooth-running process was, however, to be upset as new tensions emerged.

The rapid economic growth and especially the results of large-scale government expenditure were striking but these were most evident in the southern third of the country. In Ashanti there was a growing complaint that what amounted to confiscatory taxation through the Cocoa Marketing Board on the proceeds of their cocoa production was funding school, hospital, and road building and accordingly creating new employment in the south but not in the immediate areas of cocoa production.[87] Northerners too were beginning to complain about being left out of what looked like a southern economic bonanza when seen from Bolgatanga, Tamale or Wa.[88] Chiefs and some British regional officers sympathetic to 'traditional rulers' began to complain about the gradual exclusion of chieftaincy from the political process by what they felt was excessive and even undemocratic centralisation.[89] In January 1953 the Joint Provincial Council of Colony Chiefs and the Asanteman Council had petitioned the governor for the creation of a second chamber, an idea squashed after a serious debate in the Gold Coast's Cabinet.[90]

Togoland continued to pose problems which now needed to be confronted as a

matter of urgency (150). By 1950 the southern Ewe movement, the Togoland Congress, enjoyed a sympathetic audience on the Trusteeship Council in New York.[91] British policy and then that of the CPP was that the Trust Territory should become part of an independent Gold Coast. The CPP's attempt, with strong British support, to win over Ewe 'hearts and minds' was met with active and sometimes violent opposition. It was perceived as being crucial to the viability of the plan to integrate the Trust Territory for the CPP to poll as many votes as possible in the forthcoming general election as some kind of proof to the United Nations of the wishes of its inhabitants. This problem, alongside the disaffection of many chiefs and many opinion leaders in the north and the growth of cocoa farmers' anger at the low cocoa prices they were receiving, were to some extent marginalised by the concrete achievements of the government between 1951 and 1954; but they were all presentiments of serious trouble to come.

From the CO's point of view, the Gold Coast from 1954 onwards presented them with as many problems as before; but now these were different problems. The governor had proved himself to be a gifted negotiator and the leaders of the CPP were apparently shrewd enough to see that British policy generally supported their drive to become the first government of an independent Gold Coast. But if the Gold Coast was to become internally self-governing after the 1954 general election, for such was the intent of the White Paper, should British responsibility shift to the CRO from the CO on the model of, for example, Southern Rhodesia as the CPP now suggested? (136). The British Cabinet decided otherwise and the Gold Coast stayed within the CO's remit with the exception of the CRO's handling of the Gold Coast's external affairs (138, 140).[92] This division of responsibility, combined with the fact that the CRO was to inherit responsibility for relations with Ghana after its independence within the Commonwealth, was to exacerbate older tensions between the two British ministries from mid-1955 as the CRO undoubtedly viewed developments in the Gold Coast with a far more jaundiced eye than did the CO (130). Secondly, the CRO had to negotiate the eventual reception of an independent Gold Coast into full membership of the Commonwealth (144, 159, 202, 204, 215, 228–229, 284). This was to prove a long-running issue not least because of the hostility of the South African government, an obduracy which manifestly tried the patience of British ministers and officials (166, 234).

In June 1954 the Gold Coast again went to the polls on the understanding, in both London and Accra, that this constituted the final electoral step before the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth which was, at this stage, scheduled for December 1956. The CPP won another, and this time a more accurately predicted, handsome overall majority (152–154). But the immediate and consequent expectation of plain sailing was rapidly dashed. In late 1954, and following the strong showing of the newly founded Northern People's Party in the elections where it had won twelve of the seventeen seats it contested, serious opposition to the CPP government emerged in the Ashanti region (155–158, 161).

The National Liberation Movement or NLM had a number of salient grievances. It represented, first of all, Ashanti cocoa-farmers enraged with the CPP government's decision to both raise the export duty on cocoa and to maintain the previous year's farm-gate prices despite another increase in the world price.[93] It also secured the support of many sectors of the chieftaincy who were, in many cases, part of the cocoa-growing interest as well as constituting a group angered by their displacement

in the governance of rural areas (160). The success of the NLM enabled it to appeal to a variety of other groups as a powerful pole of opposition to the CPP. In Ashanti, some CPP members angered by the limited number of seats accorded to Ashanti by the Van Lare Commission[94] were to join the NLM, as were the rump of the old 'moderate parties'. In time, groups with a sense of grievance which could be constructed as regional or ethnic cases were to link themselves with the predominantly Ashanti NLM. The NPP, which sought to protect the Northern Territories from southern domination, the Togoland Congress, the Anloga Youth Association, and the Moslem Association Party were all to throw in their lot with the essentially Ashanti-based NLM by 1955. Together these groups were to constitute a serious challenge not merely to the CPP government's ambitions but also to British intentions (176).

The NLM was faced with formidable political obstacles. The Gold Coast had recently conducted what was widely assumed to be the final general election before full independence. The NLM's opponents, the CPP government, had won seventy-two seats in the Legislative Assembly, a clear majority.[95] In some senses the CPP enjoyed more than this numerical majority; the party also had an ideological monopoly as it was clearly the major successful proponent of the policy of expedited national independence; to have expressed opposition to that ambition would have been seen as decidely unpatriotic in these stirring times. But the NLM and its allies could and did challenge the assumptions about the Gold Coast emerging as an independent unitary state. It accordingly espoused the cause of federalism.[96]

The NLM adopted this policy not least because of their awareness of the use of federalism to cope with damagingly fissiparous sectionalism in Nigeria at the time; and it did so in order to serve two ends. Firstly, a federal structure would deny the CPP, which was with some justice being widely portrayed as a party serving predominantly southern interests,[97] total and centralised control over the constituent regions of the country. Secondly, federalism suited the very disparate nature of the NLM itself which came to represent a host of otherwise probably irreconcilable ideologies and certainly contradictory interests.[98] But, as the party had only emerged after the general election, the NLM was scarcely represented in the Legislative Assembly. Notwithstanding its success at a by-election in Ashanti in July 1955 (176, para 5) its only weapons were those of blandishment and when those were resisted by both the CPP and the British, the NLM turned to extra-parliamentary activities; these included an extended boycott of all attempts to reconcile these differences and ultimately they included, all too often, recourse to sometimes murderous violence.

The CPP faced a serious dilemma. As a government it needed to be seen to be in charge of the situation in circumstances where its largely extra-parliamentary opposition constantly sought to prove that it had lost control because of its alleged unpopularity. At the same time the CPP's ability to reconcile or coerce was seriously constrained. It could not force its opponents to the conference table. It could moreover not deploy the full force of the law for two reasons. Firstly, the NLM had cleverly drummed-up a campaign in London as well as in the Gold Coast which sought to portray the CPP as despotic. This campaign was supported by elements in London who were either apprehensive about the dissolution of the colonial empire in general or about the imminence of the Gold Coast's independence in particular; such support for the NLM included the boards of companies like the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation and partisans of empire in the Conservative party in both the House of

Commons and the House of Lords.[99] Any overt use of the heavy hand by the Gold Coast government would only provide fuel for such accusations.

Secondly, the control of internal security continued to lie squarely with the governor. He was already widely accused by the NLM of bias and complicity with the CPP.[100] Just as it was for the CPP, the governor's contemplation of the use of serious force in this intractable situation would also have been politically hazardous for British policy. However tempting it might have been (173, 219, 223), the use of British-controlled force would have been widely portrayed as partisan. Accordingly, the NLM was able to destabilise parts of the Gold Coast through the use of intimidation as well as through persuasion.

There was clearly conflict between the line taken by the CO and that adopted by the CRO about the import of these developments. Alan Lennox-Boyd, the new secretary of state for the colonies, was more severe in his views of the CPP than Lyttleton had been (170). But the CO's assessments, based largely upon the governor's judgments, contrasted sharply with the harsher views emanating from the CRO. The secretary of state for Commonwealth relations, Lord Home, endorsed the increasingly pessimistic views of many of his officials and particularly those of the CRO's Accra-based adviser on external affairs, Francis Cumming-Bruce (181, 184–185, 188; also 232–233, 237, 239–240).

Despite the provocations, the CO and the secretary of state were not at this stage to intervene as they had been invited to do by the NLM. The CO, like the governor, regarded the notion of federating so small a country as the Gold Coast as both expensive and unnecessary (157–158).

Following an unsuccessful invitation to the opposition for talks, Nkrumah sought to break the deadlock by the classical parliamentary method of setting up a Select Committee to examine the question of a federal system in April 1955. This concession fell far short of the demand by the NLM for the summoning of a constituent assembly;[101] quite what such an assembly would have looked like let alone how it would have been summoned was never clearly set out. The NLM declined to participate in the Select Committee's proceedings despite being invited to do so.

The CPP riposted with the gambit of splitting the Ashanti region by recognising the historical claims of the Brong states to the north-west of the Asante capital, Kumase, to separate regional status. This largely rhetorical ploy[102] was eventually underlined by the passage of the provocative State Council (Ashanti) Amendment Ordinance of December 1955 which sought to undermine the authority of Asante rulers, who almost universally supported the NLM, over some of the Brong rulers who supported the CPP (197, 198, 209 paras 4–6).

The Select Committee on the Federal System of Government and Second Chamber for the Gold Coast reported on 26 July 1955; despite having been boycotted by the NLM and its allies, its members felt that they had heard 'a respectable amount of evidence'. It did not recommend a federal constitution but did recommend the creation of regional councils to which certain powers and functions should be delegated 'in order to ensure full consultation and collaboration between [central government] . . . and the various regions in the planning of development'.[103] The CPP was content to accept these recommendations. The NLM was not.

The NLM leaders pressed their propaganda campaign in London ever more strongly in July. They were, however, making little progress in the eyes of the CO for whom the NLM's case seemed incoherent so long as its policies remained largely

unspecified. So long as the ambiguities remained, the CO had no option but to see the NLM as unconstructive and divisive. The secretary of state expressed this view to the NLM (168, 170–172). The NLM responded with the publication of a full and closely reasoned policy document (178).

With this statement of intent on the table, the Gold Coast government was encouraged by the CO to turn formally to the secretary of state for the colonies to request the despatch of a mediator, a constitutional adviser (174–175). Accordingly, after considering other alternatives (179–180, 182), Lennox-Boyd appointed an experienced former official of the Indian Civil Service who had been governor of East Bengal, Sir Frederick Bourne (183), who arrived in Accra on 26 September 1955.

A long fencing match between Bourne and the NLM ensued with the latter prevaricating about whether to meet him formally or not. Simultaneously, Arden-Clarke responded positively to a CO suggestion that Lennox-Boyd should meet Nkrumah, arguing in the process that the attitude of the Gold Coast government in relation to the conditions in which independence could be granted was causing him 'serious concern' (174, 187, 190). Nkrumah attached conditions to his acceptance of the subsequent invitation to visit London and responded with a lengthy letter in which he argued the case for the grant of independence in 1956;[104] Arden-Clarke thought that the letter read 'like an ultimatum' (191–192). In December 1955, after a further exchange between Lennox-Boyd and Nkrumah (196, 200), and the continued refusal of the NLM to meet with Bourne (209), Arden-Clarke suggested that a general election should be held to determine the nature of the constitution before independence was finally granted (207).[105]

Despite his failure to meet, formally at least, the leaders of the NLM, the constitutional adviser submitted his report on 17 December 1955 (208). In recommending the establishment of regional assemblies, each having substantial powers, each to be linked to a council of chiefs, and with safeguards for both councils and chiefs under the constitution, Bourne proferred a viable compromise to the NLM. But to the NLM it was a seriously deficient sop. Clause five of the recommendations insisted that central government would retain supreme legislative power and would devolve to regional assemblies only such powers as it prescribed. This neatly reversed the NLM's proposals which insisted that regional governments would specify the powers of the centre. The NLM's federal formula was condemned by Bourne as an 'extreme form of Federation' and one which would 'introduce an intolerable handicap to the administration of the country'.[106]

Neither the CPP nor the NLM were happy with the Bourne proposals. But Nkrumah attempted to persuade his opponents to attend a round table discussion on the report; this invitation immediately and decisively received the NLM's by now customary negative response. Bourne had ruled out the summoning of a constituent assembly on legal grounds. Despite the NLM's refusal to attend, the government convened a conference on the Bourne proposals.[107] The Achimota Conference gave general support to the proposals while recommending changes designed to strengthen both the regional assemblies and the position and powers of the chiefs.[108] It was growing clear that a further general election was the only way in which any further progress could be made. Arden-Clarke travelled to London in February 1956 for discussions with the CO on the line to be adopted by the British government (210–214).

The CPP government had already presented its proposals for the independence

constitution which had been considered and amended in the CO in February 1956 after discussion with the Gold Coast government (213, note 2). It now fell to the Gold Coast government to draft a White Paper announcing its acceptance of the recommendations in the Bourne Report as modified by the Achimota Conference, subject to minor alterations.[109] The White Paper set out the constitution for the independence of the Gold Coast, under the name of Ghana, as the proposals which the government would then take to the country for approval or rejection. By the end of March and the beginning of April 1956, and at that stage only in private, Gold Coast ministers were beginning to accommodate and commit themselves, albeit very unwillingly, to a further election (217, 220–222, 224–225). The unpopularity of this move with the CPP at large led the Gold Coast Cabinet, through the governor, to press the secretary of state to issue a statement to the effect that the decision to hold a further election was at British insistence rather than because the NLM had forced the Gold Coast Cabinet's hand. The secretary of state also affirmed that the transfer of power would take place after the election, providing the new constitution was shown to enjoy the support of a 'reasonable' majority of the newly elected Legislative Assembly. At that stage a firm date on which the Gold Coast would achieve independence within the Commonwealth would be announced by the British government (227). Lennox-Boyd secured Cabinet approval for this proposal and made a statement along these lines in the House of Commons on 11 May 1956 (228). The elections were scheduled for 12 and 17 July 1956 and less openly the date of independence, if all went well, was rescheduled for 6 March 1957.

The United Nations Trusteeship Council, before whom the British permanent representative and CPP ministers had been arguing the case for the incorporation of the British Trust section of Togoland for the past six years, was persuaded of the urgency of the situation. In accordance with its procedures, the Council now insisted on a plebiscite to test the wishes of the inhabitants of British administered Togoland (193–195, 205–206). The Togoland Congress, the main proponent of the reunification of Ewe-speaking people, had somewhat clouded the issue by supporting the NLM and hence, explicitly, the idea of federalism *within* the Gold Coast which was some distance from their earlier argument for an Ewe homeland. On 9 May 1956 the Trust Territory went to the polls. Although a majority (93,095) voters opted for integration, a substantial minority (67,492) voted for separation. The United Nations was in no position to insist on separation after such a result. In July the Trusteeship Council, taking note of the result of the plebiscite, resolved that the Trust should terminate on the attainment of the Gold Coast's independence, at which time integration would occur, a resolution endorsed by the General Assembly in November 1956.

At the same time some northern politicians were insisting that the British protectorate for the Northern Territories should be maintained there after the British withdrew from the rest of the Gold Coast. The governor refused to countenance yet another separatist threat and forcefully at a *durbar* in Tamale on 29 May 1956 insisted that: 'The Northern Territories are already an integral part of the Gold Coast.' As the CO's legal advisers pointed out, this was not in fact the position in law and the device of formal annexation was adopted to overcome this tricky anomaly (248, para 4; 251). By 5 June 1956, when the governor formally dissolved the Legislative Assembly and announced the dates of the election, the entirety of the Gold Coast was embroiled in an election campaign.

The election, held in July 1956, saw another impressive CPP victory. The party eventually enjoyed an overall majority of forty over the opposition with a small increase in its proportion of total votes cast (248, paras 6–10). The NLM, while it had attracted votes and won seats in the Ashanti region, had failed to take its campaign outside its core areas of support. The newly elected opposition appeared unwilling to accept the results of the election which they signified by walking out of the first session of the newly elected Legislative Assembly.

The NLM once again resorted to its tried and trusted tactics of boycott, lobbying in London and threatening secession. It was now greatly helped by being able to draw attention to the squalid implications of a public inquiry into the affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company, the buying arm of the statutory Cocoa Marketing Board, into whose funds the CPP had dipped (241–242).[110]

The CO was shocked by Mr Justice Jibowu's revelations but in an almost fatalistic fashion recognised that to intervene by, for example, seeking to 'depose' Nkrumah and some of his ministers in some way, would break those extensive promises given to Nkrumah when he agreed to call the 1956 general election (245–247). There was no easy and risk-free way of going back on these undertakings and by mid-September 1956 it was decided that the date of independence would have to be announced as promised, and without further conditions (249, 252, 254–258). Further allegations against the CPP and Gold Coast ministers, made by T M Kodwo Mercer, the Gold Coast trade commissioner in London, were investigated but dismissed for want of firm evidence (235, 244).

The NLM continued to suggest that it would refuse to operate as a loyal opposition and now demanded that the secretary of state for the colonies come out to the Gold Coast to negotiate changes in the independence constitution (252). The movement's leaders announced that if their demands were not met: '... the regions outside the Colony [the southern third of the country except for Trans-Volta-Togoland] would declare themselves self-governing and independent after 6th March [the date of independence].'[111] Despite this sabre-rattling, the Gold Coast government and opposition chief whips met on 8 October to arrange talks which ensued two days later. Rather remarkably given the history of bad-blood, the joint communiqué issued after the talks agreed that the parties had met in an atmosphere of 'good humour and goodwill and eagerness to serve the best interests of the nation'. In practical terms the talks got nowhere.

The atmosphere, if anything, worsened. In November 1956 the NLM submitted a ten-point resolution to the secretary of state which resumed its secessionist demands; the resolution also asked the United Kingdom government to send out a partition commission to divide the assets and liabilities of the Gold Coast's four regions. This resolution was decisively rejected by the secretary of state: 'Her Majesty's Government do not consider that partition of the Gold Coast is in the interests of the Gold Coast as a whole.'[112] Lennox-Boyd reiterated this position when answering opposition questions during the second reading debate on the Ghana Independence Bill in the House of Commons on 11 December 1956.[113] In the meantime Arden-Clarke was asked for an assessment of the gravity of the secessionist threat and especially whether it would be backed by force. He replied that the intention to secede was more marked in Ashanti than in the north; he added that there was a 'distinct possibility' that there would be 'sporadic outbreaks of violence' in Ashanti. While he could see no 'prospect of agreement on the provisions of the

new Constitution', these comments suggest that he felt that the threat to secede was localised and unsupported in the rest of the Gold Coast (265–266).

While strident secessionist demands continued, the NLM was actually gradually fragmenting. On 20 December 1956, the Northern Territories Council met and passed a resolution which was clearly not secessionist even if it continued to express serious and sincere worries about the fate of the Northern Territories under southern domination in an independent Ghana. But even thus weakened, the NLM maintained the pressure. On 18 December 1956, during the Committee Stage of the Ghana Independence Bill, Lennox-Boyd told the Committee, after several demands from British MPs for his personal intercession, that: 'I do not exclude that some help might be given if I paid a visit to the Gold Coast. As the Committee will recognise my plans are such that it is sometimes difficult to manage to fit in everything' (268).[114]

Such an intervention had initially been hotly opposed by Nkrumah and his Cabinet on the grounds that it was a 'local matter' and that an intervention would harm the CPP's vital image of being seen to govern in its own bailiwick (275). Sir Anthony Eden, the prime minister, also had doubts about the wisdom of a visit but Arden-Clarke's intervention, and Nkrumah's eventual recognition that the visit was the only way out of the impasse, persuaded him to change his mind (276). Lennox-Boyd eventually arrived in the Gold Coast on 24 January 1957 on his return from a scheduled visit to Central Africa.

As Nkrumah had feared this visit was a triumph for the NLM, even if it was to be their last triumph. They had undoubtedly delayed independence; they had secured a further unscheduled general election and had now successfully pressed the secretary of state to visit the country, all against the wishes of the country's properly and now twice elected government.

Once in the Gold Coast, Lennox-Boyd saw all parties to the dispute. In a rushed and over-worked six days (280) he was able to wring some rather thin 'safeguards' for the rights of 'tribal and regional peoples' which in almost all respects went no further than the Bourne proposals had done. Although the evidence is thin, it seems clear that Lennox-Boyd made it clear to the NLM when he met them that they could expect no further support from the British government.

But the NLM had drawn blood by getting him to come out at all. The visit certainly provided the movement with an opportunity to climb down with some grace. Nkrumah was prevailed upon, for the time being at least, to honour the constitutional provisions for regional assemblies which would not, of course, be in place before the date of independence (287–289). The eventual White Paper on the constitution went through the Assembly on 12 February 1957 with Dr Kofi Busia, the leader of the opposition, rather amazingly, agreeing that it was 'a workable compromise' and agreeing 'to co-operate to make it a successful foundation for the democratic life which we all desire to see established'. It was a decidedly flat ending to three years of volatile politics.

Preoccupation with the political crisis in the Gold Coast and continued uncertainty over the date of independence combined to delay detailed consideration of the future economic and financial relationship between Britain and an independent Ghana. Discussion on these issues was largely initiated by Cumming-Bruce from Accra. In June 1956 he submitted a memorandum which warned of the dangers of Soviet economic penetration after independence and which also highlighted what he saw as the principal economic weakness of the Gold Coast, namely that the

government had over-reached itself during the boom years of the early and mid-1950s by launching more services than it could afford to maintain. With the fall in the price of cocoa,[115] Cumming-Bruce forecast that there would be little or no money for further development, much less new education and welfare services, and that measures of retrenchment would be inevitable. A programme of economic action was therefore a matter of urgency. Gold Coast ministers, he argued, should be encouraged to think more seriously about their development plans and the British government should make its own assessment of the Gold Coast's post-independence development needs and be prepared, in principle, to consider a request for financial aid (238; also 271). Cumming-Bruce supported his memorandum with a letter to the CRO which emphasised that the Gold Coast was a major asset to the sterling area. Failure on Britain's part to establish a sound economic relationship with the Gold Coast in the first few years after independence would damage British interests elsewhere in Africa; the Gold Coast might become a 'major anti-Colonialist nuisance' (240).

As part of a more widespread planning exercise, the Gold Coast government was persuaded to undertake a review of its development plans financed from Colonial Development and Welfare funds. The government originally estimated that it would lose about £500,000 if its unspent CD(&)W grant came to an end at independence; this was subsequently revised upwards to about £1 million. In October 1956, prompted by Arden-Clarke, the CO attempted to persuade the Treasury to allow the Gold Coast access to its outstanding CD(&)W allocation. The Treasury at first refused, arguing that Britain had financial difficulties of its own and that the case for a concession to the Gold Coast was weak on both political and financial grounds. Politically the Treasury argued: 'Given our policy of concentrating our resources on areas where we have vital interests at stake, it would seem wrong to expend them in the Gold Coast.' Supported by Home, Lennox-Boyd urged what the CO saw as the political considerations at stake on Harold Macmillan, the chancellor of the Exchequer. At first Macmillan was equally unimpressed and it seemed that the matter would have to be decided in Cabinet. Eventually and with reluctance, the chancellor accepted a compromise put forward by Lennox-Boyd (261–263).

Nkrumah played a major role in the subsequent negotiations on economic and financial issues. He presented Lennox-Boyd with a series of memoranda which argued the case for British aid to finance Ghana's development plans, particularly those dealing with the poor Northern territories. Ghana's continued membership of the sterling area was offered as an inducement (267, 272, 277; also 278). Cumming-Bruce viewed the inducement over the sterling area as a 'scarcely veiled threat' which was not to be taken seriously (269). He also reported that Gold Coast ministers believed that they were being 'treated meanly in the winding up of the financial relations of the Colonial status' (270). The Treasury argued that 'there should be no question' of providing direct Exchequer aid to independent Commonwealth countries and the Ghana Independence Bill expressly excluded the Colonial Development Corporation from operating in Ghana (273, 283, 285–286). The CO pondered this 'negative' response and considered alternative sources of financial aid (274). Lennox-Boyd was briefed in detail on economic and financial issues before he visited the Gold Coast. His brief included a lengthy exposition on how he should respond if, in discussion, Gold Coast ministers contrasted their own financial settlement with that on offer to Malaya (277). The CO also stressed the advantages to Ghana of

continued membership of the sterling area (282). Nothing was settled when independence arrived. Nkrumah was informed that the British government was undertaking a 'comprehensive review' of the UK role in the development of newly independent Commonwealth countries. Until the review was complete, and until the government of Ghana had made further progress with its own development plans, particularly in relation to the Volta River project, it would not be possible to hold the joint discussions which Nkrumah had proposed. It was suggested that these should wait until the end of the year (290).[116]

There is a sense of tiredness over these events which suggests that all parties had been exhausted by ten years of incessant political change. On 5 March 1957 Lennox-Boyd sent a message of congratulation to Nkrumah and Nkrumah later reciprocated the good wishes (292). But the last substantial comment belonged to Arden-Clarke. In his final despatch as governor which reviewed events leading up to independence, he ended on a note of cautious optimism. He had no doubt that Ghana would 'make many blunders and often tread close on the heels of disaster'. But in the long run, and with practical encouragement from her fellow-members of the Commonwealth, he felt sure that Ghana would 'not disgrace us' (291).

With the Duchess of Kent representing the Queen, the Gold Coast became Ghana as the 6 March was ushered in. Ghana's relatively short but stressful march to independent statehood was at an end. To a limited extent both the ambitions of Ghanaian nationalists and colonial policy-makers had reached a satisfactory conclusion. To what extent this process led to the full independence of the Gold Coast is open to argument. Ghana remained a member of the Commonwealth and until the decision to become a Republic in 1960 acknowledged the Queen as Head of State and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as its final Court of Appeal. Substantial numbers of British administrators remained in post after independence. The armed forces were commanded by a British officer until 1960. After the ushering in of the Republic many of these residual ties were also cut. But in other respects, especially in the realm of its economic life, Ghana's independence was to prove limited. The sixteen dramatic years of Ghana's history illustrated by these documents were essentially years in which, in Kwame Nkrumah's famous phrase, the 'political kingdom' changed hands. There were and are other kingdoms.

R Rathbone

Notes to Introduction

1 A listing of those published before the end of 1992 is to be found in the appended select bibliography in part II of this volume.

2 At the same time it should be recognised that a significant number of files remain unavailable under the restrictions governing access which are referred to in the Foreword to this volume. Such restrictions are, for the most part, explained by the 'sensitivity' of the material in these files. In many cases the nature of the retained files is unclear as the PRO listings itemise the piece number but not the file title. This is a serious matter especially for those interested in the final six years of this study. In CO 554, the West Africa regional class, no less than 33 pieces are closed out of the 315 pieces listed that can, with some confidence, be identified as concerning the Gold Coast, slightly more than 10 per cent. The classes more obviously dealing with security and defence are even more restricted.

3 For published work on the politics of the Gold Coast/Ghana in this period, see the select bibliography in part II of this volume.

4 Key aspects of these broader themes are documented in BDEEP series A, J M Lee and P B Rich, eds, *Colonial policy and practice 1924–1925*, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, and D Goldsworthy, ed, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951–1957.*

5 And of course address the absolute importance of the Gold Coast/Ghana's pioneering role in the history of decolonisation in Africa. Much of the policy and methodology which emerged out of the experience documented here were to become significant precedents for the ways in which successive British governments were to deal with other parts of Africa and other parts of the British empire in the years which followed Ghana's independence.

6 Much of the material concerning the period before the early 1950s was generated on war-time economy recycled paper of extremely poor quality. Some of the inks used in both manuscript and typewritten entries have faded or even corroded the paper. Similarly, primitive duplication techniques tended to produce copies which in some cases have faded into illegibility. The widespread bureaucratic use of paper clips, staples and Treasury tags has also damaged a great many documents. It is sad to have to report that lack of care exercised by some previous scholarly users has further harmed important papers. The ever-vigilant staff of the PRO attempt, where possible, to conserve this vital resource but it is a monumental task.

7 And copies of the original correspondence sent from Accra to London are correspondingly preserved in the National Archives of Ghana in Accra.

8 For example, the CO did not ask for or receive copies of the minutes of the Gold Coast Executive Council and later those of the Gold Coast Cabinet until Nov 1952. These were eventually transmitted only after the Gold Coast Cabinet had given its consent to this. The CO did not receive such minutes after the 1954 general election which ushered in internal self-government (CO 554/424).

9 The bulk of this concerned the creation of a National Bank and the implications of the fact that an independent Ghana would issue its own currency.

10 Before 1951 the CO maintained separate territorial classes of records for each of the West African dependencies whose affairs were handled by the West Africa Dept. CO 96 is the territorial class for the Gold Coast and it is within this class that most of the records relating to the Gold Coast are to be found. From 1951, the territorial classes for each dependency disappear and are replaced by CO 554, the main geographical class for the West African region as a whole.

11 See, for example, Burns's address to the Empire Parliamentary Association 'Political and other changes in the Gold Coast', 24 Oct 1946. Burns was of course 'talking up' the Gold Coast not least to encourage overseas investment. As he made clear in his memoirs (*Colonial Civil Servant*, London, 1949) he did not personally regard the Gold Coast as a 'model colony' or at least all Gold Coasters as model subjects for the full period of his governorship.

12 Most Ghanaian schools of this period had been built and were staffed by Africans. Between 1930 and 1948 the number of non grant-aided schools, and the total number of enrolments in them, had increased more rapidly than the number of government and grant-aided schools and their total enrolments. The Commission on the disturbances in the Gold Coast reported that in 1948 in the primary sector there were more enrolments in non grant-aided and native authority schools combined than in government and grant-aided schools (*Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948*, chairman Aiken Watson, KC, Col 231, 1948, para 360). The Commission also reported on the strength of public commitment to Western education.

13 Africans provided the direct labour for the construction of approximately 500 miles of railway in the country, just as they did for the building of over 5000 miles of motorable roads. By the 1940s over half the Gold Coast's road mileage had been built and was being maintained by native authorities rather than the central government's Public Works Dept.

14 The 1937 cocoa hold-up led to a commission of inquiry which produced the *Report of the Commission on the Marketing of West African Cocoa* (Cmd 5845, 1938). This, *inter alia*, recommended abandoning the brokerage system in favour of creating, by statute, a monopsonistic farmers' co-operative with responsibility for marketing cocoa. The future of these recommendations was overtaken by the outbreak of war and the ensuing emergency. But the underlying principles, with the exception of the creation of an African dominated co-operative, were to inform the war-time purchasing and selling

organisation which in turn paved the way for the statutory Cocoa Marketing Board's activities in the years after the Second World War.

15 For more information on this, see CO 96/760/1.

16 Burns's handling of labour unrest attracted the rare attention of the prime minister in colonial affairs in war-time . In a hand-written minute on an incoming telegram about a widespread railway strike which began at Takoradi in the south-western Gold Coast, Churchill tartly commented: 'Surely they [the railway workers] should return to their duty and submit their case to arbitration. How is it that the Governor has let all this develop?' Towards the end of Dec 1942 most of the railwaymen were back at work and Churchill again minuted on an incoming telegram: 'Not a good story' (CO 96/774/9, minutes, 2 & 21 Dec 1942).

17 The shock of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia had alerted the Gold Coast intelligentsia to the malignity of facism. The majority of them recognised that it would have been irresponsible to disrupt a war against facism by agitation although this signified no acceptance of the colonial status quo.

18 CO 554/128/16.

19 The assessment that local government as constituted under the principles of indirect rule had limitations in the field of development was widely shared. See, for example, the *Report of the Development Adviser to the Colonial Office* presented on 20 July 1944. Amongst other things it stated: 'Many administrative officers [said] that the methods of "Indirect Rule" will make successful development programmes ... impossible. But [they agreed] indirect rule should not be abandoned but should be given a new and wider context' (CO 554/139/1).

20 See note 37 below.

21 CO 96/770/4, Burns to Stanley, tel, 14 Dec 1942.

22 Williams's memo was discussed at a CO meeting on 29 July 1943. The memo and a note on the meeting, both in CO 554/132/20, nos 1 & 2, are reproduced in BDEEP series A, J M Lee and P B Rich, eds, *op cit.*

23 *ibid.*

24 To underline its significance, King George VI sent a message to be read at the opening of the new Council on 23 July. See *The Times*, 29 Mar and 24 July 1946.

25 Much of the merchant fleet was committed on trans-Atlantic convoy duty and in the supply initiative to the Soviet Union. The South Atlantic was, moreover, a dangerous naval theatre in which many ships were crippled or sunk by an active German submarine presence.

26 None of the Gold Coast's administration could be properly regarded as an economist although the government was served by professional accountants. Planning was generated by each department submitting a costed 'wish list'. The Executive Council then ranked such submissions and the financial secretary pruned what remained on the basis of his knowledge of present and future liquidity (and, in time, of what funds might be available under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts). The Gold Coast's plan was accordingly an assemblage or a shopping list rather than an overall, comprehensive plan.

27 See eg the minuting on poor planning procedures by West African governments in CO 554/139/1 and CO 96/776/8.

28 CAB 21/831, draft oral reply to parliamentary question, 17 June 1942.

29 Churchill did not feel that the Resident Ministry had been successful enough to warrant a prolonged existence. Had the Conservatives been returned in 1945 he would have advocated 'a new body, the West African Council, presided over by the Secretary of State ... and to which the Governors should be members [sic]. ... the West African Council will provide a pattern of the sort of regional organisation which is widely advocated for our post-war colonial development' (CAB 127/260, minute, 25 May 1945).

30 One can sense the importance of many of the conclusions of Lord Moyne's report *The West India Royal Commission* (Cmd 6174, 1940) in a great deal of the internal discussion in the CO.

31 Native Authority (Colony) Ordinance 21, 1944; Native Courts (Colony) Ordinance 22, 1944.

32 Because, as the Commission put it, it was urgent to begin the political and technical formation of its future rulers (*Report of the Commission on Higher Education in West Africa*, chairman Col Walter Elliot, Cmd 6655, 1945). See also BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *op cit*, part IV, 361–362.

33 In a predominantly agricultural country like the Gold Coast, unemployment is extremely difficult to define let alone compute. The Labour Dept of the Gold Coast government began to refer to urban unemployment without equivocation from the mid-1940s. To the other explanations of the growth of unemployment must be added the opening of the borders with French West Africa which had been closed so long as this part of the French African empire was under Vichy control. This allowed a reflux of relatively cheap African migratory labour into the Gold Coast which contributed to the labour surplus and probably reduced real wages. The larger towns had, moreover, grown considerably in the period and the economy's reduced capacity to create employment was most obviously noticeable in the towns.

34 Swollen shoot disease was first identified in the mid-1930s as a virus disease disseminated by an insect known as the mealy-bug. There was no specific cure for the disease which cumulatively destroyed infected trees. The government's solution was to cut down infected trees, and those near to them, to prevent the spread of the infection.

35 Given that cocoa trees take on average seven years before they yield quality cocoa pods, replanting grants did not meet farmers' immediate needs.

36 West Africans undoubtedly expected more radical change from the new Labour government. Four years before his premiership, Attlee addressed the influential West African Students' Union in London on 15 Aug 1941 and said: 'We in the Labour Party have always demanded that the freedom which we claim for ourselves shall be extended to all. . . . I look for an ever increasing measure of self-government and political freedom in Africa' (*West Africa*, 23 Aug 1941).

37 Reflecting on recent constitutional and administrative reforms in West and East Africa, F J Pedler, a CO assistant secretary, commented in a minute dated 1 Nov 1946: 'The pace of these changes testifies to the sincerity of our policy of granting self-government as soon as possible. But these changes represent concessions to a class of literate Africans who are a small minority. If this small minority were soundly based on the conscious, informed support of the illiterate mass, all would be well. But it isn't. I am not suggesting that the literates ought not to have their places in councils and so forth, but we need to call in the African masses to keep the balance. The illiterate masses can only take a positive part in government through the development of vigorous local authorities.' Pedler's minute, in CO 847/35/6, is reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *op cit*, part I, 43.

38 Compare this with the views of Sir P Mitchell, gov of Kenya, 1944–1952, reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *op cit*, part I, 45.

39 At a meeting of the Executive Council on 4 Mar 1948, the African members, Nana Sir Tsibu Darku and E Asafu-Adjaye, are minuted as having argued that the riots 'had been brought about as a result of the recent troubles which were due to the exploitation of some ex-servicemen by the Gold Coast Convention' (ADM 13/17, National Archives of Ghana). This was very close to the nub of the explanation the governor was about to proffer to the secretary of state.

40 Col 232, 1948.

41 Watson Report, *op cit*, para 101.

42 In her introduction to Martin Wight's *The Gold Coast Legislative Council* (London, 1947), p vi.

43 Watson Report, *op cit*, para 116 (i).

44 On the model of British county councils.

45 CO 847/36/1, no 9, reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *op cit*, part I, 59, Appendix III.

46 See in this respect CO 847/35/6, minute by A B Cohen, 11 Dec 1947, reproduced in *ibid*, part I, 47.

47 The Committee, which sat under the chairmanship of the Ghanaian jurist (Sir) James Henley Coussey, worked under the following terms of reference: 'To examine the proposals for constitutional and political reform in paragraph 122 of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Disturbances on the Gold Coast . . . and, due regard being paid to the views expressed on them by His Majesty's Government, to consider the extent to which they can be accepted and the manner in which they should

be implemented' (*Report to His Excellency the Governor by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949*, Col 248, p 3). The list of members was compiled in Accra by the officer administering the government in consultation with the Executive Council. This list was submitted to London for information but not approval. The Committee met for the first time on 20 Jan 1949.

48 A L Adu and W V Dickinson. In 1942 Adu was one of the first two Africans to be appointed as assistant district officer. He went on to become commissioner for Africanisation in 1950 and became secretary for external affairs in 1955. There followed a distinguished career in the Ghanaian Civil Service and international organisations.

49 B D Addai, E Akuffo Addo, J B Danquah, George A Grant, Cobina Kessie. In addition E O Obetsibi Lamptey joined the Committee in Mar 1949.

50 Whose first editions appeared in Sept 1948.

51 The precise circumstances of Creasy's departure from the Gold Coast and his appointment to Malta remain obscure. A CO Private Office file for 1949 entitled 'Transfer of Governor Sir Gerald Creasy from the Gold Coast and the proposal to appoint Sir Charles Arden-Clarke to succeed him' (CO 967/116) is subject to a fifty-year closure. Creasy's health was certainly impaired. An entry in the late Hugh Beeton's diary for 14 Feb 1949 reads: 'H.E. went into hospital with suspected pneumonia. He doesn't keep at all fit' (Mss Afr S, Rhodes House Library, Oxford). This was a bad time for the health of these over-stretched senior officers. A month later, on 15 Mar, Beeton reported that Scott, the officer administering the government in the absence of the sick governor, was himself 'crippled with rheumatism' and two days later he recorded that Scott had been admitted to hospital leaving Mangin as officer administering the government.

52 Gold Coast politicians were not unaware of the impact of senior officials on Creasy's judgment. In a debate on the riots in the Legislative Council on 27 Apr 1948, the member for Accra summed up the feelings of the elected members when he said with some compassion: 'We feel that Your Excellency has just arrived in this country and you have not yet known perhaps the working of this Council; but we feel, Sir, that the Chief Commissioner for the Colony [Mangin], the Attorney General [A H Lewey] and the Colonial Secretary [Scott] ought to be destooled for the advice they gave you in these matters' (*Legislative Council Debs* (1948, no 1) p 93).

53 Not the least of these achievements was his close, personal relationship with Tshekedi Khama, the paramount of the Ngwato in Bechuanaland, when he was resident there.

54 From a draft for an autobiography (Arden-Clarke papers).

55 Concern with the relationship between political crisis and poor leadership led Sir T Lloyd, the CO permanent under-secretary of state, to minute on 19 May 1949 that 'the best answer lies, of course, in resolute leadership and sympathetic guidance of the kind that Sir John Macpherson and Mr Foot are giving in Nigeria. . . . That raises certain personal issues on which I am minuting separately to the Secretary of State.' L H Gorsuch, the assistant secretary, minuted in the same sequence, that the Gold Coast government had: 'analysed the situation as it develops, but has remained one jump behind, picking up the pieces as it went along. . . .' (CO 537/5814).

56 By early 1950 there were 276 Africans serving in the higher ranks of the civil service as compared with 1,100 expatriates. There had been only 17 Africans at this level in 1928, 31 in 1938 and 98 in 1948 (see Cabinet memo, 'The employment of native born administrators in the higher grades of colonial civil services', submitted by the secretary of state, James Griffiths, on 17 July 1950, CAB 129/41, CP(50)171), reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *op cit*, part IV, 356). This process was being expedited by scholarship schemes for potential officers some of which were financed by CD(&)W funds and by the policy of preferring such candidates over overseas officers. There was a substantial expansion after 1945 in the total numbers in the civil service (60 per cent between 1945 and 1950).

57 Col 250, 1949.

58 Saki Scheck of the Sekondi Youth Association at a local rally in Jan 1949, quoted in D Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946–1960* (London, 1964) p 82.

59 *Report (with Legislative Council decisions thereon) of the Select Committee Appointed to Examine the Question of Elections and Constituencies* (chairman F K Ewart) SP no V, Accra, 1950.

60 Symptoms of which were to be found in the considerable selective damage done to the premises of

such concerns in the riots of Feb 1948 and the successful boycott of imported goods which preceded them. Suspicion of expatriate commerce had a long history in the Gold Coast and was exacerbated by the firms' conduct in the period leading up to the cocoa hold-up of 1937. It remained a strong theme in the Gold Coast press throughout the period considered here.

61 Under the Burns Constitution there was provision for six voting members of the Legislative Council nominated by the governor.

62 See the *Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of British West Africa, 1945–1946* (chairman, Sir W Harragin) Col 209, 1947, pp 7–8.

63 As in most colonial situations, race and racism had an assured and unpleasant place in everyday life. The riots of 1948 served to bring these to the surface. While resentment had informed much nationalist discourse, the outspokenness of the 1940s was new. Stoking-up racial indignation was something of a two-edged weapon as time passed however. As leader of government business and later prime minister, Nkrumah had frequent need to reassure his followers that co-operation with the British was not 'selling out' and that the remaining British civil servants were useful and to be trusted.

64 The expatriate staff had grown since the end of the war when the establishment numbers were artificially low; but strikingly few Africans had reached the senior ranks. Proportionately the number of Africans had increased but as the 1954 official *Statement on the Programme of Africanisation* showed, there were only 13 Africans among the ranks of the 298 most senior officials by 1950. This was a matter of intense concern to African politicians. That concern led to the adoption of a plan for implementing a policy of Africanisation in the interim Public Service Commission in 1948, to the creation of a Select Committee on Africanisation in 1949 which maintained pressure on the colonial government to appoint more Africans to senior posts, and to the creation of the post of commissioner for Africanisation (see *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Africanisation of the Public Service,* chairman, R H Saloway, SP no 1, 1950). This pressure was maintained throughout the terminal colonial period both in the press and in the new Legislative Assembly and more formally through the Lidbury Commission on the civil service (see *Report of the Commission on the Civil Service of the Gold Coast 1950–51*, chairman, Sir D Lidbury, SP no IV, 1951), the Assembly's Select Committee which reviewed the Lidbury proposals (see *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the Lidbury Report*, chairman, K A Gbedemah, SP no III, 1952) and the Gold Coast Civil Service Working Party to review the Africanisation programme (under the chairmanship of A L Adu, unpublished, 1953) which led to the official *Statement on the Programme of the Africanisation of the Public Service* (1954).

65 This was established in 1948 in accordance with the recommendations of the Harragin Commission (*op cit*, pp 33–34) as an advisory body to the governor. The establishment of the Commission on a constitutional basis was provided for in the 1950 Constitution Order in Council. As an additional measure, African assistantships were to be created to enable suitably qualified Gold Coasters to enjoy a form of apprenticeship before taking over major administrative posts.

66 Definitions of what were and were not key ministries were not absolute. There was, for example, disquiet in some circles about the transfer of local government to an African minister. The chief commissioners of the Northern Territories and Ashanti were both opposed to such a change. Arden-Clarke argued that it would have been discordant if so large a part of the administration were to remain so publicly in expatriate hands (W H Beeton to Arden-Clarke, 28 Dec 1949, SCO 112/115, National Archives of Ghana, and Arden-Clarke to Beeton and E Norton Jones, 22 Dec 1949, BOA 1, Ashanti, National Archives of Ghana). See also doc 74, section 11.

67 There was a continuing campaign for the retention of a significant number of voting members appointed to represent special interests like commerce and mining; this appears to have been orchestrated by the managing director of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, Maj-Gen Sir E Spears. This was to extend throughout the terminal colonial period. It was particularly vocal when the constitution was again being discussed in 1953. Although the governor and his Cabinet were insistent that it would prove impossible to secure acceptance of special members in the political climate of the Gold Coast, Spears had important contacts and the Conservative secretaries of state found it difficult to argue with him (CO 554/333).

68 This expectation was expressed by Arden-Clarke in an address to the Legislative Council on 28 Feb 1950 when he said: 'In view of the many local differences and the present lack of coherent and well-established political parties covering the whole country, it is most unlikely that there will emerge from the first general election a single majority party capable of electing a Leader who could rely on an organized

majority in the House or capable of providing eight Ministers to undertake the government of the whole country' (*Legislative Council Debs* (1950, no 1) p 7).

69 Arden-Clarke was to criticise them after the election for having 'done nothing towards establishing a disciplined political party' (undated letter to his family, Feb 1951, Arden-Clarke papers).

70 It seems that Nkrumah was not only prepared to call off the strike but actually did so over the New Year. Nkrumah and the CPP executive were finally forced to proceed because of the strident representations of the party's far left and particularly from the leadership of the unions of railwaymen and dockworkers. Having himself broken the UGCC by splitting from it, Nkrumah was too shrewd a politician to court a similar schism in his young party and felt forced to go along with the strike call on 8 Jan 1950. Careful attention to the language used by the *Evening News* over this period suggests this interpretation, as do the entries in Beeton's diaries for 4–7 Jan 1950 (Mss Afr S, Rhodes House Library).

71 He had been imprisoned in the previous October and was released, somewhat ironically, as Nkrumah was jailed.

72 Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: the autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York, 1957) pp 126–136.

73 Many of those who had endured imprisonment in these times added the initials PG – prison graduate – to their names when they were published in the partisan press.

74 Gold Coast (Constitution) (Electoral Provisions) Order in Council, 1950; Elections (Legislative Assembly) Ordinance, 1950.

75 Basically all Gold Coasters over twenty-one years of age were so qualified.

76 Nkrumah and seven senior CPP officials were released as 'an act of grace' for their sentences still had several months to run even with remission. 'The decision', wrote Arden-Clarke to his family, 'however unpalatable, was probably inevitable' (undated letter, Feb 1951, Arden-Clarke papers; see also doc 94). Arden-Clarke's own account of his initiatory role in the releases, which was subsequently accepted by his biographer (D Rooney, *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke*, London, 1982, pp 117–119) is evidently incorrect.

77 At the behest of Arden-Clarke, CPP ministers agreed to put pressure on the party to end the constant verbal attacks on expatriate officials (Executive Council minutes, 3 & 6 Dec 1951, ADM 13/136 and ADM 13/137, National Archives of Ghana). Changing the titles of district commissioners and chief commissioners to government agents and regional officers was in part intended to change images but without great effect; the attacks continued. In the Legislative Assembly, lax party discipline was a frequent cause of concern to Arden-Clarke as well as to Nkrumah; CPP whips could not always guarantee majorities in important divisions. There were also allegations of ministerial corruption which led to a local commission of inquiry and to the enforced resignation of J A Braimah, the minister without portfolio, in Jan 1954.

78 Foremost amongst such obviously political measures was the temporary abandonment of the widely unpopular policy of cutting-out infected cocoa trees. The severity of the disease and the implications for the Gold Coast's single most important export meant that cutting-out was soon to be recommenced.

79 See *The Volta River Aluminium Scheme* (Cmd 8702, 1952). Nkrumah had taken the development portfolio as well as the premiership, thus underlining the party's commitment to growth and expansion. On advice from Arden-Clarke he shed this portfolio in 1952 as he had insufficient time to devote to two taxing roles. Development issues were henceforward handled by a Cabinet committee.

80 *Regional Administrations, Report by the Commissioner* (Sir S Phillipson) Accra, 1951, pp 16–17.

81 See *Report of the Colony Select Committee on Local Government Reform; Report of the Ashanti Select Committee on Local Government Reform; Report of the Northern Territories Committee on Local Government Reform;* and *Regional Administrations, Report by the Commissioner* (Sir S Phillipson) (all four reports, Accra 1951). By the Local Government Ordinance of 1951, the old native authorities were replaced by councils broadly two-thirds of whose members were directly elected, one-third elected by chiefly bodies and with a chief as president. Local councils were progressively established in rural areas and urban councils in the smaller towns. Small units were in turn amalgamated so that by 1956, 26 district councils, 14 urban councils and 238 local councils had been set up.

82 *Legislative Assembly Debs* (1952, no 3) pp 500–505; *Government Proposals for Constitutional Reform* (Accra, 1953), p 5.

83 By the 1953–54 season, the world price for cocoa had reached £400 per ton. The statutory Cocoa Marketing Board through its buying arm, the Cocoa Purchasing Company, never paid farmers more than 58 per cent of the world price. Much of the difference found its way into government expenditure.

84 The severity of CPP backbench attacks on the report of the Lidbury Commission led in Sept 1951 to the withdrawal of a bill to implement its major recommendations. The Lidbury Commission recommended replacing the existing structure which was divided into senior and junior services with a structure which followed, in outline, the main lines of the British Civil Service; this was to have three classes, clerical, executive and administrative, but added a third, sub-clerical class. The government referred the matter to a Select Committee chaired by K A Gbedemah (see note 64 above). The Committee's report, which differed little from the original, was adopted by the Legislative Assembly in Apr 1952. The main stumbling block was the sensitive issue of the higher salaries paid to British members of the civil service. These were argued as being necessary to cover both home leaves and the costs of educating children privately in the UK.

85 *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Representational and Electoral Reform* (Accra, 1954).

86 The Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1954.

87 Beeton to Arden-Clarke, 12 Feb 1953 (ADM 26/130, National Archives of Ghana). Cocoa was of course grown in the Colony and this was the area in which cocoa production had been pioneered. But swollen shoot disease had ravaged significant areas of southern production and many small producers in the south had been lured away from farming into the burgeoning commercial and waged sector. At the same time a good deal of clearance and planting had taken place in the Ashanti region which was emerging by the 1950s as a major area of cocoa production.

88 See for example the complaints voiced in the Legislative Assembly on 13 July 1953.

89 *The Ashanti Pioneer* newspaper which although independent, consistently fought the corner of the Asanteman Council, reported on 6 Dec 1951: 'Instances could be multiplied where a section of the people have been removing chiefs who are not the avowed supporters of their party and replacing them with their own candidates, thus invading the realm of chieftancy and violating its essential neutrality . . . this is a hideous national menace. . . . There are also cases of chiefs who voluntarily cast in their lot with the dominant party [the CPP] in the treacherous hope of saving themselves. This is even more hideous.' See also *Legislative Assembly Debs*, 4 Apr 1951 (1951, no 2) pp 156–174 and 26 Nov 1951 (1951, no 4) pp 182–208.

90 Cabinet minutes, 1 Jan 1953 (ADM 13/54, National Archives of Ghana). This notion was supported by Spears, chairman of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, and by other members of the business community. See *Manchester Guardian*, 24 Mar 1954, and *Daily Telegraph*, 2 Apr 1954.

91 The policies of the Togoland Congress were regarded, somewhat uncritically, as purely and simply anti-colonial by the Trusteeship Council.

92 Before 1954, the Gold Coast was treated internationally as part of Britain in respect of foreign relations. After the constitutional changes of 1954, the Gold Coast's foreign affairs were overseen by the CRO. In 1955 the governor was supplied by the CRO with an adviser on external affairs (F E Cumming-Bruce) and the local civil service appointed a senior African official (A L Adu) as secretary for external affairs. Gold Coast civil servants were attached to the FO and to British legations overseas for training purposes.

93 Farmers were to be paid £3.12 shillings per load (60lbs), the same price they had been paid in the previous season. In the same period the world price was hovering around highs of £450 per ton. Had farmers been paid the world market price they would have received over £12 per load and they were well aware of this. Some CPP politicians, on local hustings, had rashly promised that the producer price would be increased after the election. The decision to peg the price had, however, been taken in the Gold Coast Cabinet as early as 11 Mar 1954 (ADM 13/54, National Archives of Ghana). This decision was based on the fear of rampant inflation which had been signalled in the *Report on Finance and Physical Problems of Development in the Gold Coast* by D Seers and C R Ross (Accra, 1953). Commissioned by the Gold Coast's Office of the Government Statistician, the report argued, *inter alia*, that control of producer prices was the only viable means open to the government to control inflation.

94 The Van Lare Commission allocated seats to the regions of the Gold Coast on a population basis. In the proposed new Legislative Assembly of 104 directly elected members, the Ashanti region was allocated

21 seats, an increase of 2 over the 1950 figure but a decrease when taken as a percentage of the new overall total. Ashanti members vented their anger during the debate on the Van Lare Report in the Legislative Assembly. One of them, B F Kusi stated: '. . . All Ashantis express the sentiment that Ashanti is a nation and that fact has been accepted. We are not a region at all; we should be considered a nation. . . . Population alone does not make a country. . . .' (*Legislative Assembly Debs*, 9 Nov 1953 (1953, no x) pp 220–221).

95 Although it is the case that 44.6 per cent of the electorate did not vote for the CPP.

96 And it also advocated bicameralism largely because of the salience of chiefs in the movement.

97 The election returns for both the 1954 and 1956 elections show quite clearly that the Colony, the south, was indeed the CPP's electoral heartland.

98 Such as those of the NPP and the Togoland Congress whose agendas were obviously very different from one another.

99 At the annual general meeting of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation on 26 Apr 1955, the chairman claimed, incorrectly, that all Asante were pro-NLM (see *The Financial Times*, 27 Apr 1955). *The Ashanti Times*, a pro-NLM newspaper produced in Kumasi, was owned by the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation.

100 Arden-Clarke was seldom mentioned in the opposition press during these years without the added *soubriquet* of 'the CPP's propaganda secretary'. By Feb 1955, the *Ashanti Pioneer*, one of the major voices of the NLM, was calling him a 'CPP puppet'. On more than one occasion his car was stoned by angry crowds in Ashanti.

101 An intriguing echo of the same demand made by the CPP before 1951.

102 In the event Brong-Ahafo was not to be designated as a region until after independence.

103 *Report from the Select Committee on the Federal System of Government and Second Chamber for the Gold Coast* (Accra, 1955).

104 That 1956 was widely expected to be the year of independence is clear from a good deal of the documentation. The records in the National Archives of Ghana show that the final handover of ministerial work was scheduled for the end of 1956. An example of this expectation is to be found in the Gold Coast Cabinet minutes of 1 May 1956 (ADM 13/141, National Archives of Ghana) where Cabinet agreed that a plaque to be installed in a commemorative independence arch, which stands in Accra today, should be inscribed: 'A.D. 1956'.

105 Lennox-Boyd read a statement on the 'present constitutional position of the Gold Coast' in the House of Commons on 7 Dec 1955. His statement read: 'At the request of the Gold Coast Government I arranged for Sir Frederick Bourne to act as an adviser to that Government and those parties concerned who wish to avail themselves of his services, on the constitutional issues which divide the Gold Coast. I regret that the leaders of the National Liberation Movement and of the Asanteman Council have refused to meet Sir Frederick.

I have had some sympathy with their position in the past; they have a relatively small representation in the present Legislature, and it has been only natural that they should hope that by a general election or some form of constituent assembly they might assure to themselves a larger say in the constitutional issues. But, as they should know from previous public statements, Her Majesty's Government will wish to be satisfied, before full self-government can be granted to the Gold Coast, that the Constitution would be generally acceptable throughout the country.

Whatever the result of a general election or however a constituent assembly was composed, it seems clear that there would still remain a substantial body of opinion behind each of the opposed views of the CPP and NLM. It might well be no easier then than now to reach agreement on a Constitution acceptable to all. Accordingly, in my view, and I am sure the House will support me in this, the wisest course, and the one most likely to lead speedily to the conclusion that we all desire, is that the Ashanti leaders should co-operate with Sir Frederick Bourne, whose objective is to help the people of the Gold Coast to work out a generally acceptable plan.'

During subsequent questions, Mr Griffiths, the former colonial secretary, sought clarification on a number of points arising from Lennox-Boyd's statement. Griffiths pointed out that the Gold Coast already had a constitution, with its own government and its own prime minister, elected by adult suffrage. 'Would it not be a precedent', Griffiths argued, 'to have a consultative [sic] assembly in a country which has its own Parliament and Government elected by adult suffrage?'. Lennox-Boyd responded: '. . . I would with

respect ask him [Griffiths] to consider the statement carefully, where he will see the paragraphs dealing with the constituent assembly, which again were very carefully worded' (*H of C Debs*, vol 547, 7 Dec 1955, cols 378–380).

106 *Report of the Constitutional Adviser* (Accra, 1955) Recommendation VI.

107 This was held in Feb 1955 under the chairmanship of C W Tachie-Menson at Achimota College just outside Accra (CO 554/806).

108 *Report of the Achimota Conference* (Accra, 1956).

109 *Constitutional proposals for Gold Coast Independence and Statement on the Report of the Constitutional Adviser and the Report of the Achimota Conference* (Accra, 1956).

110 *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company Limited* (chairman, Mr Justice O Jibowu) Accra, 1956.

111 *Ashanti Pioneer*, 24 Sept 1956.

112 *West Africa*, 15 Dec 1956.

113 *H of C Debs*, vol 562, cols 314–326, 11 Dec 1956.

114 *ibid*, vol 562, 18 Dec 1956, col 1135.

115 The world price for cocoa, already way below its best, was down to below £300 per ton by 1956.

116 For the wider context in which decisions about CD(&)W grants and financial assistance to post-independence Ghana were made, see BDEEP series A, D Goldsworthy, ed, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951–1957*, part III, chapter 6.

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1 CO 96/775/9, no 1 22–24 Sept 1941

[Burns's reforms]: minutes by Sir A Burns and O G R Williams[1] on the reforms proposed by Burns before his departure for the Gold Coast

Sir C. Parkinson

I should be grateful if you and the Secretary of State would allow me to discuss a few matters relating to the Gold Coast before I sail. The following list of subjects is given for convenience. Although I have theories on each of these subjects I may, of course, find it impossible, when I have studied the questions on the spot, to recommend putting these theories into practice, but it would be a great help to me if I knew in advance whether the Secretary of State saw any objection, in principle, to my ideas.

(a) *Executive Council.* I am in favour, if suitable men can be found, of appointing two Africans to Executive Council (but not European unofficials). I realise that the reactions in neighbouring colonies must be considered. In this connection please see Nigeria 330024/1/40.

(b) *Legislative Council.* I am in favour of having more elected African members. But the position of Ashanti, and even of the Northern territories, must affect any decision. Lord Hailey[2] suggests separate "advisory" councils for these, with, ultimately, a general superior council for all three territories.

(c) *Municipalities.* I should like to try the experiment of an unofficial majority on Town Councils &c., the Governor approving (or disapproving) estimates, the imposition of rates, and the dismissal of staff.

(d) *Africans in European posts.* I am strongly in favour of appointing more Africans to senior posts. I know that this policy involves taking risks, but I am confident that we must take the risks, and accept some mistakes as inevitable.

(e) *African administrative officers.* I am even in favour of appointing some to District Administrative posts. My idea would be to select young graduates of Achimota[3] and send them to England for a year to do the Tropical Services Course. (It might even be possible to find one or two older men in the Service who could now be promoted; they would be too old to advance very far before being retired on grounds of age, so their comparative lack of education would not matter much). Lord Hailey prefers an "intermediate" grade from which a few men could be promoted to the Administrative Staff.

(f) *Additional European administrative staff.* Lord Hailey and Sir Arnold Hodson[4] think that the District staff is now too small and that no improvement of administration would be possible without an increase. This increase is more likely to be accepted if a few Africans are appointed as suggested above.

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[1] Parkinson asked Williams to comment on Burns's minute in preparation for a meeting with the secretary of state (see 2).

[2] W Malcom Hailey (1st Baron cr 1936); ICS from 1895; member (Finance and Home Depts) gov-gen's Executive Council, 1919–1924; gov of Punjab, 1924–1928, and United Provinces, 1928–1930 and 1931–1934; director, African Research Survey, 1935–1938; member, Permanent Mandates Commission of League of Nations, 1935–1939; head of Economic Mission to Belgian Congo, 1940–1941; chairman, Colonial Research Committee, 1943–1948.

[3] The elite secondary school near Accra established under the governorship of Sir Gordon Guggisberg, 1919–1927.

[4] Gov of Gold Coast, 1934–1941.

(g) *Segregation.* I am strongly opposed to compulsory segregation on account of race (and have in fact said so in my published "History of Nigeria").[5] I consider it absurd that, e.g. an African Judge should not be allowed to live in a European "reservation". I should like to amend the law so as to make sanitary and similar regulations very strict in the present "reservations", enforce these regulations strictly, and then allow Africans to have houses there if they are prepared to comply with the strict regulations.

(h) *Income tax.* The Secretary of State has agreed to a decision in this matter being deferred for a year.

The following additional point may be mentioned:

(i) *Pan-American Airways.* The Governor expects "several hundred employees". (Present Royal Air Force establishment 800–1,000). Special police will be required.[6]

A.C.M.B.
22.9.41

There are plenty of indications that at any rate as soon as the war is over there will be strong pressure from educated African opinion for some kind of constitutional reforms in West Africa. A rather forced interpretation of the Atlantic Charter appears to have already raised undue hopes in some quarters. It seems very probable that if the first move in this direction is made in the Gold Coast, there will be considerable agitation elsewhere, especially perhaps in Sierra Leone, for the application of a similar policy. It by no means follows that other parts of West Africa are equally ripe for such an experiment. I do not think, however, that possible embarrassing reactions elsewhere can be regarded as a good reason for not trying a forward move in the Gold Coast if, after he has assumed his Governorship, Sir Alan Burns considers that it is practicable to do so. The Gold Coast is in many respects more advanced and contains a higher proportion of educated Africans than the rest of West Africa, and I do not think we can possibly adopt a policy of going slow in the Gold Coast, until the other Colonies have been brought nearer to its level, before embarking on political reforms.

The view has sometimes been expressed that the democratic machinery appropriate to conditions in the United Kingdom will not necessarily be appropriate under entirely different conditions such as those prevailing in West Africa. This may well be the case, but I fear that we have brought up the African, insofar as he has received any education, to look to British political institutions as the goal to be aimed at and as a symbol of racial equality; and any attempt, however well intentioned, to persuade him that something different would be better for him would lead to a serious misunderstanding and mistrust of our sincerity.

In the past there has been a tendency to revert to official majorities as a cure for the deplorable mess produced by the corruption and incompetence of the municipal Councils when managed by the Africans themselves. This does not seem to me,

[5] Published in London, 1929.

[6] A reference to the growing numbers of US army air corps personnel stationed in Accra and servicing the US air route to Africa and the Middle East.

however, to be a reason for not trying again and hoping for better luck next time. It is only through his making mistakes and learning from them that we can expect the African to show whether his claim to racial equality is justified or not.

For these reasons I am in favour of letting the Governor of the Gold Coast experiment with a reform policy as indicated under Heads A, B and C, if on full consideration he reaches the conclusion that the time has now come to do so. As regards B, I have not yet had time to study Lord Hailey's Report on the Gold Coast, but I am not clear that the time is yet ripe for an Advisory Council for the Northern Territories, and on the face of it, I should think that there might be a case for bringing Ashanti, which in many respects is similar in characteristics to the Colony, within the ambit of the Legislative Council.

As regards D and E, it is already in theory the accepted policy in West Africa to appoint more Africans to senior posts. When E was discussed at the Governors' Conference before the war, it was not possible to reach agreement on a common policy, although there seemed to be a general feeling that the appointment of Africans to administrative posts presented a particularly difficult problem. That problem, however, is a practical one and not one of principle and I see no reason why a few cautious experiments should not be made, if a closer acquaintance on the spot with the local position does not lead Sir Alan to change his mind.

As regards F, there is no doubt room for a good deal more work by the European Administrative Staff, but as I understand the position, the existing Staff is considerably hampered by the ambiguity of their position in relation to the Chiefs.

It must also be remembered that at present there is no direct taxation except in the Northern Territory and consequently what is elsewhere an important part of the duties of the Administrative Officer, does not have to be performed at all by about two-thirds of the Gold Coast Staff. If direct taxation were to be introduced, it would be almost imperative to increase the staff, if it is not more than barely adequate at present. Indeed, I think that an increase of staff will be necessary in any case before any improvements can be expected in Native Administration.

G. I fully agree with the views expressed by Sir Alan Burns about segregation. It is impossible to reconcile compulsory segregation with our declared policy in regard to colour discrimination.

Pan American Airways. American Employees (or some of them) are likely to be tough customers and are not likely to pay much attention to the African Policeman. It will, however, be extremely difficult at the present time to re-enforce the European Police with suitable men.

O.G.R.W.
24.9.41

2 CO 96/775/9, no 2 30 Sept 1941

[Burns's reforms]: CO record of a discussion with Lord Moyne on the reforms proposed by Sir A Burns

Sir Alan Burns explained that it would help him a great deal if he knew in advance the views of the Secretary of State in principle upon certain questions which he proposed to explore further on his arrival in the Gold Coast. These were set out in his minute of the 22nd of September, which the Secretary of State had already seen. The opinions which he had himself expressed in the minute were, of course, entirely provisional ones, and he recognised that some of them might have to be considerably modified in the light of fuller knowledge and experience of local circumstances.

The following is a brief summary of the conclusions reached in the course of the discussion on the points raised in Sir Alan's minute:

(a) *Executive Council*

The Secretary of State saw no objection in principle to a start being made with the appointment of Africans to the Executive Council in the Gold Coast if suitable men could be found, but he wished that if, after further consideration on his arrival in the Gold Coast, Sir Alan desired to pursue the question further, he should as a first step bring the matter up for discussion at a meeting of the West African Governors' Conference. Lord Moyne made it clear that while he attached importance to discussion by the Governors of the four territories concerned of a matter which was bound to have repercussions outside the Gold Coast, he did not mean to imply that a uniform policy should necessarily be adopted in all the four territories concerned, which were politically and educationally at different stages of development.

(b) *Legislative Council*

In addition to the proposal to have more elected African members, Sir Alan also raised the question of converting the present Unofficial minority into a majority, with the usual reserve powers in the hands of the Governor. From his experience in British Honduras he considered that with proper handling there should very seldom be occasion to use these reserve powers.

The Secretary of State's attitude on these two points was, in general, the same as that indicated under (a).

Other points discussed under this head which would not be matters of interest to the West African Governors' Conference were what form of representation should be accorded to Ashanti and the Northern Territories. Lord Hailey appeared to be in favour of three Advisory Councils, one each for the Northern Territories, Ashanti and the Gold Coast Colony, with a Central legislative body superimposed upon them. Sir Alan was inclined to think that this was too elaborate machinery for a country the population of which was less than four millions. He saw no *prima facie* objection to an Advisory Council for the Northern Territories, and possibly also for Ashanti, where the Ashanti Confederacy might perhaps serve as a basis for such a Council, but the other possibility which he would like to explore was that of including Ashanti, which in many respects was similar to the Colony, within the ambit of the Colony Legislative Council. The Secretary of State offered no objection in principle to possibilities being considered.

(c) *Municipalities*
The Secretary of State remarked that an Unofficial majority with the strict limitations suggested in Sir Alan's minute would be rather unreal, but Sir Alan explained that his intention was to give them as free a hand as possible, and to stand to them in rather the same relation as he himself would stand, as Governor, to the Secretary of State. It would, of course, be an experiment to be tried out in two or three cases in the first instance to see how it would succeed. The Secretary of State agreed that Sir Alan might make the experiment if, after he had become familiar with local conditions, he still considered that it would be practicable to do so.

(d) *Africans in European posts*
Sir Alan pointed out that this policy was one which involved certain risks, but in his opinion this was not a reason for not going ahead with the policy as vigorously as was possible. One point in this connection to which he attached considerable importance was the reform of the present practice in regard to the payment of different salaries for Europeans and Africans serving in similar posts. At present there was a good deal of inconsistency in practice as between different African Colonies and different classes of posts within the same Colonies, but, broadly speaking, the position was that the European was paid a salary of so much while an African serving in exactly the same sort of post or grade was paid so much less. In Sir Alan's opinion the proper way of drawing the distinction was to say that the post in question carried a salary of so much, but that if it was held by an officer recruited from outside West Africa that officer should receive in addition an expatriation allowance of so much.

The Secretary of State expressed himself as strongly in favour of the general policy of filling more senior posts with Africans. He thought there was a good deal to be said for the expatriation allowance arrangement, but he wished to consider the matter further in the light of the recommendations of the Committee which was at present considering conditions of service in the Unified service, which Mr. Jeffries[1] said would shortly be reporting to him.

(e) *African administrative officers*
The Secretary of State offered no objection to the experiment of African administrative officers being tried in the Gold Coast if suitable candidates for such posts could be obtained who could be sent to England to do the Colonial Administrative Service Course. The suggestion made by Mr. Jeffries that these candidates should have a year at a United Kingdom University preceding the course was also accepted as very desirable.

(f) *Additional European administrative staff*
No special points were raised on this question, nor on

(g) *Segregation*, which has already been considered by the Secretary of State, who was in general agreement with Sir Alan's attitude.

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[1] C J Jeffries (Sir Charles Jeffries, KCMG 1943); CO assistant under-secretary of state, 1939–1947 (responsible in 1941 for the Colonial Service Division); deputy under-secretary of state, 1947–1956.

(h) *Income tax*
Sir Alan will make his recommendations to the Secretary of State after he has had a year within which to review the matter locally.

(i) *Pan-American Airways*
Sir Alan expressed some concern as to the possible result of so many Americans being let loose in the Gold Coast. The African police would not be able to handle the American employees, and he felt that he would probably have to ask for the existing force to be supplemented by a dozen or more European "sub-inspectors". He wondered, however, whether it would be possible to get suitable men. Mr. Jeffries explained that it had been possible to obtain the release from military service of men for the Palestine Police, and if a sufficiently strong case could be made out he thought we ought to be able to obtain a reasonable number for the Gold Coast as well, if Sir Alan Burns would let the Secretary of State know in due course what his requirements were.

3 CO 554/131/4, no 1 29 Jan 1942
[Executive Council]: despatch from Sir A Burns to Lord Moyne proposing the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council

I have the honour to address you on the subject of the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council of the Gold Coast. Although I have only been in this colony for a few weeks I have had a long experience of West Africa, extending over nearly 30 years, and my views on this subject have not been hurriedly formed. I have, moreover, had the advantage of working with Executive Councils containing unofficial members both in the Bahamas and in British Honduras. I am strongly of opinion that it is desirable to appoint two African unofficials to my Executive Council. It may even be found desirable to appoint a third (in the circumstances explained in paragraph 10 below).

2. Your Lordship was good enough to allow me, before I left England, to explain verbally my views in this matter, and to state that you saw no objection in principle to a start being made with the appointment of Africans to the Executive Council in the Gold Coast if suitable men could be found. You wished me, however, if I desired to pursue the question after examining the position on the spot, as a first step to bring the matter up for discussion at a meeting of the West African Governors' Conference. I have had the opportunity of discussing my proposals with the Governor of Nigeria, who informed me that, although the appointment of African unofficials to the Executive Council of the Gold Coast might be an embarrassment to him in Nigeria, he would be prepared to face such embarrassment, and would offer no objection to my proceeding with the appointments. Sir Bernard Bourdillon[1] did not consider it necessary, so far as he was concerned, for the matter to be discussed at a Governors' Conference, and we agreed that, owing to the delay that must occur

[1] Gov of Nigeria, 1935–1942.

before a Conference could meet, I should write to the Governors of Sierra Leone and the Gambia for their views. This I have done, stating that if they would prefer the matter to be discussed at a Governors' Conference I should of course be willing to wait, but that if they were willing to express their views by letter it would save time.

3. In reply Sir Thomas Southorn[2] informed me that, having worked with unofficial members on Executive Council both in Ceylon and Hong Kong, he has no objection in principle to the arrangement; he offers no objection to my proceeding with my proposals in the Gold Coast and sees no need for a discussion of the matter at a Governors' Conference. He considers that there may be repercussions in the Gambia, but does not think they will be serious and is prepared to face them.

4. Sir Hubert Stevenson,[3] on the other hand, is so much against my proposal that I consider it desirable to transmit, with his permission, a copy of his letter to me on the subject.[4] Sir Hubert had had a long experience of West Africa, in Nigeria, the Gold Coast (Ashanti), and now in Sierra Leone, and for this reason I attach a great deal of importance to his views, even where I must disagree with them. I should be quite willing to discuss the matter at a Governors' Conference (although I should regret the inevitable delay) but I do not believe that Sir Hubert Stevenson would be able to shake my conviction that the appointment of Africans to the Executive Council of the Gold Coast is desirable. Taking the points made by Sir Hubert Stevenson in turn:

(a) I do not believe that the appointment of Africans to Executive Council would lead to more extravagant political demands than will be made in any case in the near future; on the contrary, I think that reasonable Africans (and there are more of these than is generally admitted) would feel that the Government was ready to make reasonable concessions. On the other hand if we do nothing now we will probably be forced later by popular clamour to go further than is wise.

(b) The appointment of African (or European) unofficials to Executive Council will undoubtedly give a certain amount of extra work, as complete files could not always be sent to members, but this difficulty has been overcome in other colonies. There has been no matter discussed in Executive Council since I arrived in the Gold Coast which could not safely have been discussed with African members. Certain "security" matters may arise which could not be referred to Executive Council, but the Governor's discretion as to reference to Executive Council is absolute, and if a matter were really secret not even the members of Executive Council would know about it. I do not agree that subterfuge would be necessary; the Governor would merely be consulting, in his discretion, a few of his senior officials instead of the whole Council. He does this now in some cases.

(c) In a separate letter I have explained to Sir Hubert Stevenson my reasons for not recommending the appointment of European unofficials to Executive Council; these are set out in paragraph 5 below.

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[2] Colonial Service, Ceylon, from 1903 (member of Executive Council, 1925); colonial secretary, Hong Kong, 1926 (officer administering government for various periods, 1927–1935); gov of Gambia, 1936–1942; Colonial Service liaison officer, CO, 1942–1946.

[3] Colonial Service, Nigeria, from 1920; chief commissioner, Ashanti, 1936; gov of Sierra Leone, 1941–1948.

[4] Not printed.

(d) Sir Hubert Stevenson would not be averse to changing the constitution of Executive Council after the war: I feel that if it is to be done at all it should be done now.
(e) I admit that Africans from the coast know little of Ashanti and the Northern Territories, but I do not think that two unofficial members of the Executive Council could influence the Government policy to the injury of those territories against the weight of official representation on the Council.
(f) I believe that small changes in the constitution are more likely to be successful than a wholesale reconstruction.
(g) I agree that in Sierra Leone the disadvantages of having Africans on Executive Council may outweigh the advantages, but I do not admit that this is so in the Gold Coast. I am, however, bound to confess that Sir Hubert Stevenson's service in Ashanti, and consequent knowledge of the Gold Coast, gives his opinion a weight which mine does not possess. Against it I can only offer my experience of Executive Councils in other colonies.

5. I have explained in conversation my reasons for not advocating the appointment of European as well as African unofficials to the Executive Council, but it may be useful if I set out these reasons very briefly. They are:

(a) The Europeans already have the opportunity through their principals in London of making their views known to the Colonial Office direct, and do not hesitate to do so.
(b) The Governor and his senior officials have more opportunities of hearing the views of European unofficials than of Africans through social intercourse.
(c) With few exceptions the Europeans in West Africa are not independent, and, on account of the policy adopted by companies trading in West Africa, have little responsibility, being merely the mouthpieces of their Directors in England.
(d) In the Gold Coast the representatives of the largest (European) industry, namely mining, live too far from Accra to attend meetings of Executive Council.
(e) If a commercial representative were to be chosen it might well be that the most suitable man would be the local representative of the United Africa Company, and this appointment would be most unpopular with other European interests and would confirm the belief among Africans that the Company has considerable influence with the Government.

For the above reasons I am against the appointment of European unofficials to the Executive Council, but if Your Lordship considered it essential I should be prepared reluctantly to agree to the appointment of one European in addition to the two Africans.

6. I have consulted the members of my Executive Council and they are unanimously in favour of my proposals.

7. In these circumstances, and in spite of Sir Hubert Stevenson's views, I have no hesitation in recommending that two (or three, in the event mentioned in paragraph 10 below) African unofficials should be appointed to the Executive Council, and I suggest that, as provided in Clause IV of the Royal Instructions, they should be appointed by an Instrument under the Public Seal of the Colony in pursuance of instructions from His Majesty conveyed through Your Lordship.

8. I should be grateful for a telegraphic reply to this despatch, copies of which I

am sending to the Governors of the other West African colonies, and I shall then, if the reply is favourable, make definite recommendations for appointments to the Executive Council. These recommendations will necessarily be affected by the point referred to in the following paragraph.

9. It would in my view be desirable, if two Africans were being appointed to the Executive Council, that one should be a paramount chief. It appears, however, that it would be contrary to existing native custom for a chief to attend Executive Council, or indeed any business meeting, unless he were accompanied by his linguist or other attendants, who act, in effect, as spies upon him, and report what he has said or done, to his sub-chiefs and people. Some of my advisers consider that native custom would be unyielding in this matter, in which case it would be impossible to have a chief on the Executive Council; if that were so I should not hesitate, in announcing other appointments, to express my regret that I should be deprived by custom of the advice of a paramount chief, and to explain that the African cannot have it both ways, that is, he cannot maintain his traditional custom based on distrust of his chiefs and at the same time expect the chiefs to be appointed to an Executive Council conducted on European lines. I feel, however, that there is some chance of personal ambition and a desire for a greater share in the government of the country being able to override native custom in this matter, and in any case there would be no harm in making an attempt to secure the services of a chief on the Council; the failure of such an attempt would in fact strengthen my hands.

10. If a paramount chief from the Colony were to be appointed to the Executive Council it would be necessary for me to consider very carefully the question of appointing the Asantehene[5] also. Not only would such an appointment gratify the Ashantis but it might prove a useful corrective to any undue arrogance on the part of the Colony chief selected. In practice the Asantehene would seldom attend meetings of the Executive Council, but in this respect he would be no different from the Chief Commissioner of Ashanti. The position is, therefore, that I would in any case recommend two African unofficials for appointment to the Executive Council. If a paramount chief from the Colony were willing to serve I should probably recommend one chief and one other African, and in this case I might recommend a third, namely the Asantehene.

[5] The paramount of the Asante confederacy. The usual colonial orthography for Asante was Ashanti.

4 CO 554/128/16 12 May 1942

[Gold Coast administrative service]: minute by Lord Cranborne on Sir A Burns's proposal to appoint the first African assistant district commissioners in the Gold Coast

[Cranborne wrote this minute in response to a despatch which Burns sent to Moyne in Jan 1942. The despatch explained that Burns had consulted the other British West African governors on his proposal to appoint the first African assistant district commissioners in the Gold Coast. From Nigeria, Bourdillon replied that he did not regard the proposal as suitable for application in his own territory but he recognised that conditions were different in the Gold Coast. Burns's proposal might 'embarrass' the Nigerian government but Bourdillon stated that he was prepared 'to face this'. From Gambia, Southorn reported that there might be 'mild repercussions' but no serious difficulty. From Sierra

Leone, Stevenson replied that he was 'utterly opposed' for two reasons. First, only the Creoles in Sierra Leone had the necessary academic qualifications to fill such appointments but they had nothing in common with 'the natives of the Protectorate'. Secondly, and of more general application, Stevenson argued that 'no real progress will be made in the political development of the British West African colonies until the natives themselves take a more active part in developing them on lines best suited to their requirements'. He felt strongly that this result could 'best be obtained by fostering Native Administration and by entrusting increasing responsibilities to the Native Authorities'. Stevenson concluded that the appointment of African assistant district commissioners would be 'a retrograde step and merely tend to create an African bureaucracy which would be inimical to the natural political growth of the people'. In his own despatch, Burns dismissed Stevenson's arguments: 'I cannot agree that the Africanisation of the Political Service would interfere with any development of Native Administrations which is now possible in the Gold Coast Colony' (Burns to Moyne, 31 Jan 1942, enclosing a letter from Stevenson to Burns, 2 Jan 1942, CO 55/128/16, no 2). With Cranborne's approval, the appointments of A L Adu and K A Busia as the first African assistant district commissioners in the Gold Coast were confirmed in July 1942.]

Sir A. Burns' proposals, as may be seen from Sir H. Stephenson's [sic] reactions, raise issues of the most fundamental character. Are we to train Africans to govern themselves, or are we to incorporate them, on a basis of equality, in the British Administrative system? This must lead us to the further consideration, what is the ultimate aim of our policy towards the Colonial Empire? Do we intend to stay there permanently, or are we merely in the position of trustees until such time as the Colonial peoples "grow up" and are able to manage their own affairs without our tutelage? The latter, as Mr. Pedler[1] indicates, has been the conception generally accepted by progressive thinkers of the last generation. But are we certain that it is the right conception? In the light of what has happened in India, in Burma, in Malaya and elsewhere in recent months, I am by no means sure. It has created an impression of the impermanence of British rule. We have ourselves indicated that our control is merely temporary and preliminary to something better. In such circumstances, can we expect subject peoples to co-operate with us or even to respect us? They are merely impatient to get on to the next stage, when they get rid of us and govern themselves. If we want the British Empire to endure, is it not essential that we should assume that it is to be a permanency, and that so far from teaching Colonial peoples to govern themselves, we should do the contrary, and welcome their participation in our administration? Clearly one can lay down no hard and fast rule about this. In one case, we may wish to use one method: in another, another. That must depend on the peoples and circumstances with which we have to deal. But, broadly speaking, wherever there is a suitable opportunity, there is much to be said for dovetailing the British and indigenous elements of any Colony in the administration. That will be the effect of Sir A. Burns' proposals, which, like Sir C. Parkinson, I warmly welcome, including paragraph 7.[2]

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[1] F J Pedler, CO assistant secretary.

[2] Para 7 of Burns's despatch recommended that the African appointees should be accomodated in quarters usually provided for European officers of the same class. There would be no 'European reservations' or 'segregation'.

5 CO 554/131/4, no 6 19 June 1942

[Executive Council]: despatch (reply) from Lord Cranborne to Sir A Burns rejecting the proposal to appoint unofficial members to the Executive Council [Extract]

[Hailey's was the decisive voice in the initial decision to reject the reforms proposed by Burns in his despatch of 29 Jan (see 3). Hailey argued that the correct line of development for Africans was to associate them more closely with provincial councils and with the administrative service, gradually building up from below. It was necessary to avoid bringing in Africans at the centre too early, a mistake which he believed had been made in India. Hailey argued that Africans on executive councils would be of little use and that it would be better to expand the representative basis of legislative councils. He thought it essential to have a common policy for the four West African colonies and suggested, as a tentative first step, the establishment of informal war councils consisting of Europeans and Africans. His advice ended on a cautionary note. Concessions granted now would only encourage agitation for further concessions, making it difficult for government to decide what more to concede. It was a mistake, he argued, to move in advance of agitation; concessions should be kept in reserve so that when agitation arose there would, if necessary, be something to give. Dawe supported Hailey, minuting 'My own view . . . is that we should go slow on this. We should refuse to be pushed into piecemeal and hand-to-mouth expedients. If anything is to be done it should be on the basis of a well thought-out policy which would cover West Africa as a whole' (CO 554/131/4, minute by Dawe, 13 May 1942). To diminish what the CO thought would be Burns's 'keen disappointment' at the reply reproduced here, Gater suggested that Cranborne should send him a personal letter. Cranborne's letter expressed the hope that Burns would find 'some measure of consolation' in the recent decision to admit the first Africans to the Gold Coast administrative service (*ibid*, no 10, Cranborne to Burns, 24 June 1942).]

. . . 3. I feel that there are many objections against the proposal on grounds of principle. It is clear that unofficials cannot be appointed to Executive Councils in any truly representative capacity. They are not elected to the Council by any section of the community: and they bear no responsibility to any body of constituents for the results of the advice which they give. Neither do they bear the responsibility of office, which is shared by all the present members. The appointment of unofficial members, as Lord Hailey observed in his recent Report, has the effect of bringing into the inner councils of Government men who are not bound by the same relations to the Crown as their official colleagues and who often also owe loyalty to sectional interests.

4. Moreover, I feel that this proposal leaps too far ahead. In my view it is only by a development which proceeds step by step, at each pace sure of its footing, that we can hope for the healthy development of more liberal forms of government in the West African Colonies. It follows that in a Colony such as the Gold Coast, where so much still remains to be done in developing Local Government institutions and in making the Legislative Council more truly representative, it is difficult to justify the appointment of unofficial members to Executive Council. This is a measure which belongs properly rather to the stage at which a Colony moves forward from representative to responsible Government. I may mention in this connection that I welcomed the proposals, which I have already approved, for appointing Africans to the administrative service as a measure very appropriate to the present circumstances of the Gold Coast Colony.

5. It is true that there are many precedents in the Colonies for the appointment of unofficial members to Executive Councils. The system has in general been resorted to for reasons of political expediency; but the difficulties of principle, to which I have referred, have in practice been found to give rise to grave disadvantages

in several of the territories where the system has been adopted. So far as I am aware, no such pressure of local agitation exists on the Gold Coast as need make it necessary on grounds of expediency to disregard the objections of principle.

6. I feel furthermore that this is a matter on which it is essential to have a common policy for the four West African Colonies. It will not, as a matter of practical politics, be possible to introduce Africans into the Executive Councils in the Gold Coast and Nigeria without doing the same in the other two Colonies. If therefore a case is to be established for the innovation, I feel that it should be put forward on the basis of a common policy for the whole of West Africa, after discussion at a meeting of the West African Governors' Conference.

7. If it is considered that the special circumstances of the war may render it desirable to open up new channels for consultation with African opinion, you and your colleagues in the Conference may feel disposed to consider the alternative course of establishing informal War Councils of Europeans and Africans. These would have no constitutional position but would in practice be just as available for consultation as any more formal body. This procedure would enable the Government to feel its way without committing itself to any development which would limit the possibility of going forward with a sound policy of constitutional development after the war.

8. Copies of the despatch are being sent to the Chairman of the Governors' Conference, to the Officer Administering the Government of Nigeria and to the Governors of Sierra Leone and the Gambia.

6 CO 554/131/4, no 11 — 30 June 1942

[Executive Council]: despatch from Sir A Burns to Lord Cranborne urging reconsideration of the decision to reject the proposal to appoint unofficial members to the Executive Council

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Secret despatch of the 19th of June[1] in which you informed me that you were unable to approve my recommendation for the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council of the Gold Coast. While I of course accept Your Lordship's decision, I feel so strongly in the matter that I trust I may be forgiven if I ask that the matter be reconsidered.

2. All the objections referred to in the third paragraph of your despatch would apply equally to the principle of appointing unofficial members to the Executive Councils in the West Indian and other colonies. The unofficial members of those Councils are not elected and bear no responsibility to any body of constituents, and they bear no responsibility of office. Yet I have no hesitation in asserting that the unofficial members of the Executive Councils in the three West Indian colonies in which I have served were of great value to the administration of those colonies, and, although chosen by the Governor, were generally looked upon as the representatives of the people and as a useful link between the general public and the Government.

3. Your Lordship has referred, in the fifth paragraph of your despatch, to the

[1] See 5.

precedents in other colonies which I have mentioned above. I am aware that grave disadvantages have arisen in some territories from the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council. As I have never been in the territories to which I presume Your Lordship refers, I am unable to state, with any authority, the cause of those disadvantages, but I think it possible that they are due to the mixed nature of the population and the failure to appoint to the Council representatives of the native inhabitants. I am convinced that in the West Indian colonies the disadvantages of having unofficial members in the Executive Council are more than balanced by the advantages.

4. Your Lordship has observed that there is no such pressure of local agitation on the Gold Coast as would make it necessary on grounds of expediency to accept my recommendations in this matter. I feel that on the grounds of expediency alone, which are not the only grounds on which I make my recommendation, it would be of the greatest advantage to make this concession *now*, as a voluntary act, and not to wait until popular clamour has made it necessary to do so. I have had over thirty-six years experience of colonial administration, and I believe that the rising tide of Negro resentment of British government, and the disturbances which in recent years have been symptoms of this resentment, are due to the policy of deferring constitutional concessions until it is too late for them to be appreciated by the people. The Negro peoples, both in the West Indies and in West Africa, are learning that the colonial administrations take no notice of popular feeling until this feeling is manifested in disturbances. This is one of the principal reasons why the people of these colonies choose as their leaders, not the moderate and reasonable men, but those irresponsible agitators who stimulate racial feeling against the whites and political movements against the government.

5. Executive Councils with unofficial members may or may not be a sound instrument of government. These Councils have, however, a long history behind them in the older colonies and it would be impossible now to abolish them. So long as responsible government is withheld from the people of the colonies – and I know of no colony which is yet ripe for responsible government – it will be necessary to have resort to unsatisfactory compromises, such as unofficial membership of Executive Councils. One day, and it may be sooner than we expect, there will be a demand from the people of the Gold Coast for representation, through unofficial members, on the Executive Council, not perhaps because they hope to gain much from such representation, but because it exists in other colonies and its denial to them is regarded as discrimination. To yield then to such a demand would deprive the concession of all the political advantages which would accrue from a spontaneous gesture.

6. With reference to the sixth paragraph of your despatch I must respectfully disagree with the view that the appointment of African unofficials to the Executive Councils of the Gold Coast and Nigeria involves a similar innovation in Sierra Leone and the Gambia. I see no reason why the political advance of the Gold Coast, which is more ripe for such an advance, should be regulated by the pace of the slower moving colonies. I have no objection to the matter being discussed at a meeting of the West African Governors' Conference, but I deplore the delay that is involved in such a discussion, and the views of the Governors of the other colonies have been, I think, fairly set out in my secret despatch of the 29th of January.

7. My reason for considering this matter to be urgent is the need for enlisting

more fully, *during the present emergency*,[2] the sympathy of the African population. My experience during the past five months in Nigeria has confirmed the view I had formed soon after my arrival in this colony, that there is a growing feeling of antipathy to Europeans, and an undercurrent of discontent which afford a fertile field for the subversive activities of enemy agents.

8. The alternative suggested in the seventh paragraph of Your Lordship's despatch of establishing unofficial War Councils of Europeans and Africans, would not, I feel, be greatly appreciated by African opinion. It would be recognised as a temporary expedient and would not be regarded as any concession to African political aspirations.

9. I regret that I have felt constrained to write so fully on a subject on which Your Lordship has already reached a decision, but I should be lacking in my duty if I did not express the views I so strongly hold. Colonial policy has, in recent months, received a great deal of adverse, and in most cases entirely unjustified criticism. My personal feeling is that we have little to be ashamed of in our colonial administration and a great deal to be proud of. In spite of this I realise that the colonial peoples are not satisfied, and I believe that this dissatisfaction is due, not to any positive acts of misgovernment, but rather to our failure to treat with sympathy the aspirations (often unreasonable) of the people, and our British habit of doing everything too late.

10. Copies of this despatch are being sent to the Governors of the other West African colonies.

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[2] The context suggests that Burns meant by this the war in general rather than anything more obviously local.

7 CO 554/131/4, no 13 8 July 1942

[Executive Council]: letter from Sir A Burns to Lord Cranborne on the arguments in favour of the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council

Many thanks for your letter of the 24th June,[1] which only reached me yesterday, on the subject of the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council. Your secret despatch of the 19th June was, as you expected, a great disappointment to me, and I have already replied to it in my secret despatch of the 30th June.[2] I was sure that you would not mind my persistence in the matter as I feel that it is my duty to state my views frankly, and that you would wish me to do so.

I think it probable that in reaching your decision you took into consideration Lord Hailey's views on the subject, as expressed in paragraph 182 of his recent report.[3] I am second to none in my admiration of Lord Hailey's ability and I recognise that he has had much more administrative experience that I have had, but he has not had such a long experience of Africans as either Bourdillon or myself; I have spent the greater part of my life in colonies inhabited by Negroes. Further, although Lord Hailey may be theoretically correct in his views about Executive Councils, it is

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[1] See 5, note. [2] See 6.

[3] *Native administration and political development in British tropical Africa, 1940–1942* (published by the CO in 1944).

Bourdillon and I who have the practical responsibility, under your direction, for the administration of our two colonies.

I assure you that I am not an alarmist, but each day I get fresh evidence of the increasing feeling of the Africans against Europeans, and against the Government which Europeans represent. As I have recently returned to West Africa after an absence of eight years it is probably more apparent to me than to those who were here all the time, and could scarcely notice the slowly growing feeling. It would be disastrous for the future, and dangerous in existing circumstances, if we lose the goodwill of the Africans, which did exist and probably still exists to some extent, by failing to make a gesture which I am convinced would have an immediate effect on public opinion.

Let me make it clear that I am not an entirely enthusiastic believer in Executive Councils. But these Councils do exist in other colonies and the Africans here know of their existence. It is true that there is no violent campaign in favour of introducing the unofficial element into the Councils but the possibility of such appointments has actually been mentioned, in conversation with me, by Sir Ofori Atta,[4] and it has also been referred to in the Press. It is precisely because the appointment of Africans to the Council would "come out of the blue" that I attach such importance to it. It will be too late to do any real good if we wait to make the concession until there is an organised agitation on the subject.

I am afraid that I may be boring you with this argument, but all fanatics are rather boring and I confess to being a fanatic in the matter of giving the colonial peoples what they would like up to a reasonable point, and not just "governing" them.

The alternative suggestion of establishing War Councils to consist of Europeans and Africans appeals to me as little as it did to Bourdillon, and I have said so in my despatch.

I am expecting Bourdillon tomorrow, and the latest news is that Lord Swinton will be here on Saturday. I hope he will be a day or two later as we are not yet quite ready for him, but in any case we will manage somehow and of course he can stay with me until his own house and offices are ready.

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[4] The King, Okyenhene, of the state of Akyem Abuakwa in the southern Gold Coast. One of the first Africans to be appointed to the Executive Council in the Gold Coast in 1942. He died in 1943. After the Asantehene, he was the most powerful traditional ruler in the Gold Coast.

8 CO 554/131/4 22 July–16 Sept 1942

[Executive Council]: minutes by A C T Edwards,[1] O G R Williams, Sir A Dawe, Lord Cranborne and Sir G Gater on the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Council; decision to approve Burns's proposals

. . . If I may be permitted to do so, I would like to add the following observations:

(a) Very serious attention is being devoted to the question of the future constitution of the West African territories by the small but vocal element of the

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[1] Assistant district officer, Nigeria, from 1934; seconded to CO, 1939; to office of resident minister, West Africa, 1942.

intelligentsia both in West Africa and in this country. I would instance the memorandum prepared by the Gold Coast Youth Conference, a vast document which is still being examined in the Gold Coast. We have received an advance copy of the summary which is filed in 31455 below. There is no doubt that post-war demands will go very considerably further than the demand for the admission of Africans to Ex. Co.

(b) We have recently had an example of the growing tide of African resentment of British administration in the recent protest by African unofficials of the Gold Coast Leg. Co. against the grant of separation allowances to European officials and against the methods by which it was, in fact, carried through. The Gold Coast, indeed the whole of the West African Press, is full of such examples of this resentment and of the demand for immediate constitutional reform.

(c) The fact that unofficial representation on Ex. Co. has been granted to *Europeans* elsewhere (in East Africa) at once raises the issue that to deny it to Africans in West Africa is in the eyes of the W. African merely another instance of discrimination against the African. In their eyes the formation of informal war councils would be regarded as an expedient which is considered as "good enough for Africans".

(d) It is true that the grant of this concession in the Gold Coast would immediately raise a demand for this concession in the other West African territories but conditions vary so much that it is not imperative to have exactly parallel development in all four places. In Sierra Leone, for example, the next most important step is undoubtedly the form of the Freetown City Council.

(e) The best features of British constitutional development have not been based on any sound principles of logic, even though at a later date historians may find a logical justification therefor. Such developments have in fact been based solely on expediency.

A.C.T.E.
22.7.42

Sir Alan Burns holds strongly the view that it is politically expedient to grant African Representation on the Executive Council now, and not to wait until this concession is extorted from an unwilling Government as a result of agitation or pressure. It appears from his telegram at 12 that Sir Bernard Bourdillon is in complete agreement with Sir Alan Burns on this point.

On the other hand, Lord Hailey takes an exactly opposite view i.e. that it is a great mistake to move in advance of agitation, & that it is best to keep concessions in reserve, so that when that agitation arises there will, if necessary, be some to give.

We should, no doubt, be in a better position to deal with this problem, whether it were decided to make or withhold any concession at the present time, if there were an approved constitutional policy for West Africa and a programme for giving effect to it. Unfortunately, we have no such policy or programme. Sooner or later, however, we may be forced into some sort of public explanation of what we really intend to do as regards constitutional progress in West Africa. At the end of the war the pressure for constitutional progress seems likely to be very strong, and it may come from several quarters. It is possible, however, that it may come earlier as a result of the contemplated publication of a White Paper containing the text of the various

declarations of constitutional policy in the Colonies made on behalf of His Majesty's Government. For the above reasons I do not think that we should do much good by merely considering whether or not African Representation on Executive Councils should be granted either now or in response to pressure later on. Whatever may be decided on this point should, I venture to suggest, be related to a programme of development for fulfilling over a period of years, – no doubt an indefinite period, the declared intentions of His Majesty's Government with regard to the constitutional future of the West African Colonies. A policy and programme would clearly take considerable time to formulate, although some guidance no doubt, would be afforded by the suggestions already made by Lord Hailey as a result of his investigations on the spot, (which have been conveniently sketched in outline in his Romanes Lecture of last year).

If, however, Sir Bernard Bourdillon and Sir Alan Burns are right (and they have the advantage over Lord Hailey of longer and more intimate experience of Africans), it is desirable to do something now, and not to continue to wait. There is a good deal to be said against having Unofficial Members on Executive Councils, but the evils and inconveniences entailed are surely not so serious as to justify refusal in spite of any arguments of expediency in favour of such a concession. Unofficials in Executive Council may be a nuisance, but I do not see why they should be feared as a disaster. On the whole, therefore, I hope that the Secretary of State will see his way to reconsidering his decision in view of the opinions of the Governors of Nigeria and the Gold Coast, but I do not see that any harm is likely to be done by waiting for the promised air mail despatch from Nigeria. Nevertheless, I feel that it is extremely important in any case that we should get clear in our minds what we want to do in West Africa as regards constitutional progress, & by what methods and what stages we propose to carry it out. The longer we put off facing up to this question the more difficult we shall find it to deal with the complications which are bound to arise in the future.

(Incidentally, what Sir Alan Burns says in paragraph 7 confirms my own impressions derived from a study of the West African Press and other sources of information, which I have recorded on other papers some time ago.)

O.G.R.W.
24.7.42

Sir G. Gater

I will reserve my comments for the moment.

I think that it is essential that, before a decision is reached, we must give the other two Governors an opportunity of expressing any views which they may have. In the meantime, the despatch from Nigeria should arrive.

? Telegraph as in the draft.

A.J.D.
30.7.42

We now have the views of all four Governors on the question of appointing unofficials to Executive Councils in West Africa. None of them are opposed in principle, nor do they object to appointments being made in Colonies where it is practicable, even if it should not be practicable in their own Colonies.

There seems little prospect of any candidate being available either in Sierra Leone or the Gambia who could be regarded as suitable even on not very exacting standards. Mr. Blood,[2] however, makes the point that if on occasion a suitable candidate were found in one of the smaller Colonies, the Government of that Colony might be faced at a later date with the dilemma of either appointing a wholly unsuitable person for lack of anybody better, or of incurring the odium of not filling the appointment when the vacancy occurred.

It will be seen from paragraph 1 of 16 that Sir Bernard Bourdillon may be expected, if the principle [of] admitting unofficials to the Executive Council is conceded, to press for the appointment of Europeans as well as Africans. In the peculiar circumstances of West Africa, this is, of course, beset with a good deal of difficulty and on the whole I should have thought that the objections would out-weigh the arguments in favour of it.

Incidently, it may be of interest to note that on the 12th of May, 1942, the first urban member in the Sierra Leone Legislative Council asked the following question:

> "Are there any changes contemplated for the reform of the Constitution of Sierra Leone particularly for the increase of the number of the people's representatives in the Legislative Council and a representative of the people in the Executive Council?"

to which the Colonial Secretary replied:

> "No change is contemplated in present conditions, since any such proposals would require more exhaustive study than is now possible. The matter however will be kept in view."

? the Secretary of State may wish to discuss the matter further after he has seen the views expressed by Governors. . . . In my minute of the 24th July, I suggested that it was desirable not to consider this problem of unofficial executive councillors in isolation from the wider question of constitutional aims in West Africa, and the means which it is contemplated to adopt in order to attain those aims.

Perhaps the Secretary of State may wish to discuss at the same time the suggestion that he should write to Lord Swinton about the grant of commissions in the Army to Africans. . . .

O.G.R.W.
17.8.42

Let us discuss it as soon as possible. Sir Alan Burns and Sir B. Bourdillon advance formidable arguments in favour of their view.

C.
30.8.42

This was discussed with the Secretary of State on the 1st September, Sir George Gater, Mr. Macmillan, Sir Arthur Dawe and myself being present.

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[2] (Sir) Hilary Blood (KCMG 1944), gov of Gambia, 1942–1947.

The various arguments on both sides of the question were weighed, and some stress was laid by Sir Arthur Dawe on the possibility that this concession, so far from satisfying for the time being African political opinion, might encourage a further stream of demands in the near future, and it was felt that in view of the strongly expressed opinions of both Sir Bernard Bourdillon and Sir Alan Burns and of the fact that neither of the other Governors was opposed in principle, it would be accepting rather serious responsibility to overrule these recommendations. The Secretary of State decided, therefore, to acquiesce.

? telegraph as in draft herewith.

O.G.R.W.
3.9.42

S of S

I submit draft telegram carrying out decision reached on Sept 1st. You told me that you wished to consider whether the matter should be referred to the War Cabinet. I do not think that this is necessary, and it may create an awkward precedent.

G.H.G.
5.9.42

Sir G. Gater

The text of the announcement[3] will have to be drawn up with a good deal of circumspection. I am afraid that if left to himself the Governor of the Gold Coast, who is so keen on this innovation, may make so much of a "splash" of it that it might be inconvenient to us from a wider point of view. I think, therefore, that the Secretary of State must stipulate that he should be consulted in advance on what it is proposed to say. . . .

A.J.D.
16.9.42

[3] The announcement confirming the appointment of unofficial members to the Executive Councils in the Gold Coast and Nigeria was made on 29 Sept 1942. The Gold Coast appointments were Sir Ofori Atta and K A Korsah; those for Nigeria were A A Alakija, S B Rhodes and G H Avezathe. The text of the announcement read, *inter alia*: 'The unofficials who will serve on the Councils will do so in a personal capacity and have not been selected as representing any interest or race, but as persons in whose character and ability the Governors can have confidence and on whom they can rely as personal advisers' (CO 554/131/4, no 44A).

9 CO 96/773/20, no 7 29 Dec 1942

[Accra municipality]: letter from Sir A Burns to O G R Williams on a proposal to abolish the franchise for elections to the Accra Town Council

[Having consulted the secretary of state, Williams authorised Burns to sound public opinion on the governor's proposal outlined in this letter to abolish the franchise for municipal elections in Accra. Williams also explained that although Cranborne might have difficulty handling criticism of the proposal in parliament, it should be possible to

overcome any opposition (a) if it could be demonstrated that local opinion was in favour of the change and (b) if Burns could provide a brief explaining the defects of the existing Accra Town Council and the present system of election (Williams to Burns, tel, 6 Mar 1943, CO 96/773/20, no 8). Burns subsequently reported that he had been obliged to reconsider. He explained: 'A sub-committee of Accra Town Council composed entirely of Unofficial Members has been considering new Constitution of Council, and I have seen the draft of their report which contains many objectionable features which would, however, be popular with their less responsible constituency. If the proposals in this report are rejected by the Government (as I should advise), opportunity would arise for an attack on the Government which would be accused of opposing progress.' Burns therefore proposed to make an immediate announcement to the effect that municipal government in Accra would be organised on lines similar to that promised to Kumasi. Such an announcement, he believed, 'would be greeted with pleasure and would take the wind out of the sails of the extremists (Burns to Williams, tel, 1 June 1943, *ibid*, no 11). A new Accra Town Council Ordinance was enacted in Oct 1943.]

As you are aware, the Secretary of State has approved of my proposals for a Kumasi Town Council with an elected majority, the Governor retaining power over expenditure, the appointment and dismissal of officers, and the imposition of rates, and, most important, the power to step in and run the show if the Council fails to function or functions too badly. The election of members will be, in effect, by adult suffrage. The Bill is now in draft and I hope shortly to enact it.[1]

2. There has not been so far a word of criticism of my proposals, although I thought it possible that the ultimate control by the Governor would have been resented, and everyone seems pleased at the prospect of an African majority. I selected Kumasi deliberately for the first experiment as I thought I would get the best results there, and that if Kumasi accepted the Governor's ultimate control other towns would be more likely to follow suit.

3. I am strongly of the opinion that we should now legislate separately for each town, and not attempt to pour all our municipal ideas into the same mould, as conditions vary so much from town to town. The only thing that must be the same in each, for the present, is the ultimate control by the Governor for which Kumasi gives us the precedent.

4. I am now considering what can be done as regards Accra. The present elected members are a terrible lot, and the people themselves have no use for them. The trouble is that (as in England) the best type of electors do not vote, and votes are recorded only by hastily assembled and ignorant masses most of whom have no knowledge for whom they are voting, but present themselves at the booths with slips of paper (which often they cannot read) containing the names of candidates – slips which have been distributed by agents of the would-be candidates.

5. Norton-Jones, who as District Commissioner, Accra, has been President of the Accra Town Council for some time, and knows conditions better than any other European, has made a novel suggestion, that, instead of electing members to the new Town Council by ballot, the Native Authorities of Accra should nominate a majority of the members and the Governor should nominate the others. The Council would consist of:

2 members, nominated by the Ga Mantse[2] (the paramount chief);

8 members, each nominated by one of the subordinate chiefs;

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[1] The Kumasi Town Council Ordinance was enacted in Apr 1943.

[2] The Gã were the indigenous people of Accra.

1 member, nominated by the Chamber of Commerce and appointed by the Governor;
6 members, nominated by the Governor, who might be officials or unofficials, European or African, chosen to secure representation of the non-Ga population of Accra.

With regard to the nomination of members by the subordinate chiefs, each of these chiefs, with his elders, is the Native Authority of an area, and this Native Authority, as representative of the people, is the owner of all land held under customary title in the area concerned. These areas together make up the town of Accra and may be regarded as "wards". Norton Jones says that the proposed method of choosing members would be understood by the Africans (compare Provincial Councils and Legislative Council) and would be popular with the Gas, who are the majority of the people of Accra. He does not expect any strong opposition from others to the procedure proposed, and suggests that the non-Ga section would be satisfied by an assurance from the Governor that his nominees would be representatives of the alien minorities.

6. I think he is right as regards the Gas, but I am not sure about the others. If there could be some arrangement by which they elected their representatives instead of the Governor nominating them it might be all right, but I cannot see how we could retain the ballot for non-Gas and take it away from the Gas.

7. It would be interesting to find out, by sounding public opinion carefully, whether there would now be opposition to these proposals, but I should not care to do so until I knew whether the Secretary of State would accept them if they were agreeable to the public concerned. I appreciate the fact that these proposals may be styled reactionary, and that we will be taking away the franchise from the Accra people (who, however, only elect a minority of the members) while we have just given adult franchise to Kumasi which has never had it before. But we will be giving Accra instead a Council with an African majority, selected in accordance with African ideas, and with real instead of merely critical powers. Incidentally we do not insist on the ballot in the selection of Native Authorities who have far more power than a Town Council can ever get.

8. If the Secretary of State has no objection I should therefore like to sound public opinion and, if public opinion is favourable, go ahead with the proposals. Would you let me know as soon as you can (by telegraph if possible) as the Accra people are looking for some change in their municipality in consequence of the Kumasi decision.

10 CO 96/770/4 12–15 Jan 1943

[Legislative Council]: minutes by Sir A Dawe, Sir G Gater and Mr Stanley on the arguments against the adoption of an unofficial majority in the Gold Coast Legislative Council

Sir G. Gater

This enquiry[1] does not necessarily mean that Sir A. Burns is meditating proposals for an unofficial majority in the Gold Coast Legislature. But we know his enthusiasms

[1] See 11, para 1.

and his keenness on forcing the pace. To be on the safe side, it might be well to sound a warning note.

2. There is a strong case against unofficial majorities in the central Legislatures in West Africa. All our Colonial experience – and we have a good deal of it – is, to my mind, against the idea. It is not a question of opposing political progress: but of opposing a type of constitution which can in itself be thoroughly bad and the enemy of progress. Unofficial majorities in central Legislatures mean power without responsibility. They encourage the evolution of native politicians who can impede Government and play to the gallery in the safe assurance that they can never be called upon to form an alternative Government and that their obstructive tactics will not bring the administration to an end so long as they can force the Government to exercise its overriding powers. They encourage petty criticism at the expense of constructive ideas and are the worst form of educating native peoples in the management of their own affairs.

3. Lord Hailey, in his African enquiries, came out against unofficial majorities in central Legislatures in Africa. He considers that conditions in the West Indies are special to that part of the world and do not afford an example to be followed in Africa. He is in favour of fostering progress in the lesser governmental bodies such as territorial councils and provincial councils, and of going slow in the central Legislatures. . . .

4. Lord Hailey was specially charged to go into this problem: and I see no reason at this juncture to reject the considered conclusions which he reached. Most African Governors would, I have no doubt, be in full agreement with him.

5. I need not labour the point that to grant unofficial majorities in West Africa would get us into serious difficulties in Kenya and Northern Rhodesia. So far, we have succeeded in holding the position that the Legislatures in these dependencies must have official majorities. Once we undermine our position on that point, we shall get into serious difficulties.

? Proceed as in the draft.

A.J.D.
12.1.43

Secretary of State

I agree with Sir Arthur Dawe's conclusion that it would not be wise to introduce an unofficial majority into the Gold Coast Legislature. One of his strongest reasons is the embarrassing position which would result in East and Central Africa, particularly having regard to the recent decision by Lord Cranborne against an unofficial majority in Northern Rhodesia. I should prefer not to state the objections to unofficial majorities so strongly, and I am suggesting the omission of a sentence and certain other phrases on page 2 of Sir Arthur Dawe's draft. Otherwise I have no comments. I agree with Sir Arthur Dawe that, in view of Sir A. Burns's ardent temperament, it is wise to give him a warning of your probable view.

G.H.G.
15.1.43

I agree with the proposed action

We shall however at the end of the war be subjected to considerable pressure in

favour of political advance in West Africa. I want that adavance to be on sound, sane and durable lines.

This all points to the necessity as soon as possible of the 'Future Planning Staff', of which I have spoken before.

O.F.S.
15.1.43

11 CO 96/770/4, no 9 20 Jan 1943

[Legislative Council]: letter from O G R Williams to Sir A Burns explaining the views of the CO on the question of adopting an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council

In your telegram No.1120 of the 13th of December, you asked to be supplied with copies of the recent formulae adopted in, or proposed for, the West Indian Colonies for giving the governor overriding or paramount powers where there is an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council.

Clause VII (3) of the Trinidad Letters Patent of the 5th of May, 1941, of which I enclose a copy,[1] contains the latest wording of the Governor's reserve powers and it is being used as a model elsewhere. In the Leewards and Windwards where unofficial majorities have existed since the 1st of January, 1937, the wording is very much the same, except that the parts underlined in paragraph (a) and the whole of paragraphs (b) (c) and (d) are omitted.

I do not know the reason for your request for these formulae and I do not want to jump to conclusions. But in case you are meditating proposals for an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council, I think I ought to let you know at once that it is unlikely that the Secretary of State would be disposed to approve an innovation of this kind.[2] It is true that unofficial majorities have become established in the West Indies. But it is doubtful whether Africa should be encouraged to follow on the same path. In any case, the political circumstances in Africa are very different from those in the West Indies.

There is another point which must weigh strongly with the Secretary of State. The adoption of unofficial majorities in central Legislatures anywhere in West Africa would at present put him in a most embarrassing position in East and Central Africa. Lord Cranborne recently rejected a proposal for an unofficial majority in Northern Rhodesia: and for general political reasons in East Africa, the nature of which will be obvious to you, it is important for the present to maintain the immunity of our African central Legislatures from the unofficial majority system.

I am making these remarks just to be on the safe side. I realise that in all probability you are not contemplating any innovation on these lines in the

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[1] Not printed.

[2] At this point the first draft of this letter contained the following sentence which was subsequently deleted: 'I need not rehearse all the objections to unofficial majorities. But I think experience shows that far from encouraging healthy political evolution, they often impede it; and that the system of granting power without responsibility is not a good method of educating native populations in the best management of their own affairs.'

Legislative Council. I imagine that your object is much more likely to be the adoption of the unofficial majority system in municipal councils or other lesser organs of government, where the above objections do not apply with anything like the same force.

12 CO 554/132/10, no 1 [Feb 1943]

[Future policy in West Africa]: memorandum by O G R Williams. *Minutes* by Sir A Dawe, Sir G Gater and Mr Stanley

If the threat of war continues to recede from West Africa, one of the results may be that questions which educated Africans would otherwise have been content to leave until after the war may be pressed upon our attention at an earlier date. The questions to which I refer are those connected with the aspirations of the Africans to be given an opportunity of playing a much fuller and more influential part in the administration of the territories to which they belong.

For the reasons set out briefly below it seems desirable to prepare in advance for this possibility so as to be able to confront an incipient agitation with a definite plan of action by His Majesty's Government.

No practicable scheme will satisfy the extremists and the ill-informed people who encourage them in this country, but the realization that His Majesty's Government know what they mean to do and are in earnest about doing it should have a steadying effect which will be much needed. But it is important not to delay too long.

The proportion of Africans with even a smattering of education to the total West African population is of course exceedingly small, and only a minority of that fraction appears to be actively interested in African advancement as a political issue. That small fraction, however, appears to be capable of exerting considerable influence locally, and is mainly responsible for supplying material to keep alive the interest in this subject shown by persons and bodies in this country who profess a sympathy with the "subject races". It is obvious that the existence of even a small body of African opinion, supported as it is by members of Parliament and other persons of some influence in this country, may have a very unsettling effect upon the local community if it becomes more and more exasperated, suspicious and hostile towards His Majesty's Government. The corrosive effect upon the local community of such an increasingly malignant element might be less serious if we could look forward with confidence to a considerable period of general prosperity of which Africans of all ranks of life would enjoy a fair share. On the other hand, if the West African Colonies have to pass through a period of economic hardship, the discontent of the intelligentsia may be expected to have a much more widespread and serious effect upon the bulk of the community.

From time to time members of His Majesty's Government have referred in general terms to the benevolent intentions of His Majesty's Government towards the Colonial peoples, and hitherto it has not apparently been thought really necessary to do more than to express sentiments of this kind from time to time, while dealing *ad hoc* with any particular grievance or symptom of discontent as it arises in some concrete form, or even, on occasion, anticipating a demand by some more or less innocuous concession. To judge, however, from what has appeared from time to time since the

outbreak of war in the West African newspapers, African opinion amongst the small body of politically-minded African referred to above is becoming less and less easily satisfied with such methods.

It is not suggested that a continuance of the present opportunist policy is likely to result in serious and widespread disaffection or opposition to British administration in West Africa. What is to be feared is rather a widening breach between the European and the African as the latter becomes more educated, and an increasing sense of frustration on his part. The result of such a tendency might well be to hamper very considerably the efforts of His Majesty's Government for the general social betterment of the African races. In a word, our success in raising the standard of life, in the widest sense of the term, of the African is likely to be largely dependent upon the extent to which we can associate him as an active, intelligent and enthusiastic collaborator in the task of his own betterment.

Action is required along three main lines:

(1) The provision of greatly increased educational facilities. This is fundamental to all the rest.

(2) Greatly increased employment of Africans in the public administration and municipal government. This is clearly dependent upon the extent to which the increased educational facilities can produce men and women of the right type and with the right training.

(3) A progressive education of the African in the handling of public affairs, whether in Municipal Councils or in Legislative Councils. This is in some ways the most difficult problem of all. It is impossible to deal with it adequately in such a memorandum as this, but for the present purpose it may suffice to suggest that the line of approach should be to make political progress for the African far more closely dependent upon the two factors referred to above than has been the practice in the past.

Moreover it seems not unlikely that the confidence of the educated African in the good faith of His Majesty's Government may, to some extent, be affected by the general economic scheme into which the West African Colonies will have to be fitted in the post-war world. This is a problem which clearly cannot be discussed now.

What, it is suggested, should be attempted now is the preparation by a small committee in the Colonial Office of a plan in outline showing in the form of concrete proposals what His Majesty's Government really mean in the case of West Africa by their oft-repeated expressions of benevolent intentions towards the Colonial peoples. This outlined plan, which should cover the three points referred to above, could then be sent out to Governors, preferably in a personal letter from the Secretary of State, for their comments, and for the more detailed elaboration which will be required. It is not suggested that the plan should be tied to any sort of timetable. That clearly would be impossible; but an attempt should be made to put down on paper as near an approximation as possible to a definite programme for the first item, i.e., education, which is fundamental.

It is suggested that, when the Governors have furnished their comments on the preliminary plan, it should, after further elaboration and final acceptance by the Governors, be published in West Africa and this country at an appropriate time. Such a publication would appear to have several advantages. It would serve to dissipate the growing suspicion that His Majesty's Government really mean very little by their

general professions of benevolence. It would serve as a framework to which a good deal of the detailed development plans of the West African Colonies could be related and it would enable His Majesty's Government to resist far more effectively and convincingly any tendency to rush them into making undesirable concessions to impatient hotheads, because they would be able to point to the published plan as evidence of their sincere intention to provide definite means by which the African would be able to fit himself for a steadily increasing participation in the affairs of his own country.

Minutes on 12

Sir George Gater

I annex a memorandum by Mr. Williams. The thesis is that we now ought to frame a planned policy for West Africa.

Since the fall of France our energies in West Africa have been directed to immediate war objects. The miliary threat from the Vichy territories, the development of West Africa as a route to the east, and the diversion of shipping from the Mediterranean to the Cape overstrained the Government machine and made it difficult for it to work upon the ordinary problems of administration. But now that the war is receding from West Africa, we have got to be ready for a new phase.

There are two big problems:-

(1) material development and welfare;
(2) constitutional development.

As to (1), material development during the war will depend largely on factors external to West Africa, e.g., the supply of imported material and trained personnel. But within that limitation there is a good deal which can be done. The release of labour from military works will, for example, make it possible to go forward with the construction from local materials of schools, hospitals and clinics.

A good deal of spadework has already been done. Nigeria and the Gold Coast have already produced plans for education. A comprehensive plan covering all fields is coming forward from the Gambia. We have received Sierra Leone's plan for agricultural development; and plans covering other activities are being prepared. We are proposing a Commission on Higher Education for West Africa which ought, if possible, to get to work before the war ends.

To carry out these schemes and devise new ones we have already the machinery of the four West African Governments. The question is whether we shall want anything else. In my own view there is a case for the establishment of a central staff for development under the Achimota umbrella, (i.e. Lord Swinton or his successor), which will act as an energising and coordinating unit. I will not discuss this in detail now but I went into it with Sir Frank Stockdale[1] when he was here. Broadly the conclusion was that there was a case for establishing a Development Commissioner for West Africa with appropriate staff under the Resident Minister (or the authority which replaces him). This Commissioner would deal with development and welfare

[1] Comptroller for development and welfare in the West Indies, 1940–1945; co-chairman, Anglo-American Caribbean Commission,1942–1945; CO adviser on development planning, 1945–1948; vice-chairman, Colonial Development Corporation, 1948.

plans for West Africa as a whole, irrespective of whether the finance came from the Colonial Development and Welfare Vote or from local revenues.

With regard to (2) – constitutional development – I think it is possible for us to get a much clearer idea of our future direction in West Africa than it is in East or Central Africa. It is not suggested that it would be feasible to impose some cast-iron scheme which could be followed irrespective of circumstances. But in West Africa the main signposts which should guide us are fairly clear.

Lord Hailey was commissioned at the beginning of the war to report on the future lines of policy, and I think that in his West African reports we have, subject to certain modifications, the material from which a practicable and stable policy can be constructed. His ideas briefly are as follows. We should go cautiously at the centre while encouraging the activity and broadening the basis of local institutions. The object should be slowly to train Africans towards taking a greater part in the management of their own affairs. Measures for the greater association of Africans with the Government services should be devised. The lesser organs of Government, such as Provincial, Regional and Municipal Councils, should be developed so as to afford a training ground.

With this should go a forward policy in material development and social welfare. We should not concentrate on the pursuit of political ideals to the detriment of the pre-eminent need for improving the physical and social conditions.

There will, of course, be vocal elements in Africa who will want to quicken the tempo. We must expect a certain amount of trouble and agitation before things settle down after the war. It is idle to think that we are going to satisfy political aspirations entirely by schemes for social welfare, but in West Africa the "political" elements so far are a small portion of the population. Also it may be that by the end of the war, British prestige generally may have increased in such a way as to have a steadying effect throughout West Africa. It may therefore be feasible to look forward to the application of a sound progressive policy without having too many hand-to-mouth expedients forced on us by ephemeral agitation.

As to immediate action. As soon as the staff for planning is available in the West African Department, I would propose to have a draft scheme drawn up for consideration on the lines indicated in the above minute and in Mr. Williams' memorandum. I am not in favour of establishing any Office Committee at the moment: but in piecing the scheme together, all those in the official circle concerned will be brought into consultation. This scheme will then afford a basis for consultation with the Governors: and I think it might be worth while considering holding in London at some suitable time later on a Conference of the four Governors with the Secretary of State. But all this is for the future and rather depends on what is to happen with regard to the Resident Minister set-up.

? Proceed accordingly.

A.J.D.
9.2.43

Secretary of State

1. I think you will be interested to see a memorandum by Mr. Williams, the head of the West African Department, and a covering minute by Sir Arthur Dawe. I think it is right that planning in the widest sense should be centred in the Geographical

Department, under the supervision of the Assistant Under-Secretary, and I suggest that as soon as the necessary staff is available, the West African Department should be authorised to prepare a draft scheme in consultation with the Subject Departments of the Office concerned. Mr. Clauson[2] should be brought in on long range economic planning, and Mr. Caine[3] as Financial Adviser. Also the other Advisers and the staff of the Economic and Social Services' Departments.

2. I like Sir Arthur Dawe's idea that we should aim at the appointment of a Development Commissioner for West Africa, with appropriate staff, working under the Resident Minister, and that the Commissioner should deal with development and welfare plans as a whole.

3. I do not know whether you will wish to have any preliminary discussion or whether you are prepared to let the Department proceed with the preparation of a draft plan for your consideration

G.H.G.
16.2.43

This is *excellent*! Please proceed with the draft plan.[4]

O.F.S.
19.2.43

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[2] G L M Clauson (Sir Gerard Clauson, KCMG 1945); CO assistant under-secretary of state, 1940–1951 (responsible in 1943 for the Economic Dept).

[3] S Caine (Sir Sydney Caine, KCMG 1947); CO assistant secretary from 1940, financial adviser to the secretary of state, 1942; assistant under-secretary of state, 1944; deputy under-secretary of state, 1947–1948; 3rd secretary, Treasury, 1948.

[4] The draft plan culminated in the memo by O G R Williams on 'Constitutional development in West Africa' which was discussed at a CO meeting over which Stanley presided on 29 July 1943; see the Introduction to this volume, p xxxvii–xxxviii.

13 CO 96/770/4, no 13 28 Oct 1943

[Legislative Council]: CO note of a discussion with Mr Stanley on the secretary of state's visit to West Africa; question of an unofficial majority in the Gold Coast Legislative Council and the representation of Ashanti [Extract]

. . . Turning to the Gold Coast the Secretary of State said that the whole question there has been completely upset by the sudden request of the Asantehene for representation of Ashanti in the Legislative Council. It would not be possible to add three representatives of Ashanti without creating an unofficial majority in the Legislature unless of course further official additions were made to balance the unofficial representation. The Secretary of State said that it was clear that the Asantehene had been "got at" by the lawyers and had been prevailed upon to put his signature to the memorandum submitted by the Joint Provincial Council and African unofficial members of the Legislative Council only because he had not really understood the proposals but did not wish to appear to be opposed to the educated elements. It was obvious that he had no conception of the functions of an elected

Minister for Home Affairs and when the Secretary of State had explained the functions of such a minister to him he had been both surprised and resentful. This *volte face* on the part of Ashanti put the Gold Coast position completely in the melting pot. The governor was now inclined to consider that the best course would be to make a complete break with the existing set-up and to organise the Gold Coast on a basis of three Regional Councils, one for Ashanti and one for the Eastern and Western Provinces of the Colony (the present Central Provinces being divided between the East and the West). These Regional Councils would be constituted on the same basis as the present Provincial Councils and the proposed Advisory Council for Ashanti and each of them would elect members of the Legislative Council. There would be no election to the Legislative Council on the present direct basis. Ultimately there would be a similar Regional Council for the Northern territories, but the Governor's present view was that this would not be possible for some time and the Northern territories would have representation in the Legislative Council by nominated members. The effect of these changes would be to give the Gold Coast a Legislative Council with an unofficial majority but the unofficial majority would not be directly elected but would be elected from Regional Councils which were themselves representative of Native Authorities. The Governor thought there might be a chance of securing agreement to a scheme of this kind with the creation of an unofficial majority as an inducement. The difficulty which the Secretary of State said the Governor fully appreciated was that the creation of a Legislative Council which had an unofficial majority might have very awkward reactions elsewhere and it might not be possible to go ahead with proposals on this basis in the Gold Coast for that reason. If, however, it was felt that this could be done the Secretary of State's present feeling was that what the Governor had adumbrated would be very satisfactory. He had left it that the Governor would consider these ideas whilst he was on leave in South Africa and on his return he would submit detailed proposals which would then be discussed with him when he came home for consultations in the Spring. . . .

14 CO 96/782/1, no 7 — 10 May 1944

[Gold Coast constitution]: CO note of a discussion with Sir A Burns. *Brief* prepared by the CO in advance of Burns's visit to London

Sir Alan Burns explained his constitutional proposals summarised in the Brief.

He said that the Ashanti politicians were apparently determined to press for representation on the Legislative Council even if there was to be an unofficial African majority in which they themselves would be in a minority position.

The Governor also made it clear that in his opinion any attempt at reaching an amicable understanding with the Colony and Ashanti politicians would fail unless he were in a position to concede an unofficial African majority.

The form of constitution Sir Alan has at present in mind is substantially that summarised in the Brief, with some small variations. There would be three "Advisory Councils", one for the Colony which would replace the existing Provincial Councils and Joint Provincial Council, one for Ashanti and a nucleus of one for the Northern territories which it would not be practicable to develop for sometime after the others.

As regards the other two "Advisory Councils", they would consist of Africans with

only a few officials presided over by the respective Chief Commissioners (for he envisages a Chief Commissioner for the Colony and the abolition of the post of Secretary for Native Affairs), and the Councils would be given power, subject to a final veto by the Governor, to decide on the detailed allocation of money voted by the Legislative Council for certain specific services, e.g. Agriculture and Education.

These "Advisory Councils" would also be Electoral Colleges for the Legislative Council. It would, however, be politically necessary for sometime to come to supplement members so elected by municipal members elected by ballot, as at present, for Kumasi in Ashanti and for the existing municipalities in the Colony which return members to the Legislative Council.

In the Legislative Council he was in favour of confining the official representation to the smallest possible numbers. It will be necessary for the Colonial Secretary to lead the Government side, the Attorney-General to introduce Bills and the Financial Secretary to introduce the budget. There would also be the three Chief Commissioners, – the Chief Commissioner for the Northern territories being the only representative of that division.

As regards nomenclature, Sir Alan made it clear that he was not wedded to the terms "Advisory Councils" or "Legislative Council". It is possible that African opinion might prefer to retain the term Joint Provincial Council for the Advisory Council which he proposed for the Colony. He considered it much more important to let the Africans choose for themselves in the matter of names, rather than aim at a uniform nomenclature whether within the territory or as between the Gold Coast or other West African territories.

As regards municipal representation, Sir Alan said that there was no demand for an extension of the ballot box system. It produced fluent orators who were popular because they abused the Government but were, in other respects, so inferior as political representatives to many of the Chiefs chosen as members of the Legislative Council by the present Joint Provincial Council, that he thought it possible that in time a movement might grow up in favour of replacing the ballot box system by the system of indirect election, at present in force for the other African members of the Legislative Council, which he would propose to continue in the case of the two Advisory Councils.

The concession of an unofficial majority presupposed the possession by the Governor of adequate overriding powers. He would like to have some advice upon the form such power should take and felt some doubt whether the most recent West Indian models would suit Gold Coast conditions which were politically less advanced and in which more complete powers of veto might be necessary.

The Chairmanship of the proposed new Central Legislature presented a difficult problem. Sir Alan considered it important that the Governor should not preside, especially as, when a question arose of the exercise of his overriding powers, it might be politically inexpedient that if he were presiding he should give an immediate decision; whereas it would probably be better, when such a question arose, that it should be referred to him by the President of the Council for his decision after mature reflection. On the other hand it was very difficult to suggest a satisfactory alternative unless he could appoint the Chief Justice. He did not think that this would mean great demands on the Chief Justice's time, as the session of the Council would only be for about four days. If it were to be the Chief Justice, he would, of course, be in the position of an umpire with no original vote, though it might be

necessary to give him a casting vote. A possible arrangement would be for the Governor to be President with the Chief Justice as Deputy President and for the Governor to preside in the first instance so as to steer the new Legislative body through its earliest stages of development. It was agreed that this point had better be left open for further consideration.

Sir Alan said that he had discussed his proposals with Sir Arthur Richards,[1] who took the line that he could not contemplate an unofficial majority in Nigeria at present but that he did not consider that it would embarrass him if an unofficial majority were conceded in the Gold Coast. Sir Alan did not know what reactions in Sierra Leone Sir Hubert Stevenson would expect but he would, if possible, discuss the matter with him on his way back.

