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LIBERIA: THE PATH TO CIVILIAN RULE¹

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The Liberian military coup of 12 April abruptly thrust the continent's oldest independent republic into the mainstream of contemporary African politics. For coups--rather than elections, death, or retirement--have become the most predictable mechanism for changing top political leadership and policies in Africa. A majority of the new African nations have now endured at least one successful military intervention and a majority of that number are in their second or third round of military governments. Nigeria and many other states have experienced more years of military rule than they have enjoyed years of civilian government.

Despite the persistence of military intervention, it is an almost universally embraced norm in Africa that the civilian supremacy model of civil-military relationships is preferable to any form of military government. Indeed, it has become almost a *sine qua non* in the ritual of intervention that the coup leaders themselves in the early hours or days following their take over of power publicly proclaim their commitment to a return to civilian rule as soon as the factors which precipitated intervention have been eliminated. Certainly this was the case with the group of seventeen enlisted men under the leadership of Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe, who, in assassinating President William R. Tolbert and some of his political cohorts, terminated 133 unbroken years of civilian rule in the West African Republic. It was not until a year and a half after the 1980 coup, however, that the precise guidelines for the restoration of civilian rule achieved any degree of specificity. It is against that pledge made by Head of State Doe to restore civilian rule by 12 April 1985 that the events of the past three-and-a-half years will be evaluated in this paper.

As I have suggested in Liberia: The Evolution of Privilege (1969), Liberia is a paradox. It is one of Africa's oldest states; yet it is regarded by many of its 1.7 million inhabitants as one of the continent's most recently liberated new nations. To Gola, the Grebo, the Kpelle, Krahn, and members of the roughly seventeen ethnic groups which are indigenous to Liberia, the coup of 1980 represented the termination of a form of colonial domination not unlike that experienced by Africans around the continent. For the foundations of the modern Liberian state had alien origins. The settlement of

¹An earlier version of this article appeared in J. Gus Liebenow, "Liberia: Return to Civilian Rule," CSIS Africa Notes 21 (1983).

freed persons of color from the United States, which began in 1821 under the protection of the United States and the private sponsorship of the American Colonization Society (ACS), created a dependency relationship between the original inhabitants and the Americo-Liberians--as the settlers came to be called. The expansion of the Americo-Liberian settlers inland from the coast in many respects resembled the behavior of Europeans elsewhere in the continent. That is, the Americo-Liberians employed the strategies of outright conquest: purchase of land not actually subject to sale, basing claims to territory on Liberian "journeys of discovery," and converting treatise of friendship into deeds of ownership. Indeed, the formal declaration of independence from the ACS by the settlers in 1847 constituted an effort to frustrate competing European commercial colonial designs on the very hinterland areas claimed by the Americo-Liberians.

Rather than having returned to the continent of their fathers and brethren, the process of settlement and expansion, unfortunately, led to the creation of a caste-like relationship between the settlers from the New World and the indigenous residents. The historic continuity of this caste system, albeit significantly modified in the past three decades, led to roughly 5 percent of the population who claimed Americo-Liberian antecedents dominating the lives of the remaining 95 percent. It was this situation which was central to the popular acceptance of the military coup in 1980. The Americo-Liberians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries not only insulated the tribal hinterland against rival European influences, but they created a closed social system. A single dominant party, the True Whig Party, monopolized power for 103 years. Political leadership among the True Whig "honorable"--as the elite called themselves--was consolidated through membership in the Masonic Order, the formation of exclusive social clubs, and the operation of a tightly-knit family network based on birth and marriage into the leading families of the Americo-Liberian stratum. In this way the settlers and their descendants managed to monopolize political, economic, and social power within the republic. The tribal majority was controlled in part by force and through the co-opting of traditional leaders in a system of colonial administration based on indirect rule. This system emphasized the corporate tribal identity of individuals and the distribution of some vestige of privilege to the cooperating traditional leaders.

Although the system was not without both external and internal challenges, it remained a relatively static--if not stagnant--relationship until the Second World War. Developments in neighboring West African colonies in 1944 led the newly-elected President, William V. S. Tubman, to launch a two-pronged program which first of all attempted the gradual integration of the tribal people into the national society which had been fashioned according to the Americo-Liberian norms. The second aspect of Tubman's program was the opening of the country to overseas investment and trade in an effort to

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The coup, however, stemmed from the fact that the benefits of economic development were distributed unequally during the Tubman presidency and even more so under William Tolbert, who succeeded Tubman upon his death in 1971. Greater benefits by far accrued to the Americo-Liberians at the coast than to the tribal majority in the interior. The major economic structures were largely in the hands of European and American expatriates, Lebanese traders, and Americo-Liberian politicians. A private Liberian, whether tribal or settler in origin, who attempted to succeed independently in business without a firm political base seldom succeeded. President Tolbert's family personally acquired many expatriate-launched businesses, and took vast acreage of land out of the traditional communal tenure system and into their private hands. Tribal persons participated in and were largely limited to unskilled and semiskilled positions. Despite electoral reforms, significant elective and appointed offices were monopolized by a few leading patrons and their relatives by birth. It is true that many tribal persons and lower income Americo-liberians received education at the University of Liberia, at Cuttington College or abroad and were subsequently employed by government. They received lower pay and perquisites, however, than Americo-Liberians. A government survey in 1979 recognized that roughly 4 percent of the population owned or controlled 60 percent of the wealth. Within the military under the True Whig regime a similar hierarchical relationship developed, with the Americo-Liberians largely monopolizing the officer class while the enlisted ranks were recruited from the tribal sector. The latter were invariably selected from the least developed areas, and in addition to being posted to regions away from their home areas, they were poorly paid, poorly housed, and assigned to units and tasks on the basis of ethnic stereotypes. They were near the bottom of the prestige ladder nationwide.

Broader factors were also involved in the coup. The several years preceding the 1980 intervention were marked by rising inflation, the failure of agriculture to remain self-sufficient in food production, the drift of people from the rural sector to the urban centers where they often remained unemployed, and a severe balance of payments program associated with the decline in the iron ore market globally and exaggerated by the increasing importation of luxury consumer goods. Also fueling the fires of dissent were the flagrant examples of nepotism in public and private employment, the

ostentatious style of life of the elite, and the cost of international representation. The latter was marked most dramatically by the budget-breaking hosting of the 1979 annual meeting of the OAU. The regime was further challenged by student and labor strikes as well as by the emergence of two political opposition groups: the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and the Political Alliance of Liberia (PAL, later reorganized as the Progressive People's Party, or PPP), launched by younger people, many of whom had been trained in America. The discontent came to a head in April 1979, when the government abruptly raised the price of a hundred-pound bag of rice from \$20 to \$30. Major street demonstrations ensued. The brutal overreaction of the government--largely at the hands of the police rather than the army--during the rice demonstrations of 14 April 1979 left hundreds dead or wounded and initiated a year of political ferment. This culminated in the overthrow of the regime by seventeen enlisted men under the direction of Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe.

The coup leaders--who constituted themselves as the People's Redemption Council (PRC)--consolidated power with relative ease. This is a measure of the popular hostility in Liberia to the discredited Tolbert regime. In contrast, the largely negative world reaction to the killing of Tolbert and twenty-five others on the day of the coup, and the televised execution of thirteen former officials a week later, created serious problems. The incidents delayed both official recognition of the Doe regime as well as positive responses to the PRC's desperate appeals for financial and economic aid. The incidents of violence, while not to be condoned, must, nevertheless, be put in perspective. The coup and its aftermath, for example, was a far less bloody instance of inter-ethnic conflict than the three years of civil war in Nigeria--although it was Nigerian leaders in 1980 that orchestrated the attempted diplomatic quarantine of Doe. In many respects, moreover, the blood shed in Liberia was a reaction to the memories of roughly 160 years of oppression, which was an experience not shared by any of Liberia's neighbors. The apparent military excesses, furthermore, as well as the PRC's paranoid concern about countercoups, can be attributed to the youth of the PRC leadership, their general lack of advanced education, and the absence of any kind of experience whatever in statecraft. To its credit, the PRC quickly assembled a predominantly civilian cabinet drawn from the ranks of MOJA, PPP, and reform-minded officials associated with the prior Tubman regime. This military-civilian coalition largely secured the support of the bureaucracy. Despite the magnitude of the fiscal and other problems they inherited, the PRC has presided over a governmental system and an economy which continues to function and a society which has remained relatively stable.

The Restoration of Public Order

In setting up a balance sheet of the PRC's performance in office during the three-and-a-half years since the coup, several things stand out. The first item for analysis is the PRC's ultimate

success in restoring public order. No one suggests that this came about easily. Nor can the military be absolved from its share of the blame for the instability which was still much in evidence during my first return to Liberia a few weeks after the coup. Some of the enlisted personnel, for example, took advantage of their status reversal and harrassed innocent citizens as well as confiscated vehicles and occupied homes and other properties of the former elite. Petty shakedowns of pedestrians and commuters became almost institutionalized extortion at the highway checkpoints or during the evening curfew. The latter remained in force for almost two years, despite the fact that real threats to the regime had simply not materialized. Intimidating high-powered machine guns were everywhere in evidence during the initial weeks and months following the coup. Some of the newly-elevated generals and colonels, moreover, quickly complicated the tasks of establishing confidence in the new government by engaging in the illegal acquisition of former Whig properties. Indeed, the charge of "rampant corruption" was used with great frequency during the early period, although the magnitude of illegal privilege had by no means reached the scale of corruption of the Tolbert era. It was undoubtedly the insecurity of the PRC leaders that led to the unfortunate stifling of dissent on the part of civilian members of government as well as by students, labor leaders, and other private groups. The threat and actual use of the firing squad as a form of punishment against both military and civilian in the wake of the coup, moreover, constituted further evidence of the PRC's own lack of self-confidence.

While acknowledging the foregoing, I would insist that the weight of evidence is still on the more positive side. A considerable measure of military discipline has been reintroduced, due in part to the impact of the joint training exercise carried out with the American Green Berets in 1981. Weapons have now been stored in the barracks, and the more benign "walkie-talkie" has become the visible symbol of military authority. In his Christmas message of 1981, Doe announced the release of all political prisoners, making it one of the few African states which can make that boast. Announcements from the army command from time to time do serve as testimony that cases of soldiers engaging in extortion still persist, but these incidents are not representative of the general situation.