Sir Alan referred to a letter which he had received from Sir Arthur Dawe, from which he gathered that political reactions in East Africa might make it difficult to concede unofficial majorities in West Africa. He did not see, however, that in view of the entirely different circumstances, it would be possible to argue effectively in favour of an unofficial European majority in Kenya, because an unofficial African majority had been conceded in a West African Colony. Sir George Gater was disposed to agree with this view. In West Africa itself, Sir Alan pointed out that the Gold Coast differed from the other territories in that the Gold Coast Chiefs who, under the system of election through "Electoral Colleges", which he proposed to continue, would compose the greater part of the unofficial African majority were, on the whole, a stabilising element quite different from the type of ballot box politicians representing the municipalities.

Sir Alan urged that the Secretary of State should authorise him to inform the African politicians, at whatever time he thought most expedient in the course of negotiations, that he would be prepared to ask the Secretary of State to grant an African unofficial majority. He would not, of course, commit the Secretary of State to the grant of such a majority but he attached great importance to being allowed to say that he would be prepared to ask the Secretary of State for such a concession, with the knowledge that if he did so it would be granted. He also wished to be given an entirely free hand as to how, and at what stage in the negotiations, he should make this offer.

No conclusions were reached in the course of the discussion which merely aimed at elucidating Sir Alan's views, and it was agreed that the next step was to arrange for a discussion with the Secretary of State, especially on the crucial question with regard to the grant of an unofficial African majority.

Brief for 14

1. The principal documents to be considered are the memorandum to the King-in-Council from the Joint Provincial Councils of the Gold Coast Colony and the Confederacy Council, Ashanti, together with African unofficial members of the Legislative Council.[2]

2. Sir Alan Burns' own proposals for constitutional development. In his broadcast talk in the Gold Coast the Secretary of State said that he would give this memorandum his earnest consideration.

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[1] Gov of Nigeria, 1943–1947.

[2] A copy of the text is on CO 96/776/17.

The memorandum asks for

(a) an elected majority in the Executive Council;
(b) an elected majority in the Legislative Council;
(c) the appointment of an elected Minister for Home Affairs responsible to the Legislative Council and removable by an address from the Council upon a vote of the majority.

The new form of Legislative Council advocated would include elected representatives of Ashanti.

The memorandum was signed by the Asantehene and by members of the Ashanti Confederacy Council.

The Ashanti Confederacy Council has likewise passed a resolution asking for representation of Ashanti on the Legislative Council and an "effective African representation" on that Council. It also asks for the repeal of the Ordinance setting up the Ashanti Advisory Council.

The Governor's counter proposals are briefly as follows:-

(a) Executive Council. No change except that he sees no objection to increasing unofficial representation up to 4 nominated unofficials.
(b) Advisory Councils. He is willing that there should be a clear elected majority in the Ashanti Council.

The Provincial Councils of the Colony to be transformed into an Advisory Council to include elected representatives of the chiefs and of the municipalities with a few nominated official and unofficial members.

There would be a majority of elected members.
(c) Central Legislature. To be presided over by the Colonial Secretary and not the Governor. In addition to the President, the Central Legislature would contain

5 *ex-officio* members.
3 persons nominated by the Governor to represent various interests.
9 persons elected by the Colony Advisory Council referred to at (b).
3 persons elected by the Ashanti Advisory Council.

There would thus be an elected majority.

An essential accompaniment to an elected majority must be the possession by the Governor of overriding powers.

Sir Alan Burns went to see Sir Arthur Richards at the end of March and a note of their discussion has been drawn up which no doubt will be available when Sir Alan arrives in this country. Presumably the possible effect of Sir Alan's proposals upon public opinion in the Gold Coast was discussed between the two Governors.

The crucial point clearly is the question of an unelected majority in the Legislative Council. The Governor has refrained from going into details in his proposals until this question has been settled as the decision with regard to it will affect the rest of his proposals to a large extent.

Possible reactions in Northern Rhodesia and Kenya if an unofficial majority is conceded anywhere in West Africa, especially an elected majority, will no doubt be taken into account.

15 CO 96/782/1, no 8 23 May 1944

[Gold Coast constitution]: CO note of conclusions reached at a meeting between Mr Stanley and Sir A Burns

It was agreed that the constitutional proposals contained in the memorandum of September, 1943, put forward by the Joint Provincial Council of the Gold Coast Colony, the Confederacy Council of Ashanti, and African Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council could not be accepted as they stood. On the other hand Sir Alan Burns was strongly of opinion that it would be useless to attempt to formulate any alternative proposals for modifying the present constitution unless the Secretary of State was prepared to concede an unofficial elected African majority for the Central Legislature.

2. Sir Alan Burns' present ideas as to the modified form of constitution which he thinks would be accepted may be stated briefly as follows. They reproduce, with some variations, the suggestions contained in his secret despatch of the 7th of October, 1943.

(1) The Gold Coast Colony Joint Provincial Council should be formed into an Advisory Council either under that name or under its existing title or some other which proved locally acceptable. This body would have two functions:-

(a) It would act, as is at present the case, as an electoral college for the election of provincial members of the Central Legislature.

(b) In addition to advising on legislative and other matters referred to it, it would be given power subject to a final veto by the Governor to decide on the detailed allocation of money voted by the Central Legislature for certain specific services, e.g., agriculture or roads.

Sir Alan Burns attached considerable importance to the Advisory Council being given some such functions as described at (b) in addition to its electoral functions.

(2) The Ashanti Confederacy Council, together with representatives of some elements of Ashanti which are at present not represented in that Council, should be formed into a similar Advisory Council for Ashanti, having the same functions as the Council for the Colony, and if desired retaining its original name.

(3) There should be an embryo Advisory Council created for the Northern Territories which would not actually be brought into being until much later on when sufficient political advance had been made in that area. For the time being the representative of the Northern Territories' Council in the Central Legislature would be the Chief Commissioner.

The other two Advisory Councils would consist predominantly, if not entirely, of Africans, but would be presided over by the two Chief Commissioners respectively. (Sir Alan Burns proposes to do away with the post of Secretary of Native Affairs in the Colony and to substitute that of Chief Commissioner.).

If there should be political difficulties about the Chief Commissioners presiding over the two Advisory Councils, then arrangements will be made to enable them to have access to their respective Councils and to send messages and explanations to them.

(4) Central Legislature. The Central Legislature would be composed as follows: 6 ex officio members – namely, the Colonial Secretary to lead the Government side; the Attorney General to introduce bills; the Financial Secretary to introduce the budget; and the three Chief Commissioners.

Two or three persons nominated by the Governor to represent various interests, e.g. mining, commerce, etc.

Not less than six persons elected by the Colony Advisory Council.

Three persons elected by the Ashanti Advisory Council.

In addition, it would be necessary to retain, at any rate for some time to come, the three elected municipal members for the Colony representing the municipalities of Accra, Cape Coast and Sekondi. It would also, Sir Alan thought, be necessary to concede an elected municipal member for the new Kumasi municipality.

(5) The question who should preside over the Central Legislature presented some difficulty. The Governor was inclined to be in favour of a provision whereby he would himself be president, but with power to appoint another in his place. He might preside himself at the outset in order to steer the new Legislature through its earlier stages, but he was strongly of opinion that it was desirable especially in connection with the exercise of the Governor's reserve powers (see below) that the Governor should not normally preside. He was disposed to think that, if he did not himself preside, the Chief Justice would be the most suitable selection. Unless the Central Legislature sat much more frequently than is the case with the present Legislative Council, it should not add greatly to the Chief Justice's work.

In any case it would be provided that the President of the Legislature should have no vote (either original or casting) and that any measure which was not carried would be automatically lost.

(6) To enable such a constitution as is outlined above to be workable it was essential that the Governor should have reserve powers. The form which those powers should take and their exact scope Sir Alan had not yet fully considered, and he would propose to let the Secretary of State have his recommendations in due course.

3. Sir Alan Burns made it clear that he did not contemplate putting proposals such as those outlined above to the African political leaders as proposals approved by the Secretary of State. What he wanted from the Secretary of State was a definite assurance that if, as a result of negotiations with the Africans, he was able to recommend a modified constitution, on the lines outlined above, as being one which would be accepted locally, he could rely upon the Secretary of State giving his substantial approval, subject to modifications or criticisms of minor details. He would make it clear to those with whom he was negotiating that he was prepared to put certain proposals to the Secretary of State but could give no indication as to whether or not the Secretary of State was likely to approve them.

4. The Secretary of State said that he was prepared to give his approval to a modified constitution on the lines sketched by Sir Alan Burns but on the distinct understanding that, apart from the four municipal members to which Sir Alan had referred, the form of election would be substantially that at present in force in the case of the 6 provincial members of the existing Legislative Council. As regards Sir Alan Burns' method of negotiation with the African political leaders, the Secretary of State was prepared to give him a free hand, on the understanding, of course, that nothing was said as to the likelihood of the Secretary of State having given a promise of approval to any specific proposals.

5. The Secretary of State made it clear that he was strongly of opinion that the President of the Central Legislature should have no vote. He was agreeable to Sir Alan proceeding in the way suggested above.

6. The Secretary of State also agreed that it should be open to the Governor to negotiate, not only with the members of the Legislative Council and the Ashanti Confederacy Council, but also with any other representatives of the Joint Provincial Council who were not in the Legislature, but whom it was desired to include in the negotiations. Also one or two other leading Africans such as Dr. Danquah might be added if the Governor found it expedient to do so.

7. Sir Alan informed the Secretary of State that he had discussed his proposals with Sir Arthur Richards who, although not prepared at present to recommend an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council of Nigeria, did not consider that such a concession in the Gold Coast would seriously embarrass him. Sir Alan did not know the views of Sir Hubert Stevenson but he would try, if possible, to discuss the matter with him when passing through Sierra Leone on his way back to the Gold Coast.

8. The Secretary of State considered that in any case it would be desirable that he should himself write to Sir Arthur Richards and Sir Hubert Stevenson and inform them of the outcome of his discussion with Sir Alan Burns in order to give them an opportunity of comment before Sir Alan Burns began his negotiations.

The Secretary of State would inform the Governor by telegram as soon as his way was clear for him to start his negotiations. He would also arrange for Sir Hilary Blood to be consulted on the latter's arrival in this country next month. Sir Alan Burns would, no doubt, take a suitable opportunity, before the negotiations started, of telling the Resident Minister the general plan of action that had been agreed upon with the Secretary of State.[1]

[1] The first meeting to discuss the constitution was held in Accra on 27 July 1944. Burns described the proceedings in a letter to Williams at the CO: 'At the meeting I explained the main objections to the proposals in the Constitution Memorandum, and then, at the suggestion of the delegates, I told them what I *did* agree to (making much of their bright ideas about a Chief Commissioner for the Colony, etc.); and I then, after pressure, gave them some suggestions for an improved Constitution. The Ashanti delegates pressed for elected members of Executive Council, but I was firm on this, and the Colony people accepted my views. After I had impressed on them that my suggestions were no more than suggestions, I gave them the opportunity to propose an adjournment to consider these suggestions and consult their principals; I think our next meeting will be about the 17th August.

Some of the delegates have since stated to Mangin that they would accept my proposals with one or two small amendments, but I do not know whether they will be able to get their principals to accept them. In the mean time, Dr. Danquah and some of his friends are trying to make mischief. Danquah was very annoyed at not being selected as a representative by the Joint Provincial Council (what a good thing it is that I decided to let the Council choose their own representatives), and further annoyed when he heard from the Chiefs that I would have nothing to do with the appointment of a Minister for Home Affairs, a post which Danquah hoped to fill. . . .' (Burns to Williams, 30 July 1944, CO 96/782/1, no 22).

16 CAB 104/257 14 June 1944

[War production in the Gold Coast]: letter from Lord Swinton (resident minister, West Africa) to Mr Stanley on the performance of the Gold Coast government

Your letter of the 8th of June on cocoa has just reached me. I will give the most careful consideration to your plan,[1] as a plan and apart from personalities, and I shall

[1] For the establishment of a local cocoa board in the Gold Coast.

probably want to telegraph to elucidate one or two points when I have studied it more closely. But as the operation of the plan in the Gold Coast depends upon the Gold Coast Government, I must give you immediately my reactions to it from that angle.

2. On cumulative experience I have formed so poor an opinion of the competence of the Gold Coast Government as at present constituted, that I should be bound to advise my Ministerial colleagues not to entrust to that Government any new enterprise which could substantially affect the Allied war effort. I regret that I am unwillingly compelled to give that as my firm and considered judgment.

3. Fortunately the main war effort of the Gold Coast has depended little upon the Government. Recruiting has been in the hands of G.H.Q., whose Headquarters are in the Colony, and of an excellent Area Commander with a long and intimate knowledge of the Gold Coast peoples. Apart from industrial diamonds, the important mineral production is manganese and bauxite. A highly competent Company is responsible for manganese production and shipment, and the Ministry of Aircraft Production and the Ministry of Works, both now admirably served by their people on the spot, are responsible for bauxite.

4. The only production activities which have depended on the local Government are timber, palm kernels, rubber and cocoa. In timber the Forestry Department has done well. In all the others the Government has failed in its contribution.

5. On palm kernels the Gold Coast Government protested their inability to reach the target which they should attain without difficulty. Last year the Eastern Provinces did well; but production in the Central and Western Provinces was so bad that I had to deliver a homily in my New Year Message. Production this year is satisfactory, and I have little doubt that the target will be reached and possibly exceeded. But this is much more due to the efforts of the firms than to the activities of Government.

6. Rubber is most disappointing, and the Government has been very dilatory in producing the plan which they agreed is necessary, and which the Ministry of Supply has approved in principle. After two months delay I am still waiting for the details of the simple plan for a bounty or bonus to middlemen who exceed their basic tonnage; although I was assured in April that the figures of the deliveries of individual middlemen, on which the scheme is to be based, were all available.

7. You and your officers know from your own observation the deplorable record on cocoa. Apart from the praiseworthy efforts of a few scientists, who obtained little encouragement, nothing was being done to survey or counteract the diseases which are manacing this basic crop. On price, as lately as last September, the Governor informed you in my presence that the situation was satisfactory, although a cursory enquiry subsequently disclosed beyond any doubt that the whole of the farmers had lost heart; and your officers and the Board agreed with me that a 70% increase in price guaranteed for two years was essential.

Again nothing has been done to deal with the crushing load of indebtedness under which the industry labours, and little has been done to encourage co-operation.

8. Lastly, the Governor has been singularly unfortunate in his handling of the firms who have acted as his Government's agent, at his Government's request; and without whose complete co-operation neither the collection of produce nor the distribution of essential goods could be carried out. He has, in my opinion, treated these firms with a mixture of feebleness and insolence well calculated to discourage their co-operation.

9. In these circumstances, I must state plainly that in my opinion this Government should not be entrusted with further responsibility for war production if that can be avoided. If it should emerge that your proposals do not affect Allied supplies, but only the local interests of the territory and its people, I would strongly advise you to strengthen very materially the Administration here before you entrust it with new powers and duties.

10. I greatly regret that I must write in this sense; but in fairness to you and my colleagues, and indeed to the Colony, I can do no other.

11. If you so desire I shall, of course, be quite willing to show this letter to the Governor; indeed, I should prefer to do so.

12. My criticism of the Gold Coast Government has no application to Nigeria.

17 CO 554/152/1, no 6 14 Mar 1947

[Africanisation of the public service]: circular minute by Sir A Burns to his Colonial Service staff[1]

1. On the 17th August, 1942, I addressed a confidential minute to the senior members of the Colonial Service in the Gold Coast, explaining to them some aspects of the policy which I intended to pursue in the government of the Gold Coast. There is nothing in that minute which I wish to retract or modify, but, with the coming of peace and the opening of what I hope will be an era of rapid economic, social and political development, it may be that I can usefully amplify, for the benefit of all European officers in the Service, some of the points I referred to in my earlier minute.

2. The fundamental policy of this Government has been stated on many occasions. It is to educate the people of the Gold Coast, both individually and collectively, so that they may be able to stand on their own feet without support, to manage their own affairs without supervision, and to determine their own future for themselves. They must be trained in all technical and administrative work until they are able to conduct the public service without the assistance of European officers. Self-governing institutions, the Native Authorities and Town Councils, must be fostered and developed, so that through them the African may learn the difficult art of government. The people must be encouraged to take a greater share in the day to day business of governing the country by the inclusion of an increasing number of African members in Advisory Committees, Commissions of Enquiry, and bodies of this kind. Our policy can achieve lasting results only if we carry the people with us, and give them the opportunity by constant discussion to share in the planning of their own future.

3. All officers are aware that the steady Africanisation of the Public Service is the settled policy of Government, but there are still a few who are not prepared to face this fact and accept its implications. While none of us wishes to see any falling off in the efficiency of any department, or of any branch of the Government, and while it is

[1] For an explanation of the circumstances in which this minute was written, together with a brief account of reactions to it in the CO and in Africa, see BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part IV, 347, note.

the duty of all officers to exercise their administrative, professional and technical skill to the best advantage, we must all realise that our principal duty is to use such superior training or qualifications as we may possess to help and educate our African colleagues to take an ever-increasing share of public responsibility. I expect all officers, and especially those in the more responsible pos's, to co-operate to the full in promoting this policy, and in impressing its importance on those subordinate to them. Any individual officer who does not take the educational side of his work seriously, and make a constructive effort to assist in the carrying out of Government's policy in this matter, fails in an essential part of his duty. I fully realise that it will be some time before the Gold Coast people will be able efficiently to man all the posts in the Public Service of their Country, but I expect all European officials to work loyally towards this goal.

4. Considerable progress in Africanisation has already been made and there are numbers of scholars now receiving a higher education in the United Kingdom to fit them for senior posts in the Service. For all these men, our present colleagues and those who will join the Service later, I bespeak the sympathy and assistance of all European officers. We shall be failing in our duty if we do not give them all the help that lies in our power. It is easy enough to find faults in Africans, to point out examples of African officials who have failed in character and integrity, and to demonstrate their incapacity for difficult and responsible work – but there have also been European officials who have done no credit to the Service. There are bound to be failures in any Civil Service which sets itself a high standard, whether in Africa or elsewhere; the more generous our attitude and the more sympathetic our understanding of the difficulties of our African colleagues, the fewer will those failures be. I must here particularly emphasise the duty of senior Administrative Officers and Heads of Departments to help along (and not to obstruct) the Government policy of Africanisation of the Service, and to set their subordinates a good example in the treatment of African staff, and particularly in their training.

5. The role of many European officials in the Gold Coast is in fact gradually changing from an executive to an advisory one, and it must be clearly realised that with the acceleration of the process of Africanisation in the Administration and in all Departments, there will soon be little room for officials who do not regard the training of African staff as their primary responsibility.

6. Nor must this training be confined to the Civil Service alone. It is our duty to educate the whole population, and this duty is by no means confined to the members of the Education Department. Education is not given only in schools and colleges. The mass of the people must be taught new and healthier ways of living, improved methods of agriculture and other work, and a greater sense of public responsibility. A fundamental characteristic of British colonial policy is that we do not try to assimilate the colonial peoples, nor to turn them into imitation Scotsmen or Englishmen, but to help them to develop a higher civilisation of their own, soundly based on their own traditional institutions and culture.

7. Most officers realise that they have an educational mission to carry out, but some are so anxious to promote efficiency at all costs that they tend to become impatient and to do things themselves, instead of showing the African how to do them, and giving him the opportunity to learn by his own mistakes. I realise that in spite of the end of the war staff is still desperately short, and that many officers are still working at great pressure and have little time for teaching their juniors. I know

also that it is often quicker to do a piece of work oneself than to show an inexperienced subordinate how to do it, but first things must come first, and the duty of teaching must have first priority.

8. The maintenance and development of sound administration in a colony depends almost entirely on the personal relationship that exists between the European officials (and unofficials) and the people of the country. There is a very good tradition in this respect in the Gold Coast, and we must see to it that it is preserved and developed. If the African believes that the European official seeks honestly to assist and teach him, he will be receptive of ideas and the teaching will endure. The African, like anyone else, is naturally reluctant to admit his shortcomings to unsympathetic persons, but he knows quite well in his own mind that he has much to learn, and he is anxious to learn whatever he can. Like ourselves, while he is willing to be led by a friend, he will not be driven by anybody, and least of all by one whom he does not trust. He is very sensitive and the bad manners, or even the unsympathetic attitude, of one official may be sufficient to undo a great deal of the good work done by a number of others. Every Government officer must bear this constantly in mind.

9. I am aware that there are some "die-hards" who consider that we are moving too fast in giving greater political power to the Colonial peoples and in the Africanisation of the Service. If there are any such "die-hards" in the Public Service of the Gold Coast I suggest to them that they should consider seriously whether they can conscientiously continue to serve a Government with whose policy they are in fundamental disagreement. For this policy is clear and there is no prospect of it being changed except in the direction of still faster progress.

10. Considerable progress has already been made towards the goal of responsible government, and I hope and believe that further progress is inevitable. There is now a Legislative Council with a majority of elected members representing both the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti; it will not be very long before the Northern Territories also are represented in this Council by elected members. The Governor still retains "reserve powers" which he can use in an emergency to over-ride the wishes of the elected majority, but if, as I think they will, the members of Legislative Council exercise their new responsibilities with discretion it should seldom be necessary for the Governor to use his own powers. On the Executive Council there are three unofficial members. In four municipalities there are Town Councils with elected majorities, and more and more Africans are serving on Advisory Committees where their services are of great value. There is no one who can explain the African point of view so well as the African himself, and no Government can hope to govern well unless it pays careful attention to the wishes of the people it is governing. We must make sure that the African understands our motives, and to do so we must take into our confidence the leaders of the people, and discuss with them, patiently and with sympathy, all our plans. It is only by the exercise of the greatest patience and tact that we can hope to attain success in our task.

11. Native Authorities (performing many of the functions which in England are the duty of Local Authorities) are making rapid progress, and these, with the municipal Councils, are the best schools for self-government available to the Africans. They must be helped in every way, and officers must bear in mind that it is intended that these forms of local government should, as they become more experienced, bear an increasing share of responsibility for all those services which

from their nature can properly be administered locally. Educative and sympathetic assistance should be given to those organs of local government as a prime duty by all officers. I must emphasise that Native Authorities are not independent administrations, but a part of the Government of the Gold Coast, and as such are entitled to the full and sympathetic co-operation of every Civil Servant.

12. In conclusion I wish to record my appreciation of what the Gold Coast Service has already achieved. Recent political advances in the Central and Local Governments and in the Native Administrations have been possible only because of the confidence which exists between the various sections of the community and have in no small measure been due to the fact that many individual members of the Service have displayed those very qualities in their relationship with the Africans which it is the purpose of this minute to emphasise and encourage.

I am, indeed, glad that the writing of this minute gives me an opportunity of paying tribute to the devotion of duty of so many officers of this Government and to recognise the excellent service which they have given, and are still giving, to the people of this country.

13. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has approved the terms of this minute, which should be carefully noted and acted upon by all serving European officers. It will be shown to all overseas candidates for appointment to the Gold Coast Service before they are appointed, since anyone who is not prepared to serve in the spirit of the terms set out in this minute is not the type of official required by this Government.

18 CO 537/3564, no 38 Nov 1947

[Constitutional development in Africa]: conclusions of African Governors' Conference, 1947

(1) While certain Governors did not agree with all the statements in, and implications of, Part I of the Colonial Office memorandum (A.G.C. No. 2)[1] it was generally agreed that, in order to make it clear beyond doubt to the people of Colonial Territories that the relationship between this country and those Territories is based genuinely on a partnership and that the Governments of Colonial Territories are their Governments rather than Governments belonging to an outside authority:-

(a) Colonial Governments in Africa should be built up to the maximum possible extent as entities of their own, adapted to a gradual evolution towards the ultimate stage of self-government and with the maximum possible participation of local people on the executive side of both central and local government;
(b) the maximum possible degree of devolution of authority from the Secretary of State to Colonial Governments should take place;
(c) the relations between H.M. Government and Colonial Governments should to the maximum possible extent be conducted by means of consultation and discussion rather than by the issue of instructions;

[1] Prepared by the CO Agenda Committee as one of the papers for the African Governors' Conference, this memo, entitled 'Constitutional development in Africa', is reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part I, 59, Appendix III.

(d) the authority of Legislative Councils in all matters of local concern should be recognised, particularly where an unofficial majority has been established, and the position of H.M. Government should be secured not by means of detailed formal control but through the powers held in reserve in the constitution, which should only be used under the most exceptional circumstances;
(e) the importance of form in the relationship between H.M. Government and the Colonial governments should be recognised. While it was admitted that detailed control over the actions of Colonial Governments is to a large extent not in fact exercised at present, it was felt that the formal powers of control are still too large and that the relationship which it is desired to establish is thus obscured. It was agreed that formal powers of control should not be retained when they are not required in practice.

(2) With regard to the methods of carrying the above principles into effect, the Conference reached the following conclusions:-

(a) Part II of the Colonial Office memorandum suggests that, in order to increase the efficiency of government, to adapt the government machine more readily to its gradual evolution towards self-government and to provide a more effective means for the participation of local people in the executive side of government, the organisation of the Central executive machine known as the "Member system" should be introduced wherever possible. The Governors of those territories which have already adopted this system spoke in favour of it, but the other Governors opposed its introduction in their territories and no general agreement was reached. It was agreed that the question whether this system should be introduced on the lines suggested in the Colonial Office memorandum, should be considered by each Government in relation to the conditions in its territory;
(b) It was agreed that in order that local people should play as large a part as possible on the constructive side of government and in the initiation of policy, the maximum use should be made of consultative machinery in whatever form is considered most appropriate. Use of the system of Committees of Legislative Council in order to associate unofficial members with the affairs of particular Departments was suggested as a fruitful method of securing this consultation as far as unofficial members are concerned.
(c) It was agreed that the greatest importance attached to the development of responsible local government in the Colonies.

19 CO 537/3559, no 2 — 12 Dec 1947

[United Gold Coast Convention]: letter from K G Bradley[1] to Mr Creech Jones on the foundation of the UGCC. *Minutes* by J K Thompson[2] and Sir T Lloyd

I have the honour to report the foundation of a political body entitled "The United Gold Coast Convention."

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[1] (Sir) Kenneth Bradley (Kt 1963), Colonial Service from 1926; under-secretary, Gold Coast, 1946, and officer administering the government, 1947; editor, Colonial Service journal, *Corona*, from 1948.
[2] CO principal, West Africa Dept.

2. After preliminary meetings attended only by the organisers of the movement, a number of public or semi-public meetings were held in Saltpond and Accra during the month of July with the principal object of attracting attention to the inaugural meeting which was held at Saltpond on the 4th of August.

3. I attach a copy of the constitution adopted by the promoters of the party in May.[3] It is understood that subsequently this has been somewhat amended, though no copies of the amended constitution are at present available.

4. I attach also brief notes on the persons who have so far played leading parts in the formation of this party.

5. It would be premature to attempt at this stage to assess the possible strength of this potentially nationalist movement as its promoters are still working out the details of the political programme for which they propose to seek support. I shall endeavour in the succeeding paragraphs, however, to analyse some of its present aims and its relationship to other political movements in the Gold Coast, West Africa and beyond.

6. The first aim of the party, as set out in paragraph 4(i) of the draft constitution, is

> "To ensure that the control and direction of Government shall within the shortest possible time pass into the hands of the Natural Rulers and their people."

This aim is, however, greatly modified by the third aim,

> "To ensure that persons elected to represent the people and their natural rulers in the present Legislative Council, or in any future Legislative Assembly and Senate, shall be so elected by reason of their competence and not otherwise."

An earlier draft of the constitution, which seems to have been modified in order that the party might pay at least lip-service to the chiefs and the present system of local government throughout Native Authorities, provided for universal adult suffrage and aimed *inter alia* "to seek and secure legislation against the personal membership of anointed Chiefs in the Legislative and Executive Councils where they take oaths not sanctioned at their installation."

7. In fact, one of the party's immediate aims is to wrest power from the chiefs. Those leading chiefs of the Colony with whom I have discussed the Convention agree that this is the main immediate aim of the promoters of the party; and they are somewhat disturbed by the party's activities. This assessment of the Convention's present objective is borne out also by the reports of the meetings so far held. None of the leading chiefs of the Colony have been invited to take any part in the framing of the Constitution, nor has any approach been made to the Joint Provincial Council or to the Ashanti Confederacy Council. It is possible that one of the main claims for popular support that the Convention will put forward will be that the colony chiefs have consistently refused to extend the membership of the Joint Provincial Council to those who are not chiefs and thus make it more widely representative of public opinion, and that the chiefs no longer represent the people, particularly the younger

[3] Enclosures to this letter not printed.

educated sections of the people, but are now merely agents of the central Government. The Chiefs are, however, alive to the reproach of undue conservatism and have been discussing the question of broader representation.

8. The first trial of strength between the Chiefs and the other members of the Legislative Council on the one hand and Dr. Danquah,[4] as spokesman for the Convention, occurred during the September session of the Legislative Council. Dr. Danquah gave preliminary advice to the Clerk of one Private Bill and three Motions, and was clearly intending to launch the Convention in the Council with a coruscating display of political fireworks. Naturally, but unfortunately for him, he failed to consult the Joint Provincial Council, his "constituency", with the result that in private meetings of the unofficial members he was compelled to withdraw his Bill and all his motions, except one which was subsequently introduced in a revised form by Nana Tsibu Darku IX[5] and passed unanimously. In the event Dr. Danquah only had one opportunity for making a speech of any length or consequence during the Session and this was brought to an abrupt conclusion by a motion made by an impatient Unofficial Member "that the Question be now put" which was carried with the Doctor in a minority of one. It was notable that during this first clash, the Convention was given no support by any of the other Elected Members, although some of them had tentatively given such support at its previous public meetings. Since the Session there has been little publicity given to the Convention and I understand that its leaders have been mainly occupied in revising the Constitution and trying to clarify their policy. Some of its promoters tried to intervene in the recent strikes but their overtures were apparently not welcomed by the Union officials. The activities of the Convention in this sphere are, however, the subject of conflicting reports and I have insufficient data at present to enable me to gauge precisely what part it played.

9. At present the movement finds its main supporters in the large coastal towns of Accra, Saltpond, Cape Coast, Sekondi and in Kibi, the home of Dr. Danquah, the mainspring of the movement. It is understood that, so far, the promoters have not sought to spread their ideas in Ashanti except through publicity in the "Ashanti Pioneer" as they considered that it would be easier to win Ashanti over if the Colony had first accepted the Convention. There would be little scope for such a political movement in the Northern territories and, so far as is known, no attempt has been made to enlist support there.

10. The fact that many of the present promoters of the party, as will be seen from the attached notes, are either discredited politicians or politicians who are out of office, helps to explain why many of the most influential of the younger African politicians as well as those who at present are members of the various Councils and Committees of the Central Government have, so far, withheld their active support from the new party. The promoters have made a special appeal to young men and have gained the enthusiastic support of several able young barristers. They have been

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[4] Danquah was distrusted in the CO and by the governor in the Gold Coast as a result of the long running Kibi stool murder case in which he took a prominent part. The case caused a severe rift between the Akyem Abuakwa royal family and the governor. Danquah, as the legal adviser to the stool, was felt by the governor and his advisers to have manipulated the legal rules in a multiplicity of appeals against the trial court's finding.

[5] The paramount of Asin Atandasu state in the southern Gold Coast.

at some pains to enlist the support of the Ex-servicemen's Union (a body not recognised by Government as representative of the interests of ex-servicemen) as a promising group of discontented youths.

11. In the Gold Coast, press publicity is essential to any new political group. Most of the existing local papers already have established political allegiances and though, at first, they gave a generous share of publicity to the Convention they have recently devoted less space to its aims and activities. The Convention, however, has from its earliest days, as is shown in paragraph 15(4) of the Draft Constitution, planned to establish its own printing press and to publish its own newspapers, possibly a weekly as well as a daily. The present intention is to start publishing the daily paper at the beginning of the new year. Dr. Danquah is himself an experienced journalist, and the Secretary General designate, Kwame Nkrumah, has recently been associated with a journal entitled "Pan-Africa" which is published in the United Kingdom.

12. As will be seen from paragraph 4(8) of the draft constitution, one of the aims of the Convention is to seek collaboration with other Gold Coast political institutions and parties and "with similar movements in West Africa for any purpose common to the peoples of West Africa."

13. So far as other political parties in the Gold Coast are concerned, the promoters of the Convention seem to have made no serious attempt to gain the support of any except the Aborigines Rights Protection Society. This Society, which was fully described at page 134 of Lord Hailey's confidential report (1940–42) on the "Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa", last August celebrated its fiftieth anniversary at Saltpond. The inaugural meeting of the Convention was held in Saltpond shortly before the Society's anniversary and there seems to be little doubt that its promoters hoped to enlist the support of many of the Society's followers, to make use of the Society's undoubted prestige, and, probably, to supplant it. Though the Convention drew many of the members of the Society to its preliminary and inaugural meetings, it has failed to secure the co-operation of the president of the Society, Mr. W.E.G. Sekyi, or its leading members, two of whom are at present members of the Legislative Council, and seems in fact to have stimulated the Society to abandon its reliance on "past performance" and to start reorganising itself for a more active role in Gold Coast political affairs. Some of the more vigorous supporters of the Convention, however, believe that as a political force the Society is spent, and do not wish to waste energy and time in trying to gain its support. In their recent strike the mines employees chose as two of their three assessors, Mr. Kobina Sekyi and the Honourable George Moore, the leaders of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society. The third was Mr. O'Neill Cromwell, who is said to support the Gold Coast Convention but has so far played no active part in its work.

14. Dr. Danquah is reported to have said, in a public meeting in Accra at the end of July, that the Gold Coast Youth Conference, which he himself had organised, had completed its purpose and would be automatically absorbed in the Convention. The Youth Conference, which was described by Lord Hailey at page 135 of his confidential report referred to in paragraph 13 above, claims the credit for having secured the present constitution for the Gold Coast. Recently, however, it has shown few signs of activity. The explanation is that the General Secretary of the Youth Conference is still Dr. Danquah, and he hopes that the Youth Conference will be absorbed by his new movement. It is not at all certain, however, that the other leaders of the Youth

Conference, (including the Chairman, Dr. I.B. Asafu-Adjaye, M.B.E., an Ashanti member of the Legislative Council and a member of the Executive Council), are prepared to let the Youth Conference be superseded by the Gold Coast Convention.

15. The form that collaboration with other similar political bodies in West Africa and elsewhere may take is at present largely a matter for speculation. Some of the younger supporters of the Convention who have been educated in the United Kingdom, and, more especially, those who have spent some time in the U. S. A., have been affected by the violent nationalism and racialism of the "Zik" press, and by the nationalist movements in India, Burma, Ceylon and elsewhere, and they may seek the support of other West African political movements such as the West African National Congress and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons. The General Secretary Designate of the United Gold Coast Convention is Kwame Nkrumah, whose activities formed the subject of a letter No.33857/47 of the 18th of November addressed to Mr. Scott by Mr. K. E. Robinson. His record, which is included in the attached notes,[6] shows that until recently he has been General Secretary in London of the West African National Secretariat, an organisation that is strongly influenced by Dr. Azikiwe.[7]

16. It seems probable also that if Kwame Nkrumah, who is about to arrive back in the Gold Coast from the United Kingdom, takes an active part in organising the Convention he will seek for it the support of certain Communist organisations in the United Kingdom with which he seems to have been actively associated for some time past. He may be expected also to establish contact with Communist groups in neighbouring French territory.

17. While, as I have said, it would be premature to attempt to assess either the strength of this new political party or its potentialities, the possibility must be faced of its becoming a channel for Communist infiltration. So far as can be ascertained there is no Communist organization in the Gold Coast at present although certain of the newspapers readily publish Communist propaganda and a few individuals are known to have Communist contacts. The industrial and economic situation is, however, unsettled, and increasing Communist pressure is to be expected from neighbouring French Colonies. Kwame Nkrumah will arrive to find the new party of which he is to be the paid secretary still in a malleable and formative stage, impatient at being out-manoeuvred by the chiefs and other of the more responsible politicians, and the young "intelligentsia" of whom its ranks are mostly composed ready to accept radical ideas and to respond to the type of leadership which he may be able to provide. From such particulars of him as I have seen, and from the rapturous accounts of his talents which have appeared in the local press, I gather that he has few illusions (if any) about the messianic nature of his "mission". Much may depend on the attitude adopted by Dr. Danquah, who, although unstable, is a smart and energetic politician, and shrewd enough to know that he has already lost the support of the chiefs and stands little chance of being re-elected as their representative in the Legislative Council.

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[6] Not printed.

[7] Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe, editor-in-chief, *West African Pilot*, since 1937; president, National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, 1946; vice-president, Nigerian Democratic Party, and elected member, Nigerian Legislative Council, 1947–1951; premier, Eastern Region, 1954–1959; gov-gen, 1960–1963; first president of Nigeria, 1963–1966.

18. Some of the political conditions that might help to foster the strength of the new party would be,

(a) the continued inactivity of the other two parties, the Aborigines Rights Protection Society and the Gold Coast Youth Conference;
(b) any failure by the central Government and local Government bodies to absorb into public service the political energies and enthusiasms of the young students who are now beginning to return in appreciable numbers from the United Kingdom and elsewhere;
(c) any reluctance by the chiefs to extend the membership of their Councils so that they became more widely representative of the whole community.

19. The draft of this despatch was approved by the Officer Administering the Government.

Minutes on 19

The interesting despatch at (2) deals with what may prove to be a major political development in the Gold Coast: the emergence of the United Gold Coast Convention.

2. We have heard of this organisation through Press reports since its inaugural meeting on 4th August. The Governor's Deputy has now given us a comprehensive account of its origins, constitution and (as far as can be ascertained) its intentions, with notes on its principal personalities.

3. The leading Chiefs with whom the Acting Governor has discussed the Convention are somewhat disturbed by it. When the despatch was written (12th Dec.) no approach had been made to them collectively by the organisers of the Convention, but on 15th December while the Joint Provincial Council was in session, fourteen representatives of the Convention sought an interview with the Council to introduce the new organisation, to declare its policy, and to appeal to the Chiefs to withdraw their membership from the Legislative Council in favour of educated non-chiefs.

4. The President of the Convention is an elderly, wealthy African timber merchant, who is regarded as a figurehead.[8] Many of the promotors are discredited politicians or politicians who are out of office, and it is significant that younger men who are members of various Councils and Committees of the Central Government have so far withheld their support. The General Secretary is to be Mr. Kwame Nkrumah whom we know as General Secretary in London of the West African National Secretariat, a violently secessionist organisation, and who appears to be the principal organiser of the African Congress, to be held in Lagos in October 1948. (See 33581/47 below). Mr. Bradley points out in his despatch that Mr. Nkrumah, who is due to arrive in the Colony shortly, will probably seek to associate the Convention with certain Communist organisations in the United Kingdom and in neighbouring French Territory.

5. It is presumably too soon to say whether the Convention will succeed in establishing itself in the Colony sufficiently strongly to affect its constitutional development. The Chiefs and others who are working closely with, or as part of, the Central Government may be expected to be wary of any apparently new Movement

[8] A reference to A G (Pa) Grant.

with which Dr. Danquah and Mr. William Ofori Atta[9] are prominently connected, particularly after the request of 15th December to the Chiefs [to] give up their seats in Legislative Council in favour of more educated men. We should therefore (?) merely acknowledge the despatch, saying that it has been read with great interest and that the development of the Convention will be watched with interest, particularly in its relationship to the Joint Provincial Council and the Ashanti Confederacy Council, and its possible liaison with Communist organisations in the United Kingdom or in neighbouring French Territory.

J.K.T.
24.12.47

Secretary of State

Mr. Bradley's despatch at No.2 is a most useful and interesting account of the background to the formation of "The United Gold Coast Convention", a new political body of which the principal stated aim is to ensure the earliest possible transfer of the Government of the Colony "into the hands of the natural rulers and their peoples".

This new body has still to prove its effectiveness as a political movement. From the accounts given here, its General Secretary designate (Mr. Kwame Nkrumah) seems most likely to emerge as the real leader of this body. It is significant that he was for a time closely associated with Dr. Azikiwe; also with certain Communist organisations over here.

I agree that the reply to No.2 should be in the sense suggested at the end of Mr. Thompson's minute.

T.I.K.L.
29.12.47

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[9] A teacher, and son of the late Okyenhene of Akyem Abuakwa, Nana Sir Ofori Atta and hence a close kinsman of J B Danquah. A founder member of the UGCC, he was detained with five others by the colonial government in 1948 and was to be a lifelong opponent of Kwame Nkrumah and the CPP.

20 CO 96/810/6, no 1 13 Jan 1948

[Local government in Africa]: despatch no 15 from Mr Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy. *Appendix:* conclusions of summer school at Cambridge, African Governors' Conference paper AGC 12

In my despatch of the 25th February, 1947,[1] addressed to the Governors of all the African Territories I set out at length my views on the place of local government in the development of Africa and the machinery for handling the problems of local government. I have now received replies to this despatch from all the Governments concerned and I should like to express to Governors my appreciation of the trouble taken by them and their advisers in the preparation of these despatches. It is clear that my despatch has fulfilled its purpose in stimulating thought and discussion on

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[1] This despatch is reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part I, 44.

the problems which I raised and the replies to it show that a most useful review of policy has been undertaken in each territory. My original suggestions have been discussed at conferences or otherwise with a large number of administrative officers in most territories and their views have been taken into account in framing the replies sent by Governors. I have been glad also to note the full agreement among Governors and in the Service generally as to the very great importance of local government in our whole policy for the development of the African Territories.

2. As forecast in paragraph 5 of my despatch, the problems of local government in Africa in all its aspects were discussed in August at the summer school held in Cambridge, which was attended by a fully representative gathering of administrative officers from all the African Territories. After intensive discussion of the problems over a period of ten days the school produced a series of papers, copies of which are already in the possession of Governments. The recommendations in these papers were further discussed at the Governors' Conference in London during November, which expressed general agreement with them. I associate myself fully with the view taken by the Conference, and the conclusions of the summer school, based as they are on the collective experience of a large number of officers from the different African Territories, may therefore be regarded as representing an agreed general statement of policy on the matters discussed at the school. The endorsement given to these papers by the Governors and myself must not, of course, be regarded as committing individual Governments to agreement with every point of detail in the papers. Conditions vary from territory to territory and certain qualifications on individual points were mentioned by some Governors at the Conference. I have no doubt that Governments will wish to examine their existing policy and practice in the light of the recommendations of the summer school, as now endorsed by the Governors' Conference, and that where appropriate, action will be taken to give effect to these recommendations. To a large extent, the recommendations represent a logical evolution of the existing practice in the territories.

3. It is not, I think, necessary for me in this despatch to comment in detail on the conclusions of the summer school. These are conveniently summarized in paper A.G.C. No. 12, which was circulated to the Governors' Conference and which forms an appendix to this despatch. I commend to the special attention of Governors the recommendations on the political aspects of local government, local government in urban areas, and the functions of local government bodies. The problems of government organization in relation to local government and the work of field staffs will be referred to later in this despatch. The question of race relations will be the subjects of a separate despatch. There remain three particular points arising from the summer school papers to which I wish to refer at this stage:-

(1) Great attention was paid by the summer school as a whole and by four of its groups to the better organization and more effective training of local government staff. The recommendations made by the school on this subject are summarized in paragraph 10 of paper A.G.C. No. 12. I need not repeat them here but I wish to emphasize the great importance which I attach to the training and organization of local government staffs – a view which I know from the discussions at the Conference, is fully shared by Governors. I should be grateful if all Governments would now review the position in regard to this matter with the object of improving and expanding the facilities for training where this is necessary. In due

course I should be grateful if Governors would report the existing position in their territories and the action being taken on these questions.

(2) I am sure that there will be general agreement as to the importance of securing a proper financial relationship between local government bodies and the Central Government and an effective development of systems of local taxation. These matters are dealt with in paragraph 8 of paper A.G.C. No. 12. The recommendation is there made that, where this has not been done, an investigation might be carried out into these matters on the lines of Mr. S. Phillipson's[2] recent enquiry in Nigeria. I should be grateful if Governments would consider this suggestion.

(3) Both the summer school and the Governors' Conference agreed as to the value of applying United Kingdom experience to the problems of local government in Africa. I have accordingly decided to set up an informal panel in London consisting of persons with practical experience of local government in this country for the purpose of advising on specific questions referred to them by the African Governments or myself, and of assisting officers on leave in the study of local government methods in this country. It is not my intention that this panel should operate on the lines of an advisory committee; it will rather provide a useful body of people in this country who can be consulted individually when desired and who can if necessary be asked to visit territories to give such advice, and assistance as Governments may need on particular problems. I will address you further regarding this panel when it has been set up.

4. In paragraph 5 of my despatch of the 25th February I referred to the question of issuing a general statement of policy on local government in Africa, and in paragraph 6 I said that I should be in a better position after the summer school had taken place to consider whether such a statement of policy was required, and if so, what form it should take. The summer school discussed this point and recorded the conclusion that, while field staffs must look to their Governments for directives on policy, some general statement of policy taking account of the diversity of local conditions would be of value and would be appreciated by officers in the field. This view was accepted by the Governors' Conference and the draft of a general statement of policy based on the conclusions of the summer school will be prepared in the Colonial Office and circulated in draft for the comments of Governors. It is possible that its preparation may take some time. Meanwhile a confidential print of the proceedings of the summer school containing the various papers produced is under preparation and copies will be supplied to Governors early in the New Year for circulation to their officers.

5. I now turn to the questions of organization which formed the main subject matter of my despatch of the 25th February. These are:-

(*a*) Exchange of Information,
(*b*) Machinery for the Review of Policy, and
(*c*) District Staffs.

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[2] (Sir) S Phillipson (Kt 1949), Colonial Service, Ceylon, from 1919; financial secretary, Uganda, 1941–1945; financial secretary, Nigeria, 1945–1948; engaged on special inquiry into financial relations between government and native administration, 1946; author of various reports on financial and administrative problems in Nigeria and Gold Coast (see, in this volume, 61, para 8, and 98); adviser to Southern Cameroons government on financial and constitutional problems, 1959, 1960, 1961.

6. *Exchange of information.* General agreement has been expressed by Governors with the suggestions in paragraphs 7 and 8 of my despatch and these were also fully endorsed by the summer school. The school made certain specific proposals to give effect to these suggestions; I am in general agreement with these and should be grateful if Governments would consider the action to be taken on them. Some apprehension was expressed both by Governors and at the summer school lest these arrangements should lead to an excessive proliferation of paper at a time when staffs are short. It is natural that this point should be made and I am anxious that the arrangements should not lead to unnecessary work. At the same time I think that much can be done without adding to the work of officers either in the secretariats or in the field. In the light of the discussions which have taken place on these proposals, I consider that the arrangements suggested in my despatch should now be put into operation to the extent practicable in each territory, since I am anxious that there should be a much greater knowledge among the officers in the African territories of the work being carried on in other territories. I suggest that documents circulated should either be sent direct by the Governments concerned to the other African Governments, with a copy to the African Studies Branch of the Colonial Office, or sent to that Branch with a request that they may be circulated from London to the other territories. The Branch will give every assistance it can to Governments in the supply and distribution of information and will be glad to discuss any questions connected with this matter with officers on leave. The Branch will also issue a quarterly digest of official and other publications and information on African affairs which will be sent regularly to Governments. As regards the Colonial Service Journal referred to in paragraph 8 of my despatch, some progress has been made, and, while no final decision has yet been taken, it is likely that arrangements will be made shortly for the issue of such a periodical. I will send you a further despatch on this subject.

7. *Machinery for the review of policy.* In paragraph 11 of my despatch of the 25th February I asked the West African Governors to consider what organization is needed to ensure that the policy and technique of local government is kept under continuous review. In doing so I recongized that any arrangements made must take account of the fact that the chief responsibility for advising the Governments on African affairs in the Gold Coast is in the hands of the Chief Commissioners who are not stationed at Government Headquarters. It is clear from the replies sent by Governors, and from the discussions at the summer school and at the Governors' Conference, that the view is generally held in the three territories that the functions which I described in paragraph 9 of my despatch must to a very large extent be performed by the regional administrative organizations under the Chief Commissioners. I am not, however, yet clear exactly how it is intended that this work should be organized or how co-ordination will be maintained in this field between the Chief Commissioners' Staffs and the Central Government. The Chief Commissioner himself, while he has the main responsibility in the three territories for advising Government on African affairs in his region, has many other duties to perform as head of the Regional Government, both in day-to-day matters and in the formation of general policy. It is primarily with the machinery for the review of policy on African local government below the Chief Commissioner, and with the machinery for co-ordination at Headquarters, that I am here concerned; and I think that some further examination of the problems of organization involved may still be required. I should

be glad if the problem could be examined further and if in due course a further despatch could be addressed to me on the subject.

8. *The district staffs.* General agreement has been expressed by Governors with the contents of paragraphs 14 and following of my despatch of the 25th February and Governors have provided me with much useful information as to the means which they propose to employ to keep field staffs, both administrative and technical, more closely informed of general policy, etc., and to reduce the amount of routine work falling on administrative and technical officers in the field. The whole subject was discussed in great detail at the summer school and is dealt with in this report of Group V (pages 3 to 7). The concrete recommendations made in this report are, I feel, of very considerable value and I hope that Governments will feel able to give effect to them.

9. I have little to add myself at this stage. I would, however, like to emphasize again the great importance which I attach to freeing field staffs from routine work. I agree, of course, with the view expressed by certain Governors that an administrative officer must in his training period gain experience of routine work at District Headquarters. Nevertheless, once this necessary period of training is over, it is in my view vital that field staffs should be relieved of routine work to the maximum possible extent. As I said in paragraph 16 of my despatch, the development of local government should be the principal function of district staffs and must take precedence as such over routine work. Now that there has been an opportunity for consideration and discussion of the various proposals which I put forward in my despatch both in connexion with the preparation of the replies to that despatch and at the summer school at Cambridge, I am most anxious that energetic steps should be taken by all Governments to provide real relief for field staffs. This is a problem which has existed for many years and a proper solution ought now to be found for it.

10. One of the most promising suggestions which has been made comes from Uganda, where it is proposed to appoint District Accountants who would be responsible for accounting and financial responsibilities in the district not only for the District Commissioner but also for the technical officers serving in the district. The Governor of Uganda's despatch of the 29th August containing this suggestion has already been circulated to some Governments, but in view of the importance of this suggestion I am now sending it to those Governments which have not had it, together with his despatch of the 15th May on the same subject. The suggestion which Sir John Hall[3] has made would have three advantages. It would emphasize the necessary team spirit in the district; it would relieve not only administrative but technical officers; and it might make possible the appointment as District Accountants of officers with higher qualifications than might be feasible if the work was only being undertaken on behalf of the administrative and not the technical staff as well. I believe that this arrangement might be introduced with advantage in all the East and Central African Territories. In West Africa the position is more difficult, but I should be grateful if the West African Governments would nevertheless consider the proposal. It might be possible by concentrating the duties in the way suggested to afford a higher salary and thus to obtain suitably qualified Africans for this post who would provide a real relief to the administrative and technical officers in the district.

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[3] Gov of Uganda, 1944–1952.

11. I think it desirable that I should be kept regularly informed of the progress made in dealing with the problems relating to field staffs discussed in paragraphs 14–17 of my despatch of the 25th February. I should be grateful, therefore, if Governments would let me have a progress report on the action taken with regard to these problems not later than a year from now, to be followed by further reports at annual intervals.

12. I assume that Governors will wish to make this despatch, like that of the 25th February, available confidentially to administrative and other officers. I am therefore having the despatch printed and when it is ready will send the same number of copies to governments as were asked for in the case of the previous despatch.

Appendix to 20

In paper A.G.C. No. 3[4] some of the main points affecting local government policy in Africa were briefly discussed and it was stated that a further paper would be prepared in the light of the results of the summer school held in August. The conclusions of the summer school have already been circulated to Governments. The school was divided into six Groups dealing with the following subjects:-

(I) the political aspects of local government;
(II) the functions and finances of local government;
(III) local government and land usage;
(IV) local government in urban areas;
(V) central government organization for the development of local government, with special reference to the work of field staffs;
(VI) race relations.

The reports of the six Groups were discussed by the whole school and generally accepted with a number of amendments in each case.

2. The present paper is concerned with the reports of Groups I, II, IV and V. The report of Group III dealing with local government and land usage is directly relevant to the paper on "Economic Development and Agricultural Production in the African Colonies" (A.G.C. No. 5)[5] and a separate note, very briefly summarizing the conclusions of the school on this subject is being circulated separately as paper A.G.C. No. 13 for use in the discussion of this paper. Race relations forms a subject of its own and the report of Group VI on this subject, together with the Colonial Office memorandum referred to in the report, is being circulated to the Conference under cover of a very brief summary (A.G.C. No. 14)[6] for separate discussion.

3. The present paper deals with the political development of local government bodies both in rural and urban areas; the division of functions between local government bodies and the central government; the finances of local government; measures for improved efficiency; the better organization and more effective training of local government staffs; the machinery of government required to deal with local government problems; and the work of government field staffs. The conclusions of

[4] Entitled 'Local government in Africa' and reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *op cit*, part I, 59, Appendix IV.
[5] *ibid*, 59, Appendix VI.
[6] *ibid*, 63.

the various groups of the summer school which discussed these subjects were, as stated above, generally accepted by the school as a whole after discussion, and the recommendations made provide a concrete basis for discussion by the Governors' Conference. They represent the logical development of existing practice and it is suggested that, if endorsed by the Governors' Conference, they would provide a useful basis for future policy.

4. The purpose of the present paper is to summarize the conclusions reached by the summer school on the points mentioned above. This summary is contained in the following paragraphs.

5. *The political aspects of local government.* This part of the subject is dealt with in paragraphs 1–27 of the report of Group I. The recommendations deal with

(1) the size of local government units;
(2) their composition and the method of representation of the people;
(3) their place in the central political machine of the territories.

On these points the following recommendations are made:

(*a*) *Size of local government units.*—(i) The view is expressed that in areas where there is no traditional authority extending over large numbers of people, the aim of policy must be to develop units of local government of a sufficient size to be financially strong and thus capable of maintaining efficient staffs for the operation of social and other services. Experience in a number of territories suggests that the most suitable area to be covered may be the administrative district or division (paragraphs 7–9).

(ii) The point is made that, in the policy of forming district councils by the amalgamation or federation of smaller units, there should be no suggestion that the lowest units of local government, i.e. the village councils, should not be given the maximum encouragement; these are to be regarded as the foundation of all local government in Africa (paragraph 10).

(iii) In regard to large units of native administration covering hundreds of thousands, or millions, of people, the aim of policy must be to build up an effective and representative system of local government within the framework of the native administrations themselves, on the basis of the smallest village units, with a chain of responsibility through district councils to the central native administration (paragraphs 11 to 13).

(*b*) *Composition of local government bodies and the method of representation of the people.*—(i) It is recommended that the aim of policy should be to build up institutions of local government fully representative of all the people of the area, through the development of the council system and by the increasing introduction of the more progressive elements in the population, the ultimate aim being that the council should become the directing local authority and the organ through which the people make their wishes felt (paragraphs 14 and 15).

(ii) It is recognized that in all areas the traditional elements have a most important part to play, but it is suggested that in order to secure proper representation of all other elements of the people, including the middle class, other methods of appointment to the councils must be resorted to (paragraphs 16 and 17).

(iii) It is suggested that ultimately the method of appointing representatives

of these new elements can only be through election, although this does not necessarily mean election by means of the ballot box which may be quite inappropriate to present conditions (paragraph 18).

(iv) It is suggested that experience in a number of territories has shown the system of indirect election, through grades of councils serving as electoral colleges, to be the right method for present conditions in rural Africa. This need not exclude direct election by the people for district councils where this is appropriate (paragraph 19).

(v) Where election by whatever method is appropriate cannot yet be introduced, nomination must be resorted to as an interim measure, either for some or all the representatives. In such circumstances nomination may have to take the form of appointing representatives of particular classes of the community; but, once election in any form is adopted, this should be on the basis of the general choice of the people and should not involve selection by specialized groups (paragraph 20).

(vi) It is recommended that representatives of the people brought on to councils either by election or by nomination must not only be chosen by the people, but also accountable to the people in the sense that they are removable by them. For this purpose they should be elected, or in the interim period appointed, for definite and limited periods only (paragraph 21).

(vii) In some areas chiefs and traditional members of councils are already accountable to public opinion in the sense that they are removable if they forfeit public confidence; but this does not apply in most areas, the respect in which chiefs are held being so strong that they are not readily removable in this way. In these circumstances it is suggested that the process of political development is likely to lie in the increasing acquisition of executive power by the representative elements of the councils, without any change necessarily taking place in the formal constitutional position of chiefs. The establishment of committees of councils to deal with particular branches of work is likely to help in this process (paragraphs 21 to 23).

(*c*) *The place of local government bodies in the central political machine of the territories.*—(i) The school strongly endorses the system of indirect election to Legislative Councils now being built up in most territories through district, provincial and in some cases regional councils. The school supports the view that this system, which is at present proving acceptable to the majority of the people is much more likely, in the present stage of development of Africa to secure effective representation of the rural areas than a system of direct election to Legislative Councils by means of the franchise (paragraphs 24 to 26).

(ii) It is pointed out at the same time that to make this system of indirect election completely representative the method of appointment of members to the lowest councils must be democratic. This is regarded as a strong additional reason for rapidly increasing the representative character on local government bodies at all levels (paragraph 27).

6. *Local government in urban areas.* This part of the subject is dealt with in paragraphs 4 to 20 of the Report of Group IV. The following recommendations are made:-

(*a*) The aim of policy should be to achieve an efficient and acceptable form of

local government in urban areas by working towards the English system; the traditional native institutions should be made use of and progressively moulded to meet this aim (paragraph 4).

(*b*) To achieve this object, policy should aim at:-

(i) establishing town councils in all urban areas.

(ii) avoiding duality of control in urban areas.

(iii) achieving adequate representation of all classes of the urban community (paragraph 7).

(*c*) Except where there are strong native traditional authorities, these aims should be achieved by forming fully representative town councils on the English model, in no way subordinate to the native authorities of the areas concerned (paragraph 7).

(*d*) Where strong traditional native authorities already exist and can efficiently administer townships as a part of their areas, the aim of policy should be realized either by the native authority absorbing on to its council representatives of the town community or by the establishment of an urban council subordinate to the native authority and consisting of representatives of the native authority itself and the town community. In such cases the traditional native authority should be encouraged to develop its African urban government on English town council lines (paragraph 8).

(*e*) In the East and Central African towns, at present controlled by primarily non-African councils, the importance of adequate African representation on local government bodies is fully appreciated, but the difficulty of forcing the pace is recognized. The steps already taken or being taken to bring Africans on to the Councils are mentioned and the need to secure acceptance by the non-African communities to increased African membership by means of education and persuasion is emphasized. The establishment of representative African urban advisory councils is recommended both during the interim period before adequate African membership on their local government bodies can be secured, and thereafter to serve as electoral colleges for the African side of the local government councils (paragraphs 10 to 13).

(*f*) Detailed recommendations are made with regard to local government in mining areas, the administration of African law in urban areas with many tribes and the problems of mushroom villages and suburban areas. These are contained in paragraphs 14 to 20 of the report of Group IV and need not be repeated here, although special mention should be made of the proposal for the appointment of a high level investigating body to examine the problems of urban housing in the light of experience in all parts of Africa.

7. *The functions of local government bodies.* This part of the subject is dealt with in paragraphs 1 to 11 of the Report of Group II. The following recommendations are made:-

(*a*) The process of developing local responsibility in Africa is one of assigning authority from the central to the local government. The conclusion is reached that, while this process must never result in the abandonment of ultimate control by the central government, which must retain final responsibility for the welfare of the citizen, the responsibilities of local government bodies must expand with their capabilities until the central government exercises little more

than general legislative, judicial and directive control over local government activities (paragraphs 2 to 5).

(*b*) On the basis of Mr. S. Phillipson's report on the Financial Relations between the Government of Nigeria and the Native Administrations, the recommendation is made that the following services should be shared between the central government and local government bodies when fully developed:— agriculture, education, forests, game, lands, medical, mines, police, prisons, public works, social welfare, tsetse control and veterinary. This list of services was compiled from the Uganda Estimates (paragraphs 6 to 8).

(*c*) Detailed recommendations are then made regarding the manner in which responsibility for these services should be divided when local government in any area has reached the full development attainable in the foreseeable future. These recommendations are drawn up on the basis of the principle of "competence, consent and cash." Except in the case of prisons, mines and lands, the Group agreement was reached as to the division of functions. In the case of prisons, agreement is not reached; in the case of lands and mines no uniform division can be recommended in the light of the varying conditions of different territories (paragraphs 10 and 11).

8. *The finances of local government bodies.* This part of the subject is dealt with in paragraphs 12 to 15 of the report of Group II. Four types of local government revenue are distinguished: direct taxation, whether assessed by the central government as direct tax or levied by the local government under rating powers; revenue derived from the performance by local government bodies of services within their own areas and from rents from their own properties; grants-in-aid paid by the central government; and grants by the central government in reimbursement for services performed by the local government bodies on an agency basis. The group considered the question of the development of local taxation and of the increasing introduction of the principle of income tax in all systems of native taxation. Time was too short to permit of detailed recommendations being made and the group confined itself to emphasizing the importance of placing local government bodies in such a position that they have power to increase local taxation to provide services and works of the standard demanded by their people. It is relevant in this connexion to recall the main suggestions put forward in the paper on local government already circulated (A.G.C. No. 3, paragraphs 18 to 20). These are:-

(*a*) the proportion of direct taxation retainable by the native administrations should be sufficient to cover, with the aid of purely local revenue, the ordinary expenses of administration with some margin for expansion;

(*b*) grants from the central government should normally be treated not as general grants-in-aid but should be given for specific development purposes. There must be exceptions to this rule in undeveloped areas particularly where local government bodies are competent to operate particular services but too poor to do so;

(*c*) every possible encouragement should be given by the central government to local government bodies to develop systems of local taxation in order to secure additional revenue for development purposes;

(*d*) once a sure financial foundation has been provided, it is important that local governments should be faced squarely with the position that increased

services for the benefit of the people depend on an increased financial contribution by the people themselves. This is the only effective way of building up a real sense of financial responsibility, perhaps the most important element in the development of local government.

(*e*) When this has not been done, an investigation might be carried out on the lines of Mr. Phillipson's enquiry in Nigeria, into the financial relationship between the central government and local government bodies and the possibilities of expanding local taxation.

9. *Increased efficiency in local government bodies.* This part of the subject is dealt with in paragraph 19 of the report of Group II, and paragraphs 21 to 33 of the report of Group IV. The following recommendations are made:-

(*a*) Group IV having received detailed information as to the system of local government audit operating in this country, with an auditor appointed by the Ministry of Health but independent of control by that Ministry, recommends that in African conditions the functions of audit and inspection can most suitably be entrusted to a local government inspectorate, either specially appointed for the purpose or, where this is not possible, provided by the Colonial Audit Department.

(*b*) Both Group II and Group IV recommend the introduction of standardized and simplified accounting methods. The Group also recommended more adequate office buildings and equipment and, in order to secure more efficient tax collection, an adequate list of taxpayers, with provision for the establishment of identity by some visible documentary means.

(*c*) Group IV considered the question of the payment of councillors in urban local government bodies. The group did not recommend the payment of salaries, but noted the recommendation of a recent departmental committee of the Ministry of Health which proposed that councillors in receipt of wages (rather than salaries) should receive reimbursement for actual direct loss in attending council meetings. The group considered that this principle should also be adopted in Africa.

(*d*) Group IV recommended that the central government should in the last resort have power to suspend members of local government bodies in cases where there is gross neglect or mismanagement of their functions, and also to appoint a commission to carry on the work of the council during suspension.

10. *The better organization and more effective training of local government staffs.* This part of the subject is dealt with by all four Groups, by Group I in paragraphs 28 to 32, by Group II in paragraphs 17 and 18, by Group IV in paragraphs 29 and 30 and by Group V in paragraph 16 (1). The following recommendations are made:-

With regard to organization

(*a*) In order to attract the best men into the local government service it has been shown necessary by experience that local government personnel should be paid at the same rates as government rates for similar work. In many areas native administrations have hitherto been unable to offer such terms owing to lack of funds; hence the necessity of putting local government bodies on to a sound financial basis (Group I, paragraph 29; Group II, paragraph 18).

(*b*) A local government service on a territorial basis should be established, ensuring reasonable remuneration, superannuation benefits and opportunites for promotion and transfer and for a career, and thus encouraging attainment of a higher standard of efficiency. Provision should be made for interchange between local and central government staffs (Group II, paragraph 18; Group IV, paragraph 7).

(*c*) Local government bodies should be encouraged to make the best possible use of the services of any suitable persons possessing the necessary qualifications of education, technical training, experience and character. Although in most cases the people concerned would doubtless wish to see their local government staffs drawn from their own area, eligibility for appointment to local government bodies should not be rigidly restricted by any purely parochial considerations (Group V, paragraph 23 (1)).

With regard to training

(*d*) The higher colleges now being developed should give the maximum possible attention to the needs of local government. At present men trained at Makerere and Achimota and other higher technical and vocational colleges are proving of great worth, but their numbers are far too small (Group I, paragraph 30).

(*e*) In the interim period before adequate provision can be made at the higher colleges, and thereafter, shorter or longer courses for local government staff, including refresher courses and vacation schools, should be provided by the higher colleges and other institutions. These should not be confined simply to technical training, but should lay emphasis on training for citizenship. The expansion of training facilities for local government at such institutions as Jeanes Schools, etc., should be encouraged and the extra-mural courses to be provided by the higher colleges should include courses in local government (Group I, paragraphs 30 and 31).

(*f*) Local government staff should be admitted to central government training establishments when they wish (Group II, paragraph 18).

(*g*) Visits to this country and other parts of Africa by local government staffs for training purposes should be made possible (Group I, paragraph 32).

(*h*) Governments should secure the services of experienced local government personnel from this country for the purpose of training local personnel (Group I, paragraph 32; Group IV, paragraph 29).

11. *The machinery of government required to deal with local government problems; and the work of field staffs.* This part of the subject refers not to local government bodies themselves, but to the central government organization and the field officers of the central government concerned with the development of local government. It is dealt with in the report of Group V. The group takes as a basis for discussion the Secretary of State's confidential despatch to the African Governors of the 25th February, 1947, and, broadly speaking, the group and the school as a whole endorses the proposals in the despatch. The recommendations may be summarized as follows:-

(*a*) *Exchange of information.* The group fully endorses the Secretary of State's observations on this subject contained in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the despatch,

and makes detailed recommendations in paragraph 6 of their report to secure the desired objective, while emphasizing the necessity of providing abridged editions of documents wherever possible, in order to reduce the amount of reading matter for field staffs. The group also recommends the appointment of an officer with liaison duties to work under the head of the African affairs branch in each territory for the purpose of maintaining close contact and securing interchange of information with other British territories and foreign territories in Africa.

(*b*) *Machinery for the review of policy.* The representatives on the group of the East and Central African Territories consider the formation of African affairs branches in each Territory on the lines suggested by the Secretary of State in paragraph 9 of his despatch, to be a matter of vital importance. They recommend that these branches should include the liaison officer mentioned in (*a*) above, the specialists in land tenure and law recommended by the Secretary of State and the officers dealing with information services, co-operation and social welfare. The representatives on the group of the West African Territories did not feel able to make any recommendations on this point, as the matter had been suggested by the Secretary of State for consideration by the West African Governments; but they express the view that whatever machinery is set up should come within the framework of the existing organization at regional and territorial headquarters. It is hoped that the machinery for the review of policy as regards African local government in the West African territories may be further discussed at the Governors' Conference with a view to more definite conclusions being reached.

The group warmly welcome the creation of an African Studies Branch in the Colonial Office on the general lines suggested in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Secretary of State's despatch. This branch has now been set up and is in operation and its functions are briefly described in paragraph 10 of the group's report.

(*c*) *Government field staffs.* The group makes the following recommendations:

(i) *Continuity.* It is suggested that governments should consider again the possibility of shorter tours with more frequent but shorter periods of leave, in order to avoid the need for constant transfers of staff between districts.

(ii) *Providing field staffs with fuller information on government policy.* On the basis of paragraph 15 of the Secretary of State's despatch the group makes a number of recommendations for securing closer contact between the field staffs and the central or regional government by personal meetings, inter-team discussion, circulation of government publications, etc., and the establishment of increased library facilities, both centrally and in the provinces and districts.

(iii) *Training of field staff.* The Group recommended increased provision in the courses in this country for the joint training of administrative and technical officers to inculcate the importance of teamwork. They suggest the possibility of the attachment of technical officers to the administration for a period at the beginning of their first tour. They propose that, in order to avoid objections by probationers to too lengthy periods of training in this country, officers should be taken on to the establishment of their future territories for purposes of pay and pension as from the start of their period of postgraduate

training. They recommend the issue to all newly joined field officers of some form of field service guide.

(iv) *Improvement of working conditions in the field.* The Group make a series of recommendations on the basis of paragraphs 16 and 17 of the Secretary of State's despatch; for central office accommodation to provide together for whole teams, both district and provincial; for greater provision for the employment of stenographers; for the modernization of office equipment; for facilities for the proper training of African clerks and executive staff, and for relieving administrative officers of work connected with the supervision of public works, of routine township duties and of judicial functions not connected with native courts.

The Group fully endorses the Secretary of State's views as to the need for relieving officers in the field from their present heavy burden of routine work in order to enable them to devote more time and attention to their all-important task of the development of local government. The representatives on the group of the East and Central African territories recommend that for this purpose European or Asian office superintendents should as an interim measure be appointed with full responsibility as sub-accountants and as licensing officers and registrars, unless suitable Africans are available to undertake these duties. The representatives of the West African territories point out that such action would not be possible under West African conditions, and that the solution lies in increased devolution to local government bodies and increased training of Africans for appointment as office superintendents, and where these steps are not yet fully effective, increased employment of administrative officers in the districts.

(v) *Teamwork and devolution.* Finally the Group emphasize the extreme importance which they attach to the spirit of teamwork in the field and the closest co-operation with each other on the part of all administrative and technical officers, both European and African, working in a district or division. They also emphasize the importance of devolution of responsibility by the central government to the provinces and districts or divisions and the need to make co-ordinated plans of campaign to ensure continuity both in the framing of local policy and in its implementation.

12. There are three general points arising from the work of the school and the reports of the groups which it is desirable to discuss:-

(1) *The urgency of the task of developing local government.* This point is discussed in paragraphs 2, and 33 and 34 of the report of Group I. In paragraph 34 the Group states:-

"We regard it as urgent that African local authorities should be stimulated to introduce as great a measure as possible of democratic representation into their system, while retaining their good traditional elements. We recommend that governments should consider issuing a directive instructing all officers concerned that this objective is to be maintained in the forefront of policy. We suggest that governments should extend and accelerate the training of staff by all methods which may be practicable and that recognition should be given to any advance made by the native administrations by progressively entrusting to them wider responsibilities, even if in some cases this involves a relaxation of the existing financial safeguards."

In paragraph 33 the Group recommends the deliberate use of central government funds, where local government revenue is insufficient, to stimulate local interest and support for local government bodies, particularly through minor schemes well within the capacity of the local organization.

(2) *The question of issuing a general statement of policy.* This point is discussed in paragraph 22 of the report of Group V on the basis of the observations made in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Secretary of State's despatch of the 25th February. The Group reached the conclusion, which was accepted by the school as a whole, that field staffs must look to their governments for directives on policy, but that, in so far as this is practicable within the limits prescribed by diversity of local conditions, some general statement would be of value. The Group went on to say that such a statement would be appreciated by officers in the field in that it would give them a picture of general policy as applied to the African territories as a whole. The question of the preparation and issue of such a general statement is a matter which the Governors' Conference will no doubt wish to consider.

(3) *The application of United Kingdom experience to the problems of local government in Africa.* The school provided striking examples of the relevance of United Kingdom experience in local government to African problems. An expert with long experience of English local government addressed the school on the details of local government practice in this country. He also attended several of the meetings of Group IV on local government in urban areas and the discussion of the school as a whole on the report of this Group. The assistance which he was able to give was generally recognized. Two of the groups referred in their report to the need for bringing United Kingdom experience to bear on African problems. The suggestion has been made that a panel of persons with practical experience of local government in this country might be formed for the purpose of advising on specific questions referred to them by the African governments, assisting officers on leave in the study of local government methods in this country and visiting African territories individually to give such advice and assistance as might be asked for by governments. The question of forming such a panel is a matter on which the adivce of the Conference would be appreciated.

21 CO 96/795/6, no 1 — 28 Feb 1948

[Accra riots]: inward telegram no 137 from Sir G Creasy to Mr Creech Jones reporting the outbreak of the Accra riots

Serious rioting broke out this afternoon (28th February) in Accra. A parade of ex-servicemen, reinforced by other elements, got out of hand and attempted to march on Christiansborg Castle.[1] Two principal attempts by police to divert or stop them failed. Shots had to be fired: 1 rioter killed; 1 wounded.

Simultaneously violent crowd attacked various business premises in the town and attacked European cars. Much damage was done but full details not yet available. Military were called in to aid in course of the afternoon and main disturbance was dispersed. Action in the town still proceeding.

[1] The governor's residence in Accra.

22 CO 96/795/6, no 4 2 Mar 1948

[Accra riots]: outward telegram no 175 from Mr Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy on the governor's use of emergency powers

Your telegram No. 165.

I gather you are advised that validity of regulations made under Section 10 of Chapter 49 would be open to doubt. My Legal Advisers agree, since the Ordinance dealing as it does with aliens, defence and the like, is really intended for a state of war. There seems to be substantial risk of challenge by writ of habeas corpus or other proceedings. If therefore you consider it will be necessary to continue for any appreciable time restriction on movement of persons, and very early meeting of Legislative Council is quite impracticable, I suggest that you should bring Part II of the Emergency Powers Order in Council, 1939, into operation forthwith (see Mr. Malcolm Macdonald's secret circular despatch of 20th March, 1939). Regulations under that Order in Council could not remove doubt as to validity of regulations under Chapter 49, but they could be so framed as to continue restrictions imposed on persons by previous regulations even if latter were invalid.

If, when Legislative Council meets, you think it desirable to associate public opinion with measures considered necessary to deal with situation, there would of course be no objection to introduction of Bill containing additional powers. In any event it will certainly be advisable, as you contemplate, for legislation to be enacted removing doubt as to validity of action taken.

23 PREM 8/924 3 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: minute from Mr Alexander[1] to Mr Attlee on contingency plans to send military reinforcements to the Gold Coast

As a result of consultation which I have had with the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and with Departments over the last 48 hours, you may wish to know the present position, and the action now in hand, concerning the unrest on the Gold Coast.

2. The latest information from the G.O.C. is that the situation has quietened down on the coast but that unrest is still prevalent inland. Altogether there are 8 native battalions in West Africa (3 in Nigeria, 4 in the Gold Coast and 1 in Sierra Leone). There are no indications as yet that their loyalty is in question or that the incidents in the Gold Coast have shown any ill discipline on the part of the soldiers.

3. The main question for decision has been whether reinforcements of white British soldiers are necessary. A telegram was sent yesterday to the Governor of the Gold Coast instructing him to consult with the G.O.C. West Africa on the desirability of sending British infantry reinforcements. His reply is awaited. If it is in the affirmative it is proposed to fly in the 2 Battalion Cameronian Regiment from Gibraltar. Three York aircraft have been ordered to proceed to Gibraltar at once and a further 8 York aircraft are being held at 12 hours notice in this country. The 2

[1] A V Alexander, minister of defence, 1946–1950.

Cameronians are at 12 hours notice to move. The War Office, in consultation with the Air Ministry, are examining the implications of sending a second British battalion to the Gold Coast should this be necessary.

4. As regards naval action, the Admiralty has ordered *H.M.S. Nereide* and *H.M.S. Acteon* to sail immediately from Saldanha Bay to Takoradi. They will take eight days to get there.

5. There is one final and important point on which we are not quite clear. So far there have been no indications of trouble in Nigeria. The Colonial Office have asked the Governor for his views on this possibility, and whether in the event of trouble, sufficient local forces are available to maintain order.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Service ministers and to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.[2]

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[2] In the event, British infantry reinforcements were not sent to the Gold Coast.

24 CO 96/795/6, no 59 4 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: inward telegram no 189 from Sir G Creasy to Mr Creech Jones on the proposed commission of inquiry

You will have noted at the end of my broadcast on 1st March (repeated on 2nd March) that I promised a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the disturbances and underlying causes. Such an enquiry cannot be held until things have settled down, but the process of settling down will itself be expedited if I can announce very soon that I have asked you to appoint and send out a Commission of Enquiry, that you have agreed to do so, and that necessary steps are already being taken to this end.

2. It is essential that the Commission should be appointed from outside the Gold Coast, and I think you will agree that personnel of the Commission should be of the calibre to carry weight both here and at home and also internationally. While it is essential, of course, that the Commission should be equipped to sift and weigh evidence, you will appreciate that the underlying causes of the trouble are primarily political, coupled with a complexity of economic factors.

3. With these considerations in mind I suggest that the Commission might be composed of three persons:

(a) Chairman who should be man of known administrative experience and ability;

(b) Member of Parliament, of broad outlook, and preferably with some overseas administrative experience;

(c) Third member with legal qualifications. A serving or retired member of an overseas judiciary might be available, and I suggest that, if time permits, selection of someone from the Dominions (but not (repeat not) from South Africa) would be particularly suitable.

4. I could, of course, provide a secretary, but to stress the complete impartiality of the enquiry it would, I think, be better to appoint one from home. In any case it is essential that the Commission should bring one or more stenographers (reporter).

5. I will let you know the moment I can suggest definite dates when the

Commission should actually proceed here. Meanwhile, I shall be very grateful if you will at once authorise me to make preliminary announcement as suggested at the end of paragraph 1 above at the moment to be selected by me. I would, of course, give you as long notice as possible of the timing of this preliminary announcement. I shall also be grateful if action may be taken at once to select members of the Commission and to make as many preliminary arrangements as possible.

6. I held a full meeting of my Executive Council this afternoon, excluding the Chief Commissioner of Northern Territories, but with G.O.C. and District Commander as Extraordinary Members. The proposal that the Commission should be appointed from outside the Gold Coast and that early announcement should be made of its imminent appointment were fully endorsed.

25 CO 96/795/6, no 84 — 5 Mar 1948

[Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order[1]

The recent disturbances in many parts of the Gold Coast had their beginning in the serious riots which took place in Accra on the 28th – 29th February. There is now a disposition in some quarters to regard these riots as spontaneous, and arising out of a clash between a procession of ex-servicemen and the police, so that it is necessary to examine the events preceding them.

2. On the 17th February there had been disturbances in Accra, arising out of the prosecution on a criminal charge of the Asere Mantse.[2] The police were on that occasion heavily preoccupied with crowds in the vicinity of the Law Courts so that unruly mobs were able to do much damage to property in the business centre of the town before they could be brought under control. The trial of the Asere Mentse was deferred until the 23rd February. The point which is stressed is that these disturbances appeared to show that when the police were heavily preoccupied in one area crowds could create disturbances unchecked in another.

3. On the 20th February a meeting was held by the Ex-Servicemen's Union, a minority organisation which is not affiliated with the Gold Coast Legion. This meeting was arranged on the 18th February. This meeting was addressed by Mr. Tamakloe, General Secretary of the Union, and by a number of important members of the United Gold Coast Convention. The speeches were of a kind likely to encourage an audience of ex-servicemen such as form the Union to engage in violent demonstration, notably by emphasising how much stronger the demonstrations of the 17th February would have been had the ex-servicemen joined as a massed body. It was arranged at this meeting that ex-servicemen should parade on the 23rd February (the date fixed for the hearing of the trial mentioned in paragraph 2 above) and march to Government House to present to the Governor a petition outlining

[1] This memo was prepared by the secretariat in Accra under Scott's direction. It was forwarded to the CO as an enclosure to Creasy's despatch to Creech Jones of 5 Mar 1948.

[2] One of the wing chiefs of the Gā.

their grievances. These grievances had not previously been brought to the notice of Government by the Union.

4. It had been expected that there would be further and probably unruly demonstrations on the 23rd February, arising out of the resumed trial of the Asere Mantse. In the event this hearing was again deferred and the fact was known to the public in the afternoon of the 20th February. The procession of ex-servicemen to present their petition was also deferred. It was fixed for the 28th February.

5. In the meantime, a settlement of the trade dispute had been reached by representatives of the Joint Provincial Council and of the Chambers of Commerce, ending the boycott on imported goods organised as a protest against high prices. The terms of the settlement included the ending of the boycott on the 28th February and the offer of cotton piece goods for sale on that day at the new prices. These facts were also known to the public on the 20th February, but not until after the Union's meeting.

6. The settlement of this dispute by negotiation between the J.P.C. and the Chambers of Commerce, and the terms agreed, were assailed by that part of the press which most strongly supports the Convention. Members of that body were active in bringing pressure to bear on Nii Kwabina Bonne,[3] the organiser of the boycott, to secure its continuance. He, however, remained firm to his agreement although speeches on the subject made by him and his supporters immediately before the 28th February suggested that they were still concerned to influence the public against importing firms.

7. On the 25th February, the Commissioner of Police saw Mr. Tamakloe, the General Secretary of the Ex-Servicemen's Union and, in explaining to him the constitutional channels for the presentation of petitions to the Governor, made it clear that the march on Government House would not be permitted. Mr. Tamakloe accepted the Commissioner's advice as to the method of presenting the petition and asked for permission to hold a parade of ex-servicemen on the 28th February, to proceed in an orderly fashion along a clearly defined route. The Commissioner of Police issued the necessary permit for a parade along the route in question.

8. On the morning of the 28th February, there were crowds at the principal stores. A considerable number of those who entered the stores appeared to act on a pre-concerted plan. They enquired about prices, said that they were too high, and went out and told the crowds in the streets that the firms' prices were too high.

9. In the afternoon of the 28th February, in accordance with the arrangements which Mr. Tamakloe had agreed with the Commissioner of Police, a small deputation called at the Secretariat at 2.50 p.m. and presented the Union's petition. It raises nothing which could be described as a new point likely to have occurred to ex-servicemen as a result of the circumstances of the recent past. Most of the points are of an exceedingly general or vague character. In the meantime, the parade had completed its agreed route and had started to advance along the road in the direction of Government House. Many attempts to check it, or deflect it, were made by the police by exhortation before it reached the Christiansborg cross-road. These attempts were completely fruitless and met with nothing but scorn and anti-European cat-calls.

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[3] A minor Gã chief and businessman, also known as Nii Kwabena Bonne Taylor or Theodore Taylor.

10. At the cross-roads it was clear that the intention and temper of the crowds was such that force would have to be used to check it. After stones had been thrown by the mob – for the parade had by then lost its identity as a procession – and two police officers had received head wounds, the order to fire was given. Shots were fired and one man killed and one wounded. The mob was then forced back.

11. Shortly before any shot was fired at Christiansborg, violence had begun in the town. Large crowds gathered and began an apparently indiscriminate attack on stores. Their object seemed to be principally to loot but there was a savage attack on a European Government officer and some damage was done to the cars of Europeans. The crowds grew rapidly and looting was intensified until it became evident that the police unaided could not even contain them in that part of the town in which the concentration was greatest, let alone control them within that area. It was apparent that even the military forces available locally would be inadequate to deal with the mob, then estimated to number some 50,000, and reinforcements from Kumasi and the Northern Territories were ordered, while a reserve battalion in Nigeria was put on the alert. There was some arson on the night of the 28th February.

12. On the 29th February, the rioting broke out again in Accra and strong military and police action was necessary to bring the situation under control. Reinforcements from the North arrived, followed later by advance units from Nigeria. Some 200 special constables were enrolled. The Governor took powers under the Defence of the Gold Coast and Ashanti Ordinance, to impose a curfew on the business and adjacent areas in Accra, and this had a good effect from 6.30 p.m. onwards.

13. In the meantime, having made their own appreciation of the situation, the United Gold Coast Convention telegraphed on the 29th February to the Secretary of State. They stated, among other things: "Unless colonial government is changed and a new government of the people and chiefs installed at the centre immediately conduct of masses now completely out of control with strikes threaten [sic] in police quarters and rank and file of police indifferent to orders of officers will continue and result in worse violence and irresponsible acts by uncontrolled people. Working committee United Gold Coast Convention declare they are prepared and ready to take interim Government." They have had no reply but when a Convention delegation asked to see the Colonial Secretary in the afternoon they were given a stiff rebuff, with an implied warning that they should be circumspect in their activities.

14. The situation in Accra on the 1st March was still uneasy in the morning but was brought under control during the day. The situation elsewhere began to deteriorate, however. There were demonstrations at Kumasi and Koforidua and some looting in Nsawam. Ex-servicemen from Accra moved into Koforidua and parties also appeared in Kibi and Suhum. Ex-Servicemen also demonstrated in Sekondi. They appeared to obtain directions from Accra.

15. On the 2nd March, more troop reinforcements arrived from Nigeria and troop dispositions were made to deal with those parts of the country. There was military and police action in Kumasi, Koforidua, Nsawam and Akuse in all of which places (with others) there was violence and looting.

16. On the 3rd March dispositions of troops were strengthened or modified to suit the local security requirements and the situation generally was quieter. Two warships are on their way to the Gold Coast from the South Atlantic Station.

17. The general pattern of the developing situation has brought into prominence the activities of the Gold Coast Convention and suggests Communist indoctrination.

The Convention and the newspapers supporting it have been at pains to paint the situation as being out of hand and the Convention as the only people capable of restoring it. As the situation changed the emphasis was placed on the violence of Government's methods. Race feelings have been inflamed. The ex-servicemen have been used both as tools and as good cover for violent action. The greed and baser feelings generally of the rougher types of the population have been stimulated but the consequential thieving and destruction has been attributed to the outraged feelings of ex-servicemen.

18. In considering the next steps which should be taken in order to restore to the full the regime of law and order which has hitherto distinguished the Gold Coast, it is accordingly important to attempt an assessment of the direction of the future activities of the Convention. It must always be borne in mind, in attempting this assessment, that there is a great deal of Communist influence in the Convention. It seems most probable that their activities will be along one of the following three lines:

(a) That in their opinion having so successfully achieved disruption of normal Government administration and fostered an anti-racial atmosphere, the Convention principals can now go a step further and stir up definite anti-European positive action by directing their agents, unaffiliated ex-servicemen and mob elements, to the looting of houses of European residents, not stopping at personal assault.

(b) That they will disclaim all responsibility for the present disturbances, allow them to subside, blame Government for complete ineptitude in allowing them to arise and claim credit for their cessation using this as propaganda for supporting their cable to the Secretary of State asking for the removal of the existing Government in favour of a form of self-government set up by themselves whom they will represent as being the spokesmen for the country.

(c) That they will now take no positive action in actively promoting disorder partly from fear, in view of the large military force in the country, and partly from fear of becoming unpopular, but that they will direct their activities to irritant action in stirring up dissension in mining communities and so forth and by insidious anti-racial propaganda.

It is the opinion of the Chief Commissioner of the Colony that (a) will not be resorted to because there is no real anti-white feeling among the mass of the people and because the Chiefs are loyal to the existing Government and are not anti-racial. He considers that the actions of the Convention will be based on a possible combination of (b) and (c).

19. In seeking fully to restore a regime of law and order, the Government's ultimate objective must be to create conditions under which Government and the people together can work together for the redress of genuine grievances and the swift development of the country for the benefit of its people. To create these conditions it will be necessary to ensure that all factors which might militate against the maintenance of law and order are eradicated or at least immunized. In order that a sufficiently clear analysis of those factors may be available it will be necessary to set up a commission to enquire into all the circumstances surrounding the disturbances, both those which led up to them and those arising out of them. Steps to this end are being taken.

20. It is imperative, however, to consider, now, what steps, in addition to those already taken, must now be contemplated to hasten the return of normality. Military and naval reinforcements have already been mentioned. The strengthening of the Police Force is equally an urgent necessity and the first measures towards expanding it by the recruitment of 500 additional men have already been taken. These, however, are matters designed to make it practicable for Government to deal with any disorders which may break out. It is of even greater importance to consider what action can be taken towards preventing outbreaks by protecting the people from the influences giving rise to them.

21. Until late on the 2nd March, it was believed that the only legal powers in the Governor's hands for instituting such preventive action were those given by the Defence of the Gold Coast and Ashanti Ordinance, Cap. 49 – and then doubtfully. This Ordinance was, however, used for the imposition and enforcement of the curfew in various centres, a very useful measure. On the 2nd March, however, the Governor was advised that he might properly apply the U.K. Emergency Powers Order in Council, 1939, Part II of which confers far more extensive powers than the local Ordinance. The Governor applied this Order in Council with effect from the 3rd March. He has subsequently, on the 4th March, promulgated subsidiary legislation to cover:

(a) the censorship of the press;
(b) the spreading of disaffection by other means; and
(c) the control of movement by road, rail, etc. and certain other supplementary matters.

(a) is very necessary to make it practicable to ensure that to the greatest degree possible the public receive accurate and unsensational news and are protected from the inflammatory and ill-disposed articles and reports which have appeared so frequently in the press in the recent past.
(b) again is necessary to make it possible to curb the activities of those who seek to undermine the proper loyalties of the people.
(c) is designed to give powers to put an end, wherever it seems expedient, to the circulation throughout the country of agitators and bands of looters and other persons bent on mischief.

It remains for consideration, bearing in mind the desiderata outlined in paragraphs 18 and 19 above, whether other forms of restriction or control are necessary or expedient.

22. It will of course at all times be borne in mind that, while the Government is bound to take all steps which are permissible to protect society from those who seek to disrupt it or prey upon it, the assessment of the present advantage of any measure must be conditional on an appreciation of future repercussions. The Government is bound to keep an eye continually on the period beyond the immediate future and can legitimately weigh the emergence of greater potentialities for trouble against the convenience of more drastic action now. This is only to say that Government's main preoccupation must invariably be to bring about as rapidly as possible the development of conditions under which the causes of disturbance can be eliminated by ordinary constitutional means. Such conditions do not necessarily stem from a tranquillity imposed by restrictions and controls backed by the sanction of the armed forces. Psychologically, a people after disturbances are in a very disordered frame of

mind, with the poison of excitement and licence still circulating in their systems. With such a patient it is desirable to balance very carefully the educative effect of judicious restriction and control against the irritating effect of restriction and control which cuts too sharply across the living of a normal existence. The greatest flexibility is possible under Part II of the Emergency Powers in Council. While it is enabling legislation only, it confers powers adequate for dealing with any matter affecting the public safety and the preservation of peace and good order.

26 CO 96/795/7, no 132 12 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: outward circular intelligence telegram no 116 from FO to HM diplomatic posts on press censorship in the Gold Coast

The recent riots in the Gold Coast which appear to have been instigated by subversive elements using a Marxist technique compelled the Government there to take certain emergency powers to ensure public safety. These included an order prohibiting any publication of newspapers, posters or pamphlets without permission.

2. This action has been widely represented as a general muzzling of the press by the Gold Coast authorities and may have repercussions in view of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information, which is due to begin at Geneva on 23rd March.

3. The real position is in fact as follows. Under an order made on 4th March no newspaper, poster, or pamphlet can be published in the Gold Coast without permission unless it has been passed for publication by the Public Relations Officer or an Officer authorised by him. No censorship has been imposed on outward press messages from the Colony, nor has the Governor taken enabling powers to this end. He has, however, given directions under existing ordinances to ensure that he is made aware of all telegrams of a subversive character.

4. Please use the above facts to correct any misrepresentations on lines of paragraph 2 with which you may meet. In this connexion you could say that the United Kingdom representatives have always maintained in the United Nations discussions which have taken place on Freedom of Information that this freedom should at all times be subject to necessary restrictions, penalties and liabilities with regard to *inter alia* "publications intended or likely to incite persons to alter by violence the system of government or to promote disorder or crime". These provisions are incorporated in the United Kingdom Draft Bill of Human Rights and will be under consideration at the Conference. The Draft Bill also contains an article, already endorsed provisionally by the Human Rights Commission, which allows for derogations from its provisions in time of war or other public emergency.

27 CO 96/795/6, no 119 16 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir G Creasy on the chairmanship of the commission of inquiry and personnel changes in the Gold Coast government

Very many thanks for your letter of the 9th of March. Quite often during the past fortnight I have regretted the hope that I expressed when I wrote to you on the 21st

of February. I trust that you are not superstitious to the extent of feeling that by expressing that hope I "wished" these troubles upon you.

I can re-assure you at once on the point you raised in the second paragraph of your letter. Your telegrams and the papers which you have sent us by mail have given us quite as clear a picture of your difficulties as we could hope to get at this distance. I have seen this morning your telegram No. 263 in which you ask for guidance as to future policy and I hope that it will be possible to send you a satisfactory reply within the next day or two. Another of this morning's telegrams, the one telling us of the reaction of some of your Unofficials to the proposed appointment of Fitzgerald[1] as Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry, did surprise me. Even if for political expediency or some other reason those Advisors wish to take the views which you reported to us, I find it odd that they should maintain them in the face of the counter argument which you have no doubt put to them.

In the second half of your letter you mentioned various ways in which we might help. The M.I.5. man for whom you asked is leaving on Thursday and should be with you as soon as this letter. We are doing all we can to get Merry out to you quickly but are still awaiting further word from Ceylon. I understand that he is more likely to gain than to lose time by travelling via this country as is the present plan.

The selection of your new Commissioner of Police in succession to Ballantine[2] may be difficult. Probably the best source of supply is Palestine, though I am doubtful whether the Commissioner of Police there would be altogether suitable for your appointment. At all events after discussion with Cohen I concluded that the best plan might be for me to telegraph personally to Cunningham[3] in Palestine asking him in consultation with Gurney[4] (who from his time in the Gold Coast will have some appreciation at least of your needs and your problems) to review all the "possibles" in that country, and to let us know whether there is anyone who can be unreservedly recommended for this particular post under the present unusual conditions. Anyone whom they are able to put up without reservation will of course be at once considered with the best candidates available from any other of our Police Forces, and we will do all that we can to ensure that you get a really first-class man by the end of May.

From remarks that I have heard, I fully agree that Lewey should be moved and that quite soon. I know that Roberts-Wray[5] had him in mind for an early transfer. Roberts-Wray, as you know, is now in Nigeria, and I suggest that unless you see definite objection to that course, you should telegraph to him in Nigeria to come to you if only for a day or two so that you could discuss with him your wish for an early move for Lewey and review with him the qualities of the possible candidates for succession to Lewey, bearing in mind that, as you say, you will certainly need a decisive and strong Attorney General over the next year or so.

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[1] The first choice for a chairman was Sir W Fitzgerald, chief justice of Palestine (1944–1949) – a man who had also had administrative experience and legal experience in Nigeria and Northern Rhodesia. He was willing to serve, but there were local objections that he would (wrongly) be thought a relative of the general manager of the United Africa Company in the Gold Coast. The unofficial members of the Executive Council accordingly advised against his appointment.

[2] R W H Ballantine, commissioner of police, Gold Coast, 1944–1948.

[3] Sir A Cunningham, high commissioner and c-in-c, Palestine, from 1945.

[4] Gurney was now chief secretary in Palestine.

[5] Sir Kenneth Roberts-Wray, CO and DO/CRO legal adviser from 1945.

May I in return make one request of you? It is that you would ask your people to consider before they prefix any telegram "Most Immediate" whether it really is essential that action on it should be put in hand the very moment it arrives. I appreciate that in the early stages the use of this prefix in many of your telegrams was inevitable, but I do feel that latterly it may have been a little overdone. As you know, more often than not the receipt of a "Most Immediate" telegram means that the Duty Officer here has to call the responsible Principal or Assistant Secretary by telephone sometimes in the middle of the night, and tempers are not unnaturally likely to get a little frayed when it is evident, as it has sometimes been, that there is nothing to be done on a telegram until the Department reassembles on the following morning.

28 CO 537/3558, no 122 18 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast Riots]: outward telegram no 259 from Mr Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy on the extent of communist influence[1]

Your telegram No. 263.

1. I fully agree that the first essential is to restore law and order fully and securely and to make it clear to those who for whatever purposes have attempted to disrupt the ordered life of the territory that they will be given no opportunity of succeeding. I must necessarily leave to your discretion what active and specific measures you take to achieve this object.

2. At the same time I entirely agree with your insistence that the recent disturbances must be fully and impartially investigated, and that all legitimate causes of dissatisfaction must be brought to light and sympathetically dealt with to the utmost extent possible. I am sure you have given all possible publicity to the constructive efforts of the Government in the social and economic fields and that while there are severe economic difficulties in this post war era which bring hardship to all sections of the community the endeavour of the Government has been and remains to remove as far as lies in their power the cause of hardship or legitimate grievance.

3. I appreciate that you have in mind the necessity that action on these two lines should proceed concurrently and in so acting you have my full support.

4. I agree with you that it is of paramount importance that you should carry responsible African opininion with you, and that it should wherever possible be consulted and associated with your actions.

5. We must clearly endeavour to establish the extent to which Communist instigation and influence have been responsible for the course of events. Investigations to that end may have to be carried forward secretly until a more precise estimate of true proportions of Communist activities can be made.

6. You ask for my views about policy and future lines to work on. With you I am alive to the danger of communist activities and the necessity of helping the public to a clear appreciation of the danger as well as method employed. Consequently this

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[1] Several portions of this tel were drafted personally by Creech Jones; see the copy reproduced in BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part III, 212.

aspect of the matter must have its proper place in our pronouncements. At the same time we must do this in such a way that we do not alienate from your Government the sympathy and goodwill of responsible and educated elements both here and in Africa who may fear that this factor in the disturbances may be used so as to obscure or belittle other reasons for the outbreak which may have their foundation in sincerely felt causes of dissatisfaction quite unconnected with Communism, or in a desire to accelerate constitutional development at an ill-considered pace. I am sure you will not regard this as an implied criticism of anything you have said but purely as a personal reply to your enquiry as to how I see the matter of policy.

7. In broadcast reported in your telegram No. 261 you mentioned that connection of group of detainees with Communist Party abroad was clearly demonstrated through the apprehension of a European emissary. Presume this refers to Burt (see your telegram No. 238). In order to decide what information can be given in reply to enquiries on this point, I should be glad if you would telegraph briefly substance of evidence obtained to prove this connection and nature of indications obtained regarding plan for Union of African Socialist Republics, etc. (see your telegram No. 261).

8. As regards links with this country, there is no doubt that direct connection exists between West African National Secretariat and Gold Coast Convention through Nkrumah, who was general secretary of former from its formation in December 1945 (see Robinson's letter to Scott dated 18th November, 1947 and my savingram to Nigeria No. 1396 of 19th November, 1946, copied to Gold Coast No. 937 L.F.)

9. Chairman of W.A.N.S. is Bankole Awooner-Renner (see your telegram No. 126 saving of 2nd November, 1947). He is believed to represent W.A.N.S. on Communist Party Africa Committee. General Secretary vice Nkrumah is Bankole Akpata, who is also known to be in contact with Africa Committee. This should not (repeat not) be taken to imply that activities of W.A.N.S. are Communist controlled. Communist support is, however, forthcoming in the form of advice, political education of individuals, publicity in the Daily Worker, attendance and speakers at meetings, and supplies of literature. It is believed that West Africa is not yet regarded as suitable (owing to its still largely tribal society) for direct Communist activity. But any movement such as W.A.N.S. which seeks to embarrass the "Imperialist" powers and to work for Colonial independence can be assured of the active support of the Communist Party.

10. Kellar will be bringing fuller details and will discuss with you on arrival.

29 CO 96/795/7, no 132 — 19 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: outward circular intelligence telegram no 121 from FO to HM diplomatic posts on the detention of political activists

On 13th March Governor of Gold Coast made an order, under powers available to him, to restrict the movements of six persons to an appointed area.

2. This measure is purely preventive and not punitive. It is designed to prevent the six men from endangering public safety until the causes of the present disturbances can be investigated by the impartial commission before which the six men will be allowed to appear.

3. Information available to the Governor gave him no option but to stop the activities of the six men because of the revolutionary and unconstitutional acts which they clearly proposed to perpetrate. The connexion of this group with the Communist Party abroad was demonstrated by the apprehension of a European emissary. There have been indications that the recent demonstrations were part of a larger plot connected with the overthrow of established authority and the formation of a Union of African Socialist Republics, and that the means to be employed by the movement included some of the most evil of the violent measures adopted elsewhere by the Communists. One of the persons now removed was to have been the acknowledged leader.

4. It should be noted that one of the men concerned is a brother of the late Sir Ofori Atta at whose funeral the ritual murder occurred for which three of his relations were subsequently executed after long legal delay, which attracted considerable public notice.

30 CO 96/795/7, no 162 25 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: letter from Mr Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy on political detainees, the appointment of the Watson Commission and the postponement of the Legislative Council

I am writing to thank you for your letter of the 14th March, the terms of which I very much appreciate. As regards the action which you have had to take under the emergency regulations, I have taken the line, as you will have seen from telegrams, that the situation in the Gold Coast has been one of acute emergency and that you as Governor with the primary responsibility for keeping law and order have had to take emergency measures to deal with it. I have been at pains to emphasise that you like these measures just as little as everybody else and that they are purely temporary. I think that the general feeling here in Parliament and elsewhere is behind you and that the general disposition both here and, I gather, in the Gold Coast is that the Commission should get to work as soon as possible and that we must all await its recommendations. At any rate you can be sure that I will continue to give you all the backing I can in the most difficult situation with which you have been faced so soon after your assumption of office. There is the usual propaganda here from the extreme left directed against all government efforts and policy in the Gold Coast and reviling the Colonial Office. There is also some uneasiness about the denial to the six men restrained of the right of access to the Court for Habeas Corpus. The matter is going to be raised on a Commons adjourment. I shall of course maintain the attitude which I have already adopted.

We have had a good deal of difficulty collecting the Commission. Neither Dalgleish nor Murray was easy to get.[1] Dalgleish was abroad for us twice last year and on

[1] A L Dalgleish was a senior British trade union official; Murray was rector and bursar of Lincoln College, Oxford. The commission's chairman, Aiken Watson, KC, was recorder of Bury St Edmonds (1947) and deputy chairman of East Suffolk Quarter Sessions. He had previously served as a commissioner of the High Court of Justice. For further detail on the appointment of the Watson Commission, see BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part III, 213.

personal grounds did not want to go, but having at first refused his sense of duty led him to change his mind and I am very glad indeed that we have got him. I think that Keith Murray also should be very good. As he is both Rector and Bursar of his College it was very difficult for the College. But they took the line that if we really had not got anyone else so suitable they would be prepared to release him and he was prepared to go on the same understanding. He is such an admirable peron that I pressed him to accept and he has done so.

As regards the chairman, he has been recognised both by the Attorney General and the permanent staff at the Lord Chancellor's Office and I think that you will find him a good man. I have not seen him myself, but Cohen and Abrahams[2] had a long talk with him and his attitude seemed to them to be both sympathetic and sensible. He is obviously going to be a hard worker and I should think a quick one also. I hope the Commission will be able to produce a really good report quickly so that any action which may be necessary to follow up the report can be taken before too long.

I have been very glad to hear the better news this week about the general situation and it certainly seems that your discussions with the T.U.C. did a great deal of good, although at the time you yourself may have felt that no very concrete agreement had been reached. I hope that the improvement will continue and that conditions will be back to normal before too long.

As regards the Legislative Council, I am sure that you had no alternative to postponing it. I do not see how you could have held it at the present time and, as you say, to have done so might have given trouble-makers the kind of opportunity they were wanting. It is nevertheless of the utmost importance that the members of your Executive Council and Legislative Council should be kept in the closest touch with developments and with your views, so that at least they know and you have them in agreement with you when going through an experience such as this. But I know you have been doing this. I am not sure when you intend to have the Budget Session, but no doubt that will depend on the course of events.

I should like to finish up by saying how deeply sorry I am that these events should have come upon you so soon after your arrival in the Gold Coast. We all of us here realise what a quite exceptionally heavy strain this long drawn out state of disturbance has imposed on the service in the Gold Coast and above all on you and your principal advisers. May I again repeat that if there is anything I can do to help I shall be glad to do it, and I hope you will not hesitate to send me a personal letter again whenever you wish to do so.

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[2] Sir Sydney Abrahams, CO temporary legal assistant.

31 CO 537/3558, no 162 9 Apr 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: letter from Mr Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy on a suggestion that a minister should visit the Gold Coast, administrative reforms in the import trade and local government in urban areas

I am writing to thank you for your letter of the 22nd March. This did not in fact arrive here until after Easter and I am therefore writing this letter in a quite different

set of circumstances. I am extremely grateful to you for having explained so fully the reasons why you suggested that a Minister should be sent out to see the position for himself and to discuss it with you. I entirely appreciate why you made this request. The situation as it was at the time indeed seemed grave to us as it did to you and you need not feel that you failed to bring home its gravity to myself and others here. No doubt you and your advisers with your much fuller knowledge of the background and through your contact with the local atmosphere saw the potentialities of danger more sharply than we could; but nevertheless I think that your telegrams certainly did bring home to us how very serious those potentialities were.

I sincerely trust that the improvement in the situation which has since taken place will continue to be maintained and I hope that when the Commission has got to work things will return to normal. I need not repeat what I have already said, that I am always anxious to help in any way that I possibly can. I am sure that my telegram of the 21st March will not have given you the impression that I was not entirely in favour in general of visits by Ministers to West Africa, as to other parts of the Colonial Empire. It was only that I was doubtful about the idea of a visit by a Minister to the Gold Coast at that particular time. If after the Commission has finished its work you think that a visit by a Minister would be useful, I am sure that you will let me know and I will see whether that would be possible. Equally if a visit by Cohen some time after the Commission has reported would help we will naturally see what we can do to arrange it. I am sure that Cohen ought to see the Gold Coast and I know that he would like to do so himself. Perhaps you would let me know what you feel nearer the time.

As regards the future, I note your remark at the end of your letter that we shall have to think very hard indeed about the whole basis of our administration and that we shall have to make some radical changes. The Commission will of course be giving its advice on the economic and political issues involved, but I have no doubt that you and your advisers will meanwhile be going into the changes which are likely to be needed. I should like you to know that as far as the economic side is concerned I have asked Robinson, Melville,[1] Cohen and one or two others here to discuss among themselves possible ways in which Africans might be given a larger share in the importing and distributing trades than they have at present through the encouragement of co-operation and by other means. I think that Cohen has already written to you on this subject. As you know, the Nigerian Government has appointed a commission to deal with the distributive trade including the question of more efficient means of organising distribution. Clearly in your position it would not be appropriate to appoint a commission at the present time, as the Watson Commission will no doubt go into this question in general terms. But I imagine that you will be thinking the whole question over and if at any time you feel able to send us any preliminary ideas on the subject we shall welcome these. I do not of course regard any office committee as a substitute for the consideration which must be given to this question in the West African Territories themselves. It can do no more than analyse the problem in the light of the relatively limited information which we have at this end. We will, however, of course keep you in touch with any ideas that emerge for what they are worth. I feel that some pretty radical change may well have to be made as far as the import trade is concerned.

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[1] E Melville, CO assistant secretary, head of Production and Marketing Dept 'A' (Agriculture).

Another matter which I would like to mention is that of the illiterate and semi-literate populations in the towns and urban areas. I imagine that it is very largely among such people that the followers, as opposed to the leaders, in the recent troubles have been found. It has seemed to me for some time that many of our most serious difficulties in Africa are going to lie in our relations with these detribalised urban people; I wonder whether you agree with this as far as the Gold Coast is concerned. I think I am right in saying that, generally speaking, in the municipalities and town councils most of the African representatives come from the professional middle classes rather than from labour in the real sense. I hope that the Gold Coast Government will be considering possible means of securing more effective representation of the actual working populations and at the same time more effective contact with them. I imagine that the whole problem of local government in urban areas, particularly those urban areas of more recent development, is one which gives you a good deal of worry. But perhaps in saying this I am expressing myself too narrowly; for I suspect that it is not only urban local government about which you are anxious in the light of recent events.

The Commission will no doubt, as I have said, be making recommendations on many of these matters; but I feel sure you will agree that both you and we ourselves ought simultaneously to be considering the problems involved.

32 CO 96/796/4, no 89 — 20 May 1948

[Gold Coast administration]: minute by Sir T Lloyd to A B Cohen reporting a meeting with the Watson Commission on the general quality of the Gold Coast administration

I had a long talk on the 18th of May with Mr. Aiken Watson, the Chairman of the Gold Coast Commission of Enquiry, who brought Mr. Dalgleish and Mr. Keith Murray with him. We agreed at the outset to avoid any discussion of matters directly the subject of the Commission's enquiry, but the Chairman suggested (and I agreed) that it would be permissible for the Commission to send extracts from the draft of their report, or even large sections of it, to you or to Mr. Gorsuch for the Department to check them up on questions of fact or even in some cases for comments on points of detail. There would, of course, be no question of the Department commenting on points of principle or proposed expressions of the Commission's opinion. The sole purpose would be to ensure accuracy.

I asked Mr. Aiken Watson and his fellow Commissioners to talk to me quite frankly about their impressions of both individual officers in the Gold Coast Service and of the general quality of that Service. They had found Mr. Scott most helpful in every way, a wise Counsellor, quite unruffled by either past or present trouble, and a shrewd judge of weaknesses in administration and methods of repairing them. Others in the Administrative Service of whom the Commissioners had formed a very favourable opinion were Mr. Sinclair,[1] Mr. Salloway [sic], Mr. Allen and

[1] (Sir) G E Sinclair (Kt 1960), Gold Coast administrative service from 1936; senior assistant colonial secretary, 1947; principal assistant secretary, 1950; regional officer, Trans-Volta Togoland, 1952; later deputy gov, Cyprus, 1955–1960, and MP (Con) for Dorking, 1964–1979.

Mr. Wimshurst. Mr. Miller[2] though not of the same quality and promise of these other younger men had, they thought, shown excellent judgement at the time of the disturbances and was "the very best type of old-fashioned administrative officer".

Of the Administrative Service the Commissioners criticised Mr. Puckeridge [sic] ("no more than an accountant"), Mr. Bradley (admirable in many respects but "academic" and quite unsuited for his present appointment) and Mr. Mangin. I told them that the first two of these three would be leaving the Colony shortly, and I thought that Mr. Mangin also might be going. The Commissioners felt that it would be to the good that he should go soon.

Mr. Aiken Watson criticised the general administrative machinery of the Gold Coast Government on the ground that it is now definitely over-centralised. Far too much has consequently to be referred by Chief Commissioners and other senior administrative men to Accra, and this has been a large contributory factor to the lowering of the prestige of the authorities in the provinces.

The Commissioners were also very critical of the machinery on the side of Public Relations; one of the Commissioners (I cannot remember which) described it as non-existent.[3] All of them stressed the need for a U.K. based paper and hoped that what they had heard was being arranged in Nigeria might be copied in the Gold Coast. They were also unanimous in criticising B.B.C. presentation of News Bulletins to the West Coast. They fully appreciated the point which I made to them that the B.B.C. has to report world news much as the newspapers do. But they felt that often far too much stress was laid, in the recital of the day's events in the U.K., on strikes and other labour troubles. Seldom, if ever, was this put in perspective by its being followed up immediately with some item of news which showed that nevertheless production was steadily increasing here and the country as a whole was making an effort to solve its acute economic and financial problems.[4]

The Commissioners were especially critical of the legal staff in the Gold Coast. I need not go into this in detail here as I have already had a talk about it with Mr. Roberts-Wray. The upshot is that when Mr. Lewey goes (as he should do as quickly as may be) an exceptionally good and strong lawyer should take his place as Attorney General.

One Department which came in for very little criticism was the Police. The Commissioners had thought well of Mr. Ballantine and they all pressed on me the view (about which Sir Gerald Creasy has already written) that Mr. Imary [sic][5] who was concerned in the shooting at Accra at the end of February should not return to the Gold Coast after his present leave.

The one professional Department to which the Commissioners gave full marks was Forestry. They thought that its policy was sound. It was appreciated by the people as a result mainly of the trouble taken to make them understand its work.

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[2] H V Wimshurst and J E Miller were administrative officers class II. D M Allen, administrative officer class III, became permanent secretary of the Ghana Civil Service in 1956.

[3] As a result of the commission's criticism, a public relations officer was appointed in 1948.

[4] This was a constant subject of complaint by colonial governors and other officials which resulted in many meetings between senior members of the BBC and the CO.

[5] The reference is to police superintendent C H Imray who commanded the police detachment which fired the fatal shots at Christiansborg crossroads in Feb 1948. He was removed from the Gold Coast and later served in Kenya where he was awarded the Queen's Police Medal.

The Commissioners were very critical of the Agricultural Department. They made several sweeping statements about it – e.g. there had been no constructive policy for at least fifteen years and far too much reliance had been placed on cocoa.

Mr. Dalgleish thought well of some members of the staff of the Labour Department, and of the general line of the approach of that Department to its major problems, but he did not sound enthusiastic about Mr. Burden or Colonel Whitcombe.[6]

Mr. Murray had been well impressed with some of the education work he had seen and he mentioned a Mr. Wilson as being particularly good. Mr. Barton he regarded as a tired man who, he understood, would retire shortly.[7] He is most enthusiastic about his visit to Ibadan and found everywhere in Nigeria a much more healthy and encouraging "atmosphere" than that in the Gold Coast.[8]

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[6] G N Burden, commissioner of labour, 1946–1951 (subsequently chief commissioner, Northern Territories, 1951–1953). L C Whitcombe, assistant commissioner of labour and chief resettlement officer, 1947–1951.

[7] J Wilson, senior education officer, 1945–1948. T Barton, director of education, 1946–1951; permanent secretary, ministry of education and social welfare, from 1951.

[8] J K Thompson commented in the margin against the last sentence of Lloyd's minute: 'This is the reverse of what we have been told hitherto. It shows that we are living in a new era in West Africa.'

33 CO 96/796/5, no 12 — 14 June 1948

[Watson Commission Report]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir G Creasy on reactions to the report in the CO

Gorsuch and I have had just had a long talk with the Secretary of State, who has been reading the Commission's report over the weekend. Saloway left this morning and I am not therefore able to send out this letter by him as I should have liked to have done.

The Secretary of State has asked me to let you know that he is very pleased indeed that in Chapters II and III the Commission endorses the action taken by Government to deal with the disturbances. He is sure that both you and all those who were concerned with you in this terribly difficult situation will be very much encouraged by this general endorsement and naturally we all are too.

There is, of course, one criticism about the so-called "suspension of habeas corpus"; I think that very likely there is a pretty good answer which can be made on this admittedly controversial point and in any case, as the Secretary of State himself pointed out, the criticism is as much of us as of the Gold Coast Government. We have already consulted Roberts-Wray as to the line which we should take on this particular paragraph and we shall no doubt be discussing when you come here exactly what should be said about this. However, this is only a point of detail.

As regards the bulk of the report from Chapter V onwards, the Secretary of State's first reaction was one of very considerable surprise that three men, none of them familiar with West Africa, should have felt themselves sufficiently masters of so many subjects as to make recommendations ranging over so wide a field. I expect that you (like ourselves) will have shared this surprise. On the other hand you may perhaps agree with the view which I expressed to the Secretary of State that there seemed to

be nothing very radical in any of the recommendations from Chapter V to the end, except those in Chapter V itself and those in Chapter XIX about land and law. I do not think that we need perhaps bother too much about the recommendations in Chapter XIX; the subjects seem to have only a remote concern with the disturbances and from a preliminary examination of the report I am very doubtful whether a number of the recommendations are practicable. I am especially doubtful about those on the native law side. Cartland[1] is preparing some material on this but no doubt you will also be bringing back some views on these sections.

So much for Chapter XIX. Turning now to Chapter V, the Secretary of State does not, of course, intend to form any final views on the substantial recommendations until he hears your views when you are here. He is, of course, in general sympathy with the Commission's underlying principles of modernising the native authorities, decentralising to regions wherever possible, Africanisation, and bringing Africans into the central executive machine. But he thinks that the Commission in dealing with native administration have very greatly underrated the difficulties, the conservatism of the rural people, and the position of the Chiefs. He thinks that far too little weight has been given to all the work done and still being done by the Gold Coast administration in this field.

On the constitutional side he feels that the wholesale condemnation of the 1946 constitution is unfortunate. After all, this was introduced with universal acclamation and as far as we know there were very few criticisms against this constitution, at any rate until the disturbances. Burns would, I think, have liked to have seen the Commission and I told them this, but apparently they did not think it necessary to see him.

The Secretary of State asked me to say that he felt that in the accompanying statement we should have to be prepared to come out into the open where we felt that the Commission's assessment of the position was wrong or their recommendations impracticable, and that we should have to be prepared to say what has in fact been done in the past. This applies not only to the constitutional section but to some other sections, e.g. education. We should be very grateful if you could bear this in mind in the preparation of any material before you come here.

If I may venture to express a personal opinion on the method of handling the concrete recommendations in Chapter V it is this. In its recommendations with regard to the Executive Council I do not think that the Commission goes so very much further than you perhaps would yourself in any case have gone, and it is not so much with regard to the broad substance of the proposals that difficulty seems to arise as with regard to the details of them. My own feeling is that we should not regard ourselves as in any sense bound by the details of the recommendations and indeed that we should take the Commission at their word when they say that they do not propose to draft a constitution and that some elasticity will be necessary in this.

This also applies particularly to the part about the regional councils where they go into far too much detail; in any case I am not sure exactly what view you will take about the principle of what they say on regional councils.

Another thing which strikes me very strongly also, and with which I am sure the

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[1] G B Cartland, Colonial Service, Gold Coast, from 1935; district commissioner, 1943; seconded to CO as head of African Studies Branch, 1945–1949.

Secretary of State will be in full sympathy, is that something very forthright should be said about the necessity for ensuring that the full existing powers of the government machine to deal with the many complicated political and economic problems should be maintained. The Commission have fortunately come down very emphatically on the position of the Governor himself. I think that this must be emphasised and that we must make it very clear that this applies also to the government organisation from top to bottom. If only to bolster the morale of the Service this seems to me essential.

On the whole the economic sections seem to us to be broadly all right, although I cannot pretend to have studied them in detail yet. Saloway read them through over the weekend and seemed reasonably happy about them. We none of us like the recommendation that a foreign mission should be appointed to investigate methods of curing swollen shoot. Melville, I gather, put his distaste for this to Murray and did not succeed in shaking him. As I told Saloway, if you feel that this recommendation having been made it should be adopted, there may be some advantage in getting ahead quickly with the appointment of such a mission in order to delay the campaign as little as possible. The aim, in other words, should be to get the mission's report completed and published before the end of the year. I gather that active cutting would not start until early next year. I do not know what you will feel about the composition of such a mission but I wonder whether, in spite of what the report says, we should not get one British scientist into the party. I hate admitting that we must accept the apparent local attitude that British scientific opinion cannot be trusted.

Forgive me for this long and somewhat discursive letter. But the Secretary of State asked me to write to you straight away and let you have some idea of his views. As you will have gathered, he feels that the Commission (perhaps not intentionally) have done less than justice to all the good work carried out in the Gold Coast in past years. I am sure that he will want to bring out this feeling in the public statement.

34 CO 96/796/5, no 39 28 June 1948

[Watson Commission Report]: note of CO departmental meeting to consider the report, with particular reference to the economic sections

The main general criticism that was made of the report at this meeting was that the report was badly drafted in that its material was presented in a biased fashion. In particular, as Mr. Gorell Barnes[1] pointed out, although the inadequate supply of imported consumers' goods was one of the chief points of criticism and was cited as an important cause of the riots, only 1946 figures of imports were given although the 1947 figures showed an improvement of 70% above the 1946 money value of imports and must surely have been available to the Commissioners. In confirmation of this Mr. Melville added that the private firms were very optimistic about present and future trends in supply conditions; and Mr. Morris[2] pointed out that although the

[1] As a CO assistant under-secretary of state, W L Gorell Barnes was responsible between 1948 and 1951 for the Finance, Economic Intelligence and Planning and Research Depts.

[2] W A Morris, CO principal, Production and Marketing, Dept 'B' (subjects other than Agriculture).

Gold Coast had asked for nine million yards of Japanese textiles when allocations were being made, it had not actually ordered any, suggesting that supply conditions were now relatively satisfactory.

The meeting after noting minutes on the report by Mr. Eastwood,[3] Mr. Gorell Barnes, Mr. Bourdillon,[4] Mr. Morris, and Mr. Newton [sic][5] went on to discuss the economic sections of the report.

Paragraph 20. On the Commission's summary of the 'proximate underlying causes' it was noted by Mr. Cohen that the alleged grievances of the Africans were set down without sufficiently making clear the fact that these were *alleged* grievances and not all actual grievances. This was an example of the bad drafting which was generally criticised.

Paragraph 28. On the Commission's recommendation that there should be an Economic Adviser and an Economic Statistician the meeting was in general though qualified agreement. Mr. Cohen suggested the need for two advisers – one to deal with rural development as Mr. Saloway was doing, and one to deal with industry and commerce. Sir Sydney Caine said that the need was for an Economic Secretary rather than an Economic Adviser and that his appointment raised the general administrative problem of whether or not he should be subordinate to the Financial Secretary. Mr. Thompson pointed out that an Economic Statistician had already been appointed to the Gold Coast and was now forming his department there; the Commission have not mentioned his existence.

Chapter IX

Paragraph 166. The Commission's failure to formulate specific recommendations about what ought to be done now was commented on. There was a tendency to repeat, in effect, that if there had been a better government things would be better now. In this paragraph, for example, the Commission admits that without an army of officials "ten times the size of the staff available" the enforcement of price control would have been impossible while on the other hand it makes the general statement that "if the Government had made a more robust use of its powers" with regard to price control in textiles the boycott would never have taken place.

It was agreed that the real criticism in Chapter IX was that the government did not do something about the whole distribution system. Sir Sydney Caine pointed out that government was apparently responsible for everything judging by the last sentence of paragraph 171, and that paragraph 173 implied in effect that government should have taken over the whole of distribution. Mr. Melville said that it was interesting to note the mention of the Nowell Commission[6] in paragraph 171 in view of the fact that the Nowell Commission took the opposite line to this Commission and thought Government should stay neutral in the case of the cocoa boycott and not take any direct action.

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[3] As a CO assistant under-secretary of state, C G Eastwood was responsible between 1948 and 1952 for the Production and Marketing Dept.

[4] H T Bourdillon, CO assistant secretary, Finance Dept.

[5] R W Newsam, CO principal, Economic Dept.

[6] *Report of the Commission on Marketing of West African Cocoa* (chairman, Wm Nowell), Cmd 5845, 1938.

Paragraph 174–5. On the point raised in these paragraphs it was agreed that the announcement of the agreement to cut prices margins had been badly announced. Mr. Gorsuch said that the first press reports had described the agreement as providing for a one-third reduction in *prices* instead of in margins.

Chapter X

It was agreed that the analysis at the beginning of this chapter failed to take account of recent improvements in supplies of imported consumer goods. Mr. Gorell Barnes suggested that it should be emphasised that although it had proved necessary, in the dollar crisis of August, 1947, to reduce supplies from dollar areas there is every sign that soft currency sources are opening up. It is necessary to allow for an increase in prices but even so a 70% increase does not justify the under statement in paragraph 184 to the effect that "supplies of one or two imported commodities had improved slightly in 1947". Mr. Morris remarked that the fact that Gold Coast imports were 70% above 1946 level in 1947, whereas United Kingdom imports rose by only 37% would imply that Gold Coast supplies were not relatively restricted. It was observed that the report does not criticise the private firms very strongly on these points, a fact which is probably due to the better presentation of the firms' case to the Commission as compared with government's.

Mr. Cohen thought it would be better not to comment on paragraphs on import monopolies at all and Mr. Gorell Barnes said that the Colonial Office could not be excused on past performance without accusing the Gold Coast Government. Sir Sydney Caine took exception to the statement (as Sir Alan Burns had done in a telegram) in paragraph 206 that A.W.A.M. was formed "at the instigation of the West African Governments": in the first place it was not true and in the second place it was ill-expressed: it suggested some conspiracy. Mr. Cohen said that the government had used A.W.A.M. although it had not 'instigated' it. It was agreed that nothing should be said about these paragraphs.

Paragraph 244. It was noted that the report recommends consumers' co-operatives and Mr. Cohen said that there were plans on foot for the Gold Coast government to take over a chain of stores from such firms as Holt, Ollivant, and U.A.C.,[7] to run them under the Gold Coast Co-operative Federation and to make arrangements for the supply of a certain number of goods direct to them. Mr. Leach[8] was to discuss the matter with the representatives of the firms concerned. As plans are extremely tentative at this stage, however, it would be necessary to consider very carefully what could be said about them.

Mr. Bourdillon stressed the need to make it clear to the Africans that the remedy for high prices is largely in their own hands and is not the doing of the large firms. Mr. Melville drew attention to paragraph 216 which says in effect that retail profit margins are taken after the retail store, in our sense of the word, has sold the commodity: Commission suggested that the 'Mammies'[9] should be discouraged but

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[7] John Holt, G B Ollivant and the United Africa Company (UAC) were three of the largest trading companies working in the Gold Coast.

[8] F Leach, secretary for commerce and industry, Gold Coast.

[9] A reference to re-sellers and pass-book customers, many of whom were women, who formed an important link in the chain of distribution in the retail trade. Drawing their supplies from the main warehouses and stores, they were beyond control as to the price they charged on re-sale, even where a statutory price control existed.

did not say how. It might be politically inadvisable to try to drive the 'Mammies' off the streets even supposing we wanted to from a long term point of view. Mr. Cohen suggested that as no definite concrete recommendation had been made we should take the line that Government has been considering these matters and should describe so far as possible what is to be done.

Paragraphs 238–9. Mr. Cohen drew attention to the recommendations for better distribution given in these two paragraphs and Sir Sydney Caine commented that it seemed an expensive method of distribution to send kerosene into the country and let it "trickle back into the towns". Mr. Bourdillon pointed out that direct distribution to country areas was done through co-operatives and an extension of co-operatives should fit this recommendation.

Paragraph 245. On the recommendation to increase the supply of essential imports which is an implied criticism of this office Mr. Gorell Barnes suggested that the Gold Coast had had its fair share and Mr. Morris said that very few things were being allocated now. It was agreed that it was advisable to confine comment to the present and future: there are very few shortages at the moment. Mr. Melville pointed out that internal cocoa prices are probably going up by at least 50% in the coming season: it will be impossible to keep prices down as purchasing power rises at such a rate.

Chapter XII

On the chapter dealing with the cutting out of cocoa trees Mr. Melville said that some of the criticisms were probably fair and that the cutting out campaign had been badly handled. Mr. Cohen suggested and it was generally agreed that the recommendation contained in paragraph 273 advising a panel of three plant pathologists should be put into effect immediately. It was agreed that it might be better not to have a British Chairman of the panel but that there should be an American and, if possible, a non-European member, for example an Indian.

Paragraph 275. The recommendation in this paragraph was thought to be a matter for the Cocoa Board.

Paragraph 291–297. It was suggested that the point should be made that the government was actually working on plans for a Cocoa Bank.

Paragraph 296. Mr. Melville did not think the ordinance suggested in this recommendation would achieve anything.

Paragraph 313–320. It was thought that no more should be said about the Volta scheme than that the suggestions had been noted.

Mr. Eastwood pointed out that no allusion had been made to the Clay Mission[10] in the section on Agricultural Development.

It was agreed that two members of the Finance Department should co-operate with members of the Geographical Department in drafting a reply to the report but that nothing should be written down until Mr. Leach had been consulted.

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[10] Led by G F Clay, agricultural adviser to the S of S for the colonies, the Clay Mission visited West Africa between June and July 1947, briefed 'to investigate the suitability of conditions in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, Northern Nigeria and The Gambia, for large-scale mechanised production of groundnuts for export, in accordance with a programme covering a fixed term of years and, if conditions were considered suitable, to make recommendations as to the methods of production to be adopted so as to ensure the full co-operation of the local inhabitants, due regard being paid in any such recommendations to the social and economic effects on the territories concerned.'

35 CO 96/796/5, no 43 29 June 1948

[Watson Commission Report]: minute by A B Cohen summarising the views of the CO departments[1]

1. I have suggested to the Private Office that it would be useful if the Secretary of State could find time to discuss with the department some time this week some of the main points which will come up in the talks with Sir G. Creasy next week on the Gold Coast Commission's report. May I call attention in this connection to the letter at No. 12[2] which I wrote to Sir G. Creasy on the 14th June after the Secretary of State had discussed the report with me and also to Sir A. Burns' telegram of the 22nd June at No. 27.

2. We have now discussed the economic sections of the report with Sir S. Caine and members of the Economic Division. We have discussed Chapter VI dealing with Africanisation with Sir C. Jefferies; we have obtained the views of Mr. Blackburne on the public relations section, Chapter VII (see above); those of the Education Advisers on Chapter XVII dealing with education (see No. 29); and those of Mr. Roberts-Wray and Mr. Cartland on law reform, Chapter XIX (see No. 28). We await the views of Mr. Clay and Mr. Barltrop on Chapters XV and XVI.[3]

3. I am now in a position, I think, to make a general statement of the views of the office on the report. First of all I think we can regard Chapters II and III, which deal with the disturbances and the use by the Gold Coast Government of emergency powers, as highly satisfactory. Apart from the criticism of the Government for introducing a section into the Emergency Order in Council to some extent limiting access to the courts (para. 61 of the report) the action of the Government is generally endorsed and the action and attitude of the Gold Coast Convention are put in their right perspective. Chapter I of the report, which is introductory, is unsatisfactory in that it makes too little of the limitations on action by Government in a country like the Gold Coast; it disregards the very great past achievements of the Gold Coast Government; and in para. 20 it contains a list of alleged grievances which might appear to the casual reader as being accepted by the Commission as legitimate. It is clear from later sections of the report that in many cases at any rate they are by no means accepted. The main substantial criticism in Chapter I is contained in paras. 27 and 28, where the view is expressed that economic co-ordination and planning in the Gold Coast has been weak. Both the Economic and African Divisions of the office regard this criticism as being to a large extent justified.

4. Turning now to the body of the report from Chapter IV onwards, I should like to start off with a general comment. I think that the report ranges over too wide a field. The Commission could not, I am sure, avoid constitutional matters and they had to go into the whole economic picture. But they would, I think, have been well

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[1] This minute provided the basis for the meeting at the CO on 30 June 1948 which drafted the statement by the British government in response to the report of the Watson Commission. The report and statement were published in 1948 as Col 231 and 232 respectively.

[2] See 33.