Beginning in 1981 the confiscated properties--with the exception of those belonging to officials executed during the first few weeks of the coup--were being returned. Many Liberians in self-imposed exile abroad began to return as well. The fact that the revolution seemed to be directed against a discredited political system rather than against a class of people who could be ethnically identified did much to restore confidence among those who wanted to make their contribution to a new Liberia. There were concerted efforts, by way of radio skits, editorials in the press, and other devices, to downplay ethnic differences among the Liberian population. Indeed, the changes in cabinet and other government posts in the last

year suggest strongly that the gulf between Americo-Liberians and persons of tribal origins is being bridged. The regime has been making significant strides in reshaping the symbols and institutions of nationhood, including the official motto: "The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here." Some of the PRC's efforts, such as introduction of the Redemption flag and the dropping of Independence Day celebrations, have been rejected. Other efforts, such as eliminating the Americo-Liberian bias in the history textbooks, are long overdue and will undoubtedly succeed.

One continuing source of concern regarding political stability, however, relates to the PRC's ability to control the military itself. This is essential if the PRC is to live up to its pledge to return the army to the barracks. The rumors and allegations regarding military plots against Doe and other top PRC officials persisted even in 1983 although none in recent months has reached the scale of the 1982 conspiracy involving Doe's second-in-command, Major General Thomas Weh Syen. The latter, along with four other members of the PRC, were secretly tried and summarily executed.

The Program for a Return to Civilian Rule

In addition to its performance in restoring order, the PRC is being judged regarding the honoring of its pledge to restore civilian rule. An immediate return to civilian rule in 1980 was out of the question since more than cosmetic surgery was required to overcome the deep social wounds. In any event, most of the major structures associated with Whig oppression were destroyed or disabled during the coup. This included the True Whig Party, the Masonic Order, the elite social clubs and the family network that had maintained the oligarchy. In this political vacuum, steps had to be taken to establish strong independent counter forces in the economy, in the schools and professions, in the religious associations, and other areas of the private sector. In the absence of this, a hastily restored civilian regime would be vulnerable to subsequent interventions. Pluralism is essential to the establishment of a civilian supremacy model of civil-military relations. That model requires that civilians, rather than the military, control decision making with respect to war and peace, the determination of the size and general shape of the military establishment, the methods of recruiting both officers and enlisted personnel, the allocation of major privileges and rewards within the service, and--most importantly--the allocation of government revenues for the funding of all military and paramilitary activities. Although the actual application of these principles differs widely even within Western European democracies, the general adherence to these principles is essential.

What has been the actual progress towards the restoration of civilian rule in Liberia? The PRC has approached the task in a rational way, by establishing both an ultimate target date--12 April

1985--and a series of incremental steps leading up to the resumption of civilia s began when Head of State Doe in April 1981 appoi uished group of civilians to serve on a National ssion. In addition to its chairman, Dr. Amos S ed the wrath of the Tolbert government by runnin candidate for mayor of Monrovia in 1979, the many others who had over the years risked the confiscation of the property by their criticism Although underrepresentative of women, the d various geographic, economic, ethnic, religious, and other major interests. The Commission operated in an open fashion, consulted widely with the public in various forums, and in general conducted virtually a nationwide seminar on the important constitutional issues. The Commission wound up its work in January 1983 and presented its draft constitution to the PRC for its approval and action. The PRC then set in motion the election of a broader Constituent Assembly for May and June. During August and September the latter body received the draft, prior to submitting it to a nationwide referendum. The Consultative Assembly, like the Commission, was a distinguished panel of citizens under the chairmanship of Dr. Edward Kesselly.

The broad outlines of the contemplated instrument of government do not differ radically in form from the suspended Constitution of 1847. The draft constitution recommends a unitary rather than the federal form of national government, since the latter might have accentuated, rather than diminished, regional ethnic conflict. As was true of Nigeria, the commission in Liberia proposed a presidential rather than a parliamentary system but with enhanced powers given to the bicameral legislative and the judicial branches. This distribution of powers is designed to prevent the re-emergence of the "cult of the presidency" which had prevailed in Liberia during much of this century. The drafters hoped to encourage the emergence of a multiparty or at least a two-party system, but to restrict competition to "democratically oriented" parties. No mechanisms existed, however, to guarantee majority--as opposed to plurality--rule and no efforts were made to guarantee a broad-based mandate in terms of ethnicity or religion. The Commission did take extraordinary pains to break with the Whig interlocking elite directorate by building firm walls between religious and secular power, between the military and the political system, and between the political system and voluntary associations. Mindful of the abuses of liberty in the past, the writ of habeas corpus is not to be denied, no matter what the nature of the emergency. Also the commitments to civil liberties and equal protection of the law are expressed in unmistakable terms. The one point of contention to the more liberal-minded has been the clause which restricts citizenship to persons of African ancestry. This is part of the historical baggage which it is difficult to discard, particularly since whites and Lebanese play a major role in the economy

The recommendations of the Consultative Assembly have not been reviewed by the PRC before the document and are in the process of being submitted to the general public in a nationwide referendum. Despite many expressions of skepticism regarding the commitment of the PRC to its own political demise--as well as the serious challenge which Doe himself raised regarding the funding of the process--the move to restoration of civil rule has acquired a dynamism of its own. The Special Elections Commission has already been created under the chairmanship of Emmett Harmon. It has become almost an article of faith that voters will be registered, that constituencies will be delineated, that the ban on political organization and activity will be lifted during the early months of 1984 preparatory to the nominating and electoral campaigns and to the general election in January 1985. The new government would take office on the fifth anniversary of the coup.

This is the scenario. Any major deviation from the script would, of course, undermine the very basis for the legitimacy of the PRC as proclaimed by the PRC itself immediately following the coup. There are, however, a number of serious questions which still have to be addressed.

1. Will the PRC leave behind, on its withdrawal to the barracks, a civilian-dominated and civilian-oriented bureaucracy and judicial system? The suspension of the 1847 Constitution effectively put the former legislature out of business, but concern was expressed from the outset regarding the entrenchment of the military in the executive and judicial branches. From the perspective of three-and-a-half years of experience with the PRC, the fears have proved to be groundless. Recognizing the limited education of most PRC members in 1980, almost immediately on the heels of Tolbert's assassination, Doe sought help in governing. He quickly assembled a very respectable cluster of Liberian civilians who have managed most of the major governmental departments since 1980. The pool included not only career bureaucrats but also leaders of the two political groups that were challenging Tolbert--MOJA and the PPP (formerly PAL)--as well as some former officials identified with the Tubman era. Since the coup there have been frequent shuffling of cabinet posts, with a few officials leaving because of charges of corruption or differences in ideology and style. A smaller number left the country for fear of some kind of political retribution. Remarkably, however, there seems to be a vast pool of educated and experienced talent available to replace those who have departed. This serves, ironically, as testimony to the commitment of the Tubman and Tolbert regimes to improve the quality of the University of Liberia and to expand opportunities for education of Liberians abroad.

A few critical posts in the cabinet have been reserved for the military in carrying out its "balance wheel" role. These have included defense, finance, and information. The military initially also tended to dominate in the appointment of officials in the

administration of the counties. There was early concern that the unusual step of granting military ranks to the civilian cabinet and subcabinet level officers was a device for stifling dissent within the government coalition by placing everyone under military discipline. The PRC also attempted--with disastrous results--to subordinate the existing court system to a Supreme Military Tribunal. The most distressing feature of the early civil-military relationship, however, was the supervisory role that individual members of the PRC exercised with respect to the day-to-day functioning of department. Each of the members of the expanded PRC (raised from seventeen to twenty-eight people after the coup to provide greater ethnic balance) was linked to one or more departments in a "watchdog" role. This led to situations in which petty meddling by the PRC members undermined the authority of civilian ministers and created an administrative nightmare.

Ultimately, the PRC abandoned the "watchdog" system. For all practical purposes four or five key members of the PRC now speak with a unified voice. The core of power within the PRC is exercised by the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Deputy Vice Chairman, the Speaker, and the secretary General of the PRC. Occasionally, this may include as well the Commanding General of the Armed Forces. County administration is being progressively turned over to civilians. Although nepotism does result in relatives of members of the PRC getting jobs, this probably corrects the ethnic imbalances of the True Whig period.

2. Has adequate time been permitted for the emergence of a viable political system? For a society that thrives on political gossip and intrigue, the PRC's decree banning political activity at the time of the coup to the present has been regarded as a burden not only by those who have future political ambitions but for those who feel it is essential to constructively criticize the performance of the PRC government and to secure popular involvement in the process for restoring civilian rule. The privately-owned Daily Observer, for example, and even the editors and reporters of the government-owned New Liberian have been harassed by the arrest of staff members, the banning of particular issues, and other threats when the level and character of their criticisms has piqued the sensitivities of the PRC. Similarly, university and high school students (who considered themselves participants in the pre-1980 ferment which made the PRC coup immediately acceptable) have faced school closures, reprimands, arrests, and even the threat of the firing squad. One major exception is the churches which have become significant structures in terms of criticizing both military misdeeds as well as the pace of civilian restoration, now that the linkages between religious office and political power have been severed (and permanently prohibited under the draft constitution). Even though church leaders have not been stifled in their voicing of criticism, nevertheless, the sensitivity of the PRC to criticism has been manifest in a number of way.

Of equal concern is whether the period of less than a year will be adequate in terms of organizing new parties, getting them registered, nominating candidates, and campaigning. The leadership of MOJA and the PPP have been fragmented and the top leaders actually sidelined at the present time. No member of government has been permitted to use his post as a base for consolidating a constituency. The re-emergence of many of the old True Whig leaders--including many closely identified with Tolbert--has raised concern in a number of quarters. By various tactics, however, the PRC has made it difficult for any individual or group to jump the gun in advance of the April 1984 deadline on resumption of political activity.

There is manifest concern, moreover, that the draft constitution provides the shell of a new political system, but it is devoid of dynamic content. Although civilians since April 1980 have been expected to remain silent on political issues, increasingly, Chairman Doe, and other top PRC leaders have attempted to publicly define Liberia's political and economic ideology. They have directly challenged within both the PRC and the cabinet as well as in various forums outside government any suggestions of a "tilt" to a socialist strategy of development or a drastic realignment of Liberia's foreign relations. It is clear that the PRC has committed Liberia during this transitional period to the mix of private enterprise, state capitalism, and vestiges of traditional economic values and institutions that had long characterized the Liberian economy.

3. What are the prospects that Samuel Doe himself will be a candidate for the presidency? This has always been a possibility from the outset of the process of restoring civilian rule. He enjoys a great deal of popularity for his role in bringing the True Whig system to an end and for his actions in establishing a coalition of military and well-qualified civilians to run the transitional government. Those who have worked closely with him, as well as journalists and others who have observed him from a distance, are impressed with the manner in which he has literally grown with the job and acquired poise, a good speaking style, and other outward attributes that have won him points both at home and abroad. Hints regarding his future designs may be found in his transition from Master Sergeant Doe, dressed in battle fatigues, with hand grenades at his belt, in 1980, to Commander in Chief or Head of State Doe, dressed in flowing tribal robes or the informal "swearing-in" suit, in 1981, to Dr. Doe (honorary degree from the University of South Korea), punctiliously dressed in a three-piece business suit in 1982 (and insisting that others dress the same). Although the foreign press refers to him as "President" Doe, he has studiously avoided the appearance of having usurped the civilian title. That, too, might be part of a long-term strategy. In any event, few firmly believe that he is committed to going back to his rural village and becoming a clerk for the traditional clan chief--as he once suggested. Most revealing, however, is the fact that Doe observed his 28th birthday within weeks of the 1980 coup, but by an accelerated aging process, he celebrated his 33rd birthday

in May 1983! This would barely make him eligible for the presidency in 1985 under the current constitution. In any event there exists both good and bad military leaders assuming the mantle of chief executive in their countries in the shaping of a civilian government. De Gaulle, Ataturk, and even Washington come as quite different precedents. Some of the less favorable precedents. At this writing the odds have not been unduly stacked against leading civilian candidates for the presidency.

4. Will the military as a corporate unit honor its pledge to return to the barracks in 1985? Apart from previous observations regarding whether a failure to return to the barracks would undermine the military's only real basis for legitimacy today and the question of whether Doe and other PRC leaders can continue to control the military in the direction of civilian rule, it is reasonable to assume that the military will honor its pledge. No extra weight should be given to the objection raised by the PRC regarding the unusual clause in the draft constitution which would have denied the suffrage to Liberians while serving with the police or the armed forces. No other civilian supremacy models go to such an extreme.

In general terms, the genuine complaints of the soldiers regarding their low status in Liberian society during most of this century have been substantially addressed in terms of better salaries, housing, and uniforms, as well as in terms of the expressed gratitude of the public for the soldier's role in ending the Whig tyranny. Indeed, many former officers have already used or abused their positions to enhance their own status and that of their relatives. It is doubtful whether this situation would be challenged by a fledgling civilian regime. Some observers suggest that the major consideration regarding the honoring or reneging on the pledge lies elsewhere. What impact would a failure to return to the barracks have upon the principal supplier of both economic and military aid to Liberia, namely the United States government?

Foreign Policy Directions Under the PRC

It was alarming to many observers that the African country with the strongest links to the United States would fall victim to a coup by a group that styled itself "revolutionary." This led to the hasty conclusion that Liberia was about to embark on a radical realignment of its foreign commitments, as well as drastically changing its domestic institutions. Much attention was given in the world press to the fact that the Soviet ambassador was called in on the morning of the coup (indeed, as was the highest ranking U.S. diplomat) and that several key civilian members of the new government had been vocal about the need for Third World solidarity and Liberia's nonalignment. The immediate expressions of support for the Doe regime from Ethiopia, Cuba, the Soviet Union, and Libya

In the wake of the coup, as well as several quick visits abroad by Liberian officials, were taken as signals of new directions.

What had not been taken into account was the fact that the process of realignment had started long before April 1980. The de-emphasis on the American linkage and the strengthening of Liberia's relationships with other Western states, with its African neighbors, and with the Third World in general were actually initiated in the Tubman era and accelerated under Tolbert. The latter's dexterity in that regard had won him the chairmanship of the OAU--an office which he held at the time of his death. Indeed, the Soviets, Libyans, Bulgarians, and others were already in Monrovia at the time of the coup. Secondly, the external analysts overlooked the virtual quarantine of Doe by his closest African neighbors. The major exception was Guinea, whose leaders have had high stakes in continuing the use of Monrovia's free port for its exports from eastern Guinea and wished to live down the support given to Tolbert during the rice riots of 1979. The steady coolness as well of the Human Rights advocates in the Carter administration, moreover, meant that none of the Western sources of financial and economic aid would be forthcoming during the post-coup era until the United States declared itself. Hence, the appearance of a Liberian tilt to the East was understandable.

Even assuming the sincere motivation of any moves towards a dramatic realignment of Liberia's foreign policy, ultimately the PRC had to come back to the realities of Liberia's "special" relationship with the U.S. Aside from the historic founding of Liberia, intermittently over the past 160 years private Americans and the American government have loomed large in terms of direct loans to the government; the development of the rubber and iron ore industries; the construction of roads, harbors, and other infrastructure; the establishment of schools in Liberia and providing educational opportunities for Liberians abroad; and the founding of mission churches, many of which still maintain their links with the U.S. For half a century the unit of currency in Liberia has been the American dollar. Liberia is one of the few African states that has signed a comprehensive military agreement with the United States. In addition, Liberia is the site of a Voice of America transmitter, an OMEGA navigational station, and vital telecommunications links for the United States. The registration of American-owned ships under the Liberian "flag of convenience" also has a complex mutual benefit. In the period since the coup, moreover, the United States government, both directly and through its role in the World Bank and the IMF, has been the primary economic and financial supporter of the PRC and its program for restoring civilian rule. The AID program for 1983-84 alone is \$74 million.

Whether out of gratitude to the U.S. or in response to what the regime regards as subtle hints (or, indeed, whether it is acting in the same self-interested fashion as a growing number of African

states are doing) Liberia has been engaged in a realignment. If anything, to be reorienting its foreign policy in the direction of the Third World. This was clearly signalled in the intra-cabinet struggle in 1981. This culminated in a closing of the staff s Bureau and the drastic reduction of the staff sy, which had been growing steadily in the preceding years. 's tilt to the West is further reflected in the face of to U. S. aid, the most significant supplement development of the timber industry, of a palm oil it, and other projects is coming from the West Germans, the Belgians, the French and other Western sources. When Liberia has been seeking new diplomatic and economic linkages in the Third World, its orientation has been to those states which not only are regarded as friendly to the United States but often have the means to provide forms of "south/south" aid. Thus, President Nimeiry of the Sudan was an honored guest at the 1983 Redemption Day celebrations. Doe in 1983 paid a state visit to Saudi Arabia. Liberia opened an embassy in South Korea. The Taiwan mission has been providing much needed agricultural assistance. The most dramatic breakthrough came with the reestablishment of diplomatic links with Israel. In so doing, Liberia joined Zaire in breaking ranks on the linked quarantine of Israel and South Africa, which the Arab and African states had forged between 1967 and 1973. While Liberia's decision has been viewed by opponents of Israel as Liberia's toadying to the United States, it could also be assessed as a matter of Liberian self-interest. Although it had, for example, gotten roughly \$46 million in repayable loans from Arab states, Liberia got almost nothing by way of direct grants from the Arab development fund. Nor did it get any concession whatever from OPEC states on the price of its imported oil--which has been central to its balance of payment problems, to its recurrent oil and gas shortages, and to other problems of development. In contrast, Israel's technical assistance before the diplomatic rupture was significant, and the perceived benefits from the reestablished relationship have already been considerable in terms of military assistance, technical training, acceleration of trade and investment opportunities, development of transport and other matters.

Liberia under the PRC has also attempted to strengthen its position within West Africa. Relations with both the Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone were strained at the outset. Indeed, by early 1983, as a result of trivial misunderstandings, it looked as if Liberia and Sierra Leone were at the point of war. Troops were being massed at the borders and put on an alert basis, and diplomatic exchanges reached a new low. More recently, however, the PRC and the regime of Siaka Stevens have mended fences through the "good offices" mediation of the late Sekou Touré of Guinea. There seems to have emerged a more positive attitude towards the cooperation of these two states, along with Guinea, in making a reality of the Mano River Customs Union.

Achieving Financial and Economic Recovery

The final area for analysis deals with the ability of the PRC government to achieve financial stability with respect to international obligations as well as bringing about marked development of the domestic economy. A cataloging of the difficulties in meeting payrolls for teachers and other public employees, the recurrent fuel shortages, the threat of default on international loans, and other current ills does give one the impression of a reenactment of the "Perils of Pauline." Yet, somehow or other, the government has survived--often by engaging in dramatic shifts of funds from one account to another, or through a quick assist from the IMF or the U.S. government. We must bear in mind, however, that many of the government's financial problems are those that it inherited from the excesses of the Tolbert and even the Tubman eras. Other complications, such as the drop in prices for its principal exports, iron ore and rubber, coupled with a rising price for its imported oil, are matters that are largely beyond its ability to control. On the other hand, the oft-repeated comments of IMF, World Bank, and other representatives regarding the quality of Liberian bureaucrats and the almost heroic efforts being taken to impose fiscal sanity, does give one cause for optimism in the long run. There is also the intensification of geological mapping and the vigorous efforts at oil and mineral prospecting by American and other Western firms that could dramatically change future assessments about Liberia's financial and economic survival.

But there are sins of both commission and omission on the part of the present government that cannot be ignored. Official corruption, for example, still seems to be an almost ingrained habit even though the actors have changed and the levels of kleptocracy have not approached those of the past. The linkage between ostentatious living and enjoyment of political office in Africa, moreover, continues to persist in Liberia and elsewhere despite the scoldings of the IMF, and despite the very limited resources of the societies concerned.

Of equal significance in terms of assessing blame is the timidity of the PRC regime in addressing problems which present a real drag on genuine economic development. Despite the mounting bills for imported foodstuffs, for example, programs for meeting the need for increasing diversity of crops and expanding rice and other production remains largely rhetoric. On the other hand, the question of providing greater security in land tenure, as well as credit and other inputs for the small farmer, has simply not been seriously addressed. Nor has the issue of the ownership and the efficient management of the confiscated business and plantation interests of the former elite been rationalized in a fashion which would accelerate production, employment, revenues, and export earnings. In the meantime, the rural-to-urban drift continues with more mouths of the urban unemployed requiring food and fewer people left behind to produce it.

Finally, while it is the business of Liberians themselves to determine their own ideological strategy in terms of development, it is incumbent upon the leaders to get on with the task of implementation once the choice has been made. In that respect--given the PRC's predilections in favor of a modified form of capitalism--where is the evidence that they have substantially improved the lot of the smallholder farmer or provided support for the small Liberian business entrepreneur? The dominant economic structures continue to be controlled by Americans, Europeans, Lebanese, and others without dramatic steps in the direction of Liberian involvement in either management or ownership. Processing of raw materials in situ, which could provide jobs for Liberians, continues to remain a goal rather than a reality. In summary, the economic transformation has not, under the PRC, seriously affected the process of providing economic counterforces to the military and the civilian politicians in the society. Given the commitment to private sector action, where are the significant Liberian businessmen or industrialists, trade union leaders, heads of cooperative societies and credit associations, prosperous smallholders or even agro-business executives who could establish a genuinely pluralistic society? Only when these actors do emerge and complement the efforts of the independent journalists, the university educators, the religious leaders, and other forces, can we predict that the efforts to establish a democratically-oriented civilian supremacy model of civil-military relationships has succeeded.