[3] The Watson Report was widely circulated in the CO and discussed with experts before it was published. Burns and Hailey were among those consulted. K W Blackburne was director of the CO Information Service; E W Barltrop was the CO labour adviser (for Clay, see 34, note 10).

advised to keep off a good deal of the detail. There was no real reason to go into education at such great length and they would have been particularly well advised to keep off law reform, a highly technical subject which has received much consideration in the past. I think that much of their treatment of these subjects is superficial; that they have not always succeeded in eliciting all the facts before coming to conclusions; and that generally they seem to have proceeded with a bias in favour of the critic and against the Government. A good deal of their description of the Government's actions is couched in language which appears to suggest criticism without, I think, this always being intentional. The general effect is not very happy.

5. Having said all this I think that there is a great deal of value in the report and that we need not be too pessimistic about its effects on public opinion in Africa and elsewhere. I hope that my relative optimism will be borne out by events.

6. My very brief comments on the Chapters from IV onwards are as follows:-

Chapter IV – Ex-servicemen

No comments. The action of the Government is generally endorsed.

Chapter V – Constitutional

This is probably the most important chapter and it will be useful to the department to have the general views of the Secretary of State before the discussions with Sir G. Creasy start, although I am sure that the Secretary of State will not wish to reach any final conclusion at this stage. The whole of the analysis in this chapter suffers from the prejudice felt by the Commission against Chiefs. While many of us would agree that the Chiefs' performance in the recent disturbances was not wholly creditable and while many Chiefs have shown themselves unfit to lead modern local government bodies, yet over most of the territory they are in fact the recognised leaders of the people. The Commission greatly underestimate the difficulties of forging a modern system of local government on the basis of the existing traditional system. They do little justice to the achievements of the past. Some of their comments are inaccurate and others jejune. Their criticisms of the 1946 constitution are quite unjust, as I told them when I saw them. Sir A. Burns has dealt pretty effectively with this passage in his telegram at No. 27. I hope that in our statement on the report we shall rebut this particular criticism.

As regards the substance of the recommendations in this chapter, I think it unfortunate that they went into so much detail. Some of the detail is in my view unsound, particularly where they want to take away the rating powers of local authorities and hand them over to regional councils. Indeed their whole approach to the relative functions of regional councils and local authorities as regards finance and powers is at variance with their general proposition that decentralisation is required. The insistence on detail has made what might have been a notable series of recommendations appear somewhat amateurish. I hope, however, that this will not be held to detract from what I regard as the real merit of the main recommendations themselves.

I would suggest, subject to what Sir G. Creasy may say, that we can accept the broad picture drawn by the Commission on the following basis:-

(a) Local authorities should be the existing Native Administrations modernised

by giving full representation of all elements of the population. This is entirely in accordance with the policy worked out in Cambridge and London last year and with existing practice.

(b) The three Regional Councils should be conceived of not so much as legislative bodies, as in Nigeria where the area is much larger, but as county councils on the lines envisaged by the Commission. Their financial and other powers and their relations both to the local authorities and central legislature will require very careful working out and this will have to be entrusted to an officer with similar terms of reference to those given to Mr. Phillipson in his Nigerian enquiry or to a committee with official and African representation.

The status of Regional Commissioners would be something less than that of Chief Commissioners at present. This is a view which I believe is shared by the Governor and Mr. Scott.

(c) As regards town councils, we can, I think, agree generally to the necessity for separate bodies on municipal lines, although there may be cases where these should come under the Native Authority of the area. The recommendation at III about the attendance of Chiefs at meetings of town councils can, I hope, be disregarded. I tried to dissuade the Commission from this.

(d) The proposals for the Assembly are unobjectionable, except that it may be that the total membership is too large. Clearly it will be difficult to have 15 members from the Northern Territories at present but we might adopt the system in operation in the Sudan, where the Southern Sudan has its full quota of seats, a number of these remaining unfilled for the present.

(e) The proposals regarding the Executive Council are much the most important. I am quite convinced that we must bring Africans on to the executive straight away. Probably it would have been better to start these off as Members wholly responsible to the Governor, but having regard to the course of events in the Gold Coast and to these published recommendations I doubt whether we can in fact resist the undoubted demand which there will be for African ministers. I believe that the proper course is to accept this recommendation. I am doubtful whether nine ministers are needed and I am inclined to go for seven at first with four officials and three Africans (or perhaps eight, with four and four). I think it important that the economic field should for the present be in the hands of officials and I would go for a team of officials on the Executive Council consisting of the Chief Secretary with general responsibility and special responsibility for defence and security, the Legal Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Economic Secretary. Other subjects would come under Africans. The position of Under Secretaries would be most important and I believe that we may have to strengthen the Gold Coast Secretariat so that this may be defined.

(f) The Governor. His powers must be fully preserved as the Commission recommend. There can be no question of his moving yet in the direction of a mere ceremonial head of the Government. We must, I am sure, in commenting on this whole section of the report very firmly emphasise the necessity for having a strong Government machine both at the level of the Governor, the Executive Council and the Regional Commissioners.

Chapter VI – Africanisation
I have no comments on this, which is generally acceptable to Sir C. Jeffries. In connection with para. 135, the Government statement should make it clear that there will be a Public Service Commission with African representation which will deal with all first appointments and promotions from one section of the Service to another, and a Promotions Board also with African representation, which will deal with higher promotions inside the senior Service. The Public Service Commission would probably include unofficials but the Promotions Board should be an entirely official body. It would be suitable to have an African High Court judge as a member, as recommended by the Commission, but if the Colonial Secretary is a member the judge should not be chairman.

Chapter VII – Press and public relations
We can accept this generally; Mr. Blackburne agrees. A new Public Relations Officer is being appointed.

Chapter VIII – Immigration. This is generally acceptable.

Chapters IX & X – Boycott, supplies & distribution
We have discussed these chapters with Sir S. Caine and the Economic Division. We regard them as open to some criticism. While there is no doubt a great deal that is justified in the observations of the Commission the general impression which the chapters make is that having criticised the Gold Coast Government for not taking a strong enough or definite enough line, the Commission when they come to make recommendations have nothing very concrete to say and indeed do not make it clear what line the Gold Coast Government ought to have taken in the past. It will be necessary by some means to bring this point out in the Government statement. This runs through all three chapters. Mr. Leach, the Secretary for Commerce and Industries, who has just arrived by sea from the Gold Coast, is studying the report and is going to give us his detailed comments. These will be very valuable when added to the comments which the Economic Division have already made in the discussions with Sir G. Creasy and the preparation of the statement.

The main concrete recommendation of the Commission is that the Gold Coast Government should press on with the development of consumers' co-operatives and that these should take over an increasing proportion of imported goods, being supplied with them by the various firms. The Gold Coast Government was already starting to take action on this recommendation before it was made. Mr. Melville, Mr. Gorsuch and I had long discussions with Mr. Saloway on the subject and Mr. Leach has had discussions with John Holt and, I think, G.B. Oliphants [sic], which will continue in this country. The Government is proposing to take over a chain of retail stores from John Holt and possibly G.B. Oliphants and it will be necessary to obtain the co-operation of both the U.A.C. and John Holt. I have had a letter on the subject from Sir G. Creasy and had already had discussions with Mr. Samuel,[4] and shall be pursuing these with him and a representative of John Holt. The venture will be under the aegis of the Gold Coast Co-operative Union. I need not go into details

[4] Frank Samuel, managing director of the UAC.

here but we all regard this development as of great potential importance. I do not know how much we shall be able to say in the statement but that we shall have to discuss with Sir G. Creasy.

We feel that the Commission in its criticism of the extent and severity of import control in the past and at present (para. 245 and elsewhere) has been unjust. At any rate we have a good answer now, as the 1947 import figures show a remarkable increase over the figures for 1946. We shall have to bring this out in the statement.

Chapter XI – Trading discrimination. No comments.

Chapter XII – Cutting out of cocoa trees

We propose that the recommendations should be accepted in toto and I am pretty sure from discussions with Mr. Saloway that the Gold Coast Government will agree. The Commission propose in para. 273 that in view of the intense local suspicion of British scientific advice a small panel of three plant pathologists of high repute drawn from countries not commercially interested in cocoa should be asked to study the incidence of the disease and report on its speedy eradication. If they confirm that cutting out is the only remedy the Commission feel that the Government's position would be greatly strengthened. Our proposal on this had been that we should get a panel consisting of one British scientist and two foreign scientists nominated by the F.A.O. but I have just had a letter from Sir G. Creasy suggesting that all three scientists should be nominated by the F.A.O. and it should be left entirely to their judgment whether a British scientist should be included. We are consulting urgently with the experts on this with a view to taking very early action so that the party can visit the Gold Coast in the near future and the report can be available by the end of the year so as not to interfere with the main cutting out season which would be at the beginning of 1949. Pending the report we hope that cutting out will not entirely stop.

Chapter XIII – Cocoa Marketing Board

No comments. The Commission are opposed to any increase in the producers' representation on the Board and this will be useful in dealing with Dr. Danquah's forthcoming motion in the Legislative Council. We shall explore with Sir G. Creasy the possibility of using part of the cocoa surplus for objects of general benefit; the political difficulties are considerable. We agree with the proposals regarding the cocoa bank.

Chapter XIV – Industrial development

No comments. The passage on the Volta Valley scheme (paras 315 –320) seems to be very remote from the Commission's functions and we feel that no more need to be said on this than that their suggestions have been noted.

Chapter XV – Agricultural development

No comments pending Mr. Clay's views. We feel that the Commission are perhaps over-emphatic in their insistence on the importance of food crops as against export crops. But the chapter is reasonably balanced.

Chapter XVI – Labour and employment. No comments.

Chapter XVII – Education
Mr. Ward[5] has made some detailed comments and has some criticisms of the recommendations with particular reference to technical education. These are matters of detail; broadly the chapter seems not unreasonable

Chapter XVIII – Housing
No comments except that less than justice appears to have been done to the efforts of the Gold Coast Government in the recent past on African housing. This is a point on which Sir G. Creasy will be able to give further information.

Chapter XIX – Law reform
This is a bad chapter. In its remarks both on land, tenure and native courts the Commission has been too much guided by its prejudice against Chiefs and its tendency to superficiality is here most apparent. The subject is a most difficult one of which I myself know little. Much has been written in the distant and recent past on the subject and the somewhat facile recommendations, while they no doubt represent the ultimate objective, are in many cases impossible of realisation in the near future. Mr. Roberts-Wray, Mr. Cartland and Mr. K.E. Robinson have all commented in detail and we shall have no difficulty in drafting that part of the statement which deals with this chapter. I think I need only mention two points. I think that the Commission's recommendations for the establishment of a land court on a rather different basis from the existing land branch of the Supreme Court is sound; but this land court could not possibly be given jurisdiction over all the land cases with which the Commission wants it to deal. It would need to have many judges if this work were to be given to it and many of these cases are purely local and quite unsuitable for it. The recommendation that the jurisdiction of native courts should be entrusted to African lawyers versed in customary law is quite visionary and I am not at all sure that this is desirable. I told the Commission that whatever they were to say and that we were to try to do, this could not be achieved in the foreseeable future; but they have still included the recommendation.

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[5] W E F Ward, formerly a master and acting principal at Achimota College, now CO deputy educational adviser.

36 PREM 8/924 19 July 1948

[Watson Commission Report]: minute by Mr Creech Jones to Mr Attlee

The Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances which took place in February and March in the Gold Coast has now submitted its report. The Commission consisted of Mr. Aiken Watson, K.C., Mr. Andrew Dalgleish (Transport and General Workers' Union) and Dr. Keith Murray (Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford). I have discussed the report with Sir Gerald Creasy, the Governor of the Gold Coast, who flew home for the purpose and has now returned to the Territory.

The report will be published as a non-Parliamentary paper on the 4th August. It cannot be published before Parliament rises owing to the time required for printing and the necessity to arrange for simultaneous publication here and in the Gold Coast.

I am proposing to publish simultaneously with the report a statement of the views of His Majesty's Government on its recommendations and of the action which the Gold Coast Government proposes to take on these.

The report generally endorses both the actions taken by the police in dealing with the actual disturbances in the Gold Coast and the actions taken by the Gold Coast Government under emergency powers to deal with the situation created by the disturbances. The Commission found that the Gold Coast Convention were active in exploiting the disturbances, although there is no direct evidence that they actually promoted them. They also found no evidence of actual Communist instigation of the disturbances, although the Secretary of the Convention has contacts with the Communist Party (having recently returned to the Gold Coast from this country) and this is known to the other members of the Convention's executive.

In dealing with the underlying causes of the disturbances the Commission have ranged over a wide field of political, social and economic problems. They have made a number of criticisms of present policy, not all of which take account of existing conditions in the Gold Coast, and these are dealt with in the Government statement to be published. I need only mention here their recommendations with regard to constitutional development. They criticise the existing constitution introduced in 1946, but in my view these criticisms are not justified; that constitution was a necessary step forward in the political evolution of the Gold Coast and was warmly welcomed as such by virtually everybody in the Territory. The Commission make detailed recommendations for further constitutional advance, the most important of which is the proposal to give African members drawn from the Gold Coast Legislative Council executive responsibility for groups of departments of Government. This proposal is in line with existing policy and broadly acceptable, although I do not think it possible to go quite as far as the Commission recommends; this will be made clear in the proposed statement. The detailed recommendations for constitutional reform must, in my view, be referred to a representative local committee in the first instance for their comments and the draft statement indicates that, subject to the agreement of the Gold Coast Legislative Council, such a committee will be set up at an early date.

In view of the interest which has been shown in this country in the proceedings of the Commission, I thought that I ought to inform you of the action which is being taken.

37 T 220/105, ff 50–57 26 July 1948

[Colonial economic policy]: circular letter from Sir T Lloyd to colonial governors. *Enclosure*: CO memorandum on 'The colonial empire and the economic crisis' for the African Conference (AC(48)5)

The Secretary of State has asked me to send you the enclosed memorandum on "The Colonial Empire and the Economic Crisis." He sends it with some diffidence because

of the considerable public discussion which has already taken place on the economic problems confronting the world and because Colonial Governors have already received a number of memoranda on the matter and have taken action to cope with some of the difficulties confronting us at the present. Nevertheless, there is some danger that without wide publicity inside the territories on the essential facts of the present continuing crisis certain misconceptions of policy may arise and, consequently, some deterioration of relations between Britain and the peoples of the territories may occur. Misunderstandings are likely if a wrong approach is made in Britain and too little emphasis is given to the place of Colonial Governments and peoples in economic expansion; or when it is expected that the Colonial public should be as alive as we are ourselves to the economic situation which has come about in the world and the particular needs of Western Europe. The public here are conscious of the heavy burden they carried in the war relative to their own resources, a burden probably heavier than that carried by any other country, and yet they must continue to face sacrifice and scarcity with the promise of more to come. They do not always find it easy to understand that other people may not fully appreciate their difficulties and sacrifices.

2. On the other hand, considering the great difference which as yet exists between the average standard of living of the British people and that of the vast majority of Colonial peoples, it is not easy for the latter to understand why the former regard themselves as making any sacrifice at all. There are here obvious seeds of discontent and unhappy relations if public pronouncements are not very carefully considered and handled. It is important that those overseas should realise that the war was concerned with the preservation of the freedom of the peoples everywhere and that the prosperity of Britain is an essential factor in promoting the well-being and economic prosperity of the Colonial peoples. Equally, while we are all mindful of the deep rooted loyalty to Britain in the overseas territories, a false emphasis here regarding the present economic difficulties, or an attitude which assumes that economic development of the territories may be imposed as if the territories existed to meet the present shortages and difficulties of Western Europe, may prejudice good relations and increase the political difficulties in the territories. It hardly needs to be said that there is no intention on the part of His Majesty's Government to exploit the Colonial Empire for the sake of selfish United Kingdom interests or to impede in any way the political progress of the Colonial people, even if some individual statements made or action taken under pressure of present circumstances may perhaps expose us to doubt from certain types of critic.

3. The Secretary of State is convinced that we can escape most of these misunderstandings and turn the present situation to account by using the present period of crisis and trial for the whole Empire so as to demonstrate to ourselves and to the outside world that the inter-dependence of the Colonial territories and Britain is a real and powerful thing. To this end the ready interchange of information is a first necessity. I spoke earlier about the tendency on the part of the United Kingdom to assume that everybody else automatically realises this country's present difficulties and their causes. Clearly we cannot expect the fullest understanding of our difficulties from the Colonial public unless we tell them the facts, and unless this is done we ourselves at this end are largely to blame for the misconceptions and confusions which are bound to ensue. For example, people in the Colonial Empire are no doubt apt to wonder whether the United Kingdom is really in such difficulty as

is made out, seeing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is budgeting this year for a very large surplus (though admittedly at the cost of very large taxation); and they are also no doubt tempted to believe that the assistance which the United Kingdom is deriving from the European Recovery Programme puts us in "Easy Street". The Secretary of State feels that the Colonial Office can assist in providing material to counter any such misconceptions and to emphasise the really serious nature of the present economic position.

4. The enclosed memorandum has been prepared in the Office as a first essay in this task of "telling the facts". It sets out the salient facts about the present economic and financial crisis in this country and its repercussions in the Colonial field. It is, admittedly, not intended to be a public document, and should not be quoted or referred to in any public statement. We do hope, however, that the points which it seeks to make can in one way or another be made available to the public and that, subject to any comment which you or your Advisers may have, it may be found useful as background guidance for statements in your territory.

5. We should of course be most grateful for any comments which you may like to make on the problem raised in this letter or on the memorandum itself. I do not forecast a series of regular "bulletins" but the memorandum is intended to be a beginning of a continuing process whereby we, from the London end, will try to send periodical appreciations of the financial and economic position of the United Kingdom. One final point I would urge. The economic aspect of Colonial policy is but part of the general plan and purpose of Britain in the Colonies and in no way, in our present efforts, diminishes the importance we attach to our present and long term policies for social welfare and political responsibility. All publicity should be directed to the balanced presentation of the essential features of British policy, even if from time to time emphasis is required on one aspect or another.

I am writing in similar terms to other Governors.

Enclosure to 37

1. After nearly three years of peace, most of the world is still suffering from the consequences of war. The restoration of normal economic life has been delayed by shortages of the materials needed for rehabilitation and by the decrease in production, particularly of food stuffs, in war devastated aeas, such as the rice producing region of the Far East, aggravated by the increase in world population.

The United Kingdom, in particular, suffers from the depletion of its internal and external resources in the war and from inadequate production as an aftermath of the war.

Production in the United Kingdom and other European countries has been inadequate for all current needs of consumption, rehabilitation and development; and this, in turn, has occasioned a high degree of dependence on supplies from the United States which is reflected in the so called world dollar shortage.

The United Kingdom normally had an adverse balance of trade with the United States, but it has in the past been able to meet that adverse balance by exports to other countries which had a favourable balance with the United States.

Most of these countries at the present time are no better off than the United Kingdom; indeed, as the 'stop-gap' aid for Europe, given by the United States in

advance of the European Recovery Programme, indicates, many countries are in an even more serious position than the United Kingdom.

The difficulties confronting the United Kingdom in the economic sphere are more fully described in Chapter 1 of the 'Economic Survey' for 1948 (Cmd.7344). . . .

2. The serious consequences of these developments for the external financial position of the sterling area are vividly illustrated in the statement of the United Kingdom balance of payments for 1946 and 1947 in Table X on p. 15 of this document. It will be seen that during 1947 the gold and dollar reserves of the United Kingdom (which also constitute the reserves of the rest of the sterling area) decreased by no less than £1,023 millions. Whilst the biggest component in this total decrease was the deficit of the United Kingdom with the dollar area, it is noteworthy that the deficit of the rest of the sterling area with the dollar area increased proportionately far more in 1947, and that, whereas in 1946 the sterling area as a whole received on balance £80 millions in gold and dollars from other countries, in 1947 they paid to other countries on balance, £157 millions in gold and dollars.

3. In the summer of last year, when it became clear that the drain on the United Kingdom gold and dollar reserves was accelerating at an alarming rate, measures, which it is unnecessary to recapitulate here, were at once taken by the United Kingdom Government to bring the situation under control. At the same time co-operation in these measures was sought and obtained, both from the Dominions and from the Colonial Empire. As a result of these measures there was, during the last five months of 1947, a steady decrease in the rate of drain of the sterling area reserves which reached a peak of £156 millions in August, and by December had fallen to £48 millions. The first four months of 1948 have unfortunately not shown a similar decline in the rate of drain, and it still represents an annual rate of just over £500 millions. As the total remaining gold and dollar reserves of the United Kingdom amounted at the beginning of 1948 to about £680 millions,* it is clear that still greater efforts to remedy the situation are required.

4. The European Reconstruction Programme, now approved by the United States Congress and already in process of implementation by the American administration, represents a measure of assistance by one country to peoples outside its borders, whose generosity is quite unprecedented in time of peace. Nonetheless, supremely important as this assistance is, even if the share of it enjoyed by the United Kingdom is sufficient to cover the whole of the net deficit with the Western Hemisphere of the United Kingdom and its dependent territories (which is in itself unlikely) there will still remain the problem of the deficit of the rest of the sterling area. Moreover, the European Recovery Programme is planned to last until 1952 at the latest, and, as appropriations will have to be voted by the United States Congress, cannot be absolutely counted upon as long as that; and, unless the present disequilibrium in the balance of payments of the sterling area can be corrected during the period covered by the Programme, the Programme will have served only to postpone, not to prevent, the inevitable crisis.

5. In these circumstances the United Kingdom Government has decided that whatever American aid may become available to them through the European Reconstruction Programme, it will be necessary for them to continue and intensify

* Excluding the balance of the Canadian loan which may not be available, but including the whole of the South African gold loan.

the policies upon which they embarked last autumn with a view to reducing as rapidly as possible, the drain upon their gold and dollar reserves. These policies which are fully discussed in the Economic Survey for 1948 fall under the following main headings:-

(a) Measures designed to increase production, particularly in the basic industries and in dollar earning and dollar saving industries (see especially Chapter II of the Economic Survey).
(b) Measures to increase exports, particularly to hard-currency areas (see Chapter I(b) of the Economic Survey).
(c) Measures to reduce imports from hard currency areas and to secure essential supplies without payment of gold or dollars, (see Chapter I(d) of the Economic Survey) and
(d) Anti-inflation measures in the budgetary sphere, in wage and price policies, and in the control of investment programmes. (See Chapter 3 of the Economic Survey and the proposals of the United Kingdom Budget for 1948.)

6. By the beginning of 1948 these policies were already beginning to meet with some success. For instance, during the first quarter of 1948 the interim index of Industrial Production (1946 average = 100) stood at 121, and there had been a particularly welcome improvement in production of coal and textiles; and during the first quarter of 1948 the volume of United Kingdom exports had reached an average of 125% of the 1938 volume. But, as indicated above, the rate at which the drain on the reserves was still continuing at that date, showed that much still remained to be done.

7. It would not, perhaps, have been surprising if, in these difficult conditions, the United Kingdom had decided that it could not continue to devote any substantial proportion of its limited resources in money or materials to Colonial Development. In fact, however, the United Kingdom is determined, despite all its difficulties, to continue to play its full part in the development of the Colonies.

The Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 was amended in 1945 and the amount to be devoted from United Kingdom funds to the development of the resources of the Colonies and the welfare of their peoples, was then increased to a total of £120 millions.

Plans for the development of most Colonies, in accordance with this Act, have been framed, considered and approved, and many individual items have already been initiated. The Overseas Development Act which has now received the Royal Assent, provides for the financing from the United Kingdom funds to the Colonial Development Corporation, and the Overseas Fund Corporation, to the extent of £100 millions, and £50 millions respectively, and the Secretary of State has recently addressed to Colonial Governments a despatch enclosing a Memorandum by the Chairman of the Colonial Development Corporation asking for an early submission of schemes to increase production in Colonial territories.

In a lesser degree the revised double taxation arrangements into which most Colonies have entered, have enabled considerable revenue to be transferred in many cases from United Kingdom Exchequer to the Colonies in which United Kingdom Companies function.

Finally, special consideration has been given to the improvement of existing arrangements for ensuring that there is made available to the Colonies from the

United Kingdom, a fair share of the iron and steel and other capital goods, without which the finance thus made available, cannot be effectively utilised.

8. There are two main considerations, which have weighed with the United Kingdom in its decision not to waver from the objective of developing the economic resources of the Colonies, and raising the standard of living of colonial peoples.

First, colonial peoples themselves are demanding a higher standard of living with the amenities which that implies and the United Kingdom Government considers it to be its duty to help to put them on the road to attain them.

Secondly, it is the considered view of the United Kingdom that the development of the economic resources of the Colonies and the possibilities of triangular trade which such development opens up, is one of the most important means by which, in the long term, it may be possible to bring the balance of payments of the sterling area as a whole, once more into equilibrium. The words "long term" are here used deliberately; for it is fully realised that increased production in the Colonies must be based on the steady improvement of their social, health and educational services and on their communications and other basic economic services as well as on the actual initiation of new industrial or agricultural projects.

9. It must, however, be recognised that although there is no conflict between the interests of the Colonies and the long term interests of the United Kingdom Government, the decision of the United Kingdom to continue and intensify its support for Colonial Development, does, in a short term, carry with it certain dangers against which it will be necessary to guard.

The United Kingdom Government feels sure that Colonial Governments will wish to play their full part in averting those dangers.

10. The dangers referred to in the preceding paragraph arise from the fact that development projects in the Colonies give rise, from the moment of their initiation, both to demands for capital goods and to increased incomes, which in their turn, create increased demands for consumer goods; whilst the dividends which they can be expected to bring in the form of increased production for local consumption and for export, are necessarily delayed. These increased demands for capital and consumer goods can, for the most part, only be met by imports, either from the United States and other hard currency sources, or from the United Kingdom at the expense either of United Kingdom exports to other destinations, particularly hard currency destinations, or of already inadequate United Kingdom levels of investment and consumption.

11. The United Kingdom Government, for their part, are fully aware that the finance made available for Colonial Development must be matched by supplies of capital and consumer goods if that finance is not to be rendered ineffective, and it is their considered policy to make available for this purpose, as great a quantity of supplies as can be released without creating an unbearable strain on their own limited resources and thus endangering, in the difficult years immediately ahead, both the stability of the United Kingdom itself, and amongst other things, the whole future of the policy of Colonial Development.

12. It must be recognised, nonetheless, that, however great the effort made by the United Kingdom on these lines, the supplies of capital goods and consumer goods which can be made available for the Colonies are not likely to be sufficient to support, during the next few years, all the projects of Colonial Development which may in themselves appear desirable, or to enable the increased incomes, which will

be generated by the projects which are in fact initiated during those years, to be fully reflected in a correspondingly increased real standard of living. From this, certain conclusions affecting policy of Colonial Governments themselves would appear to follow.

13. First, it is essential that supplies of capital goods which it is possible to make available to the Colonies should be used for the most essential purposes; secondly, it continues to be necessary for Colonial Governments to control imports, and in particular, to ensure that restraint is exercised in the importation of less essential consumer goods, especially when they have to be paid for in hard currencies; and thirdly it will be necessary for all Colonial Governments to be constantly on their guard against the dangers of inflation.

14. It follows from the first conclusion that it would almost certainly be necessary for Colonial Governments during the next few years to exercise a considerable measure of control over local investment programmes and possibly to control or supervise the use of some special categories of scarce capital goods. It follows also, that the closest attention should be paid to methods of economising in the use of scarce materials, especially iron and steel, by adopting methods of building and engineering construction which call for the minimum requirements of such materials. Public Works Departments will, therefore, no doubt give close thought to the possibilities of changes in constructional methods and specifications with that object in view. Indeed, this consideration points to a conclusion of rather more general application – that is, that every encouragement and stimulus should be given to the undertaking of the simpler kinds of construction from purely local materials and with local and, where possible, voluntary labour, in cases in which hitherto it may have been taken for granted that more elaborate contructions requiring imported materials and paid labour forces would automatically be adopted. Clearly, there are limits to possibilities of that kind, but in many areas it has in fact been found that real benefit can be obtained from the construction say, of a very simple kind of school building or local dispensary which has thus become available a considerable time before it would have been possible to provide more elaborate buildings, having regard to the prospective availability of supplies for such more elaborate construction.

There are strong arguments for the use of such simple construction at all times, but in the present economic difficulties these arguments have special force. If local enthusiasm for simple construction of this kind can be stimulated in the less developed areas, it may be found that the local communities will give their labour voluntarily and without pay. This has been the experience of certain mass education campaigns, and quite apart from its immediate value, may provide the key for example to the adequate spread of primary education or rural health services in the future.

15. Import control has been the subject of two long saving telegrams which the Secretary of State has recently addressed to Colonial Governments. It is not, therefore, necessary to dilate upon this subject here. In most Colonial territories, the need to control imports, particularly imports from hard currency sources, should be readily understood; for they, like the United Kingdom, do not themselves dispose of the necessary hard currencies to buy all the goods which they would like to buy from hard currency sources. In territories such as Malaya and the Gold Coast, which are substantial net earners of dollars, it is, of course, inevitably much more difficult to

convince public opinion of the need to restrict dollar expenditure. It will, however, be appreciated that for territories in this position to claim a right to expend all, or a greater part, of the dollars they earn would make nonsense of the whole conception of the sterling area; for there is no point in having a pool if each member takes out of the pool precisely what he pays into it. The essence of the sterling area system is rather that each member should be entitled to have his reasonable needs met from some source.

16. Turning to the problem of inflation, recent increases in the prices of primary products (rubber is the only exception among major Colonial products) and the resulting increases, not only in the wages of primary producers, but in wages generally, have already given rise to inflationary tendencies in many Colonies; and inso far as increased incomes generated by Development programmes, as they gather pace, cannot be fully matched by increased imports of consumer goods, the danger of inflation will become more acute.

The theoretically ideal way of meeting such a situation is that voluntary personal savings should absorb the excess of purchasing power. Voluntary saving on so large a scale may not always be possible; but, nevertheless, savings campaigns should be maintained wherever possible.

Where savings are inadequate it is the duty of the Government to act on behalf of its people and to supplement private and voluntary saving by communal and compulsory saving through increased taxation. In the present circumstances in which Colonial territories find themselves, the importance of this fundamental point can hardly be overstressed. It is commonly argued that in developing territories a high level of taxation is an evil. But that is not necessarily so, if the taxation is not such as directly to increase costs above a level which leaves a sufficiently attractive margin of profit, and if in allocating revenue from taxation due attention is paid to development.

17. On the other hand it is in the Colonies' own vital interests by direct and indirect taxation as may be appropriate, to convert the unsatisfied (and in the present circumstances, unsatisfiable) purchasing power into a reserve which will not only obviate the dangers of immediate inflation, but will also provide financial resources against possible lean years to come and for future development and welfare at a time when present world shortages of essential capital and consumer goods have been overcome.

It is recognised that it may be no easy matter to convince public opinion that, more than 2 years after the end of the war, it is necessary to maintain or even increase wartime levels of taxation.

The real standard of living is, however, ultimately dictated not by the levels of spendable money incomes, but by the amount of goods which can be made available for consumption. If spendable money incomes were allowed to rise faster than the available supply of goods, the only result would be a runaway inflation with all the suffering and injustice which would inevitably follow in its train.

18. In the United Kingdom, where this danger of inflation has similarly been present during recent years, any large rise in the cost of necessities has been prevented by strict price control, the effectiveness of which is generally conceded to depend on an elaborate system of physical controls based on rationing.

Such a system is unsuitable for, and administratively impossible in most Colonies, and effective price control is correpsondingly weakened. But even in the United

Kingdom it had been found essential to supplement physical controls by fiscal measures, such as increases in the purchase tax and retention of high rates of both direct and indirect taxation. This was, for instance, the reason for the supplementary budget introduced last Autumn in the United Kingdom, and, as has been made clear in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech, is the main inspiration of the Budget, for 1948/49. When each of these Budgets was introduced, the United Kingdom's internal financial affairs were sound if not prosperous. The estimated surplus for the year was considerable. But in a situation where there was at one and the same time full employment, and an urgent need both to increase exports and to reduce imports, the inflationary danger was increasing; and it was solely to avert this danger that it was found necessary to reduce available purchasing power by increases in taxation.

19. In the Colonies, where the physical controls exercised in the United Kingdom are absent or less efficacious, it is all the more essential to employ the fiscal measures of surplus and increased revenue.

This is essential in those Colonies where there is, on the one hand, an unusual quantity of money available from high commodity prices and expanding investment, and on the other, an insufficiency of consumer goods. Failure to utilise to the maximum extent possible the appropriate fiscal weapons will, in such conditions, inevitably result in the territory being faced with inflation, and the discontent and political disturbances that inevitably follow in its train.

38 CO 537/3226, no 1 — 27 Sept 1948

'West African tour – 1948': report by Mr Rees-Williams to Mr Creech Jones, conclusions and recommendations

1. *General*

1. I submit the conclusions and recommendations arising out of my tour of West Africa. I have not gone into details, first because you know the area so well and secondly because I have cleared problems wherever possible with the Governments on the spot. A full report of all meetings wherein such matters were discussed has, in every case, been despatched to you.

2. *Conclusions*

(a) *Political*

2. Whilst my tour was not directly concerned with political matters, they naturally arose in the consideration of economic questions. I found that in the country areas, i.e. out of the artificial atmosphere of the capitals, people were interested in crop prices, high cost of living, shortage of supplies and the like. They were only interested in politics to the extent to which they believed these matters could be improved by political action. Politicians, like Danquah, had played on economic disturbances to gain political ends. The responsible elements were horrified at the thought of self-government. The old ones remembered the barbarism of the time before the British arrived in the country and had no wish to return to such a condition, and return it would be. But not being sure of the Government's intentions, they were sitting on the fence. They did not know whether the rebels of to-day might not be the masters of tomorrow. The people of the Northern

Territories, too, are both friendly and anxious to retain the European association for a considerable time to come.

3. When we consider that only 50 years ago barbarism had full sway it will be seen how thin is the veneer of civilisation. In my view the West African is nothing like as advanced as the Malay or the Burman and of course far behind the Chinese. So too, as in East Africa, his attitude is a mendicant one. He looks on Government as a gigantic Father Christmas able to dip in his bag and pull out trains, schools, hospitals, roads, motor cars and everything else.

(b) *Defence*

4. There would seem to be no difficulty in raising two or three divisions of West African troops. The local commanders are of our mind on the questions of King's Commissions, technical training and mass education.

5. In my view the present size of the Force is entirely inadequate even as a gendarmerie. The liaison between civil and military authorities is good.

(c) *Security*

6. The Governments agreed with our views on Intelligence and the respective roles of political and police officers.

7. As to the police arrangements, whilst improved, they are to my mind entirely inadequate. In Nigeria for example there is no radio communication even to the various residencies, and for a country the size of Great Britain, France and pre-War Germany with a population of 27 million they have a police force of less than one-third of the Metropolitan police. In Sierra Leone the Commissioner of Police for the Colony has no authority over the police (called Court Messengers) in the Protectorate.

8. The lack of organization, the small size of the police force and the inadequacy of the military forces gives rise in my mind to serious apprehension if serious disorder breaks out.

(d) *Agriculture*

9. In West Africa, as in East, the greatest problem is the tsetse fly. This occupies at least three-quarters of the area. It makes any radical improvement of the soil or methods of agriculture practically impossible, for without animals, soil fertility must decline, and shifting cultivation continue.

10. In tree crops as a rule the species are mediocre. This applies, for example, to cocoa and palm oil. In the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone there is a dangerous reliance on one export crop.

11. To add to these depressing features, the land tenure systems discourage good farming practices, and the agricultural departments are chronically short of staff.

12. There are isolated good pieces of work being done in the North to encourage mixed farming and in research at Tafo and Benin on cocoa and oil palms respectively.

13. The Marketing Policy and the Marketing Boards are, I am sure, the right policy so long as the latter do not fall into the wrong hands. This is important when one realises that, for example, the income of the Gold Coast Cocoa Board is greater than the revenue of the Gold Coast Government.

(e) *Industrialization*

14. There is a great demand for industrialization with no conception of what it means. Every territory wants to be self-sufficient in everything which is absurd. In fact agriculture must remain the staple, but there is room for processing plants and also for light engineering firms and for those making consumer goods. The Industrial Development Corporations have made a beginning but there is a great lack of the African entrepreneur and manager. The African looks for safe jobs where he can wear a white collar. His mendicant outlook however blames government for all his shortcomings and believes that it has all the means to provide him with an up-to-date economy with no trouble or work on his part.

(f) *The co-operative movement*

15. This as yet is almost entirely confined to producer societies, mainly cocoa. The societies themselves are small in membership but have fairly large turn-overs because of the high price of cocoa.

16. The movement is capable of considerable expansion on the consumer side. But the societies must be able to import as well as retail.

(g) *The monopoly firms*

17. Everywere I met hostility towards the big import houses, especially U.A.C., among Europeans as much as among Africans. This is the one matter upon which there is common agreement.

18. I believe this to be a matter of the highest political importance. In fact, more than anything else, the Labour Government will be judged on its treatment of the big monopoly firms.

19. There are only two courses available. One is to nationalise the big firms; the other is to bring into being either state trading or co-operative societies as real competitors and thus break the monopoly. I do not believe the former method is practicable.

20. As to the tin mining royalty of the U.A.C. for which no return is given and which amounts to approximately £235,000 a year, I have suggested various courses to the Nigerian Government, and a note of my suggestions has already, I believe, been sent to you. I do not believe that this royalty is justifiable.

(h) *Public relations*

21. I believe those to be bad first because of the lack of the right approach, secondly because of the lack of machinery.

22. The average officer, and more particularly the technical officer, does not regard it as any part of his job to explain to the people what is happening, thus the most appalling ignorance is present. This is regrettable always but it is highly dangerous when the people are called upon to undertake some task they hate e.g. to cut out trees in the swollen shoot campaign.

23. There is no general system of radio broadcasting.

24. The Overseas Broadcast of the B.B.C. is puerile and quite unfitted for Africa. The news items especially would seem to have been chosen by someone whose delight it was to create alarm, despondency, mistrust and derision in the African mind.

25. The Public Relations departments are doing their best within their limited resources and have achieved some success with the local press.

26. With regard to the Regional Public Relations Offices, I feel here as I felt in East Africa that their scope is too limited. On the present basis I doubt whether they are worth the money they cost. They should either be more or not exist at all. It is difficult to see the justification for spending the British taxpayers' money, for instance, on the appointment of a superintendent to control the work of two expert photographers.

(i) *Mass education*

27. This is almost non-existent and even at Udi it has fallen away badly. We are now dropping between two stools. In Nigeria the Education Department has taken it over and is trying to run it with paid assistance. The political officer regards it as another departmental matter and not his pigeon.

28. In the other territories 'mass education' has hardly got to the blue print stage.

(j) *Transportation*

29. (a) All the territories ae inadequately served in railway communications. In Sierra Leone the problem is one of relaying and re-aligning a 2 ft. 6 ins. gauge, in Nigeria the new locomotives cannot be used on parts of the line because of the light-weight rails.

(b) Roads are a problem, dusty in the dry weather, a sea of mud in the wet. Development is held up until the railway and road services are adequate.

(c) Air services are poor. The inter-territorial schedule is operated by Doves which are not suitable in my opinion for the long and dangerous haul over Liberia and French territory. I cannot understand, too, why West African Airways in conjunction with East African Airways do not run a trans-continental service. They are now losing the very [sic] paying pilgrim traffic to Jeddah and the Levantine traffic to Syria and the Lebanon. A South African Charter Company is getting it all.

(k) *Groundnuts – hold-up*

30. The hold-up at Kano is based on a misconception. Even more than engine and waggons the difficulty is one of too light rails. The section south of Kaduna is now two-thirds relaid, the other part between Zaria and Kano will be relaid after the harvest. Locally they expect a bumper harvest of 350,000 tons with 40–50,000 tons from French territory. At the rate of 40,000 tons clearance a month, the Railway estimate, the stores should be cleared by November 1949. They only lost 300 tons last year, due to faulty covering of one pyramid. Local dealers told me that they prefer storing nuts in pyramids to storing them in warehouses. There is a shortage of tarpaulins as waggon covers.

(l) *Swollen shoot*

31. I have already sent to the Office, at the request of Lord Listowel, my views of the swollen shoot situation.

32. Briefly these are that the only known method is to cut out diseased trees at an early stage of the disease. At Tafo they are experimenting with mealie bug eating insects, resistant strains and other weapons but as yet no sign of success is in sight.

33. The campaign in the Gold Coast had considerable prior publicity but undoubtedly there were some unpleasant features. Payment was made by the acre, and the labourers were paid on the basis of every 25 trees cut out. As could be foreseen the good were cut out with the bad. When they were operating in the devastated areas this did not matter so much but when they swung over to Ashanti with the idea of creating a cordon sanitaire and meeting the disease from the North, the situation became changed. There was little swollen shoot and the farmers were disturbed. Cocoa was at a high price, there was little sign of damage and compensation was inadequate. Into this picture came Danquah and his associates. They spread stories that the Government had become leagued with the U.A.C. to ruin the Gold Coast industry and replant it in South America and in Malaya. The explosion followed.

(m) *Staff shortages*

34. A really serious situation has arisen in the West African Colonies owing to the lack of European staff. Unlike South-East Asia or East Africa, there are no Chinese or Indians to perform the semi-skilled work. Thus the European has to do both skilled and semi-skilled work.

35. The lack of skilled man and woman power felt everywhere in the Colonies is accentuated by the above condition and by the bad name West Africa has got for climate, disease, lack of educational facilities and political disturbances. Added to all these there is the practice of virulent press campaign against individual European officers.

36. The African of course with his childlike outlook wants the best of both worlds. He wants more of European technical assistance with fewer Europeans. This does not apply to the people of the Northern Territories who desire the aid of Europeans and are prepared to pay for it. The Administrative Service is receiving a number of excellent young men but they necessarily have little or no experience. It is rare to find anyone other than a Cadet in charge of a district. 90 per cent of the Administration in the Gold Coast and 75 per cent in Nigeria have been appointed since 1945. Even so the Administration is desperately short of officers.

37. This shortage of administrative and technical officers is having a serious effect on normal administrations and it makes, of course, complete nonsense of large scale development.

(n) *Supplies and the inflationary tendency*

38. I found that in Nigeria supplies of cotton goods of the Japanese re-printed variety are coming through quite well. In West Africa generally there is a great demand for traditional English cotton goods, for kerosene, Raleigh bicycles, corrugated iron sheeting and concrete. The market is almost inexhaustible for the above.

39. In order to deal with the inflationary tendency of a doubled price for cocoa, an enhanced price (about 20–25 per cent) for other vegetable export products and vast inducement sums for cutting out trees infected with swollen shoot and replanting (£9 million in Gold Coast alone) large imports of consumer goods of the right types will be needed immediately.

40. I believe that there is no drive in West Africa in the Savings Campaign. In no place where large sums were being paid out did I see posters, propaganda, or a van. Savings would help a great deal in combating the inflationary tendency.

(o) *The modern state*

41. One feature that strikes me more than any other is that the West African Colonies, like all others, are battling with the problems of the modern world with little of the machinery or the outlook of a modern state. Some of the senior officials seem to regard modern planning and development as just the most recent Whitehall fad. First it was indirect rule, then social welfare, later mass education and now economic development. There are few aids such as up-to-date statistical data. The departments keep a departmental mind and the agricultural departments do not for example always visualise the profound economic and social implications of what they are doing.

42. Unless all departments work as one machine with a common purpose the result must end in frustration and a great loss of effort.

43. They have lost very largely the contact with the people on the ground that the colonial officials in the old days had without gaining the expertise of modern administration. We must help them to regain the former and to achieve the latter.

Finally

44. I have given my conclusions based on my observations. It may be thought that I am critical or pessimistic but the reverse is the case. The tropical soil harbours diseases of the most malignant kind, the administrator is suffering from the niggardly pre-war policy to an unprecedented extent, technical and semi-technical men and women are desperately short.

45. Yet we have positive achievements that have been overlooked. In the lifetime of a man of late middle age the country has been recovered from barbarism, law and order prevails if somewhat tenuously, social and educational progress has been made.

46. I feel that there is great vitality in the people and that there is an immense fund of goodwill towards us except among the political self-seekers on the Coast.

47. I believe that it will be possible to enthuse the people to develop themselves. They are desperately keen on education for their children and on economic development which they tend to see as industrialization.

48. I have therefore ventured to make the following recommendations, which relate to the foregoing conclusions and are similarly numbered.

3. *Recommendations*

(a) *Political*

49. In my view our policy on building up local government and identifying the people with the progress of their country is the sound one. We should build on a broad basis and not as in India and Burma on a narrow one. The people as a whole must go forward and not a few politicians on the sea coast out-of-touch with the moods of their own people.

50. There can be no real advance unless the people share in the desire as well as in the achievement.

51. We should give full support and encouragement to our friends, especially those in the Northern territories in every Protectorate.

(b) *Defence*

52. We should urge the Cabinet to come to a decision on a West African Corps, and the War Office to clear the outstanding points at issue.

(c) *Security*

53. The Police Adviser should go into the whole question of police, intelligence, transportation, communications and size of forces.

(d) *Agriculture*

54. We must push on with our war against the tsetse fly and our research into crop disease and into better yielding strains.

55. In those areas where there is no tsetse fly the State should set up model mixed farms of its own.

56. In other areas the State should set up pig farms.

57. In both the local farmers should be induced to take advantage of the breeding or fattening stock available.

58. Apart from these suggestions our plans for mechanised groundnut and rice production and the introduction of better yielding strains of cocoa and palm trees would seem to be on the right lines.

(c) *Industrialisation*

59. We should point out to Trefgarne[1] that even more than finance the Africans need managerial and technical training. His corporation is their great hope of the former. There is no need of him to be frightened of the Gold Coast. I found that I was able to persuade them of the need for the C.D.C. without great difficulty.

60. As regards technical training in all its branches, I feel that all the West African Governments should give more attention (a) to the setting up of trade schools (b) to the setting up of technical colleges (c) to the training establishments run by the P.W.D., railways and other governmental concerns and (d) to scholarships for apprenticeships in engineering in United Kingdom shops. I consider, too, that the Governments might also consider business scholarships for young Africans with commercial firms in the United Kingdom.

(f) *The co-operative movement*

61. I believe it is necessary to organise a double tier consumer co-operative movement. The first being a wholesale-import co-operative whose members would be unions of small retail societies or the societies themselves. These societies would form the second, or retail, tier. It is quite obvious that the present societies cannot run them themselves so I suggest that business executives from the C.W.S. and the Scottish C.W.S. be imported to run the former and executives from the big retail societies like the Woolwich Arsenal and the South Suburban be imported to run the latter.

(g) *The monopoly firms*

62. These should be dealt with by the Co-operative Societies I have mentioned. In addition I suggest that price control be reimposed on rare commodities all the way down to the consumer.

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[1] Sir George Morgan Trefgarne (1st Baron cr 1947); founder chairman of Colonial Development Corporation, 1947–1950.

63. As to the tin mining royalty of the U.A.C. this can be (i) extinguished without compensation (ii) be reduced to a nominal figure unilaterally under the original Treasury minute or (iii) extinguished for a comparatively small sum to be fixed by the Nigerian Government.

(h) *Public relations*

64. (a) In Sierra Leone, in the Gold Coast and in Nigeria respectively the installation of radio transmitters powerful enough to reach the whole territory. In towns that these broadcasts be re-diffused and in country districts that arrangements be made for public listening in every village, through the most convenient authority (headman, chief, policeman, postmaster). The programmes be arranged locally and that local material be used as much as possible.

(b) That the B.B.C. be approached urgently to re-cast its overseas programmes to make them more suitable for the African listener.

(c) That technical officers of Government be encouraged to give talks on their work from time to time, and that Government departments as such have a nation wide 'week' when, for example, the educational or agricultural department is on show.

(d) That Governments realize that people want circuses as well as bread. The administration is honest and hard-working but dull. More bands, more parks, more fairs, more sparkle is wanted.

(e) That every officer be made to realize that he is a public relations officer. 'Theirs not to reason why' went out with Tennyson.

(f) With regard to the Regional Public Relations Offices, I suggest that Ministers, with the officials concerned, should as soon as possible go into this whole question and on the basis of the experience gained and on the views which have been formed evolve the future policy with reference to this organization. I am not at all satisfied from what I have seen in both East and West Africa that its scope, and hence the work it is doing, justifies its expense.

(i) *Mass education*

65. In my view this can only be achieved through the medium of broadcasting on the scale I have suggested, by extending publications of the type of "Nigerian Citizen" and "Gaskija", and by persuading the leaders of African opinion to take a hand in the movement.

(j) *Transportation*

66. (a) *Rail.* I think the Sierre Leone railway should change to a 3 ft. 6 ins. gauge. As to the rest we must continue to give these railways all the assistance we can in getting supplies.

(b) *Road.* I think that where it is impossible to tar all roads the bad parts should be tarred, often a few hundred yards makes a road of 50 miles long impassable.

(c) *Air.* We should assist West African Airways to obtain more powerful 'planes than Doves for the inter-territorial services and should approach the Ministry of Civil Aviation in order that trans-continental traffic may be started, Kano–Khartoum–Jedda and Damascus.

(k) *Groundnuts – hold-up*

67. There is nothing we can do here other than that already mentioned except to assist in obtaining more tarpaulins for the trucks.

(l) *Swollen shoot*

68. The only solution is to cut out all trees immediately they become infected and to pay compensation *per tree* cut out and *replanted* on a generous scale.

69. These measures, which are being taken in hand in the Gold Coast and should be followed in Nigeria, must be accompanied by a vigorous propaganda campaign. It really means officers speaking to small bodies of farmers in every district affected and answering their questions. The written word is not enough. This is a case where nation-wide radio broadcasts would be a great help but would not in themselves suffice.

70. If the B.B.C. Overseas broadcasts could be persuaded to turn from their pre-occupation over bandits in the Balkans, strikers in the Midlands, the latest panic rumours from Berlin and English football and racing results and consider for a time the needs of our Colonial territories they too might assist in this matter.

(m) *Staff shortages*

71. The only answer is to offer such terms in pay and conditions as will induce people of the right type and with the right qualifications to go to West Africa.

72. Finance Committees should be told to stop crying for the moon and to take a realistic attitude on this matter. If put to them bluntly I am sure they will do so but there must be no beating about the bush. If they want good men they must take them on the good men's terms.

73. There will, too, have to be a considerable addition to the European semi-skilled ranks to relieve the skilled men of much routine work. This particularly applies to agriculture.

(n) *Supplies and the inflationary tendency*

74. (i) Our policy in this direction, accepted in the main, I understand from Mr. Poynton's[2] letter, by the other Government Departments concerned, is the right one.

(ii) I suggest that we should send a despatch to all Colonies where there is an inflationary tendency pointing out the necessity for a savings drive accompanied by propaganda and facilities for paying in and drawing out whether to or from a mobile van or otherwise.

(o) *The modern state*

75. We must suggest to Governments their requirements to bring men from the old Colonial outlook to that of the modern state. We must help them with the advice and technical assistance they require.

76. On the economic side, the Economic Development Liaison Officers can help

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[2] A H Poynton (Sir Hilton Poynton KCMG 1949); CO assistant under-secretary of state, 1946–1948 (responsible in 1948 for the International Relations, Social Service and Welfare Depts); deputy-under secretary of state, 1948–1959.

a great deal. After they have had a tour of their respective areas I would like to have a conference with the appropriate officials and with the Development Liasion Officers to ascertain in what way we can assist the Colonial territories in this part of their evolution.

39 CO 537/3564, no 42 [Nov 1948]

'General principles of constitutional development in West Africa': CO note for Mr Creech Jones's opening statement to the third meeting of the West African Council, item VII

The inclusion of this subject of constitutional development on the agenda may be warmly welcomed by the Secretary of State, since it makes possible a review, with all the Governors present, of the general principles on which we are proceeding in political development in the West African Territories. The subject has been brought into prominence by the publication of the Watson Commission's Report and H.M.G.'s statement on this. The Governors (other than Sir G. Creasy) might be asked to include in what they say some assessment of the reactions to the report and statement in their territories. Everyone would agree that the exact form of political development must be determined by the local circumstances of each territory, but there are none the less certain guiding principles of policy and the Secretary of State might take the opportunity of setting these out, imposing various problems for discussion with the Governors.

2. The main points are as follows:–

(1) *Bringing Africans into the executive machinery of government*

The Colonial Office paper circulated to the Governors' Conference of November, 1947 proposed the introduction of the Membership system and the early inclusion in the West African Territories of Africans as Members of the Executive Council with responsibility for groups of departments. The possibility of appointing Africans as deputy members as an interim measure to give experience to unofficial members of the Legislative Councils before the full Membership system was introduced was also mentioned. The proposals had a lukewarm reception from the then Governors of the West African Territories and it was agreed that the problem would have to be studied in each territory in relation to local circumstances.

The position now is that we are committed to the introduction of the Membership system in the Gold Coast and to the early inclusion of Africans, and indeed it is only due to doubts on the part of the Africans that two Africans have not already been appointed. Sir G. Creasy might be asked to explain the present position in the Gold Coast and the views of his Government in so far as there is anything to add at this stage to the White Paper issued on the Watson Report.

As regards Sierra Leone, the position is that before the Governor left to assume his post, the Secretary of State let him know that if, after considering the position and sounding representative opinion, he decided to recommend the introduction of the member system in Sierra Leone, with Africans holding some of the principal posts, the Secretary of State would be prepared to agree in principle. Sir G. Beresford

Stooke[1] might be asked whether there had been any developments in this respect. Some of the Sierra Leone unofficials at the London Conference[2] showed interest in the point, based on study of the Watson Report, although they went no further than to suggest the immediate appointment of deputy Members.

Sir A. Wright[3] might be asked whether he has any points to raise as regards the Gambia.

In Nigeria Sir J. Macpherson has announced with my approval that the timetable of the present Nigerian Constitution is to be reviewed, and that for that purpose he proposes to set up a Select Committee consisting of all the unofficial members and one or two officials after the Budget Session of his Legislative Council in 1949 to review the whole position and make recommendations. The position in Nigeria differs, of course, from that in the Gold Coast in that the present Constitution, which has now been in force for two years, provides for the setting up of the three regional Houses and contemplates an increasing measure of devolution on to them.

Sir J. Macpherson's present view is understood to be that the association of representatives of the people with the making of policy and with the Government must be built up in the regions before it can be hoped to create a truly representative body at the centre. In other words, regional Executive Councils should be developed in each of the three regions under the Chief Commissioners with increased devolution from the central Government and with a number of Africans coming in as executive members. At this stage it is understood that Sir J. Macpherson does not contemplate the introduction of the Membership system at the centre nor, consequently, the inclusion of Africans with responsibility for groups of departments in the central Executive Council. One of the reasons for this is understood to be that it would be impossible at the present stage of development to find Africans who would command the confidence of all three regions.

(The above is derived from discussions with Mr. Foot[4] and it is really for Sir J. Macpherson to explain his own point of view.)

One difficulty which will presumably have to be overcome is the desire which Africans will no doubt have to have executive responsibility at the centre as well as in the regions; since, whatever devolution takes place, the central Executive Council will remain the principal policy-making body. Sir J. Macpherson might be asked to explain how he proposes to deal with this difficulty.

(2) *Devolution to regional bodies*

The second principle of our policy in West Africa in the constitutional sphere is the setting up of representative bodies in the various regions of each territory with definite responsibilities in the sphere of legislation, deliberation and finance. This applies to all four territories and the existing position is well known. Sir J. Macpherson might be encouraged to say how he envisages the Regional Councils in Nigeria developing. At present they have no powers of legislation and only limited powers with regard to the regional bodies. Nor is the system of administration under

[1] Gov of Sierre Leone, 1948–1953.
[2] For the London conference, see 42, note 5.
[3] Gov of Gambia, 1947–1949.
[4] H M Foot, chief secretary, Nigeria, 1947–1950.

them developed very far, although considerable progress has already been made in the building up of units of government in the various departments under the Chief Commissioners. How far does Sir J. Macpherson envisage going in the process of devolution?

The Watson Commission made certain recommendations for Regional Councils in the Gold Coast, but these were envisaged rather as large local government bodies like County Councils than as Regional Assemblies in the political sense, as in Nigeria. No doubt Sir G. Creasy will not be able to say much pending the discussions of the local committee to be set up to consider the Watson Commission's proposals, but if the Gold Coast Government has worked out any ideas for discussion in the local committee, it will be interesting to know what they are.

As regards Sierra Leone, the Colony delegates to the African Conference expressed fears that the Protectorate Assembly would exercise undue influence on the Legislative Council by binding the Protectorate members to broad points of view in advance of discussions in the Legislative Council. Their point of view seemed exaggerated, but there was something in it. What exactly is to be the status of a Protectorate Assembly under the new constitution? Is it to be a body where the Protectorate members of the Legislative Council get their instructions for the Legislative Council, or is to confine itself primarily to purely Protectorate matters. The dividing line is not, of course, an easy one to define. Sir G. Beresford Stooke might be asked to give his views.

Sir A. Wright might wish to explain how the Chiefs' Council works in the Gambia.

(3) *Methods of election*

The third principle which we are following is to build up strong representation of the rural areas in the Legislative Councils by means of a system of indirect election so as to ensure that the rural areas gain political experience and that their interests are fully represented. The object is to avoid unbalanced development on the basis purely of the literate and more advanced urban communites. The system of indirect election which has everywhere been adopted in West Africa (as well as in other parts of Africa) is frequently criticised by a certain section of unofficial opinion on the ground that it is not democratic and has the effect of bringing in far too many people who owe their position to Government and cannot therefore be regarded as fully representative of the people. This point of view is exaggerated, but again there is *something* in it. A system of indirect election is generally agreed to be the most suitable for West African conditions at the present time; but if it is to survive it can only hope to do so provided that its genuinely representative character is secured. It cannot hope to survive if those elected are either wholly Chiefs or of Chiefly cast, or primarily drawn from this section of the community. The middle class, the intelligentsia, the industrial workers and the mass of the rural population must also have their due representation at all levels. Since the system of election is based ultimately on election or selection at the Native Authority or local government level, the key to securing a generally representative system is a democratic method of selection to local government bodies. This idea is being increasingly accepted by the traditional elements in West African society, as was evident at the London Conferences. But at present it is only very partially in operation.

The Secretary of State might emphasis very strongly his view that much more rapid progress must be made in making local government bodies fully representative

than has been possible hitherto. Otherwise political progress at the centre will leave the development of local government hopelessly behindhand and a stage approaching internal self-government will be reached with the rural areas not playing anything like their full part.

The Secretary of State might ask Governors to explain their intentions in this respect and it is suggested that Governors might be pressed pretty hard to find out exactly how far each Government is going to be able to go in this direction.

(4) *Local government policy generally*

The Secretary of State might mention that the conclusions of the summer conference of 1947 on local government, which were generally endorsed by the Governors' Conference in November, 1947, have now been again endorsed by the African Conference in London. These should therefore be regarded as accepted policy. What steps are being taken to secure that this policy is translated into action? The Secretary of State might mention the projected reforms in Eastern Nigeria and might ask what action is being taken in Western and Northern Nigeria. He might ask what line the Gold Coast Government are proposing to take on this in the local committee. The system of native administration in the Sierra Leone Protectorate is generally very backward. Sir G. Beresford Stooke might have something to say on this.

(5) *Relations with the French*

This subject will also come up on another item on the agenda but it must be mentioned here. There is an increasing realisation that the political and constitutional development of West Africa cannot proceed in watertight compartments and that developments and the actions of Government in French or British territory must have their due effect across the border. Politicians in French and British territories are beginning to make contacts with each other and an increasing degree of common action is bound to follow. These politicians may seek to play the French off against the British and vice versa and the fact that the two Governments have different approaches in the political and constitutional sphere will certainly be made use of by those who are working against Governments in their set of territories. Ultimately it is difficult to conceive a whole series of separate states in West Africa and the time will come, perhaps distantly and perhaps not so distantly, when the different regions in West Africa, whether French or British, may seek to unite with each other in a single self-governing federation.[5]

All this is in the sphere of long term policy. But the Secretary of State might say that it is certanly not too early to start considering the issues involved. He might seek to elicit the views of Governors. Our present policy aims at welding Nigeria and the Gold Coast into two nations or states. Our long term aims in this respect in Sierra Leone and the Gambia are less easy to predict. But can we be certain that even

[5] The first meeting between the governors of the Gold Coast and French Togoland was held in Accra on 24 Apr 1948. It was pledged to closer cross-border co-operation but was fundamentally necessary for more practical reasons. Although that portion of Togoland under British Mandate was effectively incorporated within the Gold Coast, it was also subjected to scrutiny and ultimate control by the United Nations Trusteeship Committee. It was recognised that the two mandatory powers, Britain and France, would have to work in closer harness if constitutional change in the Gold Coast were to embrace British Togoland.

Nigeria and the Gold Coast will be able to maintain their identities entirely separately from the surrounding French territories? The Pan-Ewe movement is the first indication of attempts to break down existing international frontiers. The subject is one for mature reflection, but it seems the right moment for the Secretary of State to raise it.

40 CO 537/3565, no 2 23 Nov 1948

[West African Council]: note by Mr Creech Jones to Mr Attlee on his visit to West Africa and the proceedings of the West African Council, 14–16 Nov 1948

I send this Note on my visit to West Africa. For three days I presided over the West African Council with the Governors of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia and the G.O.C. West African Command in attendance. The Council's position in West African affairs was reviewed and its machinery strengthened. I was able to press for the utmost energy in the economic drive, to deal with internal security and strengthening the police and intelligence arrangements, and to discuss how information services and public relations could be improved and communist and other subversive tendencies checked. The Council also decided to put research on a regional basis and considered how to develop further the existing friendly relations with the French, Belgian and Portuguese. The further evolution of native authorities into effective organs of local government and the recruitment of professional and technical staffs were also dealt with.

A long discussion on Defence took place and it was agreed inter alia:

(i) that it was imperative that the current issues regarding Colonial forces and their financing should be brought to a head without further delay and that there should be no run-down of existing military forces in the meantime;
(ii) that the Colonial governments should make as substantial a financial contribution as they could afford; and
(iii) that it was most necessary that a R.A.F. wing should be stationed in West Africa.

I also spoke to the Accra Town Council, addressed the principal officers in the Nigerian administrative and technical services, spoke to the new University College staff and students in the Gold Coast – where an excellent start under our Higher Education Scheme has been made – and gave three press conferences. I also inaugurated the new West African University College at Ibadan in Nigeria, by cutting the first sod on the permanent site and addressing the College together with many persons in public life in Nigeria who gathered for the occasion. The University developments essential to African progress are credits to our Government.

My plane was delayed on the homeward journey. But within the week I not only covered the two air journeys but packed every moment with official activity and valuable contacts on a great variety of subjects.

There are few signs of genuine communist activity but much agitation. There is political tension in Lagos but the Gold Coast situation appears to improve. The recent African Conference in London is already being reflected in the Territories for good.

41 CAB 134/65, CD(49) 18 Feb 1949

'Economic Survey of the Gold Coast': memorandum by CO Economic Dept for the Official Committee on Colonial Development

A. *Basic economic facts*

(i) *National income*

It is estimated that, in 1946:–

Cocoa	accounted	for	approx.	25%	of	national	income
Mining	"	"	"	12%	"	"	"
Forestry	"	"	"	2½%	"	"	"
Other export crops	"	"	"	½%	"	"	"
Internal Trade	"	"	"	12%	"	"	"
Subsistence output	"	"	"	34%	"	"	"
Other trade, European industry personal and professional services	"	"	"	14%	"	"	"

In 1948, owing to the inflated price and higher production, cocoa accounted for probably something like 50% of national income whereas in 1931 when the average price was approximately one third of the 1946 price the proportion was probably 18%. (These percentages are based on the *total* recepits from the sale of cocoa, *including* amounts paid into stablisation funds).

Total National Income of the Gold Coast was estimated at £44.27 million in 1946, or roughly £11 per head of population. Since 1946, on account of the increased price and production of cocoa, the national income may well be in the region of £55 – £60 million, or £14 to £15 per head of population. This compares with the estimated national income of £5.5 and £12 per head in Sierra Leone (1947) and Kenya (1947) respectively.

(ii) *Labour* is mainly engaged in agriculture (68% of employed male population, of which cocoa farmers account for 64%, and timber companies 4%). Approximately 12% is employed by mining companies. Other chief employers are: manufacturing concerns 7%, commerce 5%, building 3%, transportation 2%, hotel and personal services 2%.

(iii) *Transport.* South of the mountain range and in the area of highest economic development, the Gold Coast is well provided with communications. The railway has a mileage of 490 miles; in addition a line was constructed by His Majesty's Government during the war from Dunkwa to Awaso (50 miles) for the purpose of extracting bauxite. This railway has now been acquired by the Gold Coast Government. As regards roads the Gold Coast is the best equipped of the West African Colonies having 2,610 miles of first class roads, 4,000 miles of second class roads and a considerable mileage of third class roads and tracks. Road development is much further advanced in the South than in the North.

(iv) *Availability of land.* Owing to tsetse fly, flooding of land in the rains, lack of transport facilities, land available for development is limited. There is, however, suitable land for cocoa expansion and two areas each of 2,000 square miles have been indicated as suitable for groundnut cultivation.

(v) *Standard of education.* The general standard of education is higher than elsewhere in British West Africa. This will not only mean that a comparatively large

number of educated Africans are available, but should also facilitate the technical education of those required for development projects.

(vi) *Balance of trade.* The visible balance of trade was consistently favourable from 1927–1946. In 1947, recorded imports amounted to £25.3 million compared with £17.5 million in 1946. This increase reflected a rise in the value of imports of textiles from £4.3 million to £7.1 million in 1947; of industrial machinery, metals and motor vehicles from £3 million to £6 million; and of food, drink and tobacco from £1.7 million to £3.2 million. In both years currency imports were at the high level of £4½ million. Exports, as recorded on the trade returns, amounted to £20.3 million in 1947 compared with £19.1 million in 1946. Of these amounts cocoa represented £10.3 million in 1947 and £9 million in 1946. The recorded value of cocoa exports is, however, based on the price paid to the producer plus expenses of transport and handling to f.o.b. stage. No allowance is made for the total sale value of the cocoa, including the amounts passed into stabilisation funds. The true export value of cocoa including contributions to stabilisation may be put at approximately £21 million in 1947. This gives a total value of exports in 1947 of about £31 million. The true favourable balance of trade was thus approximately £6 million, despite the high currency imports, though this balance does not reflect the amount of additional purchasing power in the hands of consumers derived from overseas trade since an even greater sum accrued to stabilisation funds.

In 1948 imports up to the end of April amounted to £11.2 million and recorded exports, excluding cocoa, to £4 million. On the basis of 1947 figures it is not unreasonable to take trade in these four months as representing one third of the annual trade. On this assumption imports in 1948 can be roughly forecast at £33.5 million. Similarly the value of exports, other than cocoa can be estimated at £12 million. The sale value of cocoa (inclusive of contributions to stabilisation funds) can be put at approximately £40 million, reflecting the enormous increase in the world price of cocoa, which over 1948 averaged £200 per ton. Thus the total favourable balance for 1948 may well be of the order of £18.5 million.

It is clearly impossible to forecast what the future balance of trade will be. World cocoa prices have, however, already fallen in 1949 considerably. On the other hand an unexpectedly high yield of cocoa in 1948/49 (240,000 tons) will increase the volume of exports. Assuming, however, that the structure of trade in the future were as in 1947 and that average cocoa exports fell to 175,000 tons, an average price of £130 per ton would be required, if imports did not increase, to avoid an unfavourable balance of trade. The world price has already fallen to approximately this level. It is, however, likely that imports will increase in the future both in response to increased world supplies and as development leads to an increased volume of imports of capital equipment and consumer food. It is thus not unlikely that an unfavourable balance of trade may develop in the next few years. This is not of course an unusual feature of a developing economy which is a net capital importer.

(vii) *Revenue and expenditure.* Both revenue and expenditure have shown appreciable increases since 1931–32 when they were £2.3 million and £2.8 million respectively. In 1946–7 revenue amounted to £7.5 million and expenditure to £5.7 million; revised estimates for 1948–9 assess revenue at £10.2 million and expenditure at £10.5 million. Since 1933–4 with the exception of the year 1936–7 revenue has exceeded expenditure, the average annual surplus over the period 1946–7, allowing for a deficit of £142,246 in 1936–7, being approximately £488,900.

B. *Possibilites of expansion*

(i) *Cocoa*. Expansion and even maintenance of existing production depends upon the control of the swollen shoot disease. As cutting out is the only known cure at present, and as new plantings take 5–7 years to come into bearing, there is little possibility of cocoa expansion, apart from periods of exceptional yield, in the next seven years. The export forecast for cocoa from the Gold Coast in 1952–3 as assessed by the Colonial Development Working Party in their report of 11/10/48 is 175,000 tons, probabaly a conservative estimate.

(ii) *Mining*. Expansion of manganese and bauxite exports should be possible. Colonial Development Working Party's export targets for 1950–53 are 300,000 tons bauxite (95,000 tons in 1947) and 840,000 tons manganese (589,000 tons in 1947). The recent change in the system of calculating royalties should encourage the working of lower-grade ore and so lead to some expansion of gold production. Geological survey work in progress and prospect may reveal new possibilities of mineral production.

(iii) *Timber*. This industry which in 1947 exported 5.7 million cubic feet of unmanufactured timber, is understood to be capable of expansion by 100%–150%. The export target for the timber in 1950–53 is assessed at 8 million cubic feet. The target assumes improvements in communications, extraction machinery and port facilities. The amount of logs exported would be affected to the extent that local processing facilities are developed. Expansion of timber production would require improved arrangements for protection and regeneration of forests if it is not to lead to an undue denudation of forest reserves.

(iv) *Palm products*. Collection and export of palm kernels have fallen away since the war owing to the switch of labour to the more remunerative cocoa production. Export target for 1950–53 is assessed at 10,000 tons which is only slightly below the prewar figure of 11,000 tons (1936). There is a ready market for palm kernels if labour can be found for their collection and preparation for export and for palm oil, increased local production of which would reduce dependence on imports from Nigeria.

(v) *Agricultural method.* Agricultural production could be expanded by the introduction of group cultivation by mechanised units, mixed farming and greater utilisation of artificial fertilisers so far as they can be obtained and farmers induced to use them.

(vi) *Volta River.* If the proposed investigation into the hydro-electric, navigational and irrigation possibilities of the Volta River gives favourable results, this might open up eventual possibilities of substantial industrial and agricultural developments.

C. *Limiting factors*

(i) *Disease of Plants and livestock*

(a) Swollen Shoot: it is estimated that one-eighth of the cocoa trees are affected by this disease, the only known cure for which is cutting out; the death rate of affected trees in 1947 was computed at 15–16 million trees per annum. At present cutting out is on a voluntary basis and on a scale recognised by the recent Commission to be quite inadequate to deal with the problem. Despite

phenomenal rises in price, exports have declined from the peak figure of 300,000 tons in 1936–7 to approximately 200,000 tons in 1948. Latest figures indicate a substantial increase in production, however, in the current season.

(b) Tsetse Fly: limits the area in which larger livestock can be reared thereby limiting meat supplies for the domestic market and making the practice of mixed farming difficult. It is not possible at this stage to assess the effect of antrycide, but the introduction of this drug together with the entomological control methods already evolved should reduce the effect of the tsetse flies as a limiting factor.

(c) Lime disease: lime plantations are threatened with disease.

(ii) *Malnutrition and ill-health.* Analyses reveal that the calorific content of the diet is 20%–25% too low having regard to tropical conditions. Chief deficiencies are protein, and vitamins A and C. Principal diseases prevalent in the Gold Coast are tuberculosis, malaria, trypanosomiasis, yaws, small-pox, venereal disease and meningitis. Of these yaws and malaria are the chief causes of ill-health and labour inefficiency.

(iii) *Labour.* Skilled labour is in short supply and the mining companies, for example, are experiencing difficulty in meeting their requirements. Owing to an agricultural labour shortage and the relatively more remunerative employment in the cocoa industry, palm oil industry is short of labour. There is, however, no general shortage of unskilled labour.

(iv) *Capital.* The development of local industries is hampered through lack of capital. Efforts are being made to overcome this by loans from the Gold Coast Industrial Development Board, and the Barclays Bank scheme. Industrial development may also be assisted by the Colonial Development Corporation. The improvement of agricultural methods and production must also depend to some extent on greater credit facilities.

(v) *Transport.* Timber exports are restricted through inadequate rail and port facilities; lack of suitable shipping rules out for the time being the possibility of banana exports; internal distribution of domestic food production, particularly from the Northern Territory, is hampered by an inadequate road system.

(vi) *Supplies.* There have been severe limitations on imports of capital equipment and of consumer goods. The position regarding the latter is now considerably improved, particularly so far as piece goods are concerned. If this improvement in supplies is maintained it should increase incentive to production. As regards the former the position is also improving but supplies are not sufficient to meet the increased total demand. In the case of certain types of steel, particularly in those types which are needed for water supplies, roofing and constructional items needing plates, the present rate of supply to the Colonies as a whole falls considerably short of demand. Certain types of artificial fertilisers are also in short supply.

(vii) *Market conditions* affect certain exports, e.g. rubber, the export of which has declined owing to the restoration of Far Eastern production and to the manufacture of synthetic rubber; the rising cost of production may be a restricting factor in mining expansion.

(viii) *Methods of production* are often inefficient e.g. agricultural method in general is out of date. The introduction of group cultivation and of mechanisation

into peasant agriculture would make for increased production and would be furthered by the use of artificial fertilisers (though supplies of nitrogeneous fertilisers are not likely to be available for some time).

D. *General prospects*

In view of the uncertainty as to the future of cocoa which will depend on the success of the swollen shoot campaign and the price of cocoa in the world market, which cannot be accurately predicted, it is impossible to make more than a general assessment of the economic future of the Gold Coast over the period of the next ten years. Allowing, however, for the general value and diversity of its resources and the fact that world demand for Gold Coast exports is likely to be maintained if not increased, it is not unreasonable, provided that the limiting factors mentioned above can be overcome, to assume a fairly steady expansion of the economy as a whole. On this basis a reasonable degree of expansion in the public and social services particularly those conducive to higher production, could probably be borne. At the same time the future is not so certain that heavy increases in expenditure on social services leading to heavy recurrent charges at the end of the period of expansion should be undertaken without due care.

E. *Public and social services*

There is no economic need for extending the railway northwards but the present carrying capacity of the existing line is inadequate to cope with traffic offering. Expansion of economic activities makes additional rolling stock essential.

Road development, particularly in Northern Territories, from which it appears foodstuffs for internal consumption may be expected, would assist in economic internal distribution and facilitate the export of any surpluses.

Low productivity of labour is one of the features of the Gold Coast economy. Improvements in social services in the long run raise productivity of labour and in the short run could increase production if directed to those making a direct contribution to development. Productivity of labour would tend to be increased by improved internal distribution of foodstuffs. Provision of increased number of dispensaries and mobile health units might assist in combatting disease, and thereby assist in increasing productivity of labour.

A good standard of general education would help to provide a sufficiently large number of potential trainees for technical education. Increased vocational training and specialist education would help to meet the urgent need for skilled labour for development projects. Present educational expansion is assisting the achievement of these aims.

F. *Finance*

(i) *Surplus balances*. Chief sources of ordinary revenue are customs and excise duty and direct taxation which in 1946–7 accounted for over 72% of ordinary revenue. The present duty on cocoa exports is specific (£3.10s.0d. per ton) and the amount of revenue extremely small in relation to the value of the crop. More revenue could clearly be obtained by increasing the duty. If, in addition to the existing specific duty, an "ad valorem" duty were imposed the revenue from cocoa could be more directly related to changes in its value.

Over the period 1937–38 to 1948–49 an excess of revenue over expenditure of some £7 million has accrued, the greater part of the surplus arising during the last five years. It is not possible on the basis of information available in London to assess future revenue prospects with any precision and a careful study of the budgetary problems of development will have to be made by the Gold Coast Government before any decisions are made as to the amount of money available for development. *Prima facie*, however, and on the basis of the facts in this memorandum it would not seem unreasonable to assume an excess of revenue in the next ten years of £8 million, particularly since about 63% of import duties fall on food, drink, tobacco and clothing; revenue from this source should be highly responsive to increases in the purchasing power of the African.

(ii) *Colonial development and welfare grants* amounting to £3½ million will be available. A proportion of this has already been spent on individual schemes in operation.

(iii) *Loans*. There is a potential supply of capital available locally for loan purposes if loans can be made attractive enough to the local investor. Provided the loans are taken up by purely local concerns they may have a general disinflationary effect. In view of the lack of success which has attended efforts to float local loans elsewhere in British West Africa, however, this source of development capital is uncertain but further investigation into techniques of raising local loans would appear to be well worth while.

The present public debt is £8,410,000 with charges amounting to rather more than £400,000. During recent discussions it was considered that the public debt of the Kenya Government could, on the basis of sound finance, be raised to some £20 million. The Kenya budget is at present some £7–9 million. Conditions in Kenya and the Gold Coast differ, but it would seem that the Gold Coast might well be justified on the basis of revenue prospects in raising loans of more than the £4 million originally proposed. It would be for the Gold Coast Government in the first instance to satisfy themselves on this point after examining the prospects with due care. It must be pointed out, however, that the United Kingdom balance of payments position is still such that London borrowing should be postponed as long as possible provided reserves are not unduly depleted. Moreover, at a time when finance is not the major limiting factor it is essential that financial provision should not outrun physical resources.

(iv) *Expenditure from reserves*. Amounts spent from the surplus balance of £7 million ((i) above) to end of March 1948 were approximately £3 million. Assuming expenditure of a further £2.7 million during the financial year 1948–49, a balance of some £1.3 million will remain. Added to the existing reserve of £3.3 million this gives a total reserve of approximately £4.5 million.

This figure represents almost 50% of estimated ordinary expenditure in 1949. As it is generally considered desirable to retain a reserve equal to 4–6 months expenditure, existing reserves do not leave, on this basis, a margin for development.

Cocoa Marketing Board funds, which are not of course central Government funds, amount to approximately £35 million. The purposes for which these can be used are defined by statute but insofar as they are used on schemes for the benefit of cocoa farmers which might otherwise have to be financed from central funds they can be regarded as contributing towards general development.

General note

It is estimated that the present inflationary gap in the Gold Coast is of the nature of at least £5 million. This inflationary state will be aggravated by rehabilitation grants estimated at £9 million in connection with the Swollen Shoot campaign and by development expenditure, unless present anti-inflationary measures are maintained, and if possible reinforced. There is considerable need to develop all means of increasing small savings and for techniques to enable the people to associate themselves financially with development through their savings.

Shortage of consumer goods which, coinciding with increased wages and increased returns from exports, was one of the primary causes of inflation, is being remedied, and considerably increased imports of consumer goods, and in particular cotton piece goods, are expected in 1949. Savings as reflected in Post Office Savings Bank figures have been maintained although some depletion of savings accounts is to be expected as increasing supplies of consumer goods reach the market, and it may be necessary to stress the need for continued savings. Disinflation would be aided by increased taxation whether direct or indirect.

In the absence of information on the velocity of circulation and other data essential to a more accurate assessment of inflation generally, it is impossible to state with any accuracy the amount by which purchasing power would have to be decreased to prevent widening of the present inflationary gap under pressure, from the factors mentioned above. Some increase in taxation may, however, be necessary.

Private capital

Very little is known of plans for development by private enterprise. It will be necessary, however, if the maximum benefit is to be derived from development plans to ensure that Government development expenditure takes account of private capital expenditure.

42 CO 537/4638, no 1 10 Mar 1949

[Political developments]: despatch from R Scott to Mr Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government.[1] *Minutes* by E G G Hanrott,[2] L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen

I have the honour to report on political developments in the Gold Coast during the past few months, with particular reference to the agitation for self-government. It appears to be opportune to make such a survey at the present time, while the more extreme nationalists, who aim at self-government by any means, are still evidently without very precise plans, and are sufficiently uncertain of themselves to be constrained in some measure in their activities and teaching by the influence of sober opinion which has manifested itself since the formation of the Committee on Constitutional Reform.[3] I do not intend to imply that either defects in planning, or

[1] Scott wrote this despatch as officer administering the government. Creasy had left the Gold Coast. His successor, Arden-Clarke, did not arrive until Aug 1949.

[2] CO principal, West Africa Dept.

[3] ie, the Coussey Committee.

the circumspection at present imposed on them by tactical considerations, would necessarily prevent the extremists from taking advantage of any situation which it might seem profitable to exploit. Although, according to the *Accra Evening News*,[4] we have now entered the "era of action politics", the factors mentioned above appear to have caused the extremists to revise their timetable and this may allow responsible opinion, not hitherto remarkable for robustness and constancy, to consolidate itself.

2. There is, without doubt, a very widespead desire for 'self-government' in the Gold Coast. This term, however, covers a wide range of aspirations and conceptions of the objective, rate of progress towards it and means of achievement. In the Northern Territories representative educated Africans take the view that the Protectorate is not ripe for self-government and will require a further, substantial period of tutelage before attaining that condition; they fear that, if self-government came prematurely, the result would be the exploitation of the peoples of the Northern Territories by southerners. In the Colony and Ashanti, the level-headed and thoughtful believe that self-government can evolve out of the present system by progressive modifications over varying terms of years. It is impossible to determine what proportion of the population adheres to this doctrine. It is professed by a substantial proportion of the professional and business elements in the main towns, including members of the United Gold Coast Convention. At the opposite pole are those who demand immediate self-government and profess to be able to undertake the necessary responsibilities. Again, it is impracticable to estimate how many supporters there are for this school of thought. It comprises one wing of the Convention, the professional agitators and what might be termed the *demi-mondains* in professional and business circles. Apart from these two groups, neither homogeneous in outlook, I am convinced that the generality of the people have but the vaguest ideas on what is meant by self-government. As a column-writer in the *Accra Evening News* (16th February) puts it: "Is it necessary for everybody in the country to be self-government-minded before we embark upon a struggle for self-government? The answer is a decided NO! History teaches us abundantly that it is always the few who fight for the benefit of the many who more or less remain indifferent or slumber while others are busy." Unfortunately, "the many" include the most impressionable and excitable elements of the urban population for whom "the few" – in this case the second of the two groups mentioned above – have a heady and pernicious influence. Again, in the event of trouble, whether connected with 'self-government' or not, there are always, as another newspaper observed, "some unruly elements in the street".

3. The political lull which had set in, in September, with the departure of the Gold Coast delegation to the London Conference[5] was broken shortly before their return, early in November. Increasingly vigorous demands were made, principally through the Press, for the setting up of a 'constituent assembly' to frame a new constitution. Mr. Kwame Nkrumah and his immediate associates, with complete disregard for the Convention party line, which became somewhat prim after

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[4] The newly founded newspaper of the Committee on Youth Organisations, Nkrumah's faction of the UGCC and the forerunner of the CPP which was not finally formed until June 1949.

[5] A reference to the Lancaster House conference of official and unofficial members of African legislative councils which was held at London in Sept 1948. For an account of the proceedings, see BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part I, 52.

the proceedings of the Watson Commission, began an intensive campaign for 'self-government now', which had a disturbing popular appeal, and against which no other political leader could compete. The return of the delegation made surprisingly little impression, either immediately or later. The African members of the delegation had prepared a report on the Conference, which was a factual, pedestrian document, pointing to no conclusions. This was presented to various bodies and was used as a basis for "explaining" the conference. The Mirabeau of the Convention, Dr. Danquah, had, with characteristic ebullience, conceived a new political philosophy out of the *obiter dicta* of a surprisingly miscellaneous selection of people encountered at intervals during the Conference, but had failed, during the return voyage, to make it acceptable (or even comprehensible) to the other delegates. Incalculably, he launched a bitter and demonstrably mendacious attack on the chiefs during a social function at Freetown; and for this, on his return, he was obliged to apologise and do penance after disciplinary proceedings by the Joint Provincial Council. His subsequent political course has been extremely erratic.

4. The plain fact is that the evolutionists (among whom Dr. Danquah is now usually to be counted) have no common platform and no imaginative and constructive plans with which to capture public opinion. They are by no means all conservative in outlook and include among their number far-sighted men with progressive ideas on political and economic development. Acceptance of their ideas, however, is confined only to a group or area and there is little, if any, community of design among them. Few have been able to adjust their thought to the changes brought about by the 1946 Consitution and in common with the generality of the population, still regard the conduct of public affairs and even policy-making as matters for a 'Government' which is apart from the Legislative Council. The Council is a watchdog overseeing the actions of this 'Government' and its functions are mainly to ensure that the executive adheres faithfully to various 'policies' formulated by 'Government' over many years. Even Dr. Danquah, who has studied constitutional matters fairly extensively, was recently reported as explaining, apparently with approval, that the purpose of ministers was to 'watch the Government.' This school of thought accordingly tends to look to the Administration to provide a platform and a programme; and in this is not so much out of touch with popular sentiment as might at first sight appear. It is probable that the great mass of those who favour self-government regard this condition as being a change in the colour of the bureaucracy with such incidental changes as the provision of a larger body of watchdogs and the devolution of a greater, but still limited, number of functions from the central executive to local Government bodies. I repeat, however, that no programme has been formulated which is capable of serving as a rallying point for many who have no use for the kind of change which the extremists would like to bring about. It is to be hoped that the report of the Coussey Committee will provide such material; the Committee's early preoccupation with territorial councils and the role of local government is encouraging in this regard. The main point is, however, that for the present the only appeal which the evolutionists are capable of making to the country is that deriving from their exhibition of 'Government' as an intelligent and reasonably tractable creature, becoming more noticeably piebald and able and willing to perform the right tricks.

5. It may be a comfortable, but it is not a stimulating, representation, whereas the doctrines of the extremists, or Ghana nationalists, are colourful and exciting. The

movement is headed by Mr. Nkrumah, who has skilfully used every instrument available to him to make himself "the leader" of a loosely formed party, which is held together and organised by scattered nuclei of selected disciples. At the centre, in close association with Mr. Nkrumah is a relatively small body of zealots, partly composed of fanatical "anti-imperialists" and nationalists, and partly of gangsters. From time to time, certain of the other major extremists drew close to this coterie for a time – Mr. Ako Adjei,[6] Mr. William Ofori Atta and even Dr. Danquah – but it would appear that these liaisons are tolerated only for so long as it suits Mr. Nkrumah's book. It is doubted whether even his most intimate associates – and the three just mentioned do not belong to that category – are entrusted with his full confidence.

6. Mr. Nkrumah's party has no distinguishable name; and probably the majority of its members regard themselves as belonging to the Convention. One of Mr. Nkrumah's most adroit moves has, indeed, been his unscrupulous use of the facilities afforded by the Convention party machine and of such of the party's tenets as are not incompatible with his own. In so doing, Mr. Nkrumah has been able not only to exploit to the full the "good will" and organisation of the Convention, but also to blur that party's never very precise programme to an extent which has caused great embarrassment to its more respectable members. As one result, he has diverted to his own projects a modest but comfortable income in donations from Convention supporters.

7. Even Mr. Nkrumah's axial fantasy – Ghanaland – has been cribbed from Dr. Danquah. With some malversation of history and considerable recourse to mystical interpretation, Dr. Danquah demonstrated some time ago that the Gold Coast is the ancient state of Ghana. The romantic notion was enthusiastically received and much elaborated by local bards, but it was Mr. Nkrumah who transformed it into a political conception. In this he has employed a technique which has been successful in the hands of undemocratic leaders elsewhere. A legend has been built up on the foundation of a xenophobic and intolerant nationalisation: until 105 years ago, Ghanaland enjoyed idyllic freedom under its own governance; it was enslaved (although never conquered) by the "imperialists" for their selfish ends; in the intervening period, the "imperialists" have reduced the people to poverty and misery; they intend to keep the people in that condition and every action which may have a contrary appearance is but an artifice. Anything in restraint of Ghana aspirations is undemocratic and/or criminal. The Ghana African is essentially superior to the European in all desirable attributes. This doctrine has been persistently and skilfully drilled into the minds of Mr. Nkrumah's supporters for some months with positiveness, unction and virulence. The main tenets are daily imported into discussions, reports, speeches, stories and personal gossip on any matter of topical interest. The forms vary, but the lessons are always the same and are always well pointed. The suggestion that there is a contrary or even divergent point of view produces an almost hysterical outburst against 'stooges' or 'quislings'

[6] A prominent barrister and founder member of the UGCC. It was at his suggestion that Nkrumah was appointed secretary of the Convention. Initially he remained loyal to the UGCC and, with Obetsibi Lamptey (see note 8 below), stood against Nkrumah for one of the two Accra seats in the 1951 election. He eventually joined the CPP, the only founder member of the UGCC to do so.

or 'sham excuses', according to circumstances. It is very regrettable – and it appears to me to be profoundly significant for the future – that this tawdry mixture of nationalism, racialism and Eastern European dogma should have commanded a substantial degree of credence among younger people in the urban communities in the Colony and Ashanti, and to some extent among older people also.

8. Mr. Nkrumah's main energies are, indeed, directed towards the political education of youthful literates from the stage of upper elementary education onwards. The principal organisations supporting him – apart from the dilapidated Ex-Servicemen's Union, whose 'Supreme Council' is now dominated by Mr. Nkrumah's henchmen – are the various Youth Associations, clubs and study groups, formed by his Lieutenants or under his stimulus. The office-bearers of these bodies are, in the main, Mr. Nkrumah's most truculent and intolerant associates, whose habitual manner of public address is derived from his teaching. It is evident that, despite the adoption of such blameless designations as Ghana Youth Group and Accra Students' Union, these bodies have been organised in preparation for the coercive phase of the 'national revolution'. Their members have been inculcated with the belief that the constitution drafted by the Executive of the Youth Organisation on Christmas Day can be effectively introduced in the Gold Coast in 1949. A copy of this draft is attached.[7]

9. The date originally (in October) fixed by Mr. Nkrumah for the achievement of self-government was the 1st of April next. The need for self-government by that date and confidence in its attainment by then were persistent themes of Mr. Nkrumah's propaganda machine. The suggestion was made that if self-government were not conceded by the appointed date it would be assumed, without recourse to arms. By January, this fixture was regarded as a cardinal article of faith by Mr. Nkrumah's adherants [sic] and was accepted as a matter of course by large numbers of the unthinking. The excitement and expectancy engendered by this campaign gave serious concern to the more sober elements in the population; and, indeed, it seemed that Mr. Nkrumah was so deeply committed to producing self-government by the 1st of April and had become to so great an extent the agent of the impulse that he had created, that he would be bound to force a show-down, or lose face. On the 9th of February, the Working Committee of the United Gold Coast Convention issued a public statement reiterating its belief in the achievement of self-government but dissociating the Convention from any assertion that there would be self-government by the 1st of April. The Convention did not, however, explicitly repudiate Mr. Nkrumah, and has not done so since. The consequential appearance of association between Mr. Nkrumah and the Convention which he has used to such advantage has extricated him from the difficult position into which he had been forced by his tactical mistake in fixing a date for the achievement of self-governmemt. The Convention's sober statement very sensibly reduced the political temperature in the Gold Coast, but it restored to Mr. Nkrumah freedom of manoeuvre, which he has not failed to exploit.

10. It is my considered opinion that it is in his ability to exploit a situation, and not because of any faculty for constructive political thinking, that Mr. Nkrumah is most dangerous to the peaceful progress of this country. I believe him to be

[7] Not printed.

sufficiently intelligent to have assessed correctly the political lessons of the past few months in so far as his own ambition is concerned; and there is no reason to suppose that his ambition does not still reach towards the establishment of a Union of African Soviet Socialist Republics. I consider that his main objective, since he started his career in this country just over a year ago, has been disruption and that, despite his recent adoption of a frothy nationalism, he has been consistent in the pursuit of that objective. There has been no indication that he will not remain consistent. The political lessons which I have referred to above are:

(a) that the conception of a renascent Ghanaland, however exciting to the more irresponsible elements in the Colony and Ashanti, is not as yet sufficiently stimulating to the generality of the people to enable Nkrumah to rely on support independently of the Convention.
(b) That the generality of the people cannot be brought by political theory to the point of engaging in, or condoning, violent action.
(c) That sober opinion is more conservative than at one time appeared, and is capable in some degree of influencing Mr. Nkrumah.
(d) That those holding such opinion would for the most part prefer to preserve a facade of understanding among Africans than come into the open in opposition to Mr. Nkrumah.
(e) That racial emotion rather than sound sense would influence such persons in the event of European condemnation of Mr. Nkrumah.
(f) That demonstrations likely to endanger the public safety have been preventible by reason of the strength and steadiness of the security forces.

11. By way of commenting on (c) and (d) above, I would observe that my impression is that Africans in general have very little understanding of Mr. Nkrumah. None of Government's African advisers has, on the various occasions on which he has been under discussion, shown any appreciation of his abilities, or provided a forecast as to his course of action, influence or attitude to authority which has had any semblance of accuracy. I acquit them of any conscious *mala fides* in the matter and, indeed, they have made it clear that they dislike and distrust Mr. Nkrumah. They regard him as a mischievous and conceited demagogue, as a nuisance rather than an opponent, but it is quite evident that they form judgment on him solely in relation to African values and the structure of African society. They regard him as one who, in spite of his string of assorted academic degrees which impresses them, is still susceptible to tribal and family sanctions, still subject to African inhibitions and reservations and still capable of showing African virtues. I believe that they are entirely unable to comprehend the type of mind which Mr. Nkrumah's training has shaped for him; the cold, humourless, intense individualist, offensively cynical and repeatedly guilty of double-crossing his benefactors and associates, is un-African and therefore cannot exist. I further believe that his critics outside Government circles, even including those of his former associates who have had experience of the qualities mentioned above, also persist in weighing him solely by African values. For so long, therefore, as Mr. Nkrumah colours his imported ideologies to suit local taste, his agitation is not likely to meet with public opposition. He is, on the contrary, fortuitously assisted in his pursuit of disruption by the efforts of other politicians who have certainly no intention of furthering his interests.

12. I would judge that Mr. Nkrumah's intention is to bring about a situation in which by a combination of general strike and boycott, the Government would be rendered incapable of maintaining essential services. "It was Stalin who said 'organisation decides everything! Nkrumah too says 'our organisational strength will do the trick.'" (*Accra Evening News*, 2nd of March.) Since I wrote the foregoing sentences, he has in fact propounded a programme on the lines forecast. (*Gold Coast Express*, 8th of March). There is no indication at present that the T.U.C. is a party to any such scheme, but there have been suggestions that it has on its own initiative contemplated calling a general strike when the report of the Coussey Committee is published, with the object of demonstrating the power of organised labour. There have also been reports that the Gold Coast Mines Employees Union had been moved to call the men out on strike, ostensibly for economic reasons, on the 1st of April. Whether or not Mr. Nkrumah is behind these moves, they would create for him the kind of situation which he would seek to exploit. In the economic field, there is no apparent danger point at present, although the campaign against swollen shoot might produce demonstrations in certain rural areas which would be contagious. There is the further possibility that if large scale protection were required either for personnel operating essential services or for cutting out operations, and if police reserves were committed, the town mobs might be brought out in demonstration. I have expressed the view in paragraph 10 that the generality of the people would not engage in, or condone, violence on the stimulus of political theory. If exacerbated by the incoveniences and contentions of strikes, or excited by allegations of 'maltreatment', etc., of farmers, they could, in my opinion, very quickly be brought to a frame of mind in which violence appeared to be just "retaliation". Mr. Nkrumah is already at work on the two institutions which, in their separate ways, exercise most widely a steadying influence; the Police Force and the Christian Churches. His line with the Police has been to criticise their conditions of service, living conditions, the manner in which they are treated by their officers, etc. in such a way as to make it appear that they are the special victims of imperialist exploitation. There is a discontented element in the Police and the situation is being carefully watched; while action is being taken as rapidly as possible to remedy matters affecting Police Service which might justifiably give ground for discontent. The attack on the Christian Churches, based on the unwillingness of the Church leaders to make religious buildings available for a political demonstration, is directed both against the "imperialist" churches and against Christianity. It is as yet not an emotional, but a calculated movement. Mr. Nkrumah has also given his support to the movement for Ewe unity; and encourages the separatist tendencies, manifest in somewhat puerile form, in the Akim Abuakwa State. His Press interests itself in the disruption of native administrations in the Krobo States, a project which is being actively pursued by Dr. Danquah, Mr. Ako Adjei and Mr. Obetsebi [sic] Lamptey.[8]

13. I fear that I have written at very great length, but I considered it advisable to let you have, as comprehensively as possible, an account of the background against

[8] Obetsibi Lamptey, a lawyer and founder member of the UGCC. He was one of the 'big six' who were detained by the Gold Coast government in the immediate aftermath of the 1948 riots. He remained loyal to the UGCC and stood, unsuccessfully, against Nkrumah in the 1951 election. He joined the Ghana Congress Party when it was formed in 1952 but was expelled after a quarrel with the leaders. He formed his own Ghana National Party.

which developments in the next few moths will have to be judged. In my view, and I am so proceeding, the action required is unobtrusive but consistent vigilance to ensure against breaches of the public peace. This could not, at least for the present, take the form of direct action against Mr. Nkrumah or his Press, unless he lays himself open to legal proceedings, since –

(a) such action would create precisely that atmosphere of tension which would most favour the disruptive efforts of his associates;
(b) it would be represented as a move against self-government and would unite Mr. Nkrumah's nationalists and other less extreme varieties in defence of the path to self-government;
(c) the resultant clamour would almost certainly improperly influence the Coussey Committee; and
(d) it would leave the field clear for the second flight of agitators who would be more likely to combine, and whose combined efforts would be as prejudicial to orderly government as Mr. Nkrumah's.

Nevertheless, where he can be checked in his activities, with the support of the more solid citizen, he will be checked. Every possible effort will, of course, continue to be made to rally the better sort to a more active acceptance of their responsibilities, but, for reasons which I have given in some detail above, I am not very sanguine as to the result.

Minutes on 42

Since this despatch is of some interest and importance and should probably be seen by higher authority I send forward without delay. If it tells us little that we do not know already it does provide us with the first overall appreciation of the political situation in the Gold Coast which I have seen for some time, and it enables us to see in perspective the more sensational items of political intelligence which we receive from time to time. It is, if I may say so, written in a manner characteristic of its author, both in its phrasing and in its caution.

2. The points which strike me of particular interest are:–

(a) The fact that the moderates and "gradualist" nationalists still tend to regard "government" as something apart from themselves and to think of their political responsibilities as mainly critical opposition. This of course is only natural at the present stage of political development and one can if one wishes find a parallel in the attitude of the House of Commons to the Royal Prerogative in the seventeenth century.
(b) The relation between Nkrumah and the Convention.
(c) The assessment of Nkrumah and the failure of leading Africans to understand his peculiar make up.
(d) The stabilizing effect of the composition of the Coussey Committee and the way it has gone about its work, and the definite improvement in the situation in the past three months.

3. If one wished to be critical one might say that this appreciation omits almost entirely the economic factor in the political situation and one would like to have known more of the political consequences of the inflationary situation in the towns

as a result of last year's cocoa price. I would also have liked to know more of the extent of the influence both of Nkrumah and of the Convention in the rural areas of the Colony and Ashanti.

4. One cannot quarrel with Mr. Scott's summing up of Nkrumah but I doubt whether one can only regard him as a representative of an "imported ideology". It may be that his "Ghana" nationalism is a purely tactical step, but I personally do not think there is any conflict between the aims of the more parochial nationalism of the Conventionists and those of the Pan-African movement of Nkrumah which is apparently becoming an increasingly popular cause in French West Africa. It may be that "Ghana" nationalism is merely an earlier stage of a Pan-West African movement which will ultimately develop. We have still too little information on all this and this kind of deduction is largely guess work. But I think it unwise to regard Nkrumah as representing only alien ideals imported from Europe.

5. On the whole, considered in relation to the policy of the Gold Coast Government, Mr. Scott's appreciation is an encouraging one. It appears to confirm that we are right in pressing forward with our plans for gradual political advance on the three-fold line of local government reform, regionalization and African executive responsibility at the centre; and that this line is likely to strengthen the position of responsible Africans. The present emotional ferment, which Nkrumah is so adept at exploiting, will, however, not be calmed by political action alone and we must clearly continue in our anti-inflationary measures, increase of supplies etc. Two recent developments strike me as hopeful ones in relation to this emotional unrest of the half educated in and around the Gold Coast towns. The first is the move to improve the organization of sport in the Gold Coast with all that this may mean in diverting political excitement into other channels. The second is the remarkable success of the adult education movement sponsored by the Oxford Delegacy. Apart from these developments it is of course important that we should continue to watch the morale both of the Administration (and the service generally) and of the security forces. The morale of the former should gradually improve as the political situation becomes clearer and officers become conviced that we do not intend to scuttle out of the Gold Coast – there are of course many other factors affecting this question of morale. As regards the Police, it is quite apparent even from the press that, as Mr. Scott says, Nkrumah is making a special effort to create discontent, and it is obviously urgent that the Police Adviser's recommendations for improved conditions should be pushed ahead with fast.

E.G.G.H.
18.3.49

This is an interesting report both in its assessment of the character and aims of Nkrumah, and also the attitude of mind of the more moderate but nevertheless progressive element among the literate and politically-minded part of the population.

I believe that the policy of giving Nkrumah reasonable rope is the right one. The alternative of action against him might very well turn him into the national hero he is trying to be, and would be disastrous if it misfired. But I should feel happier about it if it were accompanied by evidence of a more lively and purposeful policy on the part of the Government. The extremist policy of "smash everything and start again"

is at any rate a dynamic one, and will always appeal to the minds of those who think they have a grievance either against the Government or against life generally. The alternative of evolutionary progress look dull beside it, and the African likes emotion and colour. It seems to me that the appreciation at (1) is not fully conscious that the criticism that "the evolutionists have no imaginative and constructive plans with which to capture public opinion" (paragraph 4) can equally be applicable to a Government which is committed to a progress by evolution; and that the doctrine that there is a separate and mysterious entity called "Government" with a bottomless purse and an infinite capacity for being abused can only be upset by thrusting responsibility on the people themselves. The Gold Coast Government waited for the Watson Commission's Report; Mr. Scott's despatch seems to suggest that they are also waiting for the Coussey Committee's report. Your report on your West African visit[9] shows only too clearly how much there is to be done in the Gold Coast, not only in economic and community development and in the improvement of local government, but in rallying the Government services, and enlisting them behind a defined and clearly understood policy of political evolution. It may, in my view, be optimistic to hope that the Coussey Committee will come out with a unanimous report; even if the moderates carry the day it seems to me likely that the extremists will save face with their supporters by producing a minority report in the comforting assurance that there is little chance of it being accepted. I should feel very much happier if the Gold Coast Government were to occupy the months which must intervene before the Coussey Committee reports in getting one jump ahead of events in the way in which the Nigerian Government has so successfully done in the last year or so.

L.H.G.
23.3.49.

Sir T. Lloyd

I agree generally with Mr. Gorsuch. I have slightly amended the latter part of his draft and now submit this for consideration. I am in some doubt, I must confess, whether it is advisable to send this despatch at the present time. I should certainly have been in favour of doing so but for Mr. Scott's illness, but with Sir G. Creasy and Mr. Scott away and Major Butler, the Chief Commissioner of Ashanti on leave, it is a little difficult for the Gold Coast Government to take a strong line on policy.

Mr. Gorsuch and I came to the conclusion that a despatch ought to be sent before we knew that Mr. Scott was going to be away for some months. You may wish to discuss with us whether we should or should not advise the Secretary of State to write to Mr. Mangin in this way.[10]

A.B.C.
25.3.49

[9] The file does not record the recipient of Gorsuch's minute. Presumably this is a reference to the visit by Rees-Williams, see 38.

[10] See 44 for the despatch which was sent.

43 CO 96/809/4, no 3 16 Mar 1949

[Togoland]: despatch from Mr Creech Jones to R Scott on closer association between the Gold Coast and the British Trust Territory of Togoland

I have the honour to refer to your Secret Despatch of the 15th February, 1949, concerning the application of the Native Authority (Colony) and Native Courts (Colony) Ordinances to the Southern Section of Togoland and the proposals for the representation of the Southern Section of Togoland on the Legislative Council. I welcome these developments, which should enable the people of Southern Togoland to share to a greater extent in the constitutional advance of the Gold Coast, and I am glad to note that you consider it possible to give them effect without delay. As you are no doubt aware, the absence of direct representation of Togoland on the Legislative Council has been criticised during recent sessions of the Trusteeship Council, where the Special Representative, Mr. D.A. Sutherland, was closely questioned on the subject. I agree therefore that it would be desirable to give effect to these changes without awaiting the report of the Committee on Consitutional Reform and I should be grateful if you would submit draft amendments to the Constitutional instruments.

44 CO 537/4638, no 4 19 Apr 1949

[Political developments]: despatch no 11 from Lord Listowel to T R O Mangin replying to R Scott's despatch on the agitation for self-government[1]

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Scott's secret despatch of the 10th March[2] in which he reports on political developments in the Gold Coast during the past few months.

2. I have read with deep interest the general appreciation of the political situation given in this despatch and the close analytical study of the character and motives of Mr. Nkrumah. I should be grateful if you would let Mr. Scott know that I am much indebted to him for this comprehensive and penetrating study of the political scene.

3. I may say at once that I accept the view taken in paragraph 13 of the despatch that, while showing unmistakable determination to maintain law and order, the Gold Coast Government should take no direct action against Mr. Nkrumah or his Press unless there is a clear transgression of the law. I fully agree that there is no object in helping him to establish a claim to be a political martyr, and that the failure of such action against him, if it were taken without clear grounds, might have most unfortunate results.

4. I have given much thought to the contrast which Mr. Scott has drawn between the doctrines of the extremists, or Ghana Nationalists, which, he says, are colourful and exciting and those of the evolutionists who have no common platform

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[1] Listowel signed this despatch on behalf of Creech Jones. Mangin was officer administering the Gold Coast government during Scott's absence on leave. [2] See 42.

and no imaginative and constructive plans with which to capture public opinion. Given the background which Mr. Scott has described of a society which, with few exceptions, has failed yet to realise how far the 1946 Constitution increased the participation of the people in government, and still regards the "Government" as a separate entity, it is easy to see that the doctrines of Mr. Nkrumah and the extremists must have their attractions even to those whose inclinations and interests alike are against political violence, and on the side of ordered progress against a background of law and order. Nevertheless, it seems to me all the more necessary that the Government itself should show every possible evidence of a positive and vigorous policy which will provide for this latter class an attractive alternative to adherence to Mr. Nkrumah's party.

5. I know that this is fully appreciated by you and your advisers, and I realise that circumstances in the past year have made it particularly difficult for the Gold Coast Government to come out into the open with a constructive policy in the way in which it would otherwise have wished to do. The necessity for waiting for the report of the Watson Commission has obviously been a limiting factor, and now that the Coussey Committee is in session, the Government must clearly avoid in any of its actions laying itself open to the implication that it is attempting to anticipate any recommendations which that Committee may make. Nevertheless, I am sure you will agree that it is most desirable that the attitude of the Government should not be capable of being interpreted as a purely negative one and that, while nothing is done in the meantime to prejudice the work of the Coussey Committee, the initiative should be seen to rest in the hands of the Government and to be exercised. I cannot indeed emphasize too strongly the imperative necessity for Government to take and hold the initiative at all times. I am glad to know that the preparation of a Development Plan is now being actively pursued with the full participation of local representatives. I hope also that the Gold Coast Government will show itself to be active and purposeful in the sphere of community development. There is in addition the vitally important question of the reform of local Government, on which the future political stability of the Gold Coast is likely to depend to a large extent. I think that you will agree that the main problems which arise are the creation of units of local government of satisfactory size in the rural areas; the introduction of adequate numbers of non-traditional members onto State Councils so as to make them more representative of all elements of the community; adequate facilities for the training of local government staff; the establishment of effective local government bodies in those urban areas which have not at present got them, together with the improvement of conditions in the mining townships; and finally the clarification of the relations of local government bodies, including established Town Councils, with the central Government in relation both to finance and functions. I know that considerable thought and attention has already been given to all these problems by yourself and your advisers. In any case they are matters which the Coussey Committee will be examining and I appreciate that, in most cases at any rate, it will not be possible for the Government to come out with proposals on them until the Committee has reported. I hope, however, that it may be possible to use the interim period to clarify the Government's own views on these matters by means of internal discussions between your advisers, so that, when the Coussey Committee does report, the Government will be able to give rapid consideration to the Committee's recommendations and to take a clear line on these important matters. Meanwhile

any concrete evidence which can be given to the public that the Administration and its officers are working on a co-ordinated policy designed to develop the country in the interests of and with increasingly greater participation of its people should help to rally those who tend to listen to the propaganda of Mr. Nkrumah and his press against their own better judgement.

45 CO 537/4638, no 7 12 May 1949

[Public services]: despatch no 181 from T R O Mangin to Mr Creech Jones on alleged subversion within the public services; proposal to issue an executive order prohibiting government servants from joining political associations

I have the honour to refer to the remarks of the Watson Commission, contained in paragraph 380 of the Commission's report, regarding the disorders and strikes that occurred in some educational institutions during the disturbances of last year. The Commission was satisfied that trouble among the school children and students had been stirred up for political ends and unreservedly condemned the instigators of the disorders. Unfortunately, although responsible African opinion equally disapproves of such unscrupulous use of impressionable pupils for political purposes and has of late to some degree openly expressed this disapproval, it has become increasingly apparent that the more extreme political agitators intend to make the fullest use of the schools and colleges both as centres of training in their political ideas and as hotbeds of unrest which would, when convenient, join with similar nuclei in the Government service generally and in the Trade and Ex-servicemen's Unions in a general outburst of violence which would, they hope, disrupt the machinery of Government. The concentration of Mr. Nkrumah's subversive influence upon the youth of the country was reported in paragraph 8 of Mr. Scott's Secret despatch of the 10th March[1] and the activities of the Committee on Youth Organisation in this respect have been mentioned in our Political Intelligence Summaries.

2. It seems probable that such teaching was responsible for the "strikes" which occurred during March at the Government Technical School, Takoradi and Trades School at Asuansi and which were reported in Political Intelligence Summary No. 10. Both these outbreaks of indiscipline showed signs of deliberate planning and gave every appearance of having been encouraged from outside the schools for seditious purposes, the pretext being in each case petty complaints about the quality of the food provided, the curriculum, and other minor, and largely manufactured, grievances for the settlement of which adequate machinery existed. Action was sudden and apparently carefully concerted, there was no preliminary deterioration in discipline, pains were taken to ensure that no pupil stood out as a ringleader, there were insolent and noisy demonstrations and processions were attempted.

3. As in the case of the Cape Coast schools where outbreaks of indiscipline occurred during the general disturbances of last year, the disaffected pupils at Takoradi and Asuansi have been sent home and it is proposed to readmit only those

[1] See 42.

who appear to have taken no part in the organisation of the outbreaks and who, moreover, sign and whose parents or guardians countersign a declaration of acceptance of the normal discipline of an educational institution. It is clear that it would be most imprudent to readmit to the schools a number of pupils whose conduct before the disturbances was unsatisfactory, or was particularly so during the disturbances. To do so would be to take back disaffected persons who would probably foment further indiscipline, of their own initiative or under external influence or both. A Departmental Committee has therefore been set up to advise as to which boys should not be re-admitted.

4. At Takoradi there was no evidence of misconduct by the staff but at Asuansi, I regret to say, there is reason to believe that some members of the junior teaching staff had brought to bear upon the pupils subversive influences of a political and racial character. Reports from other areas indicate that school teachers are instilling Youth Organisation doctrines into their pupils to an increasing extent and that in some schools there is open teaching of Nkrumah's politics. Bands of school children in hitherto friendly and, by nature, well-mannered areas shout Self-Government slogans at passive Europeans and in one instance a whole school assembled under its master expressed itself in the same unruly manner.

5. There is a growing disquiet among African members of the Central Advisory Committee on Education at the present assault on youth and the use of schools by teachers and others for the inculcation of subversive political views. From the educational point of view the practice is so wrong that failure to consider positive action could be used in very embarrassing criticism of this Government by, for example, the American member of the visiting U.N.O. Commission. I have, therefore, decided to institute a system of special confidential reports by Education Officers on the discipline, manners and tone of the schools inspected by them each month, if possible indicating to what extent subversive influences come from the teachers and from outside; that the Director of Education should address the Heads of non-Government educational units seeking their views on the seriousness of the situation, the causes of it and the steps which might be taken to secure a reformation; that the Central Advisory Committee on Education should be invited to discuss the matter and express its views and recommendations; and that the Ghana schools opened under Nkrumah's auspices should be visited and briefly inspected in the normal way with a view to correcting the impression that they are beyond the jurisdiction of the Education Department. I hope by this means not only to obtain the fullest information regarding the situation with a view to framing remedial measures but also to enlist the support of all those sincerely interested in education throughout the country in the application of such measures as may be decided upon.

6. Were the well-known Communist technique employed by Nkrumah and his followers of organising subversive "cells" and agents in Government departments confined to the educational sphere the course of action which I propose in the preceding paragraph and in paragraph 3 might be sufficient for the time being, but this unfortunately is not the case. There has recently been formed within the Police a body known as the Gold Coast Police Assembly whose objects, while ostensibly directed towards the improvement of conditions of service, are manifestly of a subversive nature and directed towards the disruption of discipline within the Force. Early in April this body attempted to instigate a strike of the Force and although the major attempt failed there were a number of instances of refusal of duty and failure

to turn out on parade. These few cases of indiscipline were promptly and firmly dealt with under the normal disciplinary powers of the Commissioner and I am glad to report that the action taken proved salutary and that the vast majority of the Police remained loyal. The situation however still requires careful handling. It is a matter of the very gravest concern that such influences should be active in the Police and I consider it imperative that immediate steps should be taken to stamp out the disloyal elements whose aim it is to create disaffection and mutiny. I do not wish to infer that there were not genuine causes of discontent in the Police Force but the fact that this discontent was voiced in such an indisciplined manner was undoubtedly due to the subversive influences to which I have referred.

7. At the same time that the attempt was made to suborn the Police there was a minor outbreak of indiscipline in Ussher Fort Prison where one of the prisoners tried to incite his fellows to "strike". Investigations have revealed that there is a group of prisoners who continually stir up trouble and that they are encouraged in so doing by some of the warders who foster discontent and undermine the discipline of the prisoners by retailing to them subversive propaganda of the Nkrumah pattern. Further enquiries are proceding but it is apparent that the morale of the prison staff is poor and that in the event of widespread disorder their reliability would be questionable. Arrangements for the internal security of prisons throughout the country are under urgent review.

8. I do not wish unduly to alarm you by suggesting that matters have reached a stage where a general conflagration is about to break out. There is evidence that the main subversive elements are not yet ready for such widespread action. Nevertheless I think you will agree that it is impossible to exaggerate the potential gravity of the situation which would be created were the existing subversive cells to be allowed to spread unchecked among Government servants. It is for this reason that I am considering in consultation with my advisers, the promulgation of an executive order such as has, I believe, recently been issued in Kenya and in Cyprus prohibiting all Government servants from belonging to any political association or organization. I shall be grateful if I may be advised of the terms in which such orders were made in the territories concerned, what reactions if any followed their issue, and whether you see any objection to the making of similar orders here.

9. I appreciate that this proposal goes further than the recommendation contained in paragraph 138 of the report of the Watson Commission[2] and that this Government may be accused of inconsistency in suggesting such a course so soon after rejecting the less far reaching recommendation of the Commission. The inconsistency is not, however, as great as might appear since I am satisfied that, whereas when the Watson report was published there would have been no popular support for such a measure, there is now, as I have indicated, a body of responsible African opinion which is deeply concerned at the trend of events and is anxious that the integrity of the public service should be preserved. Furthermore, subversive

[2] Para 138 of the report of the Watson Commission stated: 'We feel that so far as the Administrative Branches of the public services are concerned a career therein demands a loyalty transcending all other considerations. In our opinion therefore a rule ought to be introduced that no civil servant in the Administrative Branch of the Gold Coast Government may be a member of any organisation having among its objects the attainment of any end by political means.' *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948* (Col 231, 1948).

elements had not at that time permeated Government service to anything like the same extent. I am still of the opinion that in normal circumstances the freedom of Government servants to be members of political organisations should be no more restricted than the terms of Colonial Regulations provide. I have addressed you at some length in this despatch in an endeavour to show that present circumstances in the Gold Coast are far from normal and that drastic action is essential if the situation is not further to deteriorate. Moreover rules which are appropriate to membership of normal political bodies are not, in my opinion, applicable when the political bodies concerned are designed for the disruption of the State. This has been recognised by His Majesty's Government in instituting the steps which have been taken in the United Kingdom to exclude persons of known Communist sympathies from certain branches of the public service. Unfortunately in the Gold Coast, the only active political organisations at present are subversive in character and their supporters are sufficiently numerous to make it impracticable to transfer within or to dismiss from the Government services all those who are more or less actively involved. Moreover to do so would, I suggest, be to penalise unduly many persons who are not inherently disloyal but have merely been led astray by colourful and persistent propaganda calculated to excite semi-educated youth to insubordination. That the corrupting disease is present in the body politic there can be no doubt; it has been diagnosed and I feel that the time is ripe for the application of a remedy such as I propose. Liberally minded Governments are naturally handicapped in these matters by their own scruples and the inevitable tendency is passively to watch the spread of the infection because the cure is distasteful.

10. I am convinced that the time has come when Government should come into the open with a firm stand against the corruption of the public service. To continue to wait upon events is to invite disaster and it is, in my view, imperative that positive action should be taken without delay. I realise that the course proposed may cause considerable outcry but I consider that such opposition must be faced and answered. The line which I would propose to take would be that it is an essential part of our aim in working towards responsible self-government to maintain and eventually to hand on a Civil Service of the type without which no responsible Government could function. I can see no effective method other than the course which I suggest of preventing the continued infiltration of subversive influences into the Government service and the growing permeation of the service with disaffected persons. Furthermore such an order would in my opinion greatly strengthen the morale of those in the service who wish to resist subversive influences but are at present without an effective answer to attempts at intimidation.

11. Such a measure as I propose is of course the repressive approach to the control of subversive activities, but I am convinced that if constructive measures towards the improvement of local conditions are to have any hope of success, then we must provide a framework of law and order – and of confidence in Government's determination to see that these are enforced – within which such development can proceed. Without some such measure it will be impossible for this Government effectively to seize the initiative in the manner suggested in Lord Listowel's secret despatch no. 11 of the 19th April.[3]

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[3] See 44.

12. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the other West African Governors.[4]

[4] Creech Jones replied to Mangin in a despatch dated 26 May which enclosed copies of circulars issued by the governments of Kenya and Cyprus on the same subject together with a copy of the relevant Cyprus general order. The despatch stated: 'I agree that an executive order should be issued in the Gold Coast and that in issuing the order you should take the line proposed in paragraph 10 of your despatch. I should, however, be glad to know before the order is issued whether you propose to name any particular political organisations of which membership by government servants is prohibited, as has been done in Kenya. It seems to me on present information that Mr. Nkrumah has been careful so far to avoid any form of definite political organisation, and that his tactics for the moment are to infiltrate into organisations which may not be of a political nature. You may, therefore, think it preferable to frame the order on the wide terms which are used in the Cyprus circular, laying on the individual public servant the onus of maintaining impartiality rather than prescribing any definite limits to his activities by forbidding membership of definite organisations. It would, of course, be possible at any time to forbid membership of any particular organisation should its activities be obviously of such a nature that no public servant could be associated with them within the spirit of the order. I shall be glad to see the draft of the order before it is issued' (CO 96/811/6, no 5).

46 CO 537/4638, no 8 24 May 1949

[Political situation]: letter from Mr Creech Jones to T R O Mangin on the agitation for self-government; proposal that HMG should issue a statement

[In his secret letter of 12 May to Lloyd (see para 1 below), Mangin explained that the Gold Coast government had been considering the action needed to dispel the impression created by almost daily articles in the local press to the effect that the report of the Coussey Committee would result in complete self-government within the current year. Mangin observed that Attlee, replying to a recent parliamentary question on Malaya, had stated that HMG had no intention of relinquishing its responsibilities or of jeopardising the security and well-being of the people of Malaya by a premature withdrawal. An equally explicit and authoritative answer to an inspired question in the House seemed, according to Mangin, to be the best means of 'clearing the air in the Gold Coast' on the same issue. Mangin concluded: 'If you agree, the question might perhaps take the form of an enquiry as to whether it is the intention to widen the terms of reference of the [Coussey] Committee to cover a recommendation of the grant of immediate self-government and the reply might first deny such intention and go on to make a more general statement of policy as was made in relation to Malaya' (CO 537/4638, no 6).]

Lloyd has shown me your secret letter GOV.181 of the 12th May about the present political situation in the Gold Coast, and I have also seen your secret despatch of the same date and reference,[1] in which you report that you have under consideration a proposal to prohibit all Government servants from belonging to any political association or organisation.

2. I was in fact on the point of writing to you when these two communications arrived. Since Lord Listowel's secret despatch No. 11 of the 19th April[2] was sent to you, we have had further indications of the trend of afairs in the Gold Coast which

[1] See 45. [2] See 44.

definitely cause us uneasiness. Your Political Intelligence Summary No. 10 of the 14th April contains some disturbing passages about the campaign to put pressure on the members of the Coussey Committee, and the extent to which junior Government servants and others are being swept up in the tide of the agitation for self-government. In addition to this we have had allegations of deterioration in conditons from Members of Parliament and others who have visited the territory or have themselves heard of them through correspondents in the Gold Coast.

3. The view of the present phase in the Gold Coast which was taken in the despatch quoted above was based on the expectation that although the agitation of Nkrumah and the extremists would need constant watching during the interim period, the results of the Coussey Committee's deliberations and the subsequent constitutional advance which may be expected from them would bring things into their proper perspective, and confront the extreme political element in the Gold Coast with realities, to their consequent discredit in the eyes of public opinion. But, as was emphasised in the despatch, time and the exercise of a passive patience alone will not achieve this object; it is essential, to quote from the despatch, that "the initiative should be seen to rest in the hands of the Government and to be exercised." Also, as Lord Listowel said in his despatch when commenting on the attraction which Nkrumah's doctrine must have even for the moderates:-

> "It seems to me all the more necessary that the Government itself should show every possible evidence of a positive and vigorous policy which will provide for this latter class an attractive alternative to adherence to Mr. Nkrumah's party."

4. The Summary to which I have referred in paragraph 2 clearly indicates, however, (as indeed do also the other reports reaching us) that the initiative is not with the Government but that on the contrary Nkrumah's influence continues to grow and seems to be spreading not only in the urban centres but in the countryside and among the trade unions also. This means, of course, that the political strategy outlined in the previous paragraph is in great danger of being overtaken by events.

5. Nkrumah's declared object, in the event of a degree of self-government satisfactory to himself not being granted, is to adopt the tactics of non-co-operation, to bring about a sit-down strike and to make the work of the Administration impossible by non-violent methods. It seems unlikely in the present political temperature of the Gold Coast that these methods could be widely employed and still stop short of degeneration into violence. It is at least probable that Nkrumah realises this. If the hold of his group becomes strong and widespread enough it is, at the least, possible that the report of the Coussey Committee, if moderate and evolutionary in tone, will have a hostile reception and may be very difficult to implement. The greater danger, as your Political Summary points out, is that the Committee or a majority of it may be induced by one motive or another to produce recommendations which go far beyond anything which the Gold Coast or His Majesty's Government are likely to accept.

6. Your letter and despatch of the 12th May show that you already share these apprehensions, and that action is necessary. I hope to reply officially in a few days to the despatch about membership of political organisations and I will confine myself here to your suggestion that a statement of policy by His Majesty's Government

should be made by arranged question and answer in the House. I am most anxious to give you all possible support in the present difficult situation, but I should like to put two considerations to you. In the first place, I feel that a question and answer in the terms which you suggest would be aimed in the wrong direction, i.e. at the Coussey Committee rather than at the extremists. The Committee was set up as a representative and responsible body and went off to a good start, aided by the message which I sent, the Governor's opening statement and the admirable first address by the Chairman himself. Anything which has the appearance of further shepherding at this stage might well be resented by the members, might incline then to Nkrumah's side, and would certainly be seized on by Nkrumah himself and his Press as a means of pouring further discredit on the Committee.

7. Secondly, while I fully agree that some public statement designed to act as a warning and check to the pretensions of the extremists should now be made, I feel that such a statement should come in the first place from the Gold Coast Government. It would serve not only as an indication of the Government's intention to assert its authority with a greater show of initiative and as the basis of a campaign by the Public Relations Department and the Administration as a whole to counter and diminish the growing influence of the extremists and their Press, but also if necessary as a prelude to any specific measures which the Government may find itself obliged to take in the future to reinforce its control. I myself would however take the opportunity of making a reference in the House to this statement and of endorsing it on behalf of His Majesty's Government.

8. The terms of the statement would have to be carefully considered and you would also have to decide whether it should be made by a personal broadcast by you. As I have said above it seems particularly necessary to avoid saying anything which might be represented as an attempt to "jockey" the Coussey Committee. It should rather make clear that it is the Government's firm intention to keep a fair field for the Committee so that the deliberations which preceded and will follow its report are carried on in a calm and sober atmosphere. The opportunity should also be taken to make it plain that neither the proceedings of the Committee nor the subsequent action are subject to any kind of timetable, and that the Government will neither prejudge nor pay attention to the efforts of anyone else to prejudge the findings of the Committee. It seems also necessary to state that neither the Committee nor the Government will be influenced in any way by threats of action having as its object to secure the ends of any political faction by the disturbance of public order or convenience, and that the Government will take appropriate action if the need arises to prevent such efforts from achieving any success.

9. I should be glad if you would consider this alternative suggestion and let me have your views as early as possible. I would wish to consider the text of any statement or broadcast before it was actually made.

10. It has already been agreed in Lord Listowel's despatch referred to above that there should be no direct action against Nkrumah and his Press unless there is a clear transgression of the law and that a prosecution which misfired would be a disaster. I fully appreciate that it must be for the Gold Coast Government to choose the occasion and the moment at which to invoke the law in this way, and your Law Officers are no doubt keeping a careful watch on the Press. If any strengthening of the existing law is considered necessary for this purpose in present circumstances you must not hesitate to let us know. In the meantime a public announcement on

the lines suggested seems to me to offer a course which lies between the two extremes of allowing Nkrumah to go on his way unchecked or of taking action against him in the Courts.

P.S. I wonder whether there is any positive and constructive work which can be offered to Nkrumah to divert his energies into better and more helpful ways? I don't mean government employment but something in which he can take an interest and turn his thoughts into useful channels? This may be a vain hope and not necessarily practical & realistic.

47 CO 537/4638, no 19 9 June 1949

[Political situation]: letter (reply) from T R O Mangin to Mr Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government, the proposed statement and the prospect of finding employment for Mr Nkrumah. *Minute* by E G G Hanrott

[The statement which Mangin proposed in his letter of 12 May (see 46, note) and which he considered further in this letter to Creech Jones in response to the secretary of state's reply (see 46), was issued as a broadcast statement by Scott in Accra on 15 June 1949. The statement denied that the proceedings of the Coussey Committee were subject to a timetable and also emphasised that the government would 'neither prejudge the Committee's findings nor pay any attention to the efforts of any one else to prejudge them'. It then made reference to what were described as 'extremist efforts', not only to coerce the Committee but also to lead the public to expect that the Committee 'will make proposals which will fit in with the private plans of those groups for the immediate grant of self-government'. The statement warned that the government would take appropriate steps to deal firmly with any 'irresponsible attempts' to use propaganda to stir up passions 'to such a pitch as to endanger public order'. Creech Jones endorsed Scott's statement in a written reply to an arranged parliamentary question on 22 June (CO 537/4638, nos 18 & 21).]

I am very grateful to you for your letter regarding the political situation here and for the assurances of support that it contains for such action we can take to induce a change of atmosphere.

It is best that I should say forthwith that I entirely dissent from the view that Government is losing the initiative. There has, on the contrary, in my opinion, been a marked swing the other way during recent months and considerably greater confidence in Government (by which I mean the executive) has been manifested. I think that you have only to look to the last Legislative Council for an illustration of that. The budget was a controversial and constructive one and on every matter of major importance Government not only took the initiative but carried the point. Again, on a somewhat different level, the older newspapers have been maintaining a fairly sound moderate line with only occasional sallies of the baser sort when, no doubt, commercial opportunism seemed more important than consistency. Even in less demonstrable instances, like the general attitude of Africans in the street, I believe that the same degree of improvement exists. There is one very important sphere in which it appeared that there certainly was danger of losing the initiative, and the danger remains. I refer to the inability of Government, either because of the non-delivery of materials for development works or the unavailability of staff, to live up to its post-war promises of rapid material progress. The failure to produce

something solid that can be used and looked at is a much more important setback, where African opinion is concerned, than the deferment of more far-reaching, but less utilitarian, projects in the field of economic or social development. The various aspects of the matter have, of course, been the subject of frequent representations to the Office and we have had a great deal of help. Very much still remains to be done but even in this field, I believe that we have passed the turn. Recently, I had a conference of the Chief Commissioners with a view to ensuring that more flexible arrangements for departmental activities in the districts are brought into being and this will go far towards reinforcing the initiative of District Commissioners and the departmental officers who will be working with them in the field. The visitor may well hear complaints of what Government has not done, which, coupled with the strident abuse of the extremist press, may well give an impression, which I think much exaggerated, of half-heartedness on the part of Government. Equally, the critic may well describe as lack of initiative Government's disinclination to do, without full justification, a number of things which are frequently suggested, such as putting Nkrumah in prison or subsidizing gold production or building youth camps.

At the same time I must emphasise that circumstances during the past fifteen months have imposed definite limitations on this Government particularly in the political constitutional sphere where the initiative has been largely taken out of our hands, as has been recognised in paragraph 5 of Lord Listowel's despatch.[1] Although the new constitution that was granted by His Majesty's Government in 1946 was popularly acclaimed as a great political advance, nevertheless, less than two years later in 1948, an outburst of violent riots led to the Watson Commission and its recommendations of still more far-reaching constitutional advances and to the appointment of the Coussey Committee, which is now under pressure from extremists to recommend constitutional changes even beyond those recommendations of the Watson Report that His Majesty's Government was prepared to accept. These circumstances have led public opinion to believe that political initiative lies with those who have used violence and are prepared to do so again to achieve their political ends, and have at the same time hampered this Government's initiative and, to some extent, adversely affected public confidence in the ability of Government, as at present constituted, to "deliver the goods". It is true that the announcement, immediately after the disturbances, of the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry provided a period during which passions might cool and a measure of normality might be restored, but there has now been a long period of suspense which has inevitably bred uncertainty in the public mind. Some tendency has consequently developed to regard the present Government as a care-taker Government pending the inauguration of the far-reaching constitutional reforms which the Coussey Committee is expected to recommend. This tendency is reinforced by the almost unanimous campaign in the Press for self-government within this year. Such a state of affairs is largely inevitable during the period of transition which the Gold Coast is at present experiencing. It can be finally resolved only by the establishment of a settled government after the Coussey Committee has reported and its recommendations have been considered by this Government and His Majesty's Government. In the meanwhile there remains a fruitful field for Nkrumah

[1] See 44.

to exploit and it is for this reason that I felt it would be timely to issue an authoritative statement making it quite clear that there is a limit beyond which we are not prepared to go. It seemed to me that a categorical statement from you to this effect was the best way of giving the lie to Nkrumah's propaganda which, if unrefuted, may well result in an ugly situation when the report of the Coussey Committee is published. If the report is reasonable it is likely to be regarded as a 'betrayal' and if it goes beyond the terms of reference it will be unacceptable to this Government and His Majesty's Government. In either event the reactions of a public which has been led by a Press campaign to expect immediate self-government are liable to be violent - which is just what Nkrumah wants. I am quite ready to issue a statement as you suggest which should, as you remark, serve to strengthen the morale of the more responsible members of the Coussey Committee and indeed of the saner elements of the public as a whole, although it may not fully achieve the original object I had in mind.