THE USE OF TRADITIONAL HEALERS AS THE COMMUNITY
HEALTH WORKERS WITHIN THE VILLAGE SETTING

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Preface

This article was originally written in 1977 and was stimulated by discussions which were occurring at the U.S. AID Mission in Liberia. The Mission was in the process of designing a rural health care project paper. In these deliberations it quickly became apparent that in deciding who should be the actual village health workers the project planners did not recognize that a health care system already existed with practitioners who were serving their fellow villagers, namely the traditional healers. It seemed, to this observer, that these health workers were ignored because their practices were not thought to involve "real" health care, in the Western sense. Thus, they were placed in a different conceptual category more analogous to religious practitioners. However, as will be observed in the body of the article, this oversight seemed to have the potential for disastrous consequences.

Having pointed out what seemed to be an important gap in the planning process, and after assuring the AID Mission that it was possible to interview traditional healers, funding was provided for two weeks of fieldwork. The decision was made to visit the opposite ends of the country. One week was spent in Lofa County and one week in Maryland County. Four traditional healers were interviewed in Lofa and three in Maryland. In addition, discussions were held with many other individuals working as Western medical practitioners. Included among those interviewed were County Health Officers, who were the doctors responsible for health care in their particular county, along with various other health workers such as nurses, health center doctor's assistants, and clinic attendants. Their views were important in assessing the ability of the two types of practitioners to work with each other.

At the conclusion of the two weeks of fieldwork, which, needless to say, only touched the surface of a complex topic, there was, however, sufficient information to gain a sense of the attitudes which people held concerning the incorporation of traditional healers into the national health care system. The report which follows has been left as it was written in 1977, with the exception of some editorial changes and a few bracketed insertions for clarification.

The Setting

Liberia has a population of over one and a half million people nearly all of whom have indigenous origins. The small American settler population, with a limited number of exceptions, has been biologically integrated with the indigenous peoples. In any case, the latter population is an essentially urban group. Thus, since this proposal addresses itself to the rural peoples, it is the cultural background of the indigenous peoples which must be understood.

Liberia's indigenous peoples have been linguistically divided into three major language families, namely the Mande, Mel and Kruan speaking peoples. As language is an aspect of culture, there are broad cultural similarities among those peoples who belong to the same language families. In particular, the differences between the Kruan speaking peoples, who live in southeastern Liberia, and those who are Mande and Mel speakers and live in western and northern Liberia, are particularly noticeable. Thus the social organization of the former group, which in general consists of small villages or village groups rather isolated from each other, with a political organization consisting of a series of officers each holding different aspects of social power, is quite different from the social organization of the Mande and Mel speakers. These latter groups are far more hierarchically organized with political power held by only a few individuals, with each ascending office holder in the hierarchy holding office over a larger number of people. Thus, there are ward leaders, or lineage elders, who make up the representatives of the members of a village over whom is selected a village chief, traditionally often chosen from the founding lineage of the town. A group of villages with their chiefs would fall under the control of a clan chief. Strictly speaking the term clan is a misnomer. Often the people under the jurisdiction of a clan chief are not members of the same kin group. However, this terminology has become accepted usage by the Liberian government. Finally, each group of clans come under the jurisdiction of a Paramount Chief who controls a chiefdom.

The hierarchical political structure which has been described for the Mel and Mande speaking peoples had its origins in the traditional political structure. When the Liberian central government came to control the indigenous peoples of the country, however, it imposed this type of structure on the Kruan speaking peoples of southeastern Liberia. Part of the problems of political control which the central government had during the early decades of this century can be traced to their lack of understanding of the social organization of these peoples. Nevertheless, today the central authority of the government through its officials, such as the County Commissioners and Superintendents, are the decisive agents of political and social control over the indigenous populations. In spite of this, Liberian traditional villages still remain the backbone of the interior social organization.

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road or on one, ics, though such ssure for confortan in those asic building wever. Each vildd of the people, the lineage or the village.

To be successful any innovation must build upon the village unit. Any agency of change must work from within the social structure of the village unit rather than imposing it from the outside. If the latter action is taken, there will be far greater social disruption and thus a greater disinclination to accept the innovation.

In the case of this particular rural health care project, there is a universal realization by all peoples of Liberia that health care, whether traditional or modern, is fundamental to a good and happy life. As a consequence, there is no need to convince people of this fact. The people will welcome improved health care if they perceive it as conducive to a better life.

If one works from within the already existent social structure, the only new "cultural baggage" which will result from the program will be the new training given to particular individuals from within the social setting, and the education which will be necessary to sensitize them to the value of improved health conditions. Thus the characteristics which are demanded from the donor's society will only consist of the recipients' heightened sensitivity to the nature of diseases and preventive health care.

Who Lives Where?

There are at least two factors which must be taken into account in this rural health project. The first is the geographic location of the villages which are to be served. Ideally this project is designed to upgrade medical standards, both curative and preventative, in all villages, but in particular in those villages which are beyond a five mile radius of any government health post. In the end, the hope is that all villages without more complex medical facilities will be reached by this program.

The second factor which will be considered in the institution of this rural health project is the understanding that although there are broad similarities between all Liberian villages, there are particular differences which are due to divergent historical and cultural developments. It is clear that there are ethnic differences, and these most certainly must be understood and taken into consideration

at the time that the project is set in motion in any particular area. Thus, an anthropologist who has had experience in Liberia should be made a part of any implementation program.

The Individuals to be Affected

Medical services of a traditional kind have been provided to people at the village level for a very long time. It is these types of medical services which are familiar and well integrated into the social fabric of village life. Thus, any innovation which is proposed should build from the known. Those individuals who have been practicing medical services and who have either sworn oaths to practice properly, and/or whose reputations are at stake and who are constantly monitored by their fellow villagers, are the logical individuals to turn to for the development of innovative medical services.

As a consequence, since the project will build upon those individuals who already practice medical services to their fellow villagers, the additional time necessary to carry out the innovative practices will not be significant, once they have received their training and have been returned to their original villages.

Motivation

Almost without exception there is little difficulty in motivating individuals to seek medical advice when illness occurs. This is not to say that they will readily turn toward practitioners of Western medicine for all illnesses, but there is a general tendency to test all possibilities when one choice is not successful. Certainly those practitioners who provide efficacious treatment will be respected and will be used again for future needs. It is clear, for instance, from a study done of people near the Phebe Hospital complex in Bong County, that they readily turn to Western medicine for certain types of medical assistance, while other types of treatments, particularly those involving psychological or mental disturbances are, still perceived as better treated by traditional healers (Ross, 1972-74).

The motivation of the traditional healers themselves, based on a series of extensive interviews have been found to generally have no resistance toward or hesitation in referring patients toward Western medical treatment centers, particularly if they are illnesses which they know they cannot treat, or with which they have been unsuccessful after a period of treatment. In addition, with the exception of the very old practitioners, most traditional healers see no conflict between traditional and Western practices. Thus, from the point of view of the population, as well as the actual participants, there would seem to be no lack of motivation for integrating traditional and Western forms of health care.

Who Are the Participators

There are many types of traditional medical practitioners such as bone setters, snake-bite healers and so forth. However, it is the traditional herbalist who has a wide range of herbs and minerals for the treatment of a large assortment of illnesses, who is the logical individual to turn toward in upgrading medical practices at the village level. It has been found that both men and women are herbalists. In fact, some of the traditional midwives also have herbal remedies. Lest the image be drawn that these are doctors with rattlers practicing a mumbo-jumbo or slight-of-hand, let that quickly be dispelled. These are serious practitioners of medical services who use to the best of their ability their herbs and minerals to treat patients. As has been found in the limited studies which have been done on the pharmacology of these herbs, many of the substances used are effective.

Therefore, it is the herbalists, who are middle-aged and already established practitioners, who should form the base for improved medical treatment programs. These individuals need not be literate to be trained. The model of educating and upgrading the medical practices of traditional midwives, such as has been carried out in Bong County for several years, could easily serve as an example for the type of training envisioned for the herbalists. These individuals are already alert to diagnosing symptoms of various illnesses and certainly know how to relate to ill individuals within their own society. These skills, in addition to those already referred to earlier of oath-taking and reputation, make them the ideal individuals for further training. They are willing to add to their medical knowledge and most middle-aged practitioners are continually learning new herbs from other practitioners to add to their medical kit. Thus, they view the learning and use of Western medicines as a logical continuation of the growth of their medical knowledge.

Matching Participators and Projects

It is not difficult to identify traditional herbalists within Liberia. They are generally known by the population and there is nothing secret about the fact of their practice. In addition, the Liberian government on occasion has actually given out certificates or licenses to these practitioners.

Certainly in the initial stages it will be necessary to recruit individuals into the program. As stated before, it is likely that the candidates most receptive to training in Western medicine will be those who have already established a reputation for treatment are middle-aged and are still willing to learn new skills. Obviously those individuals who have had more contact with Western medical practices will be more open to the possibility of further training than those less exposed. In the interviews held, the overwhelming response by practitioners to proposals for upgrading their practices was most positive.

If the upgrading of standards of traditional midwives' practices in Bong County is any indication (after the successful training of over fifty such individuals, most whom have returned to their villages), the trainers are now finding that they no longer have to recruit. Rather they are receiving applications from other midwives to become participants in the program. Thus, although initially there may be some scepticism on the part of some individuals toward such a training program, there is a sufficient number of individuals who would clearly welcome the opportunity so that recruitment will not be particularly difficult.

Certainly it is clear that if traditional practitioners are not chosen, there may well be difficulties and obstacles placed by the society against other individuals who might be chosen to practice Western medical techniques, even those who might be from the very village in which they return to practice. This is not to say that it would be impossible for such individuals to be successful, or that the traditional practitioners would necessarily sabotage or undermine their work, but certainly the potential for tension is inherent in the insertion of new medical personnel who must make their reputation in competition with already established traditional practitioners.

Communications Strategies

As already noted, it is not difficult to identify traditional medical practitioners in any particular village. It would be difficult, however, to identify individuals other than these practitioners, were they bypassed. Certainly any training of participants should be done within the counties in which they reside. It will also be necessary that the training be done in their local languages, and with relatively few exceptions. This in view of the fact that counties are monolingualistic or else the individuals living within them are sufficiently fluent in the other languages of the particular county so that communication will not be difficult. If the training were done outside of the context of the county, then there would be serious problems.

There is an added factor which is important in having the participants trained within the context of the county, presumably at the local county hospitals. The nature of communication and training will not be just one-way. It is important that the Western-trained staff in the particular counties become familiar with and know those traditional healers who are participants in the program. There is a need for communication both ways and if the training is done outside the particular county, these additional beneficial effects will not be as apparent.