While I would not wish to be taken as implying any criticism of your suggestions as to the form which the statement by this Government should take, I must say that I am still a little uncertain as to where to place the emphasis. As I see the position, the statement would not achieve its full purpose – or anything like it – if it were to be mainly negative i.e. if it concentrated on removing current misconceptions, whether deliberately fostered or not, about the functions of the Coussey Committee or the attitude of this Government toward it. That would leave a vacuum towards the filling of which local politicians would look for a further statement. The object of the statement must be, as I see it, to encourage all sober citizens to take a stand behind Government. Their co-operation is, indeed, the requirement of highest importance whatever the findings of the committee may be. I am therefore inclined to think that the central theme of the statement should be that this Government cannot surrender its responsibilities for seeing that the people of this country are assisted, on the soundest possible bases, to develop self-governing institutions; and that this must be done with the co-operation of the people themselves. This statement would then proceed on the general lines indicated by you. I am, however, considering its form very carefully and shall forward a draft to you as early as possible. I would think it very desirable to consult Mr Justice Coussey on the question of the timing of the announcement.

I must make it clear that, while the improvement in political atmosphere to which I have referred above is real, its continuance is precarious. The inflationary processes of the recent past still exercise a very disturbing effect on the general economy; and it seems evident that the disproportion between the rewards of agriculture and employees' wages and also between market prices and wages is again such as to make industrial unrest very probable, if not inevitable. Such steps as have appeared possible to improve the distribution of local foodstuffs to the areas of most urgent demand have been taken. This, however, can be regarded only as a palliative, since the whole economic structure is so biased by inflationary elements as to be incapable of rapid renovation. Inevitable maladjustments and inequalities will produce friction and possibly the kind of atmosphere in which every kind of economic claim and counterclaim will be put forward. Such an atmosphere will be most congenial to Nkrumah's technique of race-hatred and unlimited exaggeration; and in it such political advance as has been made will be lost.

It is probable that nothing but a complete 'show-down' will contain Nkrumah and

that presupposes a sufficiently resolute body of African opinion against him. His doctrine of 'self-government in 1949', in analysis, is nothing more than the rationalisation of the emotional instincts of the irresponsible. Its mainspring is race-hatred and this is encased with the products of all the economic maladjustments deriving from the European lead in the fields of administration, commerce and industry. He has, until recently, affected little concern for the main body of working men engaged in industry and agriculture but has made a set at the partly educated, both employed and unemployed, whose future, under any system of government, indeed presents a grave problem. Recently, however, as you will be aware from reading my secret despatch of the 3rd June on the labour situation, he has made a determined set at organised labour, especially the civil service and Railway unions, and has made disturbing headway in securing the support of the leaders of these unions.

I fear that it would be impracticable to adopt your suggestion of finding employment for Nkrumah. He is obdurately and fanatically withdrawn from communication with Europeans, especially officials. Apart from this he does pretty well out of his agitation and has recently purchased, for example, an expensive Packard car. Much thought has been given to the possibility of fitting him into some niche where he would do less harm and tentative enquiries of one kind or another have in fact been made. They all indicate that he is unlikely to be attracted by anything that could be offered.

The 'show-down' to which I have already referred might occur if the Coussey Committee, with all the force of public opinion which is behind them, produced a form of constitution which could be recommended to His Majesty's Government for acceptance. If, on the other hand, and I believe that this is a distinct possibility, their recommendations entailed something so like self-government as in fact to be indistinguishable, the position would have to be faced that Nkrumah would have the support against the executive of the Legislative Council and the non-official members of the Executive Council. I do not think that any sort of statement which could be made would in these circumstances produce an atmosphere in which such proposals would be examined impartially and with good temper. It is not for me, of course, to prejudge the conclusions which may be reached by the Coussey Committee, but it might be advisable that the chairman be given some guidance at this stage as to the various alternative courses of action which might have to be taken in the event of different contingencies. I am further considering this with my advisers and shall forward my further views as early as possible.

I have been able to take advantage of Scott's returning health and secure his collaboration in arriving at the views I have expressed in this letter, and he has asked me to say that they have his full support.

Minute on 47

... Much of [Mangin's] letter is concerned with a very natural attempt to justify Government against facile criticism that it is losing the initiative, while at the same time stressing the very awkward position in which the Government has been placed by the Disturbances and the political aftermath. I do not think it serves any useful purpose to argue the point whether the Government has or has not displayed insufficient initiative during the past 18 months, though I think it is going a bit far to

claim an improvement in the political atmosphere. If there has been an improvement in certain respects, it is that, thanks to a process of political education many Africans of substance have come to appreciate more realistically the responsiblities of government, & to see clearly that the kind of mob rule and race hatred for which Nkrumah stands, is not compatible with the kind of self-government which they themselves envisage. Thus we have the open and, one hopes final split between the Convention and Nkrumah's new party, and the amusing spectacle of the Convention leaders being referred to by the Gold Coast Government as "responsible African opinion". It seems a reasonable deduction that these moderate Africans, who are frightened of Nkrumah, will be prepared to co-operate with the Government in devising a workable situation based on the Coussey Committee's findings. I think we may also probably hope that once Africans are in a position of real power, a great deal of the emotional nonsense talked about self-government will disappear, since African politicians will be too busy with their new responsibilities and with their feuds with Nkrumah and his followers. Thus, in the sense that Gold Coast politics are now becoming more realistic than 18 months ago, I think we can agree that there has been an improvement. Everything of course depends on the findings of the Coussey Committee, and in the way we and the Gold Coast Government handle the situation created by these findings. This is being considered in detail on another file, and here one need only note that the Acting Governor is considering whether some form of guidance can probably be given to the chairman.

It would seem that we must abandon any idea of finding employment for Nkrumah for the present at least.

E.G.G.H.
21.6.49

48 CO 537/4635 9–29 June 1949

[Coussey Committee]: minutes by E G G Hanrott, L H Gorsuch, A B Cohen, Sir T Lloyd and Mr Creech Jones on the anticipated recommendations of the Committee

[As the Coussey Committee was set up in Accra, the CO played no part in its appointment and hence generated very little documentation on its workings until this time. The appointment of the Committee was a logical corollary of accepting, with qualifications, the report of the Watson Commission. Beginning here in no 48, some of the CO minute sequences on the Committee are reproduced *in extenso* in this collection as they illustrate the major concerns officials were entertaining at this crucial moment of the Gold Coast's history. A number of interim communications between Whitehall and Accra are not reproduced as most of the matters they contain are canvassed fully in minute form.]

I have attached opposite a table setting out the recommendations which according to Mr. Mangin's Saving at (39) the Coussey Committee are likely to make, in such a way that they can be compared with the Watson Report in recommendations and H.M.G.'s comments thereon in Colonial 232. As Mr Mangin says, the recommendations are at present very much in outline, and they will not be filled out until the four sub-committees (on the history of the British connection; on Regional Councils and Local Government; on the Legislature and the Executive; and on the

Governor's Reserve Powers) report to the main Committee in mid-June. Nevertheless the findings are obviously taking shape, and we can, I think, begin to give serious consideration to the attitude we should adopt to recommendations such as are here forecast; for even if some sudden political squall, engineered by Nkrumah or the Convention, drives the Committee off its course between now and the middle of August, when Mr. Coussey hopes to complete his Report, we can assume that the findings cannot be *less* moderate than those sketched in this Savingram.

Indeed we can say at once that the recommendations are at present remarkably moderate, particularly, if one considers the circumstances of the Committee's appointment, and the pressure that has been put on the majority of its members both from within and without. It may be that most of the members still have little idea of the complexity of Government, as Mr. Mangin says, but they seem nevertheless to have accepted the Secretary of State's advice and to have gone about their task in a hard-thinking and responsibly-minded way. They seem moreover to have obeyed the spirit, if not the letter, of their terms of reference, and to have rejected ideas of violent upheaval in favour of planned constitutional progress. If the Committee's recommendations follow the lines here foreshadowed, we should have an adequate basis for orderly constitutional change.

It will be seen that the Committee's proposals for local government and the Regional structure are still extremely sketchy, and there is little we can say about this vital aspect at this stage; so far as they go the Committee's ideas seem to be in accordance with declared policy, and to be acceptable. Until the Local Government sub-committee has reported it is impossible to say whether the Committee has really grappled with such intricate questions as Native Authority finance and the functions of the Regions.

The main differences between what the Committee appears to envisage and our own ideas as set out in H.M.G's Statement concern the Central Legislature and Executive and may be summarized as:-

(a) A bi-cameral legislature;
(b) Representation mainly on a population and not a regional basis;
(c) Responsibility of the Executive Council to the Legislature.

Without more information one can only guess why the voting was so close on (a). Probably the chiefs, who form a large proportion of the Committee, resisted the move to restrict their influence by promoting them to an upper chamber. This may have its disadvantages in making for instability. On the other hand the existence of two chambers may make for equilibrium in the legislature. The place of the chiefs in political life is of course an issue of some importance, though essentially an issue for decision by local opinion. Pending the arrival of more information from the Gold Coast Government I should say that there is at least a good case for an upper chamber, – if Gold Coast opinion wants one – as in Jamaica and Ceylon.

(b) Representation has already caused trouble with the Ashantis and will cause more. The effect of the proposals in Memorandum A is to give the Colony and Togoland more than twice the number of representatives than those of Ashanti, although Ashanti and the Northern Territories together can just get a majority. This contrasts with the regional parity proposed by the Watson Report. From the point of view of electoral machinery, the proposals apparently mean a departure from the system of election of members of the Assembly by Regional Councils recommended

by Watson, and tacitly endorsed by H.M.G. We have always accepted the fact that ultimately major local government institutions such as Regional Councils should cease to be electoral colleges, but there are evident dangers in a divorce at present stage in the Gold Coast, particularly in the backward condition of the N.T.'s. Moreover there are awkward administrative problems in having electoral colleges separate from Regional Councils. In fact we do not yet know how the Committee will reconcile the two, and I suggest that it is therefore too early to consider this question seriously, though we can note its difficulty.

Finally there is the recommendation which we can certainly expect, of a Board of Ministers collectively responsible to the Assembly – i.e. an endorsement of para. 122 V (4) and a rejection of H.M.G.'s comment thereon (page 9 of the Statement). This is the main point of difference between the views expressed in the Statement and what is likely to be the Coussey Report – neither the two points dealt with above nor the other differences over the Executive (position of *Ex-officio* members; appointment of a Privy Council) are comparable in significance. H.M.G. rejected the Watson recommendation on this point (a) because collective responsibility of ministers to the Legislature instead of to the Governor was compatible only with the final stage of internal self-government – i.e. that reached in Ceylon in 1946 and in Malta in 1947, it is not reached in the present Jamaica constitution which is the nearest parallel to the Gold Coast to-day; (b) it presupposes the existence of organised parties and solidarity among ministers, neither of which obtains in the Gold Coast. The real issue is:- if cohesion is not supplied from below (by the legislature) it must be supplied from above (by the Governor) otherwise the initiative of Government will be paralysed either by constant changes in holders of office or by Africans' fear of one another. These arguments seem to me to be still conclusive in the Gold Coast if one visualizes "collective responsibility" as working in the sense of the United Kingdom or Canada; it would still seem to be wrong for H.M.G. to grant to the Gold Coast a degree of self-government greater than that accorded Jamaica where parties exist and where political life is far more mature.

On the other hand it is possible that the members of the Coussey Committee prefer Watson to H.M.G. on this because they liked the sound of the phrase rather than because they have thought out the full implications of the recommendation, and that in reality they would be very content with the actual position reached say in Jamaica or in Northern Rhodesia. In the former, Executive Council consists of 3 official members (Col. Sec, A.G. and Financial Sec); there are two Nominated Members from the Upper House; and there are 5 Elected Members from the House of Representatives – removable by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of that House. Voting in Executive Council is by a simple majority. In Northern Rhodesia the views [sic] of the four unofficial Members of Executive Council "carries the same weight as in the Legislative Council". In both Colonies Executive Council is collectively responsible for the initiation of policy and conversely it must be very difficult for the Governors to prevent a course of action being taken on which all the unofficial members feel strongly. In Jamaica the fact that an Elected Member can be removed by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of the lower house must in practice enforce a sense of collective responsibility to the Legislature. Yet, formally, the Executive Council is still advisory to the Governor.

It would seem therefore that the difference between the Committee and H.M.G. could be bridged if the problem can be made clear to African members and a suitable

formula can be devised to enable the African Ministers (or Members) who will be in the majority to be practically responsible to (and removable by) the Assembly; while retaining the formal position which is necessary to ensure cohesion and continuity. Much will depend on the political atmosphere at the time the Report is published, but it should not be beyond the wit of man to devise a formula (based perhaps on Jamaican practice) which will satisfy both parties and which will be in accordance with the present political development in the Gold Coast. . . .

While we should clear our minds on all these issues, and especially on the last, I doubt whether we can usefully comment at this stage for the same reason that the Gold Coast Government refrains from so doing. It seems very advisable that consultations should take place with the Governor when the recommendations of the Committee have been divulged in greater detail; so that we should give early guidance to the Gold Coast Government in framing their alternative proposals. In fact I suggest something to this effect might be said in reply to (39).

There is little to be said about the political strains discussed in the last 7 paragraphs of the Saving since these are bound up with the general political situation in the Gold Coast. At worst this latest move by Dr. Danquah may result in less moderate recommendations by the Committee, at best in a minority report.[1]

E.G.G.H.
9.6.49

Mr. Cohen

. . . Mr. Hanrott has put up some useful material in his minute above. There are three points of major importance in (39):-

(a) the structure and functions of the central legislature;
(b) the manner of representation or election;
(c) the question whether the Executive Council should be advisory to the Governor or collectively responsible to the legislature.

As regards (a) and (b), the position is still fluid, and to consider the whole range of possibilities before we know what the Coussey Committee finally decides to recommend would, I think, be a needlessly big task. Moreover, both the form and functions of the central legislature and the way in which it is to be chosen depend to some extent on the structure and powers of regional government on which the Committee may finally decide.

As regards (c), however, the position is different; it is clear that the Committee is coming down firmly on the side of an Executive Council which is a Board of Ministers with collective responsibility to the legislature. It is advisable, therefore, that we should begin at once to consider what H.M.G.'s attitude towards this recommendation should be.

The time factor as regards the other West African territories is of some

[1] The final paragraph of Hanrott's minute is a reference to the objections subsequently raised by Danquah and others which resulted in a rider rather than a minority report in the eventual report of the Coussey Committee. See *Gold Coast: Report to His Excellency the Governor by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949*. (Col 248, 1949), paras 443–464.

importance. The Coussey Committee is expected now to report by the end of August or soon afterwards; the deliberations now beginning in Nigeria are not likely to come to a head before the end of the year at the earliest, nor is it likely that the Sierra Leone Committee which is to be formed will have reported before the Coussey Committee's report is received. A very marked influence is therefore likely to be exercised on the course of constitutional deliberations in Nigeria and Sierra Leone by the Coussey report, and the action taken on it.

I think, therefore, that we owe it not only to the Gold Coast but also to the other Governments to give them as far as we can some indication in advance of what H.M.G.'s attitude is likely to be on the vital question of the status of the Executive Council. They will wish to have some guidance, before giving their own views, on the point whether what is said in H.M.G.'s statement on the Watson Commission Report regarding this subject is the last word at present or whether H.M.G. is prepared to go further. I have enclosed opposite the relevant extracts from the Watson Commission's report and the Statement.

I think therefore that it lies with us to send some communication not only to the Gold Coast but also to Nigeria and Sierra Leone, which will not only invite their views on the recommendation under (c) which the Coussey Committee will make, but will also give them some indiction of the considerations as we see them here, and some provisional idea of H.M.G.'s views. I will not minute at length as the matter will obviously require much discussion. Two things seem to me to be clear at the moment:-

(1) that the terms of H.M.G.'s Statement quoted opposite are not rigid and uncompromising, and would not prevent us from going, at any rate, part of the way towards a compromise;
(2) that whether or not it can be done without conferring collective responsibility, it is very advisable that executive responsibility should be fastened on to Africans as soon as possible. The present phase whereby African unofficial majorities enjoy the decisive voice without the responsibility of executive administration is likely to lead to difficulties as great, if not greater, than would occur if they had the executive responsibility of government.

L.H.G.
10.6.49

Sir K. Roberts-Wray
Sir T. Lloyd
Mr Hanrott's preliminary work on this file is most helpful in considering the extremely interesting saving telegram at No. 39. As Mr. Mangin has remarked in a personal letter[2] to the Secretary of State which has just come and which will be circulated separately, it appears that the Coussey Committee are in process of producing a scheme which, although it may not involve the actual grant of immediate self-government, would involve something practically indistinguishable

[2] See 47.

from this. I entirely agree with Mr. Gorsuch that we ought at this stage to send semi-officially to Mr. Scott, with copies to the other West African Governors, some general guidance on the probable attitude of H.M.G. on the question of the status of the Executive Council. I have had some discussion with Mr. Gorsuch on the lines which such a letter should take, but in view of the importance of the subject, I think that it would be better if we could discuss the matter before a letter is drafted and submitted for the Secretary of State's consideration.

On most of the other issues involved – the question of a bi-cameral legislature, the method of electing the legislature, the representation of the regions, the status and function of Regional Councils and the reform of local government – we are not yet sufficiently certain what the Committee's recommendations are likely to be to make it possible for us to send the Acting Governor any indication of H.M.G.'s probable views. In any case these matters, important although they are, are matters on which H.M.G. would no doubt wish to accept the considered local view unless there was some overriding reason to the contrary. When, however, it comes to the composition of the Executive Council and its responsibility to the Governor and the Legislative Council, an issue is involved which will determine the whole status of the Gold Coast in relation to this country. In fact a capital issue is at stake and I think that guidance at this stage is called for.

It seems highly probable that the recommendation of the Committee will be, in the terms of para. 122 (v) 4 of the Watson Report, that "the Executive Council should cease to become advisory and should become a board of Ministers with collective responsibility to the Assembly, and should initiate policy". The comments of H.M.G. will be found in the extract from H.M.G.'s statement registered at No. 42. That members of the Executive Council should be allowed to initiate policy is accepted; but we cannot, I think, accept the proposition that the Executive Council should be collectively responsible to the Assembly without conceding something which is virtually internal self-government. As Mr. Hanrott has pointed out, the Executive Council of Jamaica is still formally advisory to the Governor.

Other reasons why this proposal seems to be unacceptable are to be found at the end of Mr. Hanrott's note at No. 40, where he is describing the system in the Sudan. In drawing up the constitutional proposals for the Sudan it was recognised that the Executive Council could not act as a cabinet, since some of the members, being *ex-officio*, would not have been elected by the Assembly, while – perhaps even more important – since there are as yet no parties in the Gold Coast the Executive Council could never be certain of commanding a majority in the Council.

For these reasons my own view is that H.M.G. would have to stand firm on the advisory status of the Executive Council in relation to the Governor and that we should make it clear at this stage that the Secretary of State takes the view that this is not a point on which a concession would be possible.

Subject, however, to this, both Mr. Gorsuch and I are in favour of the maximum possible concession. As Mr. Gorsuch says at the end of his minute, we want to fasten executive responsibility on to Africans as soon as and as firmly as we can. They will have the right of initiating business. Mr. Gorsuch and I think that the Watson Committee's recommendations with regard to appointment and removal of members (para. 122 (v) 1) should be adopted rather than the alternative suggested in H.M.G.'s

statement. The alternative was favoured by Sir G. Creasy and Mr. Scott and we deferred to this view at the time. But both Mr Gorsuch and I were then in favour of accepting the Watson Committee's recommendation. Further, it may be possible, as Mr. Hanrott suggests, to find a formula to indicate that in fact the Governor would have, except in very unusual circumstances involving the use of the reserve powers, to act in accordance with the majority view of the elected members of the Executive Council. The administration of the Gold Coast will, after all, depend on agreement being maintained between the Executive and the Legislature.

In other words we should, I should hope, be able to go a long way towards satisfying African opinion that, although the Executive must remain advisory to the Governor at the present time, yet in fact the views of the African members will carry their due weight.

I think that we shall also have to mention in our letter the position of the *ex-officio* members. I am sure that we shall have to stand firm on at any rate the Chief Secretary, Financial Secretary and Legal Secretary, i.e. the main appointments, being *ex-officio* members in spite of what is said in para. 17(a) of the savingram at No. 39. And I do not think that we should be able to accept (b) in that paragraph about the removal of *ex-officio* members by a prayer addressed by the Assembly to the King.

There is the final question of the Privy Council. If there are to be two Houses, I should have thought that having a Privy Council as well would complicate the machinery too much. Nor can I see how a Privy Council could advise the Governor on the use of his reserve powers (para. 19 of the savingram). According to Mr. Hanrott's researches, there is no precedent for this and I should have thought that the exercise of the Governor's reserve powers was essentially a matter for him in consultation with his official advisers and with the Secretary of State.

? arrange a discussion.

A.B.C.
14.6.49

The discussion took place on 22nd June. Sir T. Lloyd, Sir K Roberts-Wray, Mr Cohen & Mr Gorsuch were present. I submit a dft letter to Mr Scott which summarises the conclusions reached.

E.G.G.H.
23.6.49

Sir Thomas Lloyd

Mr. Hanrott, Mr. Gorsuch and I have between us prepared a draft letter to Mr. Scott to give effect to what we agreed at our discussions last week. I am afraid that this letter is very long and I am largely responsible for its length. I feel sure that Mr. Scott and his advisers will find it helpful to get a very full expression of our views at this stage. While the letter was in process of being drafted Mr. Scott's letter of the 21st June[3] arrived. This deals wholely [sic] with procedure and makes the suggestion for

[3] See 49.

increasing the African representation on the Executive Council which Mr. Armitage had foreshadowed in discussion with Mr. Gorsuch and myself. We discussed the suggestion at our meeting last week and came to certain provisional conclusions. While adhering to these, I have dealt rather more fully with procedure than I think we then intended, in view of the receipt of Mr. Scott's letter.

I have not passed the draft through Sir K. Roberts-Wray in view of the urgency of getting the letter off quickly.

A.B.C.
27.6.49

S of S
This is an important letter, as stated in its last para. I would like your authority to send it.

T.I.K.L.
28.6.49

There is a main point which I have difficulty with. In para. 3 on page 1 in the last sentence you say that certain matters (i.e. regional and local government) are of a nature that "H.M.G. would no doubt wish *to accept* the considered local view".

I regard the whole structure of local and regional government as of major importance – quite as important as central government. It is the structure, function, finance, degree of local responsibility etc. in the field of local and regional government on which responsible self-government in the Gold Coast ultimately depends. And we ought not to say that we are prepared to accept anything which is put forward. We may get a form of federation which is administratively unworkable, yet very attractive in many other respects.

Fundamentally, the efficiency of central government depends on local government, and I regret that the Coussey Committee is giving central government so much attention as a priority. The set up of central government tends to right itself when the foundations in local government are right. I should have thought that Coussey should be reminded how much depends on getting the form of local government right if the construction at the centre of government is to be practicable and satisfy all the parts. For the development of self-government the emphasis should be much less on central and much more on local structure etc.

Last paragraph on page 3, line 5 – "for which they were responsible" ? – "to which they have been attached" is more accurate?

A.C.J.
29.6.49

Mr. Watson[4]
In view of the Secretary of State's minute I have cut out the last sentence of paragraph 3 on page 1 of the draft. I do not think that we ought to add anything

[4] N D Watson, Creech Jones's private secretary.

about calling Judge Coussey's attention to the importance of local government. There is no evidence at all that the Committee are failing to attach due importance to this. Indeed they are known to be attaching particular attention to it. But we do not yet know what they are going to recommend. So I think it will be sufficient if the sentence referred to is deleted.

As regards the Secretary of State's last paragraph I have altered the wording to meet the point. It is of course inherent in H.M.G.'s statement on the Watson Committee report that Members of Executive Council will be "responsible" for departments.

Could you have a further word with the Secretary of State on the first point and make sure that he is satisfied with the amendment now made. ...[5]

A.B.C.
29.6.49

[5] Creech Jones minuted 'I agree. A.C.J.' at the end of Cohen's minute. The letter, dated 29 June 1949 and sent to R Scott over Sir T Lloyd's signature, is not printed in this collection.

49 CO 537/4635, no 46 — 21 June 1949

[Coussey Committee]: letter from R Scott to A B Cohen on the procedure for considering the Committee's report

In Lord Listowel's secret despatch of the 19th of April, 1949,[1] about political affairs here, it was suggested that it would be advantageous if we were to have a draft scheme of constitutional advance ready, for prompt production if the Coussey Committee's recommendations should not be suitable. This proposition has now, I think, been studied from all angles; and I fear that it would not do at all to proceed on the lines suggested. With this conclusion, my principal advisers fully agree.

There are several reasons against that course. On the practical side, it is going to be extremely difficult to get any precise and comprehensive picture of the shape of the Committee's proposals until a very late hour. The final reconciliation both of the various aspects of constitutional advance which they have studied and of the diverse opinions on the Committee, may produce something quite unlike anything forecast yet. It is not that the Committee is unduly secretive: it is rather that they do not yet see the wood for the trees. Further, many of the members have, I am convinced, but the haziest idea of the implications of some of the formulas they have produced and there will probably be a lot of wobbling when they have a clearer notion of what is toward. Where the wobble will land them, I cannot prophesy.

Such difficulties are, however, of secondary importance. My main reason for rejecting the procedure suggested is that I believe that it would precipitate a black-white cleavage. I do not imply any dramatic breach. It is simply that I feel quite certain that African opinion of all shades would instinctively reject a plan, whatever its general resemblance to the Coussey recommendations, which was obviously the product of European civil servants. The most favourable reaction to be expected

[1] See 44.

would be that both plans should be sent to the Secretary of State without modification and that he should adjudicate. The most widely prevalent feeling would be, I think, that the Coussey Committee had been a sham from the start and that the Government had set it up in full consciousness that its own scheme would be accepted and the Committee's rejected. Whatever the outcome, it must be prejudicial to the relations between Government and people here.

This does not mean to say that we should not have a clear idea as to what we are aiming at before the time comes for decisions here in regard to the report of the Committee.

It seems to me to be essential, however, that for the examination of the Coussey proposals, there should be associated with the professional advisers of Government a more representative group of Africans than at present. It is important that Government should give the appearance of readiness and determination to deal with this report vigorously and at the same time with a constructive approach to constitutional advancement. It is even more important that we should attempt to carry with us in the work of modification which will, I am sure, be necessary as influential as possible a group of Africans. The attempt might not succeed but it is worth making and at least there could be no legitimate reproach that "Government" used backstairs methods of whittling down the Coussey proposals. Quite certainly, we should be no worse off: if there is going to be united opposition to any modification of the Coussey proposals we should know its full measure before we tackle it.

I have accordingly been considering the following approach. It appears to me to be clear now (especially following the new constitutional developments in Sierra Leone) that we shall have to concede an African majority on the Executive Council. It is certain to be recommended by the Coussey Committee and will doubtless be accompanied by various Watsonian embroideries. I consider that the principle of an African majority might be conceded in advance of examination of the Coussey report. I should further like to see this enlargement made "on the recommendation of the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council" which, I think, sounds more realistic than "after consultation with, etc ...". In order that a sufficiently representative selection of advisers might be obtainable from Legislative Council it would be necessary to enlarge the unofficial membership. This link between the two bodies seems to me *prima facie* to be very desirable (but I am considering the point further), while not conceding the principle of the responsibility of Executive Council members to the Legislative Council or modifying their existing position vis-à-vis the Governor. I am sure that the Executive Council as at present constituted is not a sufficiently representative body to examine the Coussey report and make recommendations which could be endorsed by the Governor for transmission to the Secretary of State. (The body of African opinion represented is very narrow and, while the Africans have minority status they would probably become even narrower in approach to the Coussey recommendations).

At present, I am putting forward these plans, provisionally. My principal advisers are in general agreement with my line of approach, as was Mangin with whom I discussed it before his departure. I would like, however, to take soundings of African opinion very early. I propose to do this through Coussey, who personally agrees with such of my reasons for taking this line as I have discussed confidentially with him. If any objection to my doing so is seen, would you be good enough to let me know by immediate telegram.

50 CO 96/812/1, no 1 1 July 1949

[Decentralisation]: letter from R Scott to A B Cohen on proposals for administrative and financial devolution. *Enclosure*: minute by Scott on 'Decentralisation' for circulation to heads of department, July 1949

[This initiative seems to have stemmed from a number of considerations. First, it reacted to the straightforward criticisms of the administration in the Watson Commission Report, not least those which suggested that government was out of touch with the governed. It also pushed forward the reformulation of the powers of local authorities. Finally, in the situation of political uncertainty leading up to the submission of the Coussey Committee Report, it attempted to instil a sense of firm but sensitive government. In some senses it was perhaps the beginning of an alternative structure to that eventually proposed by the Coussey Committee and it might be thought of as a policy which could be developed if for some reason the Coussey proposals ran into difficulties either in London or in Accra. Cohen replied to Scott on 9 July 1949: 'I hope that you will allow me to say how admirable I think the line which you are taking is. I am particularly interested in the measures for administrative decentralisation and also in your plans for development schemes in the districts and the provision of money to D.Cs. to carry out such schemes. The conferences which you propose at Headquarters and in the field will I am sure do a great deal of good. As far as I am able to judge at this end I feel sure that all that is being done will not only greatly encourage the Service, but will also greatly help to stimulate the initiative of the people. ... I can only add more power to your arm ...' (CO 96/812/2, no 2).]

You will remember that Mangin in his secret and personal letter of the 9th June to Mr. Creech Jones,[1] mentioned that we were working out proposals for the devolution of the administrative and financial responsibilities of the Central Government as a positive step towards unclogging the Government machine and stimulating the interest and initiative not only of officers in the field but also of the people for whom they are working.

Outline proposals have already been discussed with Chief Commissioners and my other principal advisers, and I am now in process of having the Heads of all Departments up to discuss with me how best they may put this policy into effect, and, generally, so that I can apply direct such stimulus as may be required.

In the meanwhile the financial implications are being worked out. Certain advances along the right lines have been made in the instructions, of which I am sending a copy, that Armitage has issued regarding the preparation of the draft estimates for 1950/51.

You will find our preliminary ideas, which were worked out by Mangin and Saloway, set out in three papers of which I am sending you copies:- a note on devolution for discussion with Chief Commissioners and others, a note of the discussion with Chief Commissioners and others held at Government House on the 27th May, and a circular to be issued to Heads of Departments after the discussion being held at Government House, which should end on the 6th July.[2]

Recently Saloway wrote to you (his letter No.A.D.104 of the 25th May refers) regarding another step we were taking to stimulate public interest in Government

[1] See 47.

[2] Only the circular to heads of department is printed here.

activities and help to break down the suspicion and distrust that is too easily aroused among people who are not sufficiently aware of the progress that is already being made by Government.

These various proposals, when carried into effect, should constitute an important advance towards more rapid development and towards bringing about a better atmosphere in the Gold Coast. It is to be hoped that they will help to turn the attention and energies of the people towards community development of their own and help them to outgrow the purely negative attitude of criticising everything done for them by Government.

You will remember that Mangin, in his Secret despatch of the 12th May,[3] outlined some of the quasi-disciplinary measures we were taking to restore the public confidence in Government's ability and determination to preserve law and order. I hope that the constructive measures that I have described above will go some way towards gaining the co-operation of the people themselves, within a framework of law and order, in the kind of positive action of which Lord Listowel wrote in his Secret despatch No.11 of the 19th April.[4]

Enclosure to 50

It is recognised, I think, by all of us that it is particularly important at the present time that Government should not only govern but should be seen to be governing and to be "delivering the goods" to the people in the shape of tangible benefits derived from our rule. This can best be achieved first by providing greater scope for initiative by Government officers at all levels and especially by those working in the field and in immediate contact with the peoples whose benefit is the ultimate aim of all Government activities, and, second, by stimulating by consultation the interest and support of the people who will be most immediately affected by the local developments being considered. The aim should be the participation by Government officers within the framework of general policies in schemes developed by local impetus, rather than the participation of local communities in schemes originated by Government officers; although it is realised that, in varying degrees, initiative must in the first place be stimulated by example. In no case, however, must the potential contribution of local communities be overlooked. It is essential for this purpose that every possible step should be taken to speed up the machinery of Government and to devise new machinery where the old form is found to be incapable of sufficient acceleration to meet the needs of the people for progress and development. It is vital to this process of acceleration and to the attainment of rapid and positive achievement that there should be the maximum practicable degree of decentralization in all branches of the Government Service and that all branches of the Government Service should, at the same time, work in the closest harmony with each other.

2. I have been concerned by the degree of centralization that obtains in some Departments and I must insist that this undue concentration of function at the centre should now be broken down. I am aware that plans for the posting of assistant

[3] See 45. [4] See 44.

Heads of Departments to the headquarters of Chief Commissioners have been held up in some cases for lack of residential and office accommodation. Every effort must be made to resolve such difficulties without delay. Priority must be given to new building where this is necessary, and, in the meantime, the possibility must be examined of making temporary use of shared accommodation and accommodation of subnormal standard. Unless such expedients are adopted the realisation of the policy of decentralization will be impeded at its first stage for an indefinite period and this I am determined to avoid.

3. Where assistant Heads of Departments have been or are in the future posted to the headquarters of Chief Commissioners they must be made fully responsible for all relevant departmental activities in the areas concerned and for the implementation, in consultation with Chief Commissioners, of Government policy in those areas in so far as it affects their Departments. In the case of Departments to which this regional organization cannot apply the same principle will nevertheless be applied, though to a modified degree, to the senior departmental representatives in each area. The chain of devolution must not end, however, with the assistant Head of Department or senior departmental officer. These must in turn devolve upon their subordinates the maximum burden of responsibility which those officers can reasonably be called upon to bear. Moreover the responsibilities so placed upon an officer must be accepted and the "safety first" mentality, which induces the reference to higher authority of matters properly within the discretion of a subordinate, must be actively discouraged; on the contrary, it is hoped that a far reaching policy of devolution of authority, especially financial authority, will stimulate the interest and initiative of officers working in the field and enable them through local consultation to carry with them the strong support of the people in their areas. In this connection I invite your attention to the following passage in Sir Alan Burns' confidential minute of the 17th August, 1942, which was circulated to all officers of this Government, and which I heartily endorse:-

Initiative

> "It is very desirable that senior officers should encourage initiative among their subordinates, and still more desirable that they should exercise it themselves. I have little use for the man who avoids mistakes by evading responsibility. Officers must, of course, be guided by the instructions they receive and the rules that have been laid down, but they must use their own common sense in the application of these rules and instructions to special circumstances, and not allow their initiative to be strangled by red tape; the principal merit of red tape is that it can easily be cut."

4. The views expressed in this Minute regarding devolution of responsibility, inter-departmental co-operation and co-operation between Administrative Service and the local representatives of departments were amplified in a further Minute by the Governor, dated the 21st March, 1945, to which I invite your renewed attention and that of your officers. Stress is there laid on the relations which must obtain at all levels between the officers of the various branches of the Government Service if that service is to operate effectively. The essence of an efficient public service must be team work at all levels. The results for which we must strive with all our energies can only be obtained if there is the utmost degree of co-operation between all

Government officers and a strong sense of common purpose in all undertakings. To this end I have directed that the Colonial Secretary shall in future hold periodical and informal meetings with the Heads of Departments stationed in Accra to explain to and discuss with them major trends in Government policy and its carrying out and to receive from them comments on and suggestions for Government action. Similarly I have instructed Chief Commissioners to hold conferences from time to time, to be attended by District Commissioners and local departmental officers, for the exchange of information and ideas with a view to the initiation and stimulation of Governmental action in all directions. Whenever possible the Colonial Secretary and, on occasion, other Secretariat officers will attend these conferences to represent the views of the centre and to receive the representations of the circumference. The main object of these conferences will be to stimulate co-operation and initiative throughout the Service and to give every officer the opportunity to contribute to the formulation of Government policy.

5. I referred in paragraph 1 above to the paramount importance of "delivering the goods" to the people both tangibly and rapidly. This obviously cannot be done by mere talk round a conference table, valuable though such consultation may be. I propose therefore that the system of Rural Development Committees, of the type inaugurated at Tarkwa and Ho, should be extended to all Districts and that they should be provided with funds to enable them to introduce without delay minor schemes of local development which do not fall within the framework of normal departmental expansion or the broader pattern of the Ten-Year Development Plan. The details of this financial devolution are being worked out and will be submitted to Finance Committee as soon as possible. As you will be aware from the circular issued from this office on the 1st June setting out the procedure for the preparation of the 1950/51 Estimates, provision has already been made for Chief Commissioners, in consultation with the various Departments, to co-ordinate the Estimates covering all Government activities within their administrations.

6. In the meantime much can be done if officers are encouraged at all levels to practice the devolution of authority to regions and districts and to begin the process of consultation and planning which will, when funds are made available, provide the people with at least some of the benefits they desire and help to restore the confidence in Government which others are doing their best to destroy.

7. I have already had an opportunity of discussing with you the general lines of the proposals set out in the foregoing paragraphs. I wish copies of this instruction to be distributed to all your officers, and I wish to receive, within one month, your detailed proposals for the devolution of responsibility within your Department. Where necessary favourable consideration will be given to the amendment of General and Financial Orders.

8. A similar circular is being sent to Chief Commissioners and District Commissioners.

51 CO 537/4635, no 53 18 July 1949

[Coussey Committee]: letter from R Scott to Sir T Lloyd on the Committee's recommendations in relation to the Executive Council and the procedure for considering the Committee's report

I have now had the opportunity during the past week of Legislative Council meetings, of discussing with my principal advisers the matters contained in your secret letter of the 29th June about the Coussey Committee. During the same period, I have also had the chance of hearing, in private conversation, the views of a number of prominent Africans. Before I give you my conclusions, I must refer briefly to the proceedings of the Committee itself.

When I wrote to Cohen on the 21st June,[1] I expressed the view that, as the full implications of some of the recommendations which were then under consideration became apparent to members, there would be considerable wobbling. That forecast was unduly conservative: the Committee has been thrown almost into convulsions. I cannot foresee what is going to emerge, but the Ashanti members are again taking an independent line and there seems to be much divergence of opinion on the part of the members. The Committee resumes its discussions to-day and it seems unlikely that its report will be available before the middle of August. There is a distinct probability, on present indications, of minority reports; and one member for whose judgment I have considerable respect has intimated, without being more specific, that Government will probably not be able to accept even the main report *in toto*.

As you suggest, the determining point in the Committee's recommendations will be in relation to the Executive Council and its status vis-à-vis the Governor. None of us here has had any doubt as to the need for adhering to the government statement in regard to this question. We are in general agreement with the suggestions which you make in paragraphs 9 to 11, as to means by which a refusal to go to the lengths visualized by the Watson Commission might be made more palatable. The only comments which I have are on paragraph 11. In considering alternative methods of appointment of members of the Executive Council, we agreed that the rather more formal method of proposal by the Governor to the legislature and appointment by resolution of that body was desirable. Experience in the formation of committees has shown, however, that the Legislative Council can in practice "force" a member on the Governor by stone-walling possible alternatives. I feel it to be important, therefore, that the Governor should have some protection against such tactics. There may be members of the future legislature in whom the Governor could repose no confidence; and whose appointment to the Executive Council would be contrary to the best interests of the country – even unthinkable. The backstairs bargaining which will go on among legislators when appointments to Executive Council are in question might result in the preferment of some such person, not because a majority of the legislature seriously backed his candidature but as a *quid pro quo* for support in some other direction. The Governor's short list might be agreed by competent representatives before formally going before Council; and it would only be in Council that objection would be made to one of the Governor's nominees. Objection might

[1] See 49.

then continue to be offered to nominee after nominee until only the undesirable character was left. (I am here basing myself on tactics which I have experienced). My suggestion is that the Governor should have discretion, after making every effort to meet the reasonable desires of the legislature, to leave a vacancy on the Executive Council unfilled, during a session of the legislature if necessary. I do not for a moment think that it would be necessary to leave it unfilled, but feel that the Governor should have a sanction to apply against an attempt to force his hand. I shall be grateful to learn whether this situation has arisen elsewhere; and whether provision to meet it exists.

As regards the removal of members of the Executive Council, I agree that this should be by a substantial majority but defer any proposal as to the proportion until the shape of the legislature is known. I am inclined to think that a motion for the removal of a member should be made *ad hoc* and that an adverse vote on a matter arising out of the conduct of the departments with which he is concerned should not in itself be regarded as a motion for his removal.

On the question of the composition of the Executive Council, our preliminary view is that it should have a minimum of nine members and a maximum of eleven, although we realise that it is impracticable to be categoric. In the purely practical aspect, at least, eight quasi-ministers would be required to look after appropriate groups of existing departments and there would be the need for one member without portfolio to look after the kind of matters which, bureaucratically, would fall to a commissioner on special duty.

Assuming that it will not be possible for chiefs to be ministers (but the validity of this assumption will have to be confirmed) we feel that it would be necessary to make provision, as visualized in the Government statement, for nominated members. No final conclusion on this point can be given until we know more about the Coussey Committee's recommendations in regard to the legislature and to the position of Chief Commissioners vis-à-vis territorial councils, if recommended. We are disposed to think, however, that as a basis of discussion we might contemplate an Executive Council consisting of:

Either 4 official, and 5 "elected" members;
or 4 official, 5 "elected", and 2 nominated members.

It does not appear to us to matter, once the principle of a non-official majority is conceded whether it is a majority of one or three.

On the question of procedure when the report is submitted, I had taken it for granted, in framing the proposals outlined in my letter of the 21st June, that the official advisers to the Governor would have formulated their views on the action to be taken, and that these would have been approved or otherwise by the Secretary of State before the Executive Council as enlarged examined the report. I readily agree that the alternative procedure suggested by you is preferable. One of my reasons for proposing consideration of the report by an enlarged Executive Council was to withhold it from public debate until the Secretary of State's views could be made known, while at the same time demonstrating to the general public that proper consideration was being given to the recommendations. This would be better achieved, from all points of view, if the Secretary of State were at an early stage to lay down a framework within which detailed discussions might take place, if necessary, in London. It will be particularly valuable, in relation to the need for stimulating

moderate support for development by evolution, that uncertainty and doubt as to how far the Secretary of State thinks the Government can go should be dissipated with a minimum of delay. I trust, therefore, that your proposal may be taken to imply that, when the Secretary of State's views have been formulated, they may be published, as the basis for discussion of the report, together with that document itself. I am here assuming, of course, that the report will not be so bizarre as to make its publication, as it stands, undesirable; and that, if it did initially have that characteristic, it might be possible to secure its modification in discussion with the Chairman. Unless the report, and the Secretary of State's views on it, were published before further discussion, it would be quite impracticable to select a representative group of Africans for such discussion.

It is going to be sufficiently difficult to form such a group in any case and to keep the numbers as low as you suggest in paragraph 18 of your letter. Frankly, there are no widely representative Africans and the distrust of one public figure by the next has to be encountered to be believed. The recent political dog-fight has greatly increased difficulties in this respect in that it has for the time being deprived all the radical leaders of what may be described as 'national status'. The dirty linen which has been exposed to view has been far from pretty, ranging from a plan for the ritual murder of Mr. Rees Williams to financial chicanery of all kinds and, by and large, the reputations of radical leaders have undergone a great change. We have been doing all that we can to stiffen the respectable elements and discredit extremism and support has been noticeably forthcoming. It may be possible, although I would not wish as yet to say anything definite on the point, to get the Legislative Council to nominate a sufficiently broadly based delegation for the purpose of discussion of the Coussey report. I am still convinced that neither the present Executive Council nor the Legislative Council are sufficiently broadly representative to find such a delegation from their own members. To take but one example, there is nobody on either who would be recognized as representative of organized labour. I shall discuss this question further and take additional soundings, and let you have my conclusions as early as possible.

I am sending copies of this letter to Foot, Ramage and Ward.[2]

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[2] R O Ramage, colonial secretary, Sierra Leone. E R Ward, colonial secretary, Gambia.

52 CO 537/4635 25 July–4 Aug 1949

[Coussey Committee]: minutes by E G G Hanrott, A B Cohen and Sir K Roberts-Wray on the method of selecting members of the Executive Council and the procedure for considering the report

... Two of the matters discussed in Mr. Scott's letter[1] present little difficulty and can be disposed of first. We can readily agree that a motion for the removal of a Member of Executive Council should be made ad hoc; and, secondly, we can presumably accept Mr. Scott's ideas of the numerical composition of the Executive Council.

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[1] See 51.

The two points which do present considerable difficulty are:-

(a) Mr. Scott's request in connection with the procedure for the appointment of Executive Council Members in his third paragraph; and,
(b) the question of procedure in considering the Report dealt with at the end of the letter.

I must say that there seem to me to be considerable objections to the proposal at (a). My understanding of paragraph 11 of our letter is that we were trying to solve a procedural problem – i.e. to reconcile the fact of election of Members with the constitutional principle of their appointment by the Governor as the King's representative. We did not, so far as I know, intend to tamper with the principle that these Members should be truly elected. What Mr. Scott is now apparently proposing is to use this procedural solution to keep out of the Executive Council those Members of the legislature whose appt. may be "unthinkable". To accept the proposal that the legislature cannot in fact elect one of its Members to the Executive Council seems to me to be abandoning the whole principle of election, and to be substituting a somewhat dishonest form of nomination by the Governor.

Moreover Mr. Scott's interpretation of the "short-listing" procedure we had suggested seems to indicate that this procedure is likely to gain a constitutional significance, and to leave doubt in the public mind as to whether we are prepared to concede the principle of election or not; which might have the most unfortunate effect on the chances of acceptance of the whole scheme.

While having considerable sympathy for Mr. Scott in the kind of political difficulty with which he is faced, I am very doubtful whether the particular suggestion he makes should be accepted, and for the reasons which I have just mentioned, I also doubt whether we should proceed with the "short-listing" procedure at all. I have discussed the matter again with the West Indian Department, and it appears that in both Jamaica and Trinidad the Elected Members are genuinely elected by the legislature without any form of intervention by the Governor. Unlike the Nominated Members they are not formally appointed by the Governor, although in Trinidad it is proposed that their appointments should be gazetted, and that they should be required to take the Official Oath and the Oath of Secrecy. It is true that the problem is made simpler in Jamaica through the existence of parties, although parties do not as yet exist in Trinidad.

Since it appears from the experience of Jamaica and Trinidad that there is no constitutional inconsistency between having Elected Members on the Executive Council and the retention of the advisory status of Executive Council, I suggest that the proposal in paragraph 11 of our letter should be abandoned in favour of a straightforward system of election. The only alternative would seem to be nomination by the Governor from a short list put forward by the legislature, leaving the Governor power to reject the whole short list if he wishes. This for various reasons seems an impracticable solution.

(b) *Procedure*. It is very difficult to visualise clearly what the right procedure in dealing with the Coussey Report should be in the present state of uncertainty over the findings of the Report and the number of Reports likely to be presented. So far as I know we did not intend when we wrote our letter that the Secretary of State should make an official pronouncement at the time of publication of the Coussey Report,

saying what was and what was not acceptable. The advantages of the procedure which Mr. Scott proposes seem to be:-

(i) that in a matter of such moment, and in the present political atmosphere, the important thing in the eyes of the Gold Coast will be how much of the Coussey Report the Secretary of State is prepared to accept, and therefore his views should be made public with the least possible delay;
(ii) that without some such clarification it will be impossible to get together a representative group of Africans for detailed discussions in London or elsewhere.

The *disadvantages* seem to be:-

(i) it would put the onus of decision on the Secretary of State and would mean that he would be publishing his comments on the Report without any public comment by the Gold Coast Government or any formal recommendation by the Governor. The normal procedure in constitution making has recently been for the Governor to make constitutional proposals and the Secretary of State formally to approve them – e.g. the cases of Sierra Leone and Nigerian constitutions. On the other hand, the procedure adopted recently in Trinidad was for the findings of the Constitutional Reform Committee to be debated in the Legislative Council, and for the Secretary of State then in the light of these findings to announce his decision;
(ii) a more serious danger seems to me that if as is possible the Secretary of State feels bound to reject a great deal of the Coussey Report, it may prove impossible to induce a representative body of Africans to take part in any detailed negotiations. It may moreover be difficult to separate in the statement questions of fundamental principle on which the Secretary of State is not prepared to yield, from questions of detail on which discussions would be possible.

This is a matter for discussion, but my personal feeling is that we must accept Mr. Scott's view of the necessity for some public pronouncement by the Secretary of State, whatever the risks. If this is agreed to the procedural sequence would run something like this:-

(1) Publication of the Report.
(2) Confidential memorandum by the Governor on the findings of the Report, after consulting his advisers.
(3) Secretary of State sends a public message inviting a delegation to London to negotiate, and making clear the terms of reference of the negotiations.
(4) The Secretary of State's message is considered by some such body as a Select Committee of Legislative Council, reinforced by Extraordinary Members to make it representative. This body elects a small delegation to negotiate in London.
(5) Discussions in London.
(6) Formal despatch by the Secretary of State to the Governor summarising his decisions.

E.G.G.H.
25.7.49

Sir K. Roberts-Wray
Mr. Gorsuch and I have discussed this and shall be discussing it again with Sir Charles Arden Clarke this afternoon and later in the week. Meanwhile I should be very grateful for your advice. ...

Mr. Scott accepts our proposal about the appointment of unofficial members of the Executive Council but wants it to be laid down that if the Governor cannot reach agreement with the Legislative Council it should be open to him to leave portfolios vacant. This may be purely a matter of constitutional drafting. What in your view would happen if the legislature would not accept the Governor's nominations, even after several attempts? I should be grateful for your views generally on this point.

A.B.C.
2.8.49

Mr. Cohen
There are two questions here:–

(1) how far is the Governor to go in endeavouring to secure appointment of members by the Legislature in the regular manner, i.e. what, for the purpose of constitutional drafting, is meant by his expression, on page 2 of his letter, "after making every effort to meet the reasonable desires of the Legislature";
(2) what is to happen if the Governor's efforts fail?

The answer to these questions is not easy, particularly as they depend upon unknown factors. For the sake of argument, let us assume that the Legislative Council contains Nominated Members and 30 other Unofficial Members, of whom 15 are "impossible", and that the Executive Council is to contain *ex-officio* Members, 4 Nominated Members and 5 Unofficial to be appointed by the Legislative Council. I assume also that (as is contemplated for Trinidad) the Legislative Council is merely to appoint members of the Executive Council and that portfolios will be allotted to individuals by the Governor in Executive Council or the Governor himself.

On these assumptions, if the Governor sends a list of 5 names to the Legislative Council and they are all rejected, he can repeat the process twice before exhausting the possibles. But suppose some of his names are accepted; how long is he to go on sending alternatives? If, for example, only one out of his first list is rejected, it would be an undignified process for him to go through the remaining 10 one by one; one the other hand, if his obligation to provide alternative names is substantially limited, the criticism would no doubt be made that the intention is to pack Executive Council. Would it not be a better course to require the Governor to send to the Legislative Council, say, a number of names not less than double the number of vacancies, and then empower him to proceed in some other manner if a sufficient number of candidates are not chosen by the Legislative Council from this list?

As regards the second question, there would be no difficulty in drafting a clause to provide that in that event the vacancy or vacancies in the Executive Council should remain unfilled, and that the Executive Council should be properly constituted although it contained only *ex-officio* and Nominated Members and any Elected Members there might be. (There is a precedent of a sort in an Order in Council which has been drafted for the Seychelles for use if required). It does not follow that

portfolios would be left vacant, and indeed someone would have to do the Ministers' work. Presumably therefore, it would have to be arranged in effect that portfolios should be held by other members, perhaps *ex-officio* or nominated. An alternative would of course be to enable the vacancies to be filled either temporarily or permanently by some other method. The Governor could be empowered himself to appoint members of the Legislative Council to the Executive Council, and in practice this would presumably mean his appointing Nominated Members of the Legislative Council. I suppose even they might be unwilling to accept office, and it would therefore be advisable to permit him to go outside the Legislative Council if he considered that course expedient.

K.O.R.W.
4.8.49

53 CO 537/4635, no 54 9 Aug 1949

[Coussey Committee]: note by E G G Hanrott of a CO meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke on the procedure for considering the report and the method of selecting members of the Executive Council[1]

1. *Procedure in considering the Coussey Report*

There was considerable discussion of Mr. Scott's suggestion that when the Coussey Report is published it should be accompanied by a Statement by the Secretary of State making clear which of its recommendations are or are not acceptable. There appear to be three alternative courses of action over this:-

(a) To publish the Coussey Report at the same time as a despatch or other formal message from the Secretary of State re-stating the terms of reference of the Coussey Committee, indicating which recommendations of the Report lay outside those terms of reference and which points in the Report presented special difficulty, and proposing the calling of a conference in London. The disadvantage of this procedure is that it would almost certainly involve consultation between the Colonial Office and Gold Coast Government officials in London before the despatch could be published, and that this and other delays would mean that the publication of the Coussey Report would be held up for at least three or four weeks. Since the report wd almost certainly leak, this wd mean that distorted versions wd be published & end in controversy.

(b) To publish the Coussey Report immediately it is received and to publish the despatch referred to in (a) as soon as it could be prepared – i.e. several weeks after the Report. The disadvantage here would be that this would leave the field free for the extremist critics of the Report to attack it, which would make it even more difficult for Gold Coast public opinion to accept His Majesty's Government's findings, which were likely to be less advanced than the Coussey Report's recommendations.

(c) To publish the Report immediately and to accompany it with a brief Statement by the Secretary of State merely to the effect that the Report was being

[1] Present: Sir C Arden-Clarke, Sir T Lloyd, A B Cohen, L H Gorsuch and E G G Hanrott.

studied in London by the Secretary of State and his advisers, and that it was proposed to call a conference to discuss it in London in due course. This could be followed later by a second Statement giving the proposed Agenda for the conference, if the circumstances made this desirable. The disadvantage of this in the Gold Coast Government's view might be that a failure to make clear before the conference how far the Secretary of State was prepared to go might make it difficult or impossible to get together a representative delegation.

It was agreed that the decision on the form and content of the Secretary of State's despatch or statement must depend on the contents of the Coussey Report and the number of minority reports, but that having regard (i) to the disadvantages to courses (a) and (b) above, and (ii) to the fact that the Report was unlikely to be presented before the first week in September, and that the Secretary of State would probably be absent from the Colonial Office from the 8th September until the end of that month, course (c) above was considered to be preferable so far as could be judged at the moment. It was generally agreed that the Report must be published and that the Secretary of State should commit himself as little as possible in his Statement so as to leave the ground as clear as possible for the conference in London.

2. *Line to be taken by Gold Coast government and His Majesty's government on the method of selecting members of Executive Council from the Legislative Council*
Difficulties had arisen from the proposal contained in Sir Thomas Lloyd's letter to Mr. Scott of the 29th June regarding the method of appointment of Members of Executive Council – i.e. nomination by the Governor, subject to the approval of the Legislative Council by resolution – in that Mr. Scott foresaw the likelihood of the Legislative Council refusing to accept any of the Governor's short list and insisting on the election of someone who might be politically "impossible". Mr. Scott had asked whether in these circumstances the Governor might have the power to leave one of the portfolios vacant. Consideration of this proposal here had led to doubts as to whether it might be difficult for the Secretary of State to justify a departure from the principle of free election, such as was contemplated in the procedure we had originally proposed, and that such justification might be particularly difficult in view of the system of free election practised in Northern Rhodesia, Jamaica and Trinidad.
Discussion of the problem revealed that there appeared to be four alternatives:-

(a) The original idea of Government nomination subject to resolution of Legislative Council. Apart from the fact that this would be vulnerable to the criticism of principle already mentioned, it would also be open in practice to the danger of "stone-walling" by Legislative Council Members (referred to above), as Mr. Scott had pointed out. Should such a situation arise this would mean either:
(i) leaving the portfolio in question vacant, or
(ii) (as the work of government had to be carried on) the Governor appointing to the vacancy a Nominated Member from one of the two Houses or elsewhere.
There were obvious objections to both these courses.
(b) Some numerical variation of the procedure in (a) – e.g. "a short list" of 10 Members for 5 places (suggested by Sir Kenneth Roberts-Wray as a possibility). This would be open to the same objections as course (a).
(c) Straight election of Members, but leaving the Governor the power of veto. The disadvantage of this would be that the veto would become increasingly difficult to

use; all African ministerial posts might be filled by extremists to the exclusion of experienced and responsibly minded men; and the barrier to the granting of responsible government would, as a result, be a very slender one.
(d) A straight election of Members of the Executive Council, subject to the Governor's veto but tempered by some system of electoral grouping by regions in the Legislative Council to safeguard the interests of the regions and to prevent the dominance in the Executive Council of politicians representative neither of a majority in the Legislative Council nor of the country as a whole. There might be practical difficulties in working this out, and ensuring that this procedure was not liable to the same objections as course (c). On the other hand if the Coussey Committee split on regional lines it might be politically practicable to work out some compromise on these lines. There were already signs that Ashanti and Togoland would welcome some kind of regional representation on Executive Council.

It was agreed that this matter was of fundamental importance and required further consideration both in the Colonial Office and by the Gold Coast Government. Sir Charles Arden-Clarke undertook to let us have his further views from the Gold Coast before publication of the Coussey Report, and it was agreed that the views of the Secretary of State should be obtained at an early stage.

54 CO 537/4635 13 – 24 Aug 1949

[Coussey Committee]: minutes by A B Cohen, Sir T Lloyd, N D Watson and L H Gorsuch on the procedure for considering the report and the method of selecting members of the Executive Council

Sir T. Lloyd
Mr. Gorsuch and I have discussed.

2. There are two points which we agreed the other day ought to be put now to the Secretary of State:-

(1) The procedure for dealing with the Coussey Committee's report.
(2) The position with regard to the appointment of unofficial members of the Executive Council.

3. Dealing first with (1), the alternative possibilities are set out in Mr. Hanrott's note opposite.[1] The procedure which we agreed on the 9th August to recommend to the Secretary of State is as follows. The report is now expected to be submitted to the Gold Coast Government about the end of August. The Governor will let us have a copy of it as soon as it is available. Very soon after that he will send us semi-officially a memorandum giving his comments on the report. He would consult his official advisers before preparing this and would possibly also have some informal discussion with individual unofficials; but he would not consult his Executive Council formally. It would not be possible to let the Governor have our final views on his memorandum

[1] See 53.

until the Secretary of State's return from holiday towards the end of September, but there might be a number of points which could be cleared up meanwhile. As soon as possible after the Secretary of State is back in the office a memorandum should be sent to the Governor semi-officially giving the Secretary of State's views on his proposals. Thereafter there should be a conference in London on the proposals which would be attended by official and unofficial representatives from the Gold Coast. If necessary the Secretary of State should send out an agenda for this indicating which points in the Coussey Committee's report he wanted to discuss, but we should not be committed to this in advance. It was agreed at our discussion that it would probably not be possible to withhold publication of the report in the Gold Coast for any length of time. It was therefore suggested that the report should be published by the Gold Coast Government as soon as possible after its submission but not until both we and the Gold Coast Government had been able to see the report; and that a brief statement should be issued by the Governor at the same time indicating that the Secretary of State intended to call a conference in London, probably early in November, to discuss the recommendations.

4. It is for this proposal in particular that we wish to obtain the Secretary of State's concurrence now, since it would be necessary to publish this statement probably during the first half of September.

5. As regards the method of appointing unofficial members of the Executive Council, the alternatives are set out in Mr. Hanrott's minute. We do not of course, want any final conclusion from the Secretary of State at this stage. But it would be useful to send the Governor any views which the Secretary of State may wish to express now. My own view on the matter is that the best arrangement would be alternative (a) in Mr. Hanrott's minute, namely the proposal in Sir T. Lloyd's letter of the 29th June (No. 48) that the appointments should be by resolution of the Legislative Council on names put forward by the Governor. What we want to aim at is appointments by agreement between the Governor and the unofficial members, but giving the Governor the initiative to suggest the names. I do not think that we should adopt Mr. Scott's proposal that the Governor should in the last resort be allowed to leave portfolios vacant. This would almost certainly be unacceptable to local opinion and departs from the principle of appointment by agreement between the two sides.

6. If, as is quite likely, we cannot get agreement to this arrangement, then I think that alternative (d) is the best one, i.e. election by the Legislative Council subject to the Governor's right of veto and with safeguards such as the obligation to appoint given numbers of members for each territorial region. I do not think that alternative (c), straight election with Governor's veto, is acceptable. This would place too much power in the hands of the Legislative Council and the veto would be difficult to exercise. Further, I am not in favour of alternative (b), selection of members from a longer list put in by the Governor, since this gets away from the conception of appointment of members by informal consultation between the Governor and the unofficials.

7. When the Secretary of State has seen these papers a letter should be sent to the Governor recording his views.

A.B.C.
13.8.49

Secretary of State

I received from Mr. Scott yesterday an advance copy of the final draft of the Report of the Coussey Committee. It is quite probable therefore that the Committee will keep to its latest time-table under which the Report is to be signed before the end of this month. It is important therefore that we should make our minds up fairly soon on the question of procedure discussed in paragraph 3 of Mr. Cohen's minute of the 13th of August. The procedure there outlined was agreed in the discussion which the new Governor had with Mr. Cohen and myself, and I support the proposals. In particular, I think it important (if only to put an end to local speculation and possibly leakage) that the Report should be published as quickly as possible after it has been presented. A typed copy should be sent here as soon as one is available so that we may be studying the document while local printing is in hand. A small supply of printed copies should be sent home by air mail for release here simultaneously with local publication. Unless preliminary study of the Report leads either the Governor or us to any contrary conclusion, there should be issued simultaneously with publication of the Report, or at least very soon thereafter, a statement that it is intended to call a Conference over here to discuss the recommendations.

In paragraphs 5 and 6 of his minute Mr. Cohen discusses alternative methods of appointing unofficial members to the Executive Council. I agree that our purpose here should be to arrive at a method based on appointment by agreement between the Governor and unofficials; also that in no circumstances should we accept Mr. Scott's proposal that in the last resort portfolios should be left vacant. That does mean that we will have to evolve some formula which provides for the contingency when the Governor and the unofficial members cannot agree. My own preference between the several methods discussed in the note at No.54 is for the one under which the unofficial members of Executive Council would be elected by the Legislative Council (subject only to the Governor's veto which will of course have to be most sparingly used) but that this should be based on some definite provision in the new constitution ensuring that all the important areas (Ashanti, the Northern Territories and possibly even Togoland) had some representation in Ex. Council.

On this latter point the Governor will be having further discussions now in the Gold Coast and will let us have his views before the Coussey Report is published, but we undertook to let him know what your own mind was on this point.

T.I.K.L.
16.8.49

Mr. Gorsuch

The Secretary of State has studied the papers, and his conclusions are as follows:-

(a) *Procedure*

The Secretary of State notes that the new Governor concurs in the proposals put forward and he agrees that a copy of the report should be forwarded to the Colonial Office as soon as it is submitted to the Governor, without waiting for the Governor to

study it, so that we can be making our own study of the report and be ready to deal with the Governor's own considered memorandum on the report when it arrives.
A The Secretary of State also agrees that publication of the report cannot be delayed; but thinks that the Governor and the Office should be in a position to have formulated views on the report by the time of publication.

He also agrees that, on publication of the report, an announcement should be made at the same time of the proposed conference in London, if it is agreed that that is the best way of dealing with the report. The Secretary of State is however not altogether clear about this proposal which appears to him to be rather a novel way, and possibly an expensive way, of considering the report. He would like to
B know, for example, whom it would be proposed to invite to the conference, and how the Gold Coast delegation would be constituted. He would like this point to be considered further and submitted to him again.

(b) Election of members of Executive Council

The Secretary of State appreciates that he is not called upon to express a final view at this stage. He agrees generally with the advice given by Mr. Cohen and Sir Thomas Lloyd, and his own feeling would be to try in the first instance for the arrangement whereby the appointments would be by resolution of the Legislative Council on names put forward by the Governor. If, however, this appears unlikely to be acceptable he thinks we should fall back on the alternative supported by Sir Thomas Lloyd, i.e. that the unofficial members should be elected by the Legislative Council, subject to the Governor's veto.

N.D.W.
23.8.49

Sir T. Lloyd

I had a brief talk with Mr. Cohen about this yesterday evening and enclose the draft letter to the Governor for consideration. ...

A. I think that the interval which must elapse between receipt of the Report and publication will provide for this, and I have mentioned it in the draft.

B. You may wish to explain to the Secretary of State the reasons why it is felt that a Conference in London is the best, and probably the inevitable, way of dealing with the Report. It will hardly be possible for the Governor to answer the two questions put by the Secretary of State until he has had the opportunity of studying the Report as finally presented to him. I have put a sentence in paragraph 4 of the draft opposite dealing with these points.

L.H.G.
24.8.49

S of S

You may wish to have a word on this tomorrow.

As regards A[2] opposite. ... You may be on holiday in the time just prior to

[2] ie, the sidelined passage in Watson's minute of 23 Aug.

publication, there may be points on which no one here could properly counsel you and it would be impolitic, in my view, to hold up publication. Every day of delay increases the risk of leakage.[3]

A regards B in Mr Watson's minute, we made the suggestion for a London conference as the alternative to sending out advice officers and legal advisers from here to Accra. A conference will almost certainly be essential and it is, I feel, preferable that they should come to us.[4]

T.I.K.L.
24.8.49

[3] Creech Jones minuted: 'I accept this'.

[4] Creech Jones minuted: 'We will wait on Governor's reply to the composition of the delegation to consider the report in London. As to place, it would be well to know that this is still the view of the Governor.'

55 CO 537/4635, no 62 30 Aug 1949

[Coussey Report]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir C Arden-Clarke giving his personal views on the final draft of the report[1]

I have been studying very carefully the final draft of the Coussey Committee's report which Scott sent to Lloyd in his letter of the 9th August, and it has occurred to me that it might possibly be of some assistance to you if I let you have, on a purely personal basis, some comments on various of the more important points in it. I must emphasise that these comments are purely my own; I have not been able to consult Lloyd, Gorsuch and Roberts-Wray, all of whom are away at the moment. They are not intended as Colonial Office views. I realise also that some amendments may have been made in the report since the final draft was prepared.

My comments, for what they are worth, are as follows:-

1. *The Executive Council*

The vital question of the relation of the Executive Council to the Governor and the Legislative Council has already been discussed exhaustively in the correspondence between Lloyd and Scott, and also at the meeting which we had in Lloyd's room before you went out.[2] The final draft of the report, as was expected, lays great stress, e.g. in paragraph 12, on the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature, and says that "any proposal whereby the Executive would be responsible to the Governor is considered to be unacceptable". On the other hand Lloyd stated in his letter of the 30th June (paragraph 5) that it seemed certain that His Majesty's Government would have to stand firm on the statement in the White Paper of last August that "during the formative period of the building-up of the new system, the Executive

[1] This is the only copy of this important document. The third and fourth pages of the typescript original have suffered extensive damage to the right and left hand sides of the text. The editor's reconstructions of missing portions are entered in square brackets.

[2] See 53.

Council should remain advisory to the Governor." Scott, in his reply of the 18th July said: "None of us here has had any doubt as to the need for adhering to the Government statement in regard to this question".[3]

Obviously this is going to be the most difficult question of all to resolve satisfactorily, and Lloyd, in his letter of the 29th June, made a number of suggestions as to the means by which a refusal by His Majesty's Government to recede from the position described above might be made more palatable to local opinion. I notice that the Coussey Committee has anticipated some of these suggestions, thereby to some extent depriving them of their affect, as concessions by H.M.G. The kernel to the solution of this particular problem may I feel very well lie in the point made in paragraph 8 of Lloyd's letter, where it is pointed out that our task is to devise a system of dual responsibility under which the Executive Council is responsible at once to the Governor and the Legislature. I have been wondering, therefore, whether the line which we have got to take ought to be to insist on the responsibility of the Executive Council to the Governor, while, at the same time, emphasising that there is in fact no escape from the Council's responsibility to the Legislature. The Coussey Committee seems to suggest that the two responsibilities are alternative; will it help if we are able to bring home to them that they are not alternative but complementary to each other? I have been wondering also whether we should be right to rely too much on the term "advisory", which is naturally likely to be unpalatable to public opinion in the Gold Coast. By concentrating on the term "responsible" we should not detract from the [position] but make it more acceptable.

Perhaps the Sudan Constitution of 1948 may be helpful in this respect. Section 9 states that the Executive Council "shall be responsible to the Governor-General for the executive and administrative functions of Government". Section 20 states "that the Members of the Council shall be collectively responsible for the policy, decisions and acts of the Council". This goes some way, although definitely only *some* way, towards the position taken in paragraph 122 (v) (1) of the Watson Commission's report, and may be helpful. The Sudan Executive Council, of course, contains *ex-officio* Members as well as Ministers, and the categorical statement in Section 9 of the Ordinance makes it quite clear that collective *Government* responsibility of the kind referred to in paragraph 5 of Lloyd's letter is not involved. I understand that in framing the present Sudan Constitution it was always recognised that a cabinet system on the U.K. model could not at this stage be established. You may already have a copy of the Sudan Ordinance, but in case not I am enclosing a copy herewith.[4] I think that it is useful as a comparison in a number of respects; it is, after all, the only African model that we have for the kind of system now envisaged for the Gold Coast.

2. *Method of appointing ministers or members*

Throughout the correspondence leading up to Lloyd's letter of the 26th August the Coussey Committee's suggestion of an elected Leader of the House has not been taken into account. This seems to me a most interesting suggestion which is clearly based on the Sudan Ordinance. In the Sudan there is a Civil Secretary, Financial

[3] See 51.

[4] Not printed.

Secretary and Legal Secretary as well as a Leader of the House, who is Minister of Agriculture, and two other Ministers; Ministers of Education and Health. It is no doubt too early yet to be able to say how the Sudan system is working, but Loveridge may be able to tell you something more about this. I will consult Robertson,[5] the Civil Secretary, who is at present on leave, but shall not unfortunately be able to see him until the end of September for he is in Scotland at the moment. But it does seem worth at any rate having a look at the possibility of adopting this system. One of the advantages of it would be that the difficulty which we discussed in Lloyd's room about the appointment of Ministers or Members (other than the Leader) would be largely overcome and we should arrive at the consultation procedure between the Governor and the Leader which I think is what we generally thought desirable.[6] On the other hand I was, on reading the final draft report, rather bothered by the suggestion that the Leader should be elected by the House without the Governor himself having any say. I had rather hoped to find that this was not based on the Sudan system, but Section 13 (ii) (a) of the Sudan Ordinance shows that it is based on that system. I do not know what you feel about this particular point, which is clearly a most important one.

3. *Election of members of the house and regional councils*

It is obviously satisfactory that the report comes down against direct franchise except in the case of the existing municipalities which have it already. But the system of indirect election proposed in the report is, as the Committee themselves recognise in paragraph 14, open to danger. As I understand it, both in the case of the Regional Councils and of the House of Assembly there would be direct election by "universal adult suffrage, by a method appropriate to each constituency, of delegates to an electoral college of the constituency" (paragraph 352). "Every qualified person over the age of 25 should have the vote" (paragraph 353). Delegates to the electoral college would only require a six months' residential qualification (presumably in the district although the relevant paragraph 366, does not specifically say so). The electoral college would elect by ballot a candidate for membership of the House of Assembly or the Regional Council as the case may be. It is not stated that the candidate in this case need be a Member of the electoral college itself.

I may be wrong, but it seems that the second process in particular would give rise to the danger of outside persons, whether members of political parties or not, coming forward as candidates before the electoral colleges and getting themselves elected by demagogic methods rather than because they really represented the interests of the area. By such methods an extremist political party might capture the majority in the House of Assembly or one of the Regional Councils. This danger could be avoided by insisting that candidates for election by the electoral colleges should be members of those colleges, and the position would be further safeguarded if it could be laid down that candidates for election to the electoral colleges should have a longer residential qualification than six months.

Another point is that it is not at all clear what "election by universal adult suffrage, by a method appropriate to each constituency", in paragraph 352 means. It seems

[5] J Robertson, civil secretary, Sudan, from 1945.

[6] See 53.

clear from the rest of that paragraph that the constituencies for the primary election would be small, and if the admirable proposal for local government elections in paragraph 126, under which ballot, acclamation or some other suitable device appropriate to the stage of development of the area could be used, then the position would be still further safeguarded. But I am not clear whether that is what the Committee have in mind. Here again, the Sudan system set out in Schedule II to their Ordinance may be helpful as a parallel, although it is not clear from Section 2(IV) of this Schedule whether candidates for the election to the Assembly from the electoral colleges would be confined to members of [the electoral] colleges. I will try to find out what the practice is in [the Sudan] on this point.

The whole subject of election, both to the Regional [Councils and] to the House of Assembly, is likely to be one on which the [Secretary of] State will want to be very clear as to the effect of the [Committee's] recommendations. You will remember that the Watson Commission [Report] proposed election to the House of Assembly by the Regional [Councils] themselves rather than by special electoral colleges.

4. *Position of the chief commissioners*

The proposals in the final draft report as regards the position of the Chief Commissioners are certainly ingenious, but [I am] not clear whether they safeguard their position sufficiently. [As I] understand these proposals the Chief Commissioner would on the [one] hand exercise Reserve Powers for the Region concerned parallel [to] those to be exercised by the Governor for the whole territory [and,] on the other hand, be the Head of the Regional Executive, [which is] in a sense subordinate to the Regional Council. Perhaps [this] point is not in fact intended by the Committee. The Chief Commissioner (or Regional Administrator) is, as I understand [the] proposals, to be Chairman of the Standing Executive Committee [of the] Regional Council with a casting vote on this Committee, but [as the] Committee is to have five elected members I am not clear [exactly how] effective such a casting vote would be. Another possible [difficulty] may arise from the fact that there are to be no *ex-officio* Members of the Regional Councils, although obviously officials, either those on the staff of the Chief Commissioners or Regional Heads of technical Departments, might well find it necessary in the course of their work to put their views before the Regional Councils themselves. Finally, no specific proposal is made to link up the chairmen of the Committees of the Councils, other than the Executive Committee, with membership of the latter Committee itself.

It seems to me that one possible solution might be to treat the Executive Committees of the Regional Councils as parallel bodies for the Regions to the Executive Council for the territory as a whole. In other words they might consist of the Chief Commissioner as Chairman with, say, three *ex-officio* members and five elected members drawn from the Regional Councils themselves. These five, or whatever is the correct number, would be the chairmen of the various other Committees of the Regional Council. The three *ex-officio* members of the Executive Committee would also be members of the Regional Council itself. Business would be carried on by agreement between the Executive and the elected side of the Regional Council, just as between the Executive Council and the Legislative Council at the centre and the Chief Commissioner would have parallel Reserve Powers somewhat on the lines suggested in the third part of paragraph 328 of the report.

I do not know what you think of paragraph 331 of the report, which suggests the

possibility of political appointments to the post of Chief Commissioner. I do not know how seriously this is meant by the Committee. I imagine that it is a point which may give rise to difficulty.

5. *Reserve powers and amendments to Royal Instructions and Letters Patent*
I notice that in paragraph 412 the report suggests that questions relating to the appointment of public officers should be excluded from matters over which the Governor may exercise his Power [of certification]. We shall be very interested to hear what you have [to say] on this suggestion. Questions relating to public officers are [included] within the scope of the Reserve Powers of the Governor of [Jamaica] (paragraph 47 (1) of the 1944 Order in Council), and the [Reserve] Power is included in the draft Constitution for Trinidad. I must [say that] I doubt whether the Committee's proposal is acceptable.

[As] regards the proposed amendments to the Letters Patent, our [preliminary] view is in accordance with that expressed by Scott in his [despatch] of the 30th July to Lloyd, namely that the proposals are not [acceptable]. The proposals with regard to the Royal Instructions [are] less objectionable although I do not know what Roberts-Wray [will] think about this. We are still looking into the point about [this], which is rather a difficult one.

6. *Local government*
I do not intend to lengthen this already long letter by [saying] anything about that, but in any case this all depends so much [on local] knowledge that it would be difficult for me to comment at [this stage]. But I notice that reference to District Commissioners is [conspicuous] by its absence. Something will presumably have to be [said at] some stage about the part which District Commissioners will [play] in relation to (a) the Regional Administrations and Councils [and] (b) the Local Authorities. We had this point in mind in [discussing] the second sub-paragraph dealing with the Governor on page 9 [of the] August 1948 White Paper, but obviously nothing more than a [partial] statement could be made there. I am sure that this is a [matter] which you will have very much in mind.

I have refrained from making any comment on the relative merits of a bi-cameral or single chamber system. Naturally we shall be very interested to hear in due course what your views are on this point.

May I repeat again that what I have said above represents nothing more than my own first reactions on reading through the report. Please treat them for what they are worth; I do not know whether they will be useful or not. My comments are not, of course, intended to be comprehensive; in particular they say nothing about the difficult questions raised about *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council, some of which, as has been noted in Lloyd's letter of the 29th June, appear to be unacceptable.

P.S. I see that in Lloyd's letter of the 26th August there is no reference to Scott's suggestion in his letter of the 18th July[7] that in the last resort the Governor should have discretion, after making every effort to meet the reasonable desires of the Legislature, to leave a vacancy on the Executive Council unfilled. We discussed this matter with you at the meeting in Lloyd's room and you will remember what was then said. The subsequent minutes on the file show that the view taken here is against this suggestion. The reasons for this are, in the first place that, so far as we

[7] See 51.

know there is no precedent for such an arrangement; in the second place we think it would be very difficult to get such a proposal accepted locally; in the third place, an arrangement of this kind would involve departing to some extent from the principle which we want to see established of appointment by consultation between the Governor and the Legislature.

56 CO 96/800/1, no 3 30 Aug 1949

[Coussey Report]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd on the working party appointed by the governor to consider the report

As promised in my telegram No.570 I am sending you by this mail under cover of a Third Person Note one copy of the Report of the Committee on Constitutional Reform.

On my arrival here I appointed a Working Party to examine the draft of this Report, copies of which had been obtained. This draft was not in its final form and did not contain the Minority reports which now appear in the final Report. The Working Party consisted of Scott (Colonial Secretary), Branigan (Attorney-General), the three Chief Commissioners, Saloway (Secretary for Rural Development), Loveridge (Judicial Adviser) and Hadow (Secretary for the Civil Service). I did not feel that consideration of the draft report should be allowed to interfere with my tours in the Colony and after the first preliminary discussion, I was not present at their deliberations nor were the Chief Commissioners who were invited to send comments in writing. The Working Party was instructed to draw up a preliminary draft demi-official letter to you and to embody our comments on the Report in the form not of a Memorandum but of a draft despatch from the Secretary of State. (The reason for this will be made clear in the demi-official letter). These drafts are now in front of me and I am working on them with my Advisers.

Unfortunately both Scott and Branigan are on the sick list and I do not know how long they will be out of action. I hope, however, to be able to despatch our comments not later than Tuesday, the 6th September. I know that the Secretary of State is planning to go on holiday on the 8th and this will give him no time to give his personal attention to our views. I do not feel, however, that I can deal more expeditiously than this with the Report and I am naturally reluctant to proceed without further consultation with Scott and Branigan.

The next meeting of Executive Council has been arranged for Monday, the 12th September, by which date the further copies of the Report promised by the Committee should be in my hands. I propose to distribute copies of the Report to all Members of Executive Council for preliminary study but I do not think the Council will be in a position or will wish to deal with the Report at this meeting. It might, however, be as well if you sent me a telegram acknowledging the receipt of one copy of the Report and saying that the Secretary of State would wish to make certain observations on the Report in order to facilitate its consideration by the Gold Coast Government and that these observations will be sent as soon as possible. I could inform the Executive Council of the contents of this telegram if there was any tendency on the part of the Appointed members to press for immediate detailed consideration at the meeting on the 12th September.

Two other factors affecting the timing of our actions in connection with this Report are that the next meeting of the Legislative Council opens on Tuesday, the 11th October, and that Coussey, in conversation with me, expressed the hope that it would be possible to publish the Report not later than a month after its receipt.

On receipt of our views you may wish to summon some of us for personal consultation in London before deciding on the form of your reply. In that event you should know that those whom I have consulted think it would be better that I should not leave the Colony at this juncture or be associated too closely in the public mind with the formulation of any views the Secretary of State may see fit to express. In my view, unless some major difference of opinion develops, it would be better that I should remain here. I am told too that it might be unwise for Scott in his present state of health to undertake any long journeys by air, but I shall know more about this in a few days' time.

57 CO 96/800/1 5 Sept 1949

[Coussey Report]: minutes by A B Cohen and Mr Creech Jones expressing reservations about the procedure proposed by Sir C Arden-Clarke[1]

I am afraid that my attempt to get the procedure settled before the Secretary of State goes away has not succeeded. The letter referred to in the attached telegram dated 3rd September will probably arrive in the office on Wednesday morning and there may just be an opportunity for the Secretary of State to glance at it. But meanwhile the telegram proposes a procedure which is *quite* impracticable, whether or not it is desirable.

The Secretary of State will return from his holiday about the 30th September, and what is now evidently proposed by the Governor is that a statement of his views in the form of a despatch (which the Gold Coast Government are drafting and sending us to-day) should be published during the first week in October. However much preparatory work we have done with the Governor during the next three weeks, clearly this time table for publishing the Secretary of State's views is not a possible one, as I indicated in para. 5 (i) of telegram No. 836 to the Gold Coast (No. 4). The Secretary of State will have first of all to reach his own conclusions on the various points at issue; and, since one of these at any rate (the relationship of the Executive Council to the Legislature and the Governor) is absolutely fundamental, he will no doubt wish to have time to consider the point. The whole problem raised by the report is probably as important, if not more important, than any constitutional issue which has so far arisen in any of our African Colonial Territories and the decisions taken will affect the course of events not only in the Gold Coast but in other territories for a long time to come. The Secretary of State will, I believe, find it desirable to consult some of his colleagues before decisions as to H.M.G.'s views are taken and it will also be necessary at some stage to bring Sir J. Macpherson and

[1] Cohen's minute was written in response to a tel from Accra outlining a procedure subsequently explained at greater length in Arden-Clarke's letter of 5 Sept (see 58).

Sir G. Beresford-Stooke into consultation. They can no doubt be consulted in a preliminary way during the next three weeks but I believe that it will not be possible to leave them out entirely in the final stages. Finally it will be necessary, if a despatch giving the Secretary of State's views is to be published (as is now proposed by the Gold Coast Government), to agree the terms of this (after the substance has been agreed) with the Governor and to get the document printed. My estimate in para. 5 (i) of No. 4 was based on nothing more than the communication of the Secretary of State's own views to the Governor. If publication of a despatch containing those views is involved, I should say that the 20th October will be the earliest possible date for this and it might clearly take longer still.

If, therefore, we adopt the Governor's general procedure, we shall either have to postpone publication of the report until after the next meeting of the Legislative Council on the 11th October, which would clearly be undesirable, or to publish the report without the Secretary of State's views, publishing these when they are ready, i.e. towards the end of October. This course would seem to me very undesirable also, since the result would no doubt be something as follows. The report would be published and criticised vocally in the press by the more extreme elements as not going far enough, in the case of the majority report. Just when the campaign against the report had reached a fairly vigorous stage the Secretary of State's despatch would be published going still less far. I cannot believe that this is a suitable kind of procedure.

All this difficulty would be avoided if we were to stick to the plan discussed with Sir C. Arden-Clarke when he was here, namely to publish the report when it has been printed – present indications are that this will be towards the end of September; the printing is being done by the Stationery Office – and to accompany it with a statement that the Secretary of State will call a conference to consider the report in November. Then we should have plenty of time during October to reach final agreement on the views to be taken by H.M.G. with everybody concerned.

There is, however, another reason, political rather than practical, why I am gravely doubtful about the procedure of publishing the Secretary of State's views *before* any discussions with the leaders of Gold Coast opinion. If we are to publish the Secretary of State's views in advance of any such discussions, I do not see how a head-on collision about the position of the Executive Council in relation to the Legislature and the Governor can be avoided. I should expect this to be followed by real embarrassment and possibly trouble in the Gold Coast. If, however, we can have some kind of discussion with leading Africans before the Secretary of State's views are finally formulated and published, then I should have thought that there was a very good chance of reaching an agreed, or at any rate acceptable solution. I still feel strongly that we ought to do our best to persuade the Governor to agree to some procedure on these lines. I am not absolutely wedded to discussion in London as opposed to Accra, although I believe that that would be the best course. If there is discussion in the Gold Coast in advance of the Secretary of State's views being published, it is bound to be hampered by the absence of any published statement of those views. That difficulty would not, however, arise in respect of discussions in London.

I am sure that we must await the Governor's semi-official letter before joining issue with him on the question of merit whether the Secretary of State's views should be published before any discussions or not. I suggest, therefore, that, subject to any

comments which he may have on the above, the Secretary of State should inform the Governor that he will ask Lord Listowel to communicate with him further on receipt of his semi-official letter. I think, however, that the Secretary of State ought to let the Governor know before he goes on holiday that the timetable which he proposes will not be practicable for the reasons which I have given above. I suggest that we should wait to see whether the Governor's letter comes in time for the Secretary of State to see it and, subject to that, I can draft a short telegram to be sent on this point.

May I again repeat my uneasiness at what I understand the Gold Coast Government to be proposing?

A.B.C.
5.9.49

Yes. I agree with Mr Cohen throughout. I am not wedded to the idea of a Conference in London because I am not clear as to how representative & authoritative it can be made. I see that the Governor now abandons the idea. As to line of procedure, I think Mr Cohen should tell the Governor of the grounds for his uneasiness & explain the difficulties of his proposed course.

A.C.J.
5.9.49

58 CO 96/800/1, no 8 — 5 Sept 1949

[Coussey Report]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd on procedure and recommendations. *Enclosures*: 1 and 2

As a result of the discussion which I had before I left London, and further discussions which I have held with my principal advisers, after arrival here, I have drawn up the following provisional programme in regard to the Coussey Committee's Report. While I have used the word 'provisional', I sincerely hope that it may be practical to adhere to this programme. At my Swearing-in ceremonies, I reiterated on my own behalf Scott's earlier promises that the examination of the Report would be carried out expeditiously, and that such proposals as emerged from its consideration here and by His Majesty's Government would be given effect without delay. I have accordingly been concerned to find out what kind of time-limit should be set to satisfy these undertakings.

2. Three copies of the Report were received by this Government on the 29th August, one of which was sent on to you by air mail the next day without comment (my letter of 30th August[1] and yours of 26th August, which crossed each other, refer). At the next meeting of the Executive Council on the 12th September I wish to settle the question of publication and other preliminaries to further action on the Report but do not propose to discuss its recommendations. As stated in my telegram No.589 sent to-day, I propose that the Report should be published on 17th October and I asked you in my telegram No.580 to arrange for its printing in England.

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[1] See 56.

3. There is, however, one extremely important point in connection with the publication of the Report on which I trust the Secretary of State will be prepared to meet my views. As you are aware, when procedure was discussed with me in London I was given to understand that a statement of the Secretary of State's views on the Report would not be forthcoming for publication simultaneously with it. I have now re-examined this question in consultation with my advisers, and in the light of the contents of the Report, and I am convinced that a mere statement that it is his intention to call a Conference in London to discuss the recommendations, as suggested in your letter of the 26th August, would not be adequate to meet the situation here.

4. My advisers have unanimously and strongly urged the need for definition of the limits within which dicussion of the Report will take place, as soon as it becomes public property. If that is not done, they feel, the disaffected will have an interval within which to base all manner of extreme claims on sections of the Report and the well-disposed, not knowing where they stand, will tend to drift towards the extreme. Further, the Report will give even reasonable Africans here the impression (and in this will reflect the opinion of most of the Committee members) that constitution making is achieved by a stroke of the legislative pen. There is, I am advised, very little comprehension of the enormous amount of work which would be required to bring into being even the foundations required for a constitutional structure such as is visualised by the Committee. Thirdly, there will be a strong disposition, particularly among the influential sections of society to concentrate exclusively on those sections of the Report concerning the central government organisation. In the interests of a reasonable settlement of the constitutional question, my advisers are firmly of the opinion that, in so far as is possible, all such misconceptions should be disposed of before they have begun to influence the public's views on the Report. I agree that this is necessary, and I am reinforced in this view by the fact that the Report itself is supplemented by a Minority Report, whose views on the central government organisation are more extreme than those of the majority. I have cause to believe that a reason for the formulation of this Minority Report (but by no means the only one, as will appear later) is to provide a lever for bargaining purposes.

5. Although my time here has been too short and my contacts with the people too limited for me to gain more than superficial impressions, it does appear to me – and my advisers confirm – that there is a very considerable body of reasonable opinion, which would be prepared to support the evolution of a constitution based on the views expressed by His Majesty's Government on the Watson Commission's Report and appreciates the dangers of too rapid an advance, but I have also been struck by the marked reluctance of individuals to come into the open in support of their opinions and their timidity in the face of press attacks or almost any form of openly expressed opposition. It will be an important part of our task to win the declared support of this element and it will greatly facilitate our task if they are given a clear and definite lead at the outset and a programme of constitutional advance, presented in an acceptable manner, which they can openly support without loss of face.

6. I accordingly advise that the Secretary of State's views on the Report be made available for discussion with it, when it is published on the 17th October. If this is agreed, I would propose to publish at the same time a message from the Governor to the people of the Gold Coast commending the Report and the Secretary of State's

despatch to their attention and study, summarising and stressing the important advances towards full responsible government now to be made, the work still to be done, and inviting their co-operation and goodwill.

7. There are two connected factors which, I think, must be borne in mind: firstly, that there is no need at this stage to express our views on the Report otherwise than broadly, for it is my intention to put the onus of implementing the approved recommendations upon the existing constitutional bodies and many details will inevitably be proved to be inapplicable: secondly, there is little point in accepting recommendations subject to reservations on matters of detail; to do so would give an impression of an ungenerous approach which would not only be undesirable and unwarranted but also, if those details are unlikely to survive the process attaching to the practical carrying out of reforms, unnecessary. I consider the immediate need, therefore, is for the Report to be examined and commented upon in a broad and generous spirit although no doubts should be permitted to remain on points of principle where its recommendations are not acceptable.

8. To facilitate the adoption of the procedure suggested, I have taken the somewhat unusual course of embodying my views in the form of a draft despatch (enclosed) from the Secretary of State to the Governor, as this seems to be the readiest means of indicating the line that might be taken on the various points, if the Secretary of State agrees with the views expressed, in order to avoid offending local susceptibilities or to encourage local support. It does not purport to be a properly balanced or proportioned document. In this connection I also enclose a copy of a note written to Scott by Dickinson, one of the Secretaries to the Committee, setting out some of the difficulties with which Coussey had to contend and giving background information, which I think you will find of value when the Secretary of State's despatch comes to be written.

9. In my letter of 30th August I set out the composition of the Working Party of officials, which I appointed to examine the Report and assist me in the drafting of this letter and its enclosure. I have not consulted the three Unofficial Members of my Executive Council who are all members of the Coussey Committee. Although I have not the slightest doubt that they appreciate some of the shortcomings of the Report it would be unfair to expect them to repudiate any part of it.

10. As you will see from the Report many of the recommendations are vague and others seem to have no relationship one with another. It is, of course, not a dispassionate examination of the "needs of the situation" and has been largely influenced by local politics. The first and second "riders" are entirely political in intention and are in part designed as a new "platform" for the popularly discredited United Gold Coast Convention. I do not consider that the Secretary of State should be called upon to rebut the extreme views and impossible claims advanced by this minority; and the draft provides only for a mere reference to the fact that the Secretary of State has received their Report and a statement that he does not think rebuttal necessary. Despite the obvious defects of the Majority Report, the Committee as a whole has done its best in circumstances of considerable difficulty. The Report does not deserve summary treatment and for every reason of expediency it should be praised.

11. The general tenor of the parts of the Report on Local and Regional Government is unexceptionable. The recommendations if fully implemented would, I consider, make for an unduly elaborate structure but I feel confident that a broad

acceptance of the proposals will make it possible to simplify the final arrangements which will have to be worked out locally. In the enclosure I have dealt more fully than may at first sight appear necessary with the suggestions if a mere broad acceptance is all that is required. I have done this mainly to emphasise the importance of the fact that the institutions of local government are in every way complementary to an effective system of central government. This is all the more necessary because of the prevailing lack of interest in local Government in the Gold Coast.

12. There are two points in connection with these parts which I should mention. Paragraph 133 of the Report suggests that all races should participate in and be subject to the Local Authorities. The existing Native Authority (but not the Town Councils) exclude persons of non-African descent from their purview. The proposed changes are therefore revolutionary and warrant more notice than is provided by one short sentence. If we are to have proper local government the change proposed cannot be contested and I do not wish to contest it. Nevertheless, I have made no mention of it in the draft for we shall have to tread warily. There are many European interests in the larger (but non-municipal) towns and even though local authority bye-laws would only be valid upon their being approved, there is a risk that the executive officers of the local authorities might make conditions almost unbearable for non-African interests unless they are closely supervised.

13. The second point is that the District Officers who have played and must continue to play a big though largely supervisory part in local government affairs are not referred to in the Report. District Officers still have, I am convinced, the confidence of the great majority of the people but they have recently suffered considerable abuse in the press as being autocratic agents who deprive the people of their liberty to do just what they like. The fifth paragraph of Dickinson's note makes it clear that the omission of all reference to their duties from the Report is not due to chance or inadvertence but is the result of a deliberate reluctance to mention them. I have therefore also refrained from mentioning them in the draft for I certainly do not want to do anything that might encourage controversy about their position; their retention is essential if there is to be adequate supervision of the proposed local authorities.

14. I am glad that the Committee in Section VII of Part III has skated lightly over the subject of the Native – re-designated "Local" – Courts. In the draft I have also skated over the subject. Although benches of lay magistrates rather than stipendiaries are probably desirable, I am not at all certain that the time is yet ripe for Local Courts to exercise jurisdiction over all nationals. The Committee does not mention that possible development but I have no doubt that it is intended and indeed it inevitably follows from the extended power of local authorities.

15. Part IV of the Report dealing with Regional Administration and Regional Councils is more disconnected than any of the other parts and this, it seems, is largely due to the inability of the Committee to reconcile itself, still less to commit itself, to the continued existence of the "Provincial Administration", as the administrative officers working outside headquarters are usually known. The Committee has therefore changed the name and attached to it a Regional Council to give it some semblance of a popular institution. They do not intend that it should be a local government organisation and they dislike its being purely a manifestation of the central government. In the result their proposals are somewhat diffuse and not

coherent but for the reasons I have given I think they should be supported. There is, of course, a local sentiment attaching to the existing "regions" – particularly Ashanti – and their maintenance would not be unpopular especially as there is generally throughout the country some suspicion that the central government in Accra is so far as local matters are concerned, generally more concerned with the affairs of the Ga (Accra) people than with the welfare of other, often more prosperous, tribes elsewhere.

16. Except as regards the composition of and the method of appointing members to the Executive Council the recommendations in the Report on the subject of the Central Government and my comments in the enclosed draft do not, I think, require much background to be provided by this letter. The subject has largely been covered in previous correspondence.

17. In paragraph 402 of the Report it is categorically stated that there will be an Executive Council consisting, apart from the Governor as Chairman, of eleven members, not more than three of whom would be *ex-officio* members, and two of whom would be members of the Senate. The Watson Commission proposed a Council of nine, apart from the Governor, of whom four should be *ex-officio* members. I agree with the view expressed in paragraph 13 of your letter of the 29th June that while it is essential to have the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Attorney General (or Legal Secretary if we adopt the nomenclature recommended in the Report) as *ex-officio* members, a fourth *ex-officio* member, the Secretary for Economic Affairs, would be desirable in the interests of efficiency but is not indispensable. I have carefully considered with my advisors whether in the interests of sound administration or, alternatively, in order to provide a bargaining counter for later discussions it would be advisable to stand out in the first place for four *ex-officio* members or whether, for the reasons given in paragraphs 4 and 6 of this letter, we should not be better advised to accept without demur the Committee's recommendation on this point, to which it is thought considerable importance will be attached throughout the country. Our conclusion is that the balance of advantage lies in accepting the Committee's proposal for only three *ex-officio* members.

18. Having conceded the principle of an unofficial majority it does not matter greatly how large it is, provided a Council is not thereby created that is too unwieldy for the efficient conduct of its business. I would not therefore wish to be dogmatic on the question whether the Council should comprise nine or eleven members. As the Committee proposed that six of the members should be appointed from the House of Assembly and two from the Senate and we have proposed that only the House of Assembly should be established in the first instance, the way being left open for the establishment of a Senate later (paragraph 18 of draft), it might seem reasonable to suggest that Executive Council should consist of nine members with provision for expansion to eleven later. In his letter of the 18th July Scott[2] pointed out that from preliminary examination of the question eight "portfolios" would be required.

19. We have also carefully considered the view put forward in the penultimate paragraph of your letter of the 26th August that each of the three or possibly four Regions should be represented on Executive Council and that provision for this should be made in the Constitution. We consider that it is of importance to maintain

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[2] See 51.

the principle that the representation of the Territories, and the fusion of their interests, should be in the Assembly; and do not think that it would be desirable, or generally acceptable, to impose any artificial limitations on the selection from the Assembly of the most suitable members for Executive Council irrespective of provenance. It might further have the disadvantage that, without undue expansion of the Executive Council, the system might lead to the situation in which it might be necessary to allocate a "portfolio" to a member unacceptable to the majority of the legislature or incapable of fufilling the functions of his office. Our conclusion is that it would be better to drop this proposal and to suggest an Executive Council of nine members with provision for expansion to eleven later.

20. It is with these considerations in mind that paragraph 26 of the draft has been written.

21. I have not entered in the draft into any detail regarding the assumption of departmental responsibilities by the Unofficial Members which is a step commonly regarded as desirable. I have avoided such discussion because it would be premature to consider the apportionment of departmental duties either on the basis suggested by the Committee or on any other. This also has the advantage of avoiding any summary dismissal of the use of the inappropriate word "Minister" and you will see that I have in the necessary context used the word "Member".

22. Various proposals regarding the method of appointing members of Executive Council have been considered in previous correspondence. The Committee recommends that the Governor, in consultation with the "Leader of the Assembly", should appoint them. We have pointed out in the draft that the proposed procedure under which there would be a "Leader of the Assembly" would be inappropriate until a full party system has been developed and, if this is agreed, the Committee's proposal falls to the ground. After carefully examining a variety of devices we have come to the conclusion that the most practicable method of appointing members and the one most likely to earn general acceptance is that proposed in paragraph 11 of your letter of the 29th June, viz., to lay down that the Governor should propose members of the legislature for appointment to the Executive Council and that the actual appointments should be made on a resolution of the House, subject to the safeguard proposed by Scott in his letter of 18th July that the Governor should have discretion to leave a vacancy unfilled.

23. In the draft I have left the door open for a conference in London should that prove desirable. London is clearly no place in which to consider detail and if any great controversy should arise on matters of major importance or of principle it would be extremely difficult to find a representative group of Africans who would be willing to risk the opprobrium which would attach to them if they agreed with our views even as the result of a London Conference. Scott mentioned the difficulty towards the end of his letter of the 18th July. I should, moreover, prefer to hammer out any such controversy here but it is certainly better for the invitation to a London Conference to be made straight away rather than have it forced upon us. If it were forced it would look like the beginning of a string of concessions.

24. If you think personal consultation with us is desirable, would you give me an indication of the particular points requiring further discussion. Loveridge and Saloway could fly to London at short notice. Scott and Branigan, though back at work, are not yet fit for air travel but may be so later. If the questions at issue are of fundamental importance I would accompany them but for the reasons given

in my letter of 30th August it is preferable that I should not come to London at this juncture.

25. I have sent copies of this letter and its enclosures to Macpherson, Ramage and Ward and a copy of my telegram No.589 of today's date.

Enclosure 1 to 58: Draft despatch on the Coussey Report from the secretary of state to the governor (as submitted by the Gold Coast government)

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the copies of the Report of the Committee on Constitutional Reform in the Gold Coast, which you forwarded to me under cover of your third personal note of the 30th August, 1949. You have undertaken that this Report will be considered expeditiously and that the decisions of His Majesty's Government which finally emerge from this consideration will be brought into effect without delay. I have been considering how best I can assist to achieve that result and I have reached the conclusion that the most practical form of assistance which I can at this stage afford will be to let you have immediately, in order to facilitate the examination of the report by yourself and your Executive Council, my own views after study of the Report.

2. I should first, however, express my admiration of the manner in which the Committee has set about its extremely complicated task and the speed with which it has concluded its deliberations. Constitutional reform in such a country as the Gold Coast is a task of great complexity. The careful weighing by the Committee of the many political, legal, economic and social factors involved and the application to them of their knowledge and judgment has resulted in a valuable report and I am particularly impressed by the heed which has been paid by the Committee to indigenous African institutions. I shall be glad if my congratulations may be offered to Mr. Justice Coussey on his skilful leadership and my appreciation to the Committee as a whole of their devotion over several months to the difficult task of recommending the lines upon which, in the constitutional sphere, the Gold Coast should now advance.

3. I wish to make it clear at the outset that subject to the observations I make later in this despatch, I am prepared to accept the proposals put forward in the Report as providing a workable plan within the framework of which constitutional development in the Gold Coast can now proceed. Although I feel it necessary to make certain reservations at this stage I do so with the intention of helping and facilitating and not of hindering or delaying the progress of the Gold Coast to full responsible government within the British Commonwealth, which it is the policy of His Majesty's Government and the manifest desire of the people of the country to achieve as soon as practicable. I endorse the Committee's general conception of the construction of a sound and democratic system of central government on a firmly established and democratic foundation of local government, both at the regional and lower levels.

4. It is clear that the construction of such a system cannot be achieved by a stroke of the pen. There must be a formative period during which the institutions of local government, which the Committee rightly regards as the best means of enabling "the majority of the people to contribute to, and participate actively in, the process of government" and "the best foundation on which to build a democratic central structure", will be strengthened, re-organised or otherwise developed; while concurrently such constitutional changes in the form of the central government and

enlargement of the legislature as are appropriate to this formative period would be pressed forward as rapidly as possible. It is of the highest importance for the eventual endurance of any such system and for the well being of the people which it is intended to promote, that there should be no discrepancy in the timing of the various stages through which the organisation of Government must proceed in order to achieve the final result. I am anxious to ensure that during this transitional stage there shall be no breakdown in the machinery of Government which would inevitably delay progress.

5. It is with these general considerations in mind that I am making the following observations. They are not to be regarded as a comprehensive analysis of the subject but relate to points which struck me on my reading of the Report as being matters on which the early expression of my views might be of particular assistance to you and your advisers in dealing with the Report.

6. Before proceeding to comment on those parts of the Report in which recommendations are made I feel that I should refer in passing to the statements made in Part I (and in the third rider). Many of the matters touched upon there do not bear directly on the consideration of the actual steps to be taken to secure for the people of the Gold Coast a satisfactory system of Government. Although I do not consider it necessary to express any opinion on the historical accuracy of the views recorded by the Committee in their General Survey, I should not wish it to be inferred that I acquiesce in them.

7. Part III of the Report deals with Local Government and I wish to say at once that I am impressed by the evident desire of the Committee to make, at the first opportunity, recommendations regarding that part of Government which most intimately affects the everyday life of the people, which is closest to the people, and which therefore is the only foundation upon which a democratic central government can work. Paragraphs 78 to 83 of the Report very properly emphasise the importance of local government.

8. I do not intend to comment in detail on the proposals made by the Committee regarding Local Government. The new framework of Local Authorities proposed by the Committee must be developed from the existing system but the methods to be adopted to provide for this orderly development of the new system from the old in a manner acceptable to the Chiefs and people are not covered by the Committee's recommendations and will have to be evolved in consultation with the existing Councils and Native Authorities.

9. I welcome the proposals that the traditional elements should be fully represented on the new Local Authorities and that these authorities should have elected majorities. The proportion of seats to be allocated on each local council to the traditional and elected representatives, the mode of election, the nature of the constituencies, the subordination of one Authority to another and the allocation of functions between the various suggested authorities are matters for close consideration in the Gold Coast.

10. The earliest consideration will doubtless be given by all concerned to placing the finances of Local Authorities on a satisfactory basis. Much ingenuity will be required to overcome the difficulties in levying rates in an equitable manner (paragraphs 200–202) and it may well prove necessary as an interim measure before it is possible to establish assessment committees and a trained corps of valuers, to provide for taxation by a number of imposts which taken collectively would bear with reasonable equality of sacrifice upon all classes.

11. The destination of revenue derived from communal lands (paragraphs 204–208) and the management of those lands seems to me to be a matter of peculiar difficulty. I welcome the Committee's view that the management – but not the ownership – of such lands should be vested in the Local Authorities and that the revenue should be accounted for by the Authority which will pay over an amount, as agreed in the circumstances prevailing in each area, to the traditional authorities. The remaining suggestions regarding local authority finances do not call for comment except on matters of detail which I consider are for local consideration.

12. The suggestions of the Committee (Section VII) regarding Local Courts are not out of harmony with recent trends in the development of the existing Native Courts and I feel sure that those trends will be re-inforced by the Committee's views. I hope that you will feel able to set up the special committee, suggested in the Report, as soon as the great volume of more urgent work necessitated by the Committee's proposals permits.

13. I appreciate the force of the arguments advanced by the Committee in favour of the development of Regional Administrations and recognise that at the present stage they have an indispensable part to play not only in the guidance, control and co-ordination of the new Local Authorities but also in the process of devolving on them the functions appropriate to them. Reference is made (paragraph 290) to a delegation of powers by the Central Government to the Regional Administrations and I agree that a detailed examination of administrative and executive duties necessary to ascertain which powers can be properly delegated is required (para.292). It seems clear that the performance of all duties assigned to Local Authorities must be under the supervision of the Regional Administration, which must therefore enjoy an effective delegation of authority in all such matters. Such a system will, I have no doubt, make for efficiency provided there is an adequate permanent staff to deal with a volume of work which will inevitably grow.

14. In section III of Part IV there is a proposal to establish a Regional Administration for the area described as "Transvolta-Southern Togoland", and I must admit to some difficulty in appreciating the reasons for the suggestion. I must naturally view with particular concern any proposal affecting the Territory under United Kingdom Trusteeship or any part of it. The suggestion is not made in respect of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship, for the Northern section of the Trust territory is to be excluded and certain areas of the Gold Coast Colony included. I gather that it is not made in respect of the Ewe speaking areas, despite the assertion (paragraph 301) that it is designed to meet the wishes of the inhabitants of the Ewe States, because in the northern part of the existing southern section and in the Krachi District (which it is suggested might, if its inhabitants so desire, become incorporated) Ewe is not, I believe, the normally spoken language. It in fact appears (paragraph 301) that the Committee found opposition in the Trust Territory to the idea but discounted it because they felt (paragraph 302) that it was largely inspired by a campaign against Regional Administrations and because of unjustified suspicions.

15. I must confess to being apprehensive of a proposal affecting the people of Southern Togoland, when such information as is available to me indicates a certain amount of opposition to it in the areas in question. I cannot help feeling that the Committee itself may have mis-read the situation. Some of the Ewe-speaking States might well fear the prospect of being placed in an isolated position in relation to the more numerous and powerful groups which are not Ewe speaking. It is not perhaps

unnatural that they should attempt to achieve closer association with others in a similar position. Such a sectional outlook would of course be fortified by doubts concerning the future of these areas in any re-organised system of administration. I cannot therefore but feel some doubt as to the validity of the basis on which the Committee has formulated this recommendation.

16. I should emphasise that my doubts in this respect in no way affect my hope that the Southern Section of Togoland may be able to be represented in the Legislative Council in the immediate future and that an electoral body will be constituted in that area for the purpose. Such a body would not in any way diminish the administrative unity and efficiency of the Gold Coast Colony with which the Southern Section is administered. Nor does my view in any way prejudice the consideration of any recommendations you may see fit to make to me that the Krachi area should be included in the Southern Section, as the Committee seems to contemplate. In any event, before considering further the Committee's proposals, I should have to be reassured that all reasonable steps have been taken thoroughly to examine the question in consultation with the accredited representatives of the people of Southern Togoland.

17. The functions and duties of the Regional Councils and the Regional Administrations, as generally outlined by the Committee, dispose me to the view that the preferable system would be that the Council should be elected from the Local Authorities, with which its duties will be so closely connected. This question, however, is one which appears to me to warrant close attention as soon as the precise functions of the Regional Councils and Administrations can be worked out in concrete detail. It is difficult, on the proposals made by the Committee, for me to visualise to what extent the existing administrative machinery available to regional bodies would enable them to undertake, either directly or through Local Authorities, the comparatively comprehensive governmental duties contemplated in the Committee's report.

18. Regarding the proposals in Part V of the Report I observe that the Committee was almost evenly divided on the relative merits of a bicameral or unicameral system for the legislature. I feel accordingly that it would be inadvisable at this stage to accept the alternative proposal for a bicameral system. I cannot but consider that in their present form the proposals for a bicameral system, if adopted, might seriously detract from the efficiency of both local government bodies and the central legislature by isolating in a chamber exercising more limited functions a number of the more able men whose services are needed in the Legislative Assembly and in the sphere of local government. I feel accordingly that in the first place it would be advisable to adopt the proposal for a unicameral system and leave the way open for the adoption of a bicameral system, if desired, at a later stage.

19. The proposals regarding the mode of election of members are not fully explicit and appear somewhat cumbrous but I agree that indirect election, except in municipalities, appears to be the most practicable method at present. The provision of the machinery for these elections and the delimitation of the constituencies will obviously involve a great expenditure of labour and time and, if the work is to be carried out expeditiously, may involve a re-organisation of the country's administrative resources.

20. I come now to deal with that part of the Report which concerns the structure of the central government and my remarks in this context must be read in

conjunction with my observations in paragraph 3 of this despatch. His Majesty's Government are pledged to advance the constitutional status of the Gold Coast with the aim of achieving full responsible government within the shortest practicable time, but this advance must be made in an ordered progression in each sphere of government if a breakdown is to be avoided. The Committee has suggested (paragraph 401) that a reconstituted Executive Council should be collectively responsible to the legislature and, at the present stage, I am unable to accept that proposal. Nevertheless, during the formative period it should be possible – given goodwill – to achieve the substance of the Committee's recommendations even though for reasons which I shall discuss it will not be practicable for the Governor to divest himself formally of his responsibilities to the extent envisaged in the Report.

21. Collective responsibility of Executive Council Members to the legislature, for example along British lines, can only rest on an effective party system. By 'effective party system' I mean the existence of parties with coherent and definite programmes. Members of the Executive must be backed by a party, or a combination of parties, possesing a majority in the Legislature, since otherwise the Executive can never be certain of receiving the support it requires in the House. I should perhaps emphasise that the term 'party system', in the sense in which I use it, means the existence of groups of persons which adhere to differing sets of principles, each group having a different approach to the problems of government, and each of which is able to offer to the electorate alternative solutions to social and economic problems. Furthermore, I consider the existence of such groups can only be regarded as a system when by usage over some years they have become accepted as necessary and integral parts of the constitutional machinery of the country. In this sense there is not, as yet, any party system in the Gold Coast and without it the Executive could never rely on the agreement of the Legislature on any question, unless the Legislature had first by vote signified its views – a procedure which would deprive the Executive of initiative and hamper the emergence of responsible government. In the stage of development which we are considering, therefore, the Executive Council must remain advisory to the Governor. Nevertheless the desire of Africans to bear responsibility for the initiation and execution of policy has my fullest sympathy and can be achieved at this stage by an elected majority in an Executive Council which is designed to be the chief instrument of Government policy.

22. I readily agree to the proposal that there should be a majority of non-official Africans in the Executive Council. While for the reasons which I have given the Executive Council should remain advisory to the Governor, it will be the body where all major questions of policy are discussed and individual members would of course have the right to initiate subjects for discussion. This in effect would mean that the elected members in the Executive Council would assume responsibility for government policy, subject only to the provision for the use of the Governor's reserved powers in certain defined circumstances.

23. I would be prepared to agree that the Governor should be required to consult with the Council on all matters unless they are so trivial as to make consultation unnecessary, or so urgent as to make it virtually impossible. It also might be provided that the Governor would not act against the advice of his Council unless the issue under discussion were one which, were it before the Legislature, would justify the use of his reserved powers and then only (except in an emergency) with the prior approval of the Secretary of State. It is inherent in this that the Legislature must

recognise that a member of the Executive Council will act in that Council with the fullest sense of his responsibility as a member of it and should not be regarded as a delegate.

24. Where the practical problems of administration are concerned, Members of the Executive Council would in fact be responsible to a very considerable degree to the Legislature, since those placed in charge of departmental activities would be required to answer to that body for them. I need not stress the importance, which is generally recognised, of this principle of requiring Members of the Executive Council to assume responsibilities for the activities of specified departments or group of departments and I will not attempt any elaboration of the manner in which it can best be applied in the Gold Coast since this will be engaging your attention.

25. The Committee has recommended that Members of the Executive Council, other than *ex-officio* Members, should be appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Leader of the Assembly. I have given careful thought to this proposal, and have reached the conclusion that, in the absence of a properly constituted party system, such a method of appointment would be inappropriate and incapable of translation into practice. In order to ensure the individual responsibility of Members of the Executive Council to the Legislature, I would suggest that the best method would be for the Governor to propose members of the Legislature for appointment and the actual appointment should be made on a resolution of the Legislature. Such an arrangement would differ from that proposed in the Watson Report and from that suggested in the Statement of His Majesty's Government on that Report, but it provides a means of consultation certainly no less effective than that suggested by the Committee. If this were adopted it would be necessary to provide that the Governor whould have discretion, after making every effort to meet the wishes of the Legislature, to leave a vacancy in the Executive Council unfilled.

26. I note that the Committee, assuming the creation of a bicameral system, has recommended the appointment of eleven members to the Executive Council, of whom three should be *ex-officio* members and two chosen from the Senate. I have suggested that only one Chamber should be established at the outset and that the way should be left open for the setting up of a second Chamber at a later stage. It would be reasonable therefore to have a Council of nine members with provision for its expansion later but I am open to conviction that a Council of eleven members might be preferable. In His Majesty's Government's Statement on the Watson Report it was agreed that the Executive Council should consist of nine members four of whom should be *ex-officio* members, and suggested that they should be the Chief Secretary and three others with responsibility for justice, finance and economic affairs. While I still am of opinion that at this stage in the economic development of the Gold Coast this proposal would contribute to more efficient administration of the country's affairs, I am prepared, if you so advise, to accept the Committee's recommendation that there should be not more than three *ex-officio* members.

27. In view of what I have said previously in connection with the proposed collective responsibility of Members of the Executive Council, some of the proposals in paragraph 413 of the Report regarding the vacation of the appointments of members (other than *ex-officio* Members) are not applicable. Furthermore I note that one of the recommendations of the Committee is that Members of the Executive Council should cease to hold their appointments on a dissolution of

the Assembly. I feel that this procedure would lead to administrative inconvenience and that provision must be made for the carrying on of the Government in the intervals between one Assembly and the next. I suggest that provision might be made to the effect that a Member of Executive Council should retain his appointment after dissolution until the first meeting of the newly elected Assembly. In view of my earlier proposal that a member of the Executive Council should be appointed on a resolution of the Legislature, I agree that the Legislature should be empowered to initiate the steps necessary for his removal and I would be ready to agree to a suggestion that upon a two-thirds majority vote of the Legislature on a motion specifically made for the purpose, the Member should be removed from the Council. I could not, however, agree with any proposal for the removal of an *ex-officio* Member from the Executive Council on a prayer or on a motion of the Legislature, which is as undesirable as it is unprecedented.

28. His Majesty's Government's Statement agreed with the Watson Commission in the proposal that each Member of the Executive Council should be served by a Secretary or Under-Secretary drawn from the Civil Service, but went further and suggested that in suitable cases deputy members might be appointed from among the African members of the Legislature. The Committee's proposals (paragraph 417–418) do not appear to differ materially from these proposals.

29. I note the Committee's proposals in Part VII of the Report dealing with the Governor's reserved powers, with the Royal Instructions and with the provisions of the Letters Patent, and shall await your views. I should, however, advise you that I should not find it possible to accept any proposals for the modification of those of the Governor's powers relating to the Public Service referred to in Section 38(1) of the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti (Legislative Council) Order-in-Council, 1946, although I see no objection to the proposal in Section 1 Part VIII for the establishment of a Public Service Commission "on a statutory basis to advise the Governor upon matters relating to the Civil Service".

30. I should also make it clear that in my view it would not be proper to fetter the Governor in his exercise of the prerogative of mercy as is suggested by the Committee (paragraph 429) by amendment of Section 12 of the existing Letters Patent. It has been, and I trust may remain, common usage for the Governor to consult the whole Executive Council in such matters and I would deprecate any proposal that he should be required to consult only one particular member of his Council.

31. I have covered, without entering into great detail, the general scope of the Report and have indicated that I agree with most of its recommendations. I hope that all such steps as may be necessary can now be taken to give effect to those recommendations. I am well aware that much detailed work remains to be done; and if there are any questions of importance which might more easily be resolved by conversations in London in which representatives of the people of the Gold Coast would take part I should be very willing to call a meeting in London.

32. I have duly considered the "riders" to the Report added by a minority of the Committee. The opinions expressed in them do not require analysis in view of my comments upon the report of the majority which I have embodied in this despatch.

Enclosure 2 to 58: Note by W Dickinson to R Scott on the proceedings of the Coussey Committee, 28 Aug 1949

At your request, I have prepared the following notes drawing attention to certain of the difficulties with which Mr. Justice Coussey had to contend in the Committee on Constitutional Reform, and to one or two of the major points which, by reason of those difficulties, were not clearly brought out in the Report.

At the outset, I would like to state my opinion, which I cannot emphasize too strongly, that Mr. Justice Coussey's task in the production of an agreed and realistic report within his Terms of Reference was an extremely formidable one, and that the unanimity which was achieved on so many major issues was brought about only by the exercise, on his part, of an infinite tact, patience and caution.

Of the handicaps under which he worked, the most obvious was the large size of the Committee, which of itself made debate interminable and decision difficult.[3] Its composition, too, cannot have been all that a Chairman would have desired: as you are aware, the small, but cohesive and vocal, Convention group was able to exert an influence disproportionate to its numbers. This was owing to the fact that the remaining members, generally speaking, thought and voted as individuals. Furthermore, this main body of the Committee included a 'tail', composed of those without strong political affiliations or convictions, who were apt to be guided by plausible oratory rather than by sound argument. In the result, it was often impossible to sense, in advance, the probable outcome of any important point of discussion. Moreover, apart from their internal instability, Members were never wholly unmindful of the attitude of the Press and of the country at large, which was at least critical, and not seldom hostile. A final disadvantage lay in the personality of Dr. Danquah, who, to the very last, was unwilling to accept any views which conflicted with his own, and who lost no opportunity of seeking to reverse any decisions of which he did not approve.

These several factors combined, on certain occasions, to make it preferable that given subjects should be left open. Again, they made it impossible, when a decision had been reached on a major issue, for that matter to be reconsidered, since in that way Dr. Danquah would have seen his opportunity to press for the review of other issues. This precaution, indeed, had to be so far observed that it was usually found undesirable to attempt to amend the wording or layout of the preliminary drafts which were ultimately included, more or less as they stood, in the final report.

Turning to details, the first omission is concerned with the relationship of the new proposals to the existing system. Nowhere in the Report is there to be found any comprehensive statement as to how the new framework, particularly of Local Government, is to be developed from the existing system, again with particular reference to the position of District Commissioners. Here the Committee's intention, in my view, was two-fold. In the first place, they contemplated a clean break with the 'ancien regime' and the complete disappearance of the District Commissioner as known to-day. At the same time, Members were fully aware that, without the wholehearted assistance of the present Administrative Officers, the proposed system would, at the least, get off to an uncommonly bad start. The fear of outside criticism,

[3] Forty members sat on the Coussey Committee, including nine chiefs.

however, on the basis that 'New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large', effectively prevented any concrete suggestion being put forward to this effect. My own view is that the Committee members contemplate that the existing personnel will be absorbed into the three divisions of government which they recommend.

Another issue was the recommendation in favour of a bicameral legislature, which was approved, at an early stage in the proceedings, by a majority of one. In this instance it was obvious that the Ashanti members were 'all out' for parity of representation with the Colony in the Central Legislature. Certain members, who otherwise would not have supported the proposed bicameral system did so therefore in the hope that by conceding parity in the Upper House the Ashanti Members might be persuaded to accept representation on the basis of population in the elected chamber. This, however, the Ashanti members, having first extracted a compromise whereby they obtained additional (but not equal) representation, failed to do. At this stage, had a second vote been taken, the previous decision would have been reversed. As always, however, to have permitted the reconsideration of the issue would have had undesirable ramifications.

A third noteworthy point which is not clearly expressed is the reconciliation of the principle of Ministerial responsibility with the idea of strong Regional Administrations. Here again, the proposed Regional Administrations were not without opponents (as witness Dr. Danquah's second rider) and it would perhaps have been unwise to have attempted a clarification of the position, which would perforce have emphasized how much Regional autonomy might impinge upon the hallowed preserve of ministerial responsibility. Broadly speaking, however, the Committee's intention is clear. The Regional Administrations should have as much responsibility as possible, the Ministers merely laying down policy and the Regions, with the local authorities subordinate to them, implementing the same.

In this connection it must be admitted that none of the Committee had any administrative experience. The Chairman was therefore wise, in my humble opinion, while indicating the general framework desired by members, in not attempting to have every detail cut and dried. Much, of necessity, in the implementation of the recommendations was left to Government to decide. To have attempted otherwise would have resulted in a series of sketchy and theoretical solutions being put forward as detailed recommendations.

This was particularly the case in connection with the Central Government machine where no attempt was made to show how the various component parts, i.e., the Governor, the Executive Council and the Legislature, would function as a whole. As the recommendations stand at present they do present difficulties, but these might well have been exaggerated had the Chairman decided – as, indeed, he at one time contemplated – to invite members to formulate any detailed solution.

I hope that these notes will be of some use.

Later (31st August)

Since writing the above, I have had the opportunity of discussing these notes with Mr. Coussey who agrees generally with what I have written.

59 CO 96/800/1 7 Sept 1949

[Coussey Report]: minutes by A B Cohen and Mr Creech Jones accepting the procedure proposed by Sir C Arden-Clarke

The Governor's letter[1] has now arrived. After reading it I am sure that we must in fact accept his view that a statement of H.M.G.'s general views on the report should be published at the same time as the report itself. I am sure also that we must have *very early* discussions in London with some of the Gold Coast Government advisers. On the last page of his letter he offers to send Messrs. Saloway and Loveridge immediately and I think that we should close with this and suggest that they get here within the next week.

I will not comment otherwise except to say that I am afraid that the draft despatch enclosed with the Governor's letter is a somewhat wishy-washy document and will need, to say the least of it, a very great deal of amendment. . . .

A.B.C.
7.9.49

It would be wise to have Saloway and Loveridge over as soon as maybe.[2] I have glanced through the letter of the Governor & draft despatch but am disposed to leave the matter to Mr Cohen & Lord Listowel until I can study the papers in greater detail on my return.

We should do as is suggested – publish H.M.G.'s views with the report.

A.C.J.
7.9.49

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[1] See 58.

[2] Branigan, recovered from his illness, accompanied Saloway and Loveridge to London in Sept 1949 to discuss the report of the Coussey Committee with officials at the CO.

60 CO 96/800/1, no 24A 17 Sept 1949

'Gold Coast constitution': minute by A B Cohen

As a result of preliminary discussion between Mr. Saloway, Mr. Loveridge, Mr. Peck,[1] Mr. Hanrott and myself certain points of major importance have emerged which are set out in this minute for further discussion with Mr. Brannigan [sic], Sir K. Roberts-Wray and Sir T. Lloyd. This note does not deal with the most important question of all, the relationship of the Executive Council to the Governor and the Legislature. That subject will be covered in the revised draft despatch from the Secretary of State which will be prepared over the week-end.

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[1] J A Peck, CO senior legal assistant.

The points covered in this note are:-

1. *The use of the term ministers*
The draft despatch prepared in the Gold Coast avoids this question but, the Gold Coast Government, following H.M.G.'s Statement of last year, proposes not to adopt the term Ministers. This term is, however, used in Jamaica and the Sudan; it will be used for the new Trinidad Constitution; and it was used in Ceylon between 1931 and 1946. In all these cases the Governor retained or retains ultimate responsibility. It is suggested therefore that it is unnecessary, and might be impolitic, to refuse to agree to the use of the term Ministers in the Gold Coast. It is suggested that reference to the question might be made in the despatch from the Secretary of State and that this might recall what was said on this point in H.M.G.'s Statement last year, might go on to refer to the other territories where the term is or has been used in circumstances where the Governor retained ultimate responsibility and full Ministerial responsibility had not yet been achieved, and might finally say that, with these parallels in view, H.M.G. would agree to the use of the term in the Gold Coast.

2. *Composition of the Executive Council*
Sir T. Lloyd's letter of th 29th June to Mr. Scott said that the attention of an *ex-officio* Member in charge of economic affairs was desirable but not essential. The Gold Coast Government have accepted this and propose that the Secretary of State should not insist on the retention of an official in this post. It is appreciated that considerable importance is likely to be attached by the public in the Gold Coast to accepting the Coussey Committee's recommendation on this point. On the other hand, it is believed that the orderly development of the Gold Coast might be seriously prejudiced unless there is an official in charge of economic affairs. It is suggested therefore that we should in fact try to retain this official post. We should not be doing this simply for bargaining purposes, but because it is genuinely thought desirable. It might, admittedly, be necessary to give way on the point later.

In return for this it is suggested that the Secretary of State should agree straightaway to an Executive Council of eleven members. This would make it possible to have 5 African Ministers with portfolio and 2 without. It is thought that there would be considerable advantage in having 2 Ministers without portfolio, since these would presumably be drawn from that part of the Assembly representing the Territorial or States Councils; had there been a bi-cameral Legislature these 2 Ministers without portfolio would, according to the Coussey Recommendation, have been drawn from the Senate. The proposal to have 2 Ministers without portfolio would not only be in accordance with the Coussey Committee's Recommendation, but also with H.M.G's Statement of last year.

It is suggested that the Secretary of State's despatch should refer on this point to the Recommendation of the Watson Commission that there should be 4 *ex-officio* Members on the Executive Council and the acceptance of this in H.M.G's Statement. It should go on to say that, while the eventual aim is a Council entirely composed of African Ministers, it is the view of the Secretary of State that at the present stage it would be in the interests of the political and economic development of the Gold Coast to retain an ex-officio Member in charge of economic affairs. The despatch should go on to refer to the suggestion in H.M.G's Statement of last year that there should be 3 African Members with portfolio and 2 without and say that, having

regard to the views expressed by the Coussey Committee, H.M.G. would agree to their being 5 African Ministers with portfolio and 2 without, thus giving African Members of the Executive Council a clear majority over the 4 *ex-officio* Members other than the Governor. The despatch should state that the Secretary of State's assumption is that the 2 Ministers without portfolio would be drawn from that part of the Legislative Assembly which is to be in substitution of the Senate.

3. *Procedure for terminating the appointment of a minister*

It is desired to emphasize that the Executive Council should be collectively responsible for its decisions and actions. What then is to happen if an individual Member refuses to act upon the majority decision of the Council or a decision of the Council taken by the Governor, after consultation with the Secretary of State, in virtue of his reserve powers? Clearly an impossible situation might be created by such an attitude on the part of an individual Member.

Had we been prepared to accept the Recommendation of the Coussey Committee for a Leader of the House of Assembly, this difficulty would have been met to a considerable extent, since it would have been possible to provide that the Governor could terminate the appointment of a Minister with the agreement of the Leader. The difficulty would have remained in circumstances where the Leader himself refused to act on a decision of the Executive Council.

The position in the Sudan is that the Governor General has power to terminate the appointment of any Minister in his discretion. In Jamaica, on the other hand, and in the proposed Trinidad Constitution, a Minister is only removable by a two-thirds vote of the Legislature. It is suggested that neither arrangement is suitable for the Gold Coast and that something in between them is needed.

It is thought that the Governor should be given power to remove a Minister with the agreement of the majority of the Executive Council. But it is important to ensure that such an arrangement does not enable a majority of the African Ministers to secure the removal of one of their colleagues merely because of personal or relatively unimportant differences with him. The Secretary of State has recently had occasion to resist such a proposal in Northern Rhodesia.

It is accordingly suggested that the following arrangement should be made. Members of the Executive Council, other than *ex-officio* Members, should be appointed by Resolution of the Assembly on names submitted to them by the Governor (this is the arrangement suggested in Sir Thomas Lloyd's letter to Mr. Scott of the 29th June). In putting forward the names the Governor should not be required to state the portfolios to be allocated to the Members. Having secured the agreement of the Legislative Assembly by Resolution, the Governor would then appoint the persons concerned as Ministers with portfolio for particular subjects, or Ministers without portfolio. The Governor should be empowered to terminate the appointment of a Minister whether with portfolio or without portfolio (as Minister), if he was satisfied that the Minister in question was not acting in accordance with a decision of the Executive Council and that this would interfere with the smooth and efficient working of the Council, *and* provided that the majority of the Executive Council other than the Governor agreed to the termination of the appointment of the Minister in question. Alternatively the majority could be not of the whole Executive Council other than the Governor, but of the majority of the Executive Council other than the ex-officio Members. Finally it should be laid down that the seat of a Member

of the Executive Council other than an *ex-officio* Member should become vacant (paragraph 413 of the Report) if he should cease to be a Minister. Equally his seat will become vacant if a two-thirds majority of the Legislature pass a vote of No Confidence in him.