One other factor must be made clear from the very beginning of any such training program. The participants are not to become government employees, but are to return to their villages after

their training. There they will continue to carry on their medical practices, receiving the same types of rewards as they were given while practicing only their traditional medicine. However, it is imperative that during the training period, these practitioners be compensated for their lost patient time and for the families that they must support.

Finally, it must be made clear that the medicines which are provided to the practitioners will be provided free by the government, but that their system of compensation must remain similar to that of their traditional practices. Thus, although the government may not monitor their fee structure directly, the constraints of living within a village should be sufficient pressure on the practitioner to control him/her from profiteering. Certainly, given the nature of village health-care structures that are envisioned for the rural health-care project, the village health committees to be created with the local town chief as its chairman, can remain the monitoring body over the practitioners' activities. Thus alleviating undue outside bureaucratic surveillance particularly to areas which are remote and difficult to visit frequently.

Spread Effects: The Diffusion of Innovation

There are at least two factors which must be taken into consideration in this project. One is the initial nature of the project as it is set in a particular county. The first attempts at training will necessarily be critical for further training programs, as the results will be watched by the sceptics. However, taking the mid-wife training projects as models, particularly the one carried out in Bong County, this should alleviate some of the potential problems. Once the members of the first group have been successfully trained and placed back into their village setting, there should be little difficulty in recruiting further candidates for training, and thus the program will continue to spread to more and more individuals in additional villages.

The second factor for spreading the project will be the necessity of instituting training programs in all of the nine county hospitals. As stated earlier, if this is not done, then there will be serious problems in reaching and communicating with the local village practitioners. If, however, the experience gained in one county is transferred to a similar program in another county, always taking into consideration the fact that there are going to be particular variations and peculiarities, then the program can be successfully spread across the country.

In any selection of candidates for training, the traditional authority system of chiefs must be consulted and advised prior to the actual choice of candidates. Based on a series of interviews, experience has shown that the political authorities themselves see the selection of traditional healers for further training as the

most logical choice. With their backing, such traditional healers will be responsive and also more accepting of the new training. Thus, in any initial recruiting program, practitioners should be identified and then consultation made with the chief and elders of the town in which the individual lives. The central government has placed political authority in the hands of the town chiefs to deal with local matters, and although they cannot necessarily command an individual to participate, their approval is important for the individual to successfully participate.

Finally, in a project such as this, there must be instituted at the county hospital level an ongoing training program for community health workers. Once these are set in place with permanent trainers, the initial task will be to place upgraded healers in each village. This in itself will take several years. In addition, with the natural loss of staff through migration, illness and death, it will be imperative that individuals continue to be replaced. Moreover, as new preventative health techniques are developed and new drugs become available, it will be necessary to return the upgraded healers to the county hospitals for further training.

Social Consequences and Benefit Incidence

In a project such as this the immediate beneficiaries of it will be all of the village members without regard to social status, sex or age. Thus there should not be any particular ill effects from such a project. All individuals will have equal access to medical treatment, because the fee structures which have been traditionally made--despite certain regional fluctuations--in most cases do not exclude anyone from the possibility of health care. There is a recognition by the traditional healers that all should be treated. Although those who can afford to pay for their services should, there are some who remain unable. These latter they treat as part of their professional responsibility.

As far as special benefits which may accrue to particular individuals, the traditional healer will obviously benefit by his ability to use additional drugs. However, as stated previously, he/she is already locked into the constraints of the society in which he/she must live and thus, must continue to practice fairly to maintain his/her social standing and reputation.

In a project such as this, there is nothing which would cause social or physical displacement from the village setting in which individuals already live. In fact, on the contrary, it may encourage individuals to remain in the village setting if they realize that they are able to receive improved medical treatment rather than having to go to another location for that treatment.

In line , by choosing individuals who are already vested with the experience of traditional medical practitioners, there is no need to change the nature of power or social position. Ratification. Ratification affirms a working structure which already exists.

Finally, the question of collection of information for the particular test site is imperative that the particular test site for this project be assessed by a trained and familiar person with the county prior to instituting the project. If there are limited time constraints for the collection of this kind of data, then it is even more important that the individual involved be already familiar with the general social organization and cultural background in order that the work can be done in a short period of time. Even then, only an attitudinal survey will be possible.

As a concluding thought, it is certain that traditional healers are not going to disappear in the near future. No matter how Westernized individuals may be, there are certain types of crises in which they will continue to turn to traditional practitioners. This is particularly the case with regards to psychological and mental illnesses. Thus, the integration of the two types of practices must occur, and with a sense of respect and willingness to learn on the part of both types of practitioners. As one African Head of State said before a WHO conference, "Whether we like it or not, the majority of people in developing countries get treatment in one way or another from traditional healers. It is high time therefore that we should review the status of this silent majority of health workers." This rural health project should be designed to do just that.

Afterword

One would like to report that since the submission of this report, a radical rethinking occurred among the health project planners. Such has not been the case. In fact in a recently AID/Liberia commissioned social soundness analysis for the Liberia Primary Health Care Project Paper Design, the report is not even mentioned. More importantly, this new analysis mentions only briefly traditional healers and their significant medical and social position within the village setting, without any discussion of their potential role in the new health care system (Schoepf & Guannu, 1981). This is particularly ironic since AID/Washington's own Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination had published in the intervening period, between the submission of the author's report and the Schoepf-Guannu analysis, their own statement on the subject which paralleled the ideas submitted in this author's recommendations (Pillsbury, 1979). Sadly, but not surprisingly, it seems that one AID hand does not know what the other is doing.

It is difficult to decide whether one should be pleased or not, but when AID/Liberia submitted its Primary Health Care Project Design to Washington, it was turned down. One privately funded American health worker assigned to the Liberian Government expressed relief that the project had not received support. This person was concerned that the project would undermine the good work which the Dutch government has been doing. The Dutch have had a small village health worker project in Maryland County and have achieved a high degree of success. They have encouraged the local villagers to select the individuals whom they desired as their health worker. In many cases the local traditional healer was chosen.

Since the Dutch are now planning to replicate their project in Grand Gedeh County, the above mentioned expatriate health worker was concerned that if the American project was funded, not only would it undermine the fine work which the Dutch were doing, but, given the poorly thought out planning, it would probably cause more harm than good.

One must, then, conclude with a certain amount of sorrow that the great potential of resources and talent which the United States government has at its command, has nevertheless not been sufficient to create a successful village health worker project fitted to Liberia's resources and needs.

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LIBERIAN LANGUAGES

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African Language Relationships

Like the vast of Africa's two thousand languages, Liberia's indigenous s belong to a major language family called NIGER-CONGO. s bgroups of NIGER-CONGO are found in Liberia. They are ATLANTIC (or MEL), and KRAUN (or KRU). Chart A lists all tw iberian languages within their respective subgroups and shows the position of these three language groups within NIGER-CONGO. It also shows the position of NIGER-CONGO within the larger set of African languages. Maps A and B present a general view of the primary areas in which Liberian languages are spoken and the approximate locations of the language family boundaries.

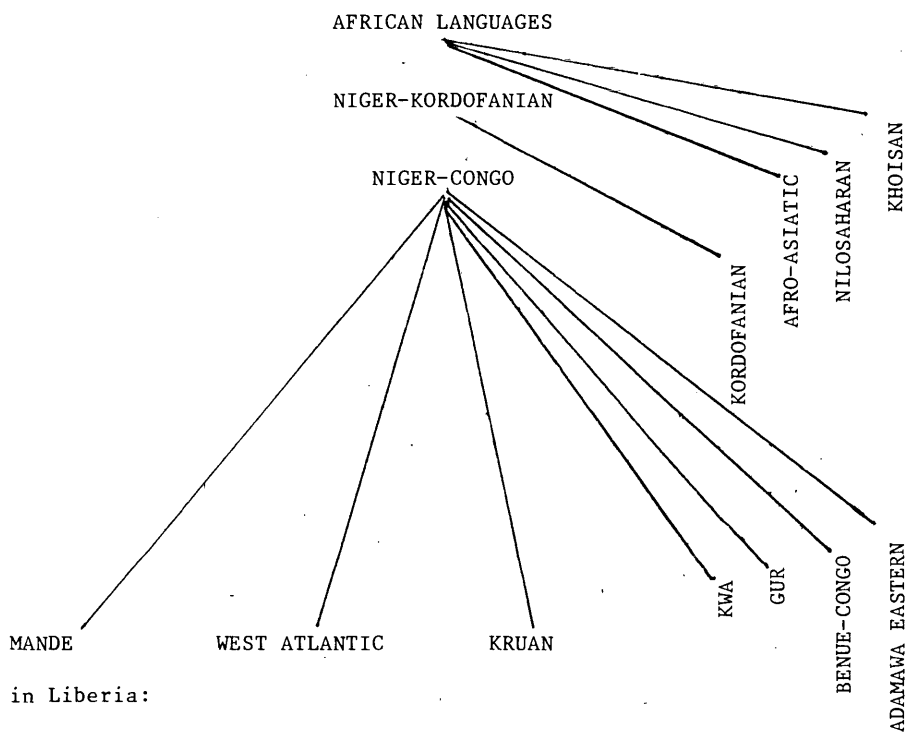
1981 Language Map

The language map included here is based upon information collected by the Ministry of Planning during a socio-economic survey conducted early in 1981. The questionnaire they used asked: "Which languages are spoken in this locality?" The languages given in reply to the question were noted beside the localities (towns, villages, and farms) on the base map. Because most of the interviews took place on farms and because of spelling difficulties, only 13 percent of the localities could be found on the base map. In all, thirteen hundred interview localities were located--enough to provide a reasonably accurate view of language distribution. Information from linguistic surveys conducted by personnel from the Institute for Liberian Languages and the University of Liberia was included to further refine this general picture.

Although the general picture of language distribution shown on Map B is accurate, we can still expect boundary variations of one to four miles in some places. This is because the survey teams occasionally bypassed some villages when collecting language information and because we could not find many--87 percent--of the interview localities on the base map.

Earlier maps showing language distribution were based upon ethnic territorial boundary information, the assumption being that the members of the various ethnic groups all lived within their traditional areas and all spoke their respective languages. Such

CHART A
LIBERIAN LANGUAGE RELATIONSHIPS²



in Liberia:

Mende
Vai
Mandingo
Bandi
Loma
Kpelle
Mano
Dan

Kisi
Gola

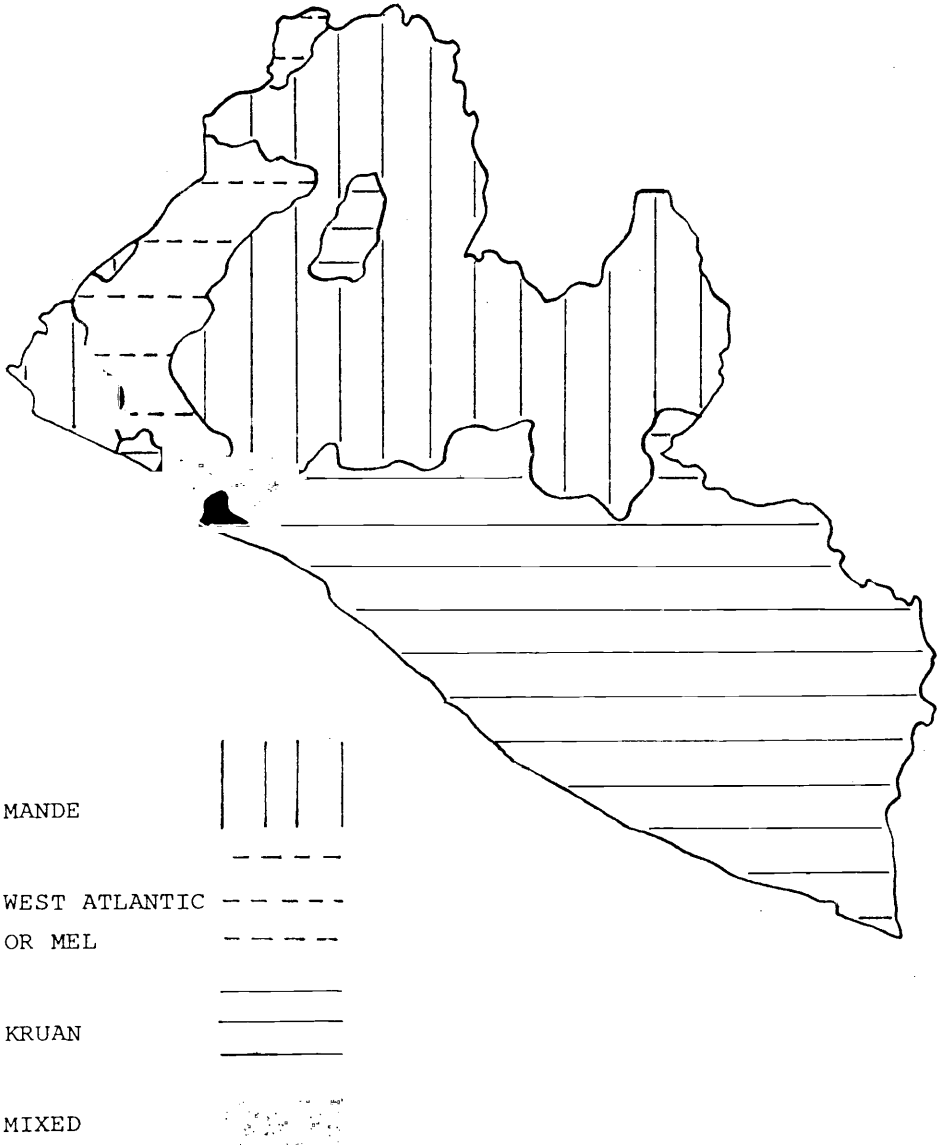
Bassa
Dey
Gbee
Kuwaa (Belleh)
Klaoh (Kru)
Tajuosohn
Krahn
Eastern Krahn (Gorbo, Kanneh,
Konobo, Glaro, Twabo)
Glio
N. Grebo (Palupo, Gbepo,
Chedepo, Jedepo, Lkepo, Tienpo)
N.E. Grebo (Sabo, Tuabo, Webo,
Kitiapo, Nitiabo)
Central Grebo (Dorobo, Borobo,
Gbolo, Trembo, Nyenebo, Gebebo)
W. Grebo (Forpo, Bua)
S.W. Grebo (Wedebo, Kplebo,)

CHART A (cont.)

Elsewhere in Liberia:³

MANDA	WEST ATLANTIC	KRAUN
Maninka-Bambara	Wolof	Bete
Ligbi	Fulani	Bakwe
Loko	Temne	Godie
Tura	Limba	Dida
Samo	Bulom	Kouya
Bisa	Nalu	Aizi
Toura	Krim	Wobe
Guro	Mani	Niaboua
Kono	Baga	Semeh
Susu	Landoma	

MAP A
LIBERIAN LANGUAGE FAMILIES



MAP B
LIBERIAN LANGUAGES-PRIMARY AREAS



This is a simplified version of the language map included in the 1982 Liberian Atlas produced by the Ministry of Planning, the German Technical Assistance Organization, and the Institute for Liberian Languages.

maps convey a misleading picture of people and languages neatly contained within sharply definable boundaries. They do not, however, account for linguistic overlap, nor do they account for language shift. By using color and shading techniques, not possible in this article, the language map in the forthcoming Liberian Atlas has overcome some of these limitations.

Language Shift

One example of language shift involves the Kuwaa (Belleh) who have a traditional ethnic territory which includes sixteen towns (Sasasu, Gatema, Kondesu, Lowoma, Konkpo, Gbele-yankei, Toikei, Koleojeh, Kaleojeh, Kineojeh, Baloma, Konjade, Kpalakonu, Mawunfodo Jala, and Doi) but a much smaller linguistic territory. Only in ten towns (Konkpo, Gbele-yankei, Toikei, Koleojeh, Kageojeh, Kineojah, Baloma, Konjade, Kpalakonu, Mawunfodo) is the Kuwaa language the primary means of communication. The people of Sasasu, Gatema, Kondesu, and Lowama, though traditionally considered Kuwaa, speak primarily Bandi. People from Doi speak primarily Loma (Federwitz and Kowula, 1981).

Language shift occurs also along the western border between Liberia and Sierra Leone. In that area some people who are ethnically Vai and Gola are using Mende as their primary language. Another example of language shift is found among the Mandingo people in the area around Bopolu. All of the people interviewed in that area claimed that very little Mandingo is heard there; virtually everyone now speaks Kpelle. Bopolu was once a thriving commercial center and an important link along the Mandingo trade route from Guinea to the coast. Apparently, the reduction of Bopolu's commercial importance has left the Mandingo population without a means for attracting linguistic reinforcements for maintaining a speech community there.

Linguistic Overlap

The Ministry of Planning's survey reveals considerable overlap along linguistic boundaries and, further, that the areas of overlap are greatly extended along the roads. Mano and Dan speakers, for example, can be found living within each other's territories along the entire length of the main road that crosses Nimba County. Along language boundaries where there are no roads, the overlapping areas are commonly between five to ten miles in width. Where linguistic boundaries coincide with major geographical features, the boundaries are often more definable and the area of linguistic overlap much smaller. Such is the case where Krahn and Gbee meet at the Cess River and where the St. John River serves as the boundary between Kpelle and Mano.

One-way Intelligibility

Where language groups differ greatly in population size, one-way intelligibility phenomena have developed. Disproportionately larger numbers of speakers from smaller language groups learn to speak the languages of their more populous neighbors. There is, for example, a high percentage of Gbee people--more than 60 percent--speaking Bassa while only a handful of Bassa people speak Gbee. The Glio, Day, and Kuwaa are other groups that are in this position.

It is possible to look at Map B and receive the impression that there are three small islands of Mende speech in Liberia. The fact is that Mende is Sierra Leone's largest language in terms of the number of speakers and the Mende speakers in Liberia are just small extensions of this relatively large group. It is good to keep in mind that the present political boundaries separating Liberia from her neighbors are not linguistic boundaries. All of the languages which appear along Liberia's outside political boundaries can also be found beyond those borders.

Eastern Liberia

Grebo and Krahn are collective terms which include ten languages (see Chart A). Seven of these are commonly referred to as Grebo and three as Krahn (Ingemann, 1972, 1977). In response to the survey questions about which languages people speak, the people from Maryland and Grand Gedeh counties usually gave only the general language names--Grebo or Krahn. As a result, we do not have enough data to show the language boundaries within the Grebo complex nor can we accurately subdivide Krahn. In Sino County a similar situation exists among the Tajuosohn (sometimes called "Bush Kru") and Klaoh (Kru) groups. Although Tajuosohn is shown as a separate language on Chart A, the Tajuosohn responses were too few and too inconsistent to define that language area separately from Klaoh. Fortunately the Glee people, who are usually included with the Bassa, consistently stated that their language was Gbee. This made possible a fair delineation of the area in which that language is spoken. It is hoped that future map revisions will bring all of the language boundaries of Eastern Liberia more sharply into focus.

Relatively New Languages

In addition to Liberia's indigenous languages, there are several languages which have been introduced more recently. The most widespread of these is English. French, Arabic, Hindi, Timne, Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, and Fulani are found primarily in Monrovia and the larger towns and are not shown on the language map. A sizeable population of Fanti-speakers (consisting mostly of fishermen and their families) is found in Monrovia as well as in other coastal towns which offer both easy access to the sea and markets for their fish.

English and Multilingualism

Throughout Liberia the percentage of the population which speaks English is increasing. Travellers visiting even the most remote villages find that they can use English at least to the extent that they can make purchases and ask for directions or assistance. English is the language of trade and government, the lingua franca in the larger commercial centers, and the medium of instruction in the schools.

Some have viewed the increase in the number of Liberians who speak English as an indication that some of the vernacular languages, especially the smaller ones, are moving rapidly toward extinction. This idea gains support from the fact that there is also an increase in the number of Liberians in Monrovia and the larger towns who speak only English. At present, however, those who speak only English are a small minority--less than 5 percent of Liberia's total population. Thus the increase in multilingualism--an increase in the number of people who speak English in certain situations, such as when speaking to people who do not know their own vernacular language, in schools, in government offices, and in other formal situations. The vernacular language is used in less formal situations--in the home, with relatives, or when conversing with friends.

Clearly, strong social reasons for communicating in the vernacular languages still exist. Where these reasons exist, it is unrealistic to predict the early demise of a language. Even in the last century, linguists expected the Dey people and their language to be absorbed by nearby English-speaking Monrovia.

Dewoi is the original name of the country about Monrovia, on the River St. Paul, called De in the De woi language. This tribe will probably soon cease to exist as such, and its language become extinct . . . (Koelle, 1854).

Now, 127 years after that statement was written, the Dey language is still very much alive. The Ministry of Planning survey teams located about twenty towns and villages in which Dey is still the primary means of communication.

Bleteo and Fahnlay

There is a situation in Liberia, however, where the social reasons for maintaining a language are so weak that a Liberian language is being lost. This is occurring among the people of Bleteo Town, located forty miles northeast of River Cess on the east bank of the Cestos River. Here there are less than forty people who still regularly speak the Bleteo language. According to Mr. Snaweeyeh, the town's leading elder, and "Town Owner," the

Bletoe language is unique and is not found or understood outside of their area. He stated further that all of the Bletoe people are able to speak Bassa and that the younger people, those under thirty years of age, use primarily Bassa. The majority of the children under age fifteen are unable to speak Bletoe.