It would be necessary to make it clear in the Constitution that a majority decision of the Executive Council included a decision by the Governor taken under his reserve power.

61 CO 96/800/1, no 28 — 23 Sept 1949

[Coussey Report]: letter from Sir T Lloyd and Sir C Arden-Clarke on the revised draft of the secretary of state's despatch on the report

Many thanks for your letter of the 5th September[1] about the Coussey Committee's Report, which arrived while I was away. We have now finished our discussions with Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge and enclosed with this letter are:-

(1) the revised draft of a despatch for the Secretary of State to send on the Report;
(2) a note with Colonial Office comments on a number of individual recommendations in the Report, most of them not covered in the draft despatch;
(3) a separate note on the local government section of the Report.[2]

The purpose of this letter is to record the reasons for the main changes which we have made in the draft despatch. Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge are of course aware of these reasons and have agreed to the changes, subject to your approval. But I am sure that it will be useful to have the reasons on written record.

2. The draft despatch in its present form represents the views of the Colonial Office at the official level. It has been seen by Lord Listowel, who agrees with it. It will be submitted to the Secretary of State on his return to the office in the latter part of next week. We hope that you will be able to let us have your comments on it by October 3rd and that, if you have any major comments, you can indicate very briefly what these are in a telegram some time next week.

3. Before I get on to the draft itself may I say how extremely grateful we are both to you for sending Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge for the discussions here and to them for coming? I know how busy they all are and that the present time is one of great pressure in the Gold Coast. It must therefore have been inconvenient for them to come to London. But without their presence we could not have completed the revision of the draft in such a short time; the discussions with them have been most valuable to us.

4. May I also express our appreciation of the first draft which you sent us with your letter? This has greatly lightened the work of drafting here and you will see that, although we have felt obliged to expand the draft considerably, we have in fact followed the framework of the original draft and have incorporated the majority of it in the new draft. Thank you very much for letting us have it.

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[1] See 58.

[2] Enclosures to this letter not printed.

5. We quite agree with the view expressed in paragraph 7 of your letter that the Secretary of State should express his views on this despatch broadly and that he should comment on it in a generous spirit although not allowing any doubts to remain on points of important principle where its recommendations are not acceptable. We have followed this line in the revised draft.

6. As regards local government, I am sure that you were quite right to deal with this fully in the draft. Indeed in paragraphs 6 to 13 of the revised draft we have commented more fully than you did. As you know, the Secretary of State himself takes a particular interest in the development of local government and regards it, as you do, as the basis of all sound constitutional development. I am sure that he will want to lay emphasis in the despatch on the opportunity which is now provided to the Gold Coast to reform the existing system of local government. I think also that he ought to say something about the need to keep the system as simple and as flexible as possible and this is done in paragraph 9. The whole of this part of the re-draft has been prepared in close consultation with Loveridge.

7. We feel that the weakest part of the Coussey Committee's Report is the part dealing with regional administration and I gather from paragraph 15 of your letter that that is also your view. While, therefore, the despatch comes down, as your original draft did, firmly in favour of the continuance and development of Regional Administrations at the present stage – we feel sure that this is right – it is somewhat guarded in its comments and is so drafted as to leave it open to the special commissioner and any other body which considers the proposals to propose modifications where necessary. The recommendations in the Report about regional finance are very complicated and we feel that the regional bodies should be kept as simple as is practicable in the circumstances.

8. We should like to suggest that Phillipson might himself be asked to carry out the investigation recommended by the Committee and envisaged by yourself. This suggestion has been discussed with Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge, who all thought it a good one. Macpherson would not find it easy to spare Phillipson, who is chairman of the Nigerian marketing boards; but, if the suggestion were put to him as a matter of high importance, I am sure that he would do his best to spare him. If you agree with this idea, I suggest that you should approach Macpherson direct, letting him know when Phillipson would be required and how long you think the enquiry would take. We would support your request if you wanted us to do so.[3]

9. The recommendations of the Committee taken literally seem to us to leave the Chief Commissioners without adequate power. This point is dealt with at some length in the attached note of Colonial Office views. We gather that you hope to be able to get this modified in local discussions and we have only dealt with the point very generally in the draft despatch in order to avoid offending local susceptibilities.

10. You will see that we have substantially cut down your original draft on the subject of Southern Togoland. We do not feel that the Secretary of State is yet in a position to express any opinion one way or the other about the Committee's recommendation for a Regional Administration for Trans-Volta-Southern Togoland. The international, administrative and local political factors on which we think a

[3] Phillipson was subsequently appointed to conduct an investigation into regional administrations in the Gold Coast. For a summary of his report which was published in 1951, see 98.

decision will have to be based are set out in the enclosed note and we hope that it will be possible for a conclusion to be reached by next January, when the subject may well come up in the Trusteeship Council following on the Visiting Mission's report. Khalidy, the chairman of the Visiting Mission, is friendly to us and has asked privately for our guidance. As the note says, we are going to let him have a memorandum of our views about which we will consult you before we send it to Lake Success. I hope that you will be able to have a full discussion with him on the subject when he is in Accra.

11. Incidentally it is stated in your original draft despatch (paragraph 15) that there is a certain amount of opposition to the Committee's recommendation in Southern Togoland itself. In Gold Coast saving telegram No.1469A of the 10th August dealing with a communication of the All-Togo Union to the Trusteeship Council it is suggested that the opposition is from the Union, but that the other political bodies in Togoland would favour the Committee's recommendation. No doubt you will be able to let us know the views held in Togoland on this subject by the various interests concerned before a decision has to be taken.

12. We have been in some uncertainty about the question of holding elections in the immediate future in Southern Togoland, to which reference is made at the end of paragraph 17 of the draft despatch, following your draft. We gather that this would only be an interim arrangement until the new constitution based on the Coussey Committee's recommendations comes into force, and that the intention would be to send to the Legislative Council to represent Southern Togoland one member elected by the proposed new electoral body. The new arrangement would require an Order in Council of its own and the question whether it was worth making such an order for the short period involved was discussed here with Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge. It was pointed out on the one hand that there would be considerable advantage both from the local and international points of view in setting up this interim electoral arrangement and that in any case the arrangement had been the subject of discussion over a period of time with the Native Administrations of Southern Togoland. Against this has to be weighed the question of the extra work involved in preparing such an instrument when a great deal of other legal drafting in relation to the Gold Coast is in hand. Branigan promised to go into the matter further when he got back and we agreed that this sentence ought to go into the despatch if we think we are going to be able to get the interim arrangement into force; but that if we think not, it ought to be left out. The matter is one for you to decide.

13. You will see that we have considerably modified and lengthened the passage about the Executive, which is now dealt with in paragraphs 21 to 31 of the draft despatch. I hope that you will agree that we have put the matter in a form as palatable as possible to local opinion while safeguarding what is essential from the Government point of view. We have left out of this section of the despatch all reference to the emergence of an established party system. We have done this because of the danger that this particular argument might operate as a boomerang. If we say that the reason why we cannot now transfer ultimate responsibility for the administration of the Gold Coast to Ministers collectively responsible to the Legislature is that there is no established party system, this argument may be used against us in two or three years' time when local opinion will not doubt claim that a party system has been solidly established. The argument would, we feel, be a strong one even in spite of the phrase in the draft despatch "a system where through usage

over a period of years parties have become generally accepted as necessary and integral parts of the constitutional machinery of the country". While therefore we are against using the argument here, it seems to us quite right that it should be used in turning down the suggestion for an elected leader of the House of Assembly. If a party system becomes established in two or three years' time, we think that an elected Leader could then be conceded while still retaining the Governor's ultimate responsibility.

14. As you will see, we have started our argument in paragraph 22 by pointing out that, although the Committee has objected to the Executive Council being responsible to the Governor, it has not proposed the granting of full responsibility to Ministers, since the majority report gives the Governor reserve powers and retains *ex-officio* members on the Executive Council. In other words we have used the Committee's own recommendation against it on this particular point and have thus avoided a direct turning down of the Report on this essential feature. We have gone on to describe in some detail how the system will work and have shown that in practice decisions will be taken by the majority of the Executive Council or the Legislative Assembly as the case may be, subject to the Governor's reserve powers, which will only be used most sparingly.

15. We have avoided arguing against the conception that the Executive Council will be collectively responsible to the Assembly. It is of course perfectly true that the Council will not be collectively responsible to the Assembly in the same sense as a Cabinet is collectively responsible to the Legislature in a country with full responsible government. It is true also that, since under our proposals Ministers will be removable individually and not as a body, there will not be collective responsibility for this particular purpose. On the other hand, when a Minister answers in the Assembly for his own department or proposes a bill or motion, he will be doing so on behalf of the Executive Council as a whole; indeed, as Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge have told us, you are anxious to establish that the Executive Council will act collectively, so as to avoid separate action by individual members of the Council either in the Assembly or outside it. For these reasons we have not directly contested the proposition that the Council should be collectively responsible to the Legislature. You will see that we have adopted the doctrine of the dual responsibility of the Council to the Governor *and* the Assembly on which Saloway brought home a formula based on my letter of the 29th June.

16. At the end of paragraph 28 of the draft despatch it is stated that the Executive Council would be a very different body from the present Executive Council, which is purely advisory. We wanted to make it clear that the Council would no longer be advisory to the Governor in the sense in which it is now, but this cannot be stated positively without some qualification. The Council will continue to be advisory to the Governor for formal purposes, e.g. in connection with the prerogative of mercy, just as, in different circumstances, Ministers here are advisory to The King. It is also arguable that the Council will remain advisory to the Governor where in practice the Governor uses his reserve powers to set aside a majority decision of the Council. For the ordinary purposes of carrying out business, however, the Council will not remain advisory, since decisions will be taken by a majority vote. We think that our one sentence at the end of paragraph 28 sufficiently covers the point.

17. As regards paragraph 29 this carries out what we understand you want, that an individual member of the Council can be removed if he refuses to carry out a

decision of the Council. This is certainly necessary, but it is important to get the arrangement worded in the Constitution in such a way that it cannot be used by one set of members of the Executive Council to get rid of one of their colleagues with whom they have quarrelled or with whom they have a difference of opinion on some question. We have recently had trouble over this in Northern Rhodesia, where the majority of the unofficial members of the Executive Council wanted to get rid of one of their colleagues with whom they were at loggerheads. Our suggestion is that where the Governor is himself satisfied that a Minister is not acting in accordance with the decision of the Executive Council, he should be empowered to get rid of him with the agreement of the majority of the Executive Council itself. It would be necessary to lay down in the constitution that a decision of the Executive Council covers both a majority decision and a decision taken by the Governor himself under his reserve powers. This point is dealt with more fully in a note which Saloway will be taking back.

18. As regards the proposal that there should be a Leader of the House of Assembly elected by the House, we are entirely convinced after discussion that you are right in thinking that this would be premature. There is no established party system in the Gold Coast and without it an elected Leader could never be sure of continuing to command a majority. On the other hand, there must in practice be a Leader of the Government side in the Assembly to perform the functions which the Leader of the House performs in the House of Commons. Without a Leader in this sense the Government side would be very much hampered in practice. We none of us thought in the discussions that it could necessarily be assumed that the Chief Secretary would be the Leader for this purpose, although he would no doubt preside in Executive Council in the Governor's absence and act as Deputy Governor and Officer Administering the Government, and the arrangement which we suggest is that the members of the Executive Council should elect a Leader from among their own number who might be a Minister or an *ex-officio* member. No doubt the African members would prefer to have a Minister, but if they could not agree on one of the Ministers, I suppose that in practice the choice would fall on the Chief Secretary. We do not think that this arrangement need be laid down in the constitution itself. We have covered this point in paragraph 30 of the despatch.

19. We understand that it is not your intention, in putting to the Legislative Assembly the names of people to be appointed to the Executive Council, actually to mention which portfolios you intend to allot to them. We agree with this and have assumed in drafting paragraph 31 that the appointments as Ministers would be made by the Governor after the Assembly had passed a resolution accepting the names put forward by the Governor for membership of the Executive Council. We are still a little doubtful about the proposal that the Governor shall have discretion to leave a vacancy in the Executive Council but have covered this in the draft in as unprovocative a form as possible. We should be grateful if you would consider this point further and let us know whether you want to retain this arrangement.

20. We hope that you will be prepared to agree that the name Minister should be conceded, although this involves going beyond H.M.G's statement of August, 1948. The term is always used in practice in Jamaica, although it is not used in the constitution and the Secretary of State has never officially recognised it. The term is actually used in the Sudan constitution and will be used in the new Trinidad constitution. In all three cases the Governor retains ultimate responsibility. On this

basis we can, I think, accept it in the Gold Coast in view of its psychological importance. The despatch makes it clear that we accept it with the Jamaica and Sudan parallels in view.

21. We had a good deal of discussion on the question whether there should be three or four *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council. We all agree, of course, that from the point of view of administrative efficiency, it would be better to have a fourth *ex-officio* member for economic affairs, and from this point of view we should have liked to stick to the proposal in the August, 1948 White Paper. But, after talking the whole thing over we have come to the same conclusion as you, namely that the balance of advantage lies in accepting three *ex-officio* members. If we are not to accept this, it seems that it would be difficult to turn down the Committee's recommendation without giving reasons, and the only reasons that could be given would offend local susceptibilities, since we should have to say in effect that an *ex-officio* member would be more efficient. There is also the danger that, if we insisted on an *ex-officio* member for economic affairs, it would be held locally that this was done simply for the purpose of retaining the alleged stranglehold of European economic interests on the country and making it easier for H.M.G. to exploit the Gold Coast.

22. Subject to anything further which you may say, we therefore propose to advise the Secretary of State that three *ex-officio* members should be accepted. In putting this to him it would help very much if we could tell him that it was your intention that broad economic policy should be handled by the Financial Secretary, just as the Chancellor of the Exchequer handles it here. We have not suggested putting anything into the despatch about this because it would probably be easier to get this arrangement accepted if it were not emphasised publicly at this stage. Could you let me know when you reply to this whether you agree that the Financial Secretary's functions should cover broad economic policy? I think that the whole question of the arrangements for handling economic policy under the new system will have to be very carefully considered in the interval before the new constitution comes into force and perhaps you could let us have your views on this at a later stage after you have been able to go into it fully.

23. You will notice that we have omitted from paragraph 35 the reference in your draft to H.M.G's continuing preference for an *ex-officio* member to deal with economic affairs. We feel that if we are in fact going to give way on this point, there is no need to mention this.

24. As regards the number of Ministers, we are inclined to think that it would be better to go for eight straight away, making an Executive Council of eleven with the *ex-officio* members. We feel that it would be desirable definitely to accept the Committee's proposal for two Ministers without portfolio, who would have been drawn from the Senate in a bicameral system and might reasonably be expected to be drawn from that part of the Assembly equivalent to the Senate under a unicameral system rather than from the House at large, as the Committee recommend in paragraph 400. If you can get these two Ministers, they will presumably be Chiefs or at any rate "elder statesmen" and they should introduce an element of stability. If this suggestion is to go in, we think that we ought to accept six Ministers with portfolio, although we agree that five, with three *ex-officio* members, could probably cover the departments adequately. If we were to suggest only five Ministers, there might be some objection locally because of the fact that these would only be equal in

numbers with the *ex-officio* members and the two Ministers without portfolio. You will no doubt want to consider this point further before you let us have your views on the revised draft despatch.

25. We have thought it as well in paragraph 37 to express the Secretary of State's appreciation of the very objective recomendations of the majority on reserve powers; these are satisfactory to us. We do not think it necessary to contest the Committee's recommendation in paragraph 421(c) about the "appointment" of public officers. We think that they are only seeking to knock out the single word "appointment", thus bringing the Gold Coast constitution into line with the Jamaica constitution. Our common form includes the word "appointment", but we do not think it essential to retain the word provided that the words about the creation or abolition of public offices and the salary and conditions of service of public officers is [sic] retained.

26. This brings me to paragraphs 43 and 44 on procedure. We were grateful for the note which Saloway brought home showing your intentions with regard to the procedure for considering the report after it has been published. We have ventured to include in paragraphs 7 and 19 of the despatch suggestions leading up to the appointment of Select Committees on local government and electoral procedure. This is in accordance with what we understand you yourself intend and Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge thought that this reference in the despatch would be helpful. We have also referred in paragraph 14 to the proposed enquiry into Regional Administrations, which I have suggested above that Phillipson might conduct.

27. As regards the new constitution itself, we understand that it is not your intention, at any rate at present, to put the Coussey Committee's Report and the Secretary of State's despatch formally to the Legislative Council at their December meeting on a Government motion for acceptance, for fear that this might invite opposition and a possible rejection. We appreciate, of course, that any unofficial member could raise the matter on the adjournment or on a motion of his own. We suggest, therefore, that the best course would be for the Secretary of State to say at the end of the despatch, in order to indicate the sense of urgency which he feels, that the way is now clear for the preparation of the new instruments to start. This would cover only the Legislature and the Executive, leaving the Regional Administrations and local government to be dealt with by Ordinances of the new Legislative Assembly. We should like to know whether you would agree with this.

28. In paragraph 13 of your letter you explain why you refrained in the draft despatch from mentioning District Commissioners. We have considered this point very carefully and discussed it at some considerable length with Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge. I quite appreciate what you say, but we are, I must confess, very doubtful about leaving out all reference to District Commissioners from the despatch. The Report has mentioned them only in one place, paragraph 76, and your letter explains that the omission of all mention of their duties was deliberate on the part of the Committee. It is quite natural that the Committee, with all the cross currents in it, should have been unwilling to face the issue involved, but we fear that, if the Secretary of State, whose business it is to look after the interests of the Colonial Service, were also to omit all reference to District Commissioners, this might not only cause discouragement to officers now serving in the Gold Coast, but might also interfere with future recruiting both for the Gold Coast and other territories, since the course of events in the Gold Coast may be regarded by intending candidates as a pattern for other territories. We have discussed the possibility of covering the point

by means of a confidential circular from you to the administrative staff describing the important part which they will have to play in the new system and explaining why reference is not made to them in the Secretary of State's despatch; but we do not feel that this of itself would be sufficient. For these reasons we have inserted a direct reference to the Administrative Service in the field in paragraph 42 of the despatch and another reference to them in paragraph 16 where we are talking about Regional Administrations. I hope you will agree that these passages adequately cover the point without running too much risk of offending local susceptibilities. We would like to suggest that in addition to this you might consider issuing some confidential circular of the kind which I have mentioned.

29. Quite apart from the despatch itself, it seems to us that the Committee's recommendations involve some further examination of the functions of administrative officers in the Gold Coast. It is quite clear that, as you say in your letter, District Commissioners will have an essential part to play in connection with the new Local Authorities; indeed without them there is little chance of the new system being brought into effect at all. The introduction of the changes and the supervision of the new Authorities will give District Commissioners work which is not only important but of the greatest interest. At present, as you say, District Commissioners suffer from a quite unjustified local prejudice in certain quarters about their activities. Would it perhaps be worth considering the issue at an appropriate time of an official statement defining the functions which administrative officers will be required to perform, in a manner which would be acceptable to them and to public opinion? Possibly also the question of a change in their title might be considered, although this is obviously a matter which would need very careful thought.

30. Before I finish this inordinately long letter may I say a word about the date of publication? We had suggested the 24th October, but there is the point that the normal question day for the Secretary of State in the House of Commons is Wednesday and not Monday. It is established practice here that, when an important constitutional advance in a Colonial Territory is being announced, the House of Commons should be informed before any other public announcement is made. If we did not follow this procedure in the present case, the Opposition would undoubtedly be very critical and they would have some justification in view of the importance of the proposals. I feel sure therefore, that the Secretary of State will wish to make an announcement in the House of Commons on the day of publication. He can only do this on a Monday by a reply to a written question (which would not be appropriate for so important a matter) or by making a special statement after questions, which would attract perhaps too much notice and might encourage some members of the Opposition to ask supplementaries of a kind which might be embarrassing to you in the Gold Coast. If, on the other hand, the statement is made on a Wednesday – the normal day for Colonial Office questions – the Secretary of State will be able to arrange for a question in the ordinary way.

31. From our point of view, therefore, it would be preferable to postpone this announcement until Wednesday, October 26th and we asked Branigan, Saloway and Loveridge whether they thought that there would be any objection to this. They made the point that the reason why a Monday had been chosen was to ensure that the announcement left plenty of time before the next weekend for any turbulent feelings to work themselves out. They said that an announcement at 3 p.m. on Monday afternoon – the time which would have to be fixed so as to fit in with Parliamentary

arrangements here – would only enable the Gold Coast papers to get full reports into their Wednesday editions, although something would no doubt appear on Tuesday. Similarly, if the announcement were on Wednesday, the full reports would only come out on Friday. We agreed that if there were strong local grounds, from the point of view mentioned, for preferring Monday to Wednesday, we would try to arrange for the Secretary of State to make his statement on Monday, the 24th. But from the point of view of arrangements here Wednesday, the 26th, would be better. Would you let us have your views on this point?

62 PREM 8/924, PM(49)46 4 Oct 1949
[Coussey Report]: minute by Mr Creech Jones to Mr Attlee

In my minute to you of the 19th July, 1948, I referred to the proposals for constitutional advance in the Gold Coast made by the Watson Commission of Enquiry. The Statement by His Majesty's Government published with the Commission's Report suggested that a fully representative local committee should be set up to examine these proposals and went on to say that, if the proposals were acceptable to local opinion, His Majesty's Government for their part would regard them as broadly acceptable, subject to the reservations made in the Statement, and would be prepared to arrange for their early implementation.

The local Committee has now reported. It consisted entirely of Africans under the chairmanship of an African judge, Mr. Coussey, and it was representative of all parts of the Gold Coast and of all sections of opinion, including the nationalists, although not the extreme nationalists. The report is unanimous except on a very small number of points.

The Report makes comprehensive recommendations regarding Local Government, Regional Administrations, the Legislature and the central Executive. I need only mention here the proposals regarding the Executive, although you will be glad to know that the Committee has made valuable recommendations for the development of local government and the replacement of indirect rule by a system suitable to modern conditions. The Report recommends an Executive Council consisting of the Governor as Chairman; three *ex-officio* members; a Leader of the Legislative Assembly elected by the Assembly; and seven members drawn from the Assembly (five of whom would be Ministers with portfolio and two Ministers without portfolio). These seven would be appointed by the Governor in consultation with the Leader and would be required to resign collectively on a vote of no confidence in the Leader by two-thirds of the Assembly. The Executive Council under the Committee's recommendation would be collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly and not responsible to the Governor, but the Governor would retain reserve powers.

We clearly cannot accept the proposition that the Executive Council should not be responsible to the Governor. The Governor's ultimate responsibility for the administration of the Territory must be retained until the stage of internal self-government is achieved. Equally we cannot accept the proposal for an elected Leader of the House of Assembly. In the absence of a well-established party system in the Gold Coast, such an elected Leader could not be sure of the continuing support of the House and without it the efficiency of Government would be seriously hampered.

I propose, however, to agree that the Executive Council should consist of the Governor as Chairman; three *ex-officio* members; and eight Members drawn from the Legislative Assembly (six of whom would be Ministers with portfolio and two Ministers without portfolio); these eight would be selected by the Governor and appointed by him subject to a favourable resolution by the Assembly and removable individually by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. This is generally in accordance with the views expressed in His Majesty's Government's Statement of last year. The system I propose is similar to that in the Sudan and that shortly to be brought into force in Trinidad.

The Executive Council will cease to be purely advisory to the Governor and this is an advance over last year's Statement. Decisions will be taken by a majority, but the Governor's ultimate responsibility will be preserved by empowering him, as in Trinidad, to act against the majority decision, with the Secretary of State's prior approval, when the issue under discussion is one falling within the scope of his reserve powers.

This line is in accordance with the views of the Governor, and his official advisers, three of whom flew to London to discuss the Report in detail.The Report represents a victory for moderate opinion in the Gold Coast. If we accept it broadly, as I think we should, subject to the points made in paragraph 4 above, the Governor hopes to have moderate opinion behind him. If we are not prepared to accept it broadly, moderate opinion will be alienated and the extremists given an opportunity of making trouble. I am satisfied that at the present stage of political development in the Gold Coast no system would be workable which did not provide, as my proposals do, for a very considerable degree of African participation in the control of policy, while preserving the Governor's ultimate responsibility.

I propose to publish a statement of my views on the above lines, in the form of a despatch to the Governor, at the same time as the Report itself is published on the 26th October. I also propose to make an explanatory statement in the House of Commons on the same day in reply to an arranged question. Public opinion in the Gold Coast is anxiously awaiting the publication of the Report and, in the view of the Governor, which I share, it is important that the statement of our comments should be issued simultaneously with it. We have handled the Report since its receipt at the end of August with great expedition; it would however be unfotunate if there were any delay in making known our views.

I thought that I ought to let you know of the action which is being taken.[1]

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[1] Attlee minuted: 'This must come to Cabinet. CRA, 5.X.49.'

63 CO 96/800/1, no 64 8 Oct 1949

[Coussey Report] letter from A B Cohen to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the appointment of the speaker and the representation of special interests in the new Legislative Assembly

There are one or two points arising from our discussions with the Secretary of State on the Coussey Report on which the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you. They do not affect the terms of his despatch.

The first one relates to paragraph 383 of the Report about the Speaker. The Secretary of State was inclined to feel that it might have been wiser for the Committee to recommend the adoption of the suggestion in H.M.G.'s statement of August, 1948, that the Speaker should at this stage be nominated by the Governor. But now that the Committee has in fact made a different recommendation, the Secretary of State does not think that it would be wise to contest this; he feels therefore that we should accept the proposal for the election of a Speaker by the Assembly either from inside or outside its members.

The second point relates to paragraph 399 about members representing special interests in the Legislative Assembly. The Secretary of State would regard it as a retrograde step to provide in the constitution for the representation of special interests. This would be quite contrary to current general policy under which such syndicalist representation is gradually being got rid of in Colonial constitutions. The Secretary of State would have no objection to the nomination by the Governor of persons with general economic experience, who would, however, be chosen not simply as spokesmen of the particular business interest from which they were drawn, but as people of general experience whose knowledge and views would be useful to the Legislative Assembly.

The Secretary of State appreciates that this would involve the retention of nomination for the Legislative Assembly and that from this particular point of view there might be local objections. He would be grateful, however, if you would consider the possibility of adopting this alternative arrangement. No doubt in practice you would continue to find it useful to nominate somebody with knowledge of mining and somebody with knowledge of commerce, although this would be done on general grounds. We have been wondering whether it would be easier if there were more than two such members, as at present, so that not all the nominated members would in fact necessarily be drawn from commercial or mining circles; but I do not know of course whether public opinion would accept the retention of four nominated members under the new constitution. Would you be kind enough to consider the point and let me have your views so that we can discuss the matter further with the Secretary of State? We shall of course have to provide for the point in the new constitutional instruments.

It seems likely that the mining and commercial interests here will ask us when the report has been published what is going to be done for them under the new constitution. We particularly want to avoid giving them the impression that their interests have been overlooked - this is a point about which the Secretary of State has himself expressed concern. They are likely to ask whether there will be a mining man and a commercial man on the new Legislative Assembly. If they do ask this and I have a chance of talking to them informally, I should propose to tell them, if you see no objection, that they will notice the Committee's recommendation in paragraph 399 of the Report, but that the direct representation of commercial and mining interests as such would be contrary to general policy for the reason which I have given above. I should, however, say that we were exploring with you other means of arranging for the new Legislative Assembly to have the benefit of the general advice and experience of the business and mining communities. I should make it clear that we recognise the very important stake which the companies have in the country and I should express the hope that it would be possible to make some arrangement which will not in fact be very different from the present arrangement.

In connection with paragraph 19 of the draft despatch and the suggestion in it that candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly should be members of the electoral colleges,[1] the Secretary of State has asked me to say that he entirely agrees that this is necessary during the period of building up political responsibility. Indeed he regards it as an important safeguard. He thinks, however, that ultimately it will be necessary to adopt the ordinary arrangement under which a candidate for Parliament does not require to have a residential qualification in the constituency itself. How long it will be before such an arrangement can be adopted in the Gold Coast it is of course impossible to say. Meanwhile the arrangement proposed in paragraph 19 of the despatch is clearly, in his view, the right one.

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[1] cf in this respect Cohen's views in 55, para 3.

64 PREM 8/924, CP(49)199 8 Oct 1949

'Gold Coast constitution': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Creech Jones

The Committee which has been considering constitutional reform in the Gold Coast has now reported and decisions are required on its recommendations. The Committee was appointed in the following circumstances.

2. Under the present constitution of the Gold Coast there is a Legislative Council with an unofficial majority and an Executive Council, which is advisory to the Governor, with an official majority. There are three unofficial African members of the Executive Council, but these have no executive responsibility for departments of Government. The Watson Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances of February and March 1948 was impressed by the need to give Africans a greater share in the forming and execution of policy and made recommendations with this object in view. His Majestry's Government in August 1948 welcomed these recommendations in broad outline and suggested that a fully representative local committee should be set up in the Gold Coast to examine them. We stated that, if the recommendations were acceptable to local opinion, we would regard them as broadly acceptable, subject to certain reservations, and would be prepared to make arrangements for their early implementation.

3. The local Committee, which started work in January, consisted entirely of Africans under the chairmanship of an African judge, Mr. Coussey, and was representative of all parts of the Gold Coast and of all sections of opinion, including the nationalists, although not the extreme nationalists. Their report is unanimous except on three points, two of which are mentioned below. It is a balanced and reasonable document and the somewhat bold experiment of appointing an all-African committee has proved successful.

Local government

4. The Report makes comprehensive recommendations for the reform of "indirect rule," the development of local government on modern lines, and the building up of regional administrations in the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories. These are broadly in accordance with our general policy and can be

accepted, although the details will need further working out locally. It is highly satisfactory that the Committee has devoted so much attention to local government and has recognised its importance to sound political development.

The legislature

5. The Committee propose a bicameral system, with a Senate consisting of Chiefs and "elder statesmen" and a House of Assembly consisting almost entirely of members elected directly or indirectly by popular vote. The Committee only decided in favour of a bicameral system by one vote and therefore submitted alternative proposals for a single chamber. It would be difficult to make a bicameral system work in the Gold Coast at this stage of political development. I propose, therefore, to reject the idea of a bicameral Legislature and to accept the Committee's alternative proposals for a single chamber, in which, however, a third of the seats would be reserved for Chiefs and "elder statesmen."

The executive

6. The main questions for decision arise with regard to the Executive. On this subject the most important recommendations of the Watson Commission were:

(1) that there should be a majority of African members drawn from the Legislature on the Executive Council;
(2) that African members of the Executive Council should have responsibility for the administration of departments;
(3) that the Governor should retain his reserve powers;
(4) that the Executive Council should cease to be advisory to the Governor and should become a board of Ministers with collective responsibility to the Legislature and should initiate policy.

7. In the Statement published with the Watson Commission's report we accepted the first three of these recommendations. With regard to the fourth, we stated that, while agreeing that the Executive Council should be the body where all major questions of policy should be discussed, at this stage it would be preferable to retain the formal arrangement in the constitution under which the Council is advisory to the Governor.

8. The Coussey Committee have recommended that the Executive Council should consist of the Governor as Chairman; three *ex-officio* members (the Chief Secretary, the Legal Secretary and the Financial Secretary); a Leader of the House of Assembly elected by that House; and seven Ministers drawn from the Legislature (five with portfolio and two without portfolio). A minority report opposes the inclusion of *ex-officio* members. Under the Committee's recommendations the Ministers would be appointed by the Governor in consultation with the Leader of the House and would be required to resign collectively on a vote of no confidence in the Leader by two-thirds of all the members of the House of Assembly. The Executive Council would be the chief instrument of policy and would be collectively responsible to the House of Assembly and not responsible to the Governor. The Committee has recommended that the Governor should have the usual reserve powers, although a minority report has opposed the retention of the Governor's power of veto.

9. There are two points in these proposals which I feel are unacceptable. In the first place, I do not think that we can accept the proposition that the Executive

Council should not be responsible to the Governor. By proposing that the Governor should have reserve powers, the Committee have themselves in effect accepted the view that he must retain ultimate responsibility, and they have therefore been inconsistent in recommending that the Executive Council should not be responsible to him. The Governor's ultimate responsibility for the administration of the Territory must be retained until the stage of internal self-government is reached. We can, however, safely concede that, provided the Governor's ultimate responsibility is secured, the Executive Council should no longer be a purely advisory body. I propose that it should be described in the constitution as the main instrument of policy (as it is in Jamaica and will be in Trinidad) and that decisions should be taken by a majority vote, subject to the safeguard that the Governor would be empowered to act against the majority decision, with the Secretary of State's prior approval, when the issue under discussion is one falling within the scope of his reserve powers. Equally, of course, the Governor would have the usual reserve powers in relation to the Legislature.

10. Secondly, there are difficulties about the Committee's proposal that a Leader of the House of Assembly should be elected by that House. In the absence of any group or party system in the Gold Coast such an elected Leader could not be sure of retaining the support of a majority of the House of Assembly and, without it, continuity in the conduct of public business could not be maintained. In practice, however, it will be necessary to have a Leader of the Government side in the House of Assembly, and I propose that the members of the Executive Council, *ex-officio* and African, should select one of their number to perform this function.

11. As regards the composition of the Executive Council, I propose, in agreement with the spirit of the Watson and Coussey Committee's reports, that it should have an unofficial majority. A Ministerial system would be introduced, and at this stage the Ministers would be selected by the Governor and appointed by him subject to a favourable resolution by the House of Assembly.

12. The proposed arrangements are similar, in their main essentials, to those already in force in the Sudan and to those shortly to be brought into force in Trinidad, which were approved by the Commonwealth Affairs Committee on 29th October, 1948 (C.A. (48) 8th Meeting, Minute 1). They are also in accordance with the views of the Governor and his official advisers, three of whom flew to London to discuss the report in detail. The Governor is satisfied that the proposed scheme is workable and best calculated to provide political experience for Africans by pinning responsibility on to them and to promote the orderly progress of political development in the Gold Coast.

13. During the past eighteen months there has been considerable political agitation in the Gold Coast and the extremists have been conducting a campaign for immediate responsible government, which has attracted support among the less responsible elements. There is, however, a large body of moderate opinion which, while recognising that the country is not yet ready for full responsible government, is convinced, as the Governor and I myself are, that immediate constitutional advance is necessary. I think that it is important that the Governor should be placed in a position to rally behind him this moderate opinion. The Coussey Committee is recognised by the public in the Gold Coast as having been a widely representative body and its report is undoubtedly a victory for moderate opinion. If we accept the report broadly, subject to the reservations set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 above, as I

feel sure we should, the Governor hopes to have moderate opinion behind him, although the extremists will not of course be satisfied. If we are not prepared to accept it broadly, moderate opinion will be alienated and the extremists given an opportunity of gaining further and weightier support and of making serious trouble. I am satisfied that at the present stage of political development in the Gold Coast no system would be workable which did not provide, as my proposals do, for a very considerable degree of African participation in the control of policy, while preserving the Governor's ultimate responsibility.

14. The Committee's report is known to have been submitted to the Governor on 29th August. We have handled it since its receipt with great expedition, as indeed was publicly promised by the Governor, with my authority. The public in the Gold Coast is anxiously awaiting its publication and, in the view of the Governor, which I share, it is important that it should be published without delay. It is important also that His Majesty's Government's views on the report should be published simultaneously with it, since otherwise there would be a period of uncertainty and speculation on the intentions of Government, of which the extremists would undoubtedly take advantage for their own ends.

15. Subject to the concurrence of my colleagues, I therefore propose to publish the report on 26th October, and at the same time to issue a statement of the views of His Majesty's Government in the form of a despatch to the Governor. I also propose to make an announcement in the House of Commons on that day in reply to an arranged question.

65 PREM 8/924 12 Oct 1949

'Gold Coast constitution': minute by Sir Norman Brook (Cabinet secretary) to Mr Attlee, commenting on CP(49)199[1] [Extract]

... 3. This project for a Constitution has obvious weaknesses, but these are inherent in any scheme for a substantial devolution of political responsibility falling short of full responsible government. It is impossible to devise any Constitution which will completely satisfy nationalist aspirations while retaining ultimate power in British hands. In the light of past events, we appear to be virtually committed to a substantial measure of constitutional advance in the Gold Coast. The Secretary of State is satisfied that the proposals put forward by the Coussey Committee will command sufficient support to offer a reasonable hope of success for the new Constitution, although there are extreme elements of political opinion which will continue to press for more.

4. It might be helpful to the Cabinet to have some information about the working of the Jamaica Constitution, which was framed on somewhat similar lines; and they may also want to know what are the probable repercussions on other African Colonies of this substantial step forward towards full responsible government in the Gold Coast.

5. The Gold Coast is strategically important to us, and the Ministry of Defence are anxious that the Colonial Office should keep in touch with them in the drafting of

[1] See 64.

the constitutional documents. In general, the Ministry of Defence feel that the Colonial Office are apt to overlook their interest in the defence aspects of Colonial constitutional changes, and they hope that they can in future be brought in at an early stage in the consideration of such changes. . . .

66 PREM 8/924, CM 58(49)3 13 Oct 1949

'Gold Coast constitution': Cabinet conclusions on the recommendations of the Coussey Committee

The Cabinet considered a memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (C.P.(49) 199)[1] reporting the conclusions reached by a local Committee which had been appointed in January, 1949, to consider constitutional reform in the Gold Coast.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies said that he was in favour of accepting the recommendations of this Committee subject to three points: (i) He thought it impracticable to adopt the proposal for a bicameral legislature: he preferred the alternative suggestion of a single Chamber in which a third of the seats would be reserved for Chiefs and elder statesmen. (ii) He considered that the Executive Council must continue to be advisory to the Governor, rather than responsible to the House of Assembly, for so long as the ultimate responsibility for the administration of the Colony rested with the Governor. (iii) In the absence of a Party system, he did not regard it as practicable for the Leader of the House of Assembly to be elected by that House and he proposed that the Leader should be selected by the Executive Council.

In discussion it was suggested that, as this constitution would not provide full self-government, some undertaking might be given that the constitution would be reviewed after a specified period of years. This would be helpful in answering the sort of criticism which was commonly directed against our Colonial administration in international discussions at the United Nations and elsewhere. It was, however, the general view of the Cabinet that such undertakings were undesirable in principle: they were apt to have an unsettling effect on the local population, who were encouraged thereby to press for further constitutional reform instead of applying themselves to the task of getting the best out of the constitution currently in force.

The Cabinet:–

(1) Approved the recommendations in C.P.(49)199 regarding the reform of the constitution of the Gold Coast.

(2) Authorised the Secretary of State for the Colonies to publish the report of the Committee together with a statement of the extent to which the Government accepted its recommendations.

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[1] See 64.

67 CO 96/800/1, no 88 5 Nov 1949

[Coussey Report]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir Arden-Clarke on reactions to the report and HMG's statement

I was very glad to get your telegram No. 767 of the 2nd November, which confirms the generally favourable press reports about the local reception of the Coussey Report and H.M.G.'s Statement which have appeared in one or two papers here. I hope things will continue to go as well as they have gone up to now.

Copies of the press comments in this country have been sent out by the Information Department and no doubt you will have seen them. Apart from the "Daily Worker" the comment is uniformly favourable and very satisfactory from our point of view. The reports which have appeared in the two main New York papers are on the contrary very unsatisfactory. We invited the American correspondents to our press conference but they did not come and a very undesirable slant has been given to the reports there. I enclose copies of the two reports[1] in question and of correspondence which I have had on the subject with Martin[2] and Sabben-Clare.[3] I think it would be helpful if you could arrange for copies of any particularly interesting press comments in the Gold Coast on the Report to be sent direct to Sabben-Clare in Washington. In so far as the local reaction is favourable, this would strengthen his hand in dealing with any American enquirers or press people.

I have had a quiet private talk with Spears[4] about the Report. He has been ill and I do not know how much contact he has had with his colleagues – very little, I suspect. Moreover they have not, I think, yet fully digested the Report and they certainly have not discussed it in detail among themselves. Spears thought very well of the drafting of the Report and its presentation and it is quite evident from what he said that he had not expected it to be nearly as good as it is from this point of view. He was more critical of its substance and was clearly apprehensive of its effect on the companies and on future investment. I used all the obvious arguments with him and I think that he fully appreciates that, having regard to what has happened, the companies will have to accept the substance of what has been conceded as a fait accompli. It is, however, I think, quite likely from what he said that they will ask for larger representation than two for the commercial and mining community in the Legislative Assembly. I suggested to him that the important thing was not members in the Legislative Assembly but effective consultation and cordial relations between the mining community and the new Gold Coast Government. He appreciates this, but I expect we shall get some suggestion in favour of larger representation. Of course I expressed no view on this. We may well be asked to have an informal talk with the London Committees of the Chamber of Mines and Chamber of Commerce and it would be very useful if in preparation for that you could let me have your comments on the points raised in my letter of the 8th October.[5] I should also very much appreciate any comments you may feel able to make on the general line we

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[1] Not printed.

[2] J M Martin, formerly private secretary to the prime minister, 1940–1945; CO assistant under-secretary of state from 1945; deputy under-secretary from 1956.

[3] E E Sabben-Clare, colonial attaché, Washington, 1947–1949.

[4] Maj-gen Sir E Spears, managing director, Ashanti Goldfields Corporation.

[5] See 63.

should take vis-à-vis minding the commercial interests here as regards their position under the new constitution. Clearly it is desirable that we should be as forthcoming as possible to them and give them a sense of security to the extent that we reasonably can.

Gorsuch had a talk yesterday with Sayers,[6] the Colonial Adviser to the Conservative Party (who, as you probably know, used to be in the Tanganyika Administration and is always ready to be friendly and helpful to us). I had a few words with him afterwards. The appropriate organ of the Party is apparently going to talk over its attitude to the Report at a meeting to-night and I may hear further from Sayers after that. I gather from him that there may well be a debate on the Coussey Report in the House of Lords about the end of November initiated by Tweedsmuir.[7] One of the points which Tweedsmuir is certain to raise is the position of the European Civil Service under the new constitution. Sayers says that the Opposition will press for something more than mere general statements and will want to know what the safeguards are. We pointed out to him that there would be a Public Service Commission to keep service questions out of politics and that clearly the Governor would have to retain a substantial degree of control. The Coussey Committee had recommended a Commission with composition and functions as proposed in the Soulbury Report for Ceylon. We had accepted the idea of a Public Service Commission in principle but had fully reserved the position of the detailed arrangements regarding its composition and functions. The Soulbury Commission had been dealing with a Commission to be set up under internal self-government in Ceylon; the arrangements for the Gold Coast would for this reason have to be different in certain respects. It would be most helpful if you could let us have before the time of this debate your comments both on the Commission (in the light of what we said in our memorandum on this subject sent out with Saloway) and in general on what line should be taken in the debate about the public service.

Sayers said that he understood two Labour members were trying to initiate a debate in the House of Commons on the subject but I do not know whether this will materialise.

I am sorry further to lengthen this letter but I should like to tell you that in the course of conversation with Coussey he suggested that at an appropriate stage it would be very desirable for one or two of the Africans likely to play a leading part under the new constitution to visit Ceylon during the interim period to see there how a constitution works. He thought that there was a tendency for people in the Gold Coast to believe that they knew how to work a constitution, whereas in fact they had no experience of it. I told him that I should like to mention the idea to you in a letter and he quite agreed to this. Perhaps you would in due course let me know what you think about the idea. If you want us to sound the Ceylon Government, we could at any time do this through the High Commissioner's Office in London.[8]

A suggestion has also been made that at the appropriate stage, i.e. presumably after the new constitution had been promulgated and when it was just coming into

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[6] G F Sayers, formerly administrative secretary, Tanganyika Territory.

[7] 2nd Baron (cr 1935), formerly assistant district commissioner, Uganda Protectorate, 1934–1936; later chairman, joint East and Central African Board, 1950–1952, and president, Commonwealth and British Empire Chambers of Commerce, 1955–1957.

[8] This idea was not apparently pursued further.

force, one of the House of Commons experts should visit the Gold Coast to advise the Government and members of the Legislative Council on any questions of procedure, etc. on which such advice would be useful. There is nothing to be done on this, I think, for some time ahead, but we could try to get Fellowes,[9] who has been out to Ceylon and I think to one of the West Indian colonies, to pay a visit to the Gold Coast, if you wanted this. Alternatively Gilbert Campion, recently retired Clerk of the House of Commons, might have to be approached. There is clearly no hurry about this, but perhaps you would let me know what you think some time.

P.S. Tweedsmuir's motion is down for the 30th November. It is simply to call attention to the administration of Colonial affairs in the African Territories; but I believe that the intention is to concentrate on the Coussey Report. I will let you know if I hear that this intention has been changed.

[9] (Sir) E Fellowes, clerk-assistant, House of Commons, 1948–1954.

68 CO 96/800/3, no 1 — 7 Nov 1949

'Conditions of service of expatriate officers in West Africa': note of CO departmental meeting [Extract]

1. *Contract terms in the Gold Coast*

The Governor of the Gold Coast had been given the Secretary of State's views on the suggestion made by the Select Committee on Africanisation that any expatriate staff required should normally be recruited on contract terms, and that only when it was clear that these terms would not attract recruits should pensionable terms be offered. The Governor had nevertheless pressed his request that Mr. Williams[1] should visit the Gold Coast to discuss with members of the Committee and others problems affecting the recruitment of expatriate staff.

Mr. Gorsuch informed the meeting of the gist of a talk he had had with Mr. Armitage[2] from which it appeared that it was likely that the Committee on Africanisation would recognise the necessity of offering pensionable terms in order to recruit expatriate administrative officers, and in certain circumstances officers of other categories. *Mr. Armitage* also reported that a member of the Legislative Council, who had previously opposed the payment of the full scale of cost of living allowances recommended by the administration to the legislature, had said that he believed that if the proposals were now resubmitted to the Legislative Council they would be approved. It was, however, Mr. Armitage's view that in spite of these indications of a change in the attitude of leading Africans towards expatriate staff a visit by Mr. Williams to the Gold Coast at the present time would be extremely valuable.

[1] J B Williams, CO assistant under-secretary of state, 1949–1953 (responsible in 1949 for the Colonial Service Division).

[2] R P Armitage, financial secretary, Gold Coast, 1948–1951.

After discussion, in which *Mr. Edmonds*[3] emphasised that pensionability was still one of the prime attractions in recruitment for the Colonial Service, it was agreed that a telegram should be sent to the Gold Coast, asking for the Governor's assurance that a visit by Mr. Williams would be justified. The wording of the telegram was agreed.

2. *Legislative safeguards for the civil service*
The meeting went on to consider the nature of the reply which should be sent to an enquiry addressed to the Secretary of State by the Gold Coast Government asking whether legislation existed in other Colonies safeguarding the Civil Service against interference of a political nature by members of the Legislative Council. It was agreed that the Governor should be informed that no legislation existed which limited the powers of a Legislative Council to legislate on the terms of service of Civil Servants. The reply should be drafted by Mr. King on the basis of his minute on the file, and copies of the Ceylon documents therein referred to should be sent to the Gold Coast for information.

3. *Representations by the Association of Senior Civil Servants in the Gold Coast (other than those relating to abolition terms)*
The meeting agreed that so far as matters of appointment, promotion, discipline, and dismissal were concerned, the security of the Service was to be found in the establishment of a Public Service Commission to advise the Governor, who should remain the constitutional agent in these matters. The suggestion was, however, endorsed that it should if possible be made a matter of policy that a Public Service Commission should be precluded from considering promotions within classes, and should consider only those promotions involving a move from class to class. While in the Secretary of State's despatch this limitation was suggested, it was based on the impracticability of the examination by a Commission of a great number of promotions; i.e. it was allowed to rest on grounds of expediency. It was agreed that it would be desirable if Mr. Williams were to discuss this question with the Gold Coast authorities, and find out whether there would be any political objections to a definition of policy of the nature described, which would have the effect of strengthening the position of expatriate officers.

It was, secondly, agreed that as a preliminary to reaching a conclusion upon the action which should be taken on the matters which had given rise to the Association's representations, Mr. Williams should discuss with the authorities in the Gold Coast what possibility there was of securing the Legislative Council's agreement to the proposals originally put to them with the authority of the Administration and the Whitley Council, if these were now re-submitted. The suggestion was made that the possibility of agreement would be increased if, from the side of the administration, some concession were made in the form of a proposal for tapering off the allowances originally recommended.

In the meanwhile an interim reply to the Association's communication should be sent to the Governor in the terms suggested in the draft on the file.

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[3] E R Edmonds, CO assistant secretary, Colonial Service Division, Dept 'E'.

4. *Abolition terms*

The meeting then turned to a consideration of the request by the Association of Senior Civil Servants in the Gold Coast that, unless a satisfactory solution were reached of the problem created by the action of the Gold Coast Legislature in altering the terms of proposals relating to the conditions of service of Civil Servants which had been endorsed by the Government, "abolition terms" should be introduced.

Mr. Williams made the following points in favour of the institution of abolition terms:

(a) nothing was worse for the morale and the efficiency of a service than the retention in office of dissatisfied or embittered persons who stayed in their posts because they could not afford to leave them.

(b) The introduction of abolition terms would recognise a development with regard to the expatriate service which followed logically on the policy of granting self-government in increasing measure. Nevertheless, as time went by it was likely that their introduction would become increasingly difficult: the present time was the easiest for their introduction.

(c) The knowledge that abolition terms were available was likely to aid recruitment of the type of expatriate officers who were badly needed; such men would be more willing to join the Colonial Services if they were sure that in case of need they could give up their job without severe financial loss.

Mr. Cohen pointed out that:

(a) The position where the West African colonial legislatures could negative or modify proposals of the executive with regard to the conditions of service of Civil Servants was not a new one. It had in fact been created in 1946 when unofficial members of the Legislative Councils were given a majority of votes, and so acquired control of the power of supply. The position had been subsequently complicated by the development of the policy of Africanisation; it was the impact of the policy of Africanisation upon the present constitution of the legislatures that gave rise to the problem, and not any consequences which might be expected to flow from the contemplated establishment of new constitutions in the Gold Coast, Nigeria or Sierra Leone.

(b) In his view, no steps likely to be taken in the Gold Coast as a result of the Coussey Committee's recommendations justified the institution of abolition terms. This step would be justified only when that degree of self-government was reached which would be marked by the abolition of the reserve powers.

(c) The institution of abolition terms now would almost certainly result in a wholesale departure of members of the technical services.

(d) It could also be represented as an admission that the Gold Coast had achieved a degree of self-government for which there was no justification in the proposed constitution. This admission would therefore be false, and likely to be dangerous.

(e) It was unlikely that any proposal to institute abolition terms would be accepted by the Gold Coast Legislative Council; and he was certain that this acceptance was essential to the working of any system of abolition terms.

Mr. Gorsuch added the point that:

(f) Where abolition terms were available it was possible that the process of

promotion would be abused. African leaders might approach the question of the promotion of Africans less responsibly if they knew that expatriate officers had the means and opportunity of alleviating dissatisfaction by resigning.

In *Mr. Cohen's* view the constitutional safeguard for the maintenance of proper conditions of service for expatriate Civil Servants (whose security in matters of appointment etc. should be achieved by the Public Service Commission) was the Governor's reserve powers, and he would prefer to see these used directly to secure adequate terms of service for expatriate staff, rather than indirectly to secure the supply of funds to meet obligations under a scheme of abolition terms; he believed that an attempt to work a scheme of abolition terms would require the use of the reserve powers.

Mr. Williams emphasised that there was a serious crisis of confidence among the expatriate Civil Servants in the Gold Coast. Reserve powers had for very good reasons not been used to forestall this crisis; but it might be thought that it would always prove inopportune to use reserve powers to protect the interests of the Civil Service.

Mr. Cohen said that in the Gold Coast there had been in existence for the past year circumstances which had produced a demoralising atmosphere for Gold Coast Civil Servants to work in. He believed that this atmosphere would change, especially when African leaders had to carry the burden of responsibility for administration, when they would learn to appreciate the value of their expatriate staff. He would oppose any attempt to make constitutional provision now for abolition terms, a step which was likely to provoke feelings and arguments prejudicial to the change of atmosphere, and also likely to make difficult, if not impossible, the securing of reasonable terms of service for the expatriate staff.

The meeting agreed:–

(a) that Mr. Williams should discuss the matter with the authorities in the Gold Coast;

(b) that a paper setting out the pros and cons of the proposal to institute abolition terms should be prepared, and the suggestion should be made to the Secretary of State that he might like to discuss the paper before Mr. Williams's departure. In view of the discussions which Mr. Williams would be having in the Gold Coast, any decision in the matter should await his return. . . .

69 CO 96/800/3, no 6 — 10 Nov 1949

'Conditions of service of expatriate officers in West Africa': CO note of a meeting with officials from West Africa

Mr. Cohen explained that the purpose of the meeting was to take the opportunity of the visit of Mr. Ramage,[1] Mr. Armitage and Mr. Baker-Beall[2] to discuss informally with them certain important questions relating to the conditions of service of expatriate officers in West Africa.

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[1] R O Ramage, colonial secretary, Sierra Leone. [2] R W C Baker-Beall, deputy financial secretary, Nigeria.

Nigeria – relief measures

Mr. Baker-Beall said that the rise in the cost-of-living was causing considerable hardship to expatriate officers with families serving on the long Scales. Unofficial members of the Legislative Council would resist any attempts to increase basic salaries, being satisfied that they were sufficient, if not generous, having regard to the needs of indigenous officers and to the capacity of the territory to pay. There was a better prospect – albeit a slender one – of securing unofficial support for some increase in expatriation pay, than for the alternative proposal of paying children's allowances, and Mr. Baker-Beall thought that they should be mentioned in that order in the despatch which was to be sent to the Governor. A very large political issue was involved in the question whether to press for either, since if any proposal of this nature were put to the Standing Finance Committee and rejected, in the view of the Nigerian Government it would be incumbent on the Governor to use his reserve powers to certify the measure. At the present stage of planning the new Constitution this must be avoided.

Gold Coast – relief measures

Mr. Armitage said that one of the functions of a Committee composed of Members of Legislative Council which had been appointed to consider measures of relief in the Gold Coast was to consider whether any alternative measures could be adopted in the place of the Cost-of-Living Allowance which had been rejected by the Legislative Council in respect of civil servants receiving basic salary of more than £750. If not they might come back to the original proposals. A time limit had been set to the Committee's deliberations.

Abolition terms

Mr. Cohen said that the draft Note which had been circulated was designed merely to summarize the case for and against including in the new Gold Coast Constitution provision for retirement with compensation for loss of career. The Association of Senior Civil Servants in the Gold Coast had raised the question in the representation which had recently been made to the Secretary of State. The draft Paper was intended to provide a starting point for consideration of the question, and had no official standing.

Mr. Baker-Beall expressed the view that this inclusion of a provision of this nature in the new Nigerian Constitution might well be agreed to by leaders of African opinion. He himself would consider it most unwise, and the Nigerian Government would, he thought, be bound to oppose it. In his view such a course would be interpreted by the more extreme unofficial political opinion as a sign that the Imperial Government was preparing to quit. Furthermore, he believed that a large number of expatriate officers would, if the provision were made, take advantage of it. This was less a matter of low morale than of inability, in the case of officers whose total salary fell short of say, £1600, to make ends meet in present circumstances. He thought that African leaders would certainly agree to the inclusion of abolition terms, and would take what steps they could to get expatriate officers in permanent posts to make use of them, hoping either to take these officers back, or recruit others, on contract terms. They attached much importance to changing the basis of employment of expatriate staff from pension to contract, and this provision would

offer a means which would help to effect the change. The officers whom they would like to take back, or even if need be to keep, were the technical officers.

Mr. Armitage pointed out that if any such provision were made at a time when claims which the expatriate civil servants regarded as just had not been met, its effect would be to encourage a general exodus. In the Gold Coast, provided steps were taken to see that the full claims of the civil servants as they had been embodied in the Whitley Council Agreement were met, and the anxiety of the Service was in this way allayed, the inclusion of the provision in the new Constitution would, he thought, be an excellent thing: it would sustain the morale of officers now in the Service, and would be a help in recruiting expatriate staff. The use of the reserve powers, which had been described as a safeguard of the expatriate officers' conditions of service, was subject to certain conditions in the new Constitution, and the expatriate officers would not be slow to notice this.

Whatever the facts, the expatriate service does at present regard the appointment of African Ministers in control of departments as effecting a change in their conditions of service. The officers most affected are those holding the more senior posts, who will be in closest contact with the Ministers; but most expatriate officers in the Gold Coast are perturbed at the prospect. Mr. Armitage believed, however, that if the original proposals put to the Legislative Council could now, as the result of a firm stand, be implemented in their original form, and if abolition terms were provided for in the new Constitution, few expatriate officers would in fact wish to do what is now the generally expressed wish – to get out when the new Constitution is set up.

He believed further that the unofficial members would make little difficulty about accepting the provision, and indeed that they would vote any sum required under the provision. They were coming, especially perhaps as a result of the enquiries of the Committee on Africanisation, to appreciate the need for expatriate officers; and might be prepared to give them better conditions rather than force them out of the Service, and then have to replace them at a premium.

Finally Mr. Armitage made the point that what had happened in the Gold Coast seemed to call for a review of the Whitley Council machinery.

Mr. Ramage said that unless the present state of morale in Sierra Leone altered considerably he would expect the number of expatriate officers who would make use of compensation terms to be limited. He thought that the institution of such terms might serve as a brake on African politicians of the more responsible sort who would be compelled at the risk of losing their expatriate staff to display a reasonable attitude towards them. A related point was that Africans are reluctant to take decisions which expose them to public criticism; if by any unreasonable treatment of their expatriate staff services were weakened and broke down the blame would be attached to the African leaders, and this they would wish to avoid.

He did not anticipate that there would be serious difficulty in getting the provision accepted by African politicians in Sierra Leone, but this would depend very much on the circumstances which existed at the time.

Mr. Cohen observed that it was clear that once the provision was made, it could not be altered or rescinded; and secondly it would be impossible to include it in the Constitution of one West African Territory and not in those of the others. It looked as if the matter would have to be considered at a West African Conference before any decision could be reached. In the meantime it would be discussed

with higher authority in the Colonial Office. He emphasised that the Note prepared had been for the purpose of clearing minds in the Colonial Office. It should not therefore be taken back to West Africa. Views in the Colonial Office were sharply divided in the matter.

70 CO 96/812/4, no 10 11 Nov 1949

[Trade commissioner]: letter from L H Gorsuch to R H Saloway on a proposal to establish a Gold Coast Trade Commissioner's Office in London

I am afraid that we have been a long time replying to your savingram No. 1738 about the setting up of a Trade Commissioner's Office in London. Apart from our desire to give this important proposal careful consideration here, there have been other reasons for the delay as will become apparent in the course of this letter.

My first comment concerns the functions which it is proposed the Trade Commissioner should have. The definition of these in paragraph 3 of your savingram conforms to what was agreed at the meeting of the West African Council in November last, and with the parallel Nigerian proposals which have been received since; it also represents our own idea of what a Trade Commissioner's functions should be. We have, however, been for some time of the opinion – and this applies both to Keith's[1] Department and to mine – that in the case of the Gold Coast there is a need for something rather more than an office dealing only with trade and business matters. With the steady (and healthy) growth of 'national' spirit among Gold Coast Africans, there is bound to be an increasing demand for a centre here which, while it will not in any way solve the problem of accommodation for students or visitors, will provide a focus for 'national' interests and life in London. As you know very much better than we do, Gold Coasters are particularly susceptible to the emotional appeal of an idea which rises above the purely materialist, and the benefits of such a centre in terms of goodwill amongst students and visitors might be out of all proportion to the financial and administrative outlay. Apart from its special merits in the case of the Gold Coast there are precedents for development on these lines – Malaya, Cyprus and East Africa have such centres.

It so happened that a short time ago Kobina Taylor, the President of the Gold Coast Union – whom, incidentally, we always find most friendly and co-operative – called on Hanrott and sketched the views of the Union on the need for some such centre and on what its functions should be. I understand that these have emerged as a result of discussions over a considerable period among students here and visiting Gold Coast businessmen and 'notables'. At our request the Union have formulated these views in the enclosed short memorandum on the subject which they have addressed to the Secretary of State.[2] You will see that their proposals resemble in some respects what is actually proposed for the Trade Commissioner's Office. Where they differ they are doubtless over-elaborate, though quite reasonable, and I will not

[1] J L Keith, CO assistant secretary, Welfare Dept (which was concerned, *inter alia*, with colonial students in the UK).

[2] Not printed.

attempt to comment on them in detail – except to say that a Gold Coast Centre in our view should not concern itself with the admission of students to Universities which at the present stage is far better left to the Welfare Department of the Colonial Office. We think that the memorandum is significant however, as an illustration of the feeling to which I have referred above, namely that a Gold Coast centre should be something rather more than a commercial office.

We should be interested to have your views on the suggestion that the functions of the Commissioner might be extended, and on the Union's proposals. There is evidently much to be said for starting in a small way and expanding welfare and social functions later, but on the other hand, our conception of what the centre should ultimately be is bound to influence our selection of the Commissioner himself, since it is obviously going to be easier to find a man with purely commercial qualifications rather than one who combines with his commercial experience interest in and sympathy for the activities of students and African visitors from the Gold Coast. Similarly it may be desirable to bear in mind the ultimate function of the centre when making accommodation arrangements.

This brings me to my second general comment on the proposals in your savingram, on the question of the salary to be offered. We note that you propose to offer £1,200 per annum, plus an allowance of £250, and that this relatively low figure has been fixed on the assumption that the post will be filled by an officer on pension or by a retiring businessman. It is possible that you have in mind a specific candidate – Leach[3] himself, I understand, wishes to be considered for the post when he retires – and for this reason you consider the salary adequate. We here have some doubt whether the figure is sufficiently high to attract a suitable man from this country if the post is advertised here. As you may know, the East African Commissioner draws £1,850 plus £500 allowance, and this figure has been given to Nigeria as a ceiling. Since what I have said above about the functions of the post obviously affects the salary to be offered, we are not proceeding to advertise here until we hear further from you, although we note that you have already advertised it in the Gold Coast. If Leach has in fact applied for the post, and if after consideration of the rest of this letter you consider him to be the most suitable candidate available locally, you may like to make a definite recommendation that he be appointed without further advertisement in this country.[4]

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[3] F Leach, secretary for commerce and industry, Gold Coast.

[4] A Gold Coast Trade Commissioner's Office was established in London in February 1951. Its objectives were described as being 'to foster trade, to expedite supplies from the United Kingdom; to provide information about the Gold Coast, to assist in the recruitment of personnel for Government, local authorities and semi-public bodies; to direct Gold Coast residents in the United Kingdom to the various agencies established for their benefit; to interest firms in the industrial development of the Gold Coast; and to provide liason with departments of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in the matter of trade and supplies'. In July 1954 the Office assumed responsibility from the CO for Gold Coast students in the UK. Leach was the first commissioner; he was succeeded by T Kodwo Mercer in 1954. Mercer was dismissed by the Gold Coast government in 1956; see part II of this volume, 235 and 244.

71 CO 96/800/3, no 25 15 Dec 1949

[Civil service]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to A B Cohen on the problem of low morale. *Enclosure*: memorandum by Arden-Clarke to members of the senior service, 1 Nov 1949

One of the first problems which confronted me on my arrival here was to assess the degree of discontent and dissatisfaction existing in all ranks and cadres of the Senior Civil Service, and to examine in what manner the morale of the Service could best be strengthened without at the same time prejudicing the successful fulfilment of the policy of the Africanisation of the Service and the smooth introduction of the new Constitutional changes based on the Coussey Committee's recommendations.

After a careful examination of the position I must advise you that I am seriously disturbed by the low morale of the Service as a whole. The views of the Association of Senior Civil Servants which I transmitted to you under cover of my Confidential Saving telegram No. 1773 of the 23rd September indicate without any exaggeration that the members of the Senior Service have the gravest misgivings as regards their security in the Service. It is not only the impact of adverse economic conditions which has caused the deterioration in their morale. Economic conditions were largely the original cause of dissatisfaction and may still be regarded as a powerful contributory cause. They are not at present, however, the main cause. The attitude of the Legislature, which has recently indicated a lack of sense of responsibility in their dealings affecting the Civil Service, has been a shock to the Service and has opened their eyes to the fact that the 1946 Constitution provided for a considerable advance in self-government and that the conditions of service of the Senior Service are henceforward subject to the approval and consent of the Unofficial majority of the Legislature. The dismay which the Association has evinced at the irresponsible attitude of the Legislature can be readily understood since they fear that those principles that are traditional and common to civil services of the British model will henceforth cease to govern their employment. Their fears have by no means been lessened by the publication of the Coussey report.

The report of the Select Committee on the Africanisation of the Public Service, which has been laid on the table of the Legislative Council but will not be debated until the next meeting, recommends *inter alia* that control of the Civil Service be withdrawn from the field of politics. To what extent this recommendation will meet with the approval of Council remains to be seen. In any event it is of the greatest importance that adequate safeguards should be introduced to protect the security and conditions of service of the Senior Service. I have already addressed the Senior Civil Service in a Strictly Confidential memorandum, a copy of which I enclose, on the part which they are expected to play in the general constitutional advance of the country. I invite your attention to paragraph 6 in which I have stated that I am fully conscious of the need for adequate safeguards covering all matters affecting the employment of Civil Servants and that I will spare no effort to ensure that they are comprehensive and are introduced as part of the new Constitution.

The tentative proposals which I transmitted to you in my Confidential telegram No. 818 have not yet been finally considered by my Executive Council. Time is required to study the documents enclosed with your Savingram No. 1695 of the 17th November and the Association of Senior Civil Servants has been asked if it has

any further proposals for safeguarding the interests of the Civil Service to put forward in addition to those contained in its savingram to the Secretary of State. I will let you have definite proposals as soon as possible and in the meantime I want to make clear that there is a very real need for adequate safeguards if the morale of civil servants is to be restored and the Service is to fulfil its essential role in making the new constitution work. The debate on the report of the Africanisation Committee, when it takes place, will help me to gauge the probable reactions of the Legislature to the embodiment of these safeguards in the constitution.

Enclosure to 71

There has, I am well aware, been a great deal of speculation as to the position of the Civil Service after the introduction of constitutional changes based on the Coussey Report, and considerable concern among members as to the future. I feel, therefore, that I should offer such general advice and guidance as I can at this juncture. I am proposing to discuss these matters with Heads of Departments and others as opportunity offers. In the meantime, it may perhaps be of assistance if I indicate, in the following notes, the lines on which I am working. I am addressing myself here to members of the Senior Service in the knowledge that on their loyal and whole-hearted co-operation much depends, if the Gold Coast is to advance steadily and peacefully along the road to responsible government within the British Commonwealth and in the confidence that their approach to forthcoming changes will be an inspiration to their juniors.

2. I am not able to indicate now precisely what changes will be introduced. The objective of the reforms is to reorganise on a representative basis all bodies responsible for the government of this country from the smallest local councils to the central bodies where policy is determined, to devolve upon the reorganised Local Authorities and the Regional Administrations as many of the functions of Government as may be appropriate and to place upon the shoulders of the African of the Gold Coast the responsibility for the management of his own local and his country's affairs. The Report of the Committee on Constitutional Reform together with the Despatch of the Secretary of State setting out the views of His Majesty's Government on its more important recommendations, provide the plan of constitutional advancement. This plan can only be carried out with the fullest co-operation of the Civil Service, particularly of the Senior Service. It provides, in my view, greater opportunities for constructive work and for service to the community than ever existed before. The difficulties are many, but they can be surmounted if tackled with determination, tact, patience, energy and understanding.

3. In the Coussey Committee's Report there is little mention of the Civil Service as a whole or of any of its branches. It seems that the Committee "assumed" the Civil Service, and they were right to do so. An alert, competent and energetic Civil Service is essential to rapid and orderly constitutional advancement.

4. The introduction of the new constitution will not involve any diminution in the size of the Civil Service – on the contrary its numbers are likely to expand to meet the expanding scope of Government's activities. I do foresee, however, in the case of some of its branches a gradual change in function and responsibilities. Under the new constitution it will be of fundamental importance that Africans in whatever capacity, whether as Ministers in the Executive Council or as members of a Local

Authority, shall assume responsibility for the management of affairs in the Gold Coast. It will be the responsibility of the Civil Service, particularly of the Senior Service, to ensure that they are enabled fully to carry out the tasks with which they are charged. The consequential variation in the functions of Civil Servants will be different in degree according to office, but one thing will be common to all: it will be part of the duty of every Civil Servant – often a major part, always a highly important part – to assist in the development of the new institutions that will be required and to ensure their efficient working. I would emphasise the words "assist in": it is for the African to develop these new institutions, but during the formative period a very great deal of assistance must be given by the Civil Service. This cannot only take the form of advice, important as wise advice will be, but must largely take the form of working in partnership with Africans in the development of their ideas. The Local Development Committees, recently formed, provide an illustration of the general trend of future changes in functions and responsibilities. These changes will be gradual; they will probably make themselves felt first in the work of the Political Administration. The majority of officers, particularly those in the technical and professional branches of the Service, will probably carry on their work for a very considerable period without any noticeable change of functions. Whenever it becomes necessary to redefine the functions of certain classes of officers this will be done. In all case, however, officers of the Senior Service should keep the objective firmly in the forefront of their thoughts: that is to transfer responsibility to institutions managed by Africans and to make sure that they can carry out their tasks.

5. Certain misconceptions appear to have arisen owing to misunderstandings about the policy of "Africanisation". It does not mean throwing out Europeans and replacing them with Africans: it does not mean any change in the principles of promotion within the Service: it does not involve any injustice to serving officers. It does mean the use of every bit of suitable African talent that can be made available, but this is at present and will for some considerable time be insufficient to meet the needs of the country. The country is embarking on large-scale plans of development. I see no reason whatsoever to believe that the constitutional changes will retard these plans; on the contrary, they may in fact give them further impetus. It is obvious to all that these plans cannot be carried out by the African alone. They can only be carried out by the African and European working in partnership. It will be many years before the Gold Coast can provide from its own citizens all the administrative, executive, technical and professional men it requires. The sound sense and practical-mindedness of the Gold Coast people make me believe that when they are faced with the responsibility of developing their own country this will be as obvious to them as it is to me. Every effort will have to be made to get the staff required for carrying out the development of the country and when the fullest use has been made of every Gold Coast African capable and qualified to undertake the various duties, there will still be need to recruit further expatriate officers. It may be that in the future as more qualified Africans become available a greater proportion of expatriate officers will be recruited on contract than in the past, but there will be ample need for the services of every efficient serving officer for many years to come. The Gold Coast Civil Service still offers a satisfying and worthwhile field of endeavour to every serving officer.

6. The Secretary of State is no less concerned than I am to see that the interests

of Civil Servants in the Gold Coast are properly secured. I am fully conscious of the need for adequate safeguards covering all matters affecting the employment of Civil Servants. I do not yet know precisely what form they will take, but I will spare no effort to ensure that these safeguards are comprehensive and adequate and are introduced as part of the new constitution.

7. It is a great task which faces the Civil Service here in the Gold Coast and I am confident that it is fully competent to discharge it. All the qualities traditional in the Civil Servant will be required, and the Service will have the added stimulus of the knowledge that the work it is doing is helping to set the pattern of advance in other Colonies and constitutes an important contribution towards securing the democratic way of life in Africa. The service required of you all is therefore for the future well-being not only of this country but also of the Commonwealth of which it forms a part. What I can do to assist the Civil Service in their task I will do, and I wish all success in the common enterprise.

72 CO 96/800/5, no 12 — 19 Dec 1949

[Commercial interests]: CO note of a meeting with a delegation representing the companies interested in the Gold Coast[1]

The *Secretary of State* welcomed the delegation.

In his introductory remarks *Mr. Mellor* expressed appreciation at the action of the Secretary of State in receiving this Delegation so soon and he said that he and his colleagues also much appreciated the opportunity which Mr. Cohen had already given some of them to discuss points arising out of the new Gold Coast Constitution. The present Delegation was fully representative and they had unanimously agreed the memorandum which had been sent as expressing their combined views. They were all of one mind in accepting the new Constitution as a necessary advance and in their wish to help make it a success on the economic plane. He wished to emphasize, however, the risk of laying up trouble in store for the future by refusing to face difficulties at the moment. The Delegation attached special emphasis on the principle of non-discrimination, which headed the points in their memorandum, since it was in their view necessary to supplement the Governor's veto by writing this principle into the Constitution. *General Spears* emphasised the peculiar delicacy of the position of the mines, who even more than commercial interests had to look a long way ahead before undertaking operations.

It was then decided to take the points in the memorandum point by point.

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[1] Present: Mr Creech Jones, A B Cohen, L H Gorsuch, E G G Hanrott (CO); Mr Mellor and Mr Samuel (United Africa Company Ltd); Mr Avezathe (Elder Dempster Lines Ltd); Mr Horsfall (Cassleton Elliott and Company); Mr Hood (Cadbury Brothers Ltd); Mr Harford (Shell Company of West Africa Ltd); Mr Rawlings (John Holt and Company (Liverpool) Ltd); Mr Redmayne (Bank of British West Africa Ltd); Maj-gen Sir E L Spears (Ashanti Goldfields Corporation Ltd and Bibiani (1927) Ltd); Maj-gen W W Richards (Ariston Gold Mines (1929) Ltd); Mr Thompson (African Manganese Company); Mr Leach (Consolidated African Selection Trust Ltd); Mr Scott, J Gliksten and Son Ltd.

2. *Non-discrimination*

General Spears said that in the Gold Coast they were facing a crisis in confidence. From recent experience he had established that it was 30 per cent more difficult to get people to put up money for the Gold Coast than for anywhere else, because the necessary confidence was lacking. *Mr. Mellor* quoted the example of a large investor who had told him that if he had to choose between investing money in the Gold Coast or Nigeria on the one hand and Brazil on the other, he would have no hesitation in choosing Brazil. *Mr. Harford* in endorsing this, stressed the effect of discrimination of [? or] fear of discrimination on the oil operations now being undertaken in West Africa. When asked by *Mr. Cohen* whether this uncertainty was a result of the publication of the Coussey proposals or of the Gold Coast political situation as it had developed during the past eighteen months, *General Spears* and *Mr. Samuel* agreed that it was the latter. The publication of the report and His Majesty's Government's views had allayed rather than increased uncertainty.

Mr. Scott stressed the effect of the uncertainty on the commercial staff in the Gold Coast. It was particularly difficult to recruit Europeans for the Gold Coast, and they were also having difficulties in persuading the existing staff to return after leave. This loss of confidence was due to doubts about their livelihood as well as to fear of discrimination, and business people in British West Africa were particularly vulnerable in the former respect because of the specialised nature of their employment in West Africa. The *Secretary of State* pointed out that British capital had in the past tended to prefer places like Brazil, and that this explained, in part, the neglect of Africa by investors in the past; this, therefore, was no new feature. As regards staff, the Colonial Office had experienced similar difficulties in recruitment, but this was characteristic of the whole post-war period and there was little evidence as yet that this had been aggravated by the proposed Constitutional changes in the Gold Coast. *Mr. Cohen* asked whether the advantages which the companies saw in a "non-discrimination" provision in the Constitution might fairly be summed up as:

(a) Its practical value in preventing discrimination against companies and their employees; and
(b) A psychological gesture to restore confidence.

This was agreed. The *Secretary of State* said that he was in communication with the Governor on this matter, and that he was fully alive to its importance, and he asked the Delegation to accept this assurance. For the present he must reserve judgment.

3. *Representation of special interests in the legislature*

Mr. Mellor, in commenting on the section of the memorandum dealing with this matter, said that the Coussey Committee evidently intended that there should be representation of commercial and mining interests in the Assembly but that the numbers proposed in the Report were in the Committee's view inadequate to carry out this intention. In addition there was the practical problem of how the representatives were to be selected. *Mr. Rawlings* said that, as he understood it, the Assembly would be different from Parliament in that it would not be in continuous session. It would, however, be necessary for the commercial and mining representatives to be in adequate numbers to be available for consultation at any

time and to serve on *ad hoc* or even standing committees. The Delegation was not asking for voting strength but for adequate numbers to allow them to perform this function.

The *Secretary of State* said that it was important in this matter to appreciate the views of African nationalist[s]. To the nationalist, United Kingdom commercial interests were alien interests, and to the nationalist also, brought up to respect the Westminster model, members of Parliament should not represent special interests but should act for the social good and the good of the country as a whole. In his own view syndicalism was not only wrong in principle, but also meant that these "alien interests" were exceedingly vulnerable to nationalist attack. Syndicalist representation of the type proposed was not, he felt, a good way of defending the stability of those interests, since any such arrangements were sure to be repudiated later. Another point was that once sydicalist [sic] representation was conceded it would be difficult to prevent it being extended to other groups in the Gold Coast. An alternative and sounder way to securing the same end was for the Governor to nominate to the Assembly persons with special experience and knowledge of economic affairs, as had been done in the case of Trinidad and other colonial constitutions.

General Spears questioned whether the House of Commons was a fair parallel, since in effect each Member of Parliament represented a cross section of interests. Nor was the kind of argument which the Secretary of State had quoted fair to those business representatives who had served for long periods on the Councils of the territories and played a distinguished part therein. He repudiated the idea of a conflict between European and African interests. Europeans were in the Gold Coast as a permanency and as of right, just as much if not more so than in East Africa, and the Gold Coast could not exist without them. *Mr. Avezathe* said that he had been a member of Legislative Council and Executive Council in Nigeria for 20 years by virtue of his judgment and experience and that he had been consulted on all matters of state, most of which had nothing to do with shipping. *The Secretary of State* acknowledged that commercial representatives on Colonial Legislative Councils often served with great devotion and public spirit, but he said that there must be moments when the obligation to the interests which elected those members must prevail. The existence of this nationalist feeling against "alien interests" was a fact and must not be ignored, however much we in this country talked of partnership. Speaking personally he said that he was in favour of embodying in the Gold Coast Constitution some provision for nominated members such as he had outlined in order to supplement the experience available in the House of Assembly. *Mr. Mellor* said he was satisfied with this statement, and therefore felt that the view of the Delegation did not differ substantially from the Secretary of State's own view in this. *Mr. Cohen* added that it might prove difficult to put this across to Gold Coast politicians.

4. *Regional representation*

General Spears emphasised the importance of this to the mines who might be at the mercy of regional bodies with extensive financial powers on which the mines were not represented. *Mr. Rawlings* made the point that there were men in the employment of John Holt and Company working in the regions who would have specialised knowledge to offer (e.g. of Togoland) but who could not be spared to attend the Central Assembly.

The *Secretary of State* in replying said that the Coussey proposals represented only a framework, and that the details of regional and local government had yet to be worked out. In the case of regional government the special Commissioner had to investigate the question; his report had to be considered by a Select Committee; and a local Ordinance had to be considered by the new House of Assembly. Local and regional government were matters for local decision, although it was known that Africans would welcome advice which the Colonial Office could give based on United Kingdom experience. In view of all this it would be premature to be dogmatic at this stage. Meanwhile the views of the Delegation would be noted, and the matter had indeed already been brought to the attention of the Gold Coast Government.

5. *Advice of business and mining experts*
In reply to a question by *Mr. Cohen, Mr. Mellor* said that it was the intention that the proposed Advisory Committee should include Africans and that it should advise the Minister dealing with Commerce and Industry. It should not, he suggested, be written into the Constitution but would provide a means whereby African Ministers and also African members of the Committee could benefit from European experience in economic affairs. He thought that it was for further consideration whether there should be one Committee or several in view of the fact that economic matters would enter into the province of more than one Minister.

6. *Ex-officio ministers*
Mr. Mellor explained that this paragraph had been put into the memorandum because the Coussey Report seemed to suggest that the position of these Ministers might be reviewed relatively soon. *Mr. Cohen* said that it would be specified in the Constitution that three of the members of the Executive Council would be *ex-officio*. This could not be altered without the constitution itself being altered.

7. *Police*
General Spears mentioned that Mr. Lamptey[2] had already said that the Police Force should not be put under the Chief Secretary. The Secretary of State said that both he and the Gold Coast Government were greatly preoccupied with matters of internal security at the present time and that the Delegation might rest assured that this consideration would be borne in mind when the constitution came to be implemented and portfolios were allocated.[3]

8. *Economic affairs*
Mr. Mellor referred to the fact that from reports he had received it appeared that it was the intention to give the portfolio of Commerce and Industry to an elected Minister. *Mr. Cohen* said that this would not affect the dominant position of the Financial Secretary in economic affairs.

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[2] Kwesi Lamptey, acting deputy chairman of the CPP during Nkrumah's detention between 1950 and 1951. Lamptey resigned from the CPP in 1951 because of his discontent with the CPP's gradualism and compromises with the British.

[3] The decision about the retention of control over the police had not yet been made explicit. The question only emerged when discussion began on the organisation of ministries. See 74, section 4, and 76.

9. *Application of laws*
Mr. Cohen said that the Gold Coast Government were well aware of the delicacy of the question of the position of Europeans in relation to Native Courts. The Colonial Office would be watching the position, and if the question were handled discreetly he thought that it would not give rise to difficulty.

10. *Civil service*
The *Secretary of State* said that both he and the Governor were intensely concerned that the interests of the Service should be safeguarded under the new Constitution, and he was confident that Africans would increasingly recognise the need for looking after the interests of European Civil Servants and indeed for recruiting more Europeans during the period while Africans were being trained.

11. *Future consultation*
Mr. Mellor asked which was the best way for the firms to make representations in future. The *Secretary of State* said that he and the Colonial Office were always prepared to hear anything the representatives of the companies might have to say. Any such representations would be fully considered and where appropriate would be referred to the Gold Coast Government. He felt, however, that it might be in the companies own interest to give latitude to their local representatives to settle what were essentially local problems on the spot. It might be possible to distinguish between essentially constitutional matters which might be discussed in London on the one hand, and regional and local matters which were best settled in the Gold Coast on the other. *Mr. Cohen* suggested that in sending out the record of this meeting the Governor might be asked for his views on this point. *Mr. Mellor* agreed, but referred to the danger of resuscitating the spectre of A.W.A.M. by forming a local association.

12. In concluding the *Secretary of State* referred to criticisms in this country that His Majesty's Government were allowing political advance in the colonies to outstrip economic development. He wished to assure the Delegation that this was not so and that the advance was being co-ordinated over the whole field. It was, however, necessary to satisfy legitimate political aspirations and to carry African opinion if the future was to be secured. Secondly, he wished to refer to the criticism that had been made that this Constitution had been settled by His Majesty's Government without adequate discussion in the United Kingdom. In publishing its Statement on the new Constitution, His Majesty's Government had, like its predecessors on similar occasions, followed precedent in declaring itself, but during the period of implementation which had now started there would be ample opportunity for those concerned, like those interests represented by the Delegation to express their views and these would be fully considered.

73 CO 96/800/4, no 19 — 20 Dec 1949
[Organisation of ministries]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir C Arden-Clarke

[J B Williams returned from his visit to the Gold Coast (see 68) with a copy of the schedule mentioned in the first sentence of this letter. Cohen sent the response

reproduced here before another copy of the schedule arrived in the CO with Arden-Clarke's letter to Cohen dated 21 Dec 1949. Arden-Clarke's letter, which elaborated on a number of issues raised in the schedule, is printed as 74. The two letters are reproduced in their correct date order but readers will find it helpful to read 74 before 73.]

You gave Williams a copy of a schedule of Ministries on which you were working and you had some discussion with him on it. Williams has explained that these do not represent your final proposals and that they are in fact only one of a number of drafts, since the proposals were still being worked out in discussion when he left. We felt, however, that it might be useful if we let you have any comments we wanted to make semi-officially on these proposals, in spite of the fact that they are not in their final form. We know that you are anxious to get the arrangements for the Ministries settled as soon as you can in order to break up the Secretariat into its component parts; it may help to speed things up if we let you have our preliminary views at this stage. They are not, of course, intended to be the final views of the Colonial Office, but they are the result of lengthy discussions between Gorsuch, Williams and myself.

The points for consideration fall under three heads:-

(1) the arrangement of Ministries;
(2) the salaries of Ministers and Secretaries;
(3) the arrangements for filling the posts.

I will take these in order.

As regards *the arrangement of Ministries* we have two major comments:-

(1) Labour seems such an important subject and one likely to occupy so much of the time of the Minister and Secretary concerned that we feel it ought to be the main subject of one of the Ministries. For that reason we are doubtful about combining it with Health. We are very doubtful also whether it ought to be handled in a Ministry largely concerned with departments or other organisations which are big employers of labour. It follows from this that we do not think that it ought to be part of the work of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Mines or the Ministry of Communications and Works. Would it be possible to have a Ministry of Labour, Lands and Surveys? If this were done, such a Ministry could hardly, we feel, deal with local government without overburdening the Ministry concerned.

(2) This leads on to our other main point. We are doubtful about giving local government and regional administration to a Minister at all, at any rate in the first instance. I discussed this point at some length with Loveridge when he was here and expressed the view that if at all possible local government ought to be under the Chief Secretary at the beginning. I said the same about regional administration. In the notes which we sent out after the talks we suggested that, if possible, the Chief Secretary should be responsible for relations with regional administrations.

We all realise, of course, that it is necessary to resist the temptation to put all kinds of departments onto the *ex-officio* members. Williams tells me that you would have liked to put more onto them, but were doubtful whether this would be acceptable politically.

As far as Regional Administrations are concerned, is it in fact necessary that they should fall within the responsibility of any Minister? The Regional Administrations will have to deal with each of the Ministries in accordance with the subject under discussion. If a communication on policy has to be sent to the Regional Administration on behalf of the central Government, would it not be sent on behalf of the Executive Council as a whole? In other words, could it not be arranged in practice that the Chief Commissioners would communicate with the Chief Secretary while not allocating Regional Administrations as such to any of the Ministries? This would mean in practice that any general subject concerning Regional Administration would have to be dealt with in the Chief Secretary's office; matters of concern to one or other of the Ministries and also of concern to Regional Administrations would presumably in any case be dealt with primarily by that Ministry. We wonder also whether it is not likely to increase feelings of insecurity in the District Administration if Regional Administration as such is under one of the Ministers. We would therefore like you to consider whether it would not be possible to arrange things in the way I have suggested.

Local government is more difficult to deal with. We appreciate that there are strong reasons for having local government and regional administration dealt with in practice by the same Ministry, but we assume that local government could hardly be handled by simply leaving it to the Chief Secretary without allocating the subject formally to any Ministry. Although there is no Local Government Department at the moment and local government is dealt with by the Chief Commissioners, I imagine that some central body will be needed, however small, to ensure that the local government reforms being carried out following on the recommendations of the Select Committees are co-ordinated to the extent considered desirable. Presumably also some central body will be required in connection with the urban local authorities in particular. Is it quite out of the question to keep local government under the Chief Secretary at first with a second Secretary to deal with this in addition to the Secretary who would be Secretary for the Civil Service? It appears from the schedule that you have in mind Sutherland[1] for this work in connection with local government. The point was covered in our notes sent out after the constitutional talks here. I do not know whether what we suggested there would help at all towards a solution.

I should not be at all surprised if you told us that you felt it impracticable politically to put local government under one of the *ex-officio* members. But we felt bound to raise the matter with you because it does seem to us that the local government reforms would be more likely to go through quickly if they could be kept under the Chief Secretary at first.

The only other comments which we have on the distribution of business are:-

(a) We hope that the business other than education given to the Minister of Education and the business other than health given to the Minister of Health can be kept down as much as possible, although we accept that both can do something extra, the Minister of Health probably a little more than the Minister of Education.

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[1] D A Sutherland, Gold Coast administrative officer, class I, from 1946; secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 1950.

If local government were to go to the Chief Secretary, perhaps the Minister of Health could take housing.

(b) We think that co-operation ought most appropriately to go with Agriculture or Natural Resources, since it is a rural subject. But that portfolio seems pretty full and I suppose that the alternative is to put it with Commerce and Industry.

Turning now to *salaries*, we have no comments on the salaries proposed for Ministers. We agree that £1,650 plus £500 expatriation allowance is appropriate for Secretaries, but do not see why the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Mines should have less than the others. The subject is one of vital importance to the economic development of the territory and we would have thought that if it were kept lower than the others the importance of the department might tend to be underrated. The same argument would not, of course, apply if you had a second secretary in a big department but, if you decided to adopt the suggestion which we have made above about having two Secretaries to the Chief Secretary, we assume that both would be on the £1,650 grade.

We are worried about the status of Chief Commissioners. At present they rank on the same level as regards salary as the Attorney-General and Financial Secretary and are members of the Executive Council. In H.M.G.'s Statement of August, 1948 (page 8) it was suggested that the Governor should be entitled to invite them to be present at meetings of the Council when matters particularly concerning them were being discussed, although it was not suggested that they should be members of the Council. This special arrangement is not retained under the existing proposals, nor are we suggesting that it should be. But we do feel very doubtful whether Chief Commissioners ought to be two steps lower down than the *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council. Ought they not to be on a level with the Secretary to the Governor and the Special Commissioner for Development, with a salary of £1,800 plus £500 expatriation allowance, rather than £1,650 plus £500 expatriation allowance? The difficulty of the work of Chief Commissioners will, I imagine, be increased rather than reduced under the new system. They will have Regional Councils to deal with and they will have to hold their own with Ministers. The District Administration in the field will look to them and I imagine that, at any rate as far as Ashanti and the Northern Territories are concerned, the people of the region will look to them to a very great extent. We hope, therefore, that you will be prepared to agree that in status and salary they should rank immediately below the members of the Executive Council itself.

As regards heads of Departments, we hope that their status will not be reduced. Although we should see no objection to heads of Departments becoming Secretaries (e.g. Cheverton, Barton and Burden)[2] and indeed think this very desirable in principle, it may well turn out in the future that most of the Secretaries will be Administrative Officers. We think it in any case very important from the point of view of the standing and morale of departmental officers and the maintenance of standards of technical efficiency that heads of Departments should not have a decreased status; they also will have to hold their own with Ministers. They should stand in the same broad relation to Ministers and Secretaries as they do at present to the Colonial Secretary. This is in fact the position in the East African Territories

[2] C Cheverton, director of medical services; for Barton and Burden, see 32, notes 6 and 7.

which have the Member system, which structurally is the same as the Ministerial system to be introduced in the Gold Coast. We very much hope therefore that, although some Directors will become Secretaries, and although Directors will work under Ministers through Secretaries, the status of Directors as such will be maintained. This may involve some reconsideration of existing salaries of Directors in relation to the salaries of Secretaries.

As regards the *officers* whose names are given in the schedule, we have few comments. We gather that you may want to put Chapman[3] into the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Mines rather than the Finance Ministry. You discussed with Williams the possibility of getting Rolleston[4] for the latter. We are now rather doubtful whether he will in fact be available and we are reviewing the field here to see whether we have any alternative names to suggest from outside. We are also reviewing the field with a view to suggesting names from outside for the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Secretary of Communications and Works. We see no objection at all, as I have already implied, to the appointment of the Director of Medical Services and the Director of Education to be Secretaries of these Ministries, if you decide to recommend that. We think that Burden deserves to be a Secretary and if you have a Ministry dealing primarily with labour, that would be a suitable post for him.

We have no comments at this stage on your proposals for Chief Commissioners, but are a bit more doubtful, I must confess, about the names mentioned for Assistant Chief Commissioners. We realise, of course, that the local field is somewhat thin and these are posts which must be filled locally. We have not considered the names mentioned for the Labour and Social Welfare Departments, but note that you will require a Director of Education from outside if Barton is made the Secretary for Education.

You will no doubt be letting us know in due course whether you want to ask for any executive or higher executive officers from the Colonial Office, as suggested in my letter of the 7th October.

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[3] H J N Chapman, deputy financial secretary, Gold Coast, from 1947.

[4] W L Rolleston, temporary CO principal, 1946; service in Malaya, 1946–1949 (acting financial secretary, North Borneo, 1948); executive officer, development, Tanganyika, 1950.

74 CO 96/800/4, no 2 — 21 Dec 1949

[Organisation of ministries]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to A B Cohen

I have been considering the question of the organisation of the ministries required under the new Constitution. The proposals for constitutional reform involve the disappearance of the Colonial Secretary as principal adviser to the Governor on all matters of policy and as chief executive officer, the liquidation of the Central Secretariat with its co-ordinating functions, and the distribution of all Government business between nine separate ministries for which three *ex-officio* members and six elected members will be responsible. I have discussed this question at length with my principal advisers and at a conference with all Heads of Departments and

have had an informal meeting with members of the Legislative Council on the subject. My proposals, framed in the light of these discussions, for the organisation of the nine new ministries are set out in the schedule attached to this letter.[1]

2. *Co-ordination*

(a) *Development.* The question of how the activities of these nine ministries can best be co-ordinated is not easy of solution. The country is embarking on an ambitious Ten-Year Development Plan which affects all ministries and this Plan must be supervised and co-ordinated. For this purpose I originally proposed to create the office of Special Commissioner for Development, which would not be attached to any particular ministry. My idea was that this officer would be charged with the duty of carrying into effect the Ten Year Development plan, when that is finally approved, and would, therefore, act as adviser to the various Ministers on all development questions affecting their ministries, would co-ordinate generally all development works and would be responsible for supervising the general planning and execution of large-scale schemes, such as the Volta scheme, which would be beyond the scope of any one ministry. In addition to these duties this official would act for the Chief Secretary whenever the latter was on leave or acting for the governor, i.e. for four months or more every year, and when acting as Chief Secretary, would be a member of the Executive Council. Similarly the Chief Secretary would take over the functions of the Special Commissioner in addition to his own when the latter is on leave. I adopted this device as I thought it probable that any proposal to make the Chief Secretary "Member for Development and Reconstruction" as in Kenya in addition to his responsibilities for defence, external affairs etc., would be viewed locally with considerable disfavour on the grounds that it was concentrating too much authority in the hands of one of the three *ex-officio* members and that less objection would be raised if these duties were assigned to an official not of Cabinet rank, who could be regarded as official adviser to all the ministries. I found, however, in the course of my talk with Legislative Council members that some unholy significance appears to attach to the title of "Commissioner", whether he be "Special", "Chief" or "District", in the minds of some of them, and that the idea of development being added to the portfolio of the Chief Secretary did not seem unacceptable at any rate as a provisional measure. I propose, therefore, to create the post of Secretary for Development immediately under the Chief Secretary, who will be the minister responsible for development in the Executive Council and in the Legislature. The Secretary for Development will carry out all the functions assigned above to the Special Commissioner, including that of acting for the Chief Secretary, whenever necessary, and will rank below ministers but above the secretaries to the various ministries.

(b) *General.* There remains, however, the question of the machinery required to co-ordinate generally the activities of the nine ministries. Policy will be decided by the Executive Council, but there must, in my opinion, be some equivalent of the "Prime Minister's Office" and "Cabinet Office". (My idea of how these offices work is, I confess, nebulous in the extreme). I propose, therefore, to establish a considerably enlarged Governor's Office in charge of a Secretary to the Governor, who will rank above the Secretaries to the various ministries. It will be his duty to ensure that the

[1] Not printed.

functions of the different ministries do not overlap and that copies of correspondence between the various ministries and the Colonial Office on other than routine matters are submitted for the information of the Governor, to deal with the business of the Executive Council and see that questions submitted for consideration have been properly examined and that all ministries concerned have been duly consulted, and to see that correspondence from the Secretary of State, circular despatches, petitions and all communications addressed to the Governor are dealt with as may be appropriate.

3. *Leader*
At this point I should mention the position of the proposed "Leader", which the Executive Council is to elect from among its own members. I imagine the first business of the new Executive on meeting will be to elect its Leader. This Leader will almost certainly be one of the elected Ministers. The Governor, after consultation with the Leader, will then distribute portfolios to six of the Ministers. The Leader may or may not wish to assume responsibility for any particular ministry. In any event, he, like the governor, will have to be kept fully informed of all that is going on and the Governor's Office will be responsible for passing to him, as it does to the Governor, the information he requires to fulfil his responsibilities as Leader.

4. *Ministry of Defence and External Affairs*
Defence cannot be divorced from internal security and one of the principal instruments in the maintenance of internal security is the Police. There will be some opposition locally to the Police being under an *ex-officio* member and not an elected minister but I regard it as essential that at this stage defence, internal security and police should remain in the Chief Secretary's portfolio.

The Public Relations Department is responsible for the exposition to the public of the policy of the government as a whole. It should not, therefore, be allocated to one of the specialised ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, but should for administrative purposes at any rate be under the Chief Secretary. Broadcasting is so closely bound up with the work of the Public Relations Department that it also has been placed under the Chief Secretary.

I assume that the three officials who will be *ex-officio* Ministers will have the titles of Chief Secretary and Governor's Deputy, Financial Secretary and Attorney-General and Legal Secretary (see paragraph 6 below) and will become *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council by virtue of these titles and that provision will accordingly be made in the Order-in-Council. The person appointed to act in any one of these three offices would thus *ex-officio* become a member of the Executive Council. I think it preferable that the designation of the Chief Secretary's Office should be that of "Chief Secretary and Governor's Deputy".

5. *Ministry of Finance*
It will be noted that the Financial Secretary, who will be Minister for Finance, remains responsible for economic policy.

6. *Ministry of Law and Justice*
The Coussey Report recommended that this Ministry should be held by the "Legal Secretary". It is proposed that the Attorney-General should be the Legal Secretary

and I am advised that he will have to retain the title of Attorney-General to enable him to fulfil his statutory functions. To comply with the law and with Coussey, he will therefore be styled "Attorney-General and Legal Secretary".

There is at present no post of Registrar-General here and the Chief Registrar undertakes a surprisingly wide range of unconnected subjects, most of which are inappropriate to an officer of Court. I am having this question examined and it seems probable that it will be necessary to establish in the very near future a Department of Registrar-General, which will be included in this ministry.

7. *Ministry of Health and Labour*

The grouping of Labour with Health may not seem, at first sight, to be an appropriate arrangement but I was influenced in this choice by the strong arguments put forward at the conference with Heads of Departments against putting Labour under a Minister who was responsible also for the development of commerce, industry or mining, or for undertaking works. It was thought that the dual responsibility to managements and employees that would result would make his position extremely difficult. It seemed desirable, therefore, to group Labour with one of the Ministries concerned with Social Services which might be considered as unbiased in favour of either management or employees. I am aware that, in some Colonies, Labour is joined to Education. This arrangement would have seemed to be suitable here also except that Education, which is a heavy and rapidly expanding responsibility, combined with Social Welfare would together form an onerous ministry. I therefore came round to the view that Labour might conveniently be grouped in one Ministry with Health, which, on its own, would have constituted one of the least onerous of the proposed ministries. It is convenient to group Co-operative Societies with Labour.

8. *Ministry of Education and Social Welfare*

The Prisons Department has been included in this Ministry as its work is more and more concerned with the reform of prisoners and their education for citizenship.

9. *Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources*

Geological Survey has, in this country, been so closely concerned with mining that I am persuaded that it may, for the present, appropriately be grouped with mining in the proposed Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Mines. If the development of rural water supplies, to which I attach great importance, proceeds as vigorously as I hope, it may at a later stage be advisable to transfer the Geological Survey Department to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Lands had, in a previous plan, been grouped under the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources but, as you are aware, land in the Gold Coast, apart from Crown Land, is almost all communally-owned by Stools or other communal authorities. The administration of land would, according to the recommendations of the Coussey Report, be divided between the Stools, as customary owners, and the proposed local authorities. It seemed best therefore to group Lands with Town and Country Planning under the Ministry of Local Government.

10. *Ministry of Communications and Works*

The responsibilities for harbours and ports are at present divided between the General Manager of the Railway, the Comptroller of Customs and Excise and

the Director of Public Works. I am having the question of allocating these responsibilities to one Head of Department within this ministry examined.

11. *Ministry of Local Government*
The Chief Commissioners of Ashanti and Northern Territories (Butler and Norton Jones) were at first opposed to the establishment of a Ministry of Local Government on the grounds that (a) it was redundant; (b) it might lead to unwarranted interference by the Minister with the Regional Administrators and their staffs (i.e. the Political administrations) in the exercise of their statutory powers and duties; (c) it would cause unnecessary delay if everything had to be referred through this ministry instead of direct to the ministry concerned; and (d) the Northern Territories valuing their status as a Protectorate, would resent their Regional Administration being put under a Minister from the South and would prefer the Governor to be responsible. Admittedly much must remain obscure until decisions have been reached, in the light of the analysis to be made by a Special Commission appointed for the purpose, as to the activities to be delegated to the Regional Administrations and their relationship, general and financial, with the Central Government. Nevertheless I think the position is sufficiently clear to say that there must be some Minister, answerable to the Legislature (and the Governor) for the activities of the Regional Administrations in the exercise of their powers to supervise Local Authorities, control their finances, and impose sanctions. There must be someone of ministerial rank to obtain in Executive Council decisions on policy in connection with the development and activities of Local Authorities, the delegation to them of additional powers, and their claims to grants from the Public Exchequer. Questions will arise in connection with powers delegated to Regional Administrations and Local Authorities in the spheres of health, education, public works and social services (paragraph 342 (e) (i) of the Coussey Report) which will have to be settled with other ministries, sometimes at ministerial level. It seems to me that in view of the different stages of development in the various regions of the Gold Coast and the very considerable changes it is proposed to bring about in the structure and functions of local government institutions, a Ministry of Local Government will be essential. In addition to their functions as Regional Administrators, Chief Commissioners, as the Chief Executive Officers of the Central Government (Coussey, paragraph 331), will have many other duties to perform and in connection with these will deal direct with the appropriate ministry. It would not be appropriate and contrary to the spirit of the new constitution if they were to deal direct with the Governor, who has only an ultimate and no immediate and direct responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of government business or the execution of policy. It would be possible to add local government to the portfolio of the Chief Secretary but this, I feel sure, would prove most unacceptable to local opinion. Butler and Norton Jones now both accept the need for a Ministry of Local government, as proposed in the schedule, and I will discuss the question with Mangin at the first opportunity.

12. *Political administration*
You will observe that the Political Administration does not appear anywhere in the schedule. This omission is deliberate. Administrative Officers will constitute the bulk of the senior staff of the various ministries and those serving in the field

under the Chief Commissioners will as the executive officers of the Central Government have a variety of duties to perform on behalf of practically every ministry. They cannot therefore appropriately appear under any particular ministry but will, like the rest of the Public Service, come under the Chief Secretary for purposes of administration.

13. *Audit*
To place the Audit Department, which is directly responsible to the Director General of Colonial Audit, under any single ministry also seems inappropriate and it has been omitted from the schedule. The Director of Audit will have close relations with each ministry and should, I suggest, if he is unable to clear any problems directly with the Minister concerned, report direct to the Governor.

14. *Correspondence with Colonial Office*
It was suggested in paragraph 8 of paper A.G.C. No. 2 "Constitutional Developments in Africa" prepared for the London Conference of African Governors in 1947:

> "Normally all correspondence should be by official letter between the Under Secretary of State, with the head of the Colonial Office department concerned signing, and the Government of the territory, with the appropriate Member of the Executive Council signing on behalf of that Government. Despatches between the Secretary of State and the Governor would not be ruled out, but should only be used on special occasions."

This would not be inappropriate here, but I should welcome your advice on this question in the light of your experience with other Colonies where the Member system has been introduced.

15. *Timetable*
The reorganisation of the present Central Secretariat system into nine ministries and a Governor's Office will inevitably take some time and cause some temporary dislocation in the conduct of government business. The new organisation must be tried out and any necessary adjustments made to secure its smooth working and efficiency, before the new Constitution comes into being, if the new and inexperienced ministers on assumption of office are to be given the means (and adequate guidance) for the proper discharge of their responsibilities. I propose therefore to put this reorganisation into effect about August or September next, on the assumption that the new Constitution will not come into being before 1951. To this end I have asked Armitage to frame the estimates for 1950/51 to provide for the establishment and working of nine ministries (without their Ministers) for the last six months of the financial year. My informal meeting with the members of the Legislative Council was designed to pave the way for the acceptance of these estimates by the Legislature.

16. I will address you separately about the emoluments of Ministers and the retention by them of their business or professional interests while in office and about the staffing of the proposed ministries.

17. I am sending copies of this letter to Macpherson, Beresford-Stooke and Wyn Harris[2] and apologise to you all for its length.

P.S. Since this was drafted I have had an opportunity of discussing this letter with Mangin who has read it and accepts the proposal for a Ministry of Local Government set out in paragraph 11.

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[2] Sir P Wyn-Harris, gov of Gambia, 1949–1958.

75 CO 96/800/5 30 Dec 1949–3 Jan 1950

[Commercial interests]: minutes by A B Cohen and Mr Creech Jones on the representation of commercial firms in the new Legislative Assembly

Sir T. Lloyd

I should like you to see this paper before the despatch goes for copying. I naturally hesitate to press my views further about representation on the Legislative Council, but as now amended by the Secretary of State the proposal, if accepted by the Governor, will do practically nothing to satisfy the representations of the firms, which I believe to be in part justified. If the amendment about co-operatives, trade unions and other important interests is taken literally by the Governor and the number of nominated members is retained at six, I do not see how the firms can get more than three members as opposed to the two proposed by the Coussey Committee and the two they have at present. Part of the firms' case is that in a very greatly enlarged Legislative Assembly with bigger powers representation by two members would be quite inadequate. If in practice they got only three, I am sure that there would be very strong criticism indeed, which I personally do not think that it would be easy to rebut. If there can be eight nominated members, then I think that we can get away with it.

I wonder whether the Secretary of State might be prepared to consider eight rather than six.

A.B.C.
30.12.49

Yes but why 8? The jump from 2 to 8 is very big. The concession of 6 in all the circumstances is more than reasonable & exposes Ministers to severe criticism from Africans & on grounds of principle. It is experience & special knowledge that we want contributed to the Chamber but that contribution carries with it a say & vote on every matter dealt with by the new Parliament & by the Executive. A "block" can be powerful, influential, clever and self-seeking. That is why I think it should be diluted by interests other than narrow economic ones. In the old Chamber there was no objection to 2 only. Now because the London "interests" arbitrarily think of a number or count a number of heads we are asked to concede what they demand. Why should we in face of African feeling & liberal sentiment here? There is no question of

these interests withdrawing from W. Africa – it is too profitable for most of them. Why should U.A.C. be represented if for no other reason than they wish to protect their "monopoly" & safeguard their existing practices?

A.C.J.
3.1.50

76 CO 96/821/6, no 30 10 Jan 1950

[Organisation and functions of ministries]: letter from L H Gorsuch to G Wheeler (Ministry of Defence)

In Cohen's absence in Paris I am writing to consult the Ministry of Defence on the question of the organization and function of Ministries in the Gold Coast under the proposed new constitution. If you will kindly refer to Cabinet Paper CP(49)199[1] of the 8th October, 1949 you will find in convenient form a summary of the constitutional changes which were approved by the Cabinet and which were subsequently published as Colonial Papers Nos. 248 and 252. Two of the most important features of these changes were that there should be a majority of African members drawn from the Legislature on the Executive Council and that these members should have the title of Minister and should have responsibility for the administration of departments.

The Gold Coast Government is now engaged in planning the changes of the structure of the administration which will be required in order to work the new constitution, the aim being to have this administrative reorganisation completed and in operation before the elected Ministers are actually appointed. The Governor has therefore sent us a preliminary schedule of the organisation of Ministries, showing their functions and the departments of Government which will be grouped under them and this is set out in the enclosed document.[2] We should be very grateful if you would let us have your comments on this schedule of Ministries in so far as it appears likely to affect Imperial defence, and particularly on the allocation of subjects connected with defence to the Chief Secretary and Governor's Deputy who, like the Ministers for Finance and Law and Justice, will be an *ex-officio* member of the Executive Council. You should know that in sending us this schedule the governor has commented in regard to the Ministry of Defence as follows:-

> "Defence cannot be divorced from internal security and one of the principal instruments in the maintenance of internal security is the Police. There will be some opposition locally to the Police being under an *ex-officio* member and not an elected minister but I regard it as essential that at this stage defence, internal security and police should remain in the Chief Secretary's portfolio."[3]

You will see that so far as matters of defence and internal security are concerned there is, in effect, a double safeguard; the portfolio is to be allocated to an official and not to an elected Minister, and the Governor retains under the new constitution his

[1] See 64. [2] Not printed. [3] See 74, section 4.

reserve powers (i.e. the power to "certify" any bill or motion which the Legislature fails to pass) together with his power of veto over legislation.

The Governor is anxious, for strong political reasons, to proceed with this reorganization as soon as possible, and we hope to send him our views on his proposals by the end of next week if possible. We should be grateful, therefore, if you could let us know at an early date whether you have any comments.[4]

[4] Wheeler replied to Gorsuch on 26 Jan 1850: 'We have no comment to make on the arrangements which are proposed for defence and internal security, and we agree with the Governor that it is desirable that the policy should also remain under the control of the official member of the Legislative [? Executive] Council who has charge of defence. We understand that there is no formal constitutional machinery in the full sense for consultation on defence matters between the military and civil authorities, although the West African Council and, at a lower level, the Working Party on Defence each provide a forum for the discussion of defence questions affecting West Africa generally. We assume that there are, however, regular contacts between the civil and military authorities in the Gold Coast, that these arrangements will be in no way altered by the new constitutional reforms and that they will continue to work satisfactorily and that the latter will continue to be consulted at an appropriate stage on all matters of defence interest' (CO 96/821/6, no 44).

77 CO 96/827/13, no 4 28 Jan 1950

[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to A B Cohen requesting an assurance that concessions beyond those agreed are not contemplated

[Cohen replied to this letter in tel no 106, 3 Feb 1950. The tel stated: 'Secretary of State warmly welcomes the action which you propose to take to rally moderate opinion. He believes that it is very important to encourage the emergence of a moderate party before the elections under the new constitution.' Cohen confirmed that Creech Jones accepted the points made in (a), (b) and (c) of Arden-Clarke's letter. The secretary of state had no intention of withdrawing on any of them, or on the point mentioned in the immediately succeeding paragraph of the letter. In view of the forthcoming general election in the UK, Creech Jones could not commit a new secretary of state and Cohen advised Arden-Clarke not to make a public statement to the effect that HMG would not make further concessions. However, for his private information, Arden-Clarke was also advised to proceed on the assumption 'that this policy will be maintained' (CO 96/827/13, no 6).]

The virtual disintegration of the Convention People's Party following upon the loss of its leaders has left something of a vacuum in the political sphere which I am anxious usefully to fill without delay.[1] It is my intention to rally moderate opinion in support of the plan for constitutional advance set out in the Coussey Report and His Majesty's Government statement, with a view to encouraging the emergence of a strong moderate party sufficiently cohesive and vocal to deal with such dissident elements as retain any substantial popular following. There is a growing body of responsible opinion which privately appreciates the very great degree of political advance represented by His Majesty's Government's proposals, but it is as yet only semi-

[1] A reference to the arrests, trials and imprisonment of a substantial number of CPP leaders on charges arising out of the attempted general strike known as 'Positive Action', see 78 and the Appendix to part 1 of this volume, paras 55–89.

articulate and unorganised, and has not devised any means of filling the gap left by the cessation of such intoxicating slogans as "Dominion Status within 48 hours." If we can stimulate an equally vociferous campaign in favour of grasping the opportunity offered by the modified Coussey proposals and showing the world what the Gold Coast can do, we shall, I feel, have gone a long way towards preventing any widespread recrudescence of less fruitful ideas and hopes.

There are at present obstacles to this development in the shapes of a reluctance on the part of certain elements openly to recognise and acknowledge the size of the step forward which the present proposals represent and the weight of responsibility which they will place on African shoulders, and the belief of the less moderate section of the community that the door is still open for concessions on the points of difference between the Coussey Report and His Majesty's Government statement if sufficient pressure is applied. I consider it necessary to dispel these ideas at once and to make it perfectly clear that the proposals do in fact hold out a very great burden of responsibility for Africans to grasp, as heavy a burden indeed as they can conceivably now bear, and that there is no question of His Majesty's Government yielding to pressure on the Coussey recommendations with which they could not originally agree. If these issues are now clarified there is, I think, a good chance of turning the general revulsion from "positive action" into a mass movement in favour of constructive advance along the lines proposed.

Present indications are that the better part of the Press will advocate this course and in order to enlist the support of the Territorial Councils, I am arranging a joint meeting of their Standing and Executive Committees in Kumasi on the 6th of February to speak to them informally on the lines of the draft which I enclose.[2] I hope that this blunt statement will prove convincing and will send them back to their people, the State Councils and to the other Chiefs as missionaries to spread the gospel, so that when the full Territorial Councils meet later in the month we shall receive from them as full support for the modified Coussey proposals as we had for the recent emergency measures.

My intention is to address the Budget Meeting of the Legislative Council at the end of February in the same vein, suitably modified in phraseology, but before I do so I should be grateful for an assurance that there is no danger of His Majesty's Government withdrawing on a number of points from the position taken up in the Secretary of State's despatch. The points on which I wish to be quite definite are:-

(a) that unless the Chiefs very strongly oppose it, in which case the system would be unworkable, the legislature is to be unicameral but the way will be left open for the establishment of a second Chamber at a later stage. I have considered in this connection the writing into the constitution of specific provision for the establishment of a second chamber by local Ordinance, as in the Malta Constitution of 1947, but I am inclined to think that this would be too tantalising and the temptation too great, while the prescription of an adequate moratorium before such legislation could be introduced would be wholly unacceptable. The establishment of a second Chamber, if and when the time comes, would be such a major constitutional change as fully to justify amendment of the constitutional instruments;

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[2] Not printed.

(b) that there is no intention of acceding to any request for a reduction in the number of *ex-officio* members of the Executive and Legislative Councils; and
(c) that there can be no diminution of the Governor's reserve powers as set out in paragraphs 421 and 426 of the Coussey Report and clarified in paragraphs 37 and 38 of the Secretary of State's despatch.

Equally I should be glad of an assurance that the last word has already been said in the despatch on the subjects of the collective responsibility of the Executive Council to the Legislature, the election of a Leader of the Assembly and the mode of appointment of Ministers.

I appreciate that in view of the impending general election[3] it may be difficult for you categorically to commit His Majesty's Government on points to be made in a speech which must be delivered only a few days after the election, but I hope that you will feel able to reassure me on the matters I have mentioned. The time factor is important if we are to seize the opportunity now presented for rallying public opinion to the view we wish it to adopt.

[3] A reference to the snap general election held in Britain in Feb 1950 which returned the Labour Party to government with an effective majority of only six.

78 CO 96/819/4, no 11 — 31 Jan 1950

[General strike]: letter from Mr Creech Jones to Sir V Tewson[1] on the general strike arising from the CPP campaign of 'Positive Action'

I am writing in reply to your letter of the 25th January about the general strike in the Gold Coast and the arrest of the leaders of the Convention People's Party and certain officials of the Gold Coast Trades Union Congress.

At the risk of making this letter rather long it may be as well if I give you some background to these unfortunate events. You will no doubt have read of the new Gold Coast Constitutional proposals which were published by His Majesty's Government as Colonial Papers Nos. 248 and 252. The reception accorded to these proposals in the Gold Coast, as in this country, was on the whole very favourable, and at the December meeting of the Gold Coast Legislative Council, which has an African majority, a motion was passed welcoming them and approving a detailed programme put forward by the Gold Coast Government to give immediate effect to the proposals. Although there has been criticism in the Press of certain aspects of the recommendations, the attitude of both Press and public has shown that the majority of responsible African opinion welcomes the proposals as constituting a very substantial advance towards responsible government. There exists, however, an extreme Nationalist group under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah (formerly closely associated with the British Communist Party) and his Convention People's Party, which has rejected the constitutional proposals and continues to demand the immediate grant of self-government. This Party has considerable influence in some

[1] President of the TUC in the UK.

of the Unions (notably the Railway Union) forming part of the Trades Union Congress and with certain of the leaders of the T.U.C. itself and it has for some time been the publicly announced programme of the C.P.P. to secure its aims by the threat of "positive action", consisting of nationwide strikes, boycotts, etc. designed to bring the administration and the economic life of the country to a standstill. While it is claimed to be "constitutional" and "non-violent", a programme of political strikes directed at the Government is in fact unconstitutional and illegal and was repeatedly declared to be so by the Gold Coast Government, who warned Nkrumah personally that political strikes against the Government were illegal and were bound, under African conditions, to lead to violence and disorder, and that he and his Party would be held responsible for the consequences. He was informed that constitutional methods were open to him in pursuit of his political aims.

Notwithstanding this warning and the fact that there is no dispute between organised labour and the Government, the strike started on the 6th January. The strike got off to a ragged start and was never, in fact, general; but the railways and some other public services were affected, and it became evident that intimidation and hooliganism, incited by the C.P.P. were being employed as means of making it more effective.

It was the view of the Governor that this deliberate challenge to constituted authority would, if not checked, inevitably lead to violence and bloodshed such as occurred in February and March, 1948 and to loss of the confidence of the people in the Government's ability to keep order. African members of the Legislative Council and other responsible African leaders denounced the strike in strong terms, and with their full agreement the Governor declared a state of emergency in the Gold Coast on the 12th January. Since then the labour situation has gradually improved, and there has been a steady return to work by commercial and government employees. The important Mines Employee Union controlling the labour in the gold and other mines has remained at work throughout the strike. The present position is that most of the strikers except the railway drivers have now resumed duty and the situation is practically normal.

The failure, which became increasingly apparent, of their plans drove Nkrumah and the other leaders of the C.P.P. to fresh acts of lawlessness in an attempt to whip up racial and political feeling against the Government. This led to a serious incident in Accra on the 17th January, when two police constables were stabbed to death in action dispersing a band of hooligans. There were also organised efforts to break the curfew which had been declared in several places under the Emergency Regulations. There can be little doubt that but for firm Police action there would have been outbreaks of looting and arson such as occurred in 1948. On the 21st January, the Law Officers in the Gold Coast decided to take proceedings against Nkrumah himself, several of the other C.P.P. leaders, the editors of two C.P.P. newspapers, and the vice-president and secretary of the Trade Union Congress (Messrs. Biney and Anthony Woode), who had all been prominent in organising and spreading the strike. These men have been charged under either the Emergency Regulations or the Criminal Code or the Conspiracy and Protection of Property (Trade Disputes) Ordinance, 1941. The cases are at present before the courts.[2]

[2] Nkrumah was arrested on 21 Jan 1950 and subsequently sentenced, on three separate counts, to a total of three years' imprisonment.

In reply to your question about the part played by the T.U.C. of the Gold Coast in these events I cannot do better than quote the following passages from the Governor's Address to the Legislative Council which was summoned to an emergency session on the 19th January to debate the situation:-

> "In case any doubts still remain on the point, I wish here to state categorically that the Trades Union Congress had no mandate for a general strike, and did not call a general strike. No trade dispute had been declared to exist between any of its constituent Trade Unions and the employers. The Trades Union Congress had been warned that in these circumstances strikes would be illegal and these warnings were repeated to all Unions. From the start of the first strike the Executive of the Trades Union Congress appears to have gone into liquidation. No reply could be obtained to any communication addressed to it and no contact could be made with the majority of its members. From all the evidence at present available it seems clear that the strikes that have occurred have been engineered by certain members of the C.P.P. who had gained positions of influence on the T.U.C. Executive Committee and on the Committees of various of the Unions and that they were brought about in pursuance of the Party's policy of "positive action" and for no other reason whatever.
>
> The people generally, the great majority of the members of the Trade Union organisations, and the greater part of the local Press, were opposed to a general strike and "positive action". For example one union of Government employees informed the head of department concerned that it did not want to strike, had no cause to strike but would have to declare a strike because of intimidation."

79 CO 96/821/6, no 38 6 Feb 1950

[Ministerial organisation and remuneration of ministers]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke

Your letters to Cohen of the 21st[1] and 22nd December dealing with the proposed new ministerial organisation and the remuneration of Ministers have now been carefully examined here. The departments and advisers concerned have had the opportunity of giving their views on those parts of the proposals which concern them and we have subsequently discussed the proposals with the Secretary of State. You may, therefore, take it that he is in agreement with the contents of this letter and I am, where necessary, making reference to views which he has himself expressed.

2. I will deal first with the proposed organisation of Ministries and the schedule of subjects allocated to Ministries and Departments which was forwarded with your letter of the 21st December. The Secretary of State is prepared to accept your view that Health and Labour should be combined at the outset under one elected Minister; he feels, however, that this arrangement should not be regarded as irrevocable and that future developments may well render advisable the separation or re-grouping of

[1] See 74.

these two subjects. He also accepts the arguments in your letter in favour of a Ministry of Local Government and agrees that there is no alternative to this which is politically practicable.

3. He does however think it very important that it should not be made to appear that the Chief Commissioners, as the executive officers of the Regional Administrations, are responsible only to one Minister (and an elected Minister at that). The Secretary of State would very much prefer the arrangement which is outlined in the first paragraph on page 2 of Cohen's letter of the 20th December,[2] i.e. that a regional matter referred to the central Government should be channelled through the Ministry concerned with the subject, and that any general matter, or one of high policy, should be referred to the Chief Secretary's Office for submission if necessary to the Executive Council. We should be grateful for your views on this.

4. On a point of nomenclature, is the title "Ministry of Defence and External Affairs" adequate for the Ministry which will be held by the Chief Secretary? He will in fact be dealing with other important groups of subjects, eg the Civil Service. It has been suggested that this Ministry might be called simply the Chief Secretary's Office, but the Secretary of State does not much like this title and at the moment none of us can suggest a suitable alternative. Perhaps you may have a suggestion to make.

5. If it is practicable, we think that it might be wise to include among the responsibilities specified for the Chief Secretary under "Administration of the Public Service" the control over postings of all senior officers. We have recently had occasion to study the experience of senior officers in Burma under the system of ministerial responsibility which operated there in the decades before the war, and it appears that ministerial interference in the postings of officers was a weakness which had a serious effect on the morale of officers. This is a suggestion which we can only send you for consideration, since it may be that the ultimate control of the Chief Secretary over postings would prove an unacceptable limitation on the powers of Ministers. It does, however, seem to us to be a possibility worth exploring. A further point in connection with the external aspect of the Chief Secretary's function is that the work of certain other Ministries, eg labour, health and transport – has international ramifications. Is it proposed that the Chief Secretary's Office should be the channel of communication with the outside world in such matters? Perhaps this will depend simply on the arrangements to be made about correspondence, about which we shall be writing separately.

6. You have proposed to put Community Development under the Minister for Education and Social Welfare. Clearly both the Education and Social Welfare Departments ought to co-operate closely in the work of Community Development; but as you know, the agreed policy is to avoid the identification of Community Development (which should influence the policy of all Departments) with any one specialised or professional service, and it seems to us that the same objection holds good to placing the subject under a Minister whose province, though in the field of social development, is a specialised one. An alternative, which we should prefer, would be to place Community Development under the Secretary for Development, who would then deal in respect of it with the Chief Secretary or with any other Minister who might be concerned. We should be glad to have your further views on this.

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[2] See 73.

7. We think it right to place Prisons under the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, but we have two relatively minor comments on the allocation of subjects between the three Departments of that Ministry, although we realise that you may not yet have worked all this out in much detail. The first is that we think the handling of Government's relations with voluntary organisations such as the Red Cross should fall to the Social Welfare Department rather than to the Department of Education. The second is that we feel sure that the right place for probation and similar work is under the Director of Social Welfare rather than under the Prisons Department, as appears to be suggested in the schedule.

8. A minor point in connection with the Ministry of Communications and Works is that we think that the Air Service Department might be better named the Civil Aviation Department in view of the number of ancillary services involved which are not technically 'air services'.

9. As regards the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Director of Colonial Geological Surveys here (Dixey)[3] had suggested with reference to paragraph 9 of your letter of the 21st December that a possible way of meeting the geological needs of the Water Supply Department would be to arrange the regular secondment of geologists to this Department from the Geological Survey Department.

10. Apart from the above, we have no comments to make on the proposals in paragraphs 2 to 13 of your letter of the 21st December. We were particularly interested by your arrangements for co-ordination through the Secretary for Development and the Governor's Secretary; you will have seen from the documents we have sent you that Trinidad have adopted a device similar to the latter.

11. I now turn to the question of salaries to be paid to Ministers, which the Secretary of State finds a difficult one; more particularly your original, though admittedly tentative proposal, to pay six Ministers £2,500 with an extra £250 for the Chief Secretary and the Leader has been superseded, after your consultation with unofficial members, by the even higher rates suggested in your letter of 22nd December. It will help in part to explain the difficulties if I give some particulars showing how the salaries payable to Ministers in some other Colonial and ex-Colonial territories compare with those of senior officials who are, or were, often in effect Ministers. In Trinidad, the Chief Secretary is paid £2,300 and the Financial and Legal Secretaries £1,875, whereas Ministers with Portfolio get £1,400 and those without Portfolio £1,000. In Jamaica the Chief secretary is paid £2,000 and the Financial Secretary and Attorney-General £1,600; Ministers get £1,100. In Ceylon, under the 1946 Constitution, the Chief Secretary was paid £3,000 and the Financial and Legal Secretary £2,400, whereas Ministers were paid £1,350. In the Sudan the Leader of the Assembly gets £E1,300 and Ministers £E1,200; senior officials get much more. The Secretary of State fully realises the necessity for offering a salary for Ministers which will attract men of the highest calibre, and appreciates also that at the present time such men are most likely to be found among the professional classes whose earnings may be comparably large. Nevertheless he feels that there is some danger, by paying salaries of this nature, of setting up a class which is divided by a wide gulf from the rest of the people. He would much prefer to see public men taking office in

[3] F Dixey, CO geological adviser and director of colonial geological surveys.

the Gold Coast on a lower scale of emoluments in consonance with the practice which has been followed in other territories cited above.

12. There is also the question whether the Gold Coast economy is likely to be able to support salaries of this amount. Admittedly this is a question which the local legislature may consider lies primarily within its own province to answer, but I should mention that the Secretary of State is concerned at the increased cost of the administrative superstructure which will be placed on the Gold Coast under the new constitutional arrangements. His concern is due to anxiety that the success of the arrangements shall not prejudiced in future by criticism of the weight of that burden or by actual difficulty in bearing it.

13. Taking all these considerations into account the Secretary of State has asked me to let you know that he would much have preferred to see Ministers paid on a more modest scale. He realises, however, that you may not find it possible to put forward modified proposals now that the stage of consultation with the unofficial members has been reached, and if you are convinced that there is no possibility of securing agreement to less he is prepared, though with reluctance, to agree to the original figure of £2,500 for Ministers, with an extra £250, for the Leader of the Assembly and the Chief Secretary. He would however find it most difficult to agree to anything beyond this.

14. There is another point arising from your revised proposals which causes us serious concern; that is, the relationship between the salaries of *ex-officio* and of elected Ministers. The task of the former seems likely to be rendered more difficult by the fact that in some political sections in the Gold Coast their presence in the Government is resented and there may be continuous pressure to get rid of them as soon as possible. If this is so, is it not possible that if they are given a smaller salary than the elected Ministers a pretext will be given for regarding them in the meantime as of lesser status, and thereby make it even more difficult for them to carry out the very important part they will have to play in making the Constitution work effectively? It seems to us that this argument should prevail over the argument that their smaller emoluments are justified by the fact that they are pensionable whereas the elected Ministers are not; the latter may in many cases have other sources of income and a lucrative occupation to go back to when they relinquish office. The *ex-officio* Minister is not pensionable *qua* Minister, but because he is selected from a service in which employment is pensionable. Moreover if Ministers enjoyed higher emoluments it would be entirely contrary to practice elsewhere in the Colonial Empire; and the Gold Coast will be setting a standard for West Africa and perhaps beyond it.

15. As regards the proposed grant of free quarters to elected Ministers, the Secretary of State feels that the emoluments to which as stated above he is prepared to agree if necessary, should be the limit of remuneration to Ministers. It is true that for historical reasons which go back to the eighteenth century four or five principal Ministers of His Majesty's Government enjoy official quarters; but this is entirely a matter of historical accident (the residence at Chequers, for example, being presented by private gift with a maintenance endowment), and as a general rule there is no question of the state accepting any obligation to provide residences for Ministers. In some Commonwealth countries, eg Ceylon and very recently Canada, the Prime Minister is given a house; but there is, as far as we know, no other precedent for the grant of free quarters to Ministers. They are not given, for example,

in Canada, Jamaica, Ceylon, Malta or the Sudan; and even in South Africa, where, because the Government alternates between two capitals a thousand miles apart, official houses are provided, a rent is charged. In Ceylon there is a special hostel for the use of Ministers who live outside the capital and there is provision of this kind in Northern Rhodesia for the Governor's Executive Council. In the light of the practice elsewhere, the Secretary of State's opinion is that the grant of quarters or some form of accommodation should not be made a prerequisite of office in the Gold Coast. He is also entirely in agreement with your view that there can be no question of relieving Ministers of liability for income tax or any other form of taxation.

16. Closely connected with this question of ministerial salary is the question raised on page 2 of your letter of the 22nd December, to what extent Ministers should be allowed to continue with private business and professional activities. This has recently been under consideration in connection with the new Trinidad Constitution, and I am enclosing a copy of a draft despatch (not in its final form) which contains a summary of the rules and conventions governing the conduct of Ministers in the United Kingdom.[4] Our intention is that this despatch should be published in Trinidad but we have still to get authority for that. It does not deal specifically with professional practice, which is likely to be the main part of your problem, but the enclosed extracts from Hansard sum up the practice in regard to Ministers who are solicitors. We have not so far been able to find any comparably authoritative statement relating to Ministers who are doctors.

17. You will see from the draft despatch that it has been considered in the case of Trinidad whether Ministers should be definitely required at the time of their appointment to divest themselves of their outside interests, but that it has been decided that the matter is best left to the sanction of public opinion and the development of custom and usage. It is, of course, not easy to lay down specific rules on this subject, for the reason that the things which are and are not permissible to Ministers are not capable of easy and precise definition. Moreover unofficial members of the Executive Council in Trinidad are to be elected and not appointed in the way it is proposed to appoint Ministers in the Gold Coast. In Kenya, to which you specifically refer, the recognised practice is for the Governor to request an unofficial member accepting office as a paid member to divest himself of all directorships and interests which are not of a family nature.

18. There are in fact two sides to the problem – what to allow to Ministers, and how to enforce any restriction which it may be desired to impose. On the first point it seems to us that the practice in the United Kingdom should be the model and we take it, from the scale of salaries proposed for Ministers, that you also hold this view. On the question of procedure, you will no doubt wish that whichever publicity may be approved for Trinidad (see para 16 above) should be given in the Gold Coast to the code of ethics in this respect which has been worked out in this country. It remains to consider whether in view of the fact that the Ministers will be appointed by the Governor, they should be required as a condition of accepting office to divest themselves of all such outside interests as the Governor may think to be necessary, or to give an undertaking not to concern themselves actively with such interests during their term of office. On this matter the Secretary of State takes the view that

[4] Enclosures to this letter not printed.

the United Kingdom practice ought to be established in the Gold Coast from the outset, and that, particularly in view of the salaries they will draw, ministers should understand that they are required to give their full time to their duties, and to cease to carry on their normal work and to divest themselves of other interests. He would be glad to know whether you concur in this.

19. The last question with which this lengthy letter is concerned is the salaries to be offered to the Secretaries to Ministries and their staffs. We are in agreement with the figure of £1,550 plus £450 overseas pay which you propose for the Secretaries, and with the salaries which you propose for the Principal and Senior Assistant Secretaries. We also agree that the salaries of Chief Commissioners should remain unchanged, although we hope that, as you say, it may be possible to review this decision as a result either of the inquiry into Regional Administration or of a Salaries Commission, if one is held. We agree that consequential changes in the salaries of Heads of Departments may also be necessary as the result of such a Commission.

20. We feel that the Chief Justice, both on grounds of status and in the interests of the judiciary as a whole, should have a salary not lower than the Chief Secretary and we think therefore that he should be given whatever salary is decided for the latter. In all the important colonies the Chief Justice receives not less than the Chief Secretary.

21. Cohen is writing to you separately about the staffing questions which are the subject of your letter of 31st December and will also write about the question of correspondence with the Colonial Office referred to in your letter of the 21st December. I am sending copies of this letter to Macpherson, Stooke and Wyn Harris.

80 CO 537/5816 14 Feb–18 Mar 1950

[Togoland]: minutes by E G G Hanrott and A B Cohen on the discussions with the French on the Ewe problem

As I see it the main reason for our attitude is the importance we attach to Anglo–French co-operation in West Africa since we realise, and presumably the French also realise, that behind at least a part of the Ewe agitation is the desire of many French Ewes to come under British trusteeship. The weakness of our programme, it seems to me, is that we are in danger of ignoring a nationalism which, though economic in origin, is powerfully political in its expression. It is all very well to describe the Ewe movement as reactionary and tribal and to talk, as we did in our "brief" for Mr Khalidy,[1] about the "continental development of West Africa", but in fact we have made very little progress towards such development and all trends seem at the moment to be in the opposite direction – vide the growth of a relatively parochial Gold Coast patriotism. The Ewes are after all an advanced and politically conscious people of approaching one million and some of the nationalist movements which upset the carefully drawn boundaries of 19th century Europe represented equally small groups.

I venture to agree with the Visiting Mission that one cannot just ignore such political feeling – our recent policy in the Gold Coast has shown us the advantages of

[1] Chairman of the UN Trusteeship Council's Visiting Mission to West Africa.

recognising a political feeling in Africa, however crude it may be, and travelling with it. There seem to me to be two courses:-

(1) to tell the Trusteeship Council and the Ewes and Togo Union that no political changes are intended and that whatever measures we may take to ease frontier controls, the future of the Ewes in Gold Coast Colony and British Togoland lies in the Gold Coast and in making the most of their association with the most advanced political institutions in Colonial Africa. This is certain to be unpopular both with the Trusteeship Council and with the All–Ewe Conference and Togo Union;
(2) to expand the Standing Consultative Commission[2] . . . into a body which is more genuinely representative of Ewes and non-Ewes in the two Togolands and which is given real political functions. I have not thought this idea out but it seems, particularly after the praise lavished in the report on the Standing Consultative Commission, that here are the seeds of a compromise which would leave the frontiers between the Administering Authorities untouched but would set up a body which would mean something emotionally both to Ewe and non-Ewe peoples. It would of course be essential to ensure that the peoples of the North were represented from the start – this would be a condition of French acceptance. . . .

I am sorry that these comments are so vague and rambling, but I have felt for some time that we were being excessively negative over the Togoland problem and in our concentration on tactics were in danger of underestimating the strength of nationalist feeling as a factor in the situation.

E.G.G.H.
14.2.50

I submit for Ministerial approval the conclusions of the Paris discussions with the French on the Ewe problem. An English translation of these is at No 15. The general line which we took in the discussions with the French is set out at length in the letter which I wrote to Sir Alan Burns[3] before the discussions on the 7th March [1950]. We subsequently discussed this line with the Foreign Office, who agreed that in the circumstances it was the best line to take. I also explained our line to the Secretary of State before leaving for Paris and he agreed that these proposals might be put forward as a tentative solution. He wished us to report the results of the conference on our return.

Our two main objectives in the talks were:-

(1) to persuade the French that it is necessary to take some definite action in the political sphere in relation to this problem and to announce this to the Trusteeship Council at its June session;
(2) to make some progress towards agreeing with the French what this definite action should be.

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[2] An Anglo–French body designed to address the mutual problems in Togoland. The governor of the Gold Coast and the lieutenant-governor of French Togo (M. Cédile) were joint chairmen. For the background to the Commission, see BDEEP series A, R Hyam, ed, *The Labour government and the end of empire 1945–1951*, part II, 173.

[3] Burns was currently the British permanent representative on the UN Trusteeship Council.

2. Before the meeting the French had circulated a draft memorandum which they wished to present to the Trusteeship Council at its current session. This appeared to us to be quite unsatisfactory in that it proposed nothing definite on the political side, while on the economic side it relied on the current discussions in O.E.E.C. for the liberalisation of European trade which may or may not help to ease the economic difficulties in Togoland. We therefore informed the French as tactfully as possible that we did not think that their memorandum would be sufficient. We urged them to agree that a political solution was necessary and that we should commit ourselves at the present session of the Trusteeship Council in Geneva to making a definite statement with regard to the political aspect of the matter at the next session in June. In this we were fully supported by M. Laurentie,[4] fresh from the Trusteeship Council; but we had a good deal of difficulty in persuading the delegates from the Ministry of Overseas France to agree to such a statement being made. In the event it was only after M. Laurentie had sought Ministerial support that the French agreed. . . . This statement was actually made by the French delegate at the Trusteeship Council last Monday, March 13th and was supported by our delegate. The object of making a statement so quickly was if possible to forestall the departure of the Ewe representatives, who were to appear before the Council, from West Africa. After hearing the statement the Council decided to defer discussion of the problem until June, but the Ewe delegates had already left West Africa and are now at Geneva. They will no doubt be heard by the Council, but we hope to avoid any discussion of solutions at this session. The upshot is that as regards procedure we secured French agreement to what we wanted, namely a definite statement at the June session of the Trusteeship Council of the action to be taken in the political sphere.

3. As regards the substance of the solution, I put forward and described at some length, setting out the pros and cons, the proposal by the Governor of the Gold Coast in his saving telegram at No. 6 that the inhabitants of Togoland under British administration should be consulted on the question whether they would prefer to be integrated into the Gold Coast or to join up with French Togoland under French administration. I explained that, whereas the Governor wished the choice to be between French trusteeship and complete fusion with the Gold Coast, trusteeship coming to an end, our view in London was quite definitely that it was no use expecting the Trusteeship Council to agree to the termination of the trusteeship status of British Togoland at the present time. If Sir C. Arden-Clarke's solution was adopted, therefore, the choice would be between the status quo and joining up with the French.

4. The French reacted unfavourably to this suggestion. They asked how consultation with the people would take place and I said that this had not yet been thought out. Their fear was that there would be some kind of plebiscite, to which they would be much opposed. They also pointed out that consultation with the people of British Togoland would make it almost inevitable that there should also be consultation with the people of French Togoland.

5. The question of a condominium came up because Sir A. Burns was inclined to favour this solution, it having been suggested to him by Mr. Khalidy, the chairman of

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[4] H Laurentie, formerly French alternate delegate on the Trusteeship Council, now a senior member of the Consultative Commission.

the Visiting Mission of the Trusteeship Council to West Africa. The view of the rest of the British delegation, including Mr. Sutherland of the Gold Coast, was definitely against a condominium, partly because of past bad experience of this form of government in the New Hebrides and partly because the establishment of a condominium would do nothing to solve the problem but would set up a Togoland isolated by new frontiers from the Gold Coast (where nearly half the Ewes live) on the one side and Dahomey on the other. The French, while not ruling out a condominium, were not in favour of it and we did not pursue this suggestion.

6. Towards the end of the first day I put forward an idea which had been suggested in earlier discussions by Mr. Gorsuch that the existing Consultative Commission for Togoland affairs (which has two British and two French Ewes on it) should be enlarged and made more representative and should then be given the task of examining the various petitions sent in from different parts of Togoland and advising the two Governments on the future administration of the two Trust Territories. The French reacted less unfavourably to this suggestion and we therefore gave it a good deal of thought during the evening and on the following morning we were able to reach agreement with the French to recommend this solution to the two Governments. The proposal is explained at greater length in the draft saving telegram and draft semi-official letter opposite.[5] The co-chairman of the Consultative Commission are the two Governors and it is proposed that official chairmen should be retained. It is also an important part of the proposal that the Commission should not be entitled to suggest a solution outside the framework of British and French administration. In other words they could not recommend a trusteeship for the whole of Togoland by the United Nations itself. They could, however, recommend that the two territories or either of them or any part or parts of them might be placed under United Kingdom trusteeship or under French trusteeship or under Anglo–French trusteeship. The next step, if our recommendations are agreed, is to consult the Governor and to ask him to put up more detailed recommendations for the Commission in consultation with M. Cédile, his opposite number in French Togoland. We agreed tentatively at the end of the meeting that there should be a further meeting in London during April when we had got the two Governors' views. We therefore want to get these communications off to the Governor urgently.

7. I must say that I was very favourably surprised when the French delegation agreed to the solution now recommended. I had not expected to get any definite conclusions of substance out of this meeting. But the French were subjected to very considerable argument from ourselves during the discussions and I suspect that they were equally, if not more strongly, pressed by M. Laurentie behind the scenes. At any rate I think that we can be satisfied with the results, with which Mr. Sutherland of the Gold Coast was in agreement.

A.B.C.
18.3.50

[5] Not printed.

81 CO 96/820/1, no 2 17 Feb 1950

[Governor's Offices]: letter from P Rogers (CO) to R J P Hewison (Cabinet Office) on the establishment of Governor's Offices in Accra; request that G Hadow be attached to the Cabinet Office to gain experience of procedure

At the end of last year His Majesty's Government agreed to proposals for a new constitution in the Gold Coast which involve the introduction of a Ministerial system early in 1951, with the Executive Council responsible for the formulation of policy and the day-to-day government of the country and African ministers responsible to the legislature for the administration of their departments. In order to co-ordinate the activities of the ministries (there are nine in all) the Governor proposes to establish a Governor's Offices roughly equivalent to the Cabinet Offices, in charge of an official Secretary to the Governor who will rank above the permanent Secretaries to the various ministries. It will be his duty to ensure that the functions of the different ministries do not overlap and that copies of correspondence between the ministries and the Colonial Office on other than routine matters are submitted for the information of the Governor, to deal with the business of the Executive Council and see that questions submitted for consideration have been properly examined and that all ministries concerned have been duly consulted, and to see that correspondence from the Secretary of State, circular despatches, petitions and all communications addressed to the Governor are dealt with appropriately. This arrangement is regarded as essential to the smooth working of the new Constitution, particularly in view of the inexperience of the new ministers.

The officer who will fill this appointment is Mr. G. Hadow, a senior officer of the Colonial Administrative Service whose present appointment is Secretary for the Civil Service in the Gold Coast. Hadow is at present on leave in this country, and the Governor has asked whether during his leave it might be possible for him to spend some time in the Cabinet Offices, since some experience, however brief, of Cabinet procedure in this country would be of obvious value to him in his new appointment. I am therefore writing to ask you whether you would agree to Hadow being attached to you for say, two weeks. I appreciate the inconvenience that this may cause you, particularly in the opening weeks of a new Parliament, but we regard it as most desirable that Hadow should have this experience if it is at all possible and we should be very grateful if you could arrange it.

From Hadow's point of view, the most suitable time for the attachment, if you agreed, would be the last clear business fortnight before Easter, ie from Monday, 27th March until Saturday, 8th April. If this first month of the new Parliament is likely to be too busy from your point of view to make this possible, Hadow could manage the first fortnight *after* Easter, although this is less convenient from his personal point of view. Failing this, he would of course be willing to fit in with whatever time suited you best before his return to the Gold Coast on the 8th May, but he would naturally prefer not to have the attachment at the very end of his leave.[1]

[1] Hewison replied to Rogers on 20 Feb: '. . . we shall be glad to arrange for Hadow to get some experience of the Cabinet Office between 27th March and 8th April. Our idea is that he should sit with [Sir N] Brook's Private Secretary, Bavin, which will place him at the centre of affairs and enable him to gather a great deal of what is going on. In addition we will show him the workings of the mechanical side of the office and will probably also arrange for him to attend a few meetings . . .' (CO 96/820/1, no 3).

82 CO 96/820/6, no 16A [Feb 1950]
'Questions of procedure for ministers': CO memorandum

[This is one of several such drafts prepared by the CO on rules and procedures for the new ministerial and parliamentary system of the Gold Coast. Most of the ground rules were drawn from established practise in the Home Civil Service. It is a useful reminder that formal legislation covered only part of the structural changes brought about in the Gold Coast after 1950. The determination of rules and procedures in the British system seldom lies directly with the legislature and as here results from the executive's experience.]

I. *Executive Council procedure*

Preparation of business for Executive Council

1. The business of the Executive Council consists in the main of:-

(i) Questions of general policy which require a collective decision of Ministers.
(ii) Questions on which there is a conflict of interest between Ministries which has not been resolved.

2. Except in cases of extreme urgency, questions falling under the second of these heads should not be referred to the Executive Council until all other possible means of resolving the conflict have been exhausted, including personal correspondence or discussion between the Ministers concerned.

3. Similarly, matters falling under the first head should be thoroughly examined at the official level, between Ministries if necessary, before they are submitted to Ministers, so that the policy decisions required may be clearly defined.

4. Proposals which involve expenditure or affect general financial or economic policy, should always be discussed with the Ministry of Finance at the official level and, if agreement has not been secured at that level, with the Minister of Finance, before they are submitted to the Executive Council.

5. These rules do not, of course, limit the right of Ministers to submit to the Executive Council memoranda setting out their views on general issues of policy.

6. Matters not involving questions of general policy which fall wholly within the responsibility of a single Minister and do not engage the corporate responsibility of the Executive Council need not be brought to the Council at all. A precise definition of such matters cannot be given, and in border line cases a Minister is well advised to bring the matter before his colleagues.

7. Matters for consideration by the Executive Council should be presented in self contained memoranda prepared in the Ministry principally concerned. When a Minister wishes to raise a matter orally at the Executive Council the Governor's consent should be sought, and the earliest possible notice should be given to the Secretary to the Executive Council.

Agenda

8. The Secretary of the Executive Council takes the Governor's instructions on the subjects to be discussed at a particular meeting and circulates, as long as possible in advance, an agenda paper listing the items of business, with references to relevant memoranda and to any previous discussions in the Council, and particulars of the time, date and place of the meeting.

Executive Council memoranda

9. A memorandum intended for consideration by the Executive Council must reach the Secretary of the Council at least five clear days before the meeting at which it is to be considered. The permission of the Governor is required for any exception to this rule, and will be granted only in cases of extreme urgency.

10. Memoranda for Executive Council should be as brief and as clear as possible. The model memorandum explains at the outset what the problem is, indicates briefly the relevant considerations and concludes with a precise statement of the decision sought. Whenever other Ministries have been consulted their designations should invariably be listed at the foot of the memorandum, and it should be made clear which of them is in agreement with the views expressed and the action proposed. In some instances time may be saved in discussion in Executive Council if the actual wording of the memorandum has been agreed with the Ministries concerned.

11. While it is sometimes useful to include a summary of the main points brought out in the body of the memorandum, such a summary should never exceed a few lines; any longer summary defeats its purpose and simply means repetition. To facilitate reference in discussion, paragraphs should be numbered. Supporting data may often be relegated to an Appendix. If it is desired to seek the authority of the Council to make a public statement or to submit a despatch for the Governor's signature, a draft may be attached.

12. Time spent in making a memorandum short and clear will be saved many times over in reading and in discussion, and it is the duty of Ministers personally to examine all memoranda before submission to Executive Council. An Executive Council memorandum is a personal, though formal, approach by a Minister to the Governor and to his fellow Ministers, and the Minister is responsible for ensuring that the memorandum is written in a style appropriate to such an approach.

13. In no circumstances should an Executive Council memorandum be reproduced in a Ministry. If a Ministry requires an additional copy or copies of a memorandum, application must in every case be made to the Secretary of the Council.

Attendance at the Executive Council

14. Executive Council meetings take precedence over all other Ministerial business. If owing to unavoidable circumstances a Minister is unable to attend any particular meeting, he should give notice to the Secretary as early as possible.

15. The Secretary of the Council should also be informed of Ministers' engagements involving absence from Accra in order that, if some sudden emergency arises, he may be able to inform the Governor at once which Ministers are immediately available.

Executive Council minutes

16. The Secretary is required, in drafting Executive Council Minutes, to avoid so far as is practicable reference to opinions expressed by particular Ministers. The record in respect of each item will be limited to the decision of the Council together with such summary of the discussion as may be necessary for the guidance of those called upon to take action on the discussion.

17. One copy of the Minutes is sent by the Secretary of the Council to each Minister.

18. Ministers are responsible for ensuring that the necessary action is taken by their Ministries to implement decisions on matters within the sphere of their responsibility. It is the duty of the Secretary of the Council to verify that action has been taken by the Ministries concerned to give effect to the Council's decisions.

19. Ministers are personally responsible for the safe custody of the copies of the Executive Council Minutes sent to them. In no circumstances should any person other than the Minister, his Permanent Secretary and his Ministerial Secretary have access to the complete Minutes of an Executive Council meeting. Where a Ministry has to take action on, or is otherwise directly affected by a particular decision, the relevant part of the Minutes may be copied in the Ministry and these extracts may be passed to responsible officers in the Ministry as may be necessary. The distribution within a Ministry of such extracts from Executive Council Minutes should be limited to the occasions on which it is strictly necessary for the efficient discharge of public business, and care should be taken to see that extracts are sent only to those officers who need to be acquainted with the actual terms of the decision.

Return of Executive Council documents

20. Executive Council documents remain the property of the Government. Ministers on relinquishing office will return to the Secretary of the Executive Council all Executive Council documents with the exception of any immediately required for current administration, which may be handed on to their successors.

Secrecy of Executive Council business

21. While the corporate responsibility of Ministers often calls for discussion between Ministers on some important question which falls wholly or mainly within the purview of a single Ministry, the normal course is for the resulting decision to be announced and defended by the Minister concerned as his own.

22. There may be rare occasions when it is desirable to emphasise the importance of some decision by stating specifically that it is the decision of the Executive Council. This, however, should be the exception rather than the rule. The growth of any general practice whereby decisions of the Executive Council were announced as such would lead to embarrassment. Thus, some decisions of the Government would be regarded by the public as less authoritative than others. It is also undesirable that Government decisions should be announced in terms which disclose or imply that they have been reached by a particular Committee of the Executive Council. Critics of the decision reached by a particular Ministerial Committee would press for its review by some other Committee or by the Executive Council, while the right of individual Ministers to speak in the name of the Government would be impaired.

23. The underlying principle is that the method adopted by Ministers for discussion among themselves of questions of policy is essentially a domestic matter, and is no concern of the Assembly or the public. The corporate responsibility of Members depends, in practice, upon the existence of free and frank discussion between them, and such discussion is hampered if the processes by which it is carried on are laid bare.

II. *Precautions against unauthorised disclosures of information*

24. Disclosures in the Press of matters under discussion by the Executive Council or any Committee of the Council may embarrass the Government, impair the efficiency of its administration and assist the opponents of individual Ministers.

The general rule

25. Ministers who share the responsibility for the Government's programme must be generally aware of the development of important aspects of Government policy. But outside this narrow circle knowledge of these matters should be confined to those, whether Ministers or officials, whose duty it is to assist in the formulation of the particular policy concerned, or who need to know what is afoot because of its effect on other aspects of public business for which they are responsible.

26. Government policy which has not yet been authoritatively published should not be discussed with persons outside the Government unless this is necessary for the transaction of public business; and care should be taken to see that private discussions between Ministers are not held in places where they may be overheard. In particular it is contrary to the practice of the corporate responsibility of Ministers to make known the attitude of individual Ministers on matters of policy.

Points to be kept in mind

27. Ministers have a personal responsibility for ensuring that all members of their staffs understand the need for exercising the strictest discretion, and in particular for seeing that the appropriate precautions are strictly observed in their Ministries. The following considerations should be borne in mind:

(1) While it is within the discretion of Ministers to decide which of their advisers should be shown Executive Council papers, the normal rule is that such papers should not be seen by any save their immediate advisers concerned in the formulation of policy. It is important that these officers as well as the Ministerial Secretary should have enough background information to enable them to discharge their own functions intelligently, and to offer advice on matters within their province in time for it to be considered; and it is necessary for these reasons that they should be informed at once of some of the decisions of the Executive Council or its Committees.

(2) Ministers are expected to exercise a real measure of control in this matter, and must satisfy themselves from time to time that their instructions in respect of the preservation of secrecy are being carried out.

(3) A Minister has, as a member of Executive Council, responsibilities wider than those of his own Ministry, and will in that capacity receive some documents which are of no concern to any of his staff.

(4) Private members of the Assembly are not members of the Government and accordingly the information given them must be strictly limited, however sympathetic they may be towards the policy of the Government or of the Minister.

(5) Documents containing or reflecting the personal views of Ministers require particularly careful handling if the responsibility of the Executive Council as a whole is to be maintained.

(6) Experience shows that leakages of information often occur as a result of the skilful piecing together, by representatives of the Press and other interested

persons, of isolated scraps of information, each in itself apparently of little importance, gathered from several sources. The only safe rule is, therefore, never to mention such matters even in the form of guarded allusions, except to those who must be informed of them in the public interest (eg, the P.R.O. for the purpose of guidance in his dealings with the Press).

28. Secrecy cannot, however, be secured solely by rules, however carefully drawn, restricting the circulation of papers; public business cannot be transacted without a fairly wide dissemination of confidential information within Government circles. The essential point is the observance of a high standard of discretion by all who acquire knowledge of such information in the course of their duties – an attitude of mind which puts first the interests of the Government as a whole and subordinates everything to that end. It is the duty of Ministers to set this standard of discretion in regard to all confidential matters which come within their knowledge, to give an example to others, and to see that their example is followed.

Responsibility of the attorney-general

29. The Attorney-General undertakes a general responsibility for investigating unauthorised disclosures of information about the proceedings of the Executive Council. Ministers are asked to notify the Attorney-General of any such disclosure which comes to their notice and to assist him in any investigation involving their Ministries or the Departments under their supervision.

III. *Ministerial speeches, broadcasts etc*

General

30. When addressing meetings Ministers must keep within the ambit of Government policy and not anticipate decisions not yet made public. They must be careful in dealing with matters within the responsibility of other Ministers not to embarrass them by statements at variance with Ministerial pronouncements. In all cases of doubt they should consult the Minister concerned.

31. The Ministry of Defence and External Affairs should invariably be consulted before any mention is made of matters affecting the relations of the Gold Coast with other countries.

Effect on business in the Assembly

32. Unless they have first obtained the agreement of the Leader of Government Business in the Assembly, Ministers should avoid saying anything which might affect the programme of government business in the Assembly. Thus they should not, without his agreement, promise Sessional Papers or Reports, the publication of which might result in a demand for a special debate, and legislation should never be promised without the express approval of the Executive Council.

By-elections of the Assembly and local government elections

33. Members of Executive Council should not speak at By-Elections of the Assembly or at Local Government Elections, but may send written messages of support to individual candidates.

Broadcasting

34. Ministerial broadcasts should be kept to the minimum. In view of the fact that broadcasts by Ministers may be regarded as controversial and therefore giving claim to a reply, the subject of the broadcast must be communicated to the Executive Council for agreement before arrangements will be made for the broadcast. The Executive Council may require to see the text or an outline of the proposed broadcast.

IV. *Press articles and interviews by ministers*

Press articles

35. Ministers are precluded from journalism in any form; but this prohibition does not extend to authorship of writings of a literary, historical, scientific, philosophical or romantic character.

36. This rule need not be interpreted as debarring Ministers from communicating in writing with the Press on occasion in order to supplement the means already used for enlightening the public in regard to measures before the Assembly and other administrative questions affecting the work of their Ministries. A Press release issued by the Ministry will usually, however, serve the same purpose more conveniently. In deciding whether to write to the Press a Minister should bear in mind his obligations to the Executive Council and to the Assembly.

37. These rules govern dealings with the Press of other countries as well as the Press of the Gold Coast.

38. The granting of special interviews to individual Press representatives is a matter for the discretion of the Minister concerned, but is a practice generally to be avoided. If granted, an interview should be confined to elucidating the policy or work of the Ministry concerned. The same considerations regarding obligations to the Executive Council and the Assembly apply, and the Minister should bear in mind that an interview granted to a single newspaper or agency may arouse jealousy and therefore hostility in the rest of the Press.

General

39. In general, Ministers should keep such activities to a minimum, and bear in mind that their relations with the press are always liable to be the subject of Questions in the Assembly.

V. *Absence of ministers from duty or from the Gold Coast*

40. Ministers who wish to absent themselves from their duties, or to be absent from the Gold Coast on duty, require the permission of the Governor. In similar circumstances Ministerial Secretaries should obtain the consent of their Ministers as well as the permission of the Governor.

VI. *Access of ministers to the governor*

41. Ministers communicate with the Governor direct by letter, minute or orally as may be appropriate, and they are accorded interviews with the Governor by arrangement whenever they wish. Apart from meetings of the Executive Council, the Governor frequently requests Ministers to see him, sometimes individually and sometimes collectively, to discuss those activities of the Government which have been entrusted to them. Discussion on these occasions is for the most part

informatory, and the Governor may request a Minister to prepare a record of the points dealt with at any interview, or in any telephone conversation. This record should be sent to the Secretary to the Governor for the Governor's approval.

42. It is the duty of Ministers to inform the Governor at the earliest possible opportunity of any important event which comes within their purview.

VII. *Permanent secretaries*

Appointment and duties

43. Permanent Secretaries are members of the Civil Service and are appointed by the Governor. Subject to the general direction and control of the Minister, the Permanent Secretary exercises supervision over the Departments for which the Minister is responsible. It is the duty of a Permanent Secretary to advise the Minister on all questions of policy coming within the scope of the Ministry's responsibility, to assist in the formulation of policy, to ensure that decisions on policy are transmitted to the proper quarter for execution, and to keep the Minister informed of the progress made in translating such decisions into action.

44. The Permanent Secretary is also responsible to the Minister for the organisation and control of the Ministry.

45. In official letters Permanent Secretaries will use the expression "I am directed by the Minister", and will sign as "Permanent Secretary to the Ministry".

Consultation with other ministries

46. In order that he may carry out his functions effectively the Permanent Secretary is particularly concerned to maintain the practice of consultation with other Ministries on all matters which do not fall wholly within the purview of his own Ministry. He must satisfy himself by personal investigation at frequent intervals that the appropriate channels of consultation are used and are working properly. A review of methods and facilities for such consultation may be conducted from time to time, as may be necessary, by a committee appointed on each occasion for the purpose. This committee will normally consist of one official (other than the Permanent Secretary) drawn from each Ministry, presided over by an official from the Office of the Secretary to the Governor (other than the Secretary), but the use of such a committee does not relieve either the Secretary to the Governor or the Permanent Secretaries to Ministries of their responsibility for maintaining efficient machinery for consultation.

VIII. *Ministerial secretaries*

Appointment and duties

47. Ministerial Secretaries are appointed by the Governor with the advice of the Executive Council. The primary duty of a Ministerial Secretary is to assist his Minister in the Assembly. In order that he may fulfil this function effectively he must be kept fully informed of the policy of the Ministry, and should be required by the Minister to participate in the formulation of policy within the Ministry in order that he may take an active part in the introduction or defence of that policy in the Assembly.

48. The Ministerial Secretary should be specially qualified to see that in the execution of policy due regard is paid to the Minister's obligation to answer in the

Assembly for the administrative and executive acts of his Ministry, and it is open to a Minister to charge his Ministerial Secretary with the responsibility for this political aspect of any subject which falls within the scope of the Ministry. When a Minister has determined what subjects involving administrative or executive action by the Ministry should receive the attention of the Ministerial Secretary, it is the duty of the Permanent Secretary to ensure that the Ministerial Secretary is kept in touch with all action taken or contemplated in connection with those subjects which may have a political significance.

Relations with the permanent secretary

49. Although a Ministerial Secretary may be authorised to assume responsibility for the political side of any particular subjects within the responsibility of a Ministry, this arrangement cannot relieve the Minister of his ultimate responsibility for policy. Nor can it relieve the Permanent Secretary of his general responsibility for the organisation and control of the Ministry or of his duty to advise on matters of policy. The Minister is entitled to look to a single person who can advise him on policy over the whole range of the Ministry's work, and that duty must be discharged by the Permanent Secretary.

50. The Ministerial Secretary, not being part of the official hierarchy of the Ministry, is not subject to the directions of the Permanent Secretary. Equally the Permanent secretary is not subject to the directions of the Ministerial Secretary. It follows that any conflict of view between the two must be referred to the Minister for his decision.

51. The Permanent Secretary will wish, in pursuance of paragraph 48, to refer papers to the Ministerial Secretary from time to time on subjects which have political implications. It follows from what has been said above that on these occasions the Ministerial Secretary will not be at liberty to make a final decision contrary to the recommendation made by the Permanent Secretary. If he finds himself in disagreement with that recommendation, he will normally discuss the matter with the Permanent Secretary. If, after discussion, the issue is resolved by agreement, a note to this effect should be placed on record in the papers. If, however, there remains a conflict of view between them, the issue must be submitted for decision by the Minister; and the Ministerial Secretary should normally take the initiative in submitting it.

52. When the Minister is away, the Permanent Secretary will submit papers which require the attention of a Minister through the Ministerial Secretary of his own Ministry to the Minister charged with the responsibilities of the absent Minister. Should there be a conflict of view between the Permanent Secretary and the Ministerial Secretary, the Minister receiving the papers will determine whether the matter is of such urgency that he must resolve the difference himself, or whether it should await the return of the absent Minister.

IX. *Heads of departments and their relations with ministries*

Duties of heads of departments

53. Subject to the general direction and control of the Minister, the Permanent Secretary exercises supervision over the Departments for which the Minister is responsible. The Head of a Department is responsible to the Minister for the

organisation and administration of the Department, and is the Minister's adviser on professional or technical matters falling within the scope of the Department. It is the duty of the Head of a Department to keep the Minister fully informed, through the Permanent Secretary, of all activities of the Department, to assist the Minister in the formulation of policy and to execute such decisions of policy as come within the scope of the Department.

54. A Head of Department should not take any action involving a change of policy or the likelihood of public controversy without reference to the Ministry. This does not, however, mean that a Head of Department exercises less responsibility than formerly; he refers to the Ministry where he would formerly have referred to the Colonial Secretary. Where there is a conflict of view between the Head of a Department and his Ministry, the former may submit to the Permanent Secretary in writing a statement of his reasons for disagreeing with the Ministry and of his own recommendations on the question at issue, for submission to the Minister and for transmission to the Governor. The Minister should forward to the Governor the original of the statement, together with any written statement which he himself may wish to make. The Governor will consider the statement or statements and decide on the manner in which the question can best be resolved.

55. When a member of the Legislative Assembly, other than a Minister, desires information as to the activities of any Department, his proper course is either to approach the Minister responsible for that Department or to ask a question in the Assembly. A Head of Department should not, therefore, without the authority of his Ministry, disclose information relating to his Department to members of the Assembly who are not Ministers.

Channels of communication

56. The channel of communication between the Minister and Heads of Departments is through the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry. Since it is necessary for the proper discharge of the Permanent Secretary's duties that he should be acquainted with the Minister's official views and instructions, and since it is the Permanent Secretary who exercises supervision over the Departments, subject to the general direction and control of the Minister, it is not appropriate that the Minister and the Head of Department should address each other direct. Heads of Departments address the Permanent Secretary, and the Permanent Secretary in addressing them will, in the case of of official letters, use the expression "I am directed by the Minister", and sign as "Permanent Secretary to the Ministry".

57. Discussions between the Minister and Heads of Departments should normally be attended by the Permanent Secretary, or some other official of the Ministry staff deputed by him. If this cannot conveniently be arranged, the Head of Department concerned should submit a note of the discussion to the Secretary for the Minister's confirmation.

58. A Head of Department may be in charge of matters which are the responsibility of different Ministers and he should then deal in all such matters with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry concerned, keeping the Permanent Secretary of his own Ministry informed in matters of importance.

59. In general, it is incumbent on the Permanent Secretary to ensure that the Minister and the Heads of departments are kept in close touch through the medium of the Ministry.

X. *Consultation and co-operation at ministerial and official levels*

60. It is the duty of Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments to ensure that they themselves and all officers for whose supervision and direction they are responsible are mindful of the importance of consultation and co-operation at all levels.

Ministers

61. Meetings of Executive Council offer a formal opportunity for frequent discussions between Ministers. In addition the Governor meets Ministers collectively for discussions on frequent informal occasions, and there is no limit to the extent of consultation which may take place between Ministers otherwise than in Executive Council, whether orally or in writing.

62. In submitting papers to the Governor Ministers should always indicate clearly what Ministries have been consulted and whether they are in agreement.

63. A Minister who desires information as to the activities of a Department which is not under his direction should obtain the information from the appropriate Minister or through the official channels between the Ministries.

Permanent secretaries and heads of departments

64. It is the duty of Permanent Secretaries to supervise the process of consultation, with a view to co-operation between Ministries and the Departments grouped under them on the most expeditious lines compatible with reliability. This implies responsibility for determining the appropriate occasions for oral discussion and for written communications, and the extent to which consultations whether oral or in writing should be confined to a given level, eg between Permanent Secretaries or between Heads of Departments. In certain circumstances it makes for the quicker despatch of business if consultation takes place between the Head of a Department in one Ministry and the Permanent Secretary of another Ministry rather than between two Permanent Secretaries: if, however, it is desired to adopt this method in dealing with any subject or class of subjects, it is necessary that the consent of the Permanent Secretary who is to be "by-passed" should be first obtained, and that copies of such correspondence should be sent to him in any case where its contents suggest that he should be kept directly informed.

65. Inflexible rules governing the method of consultation are to be avoided except where actual experience shows that their observance would be beneficial. It is, however, desirable that certain general rules should be laid down as a guide to the conduct of written correspondence.

(i) As far as possible communications following the under-mentioned channels should be by minute and not by letter:-

(a) Communications between Heads of Departments, Heads of Departments and the Permanent Secretary, the Permanent Secretary and the Minister, in any one Ministry.

(b) Communications between Permanent Secretaries, whether signed by them or on their behalf.

(c) Communications between the Permanent Secretary in one Ministry and the Head of a Department in another.

(d) Communications between Heads of Departments in different Ministries.

(ii) Correspondence by minute between one Ministry and another implies *either* the despatch of the minute in duplicate, one copy being retained by the recipient, *or* the despatch of the file. The despatch of the file is liable to hold up other business in the office of its origin and is only justified when it contains papers relevant to the question at issue, the substance of which cannot without undue difficulty and inconvenience be incorporated in a minute. It should be remembered also that the despatch of the file may mean that the recipient is obliged to make extracts from the file for his own records; the despatch of business is likely to be more rapid if the "receiving end" is treated with consideration in such matters.

(iii) The extent to which communications should pass directly between the Head of a Department in one Ministry and the Permanent Secretary in another must be determined in the light of experience. In general this channel may safely be used when the sole object is to secure assent to or co-operation in some administrative or executive act, a copy of the communication should normally be sent to the Permanent Secretary who is being "by-passed"; and where the object is to raise a question of principle or to pursue a course of action likely to lead to public controversy, direct communication between the Head of a Department in one Ministry and the Permanent Secretary in another should be avoided altogether.

(iv) Personnel matters are the responsibility of the Minister of Defence and External Affairs who, in dealing with them administratively, acts in his capacity as Chief Secretary. It follows that such personnel matters as require a decision at the ministerial level must be decided by him, unless he decides that reference to Executive Council is desirable and that those which require a decision at Permanent Secretary level must be decided in the Chief Secretary's Office. Heads of Departments should therefore communicate direct with the Chief Secretary on personnel matters, with the exceptions noted below. But, in order that the Permanent Secretaries of Ministries in which Departments are grouped may have the opportunity to comment on the subject of such correspondence, the Heads of Departments concerned will send a copy of every communication to their own Permanent Secretary. Similarly the Chief Secretary's Office will send copies of any communications on personnel matters addressed to Heads of Departments to the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries in which they are grouped. It is open to a Permanent Secretary to inform the Chief Secretary's Office and Heads of Departments within the Ministry that any particular category of correspondence dealing with comparatively trivial personnel matters need not be copied to him. In any case in which the Head of a Department has reason to believe that the Ministry would be particularly interested in a question which he proposes to submit to the Chief Secretary, he should normally consult the Permanent Secretary as to the lines on which the question should be submitted.

66. The foregoing applies to all personnel matters other than "Establishment". By "Establishment" is here meant the number and grading of posts, salaries, allowances and all matters of financial significance which directly affect the current or future Estimates. All such matters will be submitted by Heads of Departments to their Permanent Secretaries. If consultation between Ministries is necessary or desirable Permanent Secretaries will refer such matters to the Chief Secretary's Office, which will consult the Ministry of Finance and any other Ministry, as may be necessary.

67. Establishment matters will be submitted to the Minister by the Permanent Secretary at the appropriate stage. Other personnel matters, eg the personal representations of officers, questions of discipline, promotion, transfer, increments, leave and passages will not normally be submitted to the Minister since they are matters for which the Chief Secretary, without prejudice to the Public Service Commission, is responsible.

Ministry of Finance

68. Consultation with the Ministry of Finance on all matters involving expenditure or affecting general financial or economic policy is essential. Such consultation will normally take place at the official level between Ministries, and not between Heads of Departments and the Ministry of Finance; but if agreement cannot be reached at that level the Minister concerned should discuss with the Minister of Finance.

69. Annual and supplementary Estimates must be submitted to the Ministry of Finance on behalf of Departments by the Ministry responsible. The approval of the Ministry of Finance is required before the authority of the Legislature is sought for financial provision to be made.

Ministry of Justice

70. Ministers are responsible for seeing that appropriate instructions exist to ensure that Ministries and Departments through their Ministries take legal advice from the Law Officers in all cases where it is needed.

71. When it is desired that draft legislation should be prepared (including not only Bills but also Rules, Regulations or Orders of particular complexity or importance) the Minister concerned should seek a decision of Executive Council on the principles involved. When it is decided by Executive Council that legislation is required, the matter should be referred to the Law Officers accompanied by a memorandum containing the fullest possible instructions for the guidance of the draftsman.

Review of methods of consultation

72. A review of the "mechanics" of consultation may be conducted from time to time, as may be necessary, by a committee appointed on each occasion for the purpose. This committee will normally consist of one official (other than the Permanent Secretary) drawn from each Ministry, presided over by an official from the Office of the Secretary to the Governor, (other than the Secretary) but the use of such a committee does not relieve either the Secretary to the Governor or the Secretaries to Ministries of their responsibility for maintaining efficient machinery for consultation.

XI. *Correspondence with the Colonial Office*

73. Correspondence between the Gold Coast Government and the Colonial Office conforms with past practice, except in so far as modifications are necessary to enable:-

(a) Memoranda prepared by Ministers to be transmitted to the Secretary of State under official cover;

(b) Ministries to correspond semi-officially with the appropriate section of the Colonial Office, at the official level;
(c) Secret communications to be available to Ministers.

74. Correspondence may be official or semi-official.

Official correspondence

75. The channel of communication lies exclusively between the Governor and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and is in the form of despatches, Saving telegrams or telegrams.

Despatches from the Governor are divided into:-

(a) Unclassified, Restricted and Confidential.
(b) Secret.
(c) Staff.
(d) Honours.

Except in the case of "Staff" despatches which are prepared in the Chief Secretary's Office and "Honours" despatches which are prepared in the Office of the Secretary to the Governor, despatches normally serve to transmit memoranda prepared by Ministers.

76. Such memoranda must contain all the material which is necessary to enable the Secretary of State to appreciate the relevant facts and the views of the Gold Coast Government; they should be drawn up after due consultation between the Ministries concerned and, where necessary, after reference to the Executive Council. Memoranda are submitted to the Office of the Secretary to the Governor for transmission to the Secretary of State by the Governor.

77. Saving telegrams should be used only in routine correspondence, and should be drafted in the Ministries of their origin as issuing from the Governor. They are submitted to the Office of the Secretary to the Governor for transmission to the Secretary of State.

78. Telegrams should be drafted in the Ministries of their origin and are submitted to the Office of the Secretary to the Governor for encoding or encyphering where necessary, and for despatch.

Semi-official correspondence

79. This form of correspondence is appropriate in the exploratory stages of any subject or in dealing with points of explanation. The Governor corresponds semi-officially by letter or telegram with the appropriate members of the Staff of the Colonial Office.

80. Ministries may correspond semi-officially with the appropriate members of the staff of the Colonial Office. Such correspondence issues in the name of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, as being the senior official in the Ministry, and must be strictly confined to matters with which the Ministry is officially concerned; it will not be used for communicating on major matters of policy. Ministers will not themselves correspond semi-officially with members of the staff of the Colonial Office, since it is not appropriate that they should correspond with officials who are not within their own Ministries. It is permissible, however, for a Minister's own views to be conveyed to the Colonial Office in semi-official correspondence by the Secretary

to the Ministry and for the views so expressed to be specifically attributed to the Minister. Ex-officio Ministers may, in their capacity as officials, correspond semi-officially with the Colonial Office.

81. All semi-official letters issuing from Ministries should be sent in closed addressed envelopes to the Office of the Secretary to the Governor for despatch by bag. One unsealed copy of every such letter should at the same time be sent to the Governor's Secretary for information.

82. Semi-official Savings telegrams should not be used.

83. Semi-official telegrams should be sent to the Office of the Secretary to the Governor for encoding or encyphering, where necessary, and for despatch in the Governor's name.

Secret correspondence

84. Subject to any directions that may from time to time be issued by the Secretary of State the Governor may, in his discretion, show secret correspondence to members of Executive Council under the obligation of secrecy. Members of Executive Council will be personally responsible for the safe-keeping, while in their possession, of secret correspondence circulated to them.

XII. *The governor's secretary and secretary to the Executive Council*

85. This officer has dual responsibilities under the Order in Council:–

(a) in his capacity as Governor's Secretary, he has such functions as the Governor, acting in his discretion, may from time to time direct; and

(b) in his capacity as Secretary to the Executive Council, he is responsible for arranging the business for, and keeping the minutes of, meetings of the Executive Council, and for conveying the decisions of the Governor in Executive Council to the appropriate person or authority, and for carrying out such other functions as the Governor in Executive Council may from time to time direct.

86. He is responsible for ensuring that the work of the Ministries is properly co-ordinated, and to this end must maintain close contact with the Permanent Secretaries to Ministries. The Permanent Secretaries to Ministries have a corresponding duty to facilitate the maintenance of this contact.

87. He is the channel through which pass all papers submitted to the Governor and all papers intended for Executive Council, and it is his duty to draw the attention of Ministries to any lack of co-ordination. He will, when considered necessary by the Governor, send papers back for further consideration or clarification.

88. The Clerk of the Executive Council works under the supervision of the Secretary.

83 CO 96/820/5 3 Mar 1950

[Gold Coast constitutional instruments]: minute by E G G Hanrott to J A Peck

As agreed, we have had a look at the eight existing Gold Coast Constitutional Instruments in the light of the constitutional changes now proposed. The following

preliminary comments, though not exhaustive, refer to some of the changes which appear to be necessary. If I may start by summarising, the two main changes indicated seem to be those affecting

(a) the future place of Togoland under the Gold Coast constitution;
(b) the extension of the main Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti Order to the Northern Territories. (In the same way that the 1946 Constitution extended the jurisdiction of the Legislative Council of the Colony to Ashanti.)

1. *Togoland under the U.K. Trusteeship Order in Council, 1949*
The place of Togoland under the new Constitution is at present very much under consideration in the light both of the Coussey Report and of Anglo–French discussions on the Ewe question. It is only clear at this stage

(a) that a separate Togoland Order will be required to provide for the special status of the Trust territory, which will still, however, be administered as an integral part of the Gold Coast;
(b) that a good many changes will probably be required. Some of these will probably be:

(i) *Clause 5.* Alteration in the boundaries to provide for the transfer of Krachi from the Northern to the Southern Section.
(ii) *Clause 6.* It is not yet certain whether the Southern Section is to be administered as part of the Colony, as it is at present, or whether it is to form part of a new Trans–Volta–Southern Togoland Region.
(iii) *Clause 7.* The Governor will probably retain his existing power to legislate separately for the Trust Territory, but something may have to be included about consultation with the Southern Togoland Council, which has recently been set up.

2. *Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti (Legislative Council) Order in Council, 1946 (as amended)*
This will be replaced altogether.

3. *Northern Territories Order in Council, 1934*
This divides the Northern Territories, provides for their administration and reserves to the Governor the power to legislate for the Northern Territories.

4. *Royal Instructions (Northern Territories) 1934*
This is similar to the old Ashanti Royal Instructions of 1934 which were revoked in 1946.

5. *Ashanti Order in Council, 1934*
This was revoked in 1946 except for the sections providing for the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony in Ashanti.

It will be necessary to consider the future of these last three Instruments. The effect of the Coussey Constitutional changes will be to bring the Northern Territories under the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast on which it will be directly represented. It would therefore seem desirable that the main Order of the new

Constitution should provide for all three parts of the Gold Coast – Colony, Ashanti and Northern Territories – since the Governor's existing power to legislate separately for the Northern Territories will disappear. The only essential change seems to be to provide in the main Order for the jurisdiction of the Crown in Ashanti and the Northern Territories, which will presumably enable us to revoke both of the Northern Territory Instruments of 1934 and the remnants of the Ashanti Order of 1934. The only possible difficulty that I can see is that the powers exercised by the Governor in the Northern Territories exist under Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890, while Gold Coast Colony is administered under the British Settlement Acts of 1887 and 1945. However, to the layman this does not seem much of a difficulty.

6. *Letters Patent, 1946*
This will in any case be redrafted. It will be necessary to alter it to provide for the government of the Northern Territories (eg Clause 4).

7. *Royal Instructions, 1946*
This will also have to be redrafted.

8. *Gold Coast Ordinance, Order in Council*
This gives the governor power to make Ordinances for the whole Gold Coast (including the Northern Territories). For the reasons stated under 3, 4, and 5 above, this can presumably be revoked.

I hope that the above, sketchy though it is, will be of some help. I am sending you two copies of this minute, one for the file which is with you and one as a working copy.

84 CO 96/816/2, no 3A 15 Apr 1950

[Legislative Council]: letter from R P Armitage to L H Gorsuch recording his personal impressions of discussions on the draft estimates for 1950–1951

I am letting you have another record of my personal impressions of the recent meeting of the Legislative Council at which the draft Estimates for 1950/51 were considered and of the discussions on the Estimates in Select Committee.

I should record first that the atmosphere in which the discussions in Select Committee took place was completely different to that of last year. There was no tendency to introduce racial antagonism into any of the discussions and, apart from one or two instances by Danquah, the cross-examination of Heads of Departments was conducted reasonably and without bitterness or unthinking criticism.

This improved atmosphere was undoubtedly due to the Report of the Africanisation Committee, the publication of the Report of the Coussey Committee, and the action taken by the Government in consequence, and of the firm stand taken during the General Strike in January. There was a full appreciation now of the difficulty of getting qualified Africans for Senior Service posts, although some people still think that by searching further in the Gold Coast suitable Africans can be found, and that by curtailing courses of instruction or periods of training, fully-qualified Senior Staff

can be turned out at a much quicker rate than at present. The most significant single feature was an outburst by several Members when a remark by a Head of Department gave the impression that Europeans would not accept pensionable posts on first appointment in the Gold Coast because they could not see the chance of a career of twenty or more years in this Colony. I have written to you at length on the question of temporary allowances and I will not refer to them again here, but I believe that one of the main reasons why the general body of the Members of Legislative Council accepted these temporary allowances was in order that new recruits should be attracted to the Service from overseas.

There was some criticism of the scope and nature of the proposals to establish nine Ministries, which, of course, look a somewhat cumbersome organisation and an expensive one, but few Members have any idea of the type of work done in the present Secretariat and what is involved in the examination of proposals and the formulation of policy: and again, the general impression seemed to be that as these proposals were those of the Government and they seemed to fit in to the general scale of things they had better give them a chance.

Danquah and the small group which supports him attacked the Ministerial set-up consistently and the proposal to provide them with Government bungalows. He, of course, wants the position of a Minister to be much more unfettered than we intend it to be. He does not want a Minister to be provided with a first class man as Secretary, who can keep him under control. He professes not to be interested in the post of a Minister, but there is no question that he is and he wants to be able to pursue his own course of action as a Minister without interference. However, his views are generally discredited at present, and he got little support for them.

There was not the detailed criticism of proposals for new posts or increases in the establishment that took place last year. All the proposals for new posts were accepted save that of General Secretary in the Agricultural Department. Members considered that scale C.1.2. was adequate for this post and not scale A. as proposed.

They accepted a similar post, however, in the Medical Department on scale A. I am afraid it is an indication of the lack of regard in which the Agricultural Department is held at present. Linton[1] was certainly greatly superior to his predecessor when he appeared before Select Committee, but Members are extremely critical of what they think is the failure of the Agricultural Department to give advice on agricultural matters generally. It was interesting to note that this year Members re-inserted, at their own request, the post of Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer, which they had disallowed last year, because of the extremely critical state of recruitment of Electrical Engineers in that Department.

We had a tremendous programme of new bungalows for members of the Senior Service and this was accepted without comment, save that Members expressed the view that Africans in the Senior Service should not be provided with bungalows at the expense of ex-patriates and that, in fact, Africans in the Senior Service should be expected to provide their own housing and not occupy Government bungalows!!

We had, once more, a long debate on the question of ex-gratia payments to those in financial distress as a result of the Riots in 1948. The opposition was no less intense and although it looked as if the motion would be carried this year a chance

[1] R D Linton, deputy director of agriculture, Gold Coast.

reference by a Member to the effect that at the Joint Provincial Council Meeting, the Chiefs of the Colony had decided not to support the motion, a number of Chiefs who would otherwise have voted for it, either abstained or voted against it. The same result occurred as last year – an even number of votes cast – so the motion was regarded as rejected. The trading community will, however, get some assistance in the shape of loans if a firm or individual can prove that he is still suffering financially from the effects of the Riots. The terms and conditions of these loans are being considered by Executive Council next week.

Looking back over the discussions, which this year lasted for twelve instead of fourteen days, it is clear that Members are becoming more aware of the purpose of the Estimates and of Government expenditure, and there was much freer debate and discussion among themselves which is a good sign. The press has paid little attention to the Budget, but that no doubt was due to the Accra Town Council Elections which took place just after Legislative Council came to an end.

I cannot do better than to end this letter by stressing once more the appalling position in some of our Departments, particularly Agriculture, Medical, Posts and Telegraphs, Electrical and Public Works for fully qualified Doctors, Agricultural Officers and Engineers. Unless there is an improvement in recruitment in the next two years any question of expansion of services will have to be given up and existing services will have to be put on a lower level even than that of care and maintenance.

I enclose a copy of my speech introducing the Budget.[2]

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[2] Not printed.

85 CO 537/5263, no 49 June 1950

'A survey of communism in Africa': FO Research Dept memorandum; part two, regional survey – 'British West Africa' [Extract]

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222. Communism, in the sense of a coherent philosophy or an organised and disciplined party, is still non-existent in British West Africa. Athough certain individuals have shown characteristics associated with members of organised Communist Parties, and in some cases have even worked for a limited time with the British Communist Party, none of them, on present information, is now a Party member. The native "liberation" movements with which they are associated are, however, more vocal and more widely dispersed than those of British East Africa, and the activities of the most extreme of them, such as the former Zikist Movement in Nigeria and the Convention People's Party in the Gold Coast, must be considered as serving the long-term interests of Communism. As in the French and Belgian territories, these movements have taken hold over communities in which the spread of education, commerce and industry has led to a breakdown of traditional tribal organisation and allegiance, and such a breakdown may be regarded as a prerequisite to the active growth of these movements. As might be expected, these communities exist, for the most part, in the thickly-populated and relatively advanced coastal area, and elsewhere in the larger towns.

223. Although the British Communist Party officially regards its sphere of influence as confined to the United Kingdom (see Part I, para 27), it considers West Africans to be more mature politically than other Africans and has, accordingly, taken several practical steps since the end of the war to encourage their political aspirations: it has organised special study classes on the basic principles of Communism for West Africans in the United Kingdom; the Party's West Africa Committee has invited sympathisers to attend its meetings; copies of the Committee's *Africa Newsletter*, circulated in the United Kingdom, find their way to West Africa; finally, the Committee has assisted and encouraged the activities of the West African Students' Union (W.A.S.U.) in the United Kingdom and has maintained personal contact with the West African National Secretariat (W.A.N.S.).

224. These two bodies have co-operated closely. The W.A.S.U., the older of the two, was formed in 1927 as a purely social concern for the welfare of West African students in the United Kingdom. From the start it has represented every shade of political opinion, but the tendency has been for an energetic minority of Communist sympathisers to take an altogether disproportionate part in its direction. The W.A.N.S. was founded in 1945 with its headquarters in London and had as its first chairman and secretary B. A. Renner and Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast (see para 237). Although both these men have had contact with the British Communist Party, the W.A.N.S. was never under Communist control. There is no indication that it has been active since early in 1949, and it appears to have died a natural death.

225. A further body which, by supporting the forces opposed to colonial rule, can be considered as furthering the long-term aims of Communism, is the African League. It seeks to combine the interests of both East and West Africa, and has adopted a strong racial character by the total exclusion of non-Africans from its membership. Its organ *African Arrow* is essentially "nationalist" and not Communist in tone, and there is evidence that the British Communist Party regards its strongly racial character with suspicion.[1]

226. The Soviet organs in Moscow have occasionally referred with admiration to the "national liberation" movements in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, and Communist propaganda reaches the chief towns of British West Africa, but the Soviet Union is not represented in this area, and commercial contacts are almost non-existent. The Bata Shoe Company and its subsidiary firm, Czechoslovak–Nigerian Export and Import Company, do, however, form a medium of contact between British West Africa and Czechoslovakia. These Companies have sent some Africans to their works at Zlín in Czechoslovakia for technical training skilfully combined with political indoctrination, while Czech Communist agents from Zlín have paid reciprocal visits to Nigeria. It is possible that Bata may become a main channel for the dissemination of Communism in British West Africa, but so far its political activities have been on a small scale. There are now several Nigerians studying at universities in Prague, while the bodies in Nigeria and the Gold Coast with W.F.T.U., W.F.D.Y. and W.I.D.F. connexions provide a means of contact between British West Africa and Communist-controlled organisations in Paris.

[1] The latest information indicates, however, that the British Communist Party is attempting to penetrate and capture the African League. In February, 1950 it appears that the League sought affiliation with the "Rassemblement Démocratique Africain".

Nigeria

227. The chief "liberation" organisation, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C.), which stands for the overthrow of British colonial rule and the creation of independent Nigeria, cannot be described as Communist in any sense. Its founder–president, Dr Nnamdi Benjamin Azikiwe, has stated categorically that he is not a Communist; but he has had talks with Palme Dutt and other British Communists and has visited the Czech Embassy in London. According to his own statement, he would be prepared to co-operate on a purely reciprocal basis with any person or group in sympathy with his aims, but would never allow himself to become a tool in other hands. The British Communist Party is critical of Azikiwe and suspicious of his purely nationalist aspirations. No evidence was found of Communist inspiration behind the rioting at the Government coal mines at Enugu in November, 1949.

228. Until recently there was an extremist splinter group of the N.C.N.C., the Zikist Movement, headed by Nduka Eze, which claimed to be working for the establishment of a United States of West Africa. Although Eze has Communist sympathies, the movement accepted Communist technique and some of its members studied Communist literature, there was never any indication of communist inspiration behind it. Its enrolled membership was about 800 or 900. In February, 1950, the houses of some of the principal members of the Movement in Lagos and the provinces were searched by the police, and material considered *prima facie* as seditious was found in several of them, including that of the Secretary-General, H. M. Okoye, who was arrested, convicted of sedition and sentenced to 33 months' imprisonment. On 13th April the Zikist Movement was declared an illegal organisation. About a month later, however, Mr Jaja Wachuku, a leading Zikist figure, founded the "New Africa" party at a meeting presided over by Azikiwe. Although Wachuku declared that the party would not use violence, there is little doubt that it will constitute the Zikist Movement in another form.

229. The former Nigerian Trade Union Congress, at one time affiliated to the W.F.T.U., had a secretary-general, A. A. Adio-Moses, and a president, T. A. Bankole, who were in touch with the British Communist Party in 1945–46. Early in 1949, the Ibo faction within the T.U.C. broke away and formed the Nigerian National Federation of Labour (N.N.F.L.), led by Nduke Eze (see para. 228), whose expressed aim was to undermine the T.U.C., which he regarded as being too constitutional in its approach to be of any use for political purposes. By the end of 1949 the N.N.F.L. was firmly established, and would have achieved a dominant position but for the refusal of the influential Railway Workers' Union to join forces. In February, 1950, it began to publish its own newspaper, *Labour Champion.* This organ is pro-Communist in tone and is fed to some extent by Communist propaganda received from abroad. Furthermore, the N.N.F.L. had contacts with the British Communist Party (and the *Daily Worker*) and with the W.F.T.U., the W.F.D.Y. and the Council on African Affairs in New York.[2] The latest development is that the N.N.F.L. and the Nigerian T.U.C. have joined forces to form the Nigerian Labour Congress with the *Labour Champion* as its organ. In mid-June, 1950, the new body claimed a membership of 60 unions.

[2] In January, 1950, the International Bureau of the Free German Youth (F.O.J.) offered the N.N.F.L. five university places, ten in secondary schools and ten in recuperative centres of the German Democratic Republic.

230. Of the two youth movements in Nigeria, the Youth Congress of Nigeria and the Cameroons and the Nigerian Youth Movement, the former, formed in 1947, has close associations with both the N.C.N.C. and the former Zikist Movement. It is affiliated to the W.F.D.Y. and some of its members correspond with Communist youth organisations in Europe. The Congress was represented at the Budapest World Festival of Youth (see Part I, para. 23) of August, 1949, by Bankole Akpata, who has been studying in Prague since 1948. (As far as is known, there are at least three other Nigerian students at universities in Prague.) The second body, the Nigerian Youth Movement, is a Yoruba organisation – in contrast to the Ibo Youth Congress – and is not thought to have Communist leanings. In February, 1950, it was reported that the Nigerian Youth Movement and the N.C.N.C. had formed a temporary alliance to fight for self-government under the name of S.G.N. (Self-government Now). It seems doubtful, however, whether the Ibo and Yoruba elements represented by these two organisations will ever fuse sufficiently to form a permanent alliance.

231. There is one further Nigerian body with Communist connexions – the Egbu Women's Association [sic], which is affiliated to the Women's International Democratic Federation (W.I.D.F.). Its leader, Mrs. Ransome Kuti, a teacher, is, however, the only member of the Association known to hold Communist views.

232. Dr. Azikiwe runs a press in Lagos, which produces a number of newspapers, the most important of which is the *West African Pilot.* During the past two years, these papers have shown a markedly increased tendency to use news items and articles favourable to the Soviet Union in support of their campaign against "imperialism." Articles from *Tass*, the *Soviet Monitor* and the *Telepress Agency* have become increasingly common, while there has also been a number of articles attributable to no particular source but bearing the hallmarks of Cominform inspiration.

233. The circulation of foreign Communist literature is still not great, but has been increasing over the past year. Copies of the R.D.A. organ *Réveil* (see para. 215) have been seen in Lagos, while publications such as *Africa Newsletter*, produced by the Africa Committee of the British Communist Party, *Soviet Weekly, Tep*, the Czech organ of the Bata Shoe Company, and the *Guardian* from South Africa have been distributed in some of the larger towns, as well as other pamphlets and text-books produced by the British and South African Communist Parties. There is, however, no evidence of any Communist literature having been translated into the vernacular.

234. During the past year a noticeable trend has been the increased liaison between the Nigerian nationalist extremists and the Communist-directed "Rassemblement Démocratique Africain" (R.D.A.) in French West Africa.[3] Certain members of the R.D.A. branch at Porto Novo in Dahomey appear to have visited Lagos during the summer of 1949 and to have attempted to form a R.D.A. branch there. Mention must also be made of the visit of the three French Communist deputies, General Plagny, Admiral Moullec and M. Jacques Mitterand, to Lagos in October, 1949, accompanied by Theodore Hazoume of the R.D.A. Dahomey branch (see para. 218). On their part, the leaders of the N.C.N.C. are believed to have expressed a desire to establish regular contact with the R.D.A. branches at Porto Novo, Cotonou and elsewhere. It has been reported that while Azikiwe was in Paris in

[3] Gabriel d'Arboussier, Secretary-General of the R.D.A., has contributed several articles to the *Labour Champion* (see para. 229) in the past six months.

February, 1950, he met R.D.A. leaders and discussed with them the formation of a *bloc* "composed of all political organisations in Africa".

The Gold Coast

235. In the Gold Coast the political consciousness of the native has developed more rapidly than in the rest of British West Africa and political power lies nearer to the hands of African leaders, but it cannot be said that Communism has taken any real hold. Although Dr. Danquah, the leader of the United Gold Coast Convention, advocates full democratic self-government, the ending of "British dictatorship in Africa," the withdrawal of British control of the military forces and police, the replacement of European administrative personnel by Africans, &c., he strongly resents any imputation of Communist connexion or sympathy. His programme, and that of his supporters, is essentially one of Gold Coast "nationalism" (see Part I, para. 2).

236. Kwame Nkrumah, however, the head of the extreme nationalist Convention People's Party (C.P.P.) and a former member of the British Communist Party, is a much more dangerous character. His party, which split off from the U.G.C.C., was founded on the 12th June, 1949, as the successor of the Committee on Youth Organisation (C.Y.O.). It stands for the grant of immediate self-government within the Commonwealth, and has rejected His Majesty's Government's proposals for constitutional reform. This party has had some considerable influence with the Trade Union Congress, which represents about 100,000 organised workers out of a total population of some 4½ millions. In January, 1950, it carried out its threat of "positive action" by staging a strike which affected railways, electricity, communications and other key services. The strike was, however, never general, and even in the towns of Accra, Takoradi and Kumasi, where it was most effective, it was only obeyed by a proportion of organised labour. There is no evidence of Communist inspiration behind this strike action, although at his trial B. A. Renner, a close associate of Nkrumah (see para. 237), admitted that when in England he had drawn up a plan for a West African Soviet Republic. Nkrumah himself was charged with sedition and incitement to violence.

237. Kwame Nkrumah, B. A. Renner and Kojo Botsio, who are the three principal leaders of the C.P.P., have, however, all at various times been in touch with either British or "iron curtain" Communists. In 1945 Nkrumah became a member of the British Communist Party and in 1947 enlisted the assistance of its Africa Committee in organising a West African National Congress which was to have been held in Nigeria. There is, however, no evidence that he remains a member of the Party. Renner travelled extensively in the U.S.S.R. between 1925 and 1928 and received his training in Communist doctrine during this period. When in England in 1948 he wrote a petition to Stalin asking for a grant of land in the Soviet Union. He has also corresponded with the Czechoslovak Embassy in London and is known to have been in touch with the British Communist Party. Kojo Botsio, General Secretary of the C.P.P. and until recently vice-principal of the Akim Abuakwa State College, is thought to have spread Communist doctrine amongst students in the United Kingdom.

238. The extent to which African students returning from the United Kingdom have been affected by Communist propaganda is, however, difficult to determine. The fact that they are subjected to such propaganda is beyond dispute, but it appears

that, on their return, most of the students, lacking local stimulus, lose any fixity of political purpose that they might have acquired (see Part I, paras. 28–30). It is, however, of some significance that in April, 1949, the headquarters of the International Union of Students in Prague wrote to the C.P.P.'s forerunner, the C.Y.O., expressing the desire that regular contact be established between the two bodies. Three students from the Gold Coast attended the Budapest World Festival of Youth in August, 1949 (see Part I, para. 23).

239. Three newspapers, the *Accra Evening News*, the *Gold Coast Express* and the *Morning Telegraph*, are published by Kwame Nkrumah and reflect his views and those of the C.P.P. Although there is no regular circulation, open or clandestine, of European Communist literature, a considerable amount of Communist books, newspapers, pamphlets, &c., enters the colony through private mail order. The British Communist Party's *Africa Newsletter*, the *Daily Worker* and *New Times* (which is sent from Moscow to intermediaries in the United Kingdom) have all been noticed, as well as *New Africa*, the organ of the Council of African Affairs in New York (see Part I, para. 31), and propaganda from the I.U.S., the W.F.D.Y. and Youth movements in Poland and Hungary.

240. Kwame Nkrumah visited M. Houphouet-Boigny, president of the R.D.A., in the autumn of 1948 in connexion with his proposed Pan–West African Congress (see para. 218), but met with a cold reception. There may have been other instances of liaison between Gold Coast extremists and R.D.A. leaders, but the extent of such liaison appears to be less than that between Nigerian sympathisers and the R.D.A.[4]

Sierra Leone

241. As far as is known, there are no genuine Communists in this territory. The only nationalist leader of any importance, Isaak Theophilus Akuma Wallace Johnson, has been in touch with British and, reportedly, French Communists and with Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast; but, while he and his followers in the West African Youth League are doubtless prepared to make use of Communist help to further their own personal aims, they cannot be considered as believers in Communist ideology. The importance of the West African Youth League is very much less than that of the principal parties in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, since in Sierra Leone no political party holds a coherent political philosophy.

242. The Sierra Leone Trade Union Congress is in no sense Communist. Wallace Johnson was formerly connected with it, but was subsequently discredited for financial irregularities. Two unions, the Artisans' and Transport Workers', have, however, remained faithful to him.

243. Only a few African students have so far returned from the United Kingdom – the great majority only went after the war – but so far there is no evidence that any have been affected by Communism.

244. Two papers run by Wallace Johnson, the *African Worker* and the *African Standard* (which are, in fact, the same paper appearing on different days), largely feature articles by George Padmore and from the *Daily Worker*. Both the *Soviet Weekly News* and the *Daily Worker* appear on sale from time to time, but it is probable that not more than a few dozen copies of each are sold.

[4] Recently, however, there has been evidence of underground liaison between certain R.D.A. leaders in the Ivory Coast and Kwame Nkrumah, to whom copies of the R.D.A. organ *Démocrate* . . . have been sent.

The Gambia

245. Of the four British West African territories, the Gambia presents the least signs of Communist penetration. It has no organised political parties, no leaders with Communist leanings, and its one trade union, the Gambia Labour Union, is apparently quite clear. The dormant Gambia Young People's Association, led by Mr. Sam Sylva, a clerk in the Audit Office at Bathurst and a Town Councillor, is affiliated to the W.F.D.Y.; but Sylva makes no use of the newsheets and periodicals sent him from the W.F.D.Y.'s Paris headquarters, and there is no evidence that he or any members of the Association have Communist leanings. A very few copies of the British Communist Party's monthly journal on African affairs have been seen in the Gambia, addressed to various officials, and on one occasion the *Gambia Echo* reprinted an article from the American journal *New Africa* (see para. 239). The local press can, however, be considered as clear.

86 CO 96/818/6, no 11 2 Nov 1950

[Kumasi municipal elections]: inward telegram no 950 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Griffiths on the success of the CPP

My immediately preceding telegram No 949.

Kumasi Municipal Elections.

I am informed that the reason for the sweeping success of CPP in obtaining all contested seats was due to real organising capacity and that the debâcle of the opposition was due to apathy and not (repeat not) to intimidation. Chief Commissioner himself toured polling booths and reports that polling was completely orderly as in U.K. and he was received cheerfully and without any sign of impoliteness; the police arrangements were extremely good and the Town Council is to express gratitude. The only complaints, of a minor nature, as regards arrangements were from victorious party.

2. These elections were conducted under existing law which, as you are aware, requires votes to be recorded against names in polling book and does not use ballot papers or ballot boxes. In future, elections in municipalities will be conducted under provisions of the new ordinance. The rigid requirement of existing law regarding closing hour of 4 p.m. and allowing only one polling station for each ward resulted in some overcrowding, and in fact about one hundred voters were unable to vote before closing hour. Polling stations were each provided with several polling booths for alphabetical distribution of voters, and voters were marshalled in queues in alphabetical order.

3. There were two independent European journalists in Kumasi, who have reported to News Chronicle today on orderly conduct of elections. Asantehene has expressed no surprise at result of elections, and agrees that there were no signs of intimidation at polling booths.

87 CO 96/824/4, nos 1 & 2 17 Nov 1950

[Gold Coast chiefs]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to A B Cohen on the need for constitutional safeguards to preserve the position of the chiefs. *Minute* by E G G Hanrott

In Saloway's letter of the 14th November he referred to considerations which we had in mind for incorporating in the Constitutional Instruments some provision relating to "constitutional matters affecting the traditional authorities". This has been at the express request of the Asantehene, Sir Tsibu Darku and other chiefs who foresee the early possibility not only of their political power being swept away, but their very position within their states, which still means so much in rural areas, being undermined.

The Native Authority Ordinances of the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories will require revision, presumably by the introduction of new Bills, after the examination of the Reports of the Committees on Local Government. There is, however, one part in the Colony Ordinance which it will be necessary to preserve in something like the same form as at present, namely Part 3 relating to constitutional matters (as defined in the Ordinance) in regard to which the Governor's decision is final.

It is intended that the same procedure in regard to these matters should obtain as at present, that the Chief Commissioner should refer the matter in question to the Chief Secretary for the Governor's information and decision, and not via the Ministry of Local Government. This procedure satisfies the chiefs, and it is possible that the Governor at a later date may consider it desirable to take the advice of a small body of Africans in matters of this nature. This would apparently meet Sir Tsibu Darku's conception of a "Privy Council" (vide para. 435 of the Coussey Report) which, however, he does not wish to press at the present time.

To ensure that a Bill dealing with these matters, when introduced, meets our requirements in preserving the position of chiefs and the procedure in regard to constitutional questions, we consider it desirable that the Bill should require the approval of the Governor before introduction: a draft addition to clause 53 of the Order-in-Council is attached accordingly. The definition of constitutional matters has been taken from Ordinance No. 21 of 1944 at Loveridge's request. The addition has been drafted on the understanding that clause 53 as first sent to us has been replaced by the Trinidad clause 55. I am informed by Branigan that the substitution has in fact been made, though I can find no record of any reply to that effect to the last part of our telegram No. 862 of the 11th October.

We feel also that discussion of these matters in Executive Council should be avoided and an alteration to clause 4 (2) of the Royal Instructions has been prepared and is attached.

Finally, we consider that a Bill dealing with the matters referred to should be reserved for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure before assent is given, so that adequate control may be retained in regard to any amendments which may be made to the Bill in the course of its passage through the Assembly. An addition to clause 9 of the Royal Instructions is attached.

We fully realise that the provisions for which we are asking are unusual, but we are convinced that something of this nature is required in the interests of the country at

large in which the chief in his traditional role has still a great part to play. The chiefs have for the most part stood loyally by the Government in times of difficulty, and we feel that we owe it to them, to put it at its least, that their future should not be handed over for determination by the majority in the Assembly. If it became apparent that there was an almost universal demand in the country for a change in the position regarding these matters, the Governor would consider taking the advice of Executive Council. But for the time being and in the struggle which lies ahead before the chiefs, we feel that it is most desirable that provision on the lines suggested in the enclosed drafts (or any other provision achieving the same objects) should be written into the constitution.

There is one other point which I thought I should mention. We have noticed that no explicit provision appears to be made for the removal of a Speaker otherwise than on dissolution of the Assembly; while we hope that a Speaker would remain in office for the full life of the Assembly, there might arise an occasion when his continued presence in that position proved a grave embarrassment to the whole Assembly,

Annex 1 to 87

Gold Coast Draft (Constitution) Order in Council

Amend section 53 by addition of the following proviso:-

> "Provided further that, except with the consent of the Governor, acting in his discretion, signified thereto, the Assembly shall not proceed upon any Bill or amendment which, in the opinion of the Speaker or other Member presiding, provides for the final determination otherwise than by the Governor acting in his discretion of questions relating to any of the following matters:-
>
> (a) the election, installation, deposition or abdication of any chief, or the right of any person to take part in any such election, installation or deposition;
> (b) the recovery or delivery of Stool property in connection with any such election, installation, deposition or abdication;
> (c) political or constitutional relations under native customary law between chiefs."

Annex 2 to 87

Draft Royal Instructions

In *clause 4(2)* after the words "and paragraph (5) of clause 17 of these Instructions" insert:-

> "and (unless it be otherwise provided by any law enacted after the appointed day) the power conferred by any law to determine questions relating to any of the matters specified in paragraph (6) of clause 9 of these Instructions"

In *clause 9* insert the following paragraph as paragraph (6) and re-number existing paragraphs (6) to (10) as (7) to (11):-

"(6) any Bill affecting the determination of questions relating to any of the following matters:-

(a) the election, installation, deposition or abdication of any chief, or the right of any person to take part in any such election, installation or deposition;
(b) the recovery or delivery of Stool property in connection with any such election, installation, deposition or abdication;
(c) political or constitutional relations under native customary law between chiefs."

Minute on 87

The Native Authority (Colony) Ordinance of 1944

(a) defined the powers of the traditional State Councils of the Colony in respect of constitutional matters;
(b) empowered the Provincial Commissioner to refer constitutional matters to a Committee of Enquiry (of whom at least two were to be chiefs);
(c) provided for appeals from the State Council to the Provincial Commissioner who could refer the matter to the governor "whose decision shall be final".

In this Ordinance "a matter of a constitutional nature" is defined as a matter relating to

(a) the election, installation, deposition or abdication of any chief; or
(b) the recovery or delivery of Stool property in connection with any such election, installation, deposition or abdication; or
(c) political or constitutional relations under native customary laws.

It is not provided in the Order whether the Governor shall consult with the Executive Council about any disputes in these matters which may be referred to him, but under the existing Constitution the Governor is required to consult with his Executive Council except in certain well-defined instances and in normal cases he would consult his Executive Council regarding these constitutional matters. Under the existing Constitution the Executive Council is composed mainly of officials, and the three African members are nominated by the Governor. There is, of course at present no question of referring these matters to the Legislative Council.

Under the new Constitution the Governor is required to consult his Executive Council unless it is expressly provided in the constitutional Instruments that he is to act in his discretion; only in certain well-defined circumstances can he act against their advice. The official majority under the existing Constitution has been replaced by a majority of unofficial members of Executive Council chosen from the Legislative Assembly elected in part on a popular franchies.

Also relevant to the question is the substantial loss of influence which the traditional authorities will lose in local affairs through the Coussey local government proposals. Whereas at present the traditional State Councils are virtually the same as the Native Authorities which are the local government bodies, under the Coussey proposals the former will retain their traditional functions but will be separated from

the new Local Authorities which will deal with all local government matters. Although the chiefs and their State Councils will be represented on the Local Authorities this change will ultimately mean a substantial reduction in the influence of the chiefs.

To meet this situation Sir C. Arden-Clarke proposes; (a) to prevent the Legislative Assembly from legislating regarding these matters; (b) to add them to the list of subjects on which it is expressly stated in the Constitution Order in Council that the Governor shall not consult the Executive Council; and (c) to add legislation on these matters to the list of reserved Bills to which the Governor shall not give assent with [? without] the Secretary of State's approval.

It should be stated that Sir C. Arden-Clarke's proposal represents a major modification of the Coussey proposals; the Coussey report does not deal with this question at all, apart from a vague reference to the possibility of establishing a "Privy Council" in para 435 of the report.[1]

E.G.G.H.
27.11.50

[1] The amendments suggested by Arden-Clarke were included in The Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1950.

88 CO 96/819/4 20 Dec 1950

[Nkrumah]: minute by A B Cohen to Sir T Lloyd on the suggestion that Mr Nkrumah might be released from prison before the end of his sentence

Mr. Hanrott and I had an opportunity this morning of discussing the suggestion in the letter enclosed with No. 48 (which will appear in this week's "West Africa") with Mr. Saloway and Mr. Branigan.[1] Both of them obviously thought that there might be quite a lot to be said in favour of releasing Mr. Nkrumah from his prison sentence before the end of that sentence, which Mr. Branigan thought would be about June, allowing for good conduct remission. They were inclined to feel, I think, that his release before the election might not be a good thing, but that there might be something to be said for releasing him immediately after the election. He could then get into the Legislature on a by-election, if he wished to – about which they were doubtful – and could, if the Governor thought this right, become a Minister. Mr. Branigan expressed the view that it would be a good thing for Mr. Nkrumah to be a Minister and that in any case it would be much better from the general point of view for him to be inside the Legislature than working outside it. Mr. Saloway did not either endorse or contest these remarks of Mr. Branigan's, but both agreed that it was quite likely that Mr. Nkrumah would prefer to remain outside the legislative scene.

[1] Both Branigan and Saloway were in London in Dec 1950. The letter referred to was written by two MPs, Sir R Acland, Labour MP for the Gravesend Division of Kent, and Mr J Grimond, Liberal MP for Orkney and Shetland. The letter was published in the weekly journal *West Africa* on 29 Dec 1950. It suggested, *inter alia*, that Nkrumah should be released for sound political reasons.

Mr. Saloway said that the Governor, when they had discussed the matter, had expressed himself as opposed to releasing Mr. Nkrumah before his sentence had run its course. He had deliberately and knowingly committed or rather incited violence against the state and must pay the penalty.[2] Mr. Saloway had not, however, discussed the position with the Governor immediately before coming to this country.

Both Mr. Saloway and Mr. Branigan agreed that as a first step we ought to write to the Governor in continuation of Mr. Gorsuch's letter at No. 46. I suggested to Mr. Saloway that he might write personnally to the Governor also and he is probably going to do so. I submit the draft of a letter for me to send to the Governor – it ought to go off before Christmas – and also a brief acknowledgement for the Secretary of State to send to Sir Richard Acland.

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[2] Saloway had been the principal prosecution witness at Nkrumah's trial.

89 CO 96/819/4, no 50 23 Dec 1950

[Nkrumah]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the question of releasing Mr Nkrumah from prison

Will you please refer to Gorsuch's secret letter of the 29th November about Nkrumah's sentences of imprisonment? You may have seen before you got this, or if not you will in a day or two, the letter from two M.P.'s, Grimond, the Liberal Whip, and Acland, which will, I imagine, be published in "West Africa" this week and which puts forward the suggestion that Nkrumah should be released from imprisonment. Acland has sent a copy of the letter to the Secretary of State[1] expressing the hope that he will give most sympathetic consideration to the suggestion. A copy of the Secretary of State's reply is enclosed.[2] You will see that he has maintained the point that the power of clemency is a matter for your prerogative but has said that he is inviting your attention to the letter.[3]

When Saloway and Branigan came to see me on the 20th December I took the opportunity to show them the M.P.s' letter and we had some talk on the subject. Saloway may, I think, be writing to you himself.

You will have seen from Gorsuch's letter of the 29th November to Saloway that in his letter of the 21st November to Brockway[4] the Secretary of State set out very clearly the nature of the offences for which Nkrumah and others were serving prison sentences and the position with regard to the prerogative. As regards the new suggestion in the letter from Grimond and Acland, the Secretary of State has formed

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[1] Now Mr Griffiths.

[2] Not printed.

[3] Griffiths was in no position to do other than recognise that the governor alone enjoyed the prerogative of mercy. The secretary of state enjoyed no such power in individual colonies whilst governors did enjoy this right devolved from the Sovereign through the Royal Instructions and the Letters Patent. Governors were not the appointees of secretaries of state for the colonies but of the Crown even if secretaries of state were influential in their nomination.

[4] Mr Fenner (later Lord) Brockway, the veteran anti-colonial and libertarian Labour MP for Eton and Slough, 1950–1964.

no view, nor have any of us felt in a position to express any view. What follows, therefore, is not intended to argue a case one way or the other, but merely to put to you certain points which seem to us to arise.

The contention in the letter from Grimond and Acland is, as we understand it, that Nkrumah should be released for broad reasons of policy, on the ground that, now that a democratic constitution is about to come into force in the Gold Coast, it is undesirable that the leader of the main political party should remain in prison, since it is on the co-operation of that party with Government that the successful working of the constitution will to a considerable extent depend. The writers of the letter would no doubt admit that it is important to demonstrate publicly that those who proceed by violence against the state must pay the penalty for doing so; but, as I understand their argument, it is that the Government's intention to proceed firmly against such offenders has already been demonstrated and that a gesture of clemency would not therefore be misinterpreted.

What I have just said raises questions of principle, but the decision seems to us to rest to a large extent on considerations of political expediency. If, as I gather from Saloway and Branigan, it is likely that the Convention People's Party will be the only significant political party in the new Legislature and that they will secure at any rate a large minority of the seats, then we assume that some of the Ministers will necessarily be C.P.P. men. Do you envisage that, if this happens, the fact that Nkrumah is still in prison – and I understand that remission for good conduct is not likely to bring him out before June – will interfere with the working of the Executive Council? Are the C.P.P. members of it likely to press after their appointment for his release and, if so, would a refusal, if that were to be your decision, prejudice co-operation? Alternatively would the granting of their request at that stage be more likely to be interpreted by the public and the C.P.P. as a victory for them than if you were to decide to take the initiative in releasing him at an earlier stage?

To take the matter still further, when Nkrumah does come out of prison is it likely to be better for the working of the new constitution that he should be inside the Legislature, if he wishes to stand, or that he should remain outside it as the leader of his party outside the main constitutional arrangements (like Gandhi in India)? And if he came into the Legislature (if necessary by a by-election) would you be in favour of his becoming a Minister? The question whether you allow his sentence to run its course or release him earlier seems to depend to some extent on this last point.

Obviously also the effect of his release now on the election is a key point. Is the fact that he is in prison likely to improve the chances of the C.P.P. of winning more seats in the Legislature?

Alternatively if he were let out before the election would this be likely to lead to such an outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the C.P.P. as materially to improve their chances? If the conclusion is that it would not be right to release him before the election, would there be anything to be said for releasing him immediately thereafter on the assumption that the C.P.P. do in fact win a substantial number of seats?

Since the prerogative of mercy exists to serve the ends of justice and not politics, it would hardly be proper to consider the case of Nkrumah without at the same time paying equal regard to the cases of all other persons now serving sentences of imprisonment for similar offences.

Many of the questions which I have raised are hypothetical and I do not expect for a moment that you will wish to answer all of them in replying to this letter. I merely

put them as indicating some of the points which seem to us, following the talk with Saloway and Branigan, to arise in connection with the suggestion which Acland and Grimond have made.

Incidentally Branigan made one point in the discussion which was new to me, namely that Nkrumah is not debarred under Article 43 (h) of the Constitutional Order in Council from becoming a member of the Legislature, since, although he is in prison for more than twelve months, none of the sentences is itself for more than twelve months. That is reflected in what I have said above.[5]

[5] Nkrumah was released on 12 Feb 1951.

90 CO 96/815/5, no 1 — 31 Jan 1951

[Financial planning]: letter from R P Armitage to H T Bourdillon[1] on the draft ten-year plan for social and economic development

You will remember that in your confidential letter No.31080/50 of 19th June, 1950, you dealt with our proposal to transfer £1,500,000 to the Supplementary Sinking Fund, as a result of which we stayed our hand in order to give the matter further careful thought.

We appreciate the arguments against the proposal and I am left in no doubt that a very strong case must be made to support our original proposal. We think that such a case exists and that its foundation is securely bedded in the constitutional change that is now taking place here. But before I begin to develop this argument I should like to set out the position as it appears to me.

A conservative estimate of the financial position of this Colony at the end of the financial year 1950/51 is that on 31st March, 1951, our surplus will amount to £11,833,937, composed as follows:-

	£
Excess of assets over liabilities	10,333,937
Reserve Fund	1,500,000
	£11,833,937

It should, however, be borne in mind that we can already see a further £6,000,000 arising from the Development (Cocoa) Fund; but this sum will not mature till the end of the crop year – in September, 1951, and I have therefore not taken it into account at this stage.

Our revised Revenue Estimate for the year 1950/51 is £20,000,000. This does not include the £6,000,000 due from the Development (Cocoa) Fund, and is an increase of some £3,000,000 on the original Estimate for the year. It may be worth noting at this point that the revenue of this Colony has grown fairly remarkably over the past twelve years as follows:-

[1] CO assistant secretary, Finance Dept.

Year	Total £
1937–38	3,791,673
1938–39	3,780,288
1944–45	5,866,665
1945–46	7,171,618
1946–47	7,567,589
1947–48	10,245,618
1948–49	11,639,324
1949–50	18,106,495

Against this revenue of £20,000,000 for the year, the estimate for Ordinary and Extraordinary Expenditure was approximately £16,500,000. Assuming that our works programme continues as at present, although we shall not have completed as much of the programme of capital works as we had expected, our total expenditure for the year (inclusive of development expenditure) may amount to £18,000,000. On this basis it looks as though we could fairly assume a difference of some £2,000,000 a year between Revenue and Ordinary/Extraordinary Expenditure for 1950/51 and 1951/52 as with the progress made with the ten-year Plan, ordinary expenditure will increase and extraordinary expenditure will be stable at about £4,000,000 as an item quite distinct from Development.

The draft ten-year Plan for the economic and social development of the Gold Coast was laid on the Table on the 5th December by Saloway who made a statement, a copy of which I attach.[2] On further consideration we have decided that it would make for simplification of presentation of the Plan to the Legislature if part I and the financial appreciation in part II were re-written in order to put concisely the objects of the Plan, what the material benefits should be, the estimated costs and how the finances may be provided. This will leave pages 25 onwards of the draft Plan as material for departmental use and as background information to guide those concerned with the execution and financing of individual schemes. It is unlikely that this part would be printed. We propose therefore when the Economic Development Committee has examined the revised part I to forward it in draft officially, for approval with a view to subsequent publication and debate in the Assembly.

I am anxious to start the Development Fund proper as soon as possible after the Plan itself has been accepted. The Development Fund will be an integral part of the Plan. This brings me to the amount that can safely be transferred from the excess of assets over liabilities to the Fund in the coming financial year. In my view and on the basis of the foregoing we shall not be imprudent if we transfer £7,500,000 to the Fund, and we can assume that the transfer would take place by September, 1951. In that month we could also reckon to receive some £6m. into the Development No. 2 Fund from the special duty on cocoa.

Our surplus can then be recast at 1/10/1951 as follows:-

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[2] Not printed.

	£
Excess of assets over liabilities	2,833,937
Reserve	1,500,000
Development No.1 Fund	7,500,000
Development Fund No2 (Cocoa) Fund	6,000,000
	£17,833,937

This takes no account, of course, of the fact that, at a conservative estimate and assuming there is no untoward fall in the price of cocoa, we can expect a further £7,000,000 to develop during the year 1951/52. £5,000,000 of this will go straight to the Development No. 2 (Cocoa) Fund in September, 1952 but the balance of £2,000,000 would remain as a surplus asset at the end of the financial year 1951/52 to ensure that when we deal with the Estimates for 1952/53 we should have a substantial sum again as a surplus. You will have noticed that I have not included any Colonial Development and Welfare vote moneys, the £800,000 due from His Majesty's Government, or any other sum that may become due to be paid into the Development Fund, so that the figures I have given you are, to say the least, conservative. In effect, therefore, we would be budgeting now for at least £13,500,000 to go into development during the year 1951/52 which should enable the Plan to be tackled realistically.

So by 31st March, 1953, the Development Funds 1 and 2 should have received some £20m. and expenses from the Funds should not have been more than £8m. for the period 1951 to 1953. The average expenditure on development from 1945/46 to 1949/50 was £1,163,000. The following table shows how this expenditure has slowly increased:-

Expenditure on Development	
1945–46	£522,862
1946–47	895,556
1947–48	£1,176,690
1948–49	1,308,901
1949–50	1,911,258
Total	£5,815,267

The estimated expenditure 1950–51 is £2,250,000. Recurrent costs stemming from development expenditure will, of course, be transferred at once to revenue.

In our draft ten-year Plan we reckon that we shall have to raise about £25m. in loans. At the present estimate of development expenditure we should not require to raise a loan until 1955 or 1956, and later if cocoa prices remain high for another two or three seasons. With that background we consider that £1½m. can be paid into the Supplementary Sinking Fund. This should still enable the excess of assets over liabilities to rise during the year to £3,333,937 as at 31st March, 1952, which with the reserve of £1,500,000 leaves us with 24% of our present annual revenue in hand. I appreciate that this excess of assets over liabilities does not equal a clear four months of our average annual revenue which was the amount referred to in Poynton's letter to Creasy of the 27th January, 1949. On the other hand a number of the fears which were forecast in that letter have proved unfounded and our revenue

has remained extremely buoyant. The surplus of revenue over ordinary/extraordinary expenditure for 1949/50 was over £5½m. and taking development expenditure into account the surplus was nearly £4m.

We have consistently followed the policy of trying to maintain our rates of taxation and where appropriate to increase them in order to take advantage of the very favourable financial period through which the Gold Coast is passing. In so doing we have accumulated this very large surplus balance because we have not been able to spend the money on development works and major construction or at times on carrying out routine departmental administration and the provision of ordinary public services, although full provision for the latter has always been included in the Estimates. Although there is some improvement in the degree to which we can get things done there will still be a considerable time before we are really spending up to what we would like. The result, therefore, should be that revenue will still run ahead of expenditure and the need for maintaining quite such a large reserve does not become so urgent. One of the most important factors, of course, is that the existence of this large surplus balance is an invitation for critics to advocate a reduction in our rates of revenue collection. This would be an extremely unfortunate situation, one might almost say a disaster for the Gold Coast. Although we can see little further opportunity for widening the basis of taxation or of increasing the rates of tax we would be most reluctant to find ourselves under very heavy pressure to reduce existing rates.

I now come back almost to the point where I started. The Public Debt now stands at £8,410,000, of which £4,628,000 is in respect of the 1946 Loan. The balance of the Public Debt, amounting to £3,782,000 in respect of loans due well into the future, is divided as follows:-

		£
Colony		587,466
Railway	£2,293,241	
Harbours	901,293	3,194,534
		£3,782,000

We have not yet sorted out the loan position with regard to the Railway and Harbour Administration but we shall be tackling this during the next few months in order to reach tentative agreement as to the extent to which, in order to meet the cost of extensions to the north and west, the Railway and Harbour Administration should obtain loans and the methods of meeting the interest thereon and repayment liabilities. In these discussions with Salkield[3] it will be a very vital matter as to what is to happen to the £3,728,000 which is the Railway share of the 1956 loan. We are in agreement so far that the Railway and Harbours should meet the interest and Statutory Sinking Fund charges on its share of all existing loan funds and full provision was made in the 1950/51 Estimates and will be made in future. But the extent to which the Railway will be able to see clearly its liability as regards payment of interest on, and the repayment of, future loans will depend on what liability, if any, accrues to it in respect of the 1956 loan after the date of repayment.

We feel that with this large programme of railway expansion the most desirable course would be for the Government to assume a responsibility for the repayment of

[3] W H Salkield, general manager, Gold Coast railways.

the balance of the 1956 loan which is not covered by the Statutory Sinking Fund. After 1956, therefore, the Railway and Harbour Administration will have no further liability in respect of this loan and they will be able to concentrate on the method of dealing with other existing loans and fresh ones.

The new loan which they have received from the Cocoa Marketing Board is being looked after in that it is being repaid on an equated annuity basis. But as regards the 1956 loan the position is as follows:-

		£
Against the loan of		4,628,000
We shall have by 31.3.51:		
Statutory Sinking Fund	£1,668,384	
Supplementary Sinking Fund	1,106,486	2,774,870
		£1,853,130

The addition to the Supplementary Sinking Fund of £1,500,000 would reduce the outstanding balance at once to £353,130 which could hardly present much of a problem to anyone in 1956.

We realise that there must be a balance between keeping funds available for development and liquidating past obligations. But you will not be unaware of certain feelings of uncertainty regarding the future here that have found expression in some quarters and I am quite convinced that, as the future must remain a mystery to all of us, the correct policy for the Gold Coast is to put it at once into the most secure position that we can. We feel very strongly that paragraph 3 of the Secretary of State's despatch No. 324 of the 25th November, 1944, is particularly applicable in the case of the Gold Coast today. I quote for ease of reference:-

> "The knowledge that money borrowed by Colonial Governments in the past has been repaid entirely within a reasonable period and has not been allowed to run on indefinitely by means of conversions, has built up the credit of Colonial loans on the London market."

Past events in the Gold Coast from 1948 onwards have not improved the standing of the Colony in the eyes of the world and certainly must have damaged any credit which the Gold Coast would have in financial circles if it had to stand alone. We are about to embark on a new Constitution which is certain to go through a critical and experimental early stage and one of the main duties which we will have is to guide African Ministers in the pursuance of prudent financial policies. It cannot be ignored that in the opinion of a number of the educated classes the new Constitution will only be an interim phase before the Gold Coast takes its place as a self-governing unit within the Commonwealth. We may have our doubts as to how long this phase will last and it may prove that in fact conditions locally will have to advance so far in so many directions that a new constitutional position will not be as early attained as many persons now expect. On the other hand we should do all we can to show Ministers that their financial credit will stand in strict relationship to their actions. It has been frequently suggested to me in the past that if annual revenue is not adequate to meet some recurrent charge then money should be borrowed to make good the deficit. Little heed is paid by persons who make such statements to the need of eventual repayment of borrowed money. We feel that it would be an object lesson

of the highest educative value if we could carry out the intention which we originally had of paying £1½m. into the Supplementary Sinking Fund and thus enabling the 1956 loan to be repaid in full.

We hope, therefore, that you will be able to agree to this transfer of £1,500,000 to the Supplementary Sinking Fund at an early date to enable this change to appear in the workings for the current year. An examination of our timetable indicates that we shall not be able to debate the Development Plan until the draft Estimates for 1951/52 have been dealt with. We propose, therefore, to show Development expenditure for the year 1951/52 as heretofore under a special head of expenditure and provide not less than £1,000,000 as the annual contribution from revenue to the Development (No. 1) Fund. We hope that this annual contribution will be maintained for the next few years at least.

91 CO 96/823/1, no 41 10 Feb 1951

[1951 elections]: letter from F A Evans[1] to L H Gorsuch on the conduct of the rural and municipal elections

Please refer to my letter SCR 1038 of 2nd February.

The primary rural elections were held on 5th and 6th and went off smoothly. In one electoral district in Ashanti every seat in the electoral college was contested, in another in the Colony no seat was fought. The average number of contested primary elections was well below a third of the total in each constituency, agreement on the candidate having been reached by customary methods beforehand.

The municipal and the rural secondary elections were all held on the 8th February in an entirely orderly manner and friendly atmosphere. I enclose copies of the nomination gazettes with the election results entered up.[2]

In the four municipal districts the average poll was 47% of the registered electorate and the C.P.P. had no difficulty in gaining the five available seats. Although all the other candidates lost their deposits, together they polled very few votes less than 10% of the total, which showed considerably more fight than in recent Town Council elections. The five C.P.P. candidates polled 58,858 votes, their eight opponents sharing 5,574.

In the elections for the thirty-three rural seats the electoral colleges were, with few exceptions, up to full voting strength. Twenty-nine seats went to the C.P.P., generally with a heavy majority, three to the U.G.C.C., and one to an independent. The election of most interest was in the two-Member constituency of Akim Abuakwa, where Dr. Danquah (95 votes), and William Ofori Atta (87), both of the U.G.C.C., narrowly defeated their C.P.P. opponents (85 and 83 respectively).

Eight Members of the former Legislative Council fought these elections but only Danquah and Plange[3] were successful. Five, however, of the unsuccessful ones are

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[1] Permanent secretary, Gold Coast Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, who signed this letter on behalf of Saloway.

[2] Enclosures to this letter not printed.

[3] Kwasi Plange, a founder member of the Committee on Youth Organisation, the predecessor of the CPP, and a member of the executive of the CPP. He entered the Legislative Assembly as the first CPP member when he won a by-election for the Cape Coast seat in June 1950. He won one of the Cape Coast seats in the 1951 election but died during the CPP's first term.

also nominated for election as Territorial Members. The Territorial Elections are being held to-day and I enclose a copy of the nominations Gazette, No. 15.

The orderly conduct of these elections has not been marred by any untoward incident. No trouble had indeed been expected but the quiet everywhere, and particularly Accra, exceeded all expectations. For this the credit must go to the careful efficiency of the polling arrangements, to the excellent leaders who gave the Police every assistance and lost no opportunity of impressing on their followers the need for good behaviour. The C.P.P.'s organisation eclipsed anything that any other Party or candidate could offer.

The reactions to these elections are not yet noticeable. To most the results were largely foregone and the interest is more on how the new Members will comport themselves in the Assembly.

The election by the Northern Territories Electoral College were also held on the 8th. None of the nineteen Members is known to have any leaning towards the C.P.P. and all the more experienced Northerners were elected.

The C.P.P. are engaged in intensive lobbying in connection with the Territorial Elections in the hope that they will secure enough fellow travellers to give them a majority in the Assemby.

92 CO 96/821/2, no 6 16 Feb 1951

[Ministers and conflicts of interest]: despatch no 64 from Mr Griffiths to Sir C Arden-Clarke

[Given that the Legislative Assembly was to meet for the first time only four days from the date of this despatch, and that Arden-Clarke was in the process of forming the first Executive Council, it might be felt these rules were issued rather late in the day. It is perhaps evidence of how much extemporising was necessarily going on in setting up what was after all an unprecedented constitutional change in the 20th century.]

The occasion of the institution of a new Executive Council under the Constitutional Instruments for the Gold Coast provides a suitable opportunity for me to address you on certain matters which I regard as being of fundamental importance to the successful working of the new Constitution.

2. The Coussey Committee recommended, and His Majesty's Government agreed, that the Executive Council should consist, under the chairmanship of the Governor, of three *ex-officio* members and members drawn from the Legislative Assembly (Representative Members) and that six of the members drawn from the Legislative Assembly should be given executive responsibility for the administration of departments. Provision has been made accordingly in that part of the constitutional instruments which is now to be brought in operation.

3. Under these arrangements Representative Members of the Executive Council will henceforward be directly responsible for a very great part of Government business. The Constitution provides that all members of the Executive Council, whether or not they are charged with the administration of any departments or subjects, will be styled "Ministers", and their functions as such will be of a Ministerial nature. In the course of their duties Ministers will be called upon, both individually and collectively, to deal with and to take decisions upon a wide variety of

subjects touching almost all aspects of the life of the community; and situations will no doubt arise from time to time where they may find that their public duties affect or even conflict with their personal and their private interests. Situations of this nature could arise in a number of ways and I need mention here only the more obvious contributory factors such as the nature and extent of a member's private business activities, his financial interest in particular companies or schemes or his activities and interests as an official of a trade union.

4. Under the Gold Coast Constitution, provision is made for the disqualification for elected membership of the Legislative Assembly (subject to stated exceptions) of a director or manager of a company which is a party to any subsisting Government contract for or on account of the public service. This provision does not apply to persons who are merely shareholders in such a company. It is, however, to be expected that, when a member of the Legislative Assembly becomes a Minister, he should, on assumption of office, disclose to the Governor in confidence a full list of his holdings of stocks or shares in all companies whether they are or are not at the time parties to Government contracts; and, in addition, that he should use the strictest discretion in deciding, in circumstances where his private interest and his public duty may conflict, when he can properly continue to hold such stocks or shares. Since Ministers are to receive appropriate remuneration from public funds I consider it reasonable that they should also be called upon at the time of their appointment to divest themselves for their period of office of any outside interests which might conflict with their public responsibilities. So far as private businesses and professional practices are concerned, this ruling should in my view be interpreted as requiring a severance of *active* connection. Thus a professional man or a business man would take no part in his practice or business during his tenure of office as a Minister and would receive no fees or earnings during that period, but he would be able to resume his former position on giving up office.

5. There are in addition definite rules governing Ministerial conduct which have been laid down in the United Kingdom as a result of very long experience and which may be of assistance in the working of the new Constitution in the Gold Coast. In the United Kingdom, certain easily identifiable forms of misconduct, e.g. disclosure of official secrets and corruption generally, are the subject of legislation (the Official Secrets Acts and the Prevention of Corruption Acts). In addition, there is a code of ethics prescribed by rules which have been laid down by successive Governments over a long period. These rules, which are summarised below, are based on custom and usage of the Constitution, and any serious infringement of them, even though not punishable by law, would incur the drastic penalty of dismissal from office.

(a) All directorships held by Ministers must be resigned except honorary directorships, directorships in connection with philanthropic understakings and directorship in private companies which deal wholly or mainly with family affairs or interest and are not primarily engaged in trading.

(b) On assuming office, Ministers should cease to hold paid official positions in trades unions, and should cease from active full-time participation in their affairs.

(c) Ministers ought not to enter into any transactions whereby their private pecuniary interest might, even conceivably, come into conflict with their public duty.

(d) No Minister is justified in any circumstances in using official information which comes to him as a Minister for his own private profit or for that of his friends.
(e) No Minister ought to put himself, or allow himself to be put, in a position to use his official influence in support of any scheme or in furtherance of any contract in regard to which he has an undisclosed private interest.
(f) No Minister should use his official influence to support the candidature of any person for admission to or promotion within the Civil Service except that when a candidate for first appointment is known to him personally there would be no objection to a Minister giving him a written testimonal.
(g) No Minister ought to accept any kind of favour from persons who are in negotiation with, or seeking to enter into contractual or proprietary or pecuniary relations with the Government.
(h) Ministers should scrupulously avoid speculative investments in securities as to which, from their position and their special means of early or confidential information, they have, or may have, an advantage over other people in anticipating market changes.
(i) Ministers should not practice journalism while holding office. This prohibition does not, however, extend to writings of a literary, historical, scientific, philosophical or romantic character.

6. The above rules are by no means exhaustive, but they serve to illustrate the manner in which, in the United Kingdom, the holders of high public office in the service of the Crown are expected and required to conduct themselves; and they may be regarded as "rules of obligation", the breach of which shall be regarded as exposing the Minister to removal from office. There are, in addition, certain "rules of prudence" which have never been formulated and which it would be very difficult to formulate in precise or universal terms. One of these rules, however, is that Ministers should carefully avoid all transactions such as the acceptance of gifts of substantial value from members of the public which can give colour or countenance to the belief that they are doing anything which the "rules of obligation" forbid.

93 CO 96/813/5, no 12 27 Feb 1951

[Legislative Assembly and new ministers]: political intelligence notes by the Gold Coast Ministry of Defence and External Affairs on the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly and the new ministers

[This is one of a much longer series of such appraisals. Because defence and external affairs remained under British control until 6 Mar 1957, such reportage was maintained. Many of these reports are chequered with inaccuracies such as the mis-spelling of names but the report reproduced here is milder than some of this genre.[1]]

[1] The issue of intelligence reportage is of central importance but cannot be explored deeply because of restrictions governing access to such material in both Britain and Ghana. For more on colonial intelligence in this period, see R Rathbone, 'Police and politics in the Gold Coast, 1945–1957', in D Anderson and D Killingray, eds, *Policing and decolonization: nationalism, politics and the police* (Manchester, 1992) pp 84–104.

Legislative Assembly

Legislative Assembly met for the first time on Tuesday 20th February, when H.E. delivered his opening address. All of the C.P.P. members wore their cloths, but apart from this display there was no manifestation of party exuberance, and all members bore themselves with dignity. There was a ripple of amusement amongst the audience as the Honourable Member for Kumasi North West, Krobo Edusei, went to the table to take the oath, but he himself behaved in an unexceptional manner. The one "incident", when Hutton Mills neglected to shake hands with H.E. after taking the oath, was explained by Hutton Mills afterwards as due to his confusion because ink was spilt on the register of names.

H.E.'s advice that the Assembly should in its choice of a Speaker set the welfare of the country above the interests of the party was promptly followed by Nkrumah's proposal that Mr. E. C. Quist should be elected Speaker. This proposal was accepted unanimously, and the choice of this man, who had been appointed by the Governor as President of the last Legislative Council and who is highly respected everywhere as a man of dignity and character who is not immersed in party politics, started the Assembly off on the right foot, and it has been well received everywhere.

The subsequent negotiations between the parties and with H.E. regarding the choice of Ministers have been difficult, but they have been conducted so far as Nkrumah and his lieutenants are concerned, with commendable restraint and discretion. The territorial leaders would at first be satisfied with not less than four Ministries, and at one stage it appeared likely that no agreement would be reached on this point. This was in spite of the fact that nobody queried the fact that the C.P.P. could command a majority of votes in the Assembly. Eventually, however, the chiefs were made to realize that they could do no greater disservice both to their position as chiefs and to the system of local government which they represented than to antagonize the C.P.P. by trying to deny to them the responsibility to which their success in the elections entitled them. Agreement was therefore reached that the C.P.P. should have six ministries, that the other two should go to Edward Asufu-Adjaye [sic], barrister-at-law, a respresentative of the Asanteman Council and to J. A. Braimah, Kabachewura (Northern Territories).

Nkrumah has given every indication throughout these negotiations that he wishes to be recognized throughout the world in future as a statesman rather than a mere agitator. He is also concious of the fact that he will have to be a real leader of his party and not, as he at times appeared to be in the past, "a chosen instrument", if he is to keep the party on the rails.

When the Legislative Assembly met on Monday 26th the Speaker read H.E.'s message suggesting the names of the unofficial members of Executive Council. Nkrumah proposed that their names should be voted on by secret ballot, and this was supported by Tsibu Darku and J. A. Allassani. The latter two members agreed that the C.P.P. should have a majority of the Ministries and expressed willingness to co-operate with the C.P.P. on all matters which they believed to be for the good of the Gold Coast but said the members they represented would oppose anything which they considered to be detrimental to the country. The subsequent count revealed that the only suggested minister who was opposed by more than 2 votes was Ansah Koi, who received 29 "Noes".

Hereunder are some notes on the new Ministers:-

Nkrumah
Born 1909. Son of a Goldsmith. Educated at Essiama, Sekondi, and St. Augustine's College, Cape Coast. Teacher from 1934 to 1939. 1939 went to U.S.A. from U.K. to study journalism in Lincoln University. Obtained M.A., M.Sc., degrees. Returned to England in 1945, studied at London School of Economics and joined Gray's Inn, but was not called to the Bar. Became secretary to the West African National Secretariat; was closely associated with the African Sub-Committee of the British Communist Party. December 1947 returned to the Gold Coast as General Secretary of the U.G.C.C. Formed the C.P.P. in June 1949.

Nkrumah is something of an ascetic and a student of the occult. He is not of great intellect nor an orator and he has not shown himself to be a man of moral courage or fixity of purpose. He lives simply and perhaps his greatest appeal lies in his undoubted honesty.

Casely-Hayford
Born 1898. Educated in Mfantsipim, Dulwich College, London, Clare College, Cambridge. Barrister-at-law. Practised as a lawyer until 1936 when he was made District Magistrate. 1948 he retired and moved to Kumasi to practise as a lawyer again. Was first married to a Jewess, whom he divorced because of her bad behaviour in the Gold Coast, now has an Accra wife. He was elected a member of the Kumasi Town Council in 1950 and has shown himself to be active and useful as such. A good debater and invariably courteous. As a member of the Kumasi Planning Committee he has tended to side with the European members rather than the Africans over questions of development in the future.

Gbedmah
Born 1913. Educated at Adisadel and Achimota. Is a 7th day Adventist. He started life as a candy maker, than became a Master in Accra Academy, resigning in 1945. Thereafter was occupied in a series of dubious and largely unsuccessful business enterprises. Politically he was originally a follower of J. B. Danquah. When the C.P.P. was formed he became Vice-Chairman. He is known to have appropriated £2,000 from party funds, but no action was taken against him. Judgement was given against him in February 1950 for £1,500 due to an English firm, which has not yet been recovered. He showed great energy and drive in re-establishing the C.P.P. He is recognized by the other leaders of the Party as dishonest, but he is retained because of his great organizing ability.

Botsio
Born 1916. Educated at Adisadel and Fourah Bay College. B.A. 1944., then studied at B.N.C. Oxford. On leaving Oxford he taught for a while in a London County Council School and was later made Warden of W.A.S.U. Was associated with Nkrumah and the Communist Party. Returned to the Gold Coast in 1947 to be Vice-Principal of Akim Abuakwa State School under William Ofori Atta. Was made General Secretary of the C.P.P. 1949 and showed great organizing ability. He used as his text book, Stalin's "On organization". He is a retiring man, not a demagogue. His opinions often carry the day at Party meetings. Does not smoke or drink.

Hutton-Mills
Born 1894. Educated at King Edward VI's Grammar School, King's Lynne, and St. Catherine's College, Cambridge. Joined Inner Temple and called to the Bar. Practised as a lawyer in the Gold Coast but took little interest in politics until September 1949 when he joined the C.P.P. He has not been a success as a lawyer, and his practice has steadily deteriorated in recent years. He supplemented his income during the war by trading in the Black Market. He is not a good speaker.

Ansah Koi
Born 1903. M.R.C.S., M.R.C.P., practised medicine in Koforidua and Larteh. Member of Akwapim Native Authority Finance Committee. At one time had a European wife. Is a C.P.P. supporter but not a Party member. Not a great personality, or a man with very strong views on anything.

Asufu Adjaye [sic]
A well known Ashanti lawyer of very good standing in Kumasi. Was a member of the last Legislative Council, and is a member of several public bodies. Moderate in his views.

J A Braimah
Kabachewura. Born 1916. Educated Tamale Government School. Interpreter and clerk in Gonja Native Authority. Secretary to the Gonja Native Authority, 1950. Visited U.K. 1950, to study Local Government. Member of the Northern Territories Council and extraordinary member of the Legislative Council, 1950. Is the outstanding member of the Northern Territories Council, very able and a good debater.

94 CO 537/7181, no 3 5 Mar 1951

[1951 elections]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to A B Cohen on the results of the elections and the formation of the new government

You will probably be interested to have some background information about the events of the last four weeks leading up to the formation of the new Government.

On Thursday, 8th February the first general election in the history of the country took place. There were 38 seats to be filled by popular ballot in the Colony and Ashanti, the Northern Territories having adopted a different system of election for their 19 seats. Most thorough and elaborate preparations had been made for preparing the people to cast their votes. The elections went off well and in a most orderly fashion, on the whole more orderly than an election in England. The results of the elections were startling. The Convention People's Party (the C.P.P.), the extreme nationalist party, which went to the polls on the slogan "Self-Government Now", made practically a clean sweep, winning 35 out of the 38 seats available with one of the remaining three a "fellow traveller". Most of the opposition candidates, even those contesting constituencies regarded as safe by the moderates, forfeited their deposits.

A month before the election it had been expected that they would win anything up to 25 seats, but at that stage no-one, not even the C.P.P., expected such a wholesale victory. Indeed, when the C.P.P. list of candidates containing the names of a number of ne'er-do-wells was published, the party stock suffered a momentary slump and many moderates, who had themselves done nothing towards establishing a disciplined political party, began to hope that the country would react strongly against the C.P.P. list of candidates and send moderates to the Assembly. It was then that the C.P.P. played a decisive stroke. They put up their leader, Kwame Nkrumah, who was still in gaol, as one of their candidates for Accra. They promised that if he was elected he would be released from prison. A great wave of enthusiasm spread through the rank and file of the party and they then threw all their energies into the final stages of the election compaign. A few days before the election began, my intelligence sources forecast 34 seats for the C.P.P. and this coincided roughly with the last forecast made by the C.P.P. Executive before the elections.

Although there were 18 members still to be elected on the following Saturday by the Territorial Councils of the Colony and Ashanti and 19 members from the Northern Territories, a total of 37, it was clear that having regard to the ineffectiveness, lack of organisation and local jealousies of the Territorial Councils, the C.P.P. had in fact obtained a working majority in the House of Assembly and would be entitled to form the new Government, or, if they decided to go into opposition, would be able to wreck the new constitution before it had had a chance of starting.

The C.P.P. moved quickly. On Friday, 9th, they sent me a letter asking me to meet a deputation of their Executive Committee that afternoon to discuss the immediate release of Kwame Nkrumah, their leader, and other members of their party who were still serving prison sentences in connection with their campaign of "positive action" in January last year. I was not prepared to release anyone until after the Territorial Council elections were over on the Saturday. Also it was important that if Nkrumah and his colleagues were released it should be done as "an act of grace" rather than as the result of public pressure. Knowing that they would probably be attending the Territorial Council elections at Dodowah on Saturday morning, I replied that I would meet them on Saturday morning, in the hope that they would ask for a further postponement. This they obligingly did and asked me to see them on Monday. I agreed to see them on Monday afternoon and in the meantime made all arrangements for the release of Nkrumah and his colleagues at 1 p.m. on Monday. This took the wind out of their sails and enabled me to claim that the release of these men was in fact "an act of grace" and a gesture of goodwill. To my surprise it was accepted as such by the public and local press, "and even the ranks of C.P.P. could scarce forbear a cheer". The decision, however unpalatable, was in fact inevitable. To have refused to release them would have undoubtedly led to a head-on collision and would have received little or no support from the U.K. press or Parliament. There were about a dozen journalists representing U.K., S. African and American newspapers here at the time and I was kept informed of their views and the trend of their reports.

Moreover, by acting quickly I put myself in a better position to resist the demand, which I knew would be made, for the release not only of the so-called "political prisoners" but also of the ex-servicemen and other party members who had been imprisoned for participating in riots and acts of violence. Sure enough on Monday afternoon when the C.P.P. representatives came to see me, after thanking me for

releasing their leader and others, they asked me to release the rioters. I said that I would examine each individual case to see if any grounds for remission existed, but that I could hold out little hope of anyone convicted of crimes of violence being released. Gbedemah, their leader, made the illuminating remark that, if they had only known in time what I was going to do, he would have advised Nkrumah and the others to stay in prison until I had agreed to release all, a remark that Nkrumah himself repeated to me in one of my later interviews with him.

The whole of the fortnight from Sunday, 11th to Sunday, 25th was taken up with a series of interviews with the leaders and representatives of the various parties and groups which had been elected to the new House of Assembly. My objective was to arrive at an agreed list of eight persons whose names I could present to the House for its approval for appointment to ministerial office. The Colony and Ashanti Territorial Councils had between them elected some half dozen or more C.P.P. members and sympathisers and had thus ensured to the C.P.P. an over-all working majority in the House, a fact admitted by all parties.

The C.P.P. line was that by virtue of their majority and in accordance with accepted parliamentary principles they were entitled to all eight ministerial posts, though they were prepared to give two or three of the eleven posts of Ministerial Secretary to the Northern Territories and possibly Ashanti. The view of the Territorial Council members was that the constitution did not provide for government by a single political party and that a system of checks and balances allowing for the representation of all sections of the community had been intended. While admitting that the C.P.P. had an over-all majority, they considered that only four ministerial posts should go to the C.P.P. and the remaining four should be divided up between themselves. My own view was that, whatever may have been the intention of the framers of the constitution, party government had arrived, and that the responsibility for the Government should be placed fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the majority party, but that in the interests of national unity there should be a coalition and the party should accord representation in the Executive Council to the Northern Territories and to Ashanti, the Colony already being fully represented by party members. If my view prevailed, this meant that the C.P.P. should have six of the eight ministerial posts available, Ashanti one and the Northern Territories one.

The C.P.P. finding that I was ready to give them the substance of their demand, i.e. an over-all majority in an Executive Council composed of three *ex-officio* and eight representative members, were quite co-operative, but wanted themselves to choose the Northern Territories and Ashanti representatives. I pointed out that the Northern Territories and Ashanti would say "Thank you for nothing" and refuse to co-operate on such terms. Eventually, chiefly because of Nkrumah's helpful attitude, they agreed to leave the choice of these representatives to me in consultation with the Territorial groups concerned.

The Territorial groups were a very different proposition. At first they pressed hard for four ministerial posts, although they were prepared to admit that if I put their four suggested names forward the Assembly would reject them. When they found that I would not budge, they decided that they would not co-operate in the Government at all and would refuse any ministerial offices; instead, they would hold themselves in reserve to form an alternative Government if the C.P.P. majority failed. They informed me that they were not a party, had not got any special policy,

did not regard themselves as an opposition and were not prepared to form a coalition. I pointed out that this was hardly a clarion call to the country and was unlikely to win the support of the voters and that if they came out publicly with this kind of statement in the House they would be committing political suicide.

For a long week talks and arguments went on until at last on Friday afternoon (23rd February) the Northern Territories and Ashanti representatives agreed each to take one ministerial post and accepted the list which in consultation with them and the C.P.P. I had prepared. On Saturday morning the Northern Territories representatives reappeared in my office and announced that they had changed their minds again and they would not take office. I allowed myself the indulgence of a brief but violent explosion which obviously shook them and then for an hour I wrought patiently with them. Finally they accepted my advice and agreed to take office. I told them that there could be no more changes of mind as I was now sending the list of names to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Assembly when it met on Monday, 26th; and that if they did have any more second thoughts they could declare them publicly to the House and to the world in general.

The House met on Monday morning. The motion for the adoption of the list of eight names was moved by Nkrumah and seconded by Sir Tsibu Darku, who had throughout been the chief opponent of that list and had in the background inspired most of the tergiversation of the Northern Territories representatives. The ballot on the names in the House was secret; all the names were accepted practically unanimously except one which was adopted by 48 votes to 29. Nkrumah, in selecting his list of five party members for ministerial office, he himself being the sixth, seems to have been guided in part by a desire to collect a team that would be able to understand and deal with the tasks facing them e.g. himself, Botsio and Gbedemah, but partly also by his wish to convince the outside world that the representatives of his party were men of standing and education, e.g. Hutton-Mills, Casely-Hayford and Dr. Ansah-Koi. All those selected were university graduates. The two oldest members of the C.P.P. team – Tommy Hutton-Mills and Archie Casely-Hayford – both come from families widely respected in the Gold Coast for their parts in early political movements. They have hitherto been conspicuously unsuccessful in their own profession – the law. Hutton-Mills is a lazy man of considerable charm. Since his undergraduate days at Cambridge he has had a passionate interest in the turf and, on his return to the Gold Coast and until his family and the local Bar restrained him, tried his hand as a bookmaker on the Accra race course. His lack of success as a barrister has often driven him to apply for a post as District Magistrate but he has always been turned down on the grounds of his poor legal ability. Casely-Hayford was a District Magistrate for many years and was held in very poor esteem by his colleagues and those who had to wait in his court. He seems, however, to have gained a new lease of life since he got rid of his notorious first wife who was of Polish extraction. Dr. Ansah-Koi, who received only 48 votes in the Assembly, is a medical practitioner, who within three weeks sought the support of three different political groups – the C.P.P., the U.G.C.C. and the Joint Provincial Council. Nkrumah was insistent on his inclusion in the list and I do not yet understand why unless it was because he was a doctor. He is unlikely to prove a satisfactory Minister and I think that Nkrumah himself is already doubting his wisdom in having put his name forward. Doubtless it will be possible to liquidate him in due course and get someone more satisfactory. The two non-C.P.P. ministers, E. Asafu Adjaye (Ashanti), one of

our best barristers, and Braimah, a sub-chief from the Northern Territories, are both sound men and well respected.

On Monday afternoon I held my first meeting of the new Executive Council and administered the official oaths to all the members. The first business was the election by the Council of the Leader of Government Business in the House. Kwame Nkrumah was automatically and unanimously elected Leader.

After the meeting I went into a huddle with Nkrumah and with the Chief Secretary to decide on the distribution of portfolios. Most of Nkrumah's suggestions were sound but he had got Ansah-Koi for the Ministry of Health and Labour, probably because of his medical qualifications, and this had to be changed. Again I found Nkrumah very reasonable and co-operative. So we gave Gbedemah Health and Labour and Ansah-Koi the thankless task of answering for the shortcomings of the P.W.D. as Minister of Communications and Works.

On Tuesday the portfolios were duly distributed, Ansah-Koi registering strong objections but getting no change. The first thing the Ministers asked for was time to settle up their private affairs. I pointed out that many of my functions were now devolved by law on their shoulders, but they replied that they hoped I would go on governing for a little longer until they were ready.

I do not yet know what to make of Nkrumah. My first impressions, for what they are worth, are that he is an idealist, ready to live up to his ideals, but I have yet to learn what those ideals really are. Unlike most of his colleagues he seems quite genuinely to bear no ill-will for his imprisonment and is not venal. He has little sense of humour but has considerable personal charm. He is as slow to laugh as he is quick to grasp the political implications of anything discussed. His approach to questions is more that of a psychologist than a realist. He has proved he can give inspiration and I find him susceptible of receiving it but I fear there is a streak of weakness that may be his undoing. A skilful politician, he has, I think, the makings of a real statesman and this he may become if he has the strength to resist the bad counsels of the scallywags by whom he is surrounded.[1]

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[1] Griffiths minuted (18 Mar) on the first page of this letter: 'I have read with intense interest. Arden-Clarke is a shrewd politician as well as a good governor. All this augurs well.'

95 CO 96/826/3, no 12 13 Apr 1951

[Economic development]: notes by W L Gorell Barnes on his discussions with Gold Coast ministers during his visit to the Gold Coast, 30 Mar – 5 Apr 1951. *Minute* by Gorell Barnes

I. *Introduction*

I arrived in Accra on the morning of the 30th March. On that afternoon, at the suggestion of Mr. Saloway, I paid on the new African Minister of Commerce, Industries and Mines, Mr. Hutton Mills, what was intended to be a courtesy visit, but what at once, on his initiative, turned into an interesting discussion of the Gold Coast's economic problems. On the 31st March I took part in a visit to the site of the

Volta River project,[1] which had been arranged by the Consulting Engineers[2] for the U.K. Parliamentary Delegation and for a number of the new African Ministers, including the Minister of Commerce and the Minister of Agriculture. On the morning of the 1st April the Governor held a briefing meeting to prepare me for a long discussion on general supply and development problems and on the Volta River project, which I had with the new African Ministers at an informal meeting of Executive Council on the afternoon of the 2nd April. The rest of my visit was taken up with further individual discussions with Ministers, both African and European, and with officials, including the new Director of Commerce and Industries, Mr. Ferguson, and the Director of Statistics, Mr. Reisz,[3] except that I took the opportunity to listen in to part of two debates in the Assembly and also to pay a short visit to Achimota.

II. *Supplies*

2. In discussing supplies from the United Kingdom, I explained the increasingly successful efforts we had been making since 1948 to obtain for Colonial territories a fair share of those goods, mainly goods required for development such as steel and cement, which were subject to allocation by the United Kingdom Government; and I instanced the present position regarding cement and steel allocation for 1951 to show the extent to which, in this time of shortages and stringency, the importance of Colonial development was being recognised by the United Kingdom Government. I pointed out, however, firstly, that the allocations which we were obtaining, though generous in the circumstances, would not be more than sufficient at best to maintain the present rate of development; secondly, that there were certain capital goods, such as machinery and a very wide range of consumer goods, which were not subject to allocation by the United Kingdom Government, and over the distribution of which, as between export markets, the United Kingdom Government could at the most give very general guidance to industry; and, thirdly, that, given the tremendous rise which had taken place in the price of raw materials imported into the United Kingdom, a considerable increase in the price of manufactured goods exported by the United Kingdom was inevitable.

3. On supplies from other sources, I explained that it had been the firm policy of the United Kingdom Government not to ask Colonial Governments to impose import restrictions except in so far as this was necessary to protect the balance of payments position of the sterling area and to maintain and improve the strength of sterling. Thanks to this policy and to the growing strength of sterling, it had been possible over recent months for Colonial Governments progressively to relax import restrictions until at the present time the dollar area was virtually the only source from which Colonial territories could not import with almost complete freedom. Thus the

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[1] The Volta River project was first canvassed in the inter-war period. It was intended to harness the power of the Volta and to generate hydro-electricity which would, amongst other things, power a smelter to process the Gold Coast's large reserves of bauxite. It was still largely a paper proposal, not least because of the immense capital cost of the project. It was rapidly adopted by the CPP as a major policy although there was a great deal of internal opposition to it on the grounds of long-term indebtedness.

[2] Sir William Halcrow and Partners.

[3] D C Ferguson, formerly commissioner for commerce and industry in Jamaica, and A B Reisz, appointed as the first statistician in the Gold Coast in 1948.

whole of Western Europe was now regarded as a soft currency source, whilst it had been possible since 1948 to increase very considerably the value of imports obtained by Colonial territories from Japan. Unfortunately, however, it appeared that supplies from sources outside the United Kingdom were also becoming scarcer and, in addition, were increasing in price much more rapidly than supplies from the United Kingdom.

4. Finally, I explained both the general background which made necessary the restriction of dollar imports and the processes which led to the settlement, in agreement between London and Colonial Governments, of Colonial dollar import programmes for each year; and stressed in this connection the fact that the general principles on which these programmes were fixed were similar to those which operated throughout the sterling Commonwealth. I also drew attention to the opportunity which our recent circular savingram gave to Colonial Governments to submit for consideration moderate supplementary dollar import programmes for 1951, if they were satisfied that additional expenditure of dollars was essential, either because of rises in the price of dollar imports or because of that part of the increased purchasing power arising from increased raw material prices which would be left over after all reasonable anti-inflationary measures had been taken and full advantage had been taken of supplies obtainable from the sterling area and other soft currency sources. This part of my exposition was made very much easier by unequivocal and unsolicited statements by the European Ministers to the effect that, whilst the Gold Coast Government had never asked for dollars unless they considered their request justified against the background of general sterling area policy, no request for dollars by them had ever been refused.

5. The new African Ministers took all this very well and showed no disposition to suggest that the Colonial territories in general, or the Gold Coast in particular, was not being, and had not been fairly treated. One Minister – the Minister of Agriculture – did ask whether it would be possible for the United Kingdom to make a special contribution towards the success of the new constitutional experiment in the Gold Coast by singling out the Gold Coast for specially favourable treatment on United Kingdom supplies as compared with other Colonial territories and the independent members of the Commonwealth; to which I replied that, whilst he could rely on the United Kingdom giving any help they could, there was practically no Colonial territory for which a special case could not be made out: some territories, such as Trinidad and Malaya, also had new Ministers, others such as the Gambia and some of the West Indian territories, were particularly backward in development, and so on. For the rest, the African Ministers were chiefly concerned to seek advice as to how they could best help themselves.

6. On this, discussion turned mainly on two points:–

(a) Were there any measures which could be taken at the Gold Coast end to increase the flow of supplies, particularly for development?

I suggested that there were two things which the Gold Coast Government could do in this respect. Firstly, they could give very high priority to their projected port developments, since lack of port capacity appeared at present to be a limiting factor and to make it particularly difficult to catch up on any temporary dislocation of import programmes caused by temporary shipping shortages. Secondly, they could plan their development works sufficiently far in advance to enable them to place in

good time their orders for goods such as heavy machinery for which delivery periods were very long.

(b) *Prices and the cost of living*. In view of the inevitable increase in prices, what could the Gold Coast Government do to protect from hardship those elements of the population which were not benefiting from high raw material prices?

Ministers were of the opinion – which I was disposed to share – that in African conditions little effective action could be taken in the way of price control. The general consensus of opinion was that wages would have to be allowed to rise (though not to such an extent as to lead to serious difficulties if and when there was a reversal of the present trend of raw material prices); that every effort should be made to increase local production of foodstuffs; and that a limited quantity of such staples as maize should be imported and held by Government for injection into the market if and when serious shortages developed, or prices seemed to be getting out of control.

III. *The Volta River project*

7. The Governor had already informed the African Ministers that, as the Volta River project had not yet been before Ministers in the United Kingdom, I should not be in a position to tell Ministers of the final views of the United Kingdom Government about the various aspects of this project. Equally, Gold Coast Ministers were not in a position to express any final views, since the Development Secretariat had not, at the time of my visit, yet completed a comprehensive memorandum on the project which they were preparing, in consultation with Mr. Scott, for submission to the Executive Council in the very near future.

8. On my part, I stressed the following features of the project:–

(a) its vast size – capital expenditure of nearly £100 million involving nearly 1 million tons of imports;

(b) its complete dependence on the aluminium smelter – whilst it would bring benefits to the Gold Coast in the form not only of increased economic activity but of availability of surplus power, new means of communication with the north, possibilities of irrigation, etc., it stood or fell by the manufacture of aluminium, without which it could not be an economic proposition;

(c) the fact that each party to the project – the Gold Coast Government, the United Kingdom Government and, on the assumption that West African Aluminium Limited would own and operate the smelter, that company – would be dependent on each of the other parties, so that the project would only go forward on the basis of agreement between all three parties.

9. As regards organisation, I said that officials in London were thinking in terms of ownership and operation of the aluminium smelter by private enterprise and ownership and operation of the dam and the power plant by a Gold Coast public corporation, with connected port and transport facilities probably owned and operated by the Gold Coast Government. I could not yet say what the view of United Kingdom Ministers would be, but I was sure it would be helpful to United Kingdom Ministers if they could be informed as soon as possible of the provisional views on this matter of the Gold Coast Government. I also thought it would be helpful if the United Kingdom Government could be informed whether, if it were considered difficult or impossible to raise all the capital required in the United Kingdom,

the Gold Coast Government would see any objection to an attempt being made to tap such external sources of finance as the International Bank.

10. Finally, I said that, if it were agreed between the United Kingdom and the Gold Coast Governments that this project should go forward, I thought it would be necessary to consider whether it would be physically possible at the same time for the Gold Coast Government to carry out a general development programme of the sort of size envisaged in the Draft Ten-Year Development Plan[4] which was at present under consideration by Gold Coast Ministers.

11. Partly for lack of time, but mainly no doubt because they had not yet received the memorandum on the project from the Development Secretariat, the African Ministers made very litle comment on my statement at the meeting of Executive Council. But from discussion with individual Ministers, particularly during the course of the visit to the Volta referred to in paragraph 1 above, I gained the following impressions:–

(a) It is quite clear to me that the new African Ministers are extremely keen on the Volta River project, and that they are already, in their own minds and to a certain extent in their public utterances, assuming that the project will go ahead.