Bletoe is a KRUAN language and appears to be most closely related to Tajuosohn.

The people from Fahnlay Town in Nimba are reported to be speaking a unique language which is being replaced by Dan (Gio) and Krahn. To date no linguistic studies have been made to determine what the relationship of that language or dialect is to the other languages of Liberia.

FOOTNOTES

¹In July, 1981, personnel from The Institute for Liberian languages (J. and K. Duitsman, M. Rodewald) were commissioned to plot language data collected by the Ministry of Planning onto a base map. An article was written by J. Duitsman to accompany that map in the forthcoming Liberian Atlas. That map, or a simplified version of it, and portions of that article are included here with the kind permission of Mr. H. J. Schaffer, Atlas Project Director.

²The language classification represented here is basically that of Joseph Greenberg (1963), the major differences being the additions of the KRUAN branch of NIGER-CONGO and most of the languages listed under that subfamily.

³The language list under "elsewhere in Africa" is not exhaustive.

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THE 1975 VORSTER VISIT TO LIBERIA:
IMPLICATIONS FOR FREE AFRICA'S RELATIONS WITH PRETORIA

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It seemed reflective of the mood of the times that Africa reacted with relative calm when Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda on April 30, 1982 met South Africa's Pieter W. Botha. Some may suggest that it was a case of proximity legitimacy or that the southern Africa liberation struggle had progressively narrowed down to Namibia and South Africa, with the former hopefully on the way to resolution. Others may point to the deep and widespread political and economic problems that today beset the continent as motivating African forbearance.

Whatever the case, this represented a far cry from what was obtained just seven years earlier. At the twenty-fifth session of the Liberation Committee of the OAU in June 1975, the Executive Secretary reported that the major development on the southern African scene since the last session was the diplomatic offensive of South African Prime Minister John Vorster and his visit to Liberia. Major Hashim Mbita added: "The event generated a heatwave on the African continent and necessitated the OAU to hold a special session of the Council of Ministers to draw up an African strategy on southern Africa."

This paper critically examines the Liberian foreign policy initiative that the event of the visit manifested, with a view to determining the motivations and intended objectives, as well as exploring implications for free Africa's relations with South Africa.

Accordingly, it reviews the background of Vorster's "secret" visit to Liberia, the substance of the discussions, the domestic and foreign reactions elicited and the diplomatic responses of the OAU. The visit is assessed from two perspectives: (1) that of the unilateral initiative of one African country employing open summit diplomacy ostensibly in the interest of furthering African objective, and (2) the impact (or lack of it) of that initiative on the African objective of liberation in Africa's south. The paramount interest is in understanding the motives and objectives of Liberia's unilateralism, and in the light of that understanding, exploring the effects of the initiative on Africa's relations with Pretoria.

In its February 17, 1975 issue, The Times of London, headlined--"Mr. Vorster Pays Secret Visit to Liberian Leader,"³ and then went on to provide the details of the conversation that had transpired between the Prime Minister of Apartheid (John Vorster) and the President of Liberia (William R. Tolbert, Jr.). Other media (including the Liberian) soon picked up the story, some exclaiming--"Liberia Welcomes Africa's Enemy!" "Tolbert in Trouble with the OAU!" How did this come about?

That question was incidentally put to the Liberian Foreign Minister, C. Cecil Dennis, Jr., by Guinean President Sékou Touré when the former visited Conakry to brief him on the visit. Unconvinced and reportedly visibly disturbed by the explanation provided, Touré lamented that the Tolbert regime was not keeping faith with Liberia, the advocate of African liberation, and in what must have irked Mr. Tolbert, he added: "If [former President W. V. S.] Tubman was not a dynamic leader as far as his internal policies for social development [were concerned], at the African level he was always an honest man, and all African leaders knew this and had confidence in him."⁴

Since the founding of the OAU in 1963 when free Africa committed itself to struggle for liberation against the remnants of colonialism and apartheid, Liberia remained consistent until 1971 in her refusal to be lured into any form of unilateralism in respect to the Pretoria regime.⁵ In that year as a result of a change in government occasioned by the death of President Tubman, but also due to the intense African debate over tactics induced by South Africa's renewed "outward policy," shifts began to develop in Liberian policy.

These were not sudden but cumulative changes. Each new departure derived its *raison de'être* from previous stages. Upon coming to office in 1971, President Tolbert seemed aware of an important communication between his predecessor and Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda. That communication concerned Vorster's threat in early 1971 to expose the Zambian for being what he called a "double talker." What Vorster alluded to was a series of indirect contacts his government had had with Zambia, and South Africa's efforts in the process at securing a summit to further the earlier version of the "outward policy." When Kaunda refused after protracted, blunt and acrimonious exchanges, Vorster's fury led to the charge of "double talker."⁶ The exercise itself was not devoid of lessons for Africa's relations with Pretoria.

As Africa debated "dialogue" in early 1971, some of these lessons were reflected. When an opportunity was perceived for diplomatic movement on the Rhodesia problem, it was fully seized to explore the possibility of effecting South Africa's military disengagement (without free Africa's abandonment of the armed struggle option). A combination of care and tact, but also bluntness, was deemed necessary in exchange with South Africa, considering her overriding interest in the propaganda effect to exploit a situation and divide the nations of free Africa.

Already in 1969 the Lusaka Manifesto⁷ had clearly crystallized African views about relations with Pretoria. Despite subsequent interpretative proclamations such as the "Mogadishu Declaration" of 1974 and the "Dar-es-Salaam Declaration" of 1975, the Manifesto, in my view, continues to be the preeminent source of wisdom and guidance. African nationalists need not die unnecessarily, it asserts, if independence can be won peacefully. In the absence of the peaceful option, however, the people concerned are entitled to every means at their disposal including force, to effect their liberation. But the rejection of this reasonable approach by South Africa hardened Africa's methods and apparently rendered suspect any form of African unilateralism. Yet it must be remembered that implicit in the Manifesto has always been the possibility of negotiating or fighting or negotiating and fighting.

Coming to office in mid-1971 Tolbert at first maintained the inherited policy of official noncontact with Pretoria. However, already in his January 1972 inaugural address he began to hint at the wisdom of what he called "direct dialogue between those nations who . . . have come to accord mutual respect for each other's aspirations regardless of race, creed or status of their constituent peoples."⁸

While it is difficult to be precise as to when the decision was taken by Liberia to establish contact with South Africa, two versions of the origins may prove enlightening. The first was provided to the writer by a former Liberian Ambassador. The Liberian Ambassador indicated that President Tolbert substantively spoke to him in early 1974 about the subject of possible⁹ contacts between Liberian Baptists and South African Baptists. Tolbert desired to reach Baptists in South Africa. Accordingly, the Ambassador was authorized to broach the subject with the South African Permanent Representative to the U.N., Ambassador R. F. Botha. During their initial conversation the Liberian Ambassador raised the issue of apartheid, thus evoking from the South African the comment: "Maybe our principals might want to meet to explore" Nothing henceforth is heard about two Liberian Baptists trying to reach South African Baptists. For when Tolbert was informed of the discussion, his terse reaction was that he would not treat the matter of possibly meeting Vorster unless approached by South Africa. Given this background, Ambassador Botha made the necessary arrangements and the logistics of a meeting were then worked out. The Liberian Ambassador made two trips to Pretoria to finalize the preparations.

The other version, a matter of public knowledge, was provided by President Tolbert himself when he issued on February 18, 1975 an official statement on the controversial visit.¹⁰ While visiting Lesotho in July 1974, the President said he was approached by South African representatives requesting dialogue as a means of commencing a resolution of the issues of "apartheid and Namibia." His reaction then was to refer to the Lusaka Manifesto that called for South Africa's prior initiation of dialogue with its own citizens if it

desired to speak with free Africa. Tolbert added that while in New York in November, 1974 he was again approached by South Africans "along the same lines." Actually, this was his first meeting with Ambassador Botha as arranged by the Liberian Ambassador.

In the Liberia of this period it is inconceivable that such high-level political activity would be undertaken without the involvement of Finance Minister Stephen A. Tolbert, widely considered as de facto "Prime Minister" in his elder brother's government. In actuality, the Finance Minister was in charge at the outset, adding his own instructions to those the Liberian Ambassador had received from the President. At one time, according to the Liberian Ambassador, the Finance Minister established direct telephone links with Ambassador Botha, thus, considerably diminishing the Liberian Ambassador's role.

What, one might ask, motivated Liberia's direct contact with racist South Africa? Cynics would perhaps suggest that minority regimes of any color sooner or later find they share common interests. There is also a body of Liberian opinion that places the move in the same league with that of the opening toward the communist world, an initiative viewed as confused, unimaginative, dangerous and ultimately destructive to foreign policy with dire domestic consequences.

Explanations provided by the government, however, link the initiative to the changed situation in the region occasioned by the April 1974 Portuguese coup de'état and the likelihood that important concessions could be extracted from beleaguered South Africa. The Liberian government sought to exploit to her benefit this new situation if progress could be made regarding Namibia¹ and Rhodesia, and some reformist gesture obtained as a first step in respect to apartheid.

Reviewing the record of Africa's relations with Pretoria one found an Africa united as to purpose but divided over strategy. It included the 1969 Lusaka Manifesto which had received the overwhelming endorsements of the OAU and the U.N., the 1971 showdown at the OAU Council meeting between the "dialogue club" and opponents, as well as Malawian President Banda's defiant visit to Pretoria. Included as well were Vorster's 1974 so-called "voicè of reason" speech and the resultant secret diplomacy of Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and Mozambique (FRELIMO) "to explore chances of agreement on Rhodesia." Liberia was fully aware of the initiative of these frontliners, for Kaunda had sent his Foreign Minister to brief Tolbert.² As a consequence of the foregoing, it was thought that the contemplated decision for the summit would not be in violation of OAU principles, that the only negative result might be a certain amount of criticism for unilateralism. On the contrary, the gains could be tremendous, politically and perhaps in other ways.

Already there were talks at the highest levels of government of the hope that perhaps the Nobel Peace Prize awaited President

Tolbert, should a real breakthrough occur.¹³ During the contacts between Finance Minister Tolbert and Ambassador Botha the subject of landing rights in Liberia for South African airlines was discussed. The South African did not fail to offer other material rewards, offers which the Liberian appeared to have tabled awaiting the achievement of concrete results.¹⁴

As the finishing touches were being put to the visit, President Tolbert decided that his position might be further strengthened were he to invite African leaders of the territories concerned in an effort to discreetly secure their endorsement. Chosen for invitation from South Africa was the Kwazulu Chief, M. Gatsha Buthelezi, and from Namibia, the SWAPO leader, Sam Nujoma. No one was at this time invited from Rhodesia.