(b) I think that the African Ministers will, if this is the view taken by the United Kingdom Government, agree with the proposal that the aluminium smelter should be owned and operated by private enterprise. But they certainly would not wish any other part of the project to be entrusted to private enterprise; and, whilst they realise that there would have to be mutual consultation between those entrusted with the design of the smelter and those entrusted with the design of the dam and the hydro-electric plant, I am sure that they would not wish to actually employ the services of the Aluminium Company in connection either with the design or the construction of the dam or hydro-electric plant.

(c) I do not think the African Ministers will see any objection to an attempt being made to tap outside sources of finance, such as those of the International Bank. Indeed, should the United Kingdom Government by any chance decide that the necessary finance cannot be made available from the United Kingdom, I am fairly certain that the reaction of African Ministers would be, firstly, to scrape together for the project all possible Gold Coast funds (even possibly to the extent of raiding the marketing board reserves); and, secondly, to seek external finance wherever they can get it.

IV. *General impressions*

12. The constitutional experiment in the Gold Coast has got off to a good start. The new African Ministers are trying to make it work and, for the present, are not showing signs of suspicion either of their European colleagues or of the Colonial Office – indeed, the Minister of Agriculture said to me not only that my visit had been most helpful, but also that he hoped that there might be further visits from Colonial Office experts. And this is, I am sure, very largely due to the very genuine and very strenuous efforts which the European Ministers and senior officials are making to ensure the success of the experiment.

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[4] See 90.

13. It would, however, in my view, be very unwise to be complacent. The new African Ministers, in taking part in a constitution which they have described as "fraudulent and bogus", are in no easy position. Some of their followers are not finding it easy to adjust themselves to the new attitude of their leaders; and it is already clear that Dr. Danquah will take every possible opportunity to exploit this position. If, therefore, the new Ministers are to continue for any length of time to act in a responsible manner, they will need a lot of courage and a lot of encouragement and help from the United Kingdom Government.

14. In my view, the crucial issue is that of development. The new Ministers are desperately keen to show results and will be expected to do so. If they fail to do so, they are likely either themselves to turn away from political responsibility and moderation, or to be forced to give way to others who will be ready to play the card of ultra-nationalism with which they themselves won the last rubber. We sometimes say that economic development is a condition precedent to constitutional development, thereby inferring that the rate of progress towards political independence is governed by the rate of economic development. In the Gold Coast, at any rate, I would judge the position to be exactly the opposite of this. The Gold Coast is in any case moving towards political independence. If there is increasing progress in economic development, there seems to be a fair chance that further progress towards political independence will come in a responsible, gradual and orderly manner. If on the other hand, considerable progress is not made, then I believe that, unless we are prepared for a high degree of repression, we shall be forced to concede further political changes against a background of irresponsibility and disorder, to the lasting harm both of the Gold Coast itself and of future relations between the United Kingdom and West Africa. And yet, given the supply position and prospects, it is very difficult to see how, leaving aside the Volta scheme (which, if it is approved, will clearly have to be approved on the basis that it will receive special priorities outside normal Colonial programmes), it is going to be possible for the rate of development in the Gold Coast to be increased beyond the figure of rather less than £3 million per annum which it reached last year. The Draft Ten-Year Development Plan at present being considered by Gold Coast Ministers provides for an expenditure of £67 million over ten years – i.e. an average of nearly £7 million per annum. Unless there is a break in the price of primary products, this should be within the financial capacity of the Gold Coast Government with little or no external assistance. But how, in present circumstances, can the rate of supply of development goods be more than doubled?

15. This situation is not peculiar to the Gold Coast. It arises in very much the same form and against a not dissimilar political background in Nigeria and Malaya. Nor is it easy to see how we can single out these territories for special treatment at the expense either of territories which are backward economically and politically, such as, for instance, the Gambia, or of, say, the East African territories, where the need for an increased pace of Government development arises not so much perhaps from political considerations as from the fact that, unless the whole economy is to break down, the rapid progress which is being made in development in the private sector must be matched by equally rapid progress in the development of the Government sector, particularly basic services such as ports, railways, electricity supplies, etc.

16. We cannot complain that we are being unfairly treated in the allocation of United Kingdom exports, in so far as Government is in a position to dictate or

influence that allocation. Indeed, if past performance is taken as the starting point for allocations, we are on the whole being very generously treated. But that does not alter the fact that the flow of supplies to the Colonies at present in prospect is likely at best only to enable the present pace of development to be maintained; and it may be that Colonial Office Ministers will wish to draw the attention of their colleagues to the risks which will be run and the opportunities which will be missed if we cannot do better than this. In this connection we must remember that Colonial sterling balances are currently increasing at the rate of about £20 million per month, and that, whilst this may appear to the Treasury as a future burden for the United Kingdom arising out of alarmingly high prices for raw materials and the consequent deterioration in the United Kingdom's terms of trade, it is likely to appear to the Colonies as investment in the United Kingdom forced upon them owing to the inability or unwillingness of the United Kingdom to pay in terms of manufactured goods required for development for the raw materials she is receiving.

V. *Position regarding cocoa cutting-out policy*

17. In conclusion, a word about recent developments regarding the cutting-out policy to control Swollen Shoot in the Gold Coast – partly because of the intrinsic importance of the subject and partly because these developments afford a good illustration of the present temper of the new African Ministers and of the difficulties with which they are faced.

18. During their election campaign the C.P.P. had done a lot of loose talking about the policy of compulsory cutting-out and had made a number of promises and semi-promises to the farmers. After the election they were subjected to a good deal of education on the subject and, in particular, Mr. Nkrumah and the Minister of Agriculture were taken to see W.A.C.R.I. As a result, they became convinced that, for the present at any rate, cutting-out was the only possible policy. The question was then discussed in Executive Council, and it was decided that a committee should be appointed to review the methods and organisation of the cutting-out campaign, and that in the meantime compulsory cutting-out should be suspended for one month. This was admittedly a political compromise, though it is only fair to explain that European officials are apparently satisfied that some change in the method of cutting-out is necessary.

19. The decision of the Government was duly announced in the Legislative Assembly on the morning of the 2nd April. In the course of the continued debate on the Governor's Address which followed immediately afterwards, one of the C.P.P. back benchers and Dr. Danquah twisted the Minister of Agriculture's statement and implied that they had understood it to mean that the whole policy of cutting-out was going to be abandoned. That morning nothing was said to correct this impression, except for a short and gallant intervention by Mr. Branigan. On the following day, however, firstly, Mr. Gbedemah made it clear that the Government had no intention of doing anything in this matter which would endanger the Gold Coast's main industry and would cause them to be cursed by their children and grandchildren; and, secondly, Mr. Nkrumah, in winding-up the debate, stated that he was satisfied that the scientists had not yet found any answer to Swollen Shoot other than cutting-out, and that the Government statement meant no more than it said – namely, that compulsory cutting-out would be suspended for one month whilst the methods and organisation (but not the policy) of cutting-out were reviewed.

20. It may well be that something will still go wrong about this: much will depend on the nature of the committee to be established by the Minister of Agriculture. But, whilst the history of this matter to date shows the sort of difficulties with which the new Ministers are faced, it also shows that they are not altogether incapable of acting with responsibility and a certain amount of courage.

Minute on 95

Secretary of State
I am afraid that there was almost certainly a serious error in my notes on my visit to the Gold Coast, which were recently submitted to you.

2. You will remember that I drew attention to the fact that the Gold Coast Draft Ten-Year Plan assumed an annual expenditure (apart from the Volta scheme) of nearly £7 million and that this was a very great increase on the current rate of expenditure on development of rather under £3 million. This figure of rather under £3 million over the current rate of expenditure on development was taken from a passage in the Draft Ten-Year Plan where it was described as representing "total expenditure on development during 1950/51". On closer examination, however, it seems that this figure in fact represented only expenditure on development financed from current revenue, and that when expenditure from surplus balances, loan funds and C.D. and W. is added, the figure for total expenditure on development during 1950/51 is much nearer the figure of about £7 million per annum provided for in the Draft Ten-Year Development Plan.

3. The facts will be further examined and checked as quickly as possible, and it is possible that consultation with the Gold Coast Government may be necessary to arrive at the precise position. I thought, however, that I ought to let you know of the present position at once, since, if what I have said above is correct, it goes far to vitiate what I said in my notes about supplies: and provided that the Volta scheme is treated as a special scheme requiring special priorities quite outside the Colonial programme, the prospects of the Gold Coast being able to command supplies at a rate sufficient to enable them to implement at any rate the greater part of the Draft Ten-Year Plan would be very much better, and there would be no case for special representations to other Ministers.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to the Minister of State, to Mr Cook, and to all those in the Department who have seen copies of my notes. . . .

W.L.G.B.
20.4.51

96 CO 96/819/3, no 7 16 Apr 1951

[Release of CPP prisoners]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clark to A B Cohen on his decision to release the remaining prisoners serving sentences for their parts in 'Positive Action' [Extract]

Minutes by Sir T Lloyd and Mr Griffiths

Would you please refer to the correspondence beginning with your Secret and Personal letter No. 31312/9A/50 of the 23rd December and to my Secret telegram

No. 12 about the release of the remaining eight prisoners serving sentences for their parts in positive action?

As you may imagine, my decision to release these prisoners, who were all serving sentences for taking part in the riot during which the two policemen were murdered, was reached with the greatest reluctance. The main considerations which influenced me were as follows:-

(a) the leaders of the C.P.P., who now form the majority among the Ministers, are making a genuine effort to work the new constitution in the face of the impatience and criticisms of their own back-benchers and in spite of extreme provocation from Dr. Danquah;
(b) the C.P.P. in its election manifesto promised to work for the release of those imprisoned as a result of positive action;
(c) the political leaders who launched the campaign of positive action have been released and they are, they represent, being put under severe political pressure from their own party and their supporters among the ex-servicemen to secure the release of those who followed their lead even if they did misinterpret the declared policy that positive action was to be non-violent;
(d) the continued imprisonment of these eight persons is seriously weakening the position of the C.P.P. leaders and especially of Nkrumah himself, who has represented that all the blame for their remaining in prison is being put on him on the grounds that he is thinking only of himself, that he has come out of prison and become a Minister with a fat salary but has left his followers to rot in gaol. Their continued imprisonment might well, if protracted, lead to the fall of the present government, which is at present trying to be reasonable and moderate in its conduct of affairs, and to the domination of C.P.P. policy by the more extreme elements;
(e) there is no other political party existing or in sight which would be able to form and carry on an alternative government and the fall of its present leader might have a far worse effect on the maintenance of respect for law and order than the release of the eight men;
(f) these releases should remove a dangerous obstacle in the way of the continued co-operation of the C.P.P. in the new constitution and, if Nkrumah's statement about the determination of himself and his colleagues to "ensure that the forces of law and order receive the full support of the country in the performance of their duties" were eventually to be reflected in the conduct of the C.P.P., the gain to the country would be of the greatest political and social importance. As an earnest of his intentions Nkrumah has undertaken to use all the C.P.P. influence to stop the ex-servicemen attempting to stage any demonstration in celebration of these releases.

Among the other considerations of which I took account were the following:-

(a) there was nothing in the court records of these cases which showed that any one of the eight prisoners was in any way directly concerned with the murder of the two escort policemen. If there had been, they might have been hanged and there would in any case have been no question of releasing them before they had served their full sentences. . . .

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Secretary of State

The main considerations by which the Governor was influenced – as set out in the second paragraph of his letter – inevitably had in them an element of political expediency. That, though objectionable in other circumstances, was clearly quite proper here since similar considerations influenced the release from prison of Nkrumah and his leading associates and it would therefore have been improper to have excluded political considerations in considering these other cases.

Apart from its general interest, which Mr. Cohen has mentioned, this letter is to my mind further evidence of the sagacity with which Sir Charles Arden-Clarke continues to handle Gold Coast affairs, and it is mainly from that point of view that I should like you to see his letter and the draft reply. As regards the latter, while the exercise of the prerogative is for the Governor alone it would, I feel, be quite proper for us to express agreement, as the draft does, with his decision. I also agree that letters of this kind are of even greater value than formal despatches and that Sir Charles should be encouraged to go on sending them.

Draft submitted.

T.I.K.L.
27.4.51

I have an increasing admiration for the statesmanlike qualities of Arden-Clarke. The vote in the Assembly on the Self Govt now motion[1] is clear proof that so far his judgement has proved sound.

I approve draft.

J.G.
28.4.51

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[1] See 99, para 2.

97 CO 96/826/3, no 10B 16 Apr 1951

'The economic position of the Gold Coast': memorandum submitted by Sir R Acland to Mr Griffiths. *Memorandum* by the CO

[The first of the two memos reproduced here was sent with a letter from the Labour MP, Sir R Acland, to Mr Griffiths on 16 Apr 1951. Acland explained that the memo had been 'worked out cooperatively by a group of [Labour] back bench members from the best information which our researches have enabled us to find', and that it raised 'what is perhaps the most important single issue now confronting us in Colonial affairs'. He recognised that the issues raised were 'not of a nature which would allow of their being determined by the Colonial Office alone' and that 'crucial policy decisons' were involved 'on which we imagine Cabinet discussion would be essential'. Acland asked whether it would be useful to circulate the memo to other ministers and also requested a meeting at the CO between Griffiths and his officials and a group of Labour MPs. The CO memo reproduced here was prepared as a brief for Griffiths when he met the following MPs at the CO on 21 June 1951: Acland, Richard Crossman, James Johnson, Lionel Hale and Harold Davies. The CO memo is no 10F in CO 96/826/3; the record of the meeting is no 10G in the same file.]

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to ask: Are we doing enough to make sure that there is established in the Gold Coast a sufficient economic foundation to sustain the democratic political experiment which is now in progress.

I. *Gold Coast against the world background*

We believe that in one form or another the dominant world fact for at least the next quarter of a century is bound to be the contest between Freedom and Totalitarianism, between Democrats and Communists. Against this background the importance of the Gold Coast almost states itself without argument.

An extraordinarily successful start seems to have been made in a most audacious experiment in social democracy. If all goes well, there will be an effective demonstration on a world sale, relevant to the problems of tens of millions of people, and showing that Democracy is an effective and superior alternative to Communism in that it not only allows people to think their own thoughts and grow their own way, but also has power to solve immediate material problems. If there is a failure, Democracy will have suffered a world-wide reverse, and Communism will have received a world-wide advertisement. The issue between success and failure must depend, not solely but very largely on there being visible development in the economic sphere.

In such a situation, and in consonance with the ideas about obligations to backward peoples such as have been expressed, inter alia, in the Colombo Plan and in President Truman's Fourth Point,[1] one would expect to find today that favoured industrialised nations (outstandingly Great Britain as the nation most directly responsible) would be sustaining the economic development of the Gold Coast by sending into the country goods and services to a considerably greater value than the goods and services which are sent out.

In fact one finds exactly the opposite.

II. *The balance of trade*

We believe that the following figures are accurate to the nearest million:

	Imports	Exports	Balance
Total			
1949	£44,M	£49,M	+ £5,M
1950	£46,M	£76,M	+£30,M
With U.K.			
1949	£26,M	£20,M	− £6,M
1950	£26,M	£27,M	+ £1,M
With dollar countries			
1949	£3,M	£14,M	+£10,M
1950	£3,M	£25,M	+£21,M

[1] A reference to Truman's inaugural address of 20 Jan 1949 in which he declared as his Fourth Point: 'We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.' Subsequently, Truman asked Congress for 45 million dollars as a first year's appropriation for technical assistence to underdeveloped countries, to be given partly under bilateral arrangements and partly through the UN programme of technical assistance.

Dollar expenditure is restricted, as we understand, by a confidential ceiling under sterling area arrangements. We believe that if anyone were directing Gold Coast trade with the sole purpose of earning dollars for the Gold Coast, a much higher dollar earning could be made. We return to this point later.

III. *The marketing boards*

The figures shown above do not reveal the full value to the outside world, and particularly to Great Britain, of the Gold Coast's exports because of the operations of the Produce Marketing Board, and outstandingly of the Cocoa Marketing Board.

Today, to the best of our information, the price paid by the Board's buying agents to the growers (for the main crop) is ..... £130.6 per ton
The price paid by the Board to the buying agents is £141.2
The Board's total cost F.O.B. (including £55 per ton export duty) is £199.0
The C & F equivalent on arrival at U.K. is £210.9
And the average price received by the Board is £290.0

Of two different sources of information, one tells us that the total balance in the hands of the Board by the end of 1949/50 was £45 millions; the other puts it at £54,M. This latter estimates the balance at the end of 1950/51 as likely to be £74 million, – i.e. an increase of £20 million during the current year.

We understand that the Board has discovered reasons justifying this increase in the total reserves during the present year, *but if*:

(1) The world price fell from its present £310 to much less than half, namely £127, and
(2) The Board dropped its agents' price to growers only so little as to the 1948/9 price of £121 (itself a higher price than any previous) and
(3) The Board, to "bridge" these prices paid a subsidy of 10/– per load (37 $\frac{1}{3}$ loads = 1 ton) then the present surplus in the hands of the Board would last (on the basis of no change in total crop) about 8–10 years.

It is fair to add that for this result government would also have to drop the export tax to the 1948/9 level (a loss on revenue of about £9M); but it is also fair to add that 8–10 years with prices continuously at less than half their present levels is something entirely out of the question, – and it is surely absurd to guard against the almost negligible risk of such a disaster, and thereby enormously to increase the risk of an immense world victory for Communism through breakdown in the Gold Coast.

Our conclusion on this matter is that as from this present year (1950/51) urgent steps should be taken to make sure that each year's surplus on the Marketing Board's Account shall be, in one way or another, actually spent on additional goods (either consumer or capital) or on services for the benefit of the people in the producing areas of the Gold Coast.

IV. *Possible economic development*

We appreciate that now the initiative largely rests with the responsible African ministers who have won power as a result of the recent elections; and in addition we would emphasise that whatever be the economic development it is always a first essential to make sure that the whole people, – both the "important" people at the

centre and the "humble" folk at the point where the job is carried out, all feel themselves to be actively associated with the work that is actually going forward.

Nevertheless, we insist that it is no use to throw responsibility for economic development upon African shoulders until it has become quite certain that we could arrange to supply, within a reasonable time, the many "missing components" without which no efforts of theirs could achieve success. At any rate we should be sure that we are supplying these missing components at least up to the full value of the goods which they are supplying to us.

Subject to these points, possible developments seem to be:

(i) Volta Scheme. Government speaks of it taking 10–15 years. It is widely believed that with real priority in Britain it could be done in 5–7 years.
(ii) Extension to Takoradi Harbour. Real chance for future development may be hamstrung for want of harbour facilities, – e.g. cement supplies already.
(iii) A major experimental scheme in mechanised agriculture in the South on the lines of Damongo in the North.
(iv) Extension of railways; of roads; of electricity, and water supply; building houses, hospitals. All these already in hand by government departments, the need being for greater urgency.
(v) Completion of University College on the new site, and of the Regional Technical College at Kumasi.
(vi) Establishment of major enterprises: sawmills, cement works (?), brick works, canning factories. The encouragement of a multiplicity of smaller enterprises.
(vii) Extension of community development, mass literacy, the development of the Cooperative Movement.

V. *Ways in which Britain can help*

(1) Supply of Capital Goods: Cement and cement mixers, road-making machinery, water pipes (acute present shortage), electric generators, rails and rolling stock, agricultural machinery (adapted to local conditions), canning plant, saw-mill machinery, coastal trawlers, oil presses, printing machinery, heavy lorries.
(2) Supply of Consumer Goods, so as to allow more to be paid out, e.g. in wages to road makers, without running into worse inflation.
(3) Release of more dollars (see below).
(4) Organise West African Trade Fair to show Africans the sort of machines that are available for use in their own local industries.
(5) Establishing an Agency for African Traders to do the selling for small African traders who cannot maintain own agents in Europe. (We are informed that there is actually some sort of governmental prohibition on the export of furniture and in the manufacture and export of cocoa butter.)
(6) Establish Gold Coast's own Information Centre and Recruitment Centre in London. The need for technicians of all kinds far exceeds supply. If we are at all advancing towards the "internationalisation" of the work of affording help from advanced to backward peoples, there is no reason why the search for technicians should be confined to Britain. Norwegian and Japanese technicians could help to develop fishing; many Germany, Dutch, Belgian and French, and American technicians could be employed.

(7) A strong Advisory Team for Light Industries could be sent out from this country.
(8) Research on industrial and, above all, agricultural development is absolutely essential.

VI *The dollar position*
Dollar exports, besides cocoa, include gold, timber, manganese, bauxite and diamonds. We have suggested that the favourable dollar balance in 1949/50 was £22 million. There is already local resentment against the inability to purchase greater volume of dollar goods, particularly because many goods of the kinds required by local conditions, are not available except from dollar sources. An immediate relaxation would greatly improve relations with U.K. The goods chiefly required from dollar sources today are:

Electric Generators including hydro-electric, road-making machinery, Printing machinery, Refrigerating plant, Heavy trucks, lorries and kit cars, petrol and kerosene, flour and maize, tinned foods, precision tools, hospital equipment, mining machinery.

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(Numbers against paragraphs and sub-paragraphs refer to corresponding numbers in the Memorandum)

I. *Gold Coast against world background*
We can agree as to the present importance of the Gold Coast in the general world picture, and we can also agree that the success of the present constitutional experiment in the Gold Coast will depend very largely upon the success of the Gold Coast Government's plans for the economic and social development of the Territory. Both the Gold Coast Government and H.M. Government are fully alive to the need to consolidate the political progress achieved through large-scale and rapid development and, while keeping in mind the urgent needs of other Colonial territories, they are anxious to do all that is possible to assist at this critical time in the country's history. However, we cannot agree with the authors of the memorandum that an unfavourable balance of payments is necessarily an essential, or even a desirable condition of such development. At a time like the present, when the terms of trade are very heavily in favour of a relatively undeveloped country, it is possible and may even be preferable for considerable development to take place without an unfavourable external balance. Nor can we agree with what appears to be the assumption in the Memorandum that, because the Gold Coast is a Colony, it is the fault of H.M. Government if the higher receipts from cocoa are not immediately used to raise the standard of living or to develop the economy. This is not so. As will be shown later the most serious limitations on supplies in the world are caused by physical shortage accentuated by rearmament. Yet even without this additional difficulty, the translation of such high receipts into immediate development of the country is bound to present formidable internal problems, as the recent experience of Australia – which is neither a Colony nor an undeveloped country – has shown.

II. *Balance of trade*

Colonial Office estimates are in substantial agreement with those in Sir R. Acland's Memorandum, as will be seen from the following table:-

	Imports £ million		*Exports* £ million		*Balance* £ million	
	Memo	C.O.	Memo	C.O.	Memo	C.O.
Total						
1949	44	44.5	49	49.7	+ 5	+ 5.2
1950	46	45.4	76	75.6	+30	+30.2
With U.K.						
1949	26	25.9	20	20.4	− 6	− 5.5
1950	26	26	27	29.9 *	+ 1	+ 3.9
With dollar countries						
1949	3	3.0	14	13.7	+10	+10.7
1950	3	3.3	25	25.3	+21	+22

* The only significant difference between the two sets of figures is in the value of 1950 exports to the U.K. However the Colonial Office figure for this is provisional until the value of Gold Coast bullion exports to the U.K. is known, and it may be that the true total figure will prove to be not far off the figure in the memorandum.

III. *The marketing boards*

It is emphasised that the responsibility for fixing the annual price to be paid to the producer of cocoa has hitherto rested not with H.M. Government nor with the Gold Coast Government, but with the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board (although, as is stated below, the Gold Coast Government has quite recently taken to itself the *ultimate* responsibility for this price-fixing function). The primary objects of the Marketing Boards are well known. The accumulation of reserves in periods of high world prices enables the Boards to cushion producers against the impact of sudden or violent fluctuations in world prices, and also to provide finance for the improvement and development of the industry, for campaigns against crop pests and diseases and for rehabilitation. In the case of cocoa, world prices have been generally very high since the war, but even over the last 2½ years world prices have fluctuated very considerably. The Minister of State gave the following figures in the House on the 11th May to illustrate the same point. In October, 1948, the New York price was about 38 cents a lb. By July, 1949, the price had come down to 16 cents. (Then came devaluation.) In August, 1950, it had reached 40 cents, but by November it had gone down to between 30 and 31 cents. In April this year the ruling price was between 36 and 37 cents. The difference between the extremes of these prices, i.e. 16 and 40 cents, is equivalent (at the current dollar/sterling exchange rate) to a margin of about £190 a ton. It is not unknown for prices to fluctuate within a single season by as much as £100. On the average British West African (i.e. Gold Coast plus Nigeria) crop of 350,000 tons, these fluctuations can result in unpredictable gains or losses amounting to several million pounds in the course of a single season. The Cocoa

Marketing Boards, therefore, in calculating their stabilisation funds, have to consider not only the distant future but the risk which is run in each current season, since the price to the producer for the whole season is fixed before any of the crop is bought and sold and before the size of the crop can be accurately estimated. In such circumstances there can be no doubt that, as the Secretary of State said in the House on the 9th November, 1950, the Boards are right to accumulate substantial reserves. It is for reasons such as these that the Gold Coast Marketing Board, which has just published its third Annual Report, considers that a price stabilisation fund of about £50 million is required: at the end of the 1949/50 season they had £35 million in this fund. A stabilisation fund of about £50 million would last about five years if a subsidy of between £35 and £40 a ton were paid on a crop of about 250,000 tons, although it is doubtful whether any stabilisation fund would in practice be used in quite this way. The following additional points should also be borne in mind:–

(a) Market prices this year are not only very high but have gone against the usual relation between size of crop and market price (though this relation is of course only one of the factors which determine the selling price):–

Season	Purchased by Board	Selling Price expressed by average f.o.b.
1947/8	207,000 tons	£200 a ton
1948/9	277,000 "	136 " "
1949/50	247,000 "	178 " "
1950/1	say 260,000 "	say 270 " "

There are several reasons for this which may not be permanent or recurrent – the Korean war, panic buying, previous running down of stocks in several countries and the adverse circumstances in which the London market reopened.

(b) If these exceptional factors weaken, any substantial increases of production in the Gold Coast or elsewhere might well bring about a material reduction in price in comparison with other primary products.

(c) For a number of reasons cocoa is very subject to large fluctuations in price and, if present trends are reversed, they may have a very strong effect on the cocoa markets.

(d) It is worth noting that other producers of primary commodities – for example, the cane sugar producers in the Commonwealth – also set great store by future security and have willingly made long-term contracts with buyers, in which the disadvantage of a present price below ruling world prices is set off against a certain outlet at guaranteed reasonably remunerative prices for some years to come.

While price stabilisation must remain the paramount consideration, in determining its policy, the Cocoa Marketing Board has by no means overlooked the importance of the useful employment of its reserves in other directions as well in conformity with the provisions of the Ordinance under which it was set up. About £8 million has been allocated to research on behalf of the cocoa industry and to rehabilitate cocoa farms devastated by the swollen shoot disease. In addition, the Board has made provision for lending the Gold Coast Government £2,300,000 for the extension of Takoradi harbour, and has granted £1 million for a scholarship fund to

help sons of cocoa farmers to attend the University College of the Gold Coast. It is, however, essential to realise that the responsibility for general development must rest, not with Marketing Boards, but with Colonial Governments. It is only right that the largest and at present most prosperous industry in the Gold Coast should contribute by means of taxation to the development of the Territory as a whole; and in the absence of an effective income tax system, the Gold Coast Government has raised the rate of export duty on cocoa, which is now subjected to a new sliding scale which is steeply graded at the higher prices. It is estimated that this will bring in at least £9 million in the current season as compared with £2.7 million in 1949/50. When discussing the contribution of the cocoa industry to the development of the Territory, it is also relevant to draw attention to the Bill which has just been approved by the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly and which is designed to give the Gold Coast Government greater control over the Board. It provides, inter alia:–

(i) that members of the Board shall be appointed by the Governor in Council acting through the Minister for Commerce and Industry;
(ii) that the approval of the Governor in Council shall be required for the fixing of the price for the season; and
(iii) that the Governor in Council shall be empowered to direct the Board on major matters of policy, including financial policy.

IV. *Possible economic development*

The successful development of the resources of the Gold Coast will therefore depend not on the U.K. for useful and proper employment of the Board's reserves – important though this is – but on the implementation of the Gold Coast Government's plans, which themselves depend in considerable measure upon the financial contribution of the (at present) prosperous cocoa industry through taxation.

A revised draft Ten-Year Development Plan (the largest such plan in the Colonial Empire) which envisages Capital expenditure of about £67 million over the ten-year period, is at present under consideration by the new Gold Coast Government.[2] H.M. Government in the United Kingdom fully realises that, if this programme is to be fulfilled, additional supplies and skilled personnel from this country will be required, and it intends to give every assistance within its power. Estimates by the Gold Coast Government of additional requirements of capital and consumer goods needed to implement the Plan are at this moment under examination in the Colonial Office; problems of shipping and harbour capacity are being investigated; and efforts are being made to bring up to strength the Public Works Department on whom a heavy burden will fall. Two possible bottlenecks are the shortage of skilled African labour in the Gold Coast, and the capacity of the Public Works Department to deal with the heavy programme of building construction which the Plan will entail. It is hoped to alleviate the former difficulty by the development of the apprenticeship system, and to deal with the latter by increased use of consultants and by invoking the assistance of Colonial Development Corporation Engineering Limited.

The following observations are made on the particular suggestions in this section of the Memorandum:–

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[2] See 90.

(i) *Volta scheme*
The very considerable technical and financial problems posed by the Volta Scheme are now under close examination by H.M. and the Gold Coast Governments as well as by the aluminium interests concerned. Sir William Halcrows, the Engineering Consultants to the Gold Coast Government, have advised that the construction period is unlikely to be shorter than nine years, but it can be assumed that, if it is finally decided to proceed with the Scheme, it will be given special priority outside the Colonial supply allocation with a view to keeping the period of construction as short as possible.

(ii) *Expansion of Takoradi harbour*
The inadequacy of the harbour facilities at present available to the Gold Coast is fully realised by the Gold Coast Government. Apart from the extension to Takoradi Harbour, which is progressing well, and the improvements to Accra Harbour which have now started, the Gold Coast Government is conducting an examination into the whole question of port capacity in relation to development and, in particular, into the question whether a port will be required in the eastern part of the Gold Coast even if the Volta Scheme is not proceeded with.

(iii) *Mechanised agriculture*
It is doubtful whether the more densely populated cocoa-growing areas of the Colony and southern Ashanti lend themselves to large-scale experiment on the lines of the Damongo Scheme (for which 30,000 acres had been leased), but a similar scheme is envisaged at Amantin in the thinly populated area of Northwest Ashanti, and a large-scale rice production scheme is planned for Ho in Southern Togoland. A further possibility is the development of the extensive Accra plains under irrigation, dependent on the implementation of the Volta project.

(iv) *Communications and social services*
The Ten-Year Development Plan provides for the following Capital expenditure on the items specified:-

Railways	£14,950,000
Roads	8,250,000

(Communications account for about 40% of the total expenditure)

Electricity	1,078,000
Housing	5,885,000
Health	3,205,000 (approx £2,250,000 for hospitals)

(v) *Education*
The Ten-Year Development Plan provides for contributions of £1½ million to the capital cost of the University College, and £1½ million to the College of Arts, Science and Technology at Kumasi.

(vi) *Secondary industries*
The Industrial Development Corporation was established by statute in 1947 and has assisted in the development of such secondary industries as printing, weaving

and timber processing. Larger scale projects under active investigation are a brick and tile factory, grain storage and milling, and a cement factory. It is thought that the Volta Scheme and the development scheduled under the Ten-Year Development Plan will stimulate the demand for materials which might be produced locally such as cement, processed timber, canned fish and processed agricultural products. The Plan provides for £1½ million to be set aside for investment in industrial projects.

(vii) *Community development and co-operation*
The Plan provides for the continuation of present successful work in community development and mass education; and for the steady development of a healthy co-operative movement in all its branches.

V. *Ways in which Britain can help*
(1) and (2) *Supply of capital and consumer goods*

(a) The Memorandum implies that, if higher prices were paid to producers, the Colonies would be able to get more ample supplies of consumer and development goods; it is also implied that, if this does not happen, the fault lies with controls imposed by H.M. Government in the United Kingdom. Neither is the case. The decisive factor is the physical limitation on supplies which, because of rearmament, is again becoming serious, but everything is being done, and with success, to ensure that the Colonies get their fair share;

(b) So far as supplies from the United Kingdom are concerned, the share of supplies of some essential capital goods, such as steel, tinplate and cement, is allocated for the Colonies as a result of the recognition given by all Government Departments to the necessity to give Colonial needs proper priority. In fact, the Colonies are receiving better terms, not only than foreign countries, but also in certain cases (e.g. steel) than the Dominions. We should, of course, like to do still better, but there are limits to the extent to which other customers can be cut. Export availabilities as a whole could only be increased if there were further cuts in home programmes. This point, if made, should be regarded as confidential. Sir R. Acland and his colleagues will presumably appreciate the embarrassment which would be caused to all concerned if it became publicly known in the Dominions;

(c) There are many things – including all types of machinery – which are not subject to allocation and on which Government only gives general guidance to industries on the relative desirability of markets. At present this guidance puts Commonwealth markets second only to Defence and dollar exports;

(d) It should also be pointed out in this context that the United Kingdom is in effect bearing practically the whole rearmament burden on behalf of the Commonwealth.

(3) *Release of more dollars* (see Section VI below)

(4) *Machinery for African enterprises*
If there is any lack of information on this subject, the Gold Coast Office in London is now available, when necessary, to put Gold Coast traders in touch with up to date machinery for local use. Its terms of references are appended.[3]

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[3] Not printed; see 70.

(5) *African trade representation*
This again is the kind of purpose for which the Gold Coast Office has recently been established in London under the Gold Coast Commissioner Mr. F. Leach, O.B.E., who was formerly Secretary for Commerce and Industry in the Gold Coast and is well placed to assist small African traders in this way.

There is no new difficulty over the admission of furniture from the Gold Coast into this country; the problem being the lack of kiln-drying facilities in the Gold Coast for seasoning the wood.

As regards the import into this country of cocoa butter manufactured in the Gold Coast, it is the case that there have been difficulties in the past, but since early this year, Open General Licence has been extended to cocoa butter originating in the Gold Coast and other Colonial territories.

(6) *Supply of technicians*
The terms of reference of the Gold Coast Office include the provision of information about the Gold Coast and of assistance to the Colonial Office and the Grown Agents over recruitment for the Gold Coast. It is true that the need for technicians of all kinds far exceeds supply, and this applies to all Colonial territories and not merely to the Gold Coast, although recruitment for West Africa is subject to special difficulties. Suitably qualified foreigners are considered for appointment on contract terms in cases where no British candidate is available, and a number of foreign engineers, doctors, veterinary officers and agricultural specialists have been appointed to the Gold Coast and other Colonial territories since the war. American expert assistance has also been provided under E.C.A. – for example the entomologist member of the Volta Survey Panel was an American recruited in this way.

(7) *Secondary industries*
We are trying to help over the development of secondary industries in the Gold Coast and other territories in two ways:–

(i) We are reviewing "incentive" legislation passed in various Colonies since the war and its effects, with a view to giving guidance to Colonial Governments on the best forms of encouragement; and

(ii) We are exploring the techniques for identifyng those industries which are most likely to be successful in Colonial conditions. We have just employed the British Export Trade Research Association to do a short pilot survey on this in Nigeria, with a view to establishing whether, if they were given the necessary funds, they would be able to produce reports in respect of particular Colonies which would be sufficiently authoritative to induce U.K. and other industrialists to consider seriously the establishment in the Colonial territory concerned of specified industries. Pending the outcome of these approaches to the problem we do not think an advisory team should be sent out to the Gold Coast, although individual consultants have gone and will go in future. For example an expert on the establishment of cement plants has just visited the Gold Coast.

(8) *Agricultural research*
The Secretary of State and the Gold Coast Government are fully alive to the importance of agricultural research. The Gold Coast Agricultural Department is

undertaking a comprehensive soil survey in the Territory which is under the guidance of a Soil Scientist of international reputation. The Gold Coast cocoa industry has the benefit of the expert advice of the West African Cocoa Research Institute which is giving first priority to the swollen shoot problem. The Gold Coast University College is building up a strong Agricultural Department, and a Secretary for West African Agricultural Research has recently been appointed to Accra to study the needs for research in all four West African territories and to make recommendations regarding the lines of future research work. In addition, there is much cautious practical experimentation through pilot schemes of the kind that preceded the large scale agricultural enterprise at Damongo.

VI. *The dollar position*

Like other sterling area countries the Colonies are asked to restrict their purchases from North America to essential items, which cannot be obtained from soft currency sources or can only be obtained there at prohibitive prices, or after frustrating delays in delivery. Colonies submit programmes of their essential dollar requirements and after discussion with H.M. Government the pattern of essential purchases from North America is set. It is recognised, however, that under present circumstances, when prices are increasing, when the availability of certain goods from non-dollar sources cannot now be guaranteed, and when there is a real danger of inflationary conditions in certain Colonial territories (as there is in the Gold Coast) some wider definition of "essential" dollar expenditure is called for. So Colonial Governments have recently been given an opportunity to put in programmes for additional dollar purchases which they consider really necessary. No such programme has yet been received from the Gold Coast, but the Colonial Government has told the Colonial Office that the economic situation is being reviewed to see whether additional dollars are wanted. This certainly does not suggest that the Colony feels any crippling shortage of dollars. It should be noted in connection with the dollar position that:–

(a) Whilst the Gold Coast is at present spending less dollars than it earns, its membership of the sterling area enables it to spend more of some other currencies than it earns;

(b) Colonial Governments have never been asked to impose import restrictions where these are not necessary for sterling balance of payments reasons;

(c) Following the liberalisation arrangements among the countries belonging to the European Payments Union, there are no financial restrictions in the way of obtaining supplies from Western Europe. Again the main restrictions on obtaining supplies from Japan which now exist are physical ones or are due to the increasingly high prices of some Japanese goods; there have been increasing allocations of purchasing power from Japan in the past year. The growing strength of sterling has permitted the welcome removal of import restrictions, and at present the dollar area is virtually the only one from which imports need be restricted for purely financial reasons.

98 CO 96/824/7 10 May 1951

[Regional administrations]: minute by E G G Hanrott on the report by the commissioner, Sir S Phillipson[1]

I have managed to borrow a typed copy of the Phillipson Report. This has been lent to us in confidence on the understanding that it is not quoted in any communication. I understand that it is possible that Sir S. Phillipson may make some changes in the Report in the light of comments by the Gold Coast Government, but for our present purpose I think that we can regard it as the final text.

The Report runs to some 230 pages of typescript, exclusive of lengthy appendices, and it is written in the somewhat elaborate and philosophical style which we have come to associate with Sir S. Phillipson. I attach a list[2] of the contents which give some indication of the scope of the Report, and from which it will be seen that the author includes a summary of federal and regional systems in Western Europe, the Union of South Africa and other parts of the world. Without wishing to comment at this stage on the merits of Sir S. Phillipson's particular recommendations, the Report strikes me as a discerning survey of the Gold Coast scene and its local governmental institutions by a fresh and able mind, and its recommendations are very comprehensive and detailed indeed.

My object in this minute is solely to draw attention to the main recommendations of the Report and to particular points of interest which have struck me in the course of a rapid first reading. There will be time enough later for more detailed and expert examination either by or in consultation with the African Studies Branch.

The present form of the Report is not suitable for circulation, and I have thought it sufficient to circulate with the contents only Chapter V of Part III, which summarises Sir S. Phillipson's conclusions and recommendations. It will be seen that, as we always hoped he would (see the Colonial Office Note of 1949 on the Coussey Report), the Commissioner has deflated the Coussey proposals for Regional government.[3] In particular, he has abandoned the idea of "Regional Administrations" and any suggestion of financial allocations by the Central Government to separate Regional budgets. His proposals may be summarised in a quotation from Para. 10 of the Report – "What is needed . . . is to associate with the working, within a Region, of the administrative and departmental machine, suitably adapted by administrative devolution, an elected Council with a strong Executive Committee". In several places, Sir S. Phillipson says with emphasis that some "middle storey" in the shape of Regional Councils is necessary for a number of reasons, but principally to "introduce, co-ordinate and support the new local government system".

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[1] The report was later published as *Regional Administrations, Report by the Commissioner*, Sir S Phillipson (Accra, 1951).

[2] Not printed.

[3] A note on regional councils in the Gold Coast prepared by the CO African Studies Branch in Sept 1949 stated: 'Unless there are overriding political reasons which make the setting up of Regional Councils necessary it seems to us that they might well be dispensed with altogether. They would make the Administrative machinery unnecessarily complicated; they will be costly and will constitute a drain on the available manpower which does not appear to be justified' (CO 96/800/1, no 29).

I think it possible that even Sir S. Phillipson's modifications of the Coussey proposals for Regional government may be criticised as over-elaborate and as involving the absorption of too many councils, committees and individuals in the task of government in the Regions. This was the view of Mr. Wraith,[4] who had also had a quick look at the Report in the Gold Coast.

Sir S. Phillipson's summary speaks for itself, and in this minute I will only draw attention to a number of points which are not fully apparent from a reading of the summary only. I will take the main points first, and relatively minor points later:–

(1) *Number of regions*

Very early in the Report (Para. 8) the author dismisses the question of a Fourth Region for Trans-Volta and South Togoland, and says that he has been informed "authoritatively" that it is not proposed to proceed with this Coussey recommendation.[5] He has, however, been encouraged to make recommendations for the development of the South Togoland Council within the framework of the Colony Region, and this he has done. His suggestion is that the South Togoland Council should be developed as a District Council for the whole of South Togoland and that it should be given certain special functions not normally given to a District Council – e.g. power of administration of its own block grant from the Central Government. The Council would, however, be represented on the Regional Council.

(2) *Composition of regional councils* (Para. 4)

The composition of the Colony Council is to be as follows:–

Elected by District Councils	34
" " Joint Provincial Council	18
" " South Togoland Council	2
Legislative Assembly Members	6
	60

The other Regional Councils are to be roughly the same size. Executive Committees are to have from 8 to 12 members, and are to include Traditional and Legislative Assembly representatives. The Northern Territories are to be exceptional in having *ex-officio* representation.[6]

(3) *Representatives of special interests* (Para. 45)

Sir S. Phillipson comes down flatly against such representation (which it will be remembered was pressed by General Spears) – "This suggestion has been made again

[4] R E Wraith, lecturer at the Institute of Local Government Studies, Birmingham University, with a specialist interest in West African administration, currently working in the CO African Studies Branch.

[5] Whatever Phillipson had been told, the fourth region of Trans-Volta Togoland was created prior to the 1954 election. It was to comprise 13 constituencies which overlapped into the Trust Territory and was undoubtedly part of the more general campaign to reduce the 'separate' nature of the Trust Territory.

[6] Even this more modest proposal was in the event not to find its way into the administrative structure of the Gold Coast.

to me by various interests, but I find myself in agreement with the Constitutional Committee's view. There would not be in my opinion any particular advantage, either to the interest concerned or to the general public interest, in providing for special representation on Regional Councils with the range of functions which I recommend."[7]

(4) *Powers of regional administrator* (Para. 49)
Sir S. Phillipson's recommendations regarding the position of the Regional Administrator will be clear from the summary. He proposes for him a much stronger position than did the Coussey Committee, and most of the criticisms regarding the need for closer association of the Executive and Elected components in the Colonial Office Note of 1949 on the Coussey Report seem to have been met. Sir S. Phillipson recommends that the Administrator should have the power to refer decisions of the Regional Council to the Governor in Council in cases of emergency.

(5) *Position of political administration*
Sir S. Phillipson devotes a relatively short section to this, but his Report generally emphasises the 'creative' role of the official in the task of modern government, and the continuing need for administrative 'men of all work' such as Chief Commissioners and District Commissioners. Regarding the political administration in general, he recommends that it should be renamed the "Gold Coast Civil Service" and divided into two branches – "Civil Service (Administrative)" and "Civil Service (Professional and Technical)"; the exact significance of this division is not quite clear. The position of the Chief Commissioner and Regional Administrator is fully defined as a general purpose administrative official at the head of the Regional organisation. Regarding the more difficult question of the District Commissioner (whom Sir S. Phillipson recommends should be renamed "Administrative Officer"), Sir S. Phillipson broadly agrees with Dr. Marshall's[8] description of his role, with the qualification that he doubts whether the Gold Coast will ever be able to dispense with the all-round administrative official of this kind. "Whatever changes of structure the future may bring, a territorially posted service of administrative 'men of all work' (or rather of work not otherwise assigned), carefully selected on the grounds of their educational and personal records as likely to be diligent, resourceful and devoted to the public interest, will continue to constitute the 'steel framework' of the government structure" (Para. 58). It is recommended that the D.C. should be the chairman of the District Council and/or the Finance and General Purpose Committee, but only if the people so decide; otherwise he will carry out his task of delivering the new local government system from outside the Councils. It is proposed that he shall retain a very large number of other specific duties in relation to agriculture, education, elections, licensing, etc., etc. A full list of such functions is given in Appendix L.

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[7] The representation of Chambers of Mines and Commerce was dropped in the self-government constitution of 1954.
[8] Dr A H Marshall, City Treasurer of Coventry, author of *Report on Local Government in the Sudan* (Khartoum, 1949).

(6) *Police* (Para. 59)
Sir S. Phillipson recommends that the proposal of the three Local Government Committees to disband local police forces should be reconsidered. He recommends the reorganisation of the Native Authority Police and their systematic training and expansion under the supervision of Regional branches of the Gold Coast Police. He suggests that the police should be grouped as District Police Forces under the District Councils.

(7) *Allocation of functions relating to local government*
A full list of the suggested functions of the Minister of Local Government, the Regional Council, the Executive Committee and the Regional Administrator in relation to local government is given in Appendix K. It is suggested that each Instrument incorporating a District Council shall be preceded by a full process of local enquiry supervised by the Executive Committee.

Local Authority Estimates are to be approved by the Executive Committee.

(8) *Machinery*
In Para. 86 and other places, there are references to the various legislative processes required to bring into being the new Regional and local government structure. These may be summarised as follows:–

(a) Ordinance to establish Regional Councils – this need be neither long nor elaborate, and the necessary material is given in Chapters VI and VII of the Report;
(b) three separate Ordinances to introduce the new local government reform (this will of course involve the repeal of existing Native Authority legislation);
(c) legislation to establish the Traditional Councils (if necessary);
(d) Ordinances to establish the Regional Local Development Loan Board and the Local Government Civil Service Board;
(e) a Manual of Administrative and Financial Procedure for the guidance of officials regarding the functions of all these new institutions. Many of the Report's proposals – especially those relating to finance – would go in this document (which Sir S. Phillipson has, I think, copied from Ceylon); and
(f) in view of the magnitude of the task of reviewing the legislation to be repealed and to be introduced, it is suggested that a Working Party of suitable officials should be set up to prepare the ground for the Select Committee of the Assembly.

Other points
(i) There are frequent references to the shortage of trained African staff (e.g. Para. 33), both for the development of local government and for the execution of the tasks which the Ten-year Development Plan proposes to entrust to local government agencies.
(ii) The Report's recommendations will involve the suppression of the existing Local Development Committees (although there will be a Regional Local Development Loan Board), and also of the District Education Committees.
(iii) It is proposed that the Regional Offices (i.e. the present Offices of the Chief Commissioners) shall be enlarged (Para. 61).
(iv) Stress is laid on the importance of defining the constitutional and other customary functions of the existing Territorial Councils to prevent overlapping

with the new Regional Councils. It is suggested that the former shall be renamed "Traditional Councils" (Para. 84).

(v) There is in Chapter IV an interesting analysis of local government finance in the Gold Coast, which brings out well the relative failure of efforts to organise direct taxation in the Colony and Ashanti. It is pointed out that at present the tax payer in the Northern Territories is paying 28% more per head than a tax payer in the infinitely more prosperous Colony.

(vi) Sir S. Phillipson's remarks on rating (Para. 30) and the form of future local taxation are very much in line with our own advice to Mr. Hyde-Clarke.[9]

(vii) Inter-Regional distribution of Government expenditure (Para. 28) – This is at present (1950/51 Estimates):–

Colony	107.4 shillings
Ashanti	107.4 "
N. Territories	78.8 "

Mr. Gorsuch may like to see early what the Phillipson recommendations are to be. . . .[10]

[9] E M Hyde-Clarke, permanent secretary to the Ministry of Local Government in the Gold Coast.

[10] Gorsuch minuted, 11 May 1951: 'Very interesting. It is of course round the position of the political administration that controversy may revolve, and it will be interesting to see what attitude Ministers take now that they have had an insight into the responsibilities of administration.'

99 CO 537/7181, no 5 12 May 1951

[Political developments]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to A B Cohen on the prospect of agitation for further constitutional change

In my secret and personal letter No. 515/4 of the 16th April[1] I promised to let you have another letter on the development of the political situation towards the end of the Budget Meeting. The Assembly adjourned sine die yesterday, and I am now in a position to give you some background information, which I will supplement when I reach London.

The release of the ex-servicemen passed off without incident, and has considerably eased the strain on the front ranks of the Convention People's Party. The Party Leaders in the Assembly, however, are still finding the control of their supporters very uphill work, and they lean heavily on the *ex-officio* Members. Some back benchers are openly critical of their leaders, and are disinclined to accept the official Party line that the constitution, though "bogus and fraudulent", must be made to work for a period in order that Ministers may gain the administrative and wider political experience which they so sadly lack. The representative Ministers for their part began by being highly sensitive to attack but are becoming more habituated to the "slings and arrows" directed at those in high office. They have laid on the whip

[1] See 96.

with complete success since the Estimates for the office of the Governor's Secretary were rejected in Committee (they have now been passed) though some of their back benchers became rebellious under the strain. Indeed, the record of the C.P.P. majority in the Assembly is somewhat remarkable. They have adopted as a working basis, without any significant amendment, a budget which they did not prepare and which contained features they did not like; they decisively defeated a motion which was popularly interpreted as advocating "self-government now", and in the face of strong opposition they carried a Bill making far reaching changes in the composition of the Cocoa Marketing Board and bringing the Board under government control, a Bill that the old Government would never have dared to introduce.

Danquah has lost no opportunity of exploiting the situation and his motion for further constitutional reform gave the Party leaders the toughest problem they had to face during this Meeting. In order to achieve the desired result (in the event – 65 to 6 against the motion), the Party felt obliged to rely on a personal attack on Danquah and his motives. The standard of debate, which was rarely sustained at a reasonable level for any length of time in this Assembly, touched what I hope will be its nadir in the speeches against this motion.

The Chiefs are becoming increasingly ill at ease in an Assembly where they are accorded none of the traditional respect which has been paid to them in the past; at the same time they are being attacked in the rear in their own States. The Omanhene of New Juaben and Sir Tsibu Darku have been declared destooled (the latter case is on appeal, and will probably be the subject of an enquiry under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance), and the position of the Konor of Manya Krobo (Mate Kole) is being undermined by agitators. In each case the inspiration has come from supporters of the Convention People's Party and although the Party officially denies that it is engaged in subversive activities against Chiefs, there is little doubt that it would be glad to see the departure from public life of the more able and experienced Chiefs who do not subscribe to the Party's claim to political leadership. In these circumstances it will not be surprising if the Chiefs decide to withdraw from the Assembly and resign their seats. If they withdraw, they are likely to do so with dignity and to give an assurance that they will, as the Heads of their States, co-operate with the Government in all matters of mutual interest. Nevertheless, such a withdrawal might have the effect of expediting a demand by the C.P.P. for the abolition of the rights of the Joint Provincial, Southern Togoland and Asanteman Councils to elect eighteen Territorial Members to the Assembly.

It must be remembered that the C.P.P. is the Party of the young men, who in the past have been suppressed and denied any part in the management of their State affairs. They are now re-acting with some turbulence and the agitation against the Chiefs is a symptom of their impatience for reform, coupled with a desire to pay off old scores. I am glad to say that the Ministers fully appreciate the urgency of undertaking the reform of local government and this will be tackled with vigour as soon as the Phillipson report can be printed and published. The dominant feature of the present situation is the fact that there is no alternative to a Government in which the Convention People's Party holds the majority. If this Government were to fall – and it will only fall because of short-sighted indiscipline on the part of the Party back-benchers – it can ony be replaced by a Government of similar complexion, or of even more extreme nationalist tendencies. It has, therefore, been necessary for me to take every justificable [sic] measure to bolster up the prestige of Nkrumah and his

colleagues. The release of the ex-servicemen and the publication of more lenient terms for the strikers dismissed from the Public Service in January, 1950, are instances of intervention on my part calculated to fortify the Government, and they have undoubtedly had their effect. All those strikers who have not been re-employed are now entitled to re-engagement on probation irrespective of their past record, on terms which allow them to count their previous service for pension, with loss of pay and pension only in respect of their period of absence from the Service: the Party gets the credit for this. I can best summarise the position by repeating what I said "off the record" to Oliver Woods (The Times Correspondent) – "We have only one dog in our kennel and the whole question is whether the tail will wag the dog or the dog the tail. It has a very big tail and not much guts. All we can do is to build it up and feed it vitamins and cod liver oil; and, as soon as the opportunity offers, some of that tail must be docked".

Although every opportunity has been taken to inspire the leaders of the Party with confidence that they can work the present constitution, they remain exposed to continuous attacks on the score that they are not fulfilling their primary undertaking to procure "self-government *now*" – an undertaking to which they owe their position in the Government today. I do not know for how long they can or will wish to withstand this pressure but we must be prepared for moves for further constitutional advance in the not too distant future. Ministers have already given evidence, during informal talks with me, of a desire to see immediate steps taken to build up Nkrumah into a Prime Minister *de facto*. In the Press and among the C.P.P. backbenchers there are clamant demands for the abolition of the *ex-officio* Ministers of Finance and Justice, demands which the representative Ministers do not themselves wish to press at present but which they are unlikely to exert themselves to resist for long. There is, too, widespread dislike and suspicion of the Governor's reserve powers.

At what intervals these moves are likely to be made, and at what stage the removal of the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs may be demanded in addition to that of the other *ex-officio* Ministers it is not possible to foresee. They are moves which may result from over-confidence in the strength of the Party in the Assembly and in the Party's capacity to provide Ministers capable of administrative achievement – should such a state of confidence be established – as well as from their present sensitiveness to criticism by extremists. It is, to my mind, clear however that we should now direct our attention to defining our attitude towards a movement for constitutional reform along these lines, and determining the manner in which such a demand should be handled. The departure from his present office of either of the present *ex-officio* Ministers of Finance and Justice in the near future would probably be the occasion of a campaign against replacement by an expatriate, and it is likely that representative Ministers would associate themselves with such a campaign despite their privately acknowledged dependence on the education they are receiving from their *ex-officio* colleagues.

The imminent prospect of agitation for further constitutional change raises the question of the administrative experience and capacity of the present representative Ministers and of any other candidates for office which would be acceptable to the Party. Unfortunately such men as Ollenu [sic],[2] rare as they are, are still cordially

[2] Nii Amaa Ollennu, founder, with Dr F V Nanka Bruce, of the National Democratic Party in Accra in June 1950.

disliked and distrusted by the Party, and I cannot at present see any prospect of their working together in one administration. I would see no insuperable difficulty in replacing Branigan in his capacity as Minister of Justice by a representative Member of the Assembly – in fact Asafu Adjaye, the present Minister of Local Government, already sees himself fulfilling this role – provided the post of Attorney General, which would cease to carry with it ministerial responsibilities, or Director of Public Prosecutions was filled by a competent official. It is otherwise in the case of the Minister of Finance: finance and economics are an unknown field to all the representative Ministers and to practically every elected member of the Assembly and their vital importance in the formulation of policy is not properly appreciated. A device whereby the Financial Secretary or an Economic Adviser could be called in to give advice to Ex.Co. without having an authoritative voice and vote in its counsels would not work. It seems to me there would be grave dangers in acceding prematurely to any demand for the replacement of the *ex-officio* Ministers of Defence and of Finance by representative Members.

The present Ministers are beginning to show an appreciation of administrative problems, but they have a very long way to go before they find their feet; given time, however, and the guidance of their Permanent Secretaries they will "arrive". Considering the handicaps under which they have been working, the Permanent Secretaries have achieved a great deal. The Assembly began to sit on the 29th March, and since then the Ministers have been exceedingly elusive; in some cases the Permanent Secretary has been fortunate if he could secure more than half an hour of his Minister's time in the course of a week. In spite of these difficulties they have persevered under directions from me that their main task is to manage their Ministers. I have made it clear to them that they will be judged by the degree of success they achieve in establishing good relations with their Ministers and keeping them on the right lines, and not by the quality of their paper work. Ansah Koi, Minister of Communications and Works, is the one case where no progress has been made. He is, unfortunately, quite impossible temperamentally, and appears to be mentally deficient. Nkrumah is aware of this, and of the risks which the Government runs in carrying a Minister of such outstanding ineptitude and I hope to arrange for Ansah Koi's translation to the back bench before I come on leave. The field of choice for new appointments to Ministerial rank is extremely limited if the C.P.P. majority in Ex.Co. is to be maintained and it is difficult to see how it can be widened unless some of the better Territorial members formally join the Party and of this there seems little prospect at present.

Another question which will, no doubt, have to be considered in any discussion on the prospective demand for constitutional advance is the position of the Civil Service. It is unnecessary for me to state the problem here; it is one which is obviously occupying your minds in the context of many territories. At this stage, however, I think I should emphasise that the progress which has been made towards recognition that the Civil Service must be treated by politicians in a responsible manner is slight, and there is little likelihood of any appreciable change for the better, at any rate among the back benchers, as long as the majority of the higher posts are held by aliens. For this reason, as well as for others which are known to you, we must do our best to accelerate the speed of Africanisation, and accept if necessary a reduced standard of efficiency. As you are aware, an assurance has been given in the Assembly that expatriate recruitment to the Administrative Service will

now be discontinued (that is, as soon as the recruits now on order have arrived). It is the Administrative officer who comes most frequently under attack because his activities impinge most closely on the daily life of the people, he is entrusted with many unpopular duties, and is regarded as a symbol of alien rule, which by using the Chiefs as instruments of Government has set the Chiefs against their people. Once the reform of local government is well under way and his functions change, the continuing need for the services of administrative officers as a class, but not – I fear – of young and inexperienced expatriates, may begin to be appreciated. There is an increasing understanding that it will be impossible to carry out development plans, which all support, without the aid of professional and technical officers from overseas, but these, it is generally felt, can for the most part be engaged on contract terms. The report of the Lidbury Commission,[3] in so far as it recommends revised terms for expatriates, is likely to have a very rough passage.

This is a bare outline of the situation as I see it today, but it may perhaps be useful to you to have it slightly in advance of my arrival in London.

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[3] *Report of the Commission on the Civil Service of the Gold Coast, 1950–1951* (chairman, Sir D Lidbury) Accra, 1951.

100 CO 537/7181 23 May – 11 June 1951

[Constitutional reform]: minutes by Sir T Lloyd, L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen on Mr Nkrumah's probable requests during his forthcoming visit to London

Mr. Gorsuch

Sir Charles Arden-Clarke[1] spoke to me today about a talk which he had a week or so ago with Mr. Nkrumah on the subject of further constitutional advance in the Gold Coast. Mr. Saloway knows of that talk but it has not been formally recorded in the Gold Coast. Mr. Nkrumah feels obliged, for party political reasons, to press for some constitutional change before the next budget session in the Gold Coast. Already he is being criticised by his own back benchers and members of his party outside the Legislature for his considerable share in the so far successful working of a constitution which previously he had described as bogus and impossible.

As a result of the talk between the Governor and Mr Nkrumah the latter's requests for constitutional change within the next year or so are likely to be reduced to:–

(a) recognition of the office of Prime Minister in place of the post, I have forgotten its exact title,[2] which Mr. Nkrumah now holds as leader of Government business;

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[1] Arden-Clarke was in the UK on leave. Nkrumah was scheduled to visit London between 10 and 14 June 1951. Accompanied by Kojo Botsio, the education minister, he travelled to London from the United States having accepted in person his honorary doctorate of laws from Lincoln University at the beginning of June.

[2] The title was in fact 'leader of government business'.

(b) recognition in the constitution that the selection of unofficial members as holders of portfolios is by the Governor on advice from the Prime Minister and not on the Governor's own discretion.

If these points are conceded, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke feels that Mr. Nkrumah will be content to leave in abeyance for some little time at least other demands of his party such as the replacement of the *ex-officio* members by unofficials and, of course, the ultimate step of abolition of reserved power.

Sir Charles Arden-Clarke feels that our attitude, should Mr. Nkrumah raise these points when over here in mid-June, should be completely sympathetic but should not be too forthcoming or give the impression that these further concessions can easily and readily be granted. Our proper attitude would, in the Governor's view, be for Ministers to promise to consider these matters with the Governor and for him thereafter to talk them over further with Mr. Nkrumah back in the Gold Coast.

Mr. Nkrumah's visit here is, I think, expected from the 10th to the 14th of June. If I am right in that, further consideration of the matters recorded in this minute should await Mr. Cohen's return. I should be glad if you and he would have a talk with me about them fairly soon after Mr. Cohen gets back.

T.I.K.L.
23.5.51

The Governor had already told me of his talk with Mr Nkrumah, which was subsequent to (5), but your minute above arrived before I had recorded it.

In order to make sure that the record is complete, I have been over the points with the Governor again, and he has asked me to record the following.

Under (a) of your minute above, the proposal put forward by Mr. Nkrumah is that the title of Leader of Government Business should be changed to Prime Minister. He also put forward the suggestion that the Prime Minister should preside over Executive Council in the absence of the substantive Governor. Sir C. Arden-Clarke pointed out to him that the Officer Administering the Government, *qua* King's representative, is in no different position from the substantative Governor and that it would not be possible for him to be present at meetings of the Executive Council except as President. The Governor feels, however, (although he did not say so to Mr. Nkrumah) that there would be no objection to conceding that the Prime Minister should preside whenever the Governor or O.A.G. is not present (e.g. when he is on tour and there is a Governor's deputy). This would involve a change in the present precedence, since under present arrangements the Minister for Defence and External Affairs comes next after the Governor in the Council and would preside in his absence. The Governor said that he had mentioned this to Mr. Saloway and that the latter would personally be quite ready to agree to this change.

The other point which the Governor made to me was that (b) of your minute is twofold. If the office of Prime Minister is created, Mr. Nkrumah is likely to suggest not only that the allocation of portfolios to Ministers shall be made by the Governor on the advice of the Prime Minister, but also that the names put foward by the Governor to the Assembly for appointment as Ministers shall be on the advice of the Prime Minister. I gather that the Governor's feeling is that both of these would

logically follow on the adoption of the title of Prime Minister, and that he would be in favour of conceding both points.

It would be as well, before we have the talk proposed in your minute, for the Legal Advisers to consider the implication of these changes in regard to the Constitution, and if you agree perhaps the file could go to Mr. Peck for this purpose.

L.H.G.
25.5.51

Mr. Cohen

We discussed this with Sir T. Lloyd yesterday and it was arranged that the papers should go forward to the Secretary of State with a minute from you. I have arranged provisionally for us to meet the Secretary of State at 2.30 on Monday, the 11th, in order to discuss with him the line to be taken at his meeting with Mr. Nkrumah on the following day.

The Governor's letter at (5) and minutes of the 23rd and 25th May above indicate and discuss the points which Mr. Nkrumah may raise. (We do not know for certain that he will do so, but as he has particularly asked that the Governor should be present at his interview with the Secretary of State, it seems very likely). Briefly the position is that he is anxious to show his party and the country generally by the time of the budget session in March of next year that constitutional evolution is still on the move. For this purpose, according to the Governor, he would be satisfied if the title of Leader of Government Business were changed to that of Prime Minister, with the Prime Minister taking precedence in the Executive Council next after the Governor and being consulted by the Governor both in the selection of Ministers and the allocation of portfolios. If this were agreed to, we understand from the Governor that Mr. Nkrumah would not regard the further steps, i.e. removal of ex-officio Ministers and of the Governor's reserve powers, as being in any way urgent.

I have enclosed a copy of the Coussey Report and of the Statement of H.M. Government on it. The references to the post of Leader are paras 382 and 411 (iii) and (iv) of the Coussey Report and para. 30 of the Statement. Under the Coussey proposals the Leader was to be elected by the House of Assembly and the Governor would appoint Ministers and elect portfolios in "consultation with the Leader". As the Coussey Report envisaged collective responsibility there was to be no removal of Ministers by a vote of no confidence, but a vote of no confidence in the Leader would bring the entire government down. This was changed by H.M. Government to appointment of Ministers by the Governor, subject to a favourable vote of the House, and a subsequent election by members of the Executive Council of one of their number to be "Leader of Government Business' in the House. The allocation of portfolios was to be for the Governor himself, and Ministers were to be removable individually either by a two-thirds vote of the House or by a vote of the Executive Council.

It can be said, therefore, that the proposals now likely to be put forward by Mr. Nkrumah are largely in accordance with the original Coussey recommendations, except as regards the name of Prime Minister which is, of course, of great significance. I did not gather that Mr. Nkrumah is proposing the adoption of collective responsibility to the Legislature.

The Governor's view is that it should be left entirely to Mr. Nkrumah's initiative to raise these proposals with the Secretary of State and that if he does so, the attitude taken by the Secretary of State should be as indicated in Sir T. Lloyd's minute of the 23rd May.

L.H.G.
9.6.51

Mr. Mackintosh[3]

I am sending this direct to you as Sir T. Lloyd discussed the advice to be given to the Secretary of State with Mr. Gorsuch and myself before he went on leave.

Perhaps I may make one or two general observations. The purpose of our policy in the Gold Coast ought in my view to be a smooth and gradual advance towards responsible government. It must be our aim on the one hand to keep on good terms with the Gold Coast political leaders so that when the time comes the Gold Coast will elect voluntarily to remain within the Commonwealth. But on the other hand we must have regard to the need for developing administrative and political efficiency so that the country continues to be well governed. It is clear from the letter at No. 5 that, as of course is perfectly natural with a quite new form of government, the Gold Coast Ministers, even the best of them, still have a very great deal to learn. Ideally, therefore, in my view the next step forward, i.e. the kind of step discussed in the minutes above, ought to be delayed for, say, three or four years. The quicker such a step is taken the shorter the transitional period before responsible government is attained will be and in my view it would not be in the interests of the Gold Coast or of the Commonwealth that the transitional period should be too short. Ideally, therefore, I myself feel that it would be better not to make this step forward, limited though it is, early in 1952 less than eighteen months after the introduction of the new constitution.

But it must, of course, be recognised that we may not be able to adhere to an ideal time-table. We may be forced, if we are to keep on good terms with the more responsible political leaders such as Mr. Nkrumah and his immediate colleagues and not to force the Gold Coast Government into the hands of extremists, to move more rapidly than ideally we should wish. It may well be that, as the Governor seems to contemplate, we shall have to take the step described in Mr. Gorsuch's minute above some time next year. It would be fatal if this necessity arises to forfeit the goodwill of Mr. Nkrumah and his colleagues by holding back excessively.

If the subject does have to be taken I would take it on the lines described in Mr. Gorsuch's minute, subject to its being understood that, although the Prime Minister would take precedence in the Executive Council after the Governor, the term "Governor" should be understood to include, as it must for the reasons given in Mr. Gorsuch's minute of the 25th May, the Officer Administering the Government in the Governor's absence. Equally I would attach importance to the Ministers being appointed and the portfolios allocated by the Governor *in consultation with* the Prime Minister rather than simply on the advice of the Prime Minister. This would give the Governor a full say, as in my view he must have at this stage.

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[3] A Mackintosh, private secretary to Mr Griffiths.

As far as the tactics in dealing with Mr. Nkrumah are concerned, it is clearly desirable that the initiative should be left to him and that none of the above points should be raised unless he raises them. If he does, I take it that the Secretary of State will be completely sympathetic but not too forthcoming and will in fact say that he will have to consider any proposals which Mr. Nkrumah may make with the Governor himself.

A.B.C.
11.6.51

101 CO 537/7181 25 May 1951

[Constitutional reform]: minute by L H Gorsuch on CPP apprehensions about Conservative Party attitudes towards constitutional reform in the Gold Coast

[This minute refers to the reasonable apprehensions the CPP might have had about the capacity of a Labour government with a working majority of only six to continue to hold office. Attlee was in fact to go to the country in Nov 1951.]

Sir T. Lloyd

With regard to my minute of to-day on 31648/51 attached,[1] there is another point which Sir Charles Arden-Clarke mentioned to me. It is clear that Mr. Nkrumah is very much aware of the necessity of showing results to his Party. In the development field the two favourites are probably primary education and the Volta scheme; in the political field it is, of course, further constitutional advancement. On the latter point Mr. Nkrumah feels that he should have something to show by the next budget session of the Assembly, and the Governor is inclined to think that if he can point to the achievement of (a) and (b) of your minute within as amplified by mine, he will be content not to exert any pressure for the present in regard to the *ex-officio* members or the Governor's reserve powers.

But there is the possibility of a change of Government in this country which, the Governor feels, is not absent from the minds of the C.P.P. The feeling that a Government might come into power in this country which is less sympathetic towards the nature and pace of constitutional advancement than the present Government might tend to make Mr. Nkrumah and his Party crack on the pace to a greater extent than they might otherwise wish to do. The Governor suggested that if during his forthcoming visit Mr. Nkrumah had the opportunity of talking with some of the Opposition leaders (he mentioned Mr. Anthony Eden and Mr. Lennox-Boyd[2] in particular) he might be able to draw from it a reassurance which would avert the possibility of the C.P.P. accelerating their demands for further constitutional advance on the principle of making hay while the sun shines.

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[1] See 100, Gorsuch's minute, 23 May 1951.

[2] The Conservative opposition spokesmen for foreign affairs and the colonies respectively.

I am not sure whether the Governor mentioned this to you, but you may wish to discuss it when Mr. Cohen and I have our talk with you.[3]

[3] Sir T Lloyd minuted, 26 May 1951: 'The Gov told me that he was to see Lennox-Boyd and hoped to impress him with the importance of avoiding any words or actions likely to strengthen the suspicion in which Mr. Nkrumah & the CPP now hold the Conservative Party. . . . It is I think a good idea that sh'd be mentioned to the S of S before it is pursued. That can wait 'til after our talks' (CO 537/7181).

102 CO 96/815/5, no 1 2 June 1951

[Gold Coast budget]: letter from R P Armitage to L H Gorsuch on the budget meeting of the new Legislative Assembly

As suggested by you in your letter of the 11th April, I will give you my impressions of the Budget Meeting of the new Assembly which eventually ended on the 11th May; the Assembly, therefore, sat for six weeks and two days. We had allowed in our Standing Orders for twenty days for the Committee of Supply to examine the details of the draft Estimates and we just about took that period of time. I must make it clear that the actual number of hours we sat each day was very small – 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a quarter-hour interval; very often the first half-hour is taken up by Questions so it is misleading to judge the length of the discussions by the number of days taken.

On the whole the guillotine system worked quite satisfactorily. We found that we had to allot a specific time for each Head and in about half the cases, I suppose, this time was exceeded, by suspensions of Standing Orders, by up to half an hour or so. I think that Fellowes[1] would be very interested to know that this proposal of his was thoroughly justified. In fact I think it rather set the standard for debates on other matters, where we were able to keep discussion more or less to the limits proposed by the Business Committee.

As each Minister had to introduce the draft Estimates for his own Ministry and those for each of the Departments under his control, including the expenditure on development, it relieved me, as Financial Secretary, from the strict vigilance that I had to use in the past when I was Chairman of the Committee. I did have to be present most of the time, as this was the first occasion of the new procedure, but Ministers generally found they could be absent a good deal of the time. The Speaker or the Deputy Speaker was in the Chair throughout the proceedings of the Committee.

The Ministers varied in the ease with which they handled the back benchers but in my opinion Botsio was the best closely followed by Gbedemah; the others were rather apt to rely on an evasion such as that he would look into the matter and supply the member with the information he wanted later. This provoked some of the back benchers, a number of whom were extremely uncontrolled and virulent in their remarks in the early stages, into alleging that the Ministers were merely repeating

[1] See 67, note 9.

the lies supplied them by their Permanent Secretaries. As the debates continued a much better atmosphere was obtained and personal attacks on Civil Servants and violent uncritical outbursts were reduced in number. Of course the main concentration of the back benchers was on points of detail and not constructive criticism of policy but that could not be wondered at.

The main subject of questioning is still Africanisation, there is no realisation among the general run of members that there are not the Africans available to fill the vacant posts and one cannot eradicate the belief that these posts are being kept deliberately for expatriates.

It would be only fair to say that the back benchers in some matters have got quite a good knowledge of particular subjects much better, in fact, than Ministers have. The result is that they appear to lead or even drive the Ministers. Now is the opportunity for Ministers to reverse this situation and to gain full detailed knowledge of how their departments operate so that they can rebut such criticism when it is made. If they do not succeed in doing this we are going to be in for a difficult time with back benchers exerting far too great a power on Ministers. Back benchers did take the administration of party discipline with some reluctance but towards the end of the meeting although they criticised they were no longer voting against their own Ministers! This at least was an advance.

I should say that the first session was a reasonable success. We got the draft Estimates accepted with one change only – the elimination of the Head called the Governor's Office and the substitution of a Head called Executive Council. All the posts in the previous Head were kept either in the new one or were distributed among other Heads. Ministers are, I think, determined to introduce new policies and new ideas but so far they have not been able to suggest much that has not already been thought of or even started. Of course free primary education is a big cry but we haven't had details of this yet and the latest idea is to start a Medical School in connection with University College. I found that Ministers were quite ready to listen to advice and comment and were quick to seize the point.

One omission that I found was that no provision had been made for a Committee of Ways and Means to examine taxation proposals and the Revenue Estimates. I gave an undertaking that I would devise some system whereby the Assembly could go into a committee of the full Assembly to be called the Committee of Ways and Means and to review taxation proposals and the draft Revenue Estimates. It is not easy as we do not have an Annual Finance Bill and in a year like the present where virtually we had no change in taxation one has to exercise some ingenuity to bring revenue matters before the Assembly in any effective way.

The draft Development Plan is now under very urgent and final examination and will be coming before the Executive Council this month with a view to publication early in July and debate in the middle of August. The Plan has certainly reached some astronomical figures; but, as I keep repeating, the importance will lie in the priority in which the various projects are carried out and the extent to which we can get those concerned with economic production and communications undertaken in advance of or, at any rate, at the same time as, the expansion of the social services.

103 CO 537/7181, no 10 13 June 1951

[Constitutional reform]: CO note of a meeting with Dr Nkrumah on the position of prime minister, the appointment of ministers and the allocation of portfolios.[1] *Minute* by A B Cohen

The Secretary of State said that he and Dr. Nkrumah had had the chance of discussing economic questions on the previous day. Dr. Nkrumah had explained the very great needs of the Gold Coast for development. The Secretary of State had indicated that H.M. Government were anxious to help in so far as they could. He understood that Dr. Nkrumah wanted to discuss political questions at this meeting.

Dr. Nkrumah said that the present position in the Gold Coast was that he and his party had come to power on a platform of self-government now. He realised, and he believed that many of his supporters did, that progress must be gradual at present and that they could not at present dispense with the *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council or with the Governor's reserve powers, but the party were expecting some progress and if he was to retain their confidence he must be able to show some advance. He had discussed the matter with the Governor informally and had suggested that some early advance of form rather than substance should be made. He reiterated that the Gold Coast needed the official members and the Civil Service.

Dr. Nkrumah and Sir C. Arden-Clarke then explained the nature of the proposals which had been discussed. They were that the Leader of Government Business should in future be entitled Prime Minister and should rank in precedence immediately after the Governor (or, in his absence from the Colony, the O.A.G.). In other words the Prime Minister would rank before the Governor's deputy when the Governor (or the O.A.G.) was absent from Accra and in these circumstances would preside[2] over the Executive Council. In addition the appointment of Ministers and the allocation of portfolios should, it was suggested, in future be made not by the Governor in his discretion but by the Governor in consultation with the Prime Minister. Finally Dr. Nkrumah said that with the present volume of business in the Gold Coast it was necessary for all the Ministers to have portfolios. He therefore proposed that the Prime Minister should have the portfolio of development and that the portfolios of health and labour should be divided. The number of Ministers would be the same.

Sir C. Arden-Clarke pointed out that the proposed changes relating to the appointment of Ministers and the allocation of portfolios merely reflected the existing state of affairs; the Governor would in fact be bound at present to act in consultation with the Leader of Government Business.

Dr. Nkrumah said that when the constitution was being prepared it had not been expected that there would be a developed party and that the situation had been altered as a result of the emergence of the C.P.P. as the dominant party. Sir C. Arden-Clarke agreed.

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[1] Present: Mr Griffiths, Sir C Arden-Clarke, Dr Nkrumah and A B Cohen.

[2] Cohen added a marginal note: 'This would not happen often.'

The Secretary of State said that he entirely appreciated Dr. Nkrumah's reasons for making these suggestions. He would wish to discuss them further with the Governor later in the month and hoped that the Governor would discuss them with Dr. Nkrumah after his return. Meanwhile he wanted to make one or two points. He recognised that from the Gold Coast point of view it was important to be able to show some progress before too long. From the United Kingdom point of view it was important not to move too soon. Opinion in this country was recognising the responsible way in which the new Gold Coast Government was going about its business and confidence in the stability of the country was growing. He would like to see any change such as that contemplated timed in such a way as not to impair this confidence. He therefore asked Dr. Nkrumah when he would wish the change to come into effect, if it was agreed to. Dr. Nkrumah said that from the Gold Coast point of view it ought to come into effect as soon as possible. Sir C. Arden-Clarke said that he had had it in mind that if the change were agreed to by the Secretary of State it might come into effect early in 1952 before the Budget Session. In discussion of the matter with Dr. Nkrumah he had made the point that if it were brought into force too soon it might lead to the next demand, which might be a demand of substance, also being too soon. But Dr. Nkrumah had said that he did not think that this was the case. The changes which he had suggested would show the good faith of the British Government towards the new Gold Coast experiment and would make it easier to hold the position with regard to changes of substance for longer.

The Secretary of State asked whether the proposed changes would involve any alteration of the constitution and it was explained that some minor changes in the constituton would be necessary if the proposal to call the Leader of Government Business Prime Minister were adopted and also with regard to the method of appointment of other Ministers, the allocation of portfolios and the abolition of Ministers without portfolios.

With regard to the method of announcement of any changes which might be agreed, Mr. Cohen suggested that the best method would be for such changes to be announced as having been agreed by the Governor and Dr. Nkrumah and approved by the Secretary of State. He thought that it would not be desirable for public reference to be made to any detailed proposals before it could also be stated that they had been approved.

The Secretary of State asked Dr. Nkrumah whether he would wish to say anything about the discussion of these proposals on his return. Dr. Nkrumah said that he would have to say something and after further discussion it was agreed that a suitable formula should be worked out by the Governor, Dr. Nkrumah and Mr. Cohen before Dr. Nkrumah went back to the Gold Coast. The Governor suggested that this might take the general line that Dr. Nkrumah had had preliminary discussions with the Secretary of State about constitutional matters and that he hoped to discuss these matters further with the Governor after the latter's return to the Gold Coast. Dr. Nkrumah agreed that this would be suitable.

The Secretary of State said finally that he would give further consideration to Dr. Nkrumah's suggestions and would discuss these with the Governor later in the month. If any proposals which were finally put forward had the full support of the Governor, that would make it very much easier for him to consider them and the knowledge that they had the support of the Governor would, if they were agreed, carry great weight in this country when they were announced.

Minute on 103

I should record that before the Secretary of State saw Dr. Nkrumah on the 13th June, as recorded opposite, he had a talk with Sir C. Arden-Clarke, Mr. Gorsuch and myself. The Secretary of State felt that the suggestions put forward by Sir C. Arden-Clarke were sound and agreed to follow the general line suggested by him and discussed in the earlier minutes. This led to the discussion at the meeting on the 13th.

To-day I saw Dr. Nkrumah and handed him the suggested statement for him to make on his return. He agreed with it and I told him that the Governor and the Secretary of State had agreed to it. I told him that we should make no statement here and that I understood that this was merely the suggested substance of his statement. He agreed.

A.B.C.
15.5.51

104 CO 537/7181, no 15 15 June 1951

[Constitutional reform]: letter from A B Cohen to R H Saloway on Dr Nkrumah's visit to London

You are, of course, aware of the discussions which Nkrumah had with the Governor about constitutional questions before the latter came on leave. The Governor told us of these before Nkrumah got here and before the Secretary of State saw Nkrumah he discussed the matter briefly with the Governor and agreed on the line to be taken.

I enclose herewith a copy of the record of the discussion, at which I was present as well as the Governor.[1] It was, as you will see, agreed at the discussion that we should prepare a short note which would serve as the substance of a public statement to be made by Nkrumah on his return to the Gold Coast. I drafted this statement, which was agreed by the Governor and the Secretary of State, and handed it to Nkrumah this afternoon. He agreed with it. It is not intended as the exact text of any statement he is to make, but merely as the substance. I told him that we would not issue any statement here and that this was merely for him; he agreed.

I am sending this to you for your information. The Secretary of State will be discussing the matter further with the Governor later in the month and the Governor intends then to discuss the matter with Nkrumah after his return.

As far as I am able to judge the visit here has been a great success. As you know, the Labour Party gave a dinner at which the Prime Minister was present; Lennox-Boyd had Nkrumah and Botsio to lunch and Eden was present. There have also been a number of other entertainments. Nkrumah had two talks with the Secretary of State and one with Mr. Cook and the Department at which the Ewe question was discussed. We shall be writing to you separately about this, but the outcome was satisfactory.

I was not present at the first talk with the Secretary of State on the 12th June, which was about economic questions; the Governor was present. I attach a note[2] by

[1] See 103.

[2] Not printed.

MacKintosh (the Secretary of State's Private Secretary) recording some of the points raised. We will be sending out the information asked for by Botsio and referred to in the last paragraph. As regards the first paragraph, I understand that Botsio has had a useful talk with Cox[3] and others about assistance over educational recruitment and training. Cox and I are to have a further talk with Botsio to-morrow morning and I will write to you again about this.

As regards the second paragraph, I think that there may have been some misunderstanding. I understand that the position is that the Gold Coast Government have recently sent us a full statement of their probable requirements in supplies arising from the ten-year programme and the Volta scheme. This is now being analysed in the Department and will subsequently be discussed inter-departmentally, after which we shall be in a position to communicate with the Gold Coast Government as to the prospects. All this was explained this afternoon by Gorell Barnes to Nkrumah at a meeting in my room. We emphasised the importance of personal contact over these matters and said that we were always ready to welcome people from the Gold Coast, whether Ministers or officials, for the purpose of discussing supply or other problems. We also said that we thought a good deal could be done through the Gold Coast Office in London.

At a previous stage in the discussions Nkrumah had said to me that he intended to make proposals for the expansion of the Gold Coast Office in London and also for the setting up of an office in New York to deal with American supplies and technicians. I said that we welcomed the establishment and development of Colonial Government Offices in London as we were certain that they could perform extremely valuable functions. I also said that I thought that the opening of an office in New York might well be useful.

Nkrumah also referred to the student problem and said that he had it in mind to establish a Gold Coast Club in London which could accommodate students residentially and also serve as a meeting place. I said that this was a thing which I thought was very much needed. The British Council hostel in Hans Crescent was doing excellent work but much more accommodation was required and under present conditions the British Government could not finance all that was needed. I had for some time thought that both the Gold Coast and Nigerian Governments might be well advised to start such institutions as the East African Governments had already successfully done.

I think that this covers all the points which Nkrumah made in discussion.

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[3] Sir C Cox, CO educational adviser.

105 CO 96/819/16 19 June 1951

[Gold Coast chiefs]: minute by E G G Hanrott on a parliamentary question about the number of de-stoolments since the CPP took office

Since the C.P.P. took office there have undoubtedly been a large number of de-stoolments and attempted de-stoolments many of them directed against important individuals. Sir Tsibu Darku, the most prominent figure in the old Legislative

Council, is at present suspended while a number of charges are being investigated and there has been a movement against Nene Matekole [sic] another important Chief. In Ashanti a Chief has been de-stooled after about 35 years on the stool and there have even been murmurings against the Asantehene whose person until recently was regarded as almost sacred.

This movement against the Chiefs apparently derives from the part played by the Chiefs in the general election and the desire of the C.P.P. for political vengeance; it does not appear, however, to be centrally inspired. Dr. Nkrumah is believed to have discouraged overt intervention by the C.P.P. although local members of the C.P.P. have taken a prominent part in de-stoolment. It appears rather to have been caused by a surge of genuine popular feeling against the political role played by the Chiefs in central and local Government, a revolt of the young men who are now aware of their power.

This is of course entirely a matter for the Gold Coast Government and there is I suspect little that they can do except ensure that de-stoolment (which is essentially a local democratic process) should take place in an orderly fashion. The purpose of the Question[1] is doubtless to imply that with the new constitutional order we have abandoned the Chiefs to the wolves. This is in some measure true, but there was probably no alternative, and although the Chiefs still have an important part to play in local Government – where their position is still accepted – before they are relegated to an entirely ceremonial role, their days as political figures in the Central Government are probably numbered. They themselves realise this and are considering withdrawing from the Legislature and sending commoners in their place.

[1] The question of de-stoolments was raised by G P Stevens, MP. Lennox-Boyd, the new minister of state in the Conservative government, replied in a letter dated Dec 1951. The reply was based on figures for Ashanti and the Colony in the period 1948 to June 1951; no figures were available for the Northern Territories. In this period there had been a total of 16 abdications – 1 paramount chief (of the Colony) and 15 divisional chiefs (12 of the Colony and 3 from Ashanti). In the same period there had been a total of 11 de-stoolments – 2 paramount chiefs (both of the Colony) and 9 divisional chiefs (6 of the Colony and 3 from Ashanti). CO 554/702, no 2, Lennox-Boyd to Stevens, 19 Dec 1951.

106 CO 96/823/4, no 7 22 June 1951

[Togoland and the Cameroons]: CO brief for the UK representative[1] at the ninth session of the UN Trusteeship Council on the effect of the 1950 Gold Coast constitution and of the constitutional changes in Nigeria on the position of Togoland and the Cameroons respectively [Extract]

The Trusteeship Council Committee on Administrative Unions will shortly consider the extent, if any, to which the 1950 Gold Coast Constitution perpetuates and strengthens the administrative union between the Gold Coast and Togoland under

[1] Sir A Burns.

United Kingdom Trusteeship. Since the new Nigerian Constitution is to be published in early July, 1951, it may be expected that the Committee will conduct a similar study in relation to the position of the Cameroons under that Constitution. The purpose of this brief is to provide guidance for the United Kingdom representative as the attitude to be adopted by him in any discussion of these topics in the Administrative Unions Committee or in the Trusteeship Council itself: this guidance is given in paragraph 12 to 22 of the brief. Paragraphs 2 to 11 sketch in the essential background on the subject.

Historical background

2. Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship runs as a narrow strip of land along nearly the whole length of the eastern frontier of the Gold Coast. Its width nowhere exceeds 65 miles and its total area is only 13,000 square miles. It has no access to the sea. Its peoples are by no means homogeneous, and both ethnically and historically their affinities run east and west with the people over the Gold Coast frontier rather than north and south through the Trust Territory. In fact the historical reasons for the allocation to Britain of the Togoland Mandate by the Supreme Council at the Peace Conference of 1919 were the desire of the Mamprussi and Dagomba tribes in Togoland to re-unite with their kinsmen in the Gold Coast from whom they had been separated when the frontier between the Gold Coast and German Togoland was drawn; and the substantial assistance which these people gave to the Anglo-French forces in the conquest of Togoland. Similarly, the Togoland Ewes are closely connected with their kinsmen in the Gold Coast.

3. The Cameroons under United Kingdom Trusteeship extends for some 700 miles along the eastern frontier of Nigeria. It consists of two narrow strips of territory, separated from each other by some 50 miles of Nigerian soil. The southern portion is by far the larger with a total area of 27,193 square miles as against 6,889 square miles of the northern portion. There are substantial ethnic, religious and social differences between the component parts of the Trust Territory, which, when added to the difficulties of communication, make it impossible to administer the territory as a single homogeneous unit. There is a seasonable movement of population with the neighbouring parts of Nigeria and of the French Cameroons in the search for better farmland or grazing areas. Internal communications, especially in the north, are poor and the movement of people and goods is often a lengthy and expensive process.

4. For the reasons set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 above the Mandates and subsequently Section 5 (a) of the respective Trusteeship Agreements laid down that Togoland and the Cameroons should be administered as integral parts of the Gold Coast and Nigeria respectively, and this arrangement has therefore operated continuously since 1922. Through this close association over a period of more than 25 years, the two Trust Territories have been able to enjoy the benefits of organised public services on a level which could not otherwise have been possible and have obtained these benefits without having to bear the expense of maintaining separate administrations.

5. Under the terms of the Trusteeship Agreements His Majesty is designated as Administering Authority for the two Territories, and the responsibility for their administration is undertaken by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Under Article 5 (a) of each Agreement the Administering Authority "shall

administer" the territory "as an integral part of its territory" and in a speech made in a Sub-Committee of the Fourth Committee in 1946 the United Kingdom representative (Mr. Ivor Thomas) made it clear, before the Assembly approved this provision, that the United Kingdom would interpret it as meaning that the territories should be administered as integral parts of the Gold Coast and Nigeria respectively and not, as some members of the United Nations have insisted was meant, as an integral part of the United Kingdom itself. A copy of Mr. Thomas' speech is attached at Annex II to this Brief.[2]

Constitutional position: (a) *Togoland*

6. Until the 1950 Constitution was brought into effect early in 1951, the Governor of the Gold Coast had the power to legislate separately for Togoland as distinct from the Gold Coast proper. This power was never used, and in practice the laws of the Gold Coast were almost without exception applied to the Trust Territory. Laws affecting the Southern Section, which since 1922 has been administered as an integral part of the Colony and Ashanti, required the approval of the Gold Coast Legislative Council, on which from 1946 to 1950 there was a majority of African unofficials. Laws affecting the Northern Section were made by the Governor alone, since the Northern Territories, of which the Northern Section is an integral part, were not, until 1951, represented in the central Legislature. While the Executive of the Gold Coast Government (i.e. the Governor in Council) had to pay careful and increasing regard to the wishes of the Gold Coast Legislative Council (on which a Togoland representative sat from 1949 onwards), particularly in matters of finance and legislation, responsibility for the determination of policy rested largely with the Governor and his Executive Council, which acted in an advisory capacity and consisted of officials appointed by, and unofficials nominated by, the Governor. In consequence His Majesty's Government was able to give close supervision to the administration of the Trust Territory, to provide the Trusteeship Council with full information in response to its requests and to ensure that proper action was taken by the Gold Coast Government to carry out the resolutions of the Council. No incompatibility thus existed between the arrangements for the administration of Togoland and His Majesty's Government position under the Trusteeship Agreement.

7. Under the 1950 Gold Coast Constitution, the Gold Coast Executive Council has become the main instrument of policy, and the Governor is required, except in exceptional circumstances, to act upon its advice. Moreover the majority of the Ministers who comprise it are Africans drawn from a legislature which consists almost wholly of elected members. A full summary of the provisions of the 1950 Gold Coast Constitution is given in Annex I to this Brief. Its implications for Togoland, and for His Majesty's Government's position as the Administering Authority, are discussed in paragraphs 13, 15, 18 and 21.

[*Paras 8–9 on the constitutional position of the Cameroons: omitted*]

United Nations criticism of "integral part" arrangements

10. The "integral part" arrangements, both for Togoland and the Cameroons, have always been severely criticised in the United Nations and it is to be expected that

[2] Annexes to this brief not printed.

this criticism will be voiced whenever constitutional changes, such as those outlined in the foregoing paragraphs, seem to strengthen the ties between the two Trust Territories and the Gold Coast and Nigeria respectively. It has been said that the "integral part" arrangements prejudice the development of the Trust Territories by making their progress conditional on that in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, which are said to be "mere colonies" and therefore not suitable vehicles for the administration of Trust Territories; it has been asserted that the United Nations Charter visualises self government or independence for the Trust Territories as units, and that their association with other territories makes this impossible of achievement; that the integration of the Trust Territories with the Gold Coast and Nigeria prevents the Trusteeship Council from exercising its powers of supervision, since separate budget figures, legislative institutions and administrations do not exist for the Trust Territories; and that since the day to day administration of the Trust Territories is conducted by the Governments of the Gold Coast and Nigeria, and not by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, the latter authority, by failing to carry out the functions assigned to it under the Trusteeship Agreement, has therefore committed a breach of the Agreement.

11. These arguments, which have been given support by the demands of certain political factions in the Trust Territories for separation from the Gold Coast and Nigeria respectively, are in greater or lesser degree refuted by the factors set out in paragraphs 2 to 9 above and it is along these lines that they have in the past been answered by United Kingdom representatives at the United Nations (see, for example the speech made in the 1949 Fourth Committee by the U.K. representative (Mr. J. M. Martin) reproduced in Annex III to this Brief). As a result, though the arguments continue to be advanced, the United Nations has in recent months come to accept the fact that there is no practicable alternative to the "integral part" arrangements,* and the opponents of these arrangements seem at present to be content to insist that the United Kingdom should do as much as possible to enable the Trusteeship Council to assess the state of the Trust Territories by providing, so far as it can, detailed financial and other information relating solely to the territories. This the United Kingdom is doing. It may be expected however, that the interest of the United Nations in the "integral part" arrangements will be revived by the promulgation of the Gold Coast and Nigeria constitutions, and the following paragraphs indicate the tactics to be adopted by the United Kingdom representative in that event.

Line to be taken by United Kingdom representatives in United Nations bodies

12. It may be assumed that the main interest of the Trusteeship Council (and subsequently the Fourth Committee) will be to discover whether the Gold Coast and Nigerian constitutions involve any change in the status of the Trust Territories as a

* For instance, at its Sixth Session the Trusteeship Council recommended, following its examination of the Cameroons Annual Report "that, in the adoption of the projected proposals for reform, due attention should be given to representation from the Trust Territory on the various Legislative and Executive Councils concerned with the Government of the Trust Territory". As regards Togoland the Council at its Seventh Session noted "with satisfaction the selection of a representative of Southern Togoland to the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly and the selection of Togolanders to represent Southern Togoland on other bodies affecting both the Gold Coast and the Southern Section of the Trust Territory" and urged that this representation be extended.

result of the transfer of a substantial degree of executive responsibility to elected African legislatures and Ministers responsible to those legislatures, whether the changes brought about by the constitutions detract from the position and authority of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom as administering authority in the Trust Territories, and whether these changes will affect the ability of the Trusteeship Council to supervise the administration of the territories. It is possible, however, that factors largely unconnected with the constitutional changes, e.g. the realisation of an apparent surplus of revenue over expenditure in both Trust Territories in 1950, and the agitation of the Togoland Congress Party for the creation of a unified Togoland, will induce the Council to re-examine the operation of the "integral part" arrangements as such, and especially to formulate views on the political future of the Trust Territories. The following paragraphs are mainly concerned to anticipate the general lines of enquiry which may be followed by the Council.

13. Criticism based on charges that the new constitutions will prevent the operation of the International Trusteeship system should be answered with the statement that His Majesty's Government is quite satisfied that in practice no difficulty will arise under the new constitutions in the conduct of the United Kingdom responsibilities towards the United Nations in respect of the Trust Territories. The changes in the Gold Coast and Nigerian constitutions imply no change in the status of the Trust Territories: annual reports will continue to be submitted by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, the right of petition will still exist, Visiting Missions will be welcomed, and the powers of the Trusteeship Council to supervise and examine the affairs of the Trust Territories will remain unimpaired.

14. Criticism based on charges that the changed relationship between His Majesty's Government and the Gold Coast and Nigerian Governments i.e. the obligation imposed upon the Governors to act in most fields of Government activity in accordance with the advice of Executive Councils largely derived from elected Legislatures means that the United Kingdom has abandoned its responsibility as an Administering Authority to the local Governments should be answered as follows:

(a) *Togoland*

15. The position of the Trust Territory and the responsibilities of His Majesty's Government towards both the Trust Territory and the United Nations are fully safeguarded under the Gold Coast constitution by the following provisions, which relate equally to matters affecting the Trust Territory and the Gold Coast proper:

(a) As was recommended by the Coussey Committee, the Governor retains certain reserve powers under the new Constitution. If any Bill which the Governor considers essential to public order and good government is not passed by the Legislative Assembly, then the Governor may declare that the Bill shall, nevertheless, take effect. The Governor may only make such a declaration in accordance with a resolution of the Executive Council or, failing this, with the consent of the Secretary of State for the Colonies; if, however, urgent necessity precludes consultation with the Secretary of State, the Governor may make such a declaration and immediately report his action to the Secretary of State.

(b) If the Governor considers that it is expedient in the interests of good government, public faith and public order that he should not act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Council he may act contrary to that advice, with the prior approval of the Secretary of State, or if urgent necessity requires, without any such consent.

(c) No Bill may become law until either the Governor or His Majesty, through the Secretary of State, have signified assent. When a Bill is presented to the Governor for assent he may, acting in his discretion, assent to it, refuse his assent, or reserve the Bill for signification of His Majesty's pleasure. Any law to which the Governor has given his assent may nonetheless be disallowed by His Majesty.

(d) Certain specified categories of Bills must be reserved for His Majesty's pleasure, including the following (this list is not exhaustive):–

(i) Any Bill establishing any Banking association or altering the constitution, rights or duties of any such association;

(ii) Any Bill affecting the determination of questions relating to political or constitutional relations between Chiefs under Native Customary law;

(iii) Any Bill the provisions of which appear to the Governor to be inconsistent with the obligations imposed upon His Majesty by treaty;

(iv) Any Bill of an extraordinary nature and importance under which the trade, transport and communications of any territory in which His Majesty has for the time being jurisdiction may be prejudiced.

(e) It is especially to be noted that there is specific provision for the safeguarding of any treaties entered into by His Majesty, including the Trusteeship Agreement.

(f) In addition, section 50 (1) of the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1950, provides that:

> "Subject to the provisions of this Order it shall be lawful for the Governor with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Gold Coast: Provided that, should any such law be repugnant to any provision of the Trusteeship Agreement approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Thirteenth day of December, 1946, in respect of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship, such law shall to the extent of such repugnancy, but not otherwise, be void."

16. It is a matter of considerable importance that the United Kingdom representative should avoid emphasis on point (f) as a safeguard for the position of Togoland as a Trust Territory, for the reasons given in paragraph 18 below, by which he should be guided if reference to Section 50 (1) of the Gold Coast Order in Council is made in the Trusteeship Council.

(b) *Cameroons.* (The information contained in this paragraph is to be regarded as subject to amendment and should not be quoted as authoritative unless checked against the actual terms of the new Nigerian Constitution, which was not approved at the time of writing this Brief).

17. In the case of the Cameroons the position of His Majesty's Government as Administering Authority is safeguarded by the following provisions of the new draft constitution:

(a) If the Governor considers that it is expedient in the interests of public faith, public order and good government that he should not act in accordance with the advice of the Council of Ministers, he may act contrary to that advice, reporting the fact to the Secretary of State.
(b) If the Governor considers it expedient in the interests of public order, public faith or good government that any Bill or motion introduced in the Central House of Representatives which is not passed or carried by the House should have effect, he may declare that the Bill or motion should in fact take effect. This power is to be exercised by the Governor in his discretion. Similar powers are given to the Lieutenant Governors of the Regions in respect of Regional legislatures, except that they may not be exercised without the prior consent of the Governor given in writing.
(c) No Central or Regional Bill may become law until either the Governor or the Lieutenant Governor respectively or in either case His Majesty through a Secretary of State, have signified assent. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor have power to assent, or to refuse to assent or to reserve for His Majesty's pleasure any Bill presented in a regional or central legislature respectively. No Regional Bill can be assented to by a Lieutenant Governor until the Governor-in-Council has intimated that he has no objection to it. Any law assented to by the Governor or a Lieutenant Governor can nonetheless be disallowed by His Majesty.
(d) Certain specified categories of Bills must be reserved for His Majesty's pleasure, including the following:– (This list is not exhaustive)

(i) Any Bill imposing differential duties;
(ii) Any Bill which appears to the Governor to be inconsistent with the obligations imposed upon His Majesty by treaty, including those incurred under the Trusteeship Agreement for the Cameroons under United Kingdom Trusteeship;
(iii) Any Bill whereby persons of any racial community may be subjected to disabilities to which members of other such communities are not subjected;
(iv) Any Bill of an extraordinary nature and importance under which the Trade, Transport and Communications of any territory in which His Majesty has for the time being jurisdiction may be prejudiced;

(e) It will be observed that any Bill which the Governor thinks might be inconsistent with the Trusteeship Agreement must be expressly reserved for His Majesty's pleasure.
(f) Under the new draft Constitution, the proviso (at present contained in Section 6 (i) of the Nigeria (Protectorate and Cameroons) Order in Council 1946) that the Cameroons are to be administered as part of the Protectorate subject to the provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement will continue in force unmodified.

18. *Section 50 (1) of the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council 1950*
This Section, the text of which is quoted in paragraph 15 above, provides that if any Gold Coast law is repugnant to the provisions of the Togoland Trusteeship Agreement it shall, to the extent of that repugnancy, be void. Although it may appear that this Section provides a useful argument to show that the position of Togoland under the Gold Coast Constitution is fully safeguarded, in fact emphasis by the

United Kingdom representative on the existence of this apparent safeguard should be avoided for the following reasons:

(a) the danger exists that, if undue prominence is given to the existence of this clause, members of the Trust Territory public will seek to persuade the Courts to apply it to any law to which, for any reason, they object. Local Courts would therefore be obliged to interpret the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement, that is, an international treaty entered into by His Majesty's Government, a situation which has obvious and far-reaching possibilities of embarrassment.

(b) there is no similar provision in the Nigerian Constitution and any discussion of the Gold Coast provision will inevitably bring this fact to light. We should then be obliged to explain why this is so, since both the Cameroons and Togoland are administered under precisely similar Trusteeship Agreements. The explanation is straightforward enough – see paragraph 19 below – but it is not one which will commend itself strongly to the Trusteeship Council.

19. Section 50 (1) appears in the Gold Coast constitution because it has always been there: it first appeared in the British Sphere of Togoland Order in Council, 1923, as a proviso to the extension of Gold Coast law to the Mandated Territory, and has been retained ever since. Since there was no good reason for removing it (and since to do so might have attracted the attention of the United Nations) it has been retained. On the other hand, no such provisions has ever existed in respect of the Cameroons: the corresponding safeguard for the position of the Cameroons is contained in Section 6 (1) of the Nigeria (Protectorate and Cameroons) Order in Council 1946 which provides that the Northern and Southern Cameroons shall be administered by the Governor of Nigeria as part of the Northern and Eastern regions of Nigeria respectively, subject to the provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement, and in Clause 16 (b) of the Royal Instructions, which requires the Governor to reserve Bills the provisions of which appear to him inconsistent with His Majesty's treaty obligations. These provisions, which are retained in the new Nigeria Constitution, have existed since His Majesty assumed the administration of the Cameroons after the 1914–18 war, except that prior to 1946 that in the Order in Council referred to the Mandate instead of to the Trusteeship Agreement. In short, the position is that the discrepancy between the method of safeguarding the positions of the respective Trust Territories merely perpetuates a situation which has existed since 1925 and which has not operated to the detriment of the status of either territory. Since there is no good reason for, and no advantage in, making any change in the form of the respective provisions, no change has been made.

20. If, therefore, attention is drawn to the discrepancy, the United Kingdom representative should explain the position as set out in paragraph 19 above. It is to be hoped, however, for the reasons given in paragraph 18 above, that the issue will not arise: if it does the United Kingdom representative might be able to make capital out of the situation by emphasising the fact that the existence of these provisions, which reproduce the provisions of the old constitutions is another piece of evidence of the fact that the new constitutions effect no change in the status of the Trust Territories or the effectiveness of the Trusteeship Agreements.

21. While the arguments in paragraphs 15 and 17 above should be given full force in the Trusteeship Council, the danger exists that their use might give rise to the impression in the Gold Coast that His Majesty's Government has in fact reserved

all effectual and practical power to itself and that the constitutions are of little real value as a step forward to complete self-government for the peoples of Nigeria and the Gold Coast. Opportunity should therefore be taken to make use of the arguments set out in the following sub-paragraphs. These arguments also constitute the main reply to charges that the new constitutions facilitate the merging of the Trust Territories into the adjoining territories, and thus prevent the Trusteeship Council from carrying out its duties in respect of those territories, and also prevent the attainment of self-government for those territories as separate units.

(a) Although the new Constitutions make no change in the international status of the Trust Territories, nor do they militate against the operation of the International Trusteeship System, they do take the inhabitants of the Trust Territory along the road to responsible self-government. The peoples of the Trust Territories share with the peoples of Nigeria and the Gold Coast the benefits of the new constitutions since through their participation in the election of members of the Legislatures and hence the Ministers responsible to those Legislatures, they have assumed control of their own affairs in most fields of administration of their country (for the representation of Togoland in Gold Coast bodies see Annex I to this brief: for the Cameroons position see paragraph 175 *et seq* of the Annual Report for 1950). Thus a great advance has been made towards the achievement of one of the principal objects of the International Trusteeship system namely "to promote the . . . progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned and as may be provided by the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement".

(b) But this advance has only been made possible for the peoples of the Trust Territories by the fact of their association with Nigeria and the Gold Coast respectively. Divorced from them they would not have the political, economic or social stability to stand alone in the world and would not have been able to make such rapid progress towards the attainment of this objective. This situation was recognised at the time when the Trusteeship Agreements were approved by the General Assembly, and it was made clear by the United Kingdom representative, before that approval was given, that His Majesty's Government saw no future for the Trust Territories except as integral parts of the adjoining territories, and that it was the firm intention of His Majesty's Government to administer Togoland as an integral part of the Gold Coast, and the Cameroons as an integral part of Nigeria (reference should be made, if necessary, to Mr. Ivor Thomas' speech at Annex I to this brief).

(c) The advance towards self-government in accordance with Article 76 (b) of the Charter and Article 6 of the respective Trusteeship Agreements clearly must imply a policy of increasing decentralisation and relaxation of control on the part of the metropolitan authority. The peoples of the territories must accustom themselves to accepting responsibility for managing their own affairs and taking their own decisions. For so long as they continue under the international trusteeship system, the supervisory functions of the Trusteeship Council as defined in the Charter will continue. But as the advance progresses, so increases the power of the local inhabitants, through their representatives in Government organisations, to

formulate their own views on recommendations of the Trusteeship Council. For so long as H.M.G. remains the Administering Authority of the Trust Territories, H.M.G. would clearly, under its Treaty obligations, not permit the Governments of the Gold Coast or Nigeria to act in a manner contrary to the Trusteeship Agreement or the trusteeship provisions of the Charter. There is of course not the slightest ground for supposing that either Government would ever wish to do so. So far as suggestions or recommendations of the Trusteeship Council are concerned, the position is that the U.K., as the Administering Authority, will continue as heretofore to seek the advice of the two Governments on them and obviously be guided by that advice subject to the provisions of the respective Constitutions and the Trusteeship Agreement. The Trusteeship Council may rest quite assured that the views they express and the suggestions they make will continue to receive careful and earnest consideration as in the past. We sincerely hope that those views and suggestions will be of value and assistance to the territorial Governments, and we shall continue to report to the Trusteeship Council what steps it may have been possible to take to give effect to their recommendations and suggestions. We are quite confident that, in the steady advance of these two territories towards self-government, the Trusteeship Council will always have close regard to the wishes as well as the interests of the local inhabitants and expressed through and represented by their constitutional democratic organs of Governments. The Administering Authority is confident that the Trusteeship Council may also rest assured that the Governments of the Gold Coast and Nigeria are fully alive to the needs and special status of the Trust Territories which form integral parts of the territories within which they hold responsibility, and that those Governments will seek to discharge their responsibilities in the Trust Territories in a manner fully consonant with the objectives of the international trusteeship system.

22. Criticism based on the argument that the existence of a surplus of revenue over expenditure in the financial working of the Trust Territories indicates that the territories are able to support themselves, and that the effect of the new constitutions is to bind them closer to Nigeria and the Gold Coast respectively at a time when they are showing signs of being able to exist as independent units, should be answered as follows:

(a) To separate the Trust Territories from Nigeria and the Gold Coast would be to divorce them almost completely from the considerable opportunities for political advancement which association has brought. It would therefore be a negation of the policy of H.M.G., which is to bring the peoples of the Trust Territories to the highest possible level of political and economic advancement within the shortest possible time, to deny to those peoples the substantial benefits which they can only derive from a continuation of the present arrangements. The new constitutions do not bind the Trust Territories any closer: they recognise the arrangements for integral part administration and contain special provisions to safeguard the interests of the Trust Territory. The surplus which has accrued in Togoland is of course so small that it cannot be taken as a serious argument for abandoning present arrangements. The Cameroons surplus, although larger, will be devoted to necessary works within the Trust Territory under special arrangements. It has been paid into a Cameroons Development Fund, under the control of the

Governor, and will be used to finance a scheme for road building which in all will cost £2M. This scheme is supported by opinion in the Trust Territory. This is clearly the most wise use to which this money can be put.

(b) In any event the ethnic, linguistic and geographical arguments in favour of integration which are set out in the speech at Annex to this brief are still applicable.

(c) Further guidance on this aspect of the question is contained in the joint Anglo-French observations on the Ewe and related problems presented to the Trusteeship Council at its Ninth Session, and in the related Brief for the United Kingdom representative.

107 CO 96/826/7, no 20 18 July 1951

[Compulsory labour]: note by G Foggon[1] for a proposed meeting with Mr Gbedemah at the CO on 23 July

[This document illustrates how under the new dyarchy constitution the CO served an essentially African government in precisely the same way as it had served colonial governments in the past. A policy change was being canvassed in the Gold Coast and enquiry had been made about precedents and feasibility. While it is clear that CO officials strongly disapproved of the policy change suggested they were, in the event, to present the minister with the information he had requested and to proffer him advice rather than attempt to instruct him. It is additionally interesting that a minister in a government dominated by the CPP, a party which proclaimed itself as 'the party of workers and peasants', should have been contemplating such coercion of labour in his eagerness to enhance the development of the Gold Coast.]

The Minister of Health and Labour, Gold Coast, Mr. Gbedemah has indicated that he has under consideration the possible use of compulsion to fill future labour demands arising out of the Gold Coast development schemes. He is aware that the Forced Labour Convention of the International Labour Organisation may create some difficulties, but has pointed out that Kenya is at present using a measure of compulsion, and thinks that some way could be found to get over this difficulty.

2. We have the feeling that there are two trains of thought running through his mind and perhaps those of other Ministers. The first is simply the administrative problem of ensuring, in the face of existing labour shortages in the rural areas, an adequate supply of labour for the expected large scale development projects. The second is a desire to see the people of the Gold Coast consciously participating in the development of their own country. How deeply this second objective is really accepted it is difficult to say, but unless the point is raised by the Minister, it might be preferable to regard this as simply a labour supply problem.

3. It has been estimated locally that the labour force available under present conditions for the implementation of the development programme is inadequate. We do not know how these estimates were arrived at, since local registration is scanty, but presumably they represent the best possible calculation on available information.

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[1] CO principal, 1949; assistant secretary, West African Inter-Territorial Conference, Gold Coast, 1951–1953; secretary, Conference of Commissioners of Labour, 1951; commissioner of labour, Nigeria, 1954.

Nevertheless the inadequacy of the labour force must be composed of two distinct elements; an overall shortage of skilled labour that can only be rectified by technical training: a shortage of unskilled labour in the development areas. It is the latter which the Minister no doubt seeks to solve.

4. The first point that perhaps needs to be made clear is that the Kenya legislation to which the Minister has referred (the Voluntary Unemployed Persons Ordinance (Provision of Employment) Ordinance, 1949) was drawn up with a completely different object than that which Mr. Gbedemah has in mind. Its purpose was not to find people for projects requiring labour, but was an attempt to deal with the 'spivs and drones' who were being attracted to urban areas in the belief that an easy living could be picked up in the towns. The Kenya Bill made it obligatory upon adult male "unemployed persons" to report to a Labour Exchange where they were to be registered and either offered suitable employment or directed to go before a Labour Exchange Committee. A Labour Exchange Committee was empowered to require a person who appeared before it to show cause why he should not be declared to be a "voluntarily unemployed person", that is to say an unemployed person who is not genuinely seeking employment. If he showed that he was genuinely seeking employment, he may have been granted a certificate of exemption from the provisions of the Ordinance. If he failed to show cause to the satisfaction of the Committee, he may have been declared to be a voluntarily unemployed person, and be directed into employment, or repatriated to his place of residence. The Bill applied to all males between the ages of 18 and 45, except those who were of unsound mind, blind, crippled, infirm or unfit. There was also a clause under which visitors and others would be exempted.

It was decided that the Ordinance did not conflict with the Forced Labour Convention since the compulsory powers were limited to the genuinely work-shy and the Convention was not designed to cover a measure which attempted to remedy a social evil. [Emphasis throughout in original.]

It is possible moreover, for anyone to avoid direction to work by simply returning to the rural area from which he came. The Ordinance has only been applied in certain restricted municipal areas.

It is these very elements of the Kenya Ordinance which caused us to decide that it did not conflict with the Forced Labour Convention, which would make it an ineffective instrument for the purposes of the Gold Coast Government.

5. The Forced Labour Convention is very closely drawn and the permitted exceptions extremely limited. Article 2 of the Convention is as follows:

> (1) For the purposes of this Convention the term "forced or compulsory labour" shall mean all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.
> (2) Nevertheless, for the purposes of this Convention, the term "forced or compulsory labour" shall not include –
>
> > (a) any work or service exacted in virtue of compulsory military service laws for work of a purely military character;
> > (b) any work or service which forms part of the normal civic obligations of the citizens of a fully self-governing country;
> > (c) any work or service exacted from any person as a consequence of a conviction in a court of law, provided that the said work or service is carried

out under the supervision and control of a public authority and that the said person is not hired to or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations;

(d) any work or service exacted in cases of emergency, that is to say, in the event of war or of a calamity or threatened calamity, such as fire, flood, famine, earthquake, violent epidemic or epizootic diseases, invasion by animal, insect or vegetable pests, and in general any circumstance that would endanger the existence or the well-being of the whole or part of the population;

(e) minor communal services of a kind which, being performed by the members of the community in the direct interest of the said community, can therefore be considered as normal civic obligations incumbent upon the members of the community, provided that the members of the community or their direct representatives shall have the right to be consulted in regard to the need for such services.

Even the Kenya Ordinance sails extremely close to the wind and it would seem impossible for any legislation to be drafted which would enable the Gold Coast Government to direct people to work on the scale they apparently require which would not conflict with the terms of the Convention. To act contrary to the Convention would, of course, create a most unfavourable impression. The Forced Labour Convention is one of the key conventions of the I.L.O. It has been ratified by H.M.G. and applied without modification to all our territories. With a few minor exceptions such as porterage, forced labour has been virtually eliminated from all British territories. Moreover, the United Nations has recently established a committee to examine the question of forced labour and any new legislation in the Gold Coast would almost certainly attract their attention.

All this points to the need to make an all out effort to succeed by voluntary means.

6. The G.C. proposals envisage four stages in the scheme to overcome the labour shortage:

(a) voluntary registration of all unemployed persons, to be completed in two calendar months.

(b) the establishment of a Committee to submit recommendations for the immediate placing of unemployed persons in national undertakings or in undertakings of national importance.

(c) *the compulsory registration of all males between the ages of 18 and 45.*

(d) *the compulsory direction to work of all voluntarily unemployed adults within the above age limits.*

7. It might be useful to add a comment on stages (a) and (b). If the registration is carried out, before jobs are available, voluntary registration will be brought into disrepute and the disappointment of the men registering will affect their attitude to future registrations. It has been found in practice incidentally that registers of unemployed workers are seldom much use after even six months unless some system of checking the registers periodically is adopted. Moreover, stage (b) could not be carried out until work was actually available to which men could be sent. An additional factor which might assist in remedying the labour shortage is the possible availability of labour from adjacent French territory. Apparently such labour made a considerable contribution to an extensive railway project in recent years.

8. The advice to be offered to Mr. Gbedemah might be

(a) to point to the ineffectiveness of the Kenya Ordinance for the purpose which the Gold Coast Government has in mind.
(b) to stress the unfortunate impression that would be created internationally by legislation going beyond the limited scope of the Kenya Ordinance and thus inevitably conflicting with the Forced Labour Convention of the International Labour Organisation.
(c) to suggest that the available pool of unskilled labour may be much greater than present estimates, would suggest particularly if the terms and conditions of employment on the development schemes are made attractive enough.
(d) to suggest that only when it is manifestly clear that voluntary methods are failing to provide the necessary labour should methods which introduce a measure of compulsion be considered. There is always the danger that methods of persuasion will not be exhausted, if the easier method of compulsion is thought to be readily available.

8. It might be thought worthwhile to touch on more fundamental principles and approach this on a broader basis. The aim and purpose of the Gold Coast Ministers is to achieve a rapid transformation of the existing economy into one capable of attaining and sustaining a higher standard of living. They consider that to do this requires the full use of all available manpower and under prevailing conditions this can only be achieved by direction. The difficulty which history has demonstrated is deciding when the goal of a higher standard of living has been reached and when therefore, restriction of liberty can be relaxed. The means and the end have a tendency to become confused and a vitiation of principles and standards in relation to individual liberty tends to be accepted as a permanent necessity, and to become an integral part of the economic system.

We accepted direction of labour only reluctantly and at a time of great national peril. After the war it was abandoned and although it would clearly be of great help at the present time in increasing production and helping us in our financial difficulties, it has not been reintroduced.

108 CAB 134/67, CD(51)12 1 Aug 1951

'Supplies for colonial development': CO memorandum on the Gold Coast for the Official Committee on Colonial Development

There has been received from the Governor of the Gold Coast an estimate of the additional volume of imported materials expected to be required over the ten-year period 1951/60 for the carrying out of the development programme which the Gold Coast Government at present have under consideration, including the carrying out of the Volta River project.

2. In this statement, an attempt has been made by the Gold Coast authorities to arrive at an approximate total of the more important items. These figures are additional to the normal import requirements, and these latter are shown in a separate annex to the Gold Coast communication. Some increase in normal imports is to be expected on the consumer goods side, arising *inter alia* from the high level of

cocoa prices, and from the heavy local expenditure to be incurred in the execution of the development plan and the proposed Volta scheme. No estimate has been made of this. Attached as the first Annex to this paper is a table setting out the Gold Coast's estimates of the additional import materials for new capital projects over the next ten years.[1] The implications of these additional requirements, in relation to the supplies of capital goods at present going to the Gold Coast, are referred to below.

3. The Governor of the Gold Coast states that, although the Gold Coast Government are fully alive to the world-wide shortages of many of the materials listed as essential to their development programme, and recognise that the claims of the Gold Coast must be considered along with those of other countries, nevertheless most serious political consequences in the Gold Coast might flow from failure to secure the materials and tools of capital development during the period ahead. Even at present, there are reports from the large contracting firms at work in the Gold Coast that their work is suffering from difficulties in the supply situation. Accordingly, he asks that steps should be taken in the United Kingdom to bring before the Supply Departments concerned, or the appropriate interdepartmental body, the extent of the additional needs of the Gold Coast for capital equipment and materials over the period up to 1960. He also asks specifically:–

(a) if he could be advised as to the further information, if any, which the Gold Coast could helpfully provide in this connection;
(b) if he can be informed what steps can be promised to secure an early improvement in the supply situation; and
(c) if the shipping situation can be examined in the United Kingdom to ensure that, as far as possible, shortages of shipping space do not retard the movement of supplies to the Gold Coast.

4. There is attached as the second annex to this paper an analysis of the Gold Coast figures, intended to indicate the order of the additional demands from that territory. The figures so far submitted by the Gold Coast do not lend themselves readily to a precise analysis, either because the figures are not complete or because the headings do not correspond with Gold Coast import or United Kingdom export statistical classifications. The annexed note, however, points to an additional demand for an increase of nearly 70% in semi-manufactured iron and steel. It also indicates the gaps in the estimates which would have to be filled up if it was decided to proceed with a more detailed analysis of the position.

5. The party now in office in the Gold Coast, following the elections under the new constitution – the most advanced in any British territory in Africa – came to power on a declared programme of rapid and large-scale economic and social development. If the present harmonious relations between the new African Ministers and their official colleagues in the Gold Coast Executive Council are to be maintained, and the pressure of the more extreme nationalist elements for full and immediate self-government is to be neutralised, it is imperative that every possible effort should be made to enable the Gold Coast development programme to be implemented to the fullest possible extent. Failure in this respect will inevitably lead to a breakdown in the working of the constitution with serious consequences for the whole future of His Majesty's Government's relations with the Gold Coast.

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[1] Annexes to this memo not printed.

6. At the same time it must be remembered that, as development programmes gather momentum throughout the Colonial Empire, the requirements of the supplies without which they cannot be carried forward to fulfilment are also rapidly mounting in other Colonial territories; and in many of these territories there are reasons, political or economic, or both, only a little less cogent than in the case of the Gold Coast for doing our utmost to meet them. A proposal to take special action on behalf of the Gold Coast only would, therefore, raise serious questions of policy, especially if that action were to be to the detriment of other Colonial territories. On the other hand, the Colonial Office have at present no estimates, similar to those provided by the Gold Coast, from other Colonial territories of the implications of their development plans in terms of imported supplies over the next five years or so.

7. In these circumstances the opportunity was taken of the recent Conference in the Colonial Office on the Technique of Development Finance, which was attended by the Financial Secretaries or the Development Secretaries of most of the Colonial territories, to raise the question whether it would be possible for other territories to provide programmes of this kind. Many delegates expressed the opinion that the compilation of estimates for more than one year ahead would be no easy task for Colonial Governments to undertake. It would be difficult enough to forecast so far ahead with any precision even for Government requirements; and the difficulty of assessing the future needs of the private sector would be even greater. Moreover, a long-term programming exercise of this kind, additional to the annual programmes currently being prepared for certain items such as steel, would make a serious demand on limited staffs. It was accordingly the general view of the conference that an exercise of this kind could be contemplated only if there was a definite assurance that it would really help towards obtaining the required supplies.

8. The Colonial Office would welcome the help of the Committee in considering this general question, whether it would be of assistance to interdepartmental planning if estimates could be obtained from all Colonial territories, or from selected territories, along the lines of those furnished by the Gold Coast, of the additional supplies of critical materials and equipment needed for development plans over the next few years, over and above normal supplies of these items. If so, guidance would be required as to the form of this request to Colonial Governments. If an exercise of this kind would be of real value, the Colonial Office would be prepared to undertake it and to ask Colonial Governments to play their part. But it would be necessary, before embarking upon it, to be assured that it would be of practical value in planning the flow of a larger, or at least a more certain, volume of supplies to the Colonial territories over the period in question.

9. It will, of course, be for the Secretary of State for the Colonies to decide whether it would be wise to give special treatment to the Gold Coast. But, before he can take decisions on this matter or reply to the enquiries from the Gold Coast referred to in paragraph 3 above, it will be necessary for him to know:

(a) whether it is in fact considered practicable to look further ahead than a few months or at the most a year (as is the practice at present) in attempts to ensure for the Colonial Empire (or for certain selected territories) a given level of scarce supplies which are essential for their development plans, and, if so

(b) what sort of level of those supplies (taking into account shipping prospects as well as what is known in London of supply prospects both from the United Kingdom and from elsewhere) it is reasonable to count upon.

109 CAB 134/67, CD 2(51)2 15 Aug 1951

'Supplies for colonial development': minutes of the Official Committee on Colonial Development[1] on the Gold Coast's requirements

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Colonial Office (C.D.(51)12)[2] stating that the Governor of the Gold Coast had sent to the Colonial Office an estimate of the additional volume of imported materials expected to be required in the ten years 1951–1960 to carry out the development programme at present being considered by the Gold Coast Government. The Governor had asked that steps should be taken to bring these needs to the notice of the appropriate United Kingdom Departments. He had also enquired whether there was any further information which the Gold Coast could usefully provide in this connection, and wished to be informed what steps could be promised to secure an early improvement in the supply situation.

Sir Hilton Poynton said that the request from the Governor of the Gold Coast could not be considered in isolation from the development needs of other Colonial territories. The Colonial Office would be glad to know whether the Committee considered that estimates of development needs should be obtained from all, or selected, Colonial territories along the lines of those furnished by the Gold Coast. Before a reply could be sent to the enquiry from the Gold Coast, it would be necessary to decide whether it was practicable to look further ahead than a few months, or at most a year, in attempts to ensure a given level of the scarce supplies essential to the Colonial territories for their development plans, and, if so, on what level of supplies it would be reasonable to count.

Mr. Gorell Barnes said that the information given in Annexes I and II of C.D.(51)12 related to a ten-year development plan drafted by the Gold Coast Secretariat before the present Gold Coast Government had taken office. To implement the plan would have required expenditure of about £67 million over the next ten years. Expenditure on this scale seemed likely to be well within the financial capacity of the Gold Coast Government, provided that they did not also make a substantial contribution to the Volta River project. Whether import capacity would be sufficient to enable the plan to be implemented depended, in part, on whether the import facilities associated with the Volta River project were provided. Another major uncertainty was the availability of imported materials, and it was on this that the Gold Coast were now seeking advice from the United Kingdom.

Full details had not yet reached the Colonial Office, but it was understood that the new Gold Coast Government had decided that the ten-year development plan drafted

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[1] The Committee was chaired by W Strath, Central Economic Planning Staff, Treasury. It included representatives from the CO, the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Supply, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Works, and the Economic Section of the Cabinet Office.

[2] See 108.

by the Gold Coast Secretariat should be revised in certain directions, including an increase in expenditure on educational projects. The modified plan might represent expenditure of about £74 million in all, but its implementation was not now related to any particular number of years. The revision was unlikely to affect very significantly the amount and nature of the required supplies.

In discussion the following points were made:–

(a) It was clearly undesirable that it should appear that through the Colombo Plan, the United Kingdom was ministering to the development needs of South East Asia generally to a greater extent than to the needs of her own Colonies. But in the case of the Colombo Plan, one of the most important limiting factors was the capacity of the countries concerned to implement the plans they had made, and it seemed unlikely that even if the necessary materials were made available, the rate of implementation in the next year or two would be such as to rival the rate of development in our own Colonies.

(b) It seemed most improbable that, over the next few years, the world volume of capital goods exports would be more than maintained, and, in the event, it might well be reduced. The three-year defence programme of the United Kingdom allied with raw materials shortages made it doubtful whether she could even maintain the level of her engineering exports, and it seemed that the United States were assuming that rearmament would reduce substantially their engineering exports. Western European countries also had rising rearmament programmes which seemed likely to affect adversely the volume of engineering goods available for export. The needs of the Colonies for capital goods must, therefore, be considered against this background of probable world availabilities.

(c) Except possibly for a brief period in 1949–50, many Colonies had, like the Gold Coast, been, in effect, investing in the United Kingdom since the beginning of the war. The continuance of such a situation would present very serious political difficulties, and the success of the experiment in controlled transition to self-government might very well in large measure depend on whether the Colonial Governments now in office could show results in the field of economic development. The development requirements of the Colonies were not on such a scale as to render it manifestly impossible to meet them. It had been calculated, for example, that the development plans of the African Colonies could be implemented up to 1956 provided that the 1950 level of expenditure at 1950 prices could be maintained.

(d) There seemed some danger that unless Colonial requirements were fully documented and considered along with other calls on the economy when overall planning decisions were taken, they might be ranked with certain other export requirements as residual to home and defence needs. On the other hand, the extent to which it was possible to plan the direction of exports must not be exaggerated. Steel was a special case because for steel extensive powers of allocation had been, and would again be, exercised.

(e) *The Chairman* said that in present circumstances it would be quite impracticable to prepare export plans for a period as long as ten years ahead, if only because no-one could know on what scale rearmament would be continued when the three-year programme had been completed. Detailed economic planning could, however, be attempted for the three years covered by the present rearmament programme,

and it was desirable that sufficient material should be collected to enable Colonial needs to be fitted into the overall picture. Until overall planning had developed further, however, we should not know exactly what material on Colonial needs would be required, and it was most undesirable that Colonial Governments should be asked to collect material which, in the event, might prove useless for planning purposes.

(f) A procedure had already been laid down for determining export steel allocations, and here the Colonial Office would wish merely to ensure that they were presenting Colonial needs to the best advantage. There were also already in operation informal arrangements for ensuring that special assistance was given in procuring for the Colonies particular capital goods vital to the progress of their development plans.

(h) It would not be possible, at this stage, for the Colonial Office to reply fully to the enquiry from the Governor of the Gold Coast. But they should be able to collect useful information about the prospects of procuring certain goods listed among the Gold Coast requirements.

The Committee:–

(1) Invited the Colonial Office to discuss with the Chairman how planning to meet Colonial needs could best be fitted into the overall economic planning for the three years covered by the present United Kingdom rearmament programme.

(2) Took note that the Colonial Office, in consultation with the Board of Trade and Ministry of Supply, would provide the Gold Coast Government with what information was available about the prospects of procuring particular goods listed among Gold Coast development needs.

110 CO 537/6696, no 12 7 Nov 1951

[Conservative government]: minute by Mr Lyttelton to Mr Churchill on a statement on colonial policy by the new Conservative government

I think that I should at once allay fears which have been expressed about the continuity of British Colonial policy. Oliver Stanley said in the House in 1943: "We are pledged to guide Colonial people along the road to self-government within the framework of the British Empire". In keeping with this I propose, if you agree, to reply as follows to an arranged Question:

> "Certain broad lines of policy are accepted by all sections of the House as being above party politics. These have been clearly stated by my predecessors from both the main parties.
>
> Two of them are fundamental. First, we all aim at helping the Colonial territories to attain self-government within the British Commonwealth. To that end we are seeking as rapidly as possible to build up in each territory the institutions which its circumstances require. Second, we are all determined to pursue the economic and social development of the Colonial territories so that it keeps pace with their political development.

I should like to make it plain at the outset that I intend no change in these aims. I desire to see successful constitutional development both in those territories which are less advanced towards self-government and in those with more advanced constitutions. I shall do my utmost to help Colonial Governments and Legislatures to pursue with energy the promotion of the health, wealth and happiness of the Colonial peoples.

I hope that, however much there may from time to time be disagreement between us on details, all parties will be with me in agreeing on those ends."

If supplementary questions are asked I can say that I have thought it right to make this general statement but do not at present wish to add to it.[1]

[1] Lyttelton's statement was made in the House of Commons on 14 Nov.

111 CO 554/231 14–19 Nov 1951

[Local government and regional administration]: minutes by M G Smith,[1] T B Williamson, A B Cohen, Sir T Lloyd & Mr Lennox-Boyd

Mr. Williamson
Mr. Cohen

It has been recognised in the Gold Coast over the past two years that constitutional reforms which brought with them a wide measure of popular suffrage were bound to lead to parallel Local Government reforms. To consider the Local Government position separate committees sat and made recommendations for the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories, and Sir S. Phillipson made separate proposals for Regional administration.[2]

2. Following all this activity the Gold Coast Government has now prepared a draft Local Government Ordinance. The draft Ordinance observes the Coussey formula of one-third traditional and two-thirds popular representation on Local Government Councils and incorporates some features of the series of reports mentioned above; but the main basis of the draft is the Nigerian Eastern Region Local Government Ordinance, No. 16 of 1950. The draft does not deal with future Regional organisations but provides for the uniform establishment over the whole territory of Local Government Councils to be created by separate Instruments issued by the Minister of Local Government with the prior approval of the Governor in Council. The councils are to be either urban or local councils with two-thirds popularly elected and one-third traditional membership, or District Councils with membership in the same proportions elected from the members of the urban and local councils within the area of authority of the District Council concerned. It is, in fact, intended to create as many urban or local councils as there are at present Native Authorities, to be responsible for the same areas as the Native Authorities who will be

[1] CO principal, West Africa Dept. [2] See 98.

abolished. There will be over 280 such councils and to begin with they will be assigned much the same functions to perform as the present Native Authorities, although Section 58 of the draft Ordinance makes possible their ultimate assumption of wide responsibilities. It is intended to establish 31 District Councils to deal with services which can best be operated or co-ordinated over a wider area than that of a single urban or local council.

3. The existing traditional councils are to be retained and their ceremonial functions preserved by separate legislation, but their executive authority is to go to the new councils. Part VII of the draft Ordinance provides for a substantial measure of control over Stool lands by the Local Government Councils and for a division of Stool land revenues between the traditional authorities and the councils.

4. Voters in urban and local council elections must be 21 years of age, have a residential or immovable property qualification and be liable to pay the basic rate.

5. The urban and local councils are to be rating authorities and are to be empowered for the first time in Gold Coast history to impose an annual basic rate on all persons over 18 with residential or immovable property qualification.

6. The new local councils are to employ their own staffs for whom standard conditions of service will be evolved, so that in due course there should be a Local Government Service with a status comparable to that of the Government Service.

7. The Ministry of Local Government is to be responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Ordinance, for drawing up the Instruments creating the councils and for supervising the councils' activities. It is the intention that other Ministries shall deal with the councils, not direct but through the machinery of the Ministry of Local Government. To carry out these duties the Minister will have the assistance of an audit system as in the U.K. with power to surcharge unauthorised expenditure, and it is proposed that he should delegate many of his functions to regional organisations, who would examine the estimates of each council, act as channels between councils and Ministries and generally ensure that the councils did their job. For this purpose it is proposed to set up the 5 regional organisations comprising the Northern Territories, Ashanti, Trans-Volta and something like the old East and West Colony divisions, the first two of these Regions being under Chief Regional Officers and the others under Regional Officers. The regional organisation will be wholly official, but during his recent visit Mr. Hyde-Clarke said that it was thought that a demand for regional conferences would develop from the Local Government Councils which would ultimately result in some unofficial element being associated with the regional organisations. In effect, therefore, the present political administration will come under the Minister of Local Government with the regional organisations as his representatives in the country, and with the present District Commissioners redesignated District Officers and made the local representatives of the Ministry in their respective areas. (An incidental result of these changes will presumably be that the present Chief Commissioner of the Colony will be out of office and he, and perhaps the other Chief Commissioners, may wish to ask for a move).

[*paras 8–9, on consideration of draft legislation by local government advisory panel and legal adviser: omitted*]

10. I think that there is nothing in the comments of the Local Government Panel or the Legal Adviser which, if they were not adopted, would make it necessary for

the measure to be disallowed. But there is one constitutional point of substance to be considered. Under the Constitution Order in Council, Article 40 and Second Schedule, 11 Territorial Members of the Assembly are chosen from the Joint Provincial Council which consists of (a) Paramount Chiefs who are Native Authorities or members of Native Authorities, or are recognised by special Instruments as Paramount Chiefs, and (b) Native Authority members. Similarly one Territorial Member is elected from the Southern Togoland Council which consists of representatives of Native Authorities in Southern Togoland. Six Territorial Members are chosen from the Asanteman Council and nineteen from the Northern Territories Council whose members come from the Native Authorities there. Under Section 169 of the Second Schedule to the draft Ordinance the Native Authorities disappear, although temporarily preserved by Section 170, and so the basis of territorial representation largely disappears also. It is the intention of the Gold Coast Government to replace the Native Authorities legislation with legislation preserving the traditional authorities for customary and ceremonial purposes; and in due course the Gold Coast Government will presumably ask that references to this new legislation should be substituted in the Schedule to the Constitution Order in Council for the present references to territorial representation. But once the Native Authorities disappear it is perhaps not so clear that the present basis of territorial representation can justifiably be continued, particularly in the Northern Territories where all members of the Assembly are at present elected via the Northern Territories Council. If the C.P.P. gains much success in the Northern Territories in the local government elections beginning next April, it would be surprising if the Party was then willing for all Northern Territories representation in the Legislative Assembly to be through the traditional authorities of the Northern Territories Council. The proposed Gold Coast local government structure seems to be sound and logical and one that we should not seek to disturb even if we could. But we should realise that it is likely to lead (a) to some formal constitutional revision, and (b) perhaps to Gold Coast demands for more substantial revision of the basis of territorial representation in the Legislative Assembly which if granted might have a considerable effect on future Legislative Assembly elections. . . . [3]

M.G.S.
14.11.51

Mr. M. G. Smith's minute overleaf sets out the position pretty fully. I would add the following comments.

1. While we may regret (as we know does also the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, to mention but one senior G.C. official) the present decision of the Gold Coast Government not to proceed with the establishment of Regional Councils – a decision evidentally prompted by the desire of the C.P.P. Ministers to assert their influence direct at the local government level – it is clear that this is a

[3] Smith added a note to his minute which referred to a recently arrived despatch on the proposals from the Gold Coast government dated 9 Nov (CO 554/231, no 16). Smith commented on the despatch: 'It elaborates but does not alter the above minute, but it makes it clear that the Governor is not entirely happy about the proposed regional set-up which concentrates real power in Accra.'

matter which the Gold Coast Government must be left to decide for themselves. It would be out of the question for us to seek to raise objection.

2. Subject to proper arrangements being made and implemented to consult the people of Southern Togoland and Trans-Volta on the establishment of a Trans-Volta Region and Trans-Volta Council – which arrangements are clearly contemplated (see the enclosure to enclosure A to (16)) – we can welcome the proposal to divide the Colony into three Regions with a more or less self-contained Ewe Region as one of them. If these proposals are accepted locally, a small consequential amendment will be necessary to the Second Schedule of the Constitution Order in Council, as pointed out in paragraph 12 of enclosure (A). This need raise no difficulty of principle.

3. As regards the further, and much more important constitutional changes, regarding the basis of election of territorial members to the Legislative Assembly, which Mr. Smith foresees in paragraph 10 of his minute, I think we can only await developments in the Gold Coast. Such changes may well be pressed and are probably inevitable. They would constitute the final and formal relegation of the traditional authorities to their customary ceremonial functions. . . .[4]

T.B.W.
15.11.51

Sir T. Lloyd

Two extremely important sets of proposals are submitted herewith from the Gold Coast. The first is the Bill to give effect to the important reforms in local government which were originally recommended by the Coussey Committee. These reforms are long overdue and now that the Gold Coast has its new constitution it is vitally important, if the system of government in the country is not to be unbalanced, that the system of local government should be thoroughly overhauled. Most people in the Gold Coast agree to that and the Colonial Office has always taken that view. H.M.G. in the policy despatch of the 14th October, 1949 warmly welcomed the Coussey Committee's proposals in principle (see paras. 6–13 of despatch).

Subsequently the proposals were considered by three Select Committees in each of the three regions of the Gold Coast and the Bill is broadly based on the conclusions of these Select Committees. The Colonial Office has been kept generally informed of these developments and recently Mr. Hyde-Clarke, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government, flew home for consultations with our Local Government Advisory Panel. The position as it emerged from the Advisory Panel is fully stated in Mr. Smith's minute above. Broadly speaking they accepted the Bill in principle, but had a number of detailed comments which Mr. Hyde-Clarke has taken back for consideration.

Great credit for the preparation of this Bill rests on Mr. Hyde-Clarke and also for the support which he has given on the Minister for Local Government, Mr. Asafu Ajeyi [sic].

I am sure that we need have no hesitation in agreeing to this Bill. It is to be introduced at the session beginning on the 20th November and it is urgent to get our telegram off. If the Bill goes through the Legislative Council, as it no doubt will, it

[4] Cohen noted in the margin against para 3: 'I don't agree with this.'

will clearly take years for the new system to be finally brought into effective operation. The important thing, however, is that the process should start.

The second measure put forward is the reorganisation of the system of regional administration in the Gold Coast. The Coussey Committee recommended by a majority that there should be three regions with Regional Administrations and Regional Councils. H.M.G. in the despatch of the 14th October, 1949 accepted this but expressed the hope that the Councils would not be too elaborate. Sir Sidney Phillipson reported on the form of these Regional Councils but his report has not been accepted by the Gold Coast Executive Council. They have reached the conclusion that the Regional Administrations should be retained except that there should be five of them instead of three. They have, however, rejected the idea of Regional Councils. The reason for this is to a large extent political; the Gold Coast Ministers do not want a step intervening between them and the local government bodies. I do not think that it can be argued with confidence that the retention of Regional Councils in the Colony and Ashanti is necessary. It was never absolutely clear what duties these bodies would perform and I agree with Mr. Smith and Mr. Williamson that there would be no justification at all in seeking to override the views of Gold Coast Ministers on this matter. It is an important point that the Trans-Volta Regional Administration will have a council; that is quite necessary in the political circumstances of Southern Togoland. Equally it is important that the Northern Territories Council will remain. The division back of the Colony into three separate regions is, I am sure, absolutely right. The creation of a separate Regional Administration for the Colony at Cape Coast several years ago was in my view a mistake which partly contributed to the seriousness of the 1948 disturbances. Cape Coast is well towards the west of the Colony and it is ridiculous to try to administer Accra and Southern Togoland from it.

We can certainly in my opinion agree with what is now proposed and I submit a draft telegram for this purpose, together with a personal telegram from myself to the Governor on two particular points.

I only have one other comment and that is on the question of territorial members in the Gold Coast Legislature (see para. 10 of Mr. Smith's minute and para. 3 of Mr. Williamson's). These territorial members are a substitute for an upper House which was rejected by H.M.G. in the despatch of the 14th October, 1949. The Coussey Committee in putting forward proposals, should their narrow majority proposal for a bicameral chamber not be accepted, recommended that one-third of the members of the lower House should be representatives of the traditional Chiefs and Native Authorities. The changes in local government do not seem to me to justify any change in this arrangement, which is fundamental to the present constitution of the Gold Coast. It may be that we should send a letter to the Governor on this point later; but I am not sure of this as the point is not raised by the Gold Coast Government themselves. We will look into this question later.

A.B.C.
16.11.51

Minister of State
The issues involved here are of considerable importance and our proposal to accept the draft legislation and the Governor's views (see No.16) on Regional Councils must, I feel, have Ministerial approval.

As you will see from paragraph 6 of No.14 the legislation is to be debated during the meeting of the Assembly beginning on Tuesday next, the 20th November, and the Governor therefore wants general approval at least by that date. I am sorry that the timetable should be so tight, particularly on a matter of this importance, but the despatch enclosing the legislation was not received here until Saturday last while the other despatch (No.16) has been with us only two days.

The minutes of Mr.Williamson and Mr.Cohen will, I hope, make the issues plain and we seek your approval for the two drafts now submitted.

T.I.K.L.
16.11.51

Sir T. Lloyd
I approve of the two drafts. No doubt in common with others who have seen this file, I wish that changes in *local* government had preceded & not followed virtual self-government at the centre. I have asked Mr Cohen for further information on the point raised in Mr Williamson's minute of 15/11/51, para 3, & Mr Smith's minute of 14/11/51, para 10, but this does not affect the need to send off the despatches at once.

A.L.B.
19.11.51

The Minister of State asked in conversation with me for further information on the point discussed in the last paragraph of my minute of the 16th November (and in the passages in Mr. Williamson's and Mr. Smith's minutes referred to in the Minister of State's own minute of the 19th November).

I have nothing to add as far as the Colony and Ashanti are concerned. It is in accordance with the proposal of the Coussey Committee that one-third of the members of the Legislative Council should be chosen by the traditional councils. As I said in my earlier minute, there is no reason why this should be altered simply because of the reforms in local government now being put through.

In the case of the Northern Territories the position is the same. But the Select Committee of the Legislative Council (known as the Ewart Committee) which made recommendations on methods of election recommended that instead of the one-third and two-thirds arrangement all the members of the Legislative Council representing the Northern Territories should be elected by a special electoral college of the Northern Territories consisting of the members of the Northern Territories Council (which is representative of the Native Authorities of the Northern Territories) and other members on the basis of one per 10,000 people in the Northern Territories. This certainly represents the wishes of the Northern Territories at the present time and I do not myself think that there is any immediate likelihood of a demand for the alteration of this system. If it were altered it would, of course, be possible to go back to the Coussey recommendation for separate elections on the Colony and Ashanti model in respect of two-thirds of the members and election by the Northern Territories Council in respect of one-third. This certainly should not be done unless there was a demand for it from the Northern Territories.

All the arrangements are laid down in or under the Order in Council and they could not be changed without amendment of the Order in Council.

I agree with Mr. Williamson and Mr. Smith that no special letter to the Governor is needed.[5]

A.B.C.
4.12.51

[5] Lennox-Boyd minuted at the end of Cohen's minute: 'I agree. A.L.B., 8.12.51.'

112 CO 554/298, no 10 9 Jan 1952

[Constitutional reform]: CO note of a meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke on changes proposed by the governor; proposals that the leader of government business should become prime minister and that the Executive Council should become the Cabinet

Sir C. Arden-Clarke opened the discussion on the constitutional changes in the Gold Coast that he had proposed. He said that he no longer asked for an amendment to the Order in Council to make the present Leader of Government Business Prime Minister without being appointed according to the method proposed for future Prime Ministers, as Dr. Nkrumah would prefer, if the changes were made, to resign his present post and to obtain a fresh mandate as Prime Minister from the Assembly. This would involve the resignation of the other African Ministers and enable Nkrumah to propose the replacement of Ansah Koi and Hutton Mills. Nkrumah had Kwesi Plange in mind for one of the posts; perhaps a Northerner might be a useful appointment for the other post. He wished to be in a position to announce the constitutional changes before the end of the Budget Session of the Assembly which would begin on the 29th January and continue until about the end of March.

2. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the general background to his proposals was the need, in the interests of developing stable government in the Gold Coast, to maintain the present Ministry in power for another year or two. Constitutional progress during the past year was to be measured not merely by the positive achievements but by the many pitfalls that had been avoided. There had been an encouraging increase in the sense of responsibility shown by the African Ministers and the continuance in office for a further period of the present moderate and well-intentioned group of Ministers would tend to develop in the country a tradition of responsible moderate government which it was the wish of His Majesty's Government to foster. This sense of responsibility should progressively filter down to lower levels of Government and in this connection the recent establishment of a school for training in local government was important. But if the present Government were to resign no alternative government could be formed from the present Assembly; unless the constitution was to be suspended and fresh elections would have to be held. It was his considered opinion that these elections would result in the return to the Assembly of a solid bloc of members pledged to demand immediate self-government. The C.P.P. itself had won the last election on a demand for "Self-government Now" and it assumed office with the declared intention of proving the constitution fraudulent.

The fact that the Party leaders had stayed in office and found the constitution workable marked in itself a notable advance in political responsibility. But it meant that there was bound to be pressure for further constitutional advance to justify to an impatient electorate the Party's observance of the constitution. It was important that this pressure should be eased by making some relatively minor changes which would nevertheless enable Nkrumah to defend his moderate policies before extremist opinion in his Party and the country.

3. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he had recently asked Nkrumah whether he regarded His Majesty's Government as committed to the constitutional changes which he had proposed in his talk last June with Mr. Griffiths.[1] Nkrumah had affirmed his clear understanding that what Mr. Griffiths had said represented a definite commitment.

4. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* pointed out that the proposed changes were essentially a formal recognition of a constitutional stage which had already been reached. When the 1950 constitution was framed it had been thought unlikely that any single party in the Gold Coast would secure a majority in the Assembly. But once the C.P.P. had won such a majority it had clearly become impossible for the Governor to nominate Representative Members of the Executive Council for approval by the Assembly except with the agreement of the leader of the majority party; with a majority of Representative Members drawn from one party the Executive Council had the appearance of a Cabinet and already was often popularly accorded the title; and in these circumstances the Leader of Government Business bore for nearly all internal affairs the virtual responsibilities of a Prime Minister. Power was so firmly in African hands that it would not be possible to frame the details of a defence policy without local agreement.

5. The proposed changes should be sufficient to hold the position for perhaps a year or so and he had pointed out to Nkrumah that although he considered that constitutional advance should proceed steadily step by step changes could not be introduced more frequently than at yearly intervals at least. Future developments could not be forecast with any precision. It was possible that the extremist tail of the C.P.P. might break off and form a rival party and that the present C.P.P. leaders might become the nucleus of a more moderate party attracting to it some of the more sober responsible elements such as Ollennu's National Democratic Party, which was not represented in the present Assembly. It would be a long time before the Gold Coast could contemplate staffing a Defence and External Affairs Department by Africans but none the less the next demand would probably be for some modification of the position of the three *ex-officio* Ministers. This might have to be met by abolishing the *ex-officio* posts of Minister of Justice and Minister of Finance while leaving the *ex-officio* post of Minister of Defence and External Affairs intact for a much longer period. It might then be possible to establish the post of Attorney-General filled by a European separate from that of the Minister of Justice, and to appoint a European Financial Secretary or Adviser on Economic Affairs to the Minister of Finance.

6. In reply to questions about the recent Assembly proceedings *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the title of government Chief Whip was misleading: it was an unpaid

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[1] See 103 and 104.

post without recognised responsibilities similar to those in the United Kingdom, and it was possible that in future the C.P.P. would wish to appoint a Chief Whip on the United Kingdom model. Nkrumah's statement to a Party meeting that the opposition in the Assembly leading to the withdrawal of the Lidbury motion was planned should not be taken too literally. It was most unlikely that Ministers generally had sought to engineer these events although it was possible that Botsio might have had some connection with them.

7. There was a general discussion on the principal changes proposed:

(i) The alternative title of Cabinet proposed for the Executive Council was a change which had not been discussed in June 1951. There was a precedent for it in Malta.

(ii) Malta again provided a precedent for establishing an office of Prime Minister.

(iii) It was proposed that the procedure for appointing Representative Members of the Executive Council, namely approval by the Assembly of a nomination of the Governor, should be followed in the appointment of a Prime Minister.

(iv) *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that Nkrumah recognised that the use of the expression "in consultation with the Prime Minister" over the appointment of Representative Members of the Executive Council and the assignment to them of portfolios was deliberate and was not intended to mean "on the advice of the Prime Minister". This was clear from the parallel expressions in Section 6 of the present Order in Council. The wording proposed would leave the initiative with the governor, although if faced with firm recommendations from a Prime Minister with a secure majority the Governor would not be in a strong negotiating position.

(v) The changes in title and method of appointment of the three *ex-officio* Ministers were new since the June talks. They were proposed on the Governor's own initiative with the concurrence of his senior European colleagues to placate popular opinion on the *ex-officio* appointments. The change in title of the office of Chief Secretary to that of Defence Secretary might in due course lead to a transfer of responsibility for the Civil Service from the Chief Secretary to the Establishment Secretary (a post just created and not yet filled) who would, under the Governor, become the head of the Civil Service. It would be necessary to have a Minister to answer questions in the Assembly about the Civil Service and this should presumably be the Minister of Finance. But it was fundamental to devise and maintain machinery which would preserve the independence of the Civil Service in the same way as in the United Kingdom where it was established practice for the Chancellor, though he was the Minister responsible to Parliament on general issues and questions of pay, to leave practically everything else to the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. The Governor was observing the practice of invariably accepting the advice of the Public Service Commission which at present had a membership of two Europeans and one African. The Public Service Commission would in time become wholly African and might perhaps assume some direct responsibility for the Civil Service instead of acting as Adviser to the Governor. These successive changes in control of the Civil Service must be carefully timed to give the best possible opportunity for establishing a tradition of freedom from political interference.

Sir C. Arden-Clarke said that as it was likely that within the next two years the Minister of Finance would be an African Representative Minister it was

desirable to have it as established practice by then that the Minister answering in the Assembly for the Civil Service did not concern himself with day to day control of the Service to any appreciably greater extent than did the Chancellor in the United Kingdom. Most questions now asked in the Assembly were about Africanisation and called for an answer but the Table Office would have to learn to scrutinize questions about the Service carefully before deciding whether they could be allowed.

Sir T. Lloyd said that in the United Kingdom the Prime Minister's authority was needed for appointments to the posts of Permanent Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Establishment Officer and Finance Officer (if any); but the authority was normally exercised on the advice of the Departmental Minister (or on that of the Departmental Permanent Secretary) in consultation in either case with the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury.

Sir C. Jeffries suggested that the United Kingdom Order in Council on the Civil Service might be worth examining as a precedent for the issue of a similar document for the Gold Coast.

(vi) The proposal that the Prime Minister should rank in the Cabinet next in order of precedence after the Governor and in the absence of the Officer Administering the Government should preside at Executive Council meetings arose naturally from the creation of a post of Prime Minister and had been discussed with Mr. Griffiths in June. The proposal that all Representative Members of the Executive Council should cease to hold office once a new Prime Minister was appointed had emerged subsequently but it was again a logical outcome of the main proposal.

8. In reply to questions about the success to date of the new constitution and the capacity of the C.P.P. Ministry for sound administration in view of developments such as the handling of the Lidbury Motion in the Assembly and the failure to tackle energetically the Swollen Shoot menace, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the C.P.P. was not facing the Swollen Shoot problem properly. The Ministers probably realised now that their decision to abandon compulsion was wrong. But the farmers in the devastated areas were now asking in large numbers for help and the Minister for Agriculture was preparing a scheme for the application of the New Deal for Cocoa to those areas, perhaps accompanied by a reimposition there of compulsion. But as there seemed no possibility of an alternative to Nkrumah emerging it would seem wise policy formally to invest him with authority which should materially help to secure the acceptance of his moderate policies such as the endorsement of the Lidbury recommendations. The Lidbury Report would now, it was hoped, first be considered by a Select Committee of the Assembly and would not come up again in full Assembly before the June Session. The proposed changes were not much more than a recognition of the de facto position reached although to present them as such to the Gold Coast would be to forfeit the good will which the free grant of these advances might otherwise evoke. If the Gold Coast experiment was to fail it must fail through African ineptitude or ill-will, not through any holding back by His Majesty's Government.

9. It was agreed to recommend the Gold Coast proposals to the Secretary of State at the meeting with him to be held on the 10th January.

113 CO 554/297, no 13 9 Jan 1952

[Civil service]: CO note of a meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke on a proposal to establish a local civil service for the Gold Coast

In amplification of his letter of the 21st December to Sir Thomas Lloyd on the Public Service *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke* circulated copies of a draft despatch to the Secretary of State proposing the establishment of a separate Public Service for the Gold Coast to which all present and future officers appointed locally would belong and which serving officers appointed by the Secretary of State or the Crown Agents for the Colonies could opt to join. The local Service would be the responsibility of the Governor who would act on the advice of the Public Service Commission and members of the Service would not be members of the Colonial Service or subject to the authority of the Secretary of State. Their right to petition to the Secretary of State as Civil Servants, though not of course as individuals, would disappear. Serving officers appointed by the Secretary of State or the Crown Agents, unless they chose to join the local Service, and any officers appointed in future to pensionable posts by these means would be the ultimate responsibility of the Secretary of State. Expatriate officers appointed on contract in the future would not be members of the Colonial Service. If the career of an officer for whom the Secretary of State was responsible was likely to be prejudiced by action taken in respect of an officer of the local Service the Secretary of State would first be consulted before the action was taken.

2. It was pointed out that in earlier discussions with Mr. Saloway on the formation of a separate Local Service two objections had been raised:

(a) The existence in the same territory of two different Public Services, one largely European and the other almost wholly African, would tend to emphasise racial differences and might suggest divided loyalties rather than promote a common loyalty to the Gold Coast. Also, the means then proposed of protecting the interests of officers for whom the Secretary of State was ultimately responsible by allowing them to appeal to him against promotions or awards prejudicial to their interests would give the appearance of "interference" by the Secretary of State in a local Service for which he no longer had responsibility. This latter difficulty it seemed might best be met by the new proposal that whenever a promotion that might seem prejudicial to an officer of the Colonial Service was pending the Governor would consult with the Secretary of State so that it would be clear from the beginning that the decision reached was a joint one and took the interests of the officers of both Services into consideration.

(b) The establishment of a local Service would involve a restriction to officers from the Colonial Service of the pledges given to the Public Service generally in Mr. Griffiths' despatch No. 492 of 19th December, 1950. It was agreed that pledges so recently given could not be modified without the consent of those to whom they were given. Sir Charles Arden-Clarke accordingly undertook before submitting the despatch to consult the African Staff Associations concerned to ascertain whether they agreed to the establishment of a local service on the lines now suggested. Assuming that the way was thus cleared for the submission of the despatch seeking agreement to the establishment of a separate local Service, it might be pointed out in the Secretary of State's reply that the protection afforded to Africans

by Mr. Griffiths' despatch, which was the safeguard against local political interference, was now adequately supplied by the Public Service Commission; and that although all officers in the Public Service of the Gold Coast would no longer be members of the same Colonial Service all of them still owed their loyalty to the Gold Coast Government.

3. *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke* said that he felt sure that most Africans appointed by the Secretary of State would opt to join the local Service. If they did not, although it was unlikely that direct individual pressure would be brought to bear on them to join it, it was possible that the African Ministers might want to improve conditions only for Africans in the local Service.

4. *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke* referred to his proposal that he should be authorised, if it became necessary, to announce the ordered withdrawal of the Administrative Service from the colony and the Ashanti over a period of time short enough to administer a shock and long enough to avoid the accusation that withdrawal was being needlessly hastened to engineer a breakdown. He said that the announcement of the Constitutional changes and of the establishment of a local Service if agreed might prove adequate to restore the authority of the government and make this further measure unnecessary. But the District Commissioners and the Administrative Service as a whole were widely regarded as the symbols of United Kingdom authority to be dispensed with as soon as possible. If the move succeeded the Gold Coast would quickly find it necessary to create contract posts for expatriate staff to get their new local government bodies functioning. It was now intended to submit the Lidbury Report to a Select Committee of the Assembly so that it was unlikely to come before the full Assembly again until the June session. If it became necessary to announce the withdrawal of the Administrative Service plans would have to be ready for dealing with all the officers concerned. There could be no bluffing once the announcement had been made. There were about 150 Administrative Officers and their withdrawal might be spread over, say, five years. If the step were not taken, hostility to the Administrative Service might spread to expatriates in other branches of the Service and lead to mass resignations and chaos. It would be necessary to offer the Administrative staff either satisfactory transfers or adequate compensation payable from Gold Coast funds for loss of career. But the step might not be needed. The African Ministers had been shocked when it was even hinted at.

5. *Sir Charles Jeffries* pointed out that the announcement of the withdrawal of the Administrative Service might have a serious effect on the Service outside the Gold Coast. He asked whether the establishment of what might be termed a British Overseas Service staffed and controlled from the United Kingdom and able to provide officers on request to any Colony or perhaps other overseas Government asking for help for a long or short time might make expatriate officers acceptable in the Gold Coast. *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke* welcomed this proposal and suggested that if expatriate pay could be met from Colonial Development and Welfare funds or other United Kingdom funds this would ease the position also. Payment to all African officers of the same total emolument, including expatriation pay, as Europeans received would cost the Gold Coast about another £1,000,000 a year; but a recommendation on these lines might emerge from the Select Committee. There were precedents for it in Fiji and Mauritius where there was no expatriation pay.

6. It was pointed out that although there was a shortage of Administrative officers generally at present the demand for them would dwindle and it might not be possible to transfer to other territories all Gold Coast Administrative staff during the five year period contemplated. But it should be possible for a good many officers, including particularly very junior officers and officers with proved ability of middle seniority, to be placed without much difficulty. It was suggested that instead of offering to withdraw the entire Administrative Service the same effect might be achieved by removing the present "ban" on the transfer of Administrative Officers. It might then be possible to offer immediately up to 20 transfers of selected men. An experiment might be carried out of removing entirely the depleted expatriate Administrative Officers either from one Province or from one Ministry.

7. It was agreed that the proposals concerning the Public Service should be put to the Secretary of State at the meeting with him on the next day and that particular attention should be drawn to the contemplated modifications of Mr. Griffiths' despatch.

114 CO 554/298, no 11 10 Jan 1952

[Constitution and civil service]: CO note of a meeting between Mr Lyttelton and Sir C Arden-Clarke to discuss changes proposed by the governor

Proposed changes in Gold Coast constitution

At the request of *the Secretary of State, Sir C. Arden-Clarke* described the local background to his proposals. He said that however advanced the 1950 Gold Coast Constitution might be held to be in the United Kingdom it was generally regarded in the Gold Coast as "bogus" and as giving only the appearance of transferring power to African hands while retaining real control in the hands of the Governor and the *ex-officio* members of Executive Council. It was because of this that the C.P.P. had won an overwhelming victory in the 1951 elections on the slogan of "Self-government Now" as against the demand by other parties for self-government as soon as possible.

2. There was no alternative government to the C.P.P. at present or in the next 12 months at least. The opposition parties were relatively weak and inarticulate and had a negligible following in the country. An organised opposition would no doubt develop in due time but present stresses were between the powerful and vocal extremist elements of the C.P.P. itself and its more moderate leaders. While the C.P.P. was showing some totalitarian tendencies it was the considered opinion both of himself and his principal advisers that there was no danger of any form of dictatorship arising in the Gold Coast. The people would not tolerate it. Were the present Government to fall it would be necessary, short of trying to govern by recourse to the reserved powers, to hold fresh elections. These would inevitably produce a violently nationalist assembly, solid in its demand for immediate self-government. It was possible that the extreme nationalist "tail" of the C.P.P. might at some time break off and become a recognised opposition leaving the present leaders of the C.P.P. as the nucleus of a moderate group to which similar elements in the country might rally.

3. The progress in responsible government achieved since the C.P.P. assumed power should be measured not merely by positive developments but by the many pitfalls which had been avoided. The very acceptance of office by leaders who had won the election by their attacks on the constitution was itself a great step forward. The continuance in office of these leaders for ten months, during which they had gained much valuable insight into the methods of sober, democratic, government and some realisation of the administrative difficulties which had constantly to be overcome if paper plans were to be implemented, marked the beginning of responsible, popular government in the country. The increasing sense of responsibility of the best of these ministers should steadily filter down to lower levels.

4. It was in these circumstances that last June Nkrumah had asked Mr. Griffiths, in view of heavy pressure from his own party and in the country for early self-government, to agree to a further moderate instalment of constitutional advance which could be announced not later than the next Budget Session in recognition of the progress made during the preceding year, and presented as a fresh proof of the goodwill of His Majesty's Government to the new political situation in the Gold Coast. If these changes of form could be made Nkrumah felt that he could hold off for some time pressure for more drastic changes of substance. The changes proposed represented little more than the formal recognition of the existing position. The Executive Council was already sometimes referred to in the local Press as the Cabinet and to give it this alternative title would not affect its powers. As leader of a strong majority party, Nkrumah was already de facto Prime Minister and it had from the first been necessary for the Governor to consult with him on the appointment of other Representative Ministers.

5. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that to keep the constitution functioning it was essential to make some concessions and those now proposed did not amount to much. The concessions would be judged in the Gold Coast against developments in Libya and the Sudan where the people were less ready for responsible government than the Gold Coast. The alternative to making moderate concessions now would be to face in a few months a united demand for much more far reaching concessions – probably for full Dominion status. This demand could be resisted only by force.

6. In reply to a question from *the Secretary of State*, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the phrase proposed in the constitutional amendment "in consultation with the Prime Minister" was understood by Nkrumah not to mean more than it said. It would not therefore bear the meaning "on the advice of the Prime Minister"; but in practice, if the Prime Minister had a substantial majority in the Legislative Assembly, although some initiative would remain with the Governor, it would be very difficult for him to act contrary to the considered advice of the Prime Minister. He would still be in a negotiating position, but it would be a weak one.

Continuing, Sir. C. Arden-Clarke said that he himself had regarded the talks last June as constituting a definite, if informal, commitment of His Majesty's Government.[1] Nkrumah certainly regarded them in this light and had recently confirmed to the Governor that he did. The Secretary of State's recent statement in the House on Colonial policy[2] had been well received in the Gold Coast where

[1] See 103 and 104.

[2] See 110.

previously there had been some uncertainty about Conservative Party intentions. The breaking of what was understood to be a pledge would revive past suspicions.

7. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that he considered the changes proposed were the minimum we could hope to be acceptable locally. We might well have expected more comprehensive demands from the C.P.P. leaders such as the abolition of the posts of the three *ex-officio* Ministers and if we could keep the country on the path of constitutional development through these relatively minor concessions, we should do well. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* added that the next step but one would no doubt see some modification of the position of the *ex-officio* Ministers, but he had told Nkrumah that constitutional amendments could not be brought into effect at less than yearly intervals.

8. *The Secretary of State* said that although he was reluctant at the present time to endorse the proposals coming as they did so soon after the introduction of the present constitution, he recognised that there was no practical alternative. If a genuine pledge had been given he would not wish to go back on it. It would however be necessary to put them to the Cabinet and he would wish to make it clear that the proposals were advanced on the considered advice of the Governor. Assuming that the changes were agreed by the Cabinet they must be presented locally and to the House of Commons as made willingly and on the advice of the Governor and not as a result of pressure.

9. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he would like to be able to announce the changes early in February, i.e. as early as possible in the Budget session and bring them into effect before the end of March when the Session would finish. This would enable Nkrumah to make certain changes in his team which he had in mind and it should also be possible for him to make a fairly moderate statement of policy about the rate of future constitutional reforms.

Proposal to establish a separate Gold Coast public service

10. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that there had been a recent exchange of views between the Colonial Office and the Gold Coast Government on a Gold Coast proposal to establish a Public Service separate from the Colonial Service to which all officers appointed by the Governor would belong and which officers appointed by the Secretary of State or through the Crown Agents would have the option of joining. The Secretary of State would retain his responsibilities for officers of the Colonial Service who did not elect to join the local Service. The Secretary of State would wish, he thought, to know of this proposal, which seemed generally acceptable, as its implementation would involve some revision of Mr. Griffiths' despatch of the 19th December 1950 which had assured all members of the Public Service that the Secretary of State was finally responsible for safeguarding their legitimate interests and conditions of service. As the establishment of a local Service would involve the withdrawal of this safeguard from officers entering it, the local staff associations concerned would first be consulted and their agreement obtained before the proposal to establish the service was put forward formally.

11. In reply to a question by *the Secretary of State*, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that although there would probably be little direct pressure on African officers appointed by the Secretary of State to join the local Service, they would probably find it in their interests to do so. There was a strong local demand for a separate Service and while there was generally speaking no dislike of European officials as individuals they were

regarded as imposed from outside and not subject to local control. *The Secretary of State* said that if, on being consulted, the staff associations did not agree to the change it should not be proceeded with.

The possible withdrawal of administrative service

12. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the proposal in his letter of the 22nd December to Sir T. Lloyd that he should be empowered, if necessary, to announce the withdrawal of District Commissioners over a specified period – he had five years in mind – was intended for use only as a last resort and he hoped that it was an exercise which he would never have to put through. But if the recommendations in the Lidbury Report were finally rejected by the Assembly it might be necessary to have such a move ready to demonstrate to the country that His Majesty's Government would not impose an alien Public Service on the country against its will. If this were not done, present opposition to the District Commissioners might broaden into an opposition to all expatriate officers and lead to mass resignations from all branches of the Service that would bring chaos. It was now proposed that the Lidbury Report should be considered by a Select Committee of the Assembly who, if appointed to deal with the matter, would not be able to report before the June Session so that it would be some time before the step became necessary, if it was needed at all. But if by then the constitutional changes proposed had come into effect and a local Service had been established, this further drastic step might well not be required. A tentative warning given to the African Ministers that the step might be taken had had an immediate and salutory effect, but if the move were once announced publicly it would have to be carried through. Opposition to the District Commissioners arose from the fact that they were regarded as the symbol of United Kingdom control which the country was now in the process of shedding. Their withdrawal would administer a shock which, if successful, might lead to the creation of a substantial number of contract posts perhaps with the title of Local Government Advisers. If the withdrawal were carried out the officers concerned would have to receive adequate compensation from Gold Coast funds for the loss of career involved and the Governor's reserved powers would if necessary have to be used to ensure this.

13. *The Secretary of State* said that in proposing a withdrawal which would be rapid enough to administer a severe shock to public opinion but sufficiently prolonged to avoid a breakdown in the administration, Sir C. Arden-Clarke seemed to be trying to devise mechanism that would probably prove too delicately balanced for the human strains it would have to bear. It seemed in any case rather optimistic to contemplate a withdrawal so orderly that there would be no break down. In that event there would then be no real threat and so no shock. If the step had to be taken it would be better not to be too precise on the method and period of the withdrawal.

14. *Sir C. Jeffries* said that twenty or thirty administrative officers from the Gold Coast could be offered posts in other territories forthwith, but it would become increasingly difficult to place the others as time went on. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* replied that these figures of possible transfers were much larger than he had expected and a rather different plan might be worked out in the light of them.

It was therefore agreed that there should be a further discussion with Sir C. Arden-Clarke under the Chairmanship of Sir C. Jeffries to consider the matter further.

115 PREM 11/1367, C(52)28 9 Feb 1952

'Amendment of the Gold Coast constitution': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lyttelton

I wish to seek my colleagues' advice on certain proposed amendments to the Gold Coast constitution.

2. I will outline briefly the history behind the present constitution. There is a deep fund of goodwill in the Gold Coast towards the United Kingdom and the British connection is highly valued. The aim of all political parties is full self-government within the Commonwealth – not outside it. But nationalist feeling is strong and has been rising rapidly in strength since the war. It was the Government's failure properly to assess the strength of nationalist aspirations, and to retain the confidence of the people and the initiative for ordered constitutional advance, that was the root cause of the riots and bloodshed of February/March, 1948; though there were economic and social discontents also.

3. The Watson Commission, which enquired into the disturbances, recommended outside its terms of reference in August, 1948, a number of constitutional changes and reforms. It was thought fit to publish this document and the then Government agreed in principle with the objectives of the main recommendations but decided that they must first be considered by representatives of the Gold Coast people. Hence the establishment towards the end of 1948 of the Committee on Constitutional Reform under Mr. Justice Coussey, which consisted entirely of Africans. This committee presented a report in August, 1949, which was accepted in broad outline by the Government the following October. The existing constitution embodies the results of Coussey's work.

4. A new Governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, was appointed in the summer of 1949. He dealt firmly and successfully with an attempted challenge in January, 1950, by the Convention People's Party to the constitutional proposals which took the form of a demonstration of "positive action" for the immediate grant of "Dominion status", and his action had the support of responsible Gold Coast opinion.

5. The present constitution came into force at the beginning of 1951. It provides for a Legislature consisting almost entirely of directly or indirectly elected African members and an Executive Council (equivalent to a Cabinet) consisting of the Governor as President, three *ex-officio* members (at present senior European officials, namely the Chief Secretary who is Minister of Defence and External Affairs, and the Ministers of Finance and Justice), and eight African Ministers appointed from the Legislature by the Governor in his discretion but subject to a favourable resolution of the Legislature. The Executive Council is the principal instrument of policy; the Governor is required to consult it on all important issues, and must act in accordance with its advice unless he considers it expedient in the interests of "public faith, public order or good government" not to do so.

6. The constitution also provides for a "Leader of Government Business" in the Legislature who is chosen by the Members of the Executive Council from among their own number. He ranks in precedence after the Governor and Chief Secretary. The present Leader is Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, whose Convention People's Party took office after winning a large majority at the elections last February.

7. The following changes are proposed:–

(a) The title of Leader of Government Business should be changed to Prime Minister.
(b) The Prime Minister would be chosen by the Governor in his discretion but submitted to the Legislature for its approval.
(c) The Executive Council should have the alternative title of the Cabinet.
(d) The Prime Minister should rank, in Cabinet, next in order of precedence after the Governor (or Officer administering the Government) and would preside in Cabinet in his absence.
(e) The Governor would act after consultation with the Prime Minister, not in his sole discretion, in nominating for the Legislature's approval the African Ministers and in assigning to them responsibility for Departments.

8. I wish to emphasise that these changes are essentially changes of name rather than of substance: they do not go materially beyond recognising what is already the *de facto* position in the Gold Coast.

9. Dr. Nkrumah was in prison fourteen months ago for sedition and incitement to riot in the "positive action" campaign. Though he would not be the first Prime Minister in a Colony – Malta has had a Prime Minister for twenty years – he would be the first Negro Prime Minister in the Commonwealth. Dr. Nkrumah and the Executive Council recently showed some signs of being run off their feet by the back benchers of the party, though they now appear to have regained control.

10. Moreover, if these changes are made in the Gold Coast, there may be repercussions elsewhere in the Colonial Empire. In Nigeria the new federal constitution has got off to a good start. Nevertheless, the politicians in the West, and possibly also in the East, may feel impelled to press that Nigeria or at any rate the West and East should follow the Gold Coast lead. But the Governor, who has flown here for consultation, tells me that the conservative North would be resolutely opposed to any further constitutional advance for a long time to come (as would he himself) and that he would resist such pressure, though he cannot of course be sure of being able to do so successfully. Apart from Nigeria, the grant of the title of Prime Minister in the Gold Coast might lead to an immediate request for a similar title in Jamaica which already has a Ministerial system. Trinidad is unlikely to want a Prime Minister. It is unlikely that any other Colony will be affected.

11. In these circumstances, I decided to call home the Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, for consultation and I had a long meeting with him.[1] He has a reputation of being one of the aces in the Colonial Office pack. He has certainly handled the Gold Coast constitutional development in a masterly fashion: he has obtained a great personal hold over Dr. Nkrumah and the African Ministers and has eased the delivery of the new constitution through its birth pangs. When I saw Sir Charles Arden-Clarke his advice could hardly have been clearer. He said:

(a) that if this titular concession were made there was at least a chance of delaying further constitutional changes in order to allow time for the African Ministers to gain a further sense of responsibility and knowledge of government, and time perhaps for an opposition party to develop;

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[1] See 114; also 112.

(b) that if we did not make these concessions he did not think he could hold back demands for self-government and Dominion status now. The platform slogan upon which Dr. Nkrumah's party won the election was "self-government now"; and it has now been adopted by his rival, Dr. Danquah, who does not lose any opportunity of attacking him for abandoning it. If we refused he said substantial numbers of troops would be required to keep the country quiet;
(c) that developments in Libya and the Sudan had increased the pressure and quickened the tempo of demands for further constitutional advance.[2]

Such advice, coming from so resolute, experienced and sagacious a Governor would give pause but this is not all.

12. Last year my predecessor had an interview[3] in London with the Governor and Dr. Nkrumah when the project was discussed of calling him "Prime Minister" and of the Governor appointing Representative Ministers in consultation with him. Legally and literally what the Secretary of State said could be construed as not being a pledge. Morally and practically I consider he gave a pledge and it was so read by both the Governor and Dr. Nkrumah. To go back on it now would not only be to repudiate a British bargain but would inevitably lead to the inference that Her Majesty's new Government were determined to alter their policy with regard to the Gold Coast.

13. If, on the other hand, we make concessions, there is at least a chance of a policy of ordered progress by successive stages being successfully pursued.

14. I should add that if the leading Gold Coast Minister has the title of "Prime Minister" it does not mean that he has any right, any more than the Prime Minister of Malta, to be invited to meetings of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers.

15. I therefore with great reluctance, but without any doubt or hesitation, have to recommend to my colleagues that the concessions in paragraph 7 should be granted and the consequences accepted. If politics is the art of what is practicable this course is justified.

16. I conclude by saying that no guarantee could be given that these steps will lead us to where we want. All that I can guarantee is that not to take them will certainly lead us to where we do not want.

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[2] Libya became independent in Dec 1951. On the Sudan, see part II of this volume, 125, note 5. Also BDEEP series B, Douglas H Johnson, ed, *Sudan*.
[3] See 103; also 104.

116 PREM 11/1367, CC 16(52)6 12 Feb 1952

'Gold Coast: amendment of constitution': Cabinet conclusions

The Cabinet considered a memorandum by the Colonial Secretary (C.(52) 28)[1] proposing certain amendments in the new constitution of the Gold Coast designed to give an appearance of greater authority to the Leader of the Government Party in the Legislature. It was proposed that the Leader of Government Business in the Legislature should have the title "Prime Minister" and that the Executive Council

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[1] See 115.

should be called "the Cabinet". The Governor would choose the Prime Minister, but would submit his choice for the approval of the Legislature; and he would consult the Prime Minister before nominating the African Ministers for approval by the Legislature and assigning their portfolios to them. It was also proposed that, in Cabinet, the Prime Minister should rank next in order of precedence after the Governor.

The Colonial Secretary said that his predecessor had given what would generally be regarded as a pledge to make these changes. They were, moreover, strongly pressed by the Governor of the Gold Coast. Though he could not welcome them, he was satisifed that, as things had gone so far, there was a definite balance of advantage in accepting them.

In discussion the following points were made:–

(a) Paragraph 7(d) of C. (52) 28 was somewhat ambiguously expressed. It was, however, the view of the Cabinet that, when the Governor was absent from the Colony, the Officer administering the Government should take precedence over the Prime Minister and should preside over the Cabinet.

(b) *The Commonwealth Secretary*[2] said that these changes might excite some alarm in South Africa and he would like to have an opportunity of explaining them to the Union Government before any announcement was made.

The Cabinet:–

Subject to the points noted in paragraphs (a) and (b) above, approved the proposals in C. (52) 28.

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[2] Lord Ismay.

117 CO 554/297, no 27 29 Feb 1952

[Civil service]: despatch from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lyttelton on the formation of a local Gold Coast civil service

The position of the Civil Service under the new constitution of the Gold Coast was a matter which was the subject of careful consideration by both your predecessor and myself, and your predecessor's despatch of the 19th December, 1950, examines the position of the Civil Service in detail, in relation to the proposed constitutional changes in the Gold Coast.

2. On the 29th September, 1950, your predecessor appointed a Commission to investigate and report on the structure and remuneration of the Civil Service in the Gold Coast and to make recommendations. The Commission reported on the 30th August, 1951, and I have now had an opportunity to examine the Report and the recommendations contained therein. The Commission have rightly interpreted the wishes of the Gold Coast Government and, in my view, it is most important that urgent consideration is given to the formation of a Local Gold Coast Civil Service at an early date.

3. Your predecessor's despatch of the 19th December, 1950, stressed the fact that it is essential that Civil Servants should be enabled to carry out their functions under conditions of reasonable security and free from political interference. To this end the

Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1950, provided for the establishment of a Public Service Commission as an entirely non political body outside, and independent of, the Legislature or of Ministerial control. This Public Service Commission has already been established.

4. Before proceeding to discuss the principles to be applied to the formation of a local Civil Service, I would invite attention to the warnings contained in the Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council which enquired into the Africanization of the Public Service and the Report of the Commission on the Civil Service of the Gold Coast, 1950–51, to the effect that the Gold Coast will have to recruit expatriate personnel for some time to come to supplement an indigenous service. It is the considered view of the Gold Coast Government that any attempt to hasten the establishment of this indigenous service by terminating the appointment of serving expatriate officers before qualified local candidates are available in sufficient numbers and with sufficient experience to take their place, will endanger the maintenance of existing social and essential services, will retard the political, social and economic development of the country and jeopardise the future of the indigenous Local Civil Service.

5. After careful consideration and in consultation with yourself, I have reached the conclusion that the immediate formation of a local Gold Coast Civil Service, which is earnestly desired by the Gold Coast Government, is a natural corollary of the constitutional development already achieved and should be established on a date to be agreed. I consider it appropriate that on that date the Governor should assume full responsibility for this new local Service and that the responsibility of the Secretary of State should be confined to existing and future officers of the Colonial Services.

6. The position with regard to the Public Service as a whole will then be as follows:–

(i) All serving officers who have been selected by the Secretary of State or by the Crown Agents for the Colonies for appointment in the Gold Coast will continue to be the responsibility of the Secretary of State unless they opt to join the local service. All other Civil Servants will be the responsibility of the Governor as members of the local Civil Service.

(ii) Whenever possible all vacant posts to be filled on first appointment will be filled by suitable qualified Gold Coast African candidates appointed by the Governor to the Local Service on the advice of the Public Service Commission. The confirmation of the Secretary of State will not be required for such appointments.

(iii) In the absence of a suitable qualified African candidate the post should be filled, wherever possible, by an expatriate for a limited period on contract. If this proved impossible the Secretary of State would, on request, be prepared to select a candidate for appointment, transfer or secondment to the post on pensionable terms, and such an officer would remain the responsibility of the Secretary of State.

(iv) Recruitment by the Secretary of State would be "to the Colonial Service for service in the Gold Coast" in the case of pensionable appointments.

(v) (a) All promotion to posts in the Public Service of the Gold Coast will be made by the Governor on the advice of the Public Service Commission.

(b) Whenever a vacant senior or promotion post in the Gold Coast is to be filled, the Governor will decide, in the light of advice given by the Public

Service Commission, whether there is any suitable qualified officer serving in the Gold Coast. When it is proposed to promote any officer for whom the Secretary of State retains responsibility, or where a proposed promotion entails the supersession of any such officer, irrespective of salary, the Governor will consult the Secretary of State.

(c) All promotions will be from within the Gold Coast unless the Secretary of State is expressly asked to make an external appointment.

(d) If the Governor, having consulted the Public Service Commission, decides that there is no suitable qualified officer to fill a senior or promotion post in the Gold Coast, the Secretary of State may be asked to select an officer to fill the post. Such an officer would be the responsibility of the Secretary of State.

7. The disciplinary control of the Secretary of State will be confined to those officers for whom he is responsible.

8. It will have to be made clear to all future candidates with whose appointment the Secretary of State is not concerned that it is the Governor and not the Secretary of State who will exercise control over their appointments, discipline and promotion.

9. Nothing contained in this despatch is intended to apply to the appointment of Judges or of ex-officio Ministers.

10. I have consulted the Association of Junior Civil Servants regarding the proposal to form a Gold Coast Local Civil Service and they have expressed their agreement with my proposals. Consultation with African members of the Senior Service is being carried out through the Association of Senior Civil Servants, but information regarding the decisions of such officers is not yet available. In view of the agreement of the Junior Service I consider that it is now appropriate to approach you in this matter.

11. I am of the opinion that the establishment of a Local Civil Service will be an important step towards meeting the natural desire of the Gold Coast to control its own Public Service and I trust that you will consider that these arrangements make adequate provision to enable the Secretary of State to discharge his responsibilities in respect of officers who have been, and will be selected by him.

12. I appreciate that the recommendations contained in this despatch will, if accepted, necessitate certain amendments to the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1950, which have already been the subject of other correspondence.

118 CO 554/371, no 26 7 July 1952

[Constitutional reform]: Note by W L Gorell Barnes on Mr Lyttelton's discussions with Gold Coast ministers during his visit to the Gold Coast.[1] *Minutes* by Gorell Barnes and Sir T Lloyd

[Lyttelton made only one visit to the Gold Coast, from 31 May to 6 June 1952 (see *The memoirs of Lord Chandos*, London, 1962, pp 354–355). On 6 June he sent a tel to the CO

[1] Gorell Barnes accompanied Lyttelton on his visit to the Gold Coast. He attended some, but not all, of the meetings with Gold Coast ministers. This note on the discussions was drafted by Gorell Barnes and amended by Lyttelton.

from the Gold Coast in which he explained that he had emphasised to Gold Coast ministers (a) that dominion status was a gift not of the British government but of the Commonwealth as a whole, and (b) that in his view the Gold Coast was not in a position to govern herself as regards external affairs and defence, internal security being regarded as part of defence. Lyttelton's tel also explained that he was not sure how far some Gold Coast ministers accepted (b) and continued: 'Governor and I afterwards made it clear to Nkrumah, and subsequently to the whole Cabinet, that any major constitutional change would involve a General Election from which, for 3000 reasons a year, they recoiled' (PREM 11/1367).]

1. On the 31st May the Secretary of State and the Governor had a long meeting with Representative Ministers. The greater part of this meeting was taken up by long speeches by Representative Ministers, the burden of which was that they and the country wanted something which they variously described as "freedom", "self-government now" and "Dominion status". It was clear that Representative Ministers did not have any clear idea of the meaning of these various phrases and were not conscious that they did not all mean the same thing. The Secretary of State accordingly concentrated on explaining to them:–

(a) that the Gold Coast already had a very large measure of internal self-government; and
(b) that Dominion status was in the gift not of H.M.G. in the U.K. alone but of the existing members of the Commonwealth as a whole.

It was agreed that the Representative Ministers should, in the light of the above, consider what it was that they really wanted, and that these constitutional matters should be discussed again after the Secretary of State's return to Accra.

2. Before the Secretary of State arrived, Dr. Nkrumah had already intimated, in terms which were designed to give the impression that his views were much more conservative than those of some of the other Representative Ministers, that he would like to have a private talk with the Secretary of State about constitutional matters before his discussions with Representative Ministers as a whole came to a head. This discussion took place on the 4th June. The Governor was present.

3. At this meeting the Secretary of State made the following points clear to Dr. Nkrumah:–

(a) that, in his view, it would be necessary for the portfolio of Defence and External Affairs to remain in the hands of an *ex-officio* Minister and that, in this connection, the police must be regarded as coming under the heading of Defence.
(b) Dr. Nkrumah and his colleagues must be careful not to ask for too much, since the Gold Coast still badly needed the assistance of the U.K., and the U.K. might not be prepared to remain in the Gold Coast except under conditions under which they were satisfied that they could do a good job, or to accept responsibilities without being left any of the means by which they could be fulfilled.
(c) that any major changes in the constitution would have to be preceded by proper consultations and followed by a General Election.

4. Dr. Nkrumah did not show much fight on any of these points. He somewhat naïvely said that he had started by being an advocate of complete independence

and severance of the British connection, but had soon given that up as it hadn't gone down at all well. He professed to a wish to go slow and avoid an early election.

5. The final discussion on these constitutional matters took place on the afternoon of the following day, the 5th June. On this occasion the *ex-officio* Ministers and Mr. Gorell Barnes were present in addition to the Governor and the Representative Ministers. This meeting at once turned itself into a drafting party and its product was the communiqué issued on the following day, the text of which is, for convenience, set out in the annex to this note.[2] It is, however, perhaps worth recording the following points:–

(a) Although we should no doubt have had to insist on its inclusion in any case, the reference to consultation with the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast was in fact inserted by Dr. Nkrumah himself.

(b) Some Ministers – Gbedemah and Ansah Koi and, I think, Casely Hayford – urged the insertion in the first paragraph of the communiqué of some word or words to indicate that Representative Ministers had pressed for *immediate* or *early* constitutional changes; but Dr. Nkrumah joined with us in rejecting this.

Minutes on 118

Sir T. Lloyd

. . . It seems fairly clear that the danger in the Gold Coast now is not that of an outburst of anti-European or anti-British feeling but rather that of abuse by a certain section of Africans of the power which we are transferring to them in increasing measure. This danger arises partly out of the tendency of the African to exploit the African if placed in a position to do so, and partly out of the lessons in the organisation of party dictatorship which some of the C.P.P. leaders learnt from their early flirtations with Communism or Communist-penetrated organisations, and which they tend to retain long after they have thrown off such other aspects of Communism as may have appealed to them only when their desire for power was completely frustrated.

If this analysis is correct, then we may at some stage be confronted with a situation in which, on the assumption that the possibility of reinstating a Colonial form of government must be ruled out, we are faced with the alternative of clearing out altogether or, by our continued presence, appearing to condone, or even abet, a dictatorial form of government.

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[2] The communiqué stated: 'During his visit to the Gold Coast the Secretary of State had meetings with the Ministers. The Prime Minister and other representative Ministers made clear their wish for self-government within the Commonwealth.

There was discussion on the meaning of this term and of what constitutional changes were involved. It was agreed by the Secretary of State that when the proposals had been formulated by the Gold Coast Government after consultation with the Chiefs and the people of the Gold Coast they would be examined and discussed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Gold Coast.'

I assume this to be the sort of possibility the Secretary of State had in mind when he had the threat recorded in para 3(b) of [26].[3] In making this threat, I assume that the Secretary of State was not just bluffing; and that if that is the case, then I cannot help wondering whether we ought not to ask the Governor to be considering the preparation of plans which could be implemented at short notice, if the threat had to be carried out. Evacuation is never an easy exercise and can be almost an impossible one, if no preparations have been made at all.

Perhaps we could have a discussion about this some time.

W.L.G.B.
29.7.52

Mr. Gorell Barnes

We had a word about this today.

The Governor has accepted the record of the discussion when the Secretary of State told Dr. Nkrumah that conditions might arise in which the U.K. might not be prepared to remain in the Gold Coast, and any request to him to be considering the preparation of plans for evacuation at short notice might, I fear, have a harmful effect. Our purpose just now is to encourage him to be more resistant to ideas of, and demands for, still more constitutional change; the mere thought that evacuation was, even remotely, a possibility, would almost certainly weaken any new resolution which the Secretary of State's recent letter on GC/P and P[4] may induce in Sir Charles.

I think this file can be put by, but if you feel strongly on the point raised in your minute of yesterday's date it can be brought up again in two months' time for further consideration.

T.I.K.L.
30.7.52

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[3] ie, a reference to para 3(b) of the note of the discussions with Gold Coast ministers.

[4] A reference to a Gold Coast, private and personal file of secretary of state's correspondence which has yet to be released and which is presumably in the CO 967 series (Private Office).

Appendix to Part I

Draft report on disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1950
CO 537/5812, no 1

[This draft report was prepared by the secretariat in Accra as a despatch to be submitted to the secretary of state (Mr Griffiths) over Arden-Clarke's signature. Although it appears on a file entitled 'Gold Coast: strikes and disturbances, general strike, January 1950', it is essentially a commentary on political developments in the Gold Coast from the foundation of the UGCC in Aug 1947 to the 'Positive Action' campaign of Jan 1950. As a narrative covering the major events documented in part one of this volume, the report is reproduced here as an Appendix to part one. The report is not dated. It was presumably written immediately after the strike in Jan 1950. It was handed to Cohen at the CO by Arden-Clarke on 29 June 1950 when the governor was on a visit to the UK. Arden-Clarke explained that he had 'held it up for some time' because he thought it was too long and because he wondered whether the CO would prefer a shorter version. As indicated in para 38 of the report, Arden-Clarke had been assisted in planning security measures during the strike by a copy of a despatch from Sir H Gurney, the high commissioner in Malaya, which outlined the security measures adopted by the colonial government in Malaya during the Emergency. Having read the Gurney despatch and the Gold Coast report, Gorsuch, the CO assistant secretary who was head of the West Africa Dept, minuted: 'What we want is to know how far the conclusions drawn by Sir Henry Gurney are applicable to events and conditions in the Gold Coast. I must say that there was much in the Gurney despatch which I found disturbing' (CO 537/5812, minutes by Cohen & Gorsuch, 29 June & 11 Aug 1950). Gorsuch wrote to Arden-Clarke asking for an assessment along these lines on 23 Sept 1950 (*ibid*, no 2). What reply, if any, Arden-Clarke sent is not known. A file entitled 'Lessons of the Emergency in Malaya' (original reference 94041/12/50) falls within a sequence of general files on defence for the year 1950 (CO 537/6403–6406) which are retained in the originating department. However, copies of the Gold Coast report were circulated to other CO departments and separate copies were made, for CO subject files, of those sections on police policy (paras 29–31, 43), special constables (paras 45, 106–109), police radio communications (paras 46, 110–112) and intelligence co-ordination committees (paras 102–105).]

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I have the honour to report on the recent emergency, the events that led up to it, its course and its results. Short reports have been made to you by telegram throughout the emergency and, in my secret despatch of , I gave a full account of the part played by the trades unions in the general strike. I have nevertheless thought it desirable to describe more fully the course of events that led up to the attempt by the Convention Peoples' Party to coerce the Gold Coast Government and, indirectly, His Majesty's Government into granting immediate self-government to the Gold Coast. I have, therefore, placed on record, in the perspective in which I see it, the political situation which faced me on my arrival here, in order that it might serve as the background to the actions I subsequently took to deal with it. I hope, therefore, that I may be forgiven for the unusual length of this despatch, which I have divided into five phases:

(i) The deterioration of public confidence (August 1947–April 1949)
(ii) Measures taken to restore confidence (April–August 1949)
(iii) Preparations against "positive action" (August–October 1949)

(iv) Positive Action (October 1949–January 1950)
(v) The aftermath.

I have added a final section on the lessons learned from dealing with this emergency.

Phase I August 1947 to April 1949

The deterioration of public confidence

The background

From the end of the war until the appointment of the Watson Commission in March, 1948, there was a deterioration of public confidence in Government. This was due mainly to five immediate causes, namely, the tide of nationalism that was flooding over many dependent territories, serious inflation, the inability of Government, through lack of qualified staff and materials, to carry development projects beyond the planning stage, the commercial struggle between an independent and ambitious Greek firm, A.G. Leventis & Co., and the main European importing firms forming the Association of W.A. Merchants and, finally, the bitterness of the group of politicians, led by Dr. J.B. Danquah, over the hanging of the Kibi murderers. Of these the last two were purely local and require a short explanation.

2. At a time when imports were controlled by Government, Leventis organised and sustained a vitriolic press campaign against the Association of W.A. Merchants, the Gold Coast Government and the Colonial Office both of which, he alleged, supported the Association. This campaign was waged through a period of acute inflation, when it was easy to inflame popular feelings against the European importing firms on the grounds that they were responsible for the high prices. The accusations of racial discrimination and the exploitation of Africans by the concerted action of Government and European firms, bedevilled hitherto good relations and stirred up racial suspicions and hatred of Government. It culminated in the boycott of imported goods that immediately preceded the 1948 disturbances.

3. The Kibi affair changed the pattern of Gold Coast politics. A number of Kibi people were tried for ritual murder at the time of the funeral, in 1944, of Nana Sir Ofori Atta, Omanhene of Akyem Abuakwa. They were defended in a notoriously long trial by many lawyers led by Dr. J. B. Danquah and employed by their relatives. The bitterness of this family over the trial and conviction of some of their relatives as murderers resulted in their instituting an uncompromising political campaign against the Governor and the Government. This group subsequently formed the hard core of the extreme nationalists who, in August 1947, founded the United Gold Coast Convention.

4. The Kibi group supplemented the attacks on Government made through the press by Leventis, and in turn, received valuable encouragement from him when, late in 1947, the U.G.C.C. started its nationalist campaign.

The rise of the United Gold Coast Convention

5. The United Gold Coast Convention was founded on the 4th August 1947. It was dominated from the start by Dr. J. B. Danquah and a left-wing group of lawyers

and politicians, who aimed at securing a greater share of political power for themselves. It published its official aims and objects as being –

"1. To ensure that, by all legitimate and constitutional means, the control and direction of Government shall, within the shortest time possible, pass into the hands of the people and their chiefs.
2. To take all such steps and to do all such things as are incidental or are conducive to the attainment of the above object and to co-operate or join with bodies or organisations having similar objects for any common purpose."

The inclusion of the chiefs was, in fact, an afterthought: their elimination as a force in national politics was one of the immediate tasks the Convention set itself. This new political organisation was able, in a short time, to attract a large following in the urban areas, especially among the younger clerks, the unemployed and the disgruntled among the ex-servicemen.

6. On the 16th December, the new general secretary, Mr. Kwane [sic] Nkrumah, arrived from London after an absence of some years in America and England. He was communist-trained and had played a leading part in London in organising the communist-sponsored "Pan Africa" [sic] movement and the West African National Secretariat. From the start he seems to have had as his ultimate goal the establishment of a "Union of West African Soviet Socialist Republics". He was committed to organising an All-West Africa Congress in Lagos in October 1948 to which representatives of all the extremist organisations in French and British West Africa were to be invited. His immediate programme seemed to be the stirring up of anti-European feelings and the disruption of the country by nationwide strikes and boycotts. His initiative and organising ability greatly strengthened the U.G.C.C. and he quickly began to mould the party's programme to achieve his own aims. The violence of the attacks upon the Gold Coast Government and Imperialism in general and the use of communistic catchwords and slogans increased steadily.

The disturbances of 1948

7. In February and March 1948, the constant inflaming of public opinion against Government, fanned by the passions aroused over the boycott, led to disturbances and an attempt by the U.G.C.C. to seize power. The outbreak of violence was sudden and unexpected. The shooting by the police on an unruly mob of demonstrators, including ex-servicemen who were marching on Government House, allowed the extremists to work up anti-government and anti-European feelings into the wildest excesses of mob violence, bloodshed, looting and arson. This outbreak, which lasted for several days before it was brought under control, shook the public's confidence in the ability of the Government to maintain its authority and to protect persons and property.

8. The U.G.C.C. claimed that the existing government was paralysed and had so lost the confidence of the people that the only solution for the Gold Coast was the immediate grant of self-Government. The Convention cabled to the Secretary of State that it was prepared to take over the interim Government of the country pending the calling of a constituent assembly.

9. A Commission of Enquiry was appointed in April and in August its report (Colonial No. 231) was published together with a statement on it by His Majesty's Government (Colonial No. 232). The leaders of the U.G.C.C., who were widely

believed to be responsible for the disturbances and were held to blame by the Commission, were allowed to go unpunished, except for their removal to the Northern Territories for six weeks immediately after the disturbances, and a far-reaching plan for political advance emerged. These two facts helped to convince large sections of the urban public that Government was on the run and that violence brought great political concessions.

Proposals for constitutional reform

10. The proposals for rapid political advance gave the politicians and the country much to think about and overshadowed the blame attached to the U.G.C.C. leaders. As a result, political tension was greatly reduced. There followed a political lull which lasted until November. This was due partly to the absence of many prominent politicians, including Dr. Danquah, in the United Kingdom at the Colonial Conference, and partly to the fact that the public was slow to digest the Watson Report.

11. At the end of December 1948, the appointment of the widely representative and all-African Coussey Committee, which included several of the leaders of the U.G.C.C., to work out the detailed application to the Gold Coast of the plan for political advance set out in His Majesty's Government's statement on the Watson Report, lowered tension still further, except among the extremists, and brought constitutional questions back from the realms of heady nationalist slogans to constructive discussions round a conference table. Moderate opinion began to express its views.

Nkrumah builds up his own extremist party

12. In the meantime, however, in the middle of 1948, the struggle for power within the Convention between the general secretary, Mr. Nkrumah, and the rest of the working committee, led by Dr. Danquah, had reached a climax. Nkrumah had been relieved of his key post and, in order to avoid an open split in the Convention just before the publication of the Watson Report, had been given the sinecure post of treasurer.

13. From that time onwards Nkrumah began to build up within the U.G.C.C. a personal following organised largely as youth groups. Into these he attracted supporters both from the rank and file of the U.G.C.C. and from outside, partly by wild promises, and partly by threats against those who stood aloof. Many of the younger literates and some older people who were failures and hoped for rapid advancement under a new regime were attracted by his exciting nationalist propaganda, which was anti-imperialist and anti-European, and painted a colourful picture of the people of "Ghana", freed from the shackles of Imperialism, building a paradise of jobs and high pay for all. Many members of the junior civil service joined his ranks: many school teachers all over the country gave him support and carried the teaching of his slogans into their schools. To these were added the growing hooligan element from among the young unemployed in the urban areas.

14. In September 1948, with the help of Convention funds, Nkrumah started his own press and built up through his paper, "The Accra Evening News", a violent campaign for immediate self-government, the early course of which was outlined in

Mr. Scott's Secret despatch of the 10th March, 1949.[1] He started calling for a "constituent assembly" to decide the future constitution. He began to attack in advance the appointment of a local representative committee on constitutional reform on the grounds that it would not be able to achieve the full and immediate self-government which he demanded.

Campaign for immediate self-government

15. In October 1948, Nkrumah announced in his press and on public platforms all over the Colony and Ashanti his aim of achieving self-government by the 1st April 1949. By repetition he succeeded in raising the expectations of his followers and with them the political tension. He began to attack the forces that made for stability. He tried to stir up dissatisfaction in the police force by criticising its conditions of service and launched a campaign against the Christian churches. On Christmas Day, in the name of the Committee on Youth Organisation, he drew up the outline of a constitution which he proposed should be put into effect on the 1st April. This was designed as his reply to the appointment of the committee on constitutional reform. Political excitement continued to rise. In February 1949 the U.G.C.C. publicly disassociated itself with [sic] Nkrumah's timetable for self-government but did not dismiss him from his post on the working committee of the Convention.

Programme of positive action

16. On the 8th March, Nkrumah announced his revised timetable for the various stages by which a new construction [? constitution] granting self Government to the Gold Coast should be brought into being in 1949 and should be celebrated at "the first free Christmas since 1844". He outlined his programme of "positive action" designed to coerce Government to meet his demands by bringing the administration of the country to a standstill by strikes and boycotts.

17. Members of the Coussey Committee, which had started work in January, received threatening letters from "The Gold Coast Assassination Committee" and were constantly attacked by Nkrumah's papers as "Government stooges" and "Quislings".

Disregard for law and order

18. Although the 1st April passed without Nkrumah precipitating a show-down, tension continued to increase. "S.G." (self-government) slogans were chalked on streets and walls; "S.G." badges were worn by enthusiastic supporters; school-children and young unemployed hooligans went about shouting anti-imperialist and anti-European slogans and began to insult and even to molest Europeans in the streets. There was an abortive but dangerous attempt at a strike in the police force and a threat of a strike among prison warders. In the rural areas there was a campaign to discredit District Commissioners as stumbling blocks in the path to self-government, and to disrupt Native Authorities. Schools became the most important centres from which Nkrumah's doctrines were spread. The worst elements among the ex-servicemen were enlisted among his followers as shock troops. Labour unrest, fermented [sic] by extremists, began to find expression in a series of strikes aimed at securing quite unreasonable concessions from employers. The junior civil service was permeated with Nkrumah's doctrines. The senior civil service was restless; its

[1] See 42.

expatriate members were seriously embarrassed by the sharp rise in the cost of living and uncertain about their own future under a new constitution, especially in view of the opposition of the legislature to proposed improvements in their conditions of service; they were frustrated in their work by lack of technical staff and the shortage of essential materials and equipment required for the development of the country; they were disgusted by the bitter racial attacks that were made on them in the press and in public meetings; and they were disturbed at the widespread disrespect for law and order.

19. By the end of April, 1949, lawlessness and disregard for authority had reached its height. Nkrumah's press was violent and inflammatory and stirred up racial hatred. The country began to realise that the hooligan element was in the ascendant. The Chiefs and moderates in general were overawed into silence or retreat and looked to Government for a lead.

Phase II April to August 1949

Restoration of confidence

Measures taken

20. *The press.* By April 1949 the older established press had begun to reflect the reaction of decent citizens against hooliganism and against the growing disregard of the young people who followed Nkrumah for any of the accepted standards of conduct. It was clear that the unchecked and vicious libels against the Government officers published in some local papers were having a serious effect not only on public confidence in Government but also on the morale of the civil service. It was decided, therefore, to check these libels and to deal with any other mischievous material appearing in the local press that transgressed the law. The press was scrutinised daily and, when a clear libel against any government officer was published, the Law Officers prosecuted the publisher, the editor and the printer of the paper. Several successful actions were immediately instituted for libels, most of which appeared in the Nkrumah press. There were also a few successful prosecutions for sedition, for publishing false news and for contempt of court. These court cases, some involving heavy damages, others involving imprisonment, had a noticeable effect on public and service morale. These actions were welcomed by the greater part of the moderate papers which were now beginning to react to the strenuous efforts of the Public Relations Department to raise the prestige of the press and to persuade it to give a lead in support of law, order and constitutional means of securing political advance.

21. *The civil service.* In March the Legislative Council had, with full official support, set up a select committee to make recommendations regarding the Africanisation of the public service. This was regarded by African opinion as an important step forward in carrying into effect Government's pledge to train Africans as fast as possible for posts of higher responsibility.

22. In a secret despatch of the 12th May,[2] Mr. Scott, as Officer Administering the

[2] See 45.

Government, sought your approval for prohibiting civil servants from engaging actively in politics, and was able to announce to Legislative Council, on the 12th July, the nature of the measures that Government proposed to take. A circular on the subject and a revised General Order were issued on the 2nd August.

23. To meet the sharp rise in the cost of living, Finance Committee, after prolonged wrangling, voted a temporary cost of living allowance to all civil servants except to those earning over £826 a year.

24. *Improved Supplies.* During 1949 supplies of imported goods rapidly became more plentiful and the retail prices of most key imports fell quickly. The high price of cocoa had, however, raised the prices of local foodstuffs to such a level that the urban population was suffering considerably. A plan for increasing local food production and for bulk-buying by Government with guaranteed prices was announced.

25. *Trade unions.* From April onwards Nkrumah made strenuous efforts to win over the trade unions to his programme of positive action which was based on a general strike. He met with growing success and enlisted the support of a number of the most turbulent of the trade union officials. His pictures of a paradise under self-government made a strong appeal also to the rank and file of the unions.

26. In May there was a serious strike of employees of the Oil Storage Company of Takoradi which lasted for a month. The demands of the employees, who enjoyed relatively favourable conditions of service, were unreasonable. The distribution of petrol and oil was considered to be a service essential to the community. Petrol was required for the lorries which brought in the daily supplies of local foodstuffs to the urban centres: fuel oil was necessary for the pumps that prevent the flooding of the gold mines. The army was immediately called in to help maintain supplies. This prompt action successfully avoided any serious dislocation of supplies and was widely welcomed by public opinion and by all but the extremist press.

27. *Schools.* In March and April there had been strikes at the trade training centre at Asuansi [sic] and at the technical school at Takoradi: in both there was evidence of outside subversive influences. Vigorous disciplinary measures were taken immediately against those responsible. Education officers and educational units were instructed to make reports on teachers who actively carried extremist political propaganda into their teaching. (Mr. Scott's Secret despatch of the 12th May refers). These circulars had a very salutary effect on the educational system and also strengthened moderate opinion.

28. Threats by Nkrumah's followers to boycott the traditional celebration of Empire Day and to molest those taking part, were countered by calling on all schools to prepare ceremonial parades on a greater scale than usual. Special arrangements were made by the Police to see that those taking part were not molested. A concerted drive by the police against hooligans a few days before the parades had a salutary effect. These parades have always been popular with schoolchildren and parents and with most teachers and, in 1949, they were, with very few exceptions, more successful than ever. The campaign that had been waged by the extremist press was a complete failure and Government's stand was widely welcomed.

29. *Law and order.* In the second quarter of 1949, the police instituted a campaign against hooligans in the main urban centres and obtained a large number of convictions. This helped to restore orderly conduct in the streets.

30. The task of strengthening the police force against the day when the extremists might attempt a trial of strength was undertaken with vigour by the new

Commissioner of Police. Rates of pay for the police were substantially increased until they compared very favourably with rates in other branches of the civil service. In July, the Legislative Council passed bills prohibiting the police from being members of trade unions. At the same time, the proper means for bringing genuine grievances to notice within a disciplined force were fully explained to all ranks. Similar measures were taken in respect of the staff of H.M. Prisons and of the Preventive Service, both armed security forces. These measures met with widespread public support. In June, the Finance Committee of the Legislature voted £185,000 for wireless equipment for the police force. There was little public comment or press criticism. The police transport fleet was rapidly increased: a vigorous recruiting drive was made to bring the police mobile force up to establishment in spite of the acute shortage of accommodation. Additional supplies of tear smoke were ordered. Special precautions were taken to ensure the security of arms and ammunition as thefts from the army had recently been discovered.

31. The work of revising the internal security schemes, which had been prepared in July 1948 against the possibility of disturbances on the publication of the Watson report, was put in hand. The revision of existing emergency legislation was started. In May and June, three bills were drafted, one to make spoken sedition an offence, a second to prohibit unlawful societies and the third to provide for the better registration of newspapers, in order that those responsible for what the paper published might be clearly indicated. These bills, which in normal times would be expected to raise a political storm, were kept ready for introduction to the Legislative Council should a favourable opportunity occur.

32. *Political.* On the 15th June, Mr. Scott, as Officer Administering the Government, made an important broadcast warning the public that Government would punish any illegal attempts by extremist groups to intimidate or coerce the Coussey Committee, and would deal firmly with any attempts at disorders.[3] This statement, which did much to reassure moderate opinion, was endorsed by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons on the 22nd June, and was later supported by the Joint Provincial Council. These speeches were given the widest publicity and were greatly welcomed by the public and by the civil service.

The Convention Peoples' Party

33. During this period, however, tension was mounting as the date for the publication of the Coussey Report drew nearer. Nkrumah's extremism and his open flouting of the policy of the rest of the U.G.C.C. working committee led, on the 12th June, to a split. Nkrumah was dismissed by the U.G.C.C. and immediately announced the formation of the Convention Peoples' Party. A programme was ready. The party's chief aim was announced to be "To fight relentlessly by all constitutional means for the achievement of full self-government now for the Chiefs and People of the Gold Coast". It threatened that if the Coussey report did not bring this, the C.P.P. would immediately launch a campaign of "positive action" including a general strike with picketting, a boycott of imported goods and civil disobedience, and non-co-operation with Government, with the object of coercing Government to meet their political demands. In spite of the lip service done to the use of "constitutional means" there

[3] See 47, note.

was little talk, at this stage, of "positive action" being non-violent and to everybody, including the C.P.P. leaders, "positive action" meant disturbances: in fact there were grounds for expecting sabotage of the means of communications, railways, roads, the telephone system and possibly airports: the fear of arson was widespread.

34. Nkrumah proceeded to enrol into the C.P.P. a great part of the rank and file of the U.G.C.C. which he had already organised within the Convention, into special youth groups known loosely as the C.Y.O. [Committee on Youth Organisation]. All the extremists and the hooligan element in the U.G.C.C. went over to him. the ex-servicemen's union was dominated by his henchmen: this group was chosen for the role of the C.P.P. shock troops in the campaign of "positive action". The C.P.P. now launched a vitriolic campaign against the old working committee of the U.G.C.C. for its go-slow tactics and spinelessness, it succeeded in discrediting its leaders by charges of political inconsistency and corruption, to such an extent that they could hardly appear in public with safety and it broke up the U.G.C.C. meetings with gangs of hooligans.

The "strong man" myth

35. At this juncture the appointment of Sir Gerald Creasy to Malta and of myself to succeed him as Governor of the Gold Coast was announced. In a despatch to the local press, George Padmore, an anti-imperialist and former communist writer, described the incoming Governor as a "strong man" and forecast a spate of legislation, such as the sedition bill which had been withdrawn in 1934 as a result of local agitation. It had been decided to introduce in the July meeting of the Legislative Council the three bills mentioned in paragraph 31 above in order to strengthen Government's hand and to enable it, without resort to emergency legislation, to control the situation that was developing. Padmore's despatch removed the last chance of getting these bills through the Legislature at that meeting. As subversive propaganda, however, it completely missed the mark, as public opinion had already welcomed Government's assurance that strict measures to ensure law and order would be taken and was reassured rather than dismayed by the "strong man" myth.

Phase III August to October 1949

Preparations against Positive Action

The situation on my arrival

36. This, then, was the situation which I found on my arrival in the Gold Coast, on the eve of the publication of the Coussey Report on constitutional reform. Vigorous measures had already been taken to restore confidence in Government and to strengthen the security forces. Clear statements of Government's determination to restore law and order had already been made. There had been a definite but not very effective hardening of moderate opinion against the excesses of the extremists. On the other hand, the C.P.P. was openly threatening to disrupt the administration of the country on the publication of the Coussey report which was due to take place towards the end of October.

37. The situation as explained to me was serious. When I was sworn in on the 12th August, I strongly endorsed the statements on law and order made by Mr. Scott in June and July and, a few days later, set off to tour the Western Province where tension and the risk of disorders seemed to be greatest. The lack of discipline and even discourtesies that I encountered at certain public meetings in these areas, indicated clearly that additional measures would have to be taken immediately to deal with the situation and restore public confidence. It seemed to me to be essential to stiffen and bring into the open the large body of moderate opinion. Elementary social discipline had to be enforced and Government had to show, by its actions as well as by its public statements, that it was fully determined to enforce law and order and was capable of doing so. The cardinal principle that I laid down was that no situation should be allowed to develop which would involve the use of rifles.

Measures taken

38. *Lessons from Malaya.* In planning security measures I was greatly helped by Sir Henry Gurney's Top Secret Despatch No. 5 of the 30th May,[4] a copy of which had just reached the Gold Coast. The Report of the Commissioner of Police on the Emergency in Singapore also was of considerable use when the time came for making practical security arrangements. I was myself, of course, already aware of the security measures taken in Malaya, having, during the preceding two years, attended from Sarawak the security conferences of the High Commissioner with the Heads of Services in the area.

39. *Central Security Committee.* After presiding over the Gold Coast Defence Committee, which had already made good progress in planning security arrangements, I decided to set up a smaller Central Security Committee comprising only the Colonial Secretary, the District Commander, the Commissioner of Police and myself.

40. *Security liaison officer.* In September I appointed a Security Liaison Officer who was to be personally responsible to me for seeing that all security arrangements were completed before the publication of the Coussey report. He was to be on tour most of the time and to report back to me at intervals. In particular he was requested to ensure that:–

(i) the schemes for the zones and districts into which the Gold Coast had been divided for security purposes were drawn up to conform to an overall security scheme and that they were properly coordinated at all levels;
(ii) the equipment and supplies required under the security schemes were obtained without any delay that could be avoided by the cutting of red tape;
(iii) all those concerned with planning and carrying out security schemes were kept informed of the security situation as known at headquarters and
(iv) I myself and security headquarters were kept constantly informed of the security situation in the areas which he visited and of the needs of those responsible for security districts and zones.

This appointment was welcomed by everybody. There followed a marked increase in the tempo of the security programme as a result of the increased interest and the

[4] Gurney's despatch on the Malayan Emergency is reproduced in BDEEP series B, A J Stockwell, ed, *Malaya*.

greater sense of urgency that those concerned brought to the task. By the end of October the objects of the appointment had been achieved and the schemes were complete and ready to be put into action.

41. *Emergency legislation.* The emergency regulations made in 1938 under the Emergency Powers Order-in-Council 1939 were revised in the light of experience in the Gold Coast and in Malaya. These regulations were printed and distributed in advance as secret documents to those in charge of security districts. A series of code words was arranged to notify their coming into force.

42. *Internal security schemes.* Instructions were issued that all internal security schemes, the overall scheme, the zone schemes and the district schemes were each to be jointly planned by the administration, the police and, wherever military units were stationed, the army. The chain of command at all levels was clearly laid down.

43. *The police.* The Commissioner of Police was instructed to see that acts of lawlessness, especially those perpetrated by the hooligan elements in the towns, were dealt with more firmly. Patrolling on foot and in wireless cars was intensified. In September, when a heavy fine was imposed on Nkrumah in Accra for contempt of court, large crowds of his supporters staged unruly demonstrations both in Accra and in Sekondi/Takoradi. The police dealt very firmly with the situation and their quick action had a sobering effect on the extremists.

44. *The use of troops.* It was decided that in an emergency, troops should not be expected to man essential services though they might be called upon to supply a few skilled technicians. Essential services would have to be manned by special constables. Similarly, troops were relieved of static defence duties except the guarding of certain vulnerable points which they alone could properly protect. It was decided also that whenever large police forces were called out to meet a disturbance or a threat of one, troops should always be seen to be in close support in some conspicuous place.

45. *Special constables.* It was decided that the combined forces of the police and the army were insufficient to undertake, in addition to their more active duties, the static defence of any except the most vital of vulnerable points. The regular security forces, therefore, in order that they should remain flexible and mobile, were relieved of many important but subsidiary duties. For these special constables of three categories were enrolled and trained: the first was to maintain essential services; the second to carry out auxiliary police duties and the third, who were mostly commercial or mining employees, to undertake the static defence of the premises on which they normally worked. These forces of special constables were recruited from volunteers of all races through a civil volunteer registry supervised by the Commissioner of Labour and drawn up by District Commissioners from the most reliable reserves of manpower in their districts. The response of Africans was uneven: in some areas e.g. Kumasi it was overwhelming: in others e.g. in Accra and Sekondi/Takoradi, it was negligible. Parades of special constables of the second category were held regularly and openly for some time before trouble was expected to occur.

46. *Police wireless network.* The need for an extensive wireless network, as an essential part of security arrangements, had been stressed by Mr. Rees-Williams when, after visiting Malaya, he came to the Gold Coast in August, 1948. Equipment, designed to link all important police and administrative outstations with the various headquarters, had been ordered in July, 1949, and, thanks to the strenuous aid of the Colonial Office, a high priority was accorded to these orders. Sets soon began to

arrive in a steady stream, many by air: as they arrived they were installed and put into operation. The army, which was already operating a network of its own, was able to lend the police a number of army wireless sets pending the completion of the police network. It was thus possible to establish a very serviceable system of wireless communications by the earliest date on which organised disturbances had been forecast.

47. *Transport.* Arrangements were made with transport owners for the requisitioning of such additional transport as might be required for the security forces or for the maintenance of essential services. Transport was fitted, in advance, with screens of wire netting to protect those using it against brickbats.

48. *Tear smoke.* It became clear that if, as had been laid down, the use of rifles was to be avoided, except as a last resort, tear smoke for use in the control of mobs and rioters was a key weapon. Its importance in controlling and dispersing crowds without bloodshed, which always antagonised public support for Government measures, was not at first fully appreciated by the police. Eventually, however, greatly increased stocks of modern tear smoke equipment were purchased from the U.S.A.

49. *Barbed wire.* It was decided to erect curtains of barbed wire around vulnerable points in order to reduce to a minimum the trained manpower required to protect them. The fact that this wiring and the wiring of vehicles was carried out openly before any disorders occurred, had a surprisingly good effect on moderate opinion. It was taken as a clear sign that Government was going to stand no nonsense and was making proper arrangements to maintain law and order.

50. *The chiefs.* The chiefs were kept informed of the progress of security arrangements. The Asantehene gave a most heartening lead by a forthright condemnation of lawlessness, and many other chiefs began to make forceful public statements in support of Government's preparations to prevent the threatened disorders. On the 20th October, the Ga Native Authority told Nkrumah that, unless he promised to be of good behaviour, it would drive him out of Accra.

51. *The press.* In June, when the split between the U.G.C.C. and Nkrumah occurred, the editors of local papers had to decide whether to throw in their lot with the extremists and share with them the consequences of any disorders that occurred, or whether to take a stand on the side of law and order, to try to bring about conditions in which orderly constitutional advance would be possible and to restore the international reputation of the Gold Coast which had been so badly damaged by the recent disorders and political instability. At first the press worked hard for a reconciliation between the two parties, believing that divided counsels at such a critical time would weaken the strength of the Gold Coast's demand for far reaching political advance towards self-government. The more responsible editors were kept closely in touch by the P.R.O. with the development of the security situation. They were finally convinced that the C.P.P. programme would lead to violence, with which Government was now well prepared to deal, and would not only cause much hardship throughout the country but would further lower the reputation of the Gold Coast in the eyes of the world and would put back any programme of constitutional reform. Once convinced, the whole press, apart, of course, from Nkrumah's papers, chose the side of law and order and started to publish outspoken editorials and articles, condemning Nkrumah's unconstitutional programme and methods and stressing the need for re-establishing respect for law if constitutional advance was to be achieved

in the near future. This strong line gave new heart to moderate opinion which was extremely nervous of what might result from the publication of the Coussey report in the form of either disturbances or a constitution which would given control to the extremists.

52. *Trade unions.* At the July conference of the T.U.C. the responsible and moderate leaders were thrown out and replaced by extremists, most of whom were pledged to support the C.P.P. Strenuous efforts were made by the Labour Department and by all Government departments that employed labour to prevent a landslide of the trade unions into the C.P.P. camp. Two important strikes, one in a commercial firm and one in the Government Meteorological Service, were kept on the boil by the T.U.C. and the C.P.P. They were generally regarded as being designed to test Government's reactions before a general strike was launched as part of positive action. The clearest warnings had been issued by Government that strikes designed to coerce Government by inflicting hardships on the community were illegal and that, in particular, a general strike planned as part of the programme of positive action would be illegal. Many of the unions, particularly the Railway, P.W.D. and P.& T. [Posts and Telegraphs] unions were by now dominated by staunch adherents of the C.P.P. It seemed probable that if Government acquiesced in the granting of the unreasonable claims of the strikers in these two strikes, there would follow a whole series of strikes in support of even more extreme demands. A firm line was taken by the commercial firm and those strikers of the Meteorological Service who did not return to work by a certain date were regarded as having terminated their own appointments. Many of the unions were internally divided, partly because of the lack of co-operation between the artisans and the clerical workers, and partly because irresponsible leaders had, by their turbulence, alienated the more moderate groups within their unions. The T.U.C. itself was completely in the hands of the extremists. It seemed possible, just before the publication of the Coussey report, that if Nkrumah and the C.P.P. called for a general strike as part of positive action most of the important unions of Government employees as well as the commercial unions would come out. The Mines employees union, which in size and influence was second only to the Railway union, remained somewhat aloof but was constantly being canvassed to throw in its lot with the C.P.P.

53. It was clear to Government that without an effective general strike any programme of positive action launched by the C.P.P. would be short-lived and a failure. During this time, therefore, Government made strenuous efforts to see that all legitimate grievances of employees were settled as quickly as possible but adopted a very firm attitude towards any demands that were regarded as unreasonable and were clearly political moves rather than industrial grievances.

Effect on public morale

54. The effect on the public of the open preparations and the other measures taken by Government to control the situation was encouraging. Moderate opinion was greatly heartened and started expressing its views forcibly. The lawless elements began to have second thoughts. On the eve of the publication of the Coussey report the C.P.P.'s public programme of "positive action" became "non-violent, sit-down-at-home". Nobody, however, least of all the C.P.P. leaders, believed that "positive action", once launched, would end in anything but violence.

Phase IV 26th October 1949 to 21 January 1950

Positive Action

The Coussey Report and H.M.G.'s statement

55. The report and H.M.G.'s statement were published on the 26th October. I held press conferences on the same day and on the 30th to explain the balanced plan for constitutional advance set out in the two documents. On the 2nd November, I held an informal meeting with members of Legislative Council for the same purpose. There was no immediate reaction. The plan did not, of course, grant immediate self-government but the campaign of positive action was not launched. For five days neither the U.G.C.C. nor the C.P.P. came out with a statement and the local papers published extracts but waited for the main political groups to show their hands before declaring their own policies. The C.P.P. was the first to take the plunge. The Accra Evening News, on the first three days of November, "rejected" H.M.G.'s statement and demanded

(i) a bi-cameral legislature
(ii) universal adult suffrage
(iii) a directly elected lower House
(iv) thirteen ministers chosen by the lower House and collectively responsible to it,

but conceded that the minister of Defence should be an official [and] accepted the Coussey report's recommendations that the Governor should retain reserve powers of certification and veto. In the middle of November, most papers carried a press release from London by the communist-sponsored "Congress of Peoples against Imperialism" rejecting the Coussey report and H.M.G.'s statement and calling for a constituent assembly. The committee claimed to have the support of Gold Coast students in the United Kingdom. The United Gold Coast Convention, after nearly accepting the Coussey report as a working basis for reform, returned to the line their leaders had taken in the minority report. Though the country as a whole was far from understanding the issues at stake, the leaders of all except extreme opinion were inclined to the view that H.M.G.'s statement went as far, if not further, than they could have hoped. Indeed, there were many moderates who considered that the advances planned were too far reaching and put on African leaders responsibilities greater than they could yet carry and that the Extremist might gain control.

The Ghana Representative Assembly

56. Nkrumah now set about organising what he called a "Ghana Representative Assembly" to consider the Coussey Report and H.M.G.'s statement and, if these were found to be unsatisfactory, to put forward alternative proposals to Government and to decide on positive action if the proposals were not accepted within twenty-one days.

57. On the 20th November there was a meeting of the "Ghana Representative Assembly" which was far from representative – none of the three territorial councils sent representatives – and was attended by some 2000–3000 persons – a very poor gathering in view of the publicity that had been given to it. A motion was passed in the following words:–

"That the people of the Gold Coast be granted immediate self-government by the British Government, that is full Dominion status within the British Commonwealth of Nations based on the statute of Westminster. That the assembly respectfully demand immediate grant and sanction of full self-government for the chiefs and people of the Gold Coast".

Copies of this resolution were sent to the Secretary of State, the Governor, the Legislative Council and to the three territorial councils, which were requested to endorse the resolution and forward it to the Secretary of State. These three councils rejected the claim of the assembly to be representative and took no further action on the assembly's resolution.

The Trades Union Congress

58. In the meantime, the T.U.C. was trying to raise the political temperatures by opposing the dismissal of some of the meteorological workers who as was mentioned in [para 52], had gone on strike on the 5th October. By the 21st November all but two of the strikers had been dismissed. On the 13th November the T.U.C. threatened to call a general strike if the workers were not reinstated. It had always been anticipated that, when the time for "positive action" drew near, the C.P.P. leaders in the T.U.C. would try to find an industrial dispute to provide a semblance of legality for the calling of a general strike, which would, in fact, have the political aim of coercing government to grant immediate self-government.

Government's programme for constitutional reform

59. On the 18th November the Colonial Secretary made a broadcast, which was given the widest publicity and reproduced in the local press, announcing that, at the meeting of Legislative Council on the 8th December, he would move for the setting up of committees to work out in greater detail certain of the constitutional proposals accepted by H.M.G. These issues did not include such controversial questions as the uni-cameral or bi-cameral legislature, the collective responsibility of members of Executive Council to the legislature of [?or] the appointment of three ex-officio ministers, as H.M.G.'s attitude on these had already been made clear. The broadcast was designed both to keep the country informed of what Government proposed to do and to explain its policy to the territorial councils in preparation for the forthcoming meeting of Legislative Council.

60. The C.P.P. now began to attack Government for adopting delaying tactics by seeking to set up new committees on the side issues of constitutional reform. During November the working committee of the U.G.C.C. was vilified and most of its prominent leaders had their cars badly stoned and damaged by C.P.P. gangs. The U.G.C.C. for its part, attacked the Government motions as well as H.M.G.'s statement wherever they fell short of the minority riders to the Coussey report. On the 5th December the Ashanti Confederacy Council accepted the Coussey report and H.M.G.'s statement as a working basis for constitutional advance.

61. In my address to the Legislative Council on the 8th December, I commended the plan of constitutional reform as a great advance which placed the responsibility for the conduct of affairs fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the Gold Coast people. By the 14th December the Council had accepted the seven Government motions setting up various committees on constitutional reform, had rejected

a motion by Dr. Danquah to enlarge the Legislative Council, as now being unrepresentative, with a view to its considering afresh the whole of the proposals set out in the Coussey report and H.M.G.'s statement, and a motion by a supporter of the U.G.C.C. to exclude the proposed three ex-officio members from Executive Council. This outright rejection by the Council of the U.G.C.C. policy led the C.P.P. to praise for a moment the efforts of the U.G.C.C. and suggest a reconciliation. It was reliably reported that Nkrumah had, in fact, agreed privately with Dr. Danquah, to back the line to be taken by the U.G.C.C. in Legislative Council.

62. There was an immediate rise in [the] political temperature. The U.G.C.C. intensified its demands for a constituent assembly; the C.P.P. called a public meeting at which it threatened to launch a campaign of positive action if, within 14 days, the Government did not agree to the calling of a constituent assembly.

The T.U.C. prepares for a general strike

63. Nkrumah then set off on a tour of the Western Province, Ashanti and the N.T's to canvass support for his campaign. In the meantime it had been reported that the T.U.C. had decided on the 9th December, to call a general strike in the first week of January. On the 23rd December, representatives of the T.U.C., at their own request, met the Colonial Secretary in Accra in an unsuccessful attempt to get Government to change its decision regarding the dismissal of the meteorological strikers. At a private press conference, on the afternoon of the same day, the T.U.C. expressed its intention of calling a general strike to compel Government to reinstate the dismissed employees of the Meteorological Department. On the 30th December, the Colonial Secretary repeated to the T.U.C. his warning of the 16th November that such a strike would be illegal, and would cause much hardship to the community and would render those organising or taking part in it liable to punishment under the Conspiracy and Protection (Trade Disputes) Ordinance (No.12 of 1941).

64. In spite of Government's warnings, on the 31st December, the T.U.C. Executive sent a telegram to the Accra Trades Council announcing that the 7th January was the last date by which Government would have to change its attitude towards the dismissal of the meteorological workers. The local press, except for Nkrumah's papers, had since the middle of December intensified its oposition to "positive action" and was outspoken in condemning Nkrumah's tactics and the threat of a general strike.

65. On the 29th December, the Asantehene, in the Kumasi Divisional Council, roundly condemned Nkrumah and all his words and all forms of unconstitutional political action; on the next day, the Divisional Council passed unanimously a resolution condemning Nkrumah's programme. On the 31st December the Asantehene broadcast to his people in similar terms.

Nkrumah warned by government

66. On the 3rd January, Nkrumah returned to Accra from the N.T's and, in view of the C.P.P.'s threat of positive action, was immediately invited by the Colonial Secretary to come and see him on the 4th January. On the 4th, Nkrumah was warned personally by the Colonial Secretary that positive action would inevitably lead to violence and that if there was bloodshed the guilt would be on his head and on those who helped him with positive action. On the same day, after the interview, Nkrumah sent a letter to the Colonial Secretary enclosing a copy of a C.P.P. manifesto entitled

"Positive Action Declared" which his party intended to issue "at any time as from now", but offered to call on the Colonial Secretary to discuss this matter on the following morning. On the same day he held a big public meeting and reiterated the need for positive action but gave no date for its introduction. He again saw the Colonial Secretary on the 5th January and on this occasion brought with him three of his Executive Committee. He was told that the C.P.P. had open to it constitutional and democratic means of making its views effective by successfully contesting the elections under the proposed new constitution. He was assured that the C.P.P. would be given every opportunity of representing its views to the committees on constitutional reform that had recently been set up. If the C.P.P., because it was impatient or had no confidence of success through democratic methods, decided to adopt unconstitutional means and launch a campaign of positive action, it would set back the progress of constitutional advance and would bring severe hardship on the Gold Coast people. He was again warned that Government would take all the steps necessary to ensure that if "positive action" started it should not succeed in its object and that he and his confederates would be held personally responsible for any evil consequences that ensued.

67. Nkrumah and his colleagues were clearly shaken by these warnings. A telegram had on that morning appeared over his name in the C.P.P.'s Takoradi paper, the "Morning Telegraph" to the effect that positive action would start on the 8th January. He immediately denied that he had authorised its publication and agreed to print forthwith a denial in the press. He agreed also to the issue of a press statement that in view of Government's assurances that the C.P.P.'s views would be fully considered with those of other political parties by the committees on constitutional reform, he would recommend to his Executive Committee that they should review their policy regarding positive action. Immediately he was attacked by Dr. Danquah in the press for letting the country down by his *volte face* in calling off "positive action" in return for empty promises from Government regarding the representation of the C.P.P.'s views to the constitutional committees, access to which had been open to the C.P.P. all along. On the 6th January, Nkrumah came to the Secretariat to try to get Government to change its attitude towards the dismissal of the meteorological workers. He stated that this would help the T.U.C. to review its policy regarding a general strike. He was told that Government's decision on this issue had been final. There was further correspondence with the Colonial Secretary in which he tried to give the impression that he had believed that the constitutional committees of which the Colonial Secretary had spoken were designed to prepare the way for a constituent assembly.

Positive action declared

68. On the afternoon of Sunday the 8th January, Nkrumah held a large C.P.P. meeting in Accra, and himself announced that positive action would be put into effect as from midnight of the 8th/9th January together with a nation-wide strike, a boycott and non-co-operation with Government. His declaration followed closely the wording of the manifesto which he had sent to the Colonial Secretary on the 4th January.

69. The motives guiding the somewhat inconsistent activities of Nkrumah are not altogether clear but a possible interpretation is as follows. When he returned to Accra after an absence of a fortnight, he realised that the tension had dropped and

that public opinion had hardened against him, particularly in Ashanti. He was, therefore, hesitant and willing to accept a way out of his dilemma by agreeing to call off positive action on the understanding that his views would be heard by the Select Committees. But when he found that the T.U.C. Executive, dominated by his supporters, would not call off the strike, that his inconsistencies were ridiculed in the press and that Dr. Danquah was attacking him for betraying the country by not insisting on a constituent assembly, he was again in a dilemma. To extricate himself from this he, therefore, asked the Colonial Secretary for the assurance that there would be a constituent assembly without delay, knowing that this assurance would not be given. He was then in a position to revert to his original proposal of "positive action".

70. In the meantime, on the 6th January, the Standing Committee of the J.P.C. had been negotiating at Cape Coast with the T.U.C. to avoid the threatened general strike. The representatives of the T.U.C. demanded:–

(a) the reinstatement of all dismissed meteorological employees,
(b) the withdrawal of the Government's instruction prohobiting civil servants from engaging actively in politics,
(c) a meeting representative of the whole country to be called by the chiefs to consider the Coussey report and receive T.U.C. representations,

as their conditions for calling off the general strike with effect from 11th January. These conditions were, of course, unacceptable

The stage was now set for positive action and a general strike.

The general strike

71. The general strike was led by Pobee Biney, an official of the C.P.P. and of the T.U.C., who brought the Railway Engine drivers out at midnight on the 6th/7th to encourage other unions to join the strike. At Sekondi, Electricity workers and some Posts and Telegraphs wireless employees went on strike from midnight on the 7th/8th and were followed on the 8th by the employees of West African Airways. On the 9th, the strike got under weigh [sic]. The Railways, the P.W.D. and the Transport Department were the main Government undertakings affected. Except when intimidation reached its height on the 10th and 11th, most other Government employees outside the Sekondi-Takoradi area remained on duty. Most commercial firms and municipal transport services were badly affected all over the country, but mines employees did not join the strike.

72. The T.U.C. had never informed Government officially of its intention to call a general strike and on the 8th January was asked by telegram "whether the T.U.C. has called a general strike or whether any of its constituent unions have called a general strike and if so on what grounds and with effect from what date". There was no reply. To all intents and purposes the T.U.C. Executive had ceased to exist. The T.U.C. leaders who had encouraged the unions to strike were all C.P.P. leaders. On the 9th and 10th, owing to lack of a lead from the T.U.C. and general confusion as to the purpose of the strike, there seems to be some prospect of the strike fizzling out. It was, therefore, decided, before introducing emergency legislation, to see whether this would happen. On the 9th, 10th and 11th January Government issued constant warnings that the strikes were illegal. Labour officers and heads of Government Departments exerted every effort by personal contact with staff and, when possible,

with union leaders to get strikers back to work. In the meantime, all essential services were kept working, some with volunteer staffs. The Railway, with volunteer engine drivers, started operating a skeleton goods service on the 10th.

Emergency powers

73. On the 11th, the situation began to deteriorate as the C.P.P. leaders in the unions returned from a conference to their stations and began to intensify their propaganda. Intimidation of those remaining at work increased, especially in Kumasi, and the strike started to spread and to affect such key services as telephones and electricity supplies. The tension in the main towns was increasing and, though no major incidents had occurred, they had now to be expected. The Colonial Secretary had during the day flown to Kumasi to see the Chief Commissioner and the Asantehene and to Takoradi to see the Chief Commissioner of the Colony and had discussed the situation with them on the spot. They all considered that the situation had changed rapidly for the worse and that emergency legislation should be introduced forthwith. In the evening I held a meeting of Executive Council. It was clear that the spread of intimidation, the rising tension and the deliberate challenge to all constituted authority would, if not checked immediately lead to violence and bloodshed. It was essential to maintain the confidence of the public in Government's ability to keep order and protect all those willing to work. The effect of the disorders in 1948 and the loss of confidence in Government's capacity to protect the property and persons of citizens made this task doubly important. It was essential to avoid a situation developing in which bullets and not batons would have to be used. The Executive Council was unanimously in favour of the introduction of emergency legislation.

74. After a meeting with the Central Security Committee to decide upon the action to be taken on the next day, I declared a state of emergency with effect from midnight of the 11th/12th; brought into operation all the powers under Part II of the Emergency Powers Order-in-Council 1939, and put into force the Emergency Regulations that had already been printed and circulated in draft form.

75. Orders were immediately made prohibiting the holding of processions, regulating traffic on highways, giving powers to requisition, imposing curfews in certain areas and authorising the disconnection of certain public services. This was announced over the wireless at midnight and then publicised by every available means. It was decided that censorship of the press should not be introduced but that the Public Relations Officer should, on the morning of the 12th, hold a press conference and explain the emergency regulations carefully to all editors. It was decided that, if, thereafter, a paper transgressed the emergency regulations, it should be banned. This he did, laying on the press the responsibility for seeing that the necessity for restricting their activities did not arise.

76. The introduction of Emergency Regulations was welcomed by the greater part of the press. All the members of the Legislative Council who happened to be in Accra on the 12th had been invited to a meeting with the Colonial Secretary so that he might explain to them why Government had taken this action. They strongly endorsed my decision and called for the strongest measures against those responsible for "positive action". With the support of Mr. Quist, the President of the Legislative Council, they asked that an emergency meeting of the Council should be held on the 19th to give the legislature an opportunity to express the country's support of

Government in its action to restore law and order. The Joint Provincial Council and the Ashanti Confederacy Council decided to meet on the 17th to brief their representatives on Legislative Council.

Bringing the situation under control

77. On the 12th, the first phase of the internal security scheme was put into operation throughout the country. Police action against hooliganism and intimidation was immediately intensified. In Sekondi/Takoradi a curfew was imposed. In Kumasi an unlawful assembly was dispersed and the ring-leaders arrested with the result that tension there fell immediately.

78. On the 13th the situation throughout the country began to improve, especially in Kumasi, and many Government employees returned to work. In Sekondi a chief instigated a large assembly of his followers to break the curfew. When the Police intervened they were heavily stoned but soon dispersed the crowd and arrested the chief. Subsequently the curfew in this area was punctually observed.

79. On the 14th the general improvement continued and intimidation was brought under better control. The main commercial firms began to re-open their stores. The Railway locomotive drivers however, remained obdurate. Both Government and the main commercial firms warned absentees that unless they returned to work on the 16th they would be regarded as having themselves terminated their appointments.

80. In the meantime, trunk telephone wires between the main centres had been cut on several occasions, but had quickly been repaired. An attempt at sabotage of the Railway line had been made at Takoradi where the points at a junction had been locked. A stick of gelingnite [sic] with a detonator attached had been thrown into the house of the Town Clerk in Kumasi. In Accra there had been one unsuccessful attempt at arson.

81. Certain C.P.P. leaders who had openly instigated the strike were arrested. The main C.P.P. figures, however, were left at large as it seemed likely that given rope, they would incriminate themselves still further and make it easier to bring home to them by prosecutions in the Courts the full consequences of their actions. Nkrumah's two papers, the Accra Evening News and the Cape Coast Daily Mail, infringed the Emergency Regulations and were banned.

82. At this stage, I gave instructions that all efforts would be concentrated on getting people back to work on the slogan "Business as usual".

Minor disorders in Accra

83. In Accra the first signs of disorders occurred on the evening of the 15th January when the police were stoned while dispersing a crowd of about 400 assembling for a fetish dance. On the 16th, a crowd of about 1000 gathered to listen to a speech by C.P.P. leaders calling upon them to continue with positive action and to stage a demonstration of ex-servicemen against the arrest of the C.P.P. leader of their "Union". On the 17th, groups of local roughs, many of them armed with sticks, knives and cutlasses, gathered in the Jamestown area of Accra. Many of these groups were led by members of the ex-servicemen's "Union" who however, probably did not exceed 200 in number. They began to stone the police who were trying to disperse them. The Police were constantly engaged from 7.30 a.m; by 10.30 a.m. with baton charges and the use of tear smoke they had the situation well under

control. In the course of these actions, however, two policemen were stabbed and died. As the police units in action were in constant wireless communication with the Accra Zone H.Q., it was possible, as soon as the report of the stabbing was received, for Zone Headquarters to decide what degree of force was necessary to control the situation. The parties in action were instructed not to open fire but, as they had adequate forces, to use their batons. Later in the day, I went down to address the police in the main barracks. As they had shown the most praiseworthy restraint in the face of great provocation, I thought it well to congratulate them and to ensure that they continued to exercise restraint. I repeated my instructions that they should use "batons but no bullets" and added that there should be "bloody coxcombs but no bodies". I found their morale extremely high and their sense of discipline excellent. That night a curfew was imposed in Accra and strong police action was necessary to enforce it in the face of stone throwing and road blocks. The police wireless patrol cars were at this stage invaluable and tear gas was on occasions extremely effective. Indeed, Christiansborg Castle, which was 150 yards down wind from one police sortie against a road block, was for a short time enveloped with tear gas and I and my staff quickly learned how effective it could be, even when carried some distance on the breeze.

84. The strike situation was improving slowly. Under a revised and simplified disciplinary procedure, that had just been approved by your predecessor, Government employees who were on strike were given until the 20th, (i.e. four days longer than by the earlier announcement) to return to work. They were told that if they did not return by that day they would be regarded as having dismissed themselves.

Legislative Council: support for measures taken and passing of three bills

85. On the 19th I addressed the Legislative Council at its emergency meeting. The Council unanimously approved a resolution deploring "the grave disorders and acts of violence which a political group has brought about by its so called 'Weapon' of positive action"; recording its appreciation of the stand made by the great majority of the people in refusing to participate in the disorders; condemning the strike as unjustifiable and illegal and endorsing government's statements on the subject; and, finally, recording its high appreciation of and strong support for the emergency measures taken by Government and urging Government to take all necessary steps to prevent further outbreaks of violence. This resolution was in line with the views expressed two days before by the Ashanti Confederacy Council and the Joint Provincial Council. The Council then passed unanimously three bills, the Sedition Bill and the Newspaper Registration Bill, and a Bill to allow the Governor-in-Council to impose a curfew in any area where the situation demanded it without having to resort to emergency legislation. Thus the Legislative Council endorsed Government's actions first in warning Nkrumah, second in giving "positive action" and the general strike an opportunity of fizzling out and third, when this did not occur, in introducing emergency legislation.

86. On the 19th the President of the T.U.C., who had resigned as a protest against the calling of a general strike, sent out a telegram calling on all strikers to return to work. On the 20th however, Woode, the General Secretary, sent out a telegram to all unions telling them to continue with the strike. On the 20th there were encouraging signs that a general return to work was now under weigh.

Arrest of Nkrumah and his confederates

87. Government had already warned Nkrumah and the other C.P.P. leaders that those responsible for organising "positive action" would, if it was put into effect, be held responsible for its consequences. It was now time that this promise was fulfilled. Already many of the active C.P.P. members had been arrested in various centres and charged for their parts in instigating the strike. Nkrumah and the others of his inner circle, who were mainly responsible for planning positive action, were still at large but were cowed into silence. It was decided to arrest at the same time Nkrumah and any others of his chief colleagues against whom serious charges lay. On the 20th and 21st the police arrested without incident, Nkrumah and most of his most important confederates, including Bankole Awoonor Renner, T. Hutton Mills (a barrister), Pobee Biney (Railway Union), Markham (Editor of the banned Accra Evening News), Kofi Baako (Editor of the banned Cape Coast Daily Mail) and Anthony Woode (Gen. Secretary, T.U.C.). Nkrumah, at the time of his arrest, had in his possession four jujus.[5] Hutton Mills had in his possession copies of a resolution of the C.P.P. executive calling off "positive action" with effect from the 21st January for the following six reasons:–

(i) the introduction of emergency regulations,
(ii) the imposition of the curfew,
(iii) C.P.P. members were not "Sitting-at-home",
(iv) the banning of two C.P.P. newspapers,
(v) the impossibility of keeping contact with C.P.P. members,
(vi) the fact that C.P.P. proposals regarding the new constitutions would be submitted to Select Committees: if necessary a petition could also be sent to the King calling for a constituent assembly.

General return to work

88. The general return to work, which was in full swing on Friday the 20th, was continued on Saturday. By Monday the 23rd the return was almost complete, though the Railway artisans and locomotive drivers did not all come back until the 27th and the 28th. With the return to work of this section of railway men the strike was at an end. The Government departments most concerned, the Railway, the P.W.D. and the Transport department as well as the commercial firms now had to settle down to separating the strikers into sheep and goats and re-engaging the former and recruiting new staff to replace the latter.

89. The C.P.P. leaders were nearly all in custody awaiting trial and the threat of "positive action", which had been hanging over the country for a year, had been banished. The emergency was over. The time had come to take stock and to turn the country's interest from the struggle to maintain law and order and to keep essential services going towards the constructive task of building up a new constitution.

[5] Juju: West African; a charm or amulet used as a means of protection.

Phase V

The aftermath

The Convention Peoples' Party

90. It was decided not to withdraw the emergency legislation until the most important of the trials of the C.P.P. leaders had been completed. Without leaders and under the shadow of emergency regulations the rank and file of the C.P.P. remained quiescent up to the lifting of the emergency regulations on the 18th March. It is not clear whether the C.P.P. is still strong enough as a political force to find new leaders and take up the struggle where its founders had to leave it. There are signs of renewed determination to rebuild the party and it is possible that it will now aim at capturing the elections for the town councils and for the legislature under the new constitution.

The trade unions

91. Several thousand workers have been dismissed and many others have lost their pension rights: many of these are bitterly disillusioned about Nkrumah and the C.P.P. The leaders of the T.U.C., who had nearly all been staunch members of the C.P.P., are at present discredited and several of the most important of them are in gaol: the leaders of the constituent unions who had come out on strike have lost much of their influence. The Labour Department is busy picking up the bits and trying to help the T.U.C. and the trade union movement to build itself up in accordance with democratic trade union traditions and not on the lines of a revolutionary movement or a movement dominated by a revolutionary political party.

The United Gold Coast Convention

92. Already the U.G.C.C. is hard at work trying to regain the support of the members whom Nkrumah stole from them. They are trying to regain popular support by vigorous attacks on the Government's constitutional proposals and by demands for even greater advances towards self-government than His Majesty's Government has agreed to. It is well, in trying to assess the future of this party, to remember the record of its present leaders. From the time of the 1948 disturbances until they split with Nkrumah in June, 1949, they organised the hooligan elements in the towns, and were able to intimidate their political opponents with threats and acts of physical violence and threats of other forms of victimization; they stirred up racial hatred against the Europeans and, with it, suspicion and hatred of government; they misled the youth of the country, including school children, into behaviour which recognised no traditional or civilised codes of conduct. At one time Nkrumah had completely discredited them in the eyes of the public for their dishonesty, corruption and unscrupulous self-seeking. It is true that, more recently, when they were themselves threatened by Nkrumah with political extinction and personal violence, they embraced a constitutional policy. It remains to be seen, however, whether, with the threat of Nkrumah removed, they will revert to their bad old ways. It is important to remember that, at the time of the constitutional debates in December, Dr. Danquah and Lamptey are reported to have reached a temporary

understanding with Nkrumah. Up to the present, the U.G.C.C. seems, in spite of a vigorous press campaign, to be making very slow progress towards regaining the political lead.

The chiefs and moderate opinion

93. There is a very large body of moderate opinion which is in favour of orderly constitutional advance and considers that the proposed reforms constitute as long a step forward towards self-government as the Gold Coast can take at this stage in its development. It has been greatly strengthened, partly by its renewed confidence in Government's capacity to maintain law and order, and partly because it was able, with the help of a large section of the press, to take a stand against hooliganism and intimidation. It is, however, poorly organised as a political force as it is not yet represented by any political party. In so far as it expresses its views, it is through the more conservative local papers and through the traditional authorities represented by the chiefs in the three territorial councils. The chiefs are bound by tradition to reflect public opinion though they may also help to form it: if the great majority of the people in a state were in favour of one of the more extreme political programmes, it would be extremely difficult for the chief to take a completely different line. It is essential, therefore, if the traditional authorities are to maintain a moderate policy and by this I mean merely a policy aimed at orderly self-government by constitutional means, that moderate opinion throughout the country should organise itself. Otherwise the moderates will again find the initiative wrested from them by extremist groups. It must be borne in mind that the traditional authorities and the moderates have just helped the Government to thwart an attempt by the C.P.P. to seize power. Many of the younger generation, brought up for two years on the doctrines of revolutionary nationalism, were in sympathy with that attempt and will not easily change their views. They must, therefore, be expected to work against the moderates and the traditional authorities as obstacles in their path to power.

The filling of the political vacuum

94. The political vacuum left by the temporary withdrawal of the C.P.P. and the discrediting of the U.G.C.C. must be filled with more responsible political groups if there is to be any hope of orderly constitutional advance and if the second state of the Gold Coast is not to be worse than the first.

95. On recent past performance the prospects of moderate opinion organising itself and producing leaders with the capacity and energy required to carry public opinion with them in putting into effect the constitutional reforms proposed by H.M.G. would not seem to be very good. It is, nevertheless, the solution which must be aimed at and I propose to bend my best efforts to that end.

96. At the same time it is to be hoped that the U.G.C.C. will be convinced that the most rapid political advance will be achieved by constitutional means: that the country can be rapidly developed at this stage only if the political leaders co-operate with the Executive; and, last but perhaps most important, that it is to the personal interest of the leaders of the U.G.C.C. that they should co-operate in carrying into effect H.M.G.'s proposals for constitutional reform. If the moderates or the U.G.C.C., converted to a constitutional line, do not seize the political initiative, it seems inevitable that the C.P.P. or a similar party should rise up and, with increasing encouragement from communist forces outside the country, and later perhaps from

within the country, should again challenge all constituted authority and attempt to disrupt the building up of a democratic Gold Coast.

97. One of the conditions by which this growth of extreme nationalism or even communism would be stimulated, would be widespread urban unemployment especially among the youths who have had the barest smattering of schooling. To my view one of the most urgent political and social tasks is to undertake the rehabilitation of the great number of urban youths who remain unemployed or under-employed and give rise to the gangs of hooligans that have recently caused so much trouble.

Government's task

98. The Government has now demonstrated clearly to all that it has the will and the capacity to preserve law and order and maintain essential services in the face of a general strike. By this very action it has had to range itself against those who had followed the two most vigorous political parties that have so far emerged and against those nationalists who had been led to believe that the country was already ripe for full self-government. The task, therefore, that lies ahead is to give the political leaders and the people themselves confidence in the Government's capacity and will to lead them rapidly towards greater political responsibility to help them to develop the country and to raise the standard of living throughout the Gold Coast.

Lessons learned in dealing with the Emergency

99. It may be of interest if, at the end of this despatch, I outline a few of the more important lessons in internal security that we have learned from dealing with the emergency.

100. At the outset, I must make it plain that the security arrangements were not subjected to a severe test. They had been designed to deal with a far more serious threat to law and order, including widespread disorders, accompanied by sabotage of key services and a general strike, than was allowed to develop.

101. The following features of our security arrangements, for many of which we were indebted to Malaya, were found to be of great value in the circumstances of the Gold Coast which I have outlined in the body of this despatch.

Intelligence

102. It proved most valuable to have built up a sound intelligence system. Measures taken included:–

(i) the strengthening of the police special branch, the provision of adequate funds for its use and the issue of regular security intelligence reports;

(ii) the collection of monthly political intelligence reports from all District Commissioners and the issue from the Secretariat of a monthly and, in times of tension, a weekly intelligence summary to all District Commissioners and heads of certain departments;

(iii) the establishment of an Intelligence Coordination Committee, comprising the police officer in charge of the special branch, the Secretariat officer in charge of political intelligence and two army staff officers, one from Gold Coast District

Headquarters and the other from the Headquarters of West Africa Command. This committee meets weekly in order that the police and the administration may exchange security and political intelligence and that the army may, from this intelligence, make its appreciation of the security situation.

Central Security Committee

103. This committee, comprising only the Colonial Secretary, the District Commissioner, the Commissioner of Police and myself, was better adapted for the control of security arrangements than the rather unwieldly Defence Committee that worked out the original security schemes. During the emergency, it was always possible to summon this small committee at short notice and to call in anyone whose advice was needed. In practice the Security Liaison Officer always attended these meetings when he was in Accra. During the emergency the Public Relations Officer usually attended and this addition proved to be very useful.

Internal security schemes

104. The final version of the overall internal security instruction, to which all zones and district security schemes had to conform, was the result of joint discussion and planning by the administration, the police and the army. It was issued by the Central Security Committee. Similarly zone and district schemes were the result of joint planning. For security purposes the Gold Coast was divided into security zones and districts and care had to be taken to see that the boundaries of these areas, which could not always coincide with police or administrative boundaries, were clearly defined. A chain of command was clearly laid down. For the Gold Coast, the Central Security Committee, over which I presided, directed operations. There were six zones, each in the charge of a zone Controller who was the senior administrative officer in the zone. All policy decisions by zone headquarters were made as a result of joint consultation between the zone controller, the police and the military officer concerned. The Northern Territories, Ashanti and the Accra zones were responsible direct to the Central Security Committee; the Western, Central and Eastern zones of the Colony were responsible to the same committee through the Chief Commissioner of the Colony.

105. It was laid down that whereas all policy decisions at each level were made by the zone or district controller in consultation with his police and military colleagues, both the police and the army were to have full responsibility and discretion for deciding how best to carry out, within this policy, the tasks before them. Frequent conferences at zone and district headquarters succeeded in ensuring that, in most areas, the security forces worked closely and smoothly together.

Special constables

106. All special constables were volunteers, although powers existed to conscript people for this service. It was possible, in some security districts, to train and use more special constables than in others. In some areas Africans were reluctant to enrol in forces which would probably be called upon to act against the extreme nationalists; in others those in charge of security arrangements felt that they would get no reliable volunteers even if they made an appeal.

107. The division of special constables into three categories, described in paragraph [45] above, proved to be sound. However, as the strike was only partial the

arrangements for the maintenance of essential services by special constables of category 'A' were not properly tested. The fact that no serious disturbances or attempts at sabotage, looting and arson occurred, meant that special constables of category 'C' were not given the opportunity of showing their paces. Special Constables of category 'B', who became auxiliary police, were of the greatest use in relieving the regular police. The fact that they were partially trained made it possible to use them with great success as motorised patrols.

108. In the light of experience it has been decided to build up an auxiliary police force on the lines of a territorial force, which would carry out a maximum of 24 hours training each month. This force will be in addition to any force of special constables that it may be necessary to enrol: it is hoped that, when it becomes a regular part of security forces, it will encourage more Africans to volunteer as special constables.

109. The fact that special constables were trained openly for some time before the disturbances were expected had a good effect on public morale.

Wireless

110. The police wireless network was of great value, even though the telephone system worked admirably during most of the emergency. If the telephone exchange staff had gone on strike or had sabotaged their installations or if all trunk lines had been cut, the wireless network would have been the key to the whole security operation.

111. From the start both the police and army were working on the Standard Allied Services Procedure. The use of a procedure common both to the police and the army is essential for smooth working. It would have assumed even greater importance if troops from outside had had to come in as reinforcements. It is proposed, in future, to hold signal exercises throughout the security organisation at regular intervals so that all those concerned may learn the elements of wireless discipline. More care will, in future, have to be taken that messages that should carry a security grading are not transmitted en clair over the H.F. [high frequency] network, as some of these messages were picked up both by the army and by the Police in Nigeria. This would have been extremely dangerous if disaffected forces in the G.C. had been equipped with receiving sets.

112. In the urban areas the extensive use of police wireless patrol cars was of the greatest assistance in controlling and moving security forces.

Tear smoke

113. Tear smoke was on many occasions extremely useful in controlling and dispersing crowds of rioters. Although stocks are expensive and deteriorate quickly it is proposed to keep larger supplies in future and to use up old stocks for practice. There are many occasions in which a combination of baton charges and tear smoke can make resort to rifle fire unnecessary and it is proposed in future to make greater use of this humane but effective weapon. The slogans "batons but no bullets" and "bloody coxcombs but no bodies" helped to ensure that the minimum force required was used. Tear smoke helped to make this minimum force effective. The public strongly approved the firmness and restraint that the use of batons and tear smoke, rather than rifles, implied.

Aircraft

114. It was of great advantage to have a regular internal air service, not only for the distribution of urgent printed orders and notices but also to enable senior administrative, police and army officers and heads of departments to visit out-stations and maintain close personal liaison. It was, however, frequently necessary to charter small planes for special trips. It is proposed in any future emergency to charter one small plane for the duration for liaison purposes. The two Bristol Wayfarers at the disposal of West Africa Command were useful for carrying troops and police: in more serious disturbances, when roads might be blocked, these aircraft would have been of the greatest importance in keeping the security forces mobile. There were available, in addition, two Bristol Wayfarers belonging to the West African Airways Corporation, which could have been requisitioned without difficulty.

Declaration of State of Emergency

115. It was, in my opinion, of the greatest value in establishing early control of the situation to bring in emergency powers before disturbances occurred. In the recent emergency I am convinced that this step prevented a much more serious situation from developing. In making this decision I had in mind the facts expressed by Sir Henry Gurney in his despatch.

116. It was of great advantage also to have circulated the emergency regulations in draft in advance of their enactment. The orders to be made under those regulations were still being revised, however, when the emergency overtook us, and this caused some confusion and delay in out-stations.

117. For speed of action, powers conferred by the emergency regulations on the Governor should be developed by orders to Chief Commissioners and, when appropriate, to District Commissioners and departmental officers in districts. These orders should be circulated before the emergency arises and a code word should issue to notify all concerned as to which regulations and orders have been put into force on the declaration of the emergency.

Use of ordinary courts for punishing offenders

118. There had, in the 1948 disturbances, been much local resentment, and much criticism from outside the Gold Coast of the fact that the leaders of the U.G.C.C. were removed to isolated areas but were not put on trial before the courts. It was decided, in this emergency, that those responsible for positive action should, if they transgressed either normal or emergency legislation, be charged immediately before the appropriate courts. There is, in the Gold Coast, a great respect for the impartiality of the courts and, in the event, public opinion strongly approved the fact that those responsible for the emergency had to stand their trial before the ordinary courts.

Control of the press

119. In the 1948 disturbances press censorship was successful but required most skillful management by the Public Relations Officers who knew the local pressmen. These officers are, in an emergency, required to keep the press and public informed of the situation and to explain Government measures, often before they are taken and they should not be diverted from these important duties.

120. On this occasion it was decided not to censor the press but to ban any papers that transgressed the emergency legislation. A press conference was held immediately after the declaration of the emergency to explain the situation. The fact that this press conference included not only all the local editors but also representatives of two London papers – the "Daily Telegraph" and the "Daily Express" – who happened to be in the Gold coast at the time, was important. The procedure was accepted by most of the local press as satisfactory and the subsequent banning of two C.P.P. papers met with no significant criticism in the U.K.

Civil service in politics

121. How far civil servants can be allowed to take part in politics without damaging the reputation of the civil service for strict impartiality has recently been the subject of a white paper (the Masterman Report) and of some controversy in the U.K. In the Gold Coast, in the first half of 1949, the junior civil service was becoming so ill-disciplined and disaffected as a result of the political affiliations of its more youthful members that firm action was essential. The almost total prohibition of civil servants from taking any active part in politics had an immediate and most salutary effect. It has now been found desirable to relax this prohibition so far as certain manual and technical Government employees of the junior service are concerned.

Mass disobedience in the civil service

122. In spite of the prohibition of civil servants from taking an active part in politics Government was, at the start of positive action, faced with mass disobedience in certain departments, members of which, despite frequent warnings, joined in a general strike not over an industrial dispute but over a political issue.

123. The procedure laid down long ago for dealing with disciplinary cases in the civil service did not contemplate mass strikes of civil servants in support of a revolutionary political programme. It was found necessary, therefore, to seek your authority to simplify and shorten this procedure. As a result it has been possible to deal with several thousands of strikers with speed. Some members of the civil service were dismissed, most of them from the Railway Administration, the Public Works, the Government Transport Department and the Posts and Telegraphs Department, but about one third of these have been re-engaged, some with loss of pension rights and some with only the loss of pay for days on which they were absent from work.

124. The fact that it was possible to warn civil servants that if they did not return to work by a certain date they would be regarded as having terminated their own appointments, helped very greatly to get under weigh [sic] a general return to work. The procedure was, however, flexible enough to allow heads of departments to re-engage all those whose services were badly needed and whose offences had not been very serious. It would not have been practicable to sack the whole of the employees of the Railway or of the Posts and Telegraphs Department, or indeed of any highly technical department.

Index of Main Subjects and Persons: Parts I–II

This is a consolidated index for both parts of the volume. It is not a comprehensive index, but a simplified and straightforward index to document numbers, together with page references to the Introduction in part I, the latter being given at the beginning of the entry in lower case roman numerals. The index is designed to be used in conjunction with the summary lists of the preliminary pages to both parts of the volume. A preceding asterisk indicates inclusion in the Biographical Notes at the end of Part II. Where necessary (eg, particularly in long documents), and if possible, paragraph or section numbers are given inside round brackets.

Two British officials – Arden-Clarke and Sir T Lloyd – appear prominently throughout the two parts of the volume. In both cases the index provides, in addition to page references to the Introduction, the first document reference only; subsequent references can be identified from the summary lists. In the case of Lennox-Boyd, references are provided up to the point at which he became colonial secretary in 1954; thereafter references can be identified from the summary list in Part II. In the case of Nkrumah, who appears intermittently in part I but extensively throughout part II, the document entries are subdivided by subject for part I only; part II subject entries can be identified from the summary list.

The following abbreviations are used:

App – Appendix in Part I (pp 381–411)
E – enclosure
N – editor's link note (before main text of document)
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