Buthelezi visited Liberia from December 31, 1974 to January 6, 1975. True, in conversations with Tolbert, he did speak of "cautious optimism" regarding developments in his country and the region. Nevertheless, he made it clear that Vorster was unprepared to recognize the right of all men to human dignity and equality. Perhaps the expression of "cautious optimism," even from a personal-¹⁵ity of such questionable credibility, sufficed for Liberian purposes.

Nujoma visited for a week beginning February 1, 1975. Tolbert's pointed question to the SWAPO leader was: "Do you think a visit by me to Namibia will be helpful to the liberation and independence cause of your country?" The equally blunt reply came that it would be inappropriate for Tolbert to visit "the Neo-Nazi Boers in Namibia in view of the fact that it is they who are in control there." Instead, continued Nujoma, representatives of the Vorster regime might be invited to Liberia for talks with SWAPO on the future of Namibia. Conveniently ignoring this clear statement of condition and purpose for SWAPO/South Africa direct contact, Liberia considered that SWAPO had offered a veiled endorsement of the idea of a Liberian/South African¹⁶ summit. Nujoma was later to threaten to go public on the matter.

All being thus prepared in the perception of the Liberian authorities, the final cable of confirmation for the summit was dispatched. The arrangements for the accommodation of the visitor were made almost entirely by Finance Minister Stephen Tolbert with only marginal involvement of anyone else.¹⁷ The government was later to explain the secrecy of the atmosphere surrounding the visit as exclusively in the interest of security.

But following the visit it became clear that there was more to the desire for secrecy than security. Security cannot explain the concealing of the information from all but a handful of the cabinet as late as five days after the visit. On February 17 Foreign Minister Dennis briefed Guinea's President Touré, pleading for forbearance "for most members of the Liberian cabinet" had not been informed. In fact most government officials and the Liberian people

received their first information from a broadcast of the BBC quoting Reuter's and The Times of London on the very day, February 17, 1975. Moreover, the Liberian delegation attending the budget session of the OAU Council of Ministers in Addis Ababa, February 13-21, was subjected to great embarrassment by the revelation. With no information or instructions from home, the delegation endured severe criticism as the Council resolved to hold a special session designed "to discuss South Africa with Liberia in the dock."¹⁸ In light of such apparently poor coordination in government circles and the mounting criticism abroad and echoes of suspicion at home, Tolbert issued his statement of explanation.

The substance of the discussion between the two leaders revealed a mutual desire to normalize relations but great divergence of views as to the philosophical bases for that relationship.¹⁹ While Tolbert moralized about ending confrontation and promoting conciliation based on mutual respect for human rights and equality, Vorster reverted to the 1966 origin of his "outward policy" emphasizing the need for a nebulous peace. Unabashedly asserting that Africans live in "differentials" rather than discrimination in South Africa, Vorster went on to liken his country's relations with Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and Malawi to those between the European Economic Community and free Africa.

When Tolbert firmly, but in moderate tone, verbalized the standard OAU position on Namibia and Rhodesia, Vorster reacted by stating that his government held that a key role could be played by Zambia and South Africa on the matter of Rhodesia. In October 1974, fresh contacts had been made which resulted in more than fifteen meetings with officials of the two countries in Zambia and South Africa.

On Namibia, Vorster informed the Liberians of financial burdens his government experienced in the last fifteen years. He asserted quite frankly: "I would be only too pleased to get South West Africa off our backs." So much the more because South Africa had since 1967 accepted the right of this territory to self-determination and independence. But he added without further clarification: "We have certain responsibilities" as the administering authority.

When the conversation ended the two leaders had exposed the respective positions of their governments with no discernible effort at mutual persuasion. They seemed agreed that the decisions to establish contact which had led to the visit would be maintained, and that perhaps their meeting had aided the efforts of the frontliners regarding a Rhodesian settlement. Beyond this, each party left with its own perception of what had been achieved--for Vorster perhaps that the visit had taken place at all, for Tolbert that his efforts had complemented the frontliners, and that Vorster might just be serious about what he called²⁰ getting Namibia off his back with "territorial integrity" intact.

As Vorster departed he inquired of his host whether confidentiality was preferred. Tolbert for his part expressed no objection to publicity. Finance Minister Stephen Tolbert thereupon sent a secret dispatch of the transcript of conversation, complete with photographs, to his friend Leonard Buckley of The Times of London.²¹ Thus it was that five days following the clandestine visit of the South African Prime Minister to Liberia the world was given a full account even while Foreign Minister Dennis undertook his briefing shuttle to African Heads of State.

The diplomatic offensive that the Foreign Minister's far-ranging trips represented was an attempt to remove the perceived negative impressions of the visit. Travelling to fifteen African states between February 17 and March 6, 1975, Mr. Dennis was received by thirteen Heads of State. It would appear that the foci of these briefings were the Current Chairman of the OAU (Somalia) who was requested to inform all other OAU member states, the Chairman of the Nonaligned Countries Movement (Algeria), the leading frontline states, Liberia's neighbors and a few other countries apparently judged important in assessing African opinion.²²

While the Foreign Minister reported to President Tolbert upon his mission's conclusion his sense of general African understanding of the initiative (if remarks of Heads of State are reliable indicators), the comments of the Heads of State betrayed at times an acute sense of outrage.

Guinea's Touré was one of those clearly disturbed by the visit. Despite Tolbert's earlier revelation to him about being approached by South Africa and briefings he had received regarding the October 1974 contact of the frontliners with south Africa, Touré unreservedly rejected any contact with Vorster. He emphasized the moral imperative that "dialogue" be approached collectively. While wishing Tolbert well, understanding that he took the action in good faith, Touré called the action a "moral wrong." He confided to Liberia's Foreign Minister: "I am scared . . . scared not of Tolbert being bought, but of making moral mistakes because as leaders of our people our only true strength is our moral stature before our people and world opinion."²³ Kenyatta of Kenya and Boumedienne of Algeria were similarly disapproving of the visit, the former unreservedly and the latter with circumspection.

Expressions of support came from the leaders of the Ivory Coast (Tolbert's initiative dubbed an "act of courage"); Ghana (even though Foreign Office Officials harbored reservations); Nigeria (with guarded optimism in view of "changing circumstances," yet aware of the need to be cautious when dealing with a devil such as Vorster so that "my brother is not waylaid and abandoned with this problem")²⁴ Somalia (sounding a note of caution); Ethiopia; Zaire (sovereign Liberia had need to explain her actions to no one); Cameroon and Mauritania ("full faith in the nobility of his motivations").

Having earlier joined Botswana and FRELIMO in talks with South Africa, Zambia and Tanzania were also generally supportive of the Liberian initiative. President Kaunda was willing to place Liberia in league with the frontliners whose efforts were motivated by principles and a worthy cause rather than a debasing search for aid from apartheid. Nyerere, remaining highly analytical in his reaction, felt that South Africa may have been "genuine" in that new phase of contact because of the realities confronting her. He would deal with Vorster only to assist the process of decolonization of Rhodesia and Namibia, and in absolutely no other matter. His feeling was that Tolbert was similarly motivated.

The international press exposure of the visit occurred while Dennis was already en mission. The murmurs of embarrassment and disbelief this elicited at home obliged Tolbert to issue his February 18 statement of explanation--six full days following the visit and only a day after its publication in the Liberian press.

As was customary in the Liberia of 1975, no sooner had the President spoken than a chorus of stage-managed expressions of support began flowing from affiliates of the Establishment. The cabinet endorsed the visit after the fact, having earlier been kept in the dark as a collectivity. From the legislative branch of government came an all-encompassing

Joint Resolution by the Senate and House of Representatives, . . . expressive of their congratulations, profound appreciation and satisfaction to Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr. . . . for his recent meeting with Prime Minister John Vorster on the South African Problem and tendering him their wholehearted support for his²⁵ policies and programs since his presidential incumbency.

The Congress of Industrial Organizations of Liberia in a letter that thinly veiled a lack of understanding of the issues, congratulated Mr. Tolbert "for having succeeded in having . . . Vorster come to our ancient country to talk peace."²⁶

But there were also voices of dissent. The Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) expressed moral indignation over the government's decision to allow Africa's enemy to visit Liberia. For MOJA this was, however, considered hardly surprising since the Liberian leadership was a minority leadership and more attuned to "his master's voice" than the true sentiments of the people. In an "open letter" the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) wrote about its shock and surprise, adding:

Mr. President, you have seriously embarrassed the people of Liberia before the entire world. Even before the tide of shock and surprise can ebb, Vorster, in open mockery of the people of Liberia, has invited you to South Africa.

We must say here to you, our dear friend, that if you go to that place, please do ^{us} the very kind favor of not returning to our country.

There the matter rested at home as Algeria called for an Extraordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers which convened in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, April 7-10, 1975. It was an open secret that Liberia's unilateralism represented by the Vorster visit was a prime reason for the assembly. But open to examination and possible censure were also Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and Mozambique (FRELIMO) for also having undertaken peace initiatives without prior OAU endorsement. The atmosphere was charged. Guinea wanted nothing short of a vehement denunciation "as a traitor of African freedom and dignity, any African government which echoes or makes itself an accomplice of imperialism in our ranks by playing the game of the apartheid regime."²⁸

Clearly on the defensive as even the shuttle diplomacy had implied, Liberia was particularly keen on informally ascertaining the views of other governments and liberation movements in Tanzania prior to the convening of the meeting. The uneasiness of the Liberian delegation was soon calmed when Tanzania's Foreign Minister John Malecela made available an advance copy of a draft "strategy of Dar-es-Salaam on Southern Africa" reflecting the views of the four frontliners that had met the South Africans. Assurances of support to Liberia also emanated from Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Kifle Wodajo, ANC's President Oliver Tambo, Nigeria's Foreign Minister Okoi Arikpo and Mauritania's Foreign Minister Hamdi Ould-Moukness.

One preconference problem then remained outstanding. SWAPO's Sam Nujoma expressed to the Liberians his concern that Vorster's visit on the heels of his own to Liberia left the unwarranted impression that the Liberian initiative had received his endorsement. He was being pressured, Nujoma asserted, to publicly state that he had no prior knowledge of the Vorster visit. Understanding that such a declaration would add complications to an already difficult situation, Foreign Minister Dennis successfully dissuaded Mr. Nujoma from doing so. Thereupon the SWAPO leader made clear that he would deny before the Council and publicly any Liberian statement that would express or imply that he knew of and had approved the visit.

It was with this understanding and the various assurances that Liberia approached the formal opening of the conference. With the host, President Julius Nyerere, giving the keynote address, the draft strategy was presented. The purpose of the meeting, Nyerere asserted, was not to debate "detente," "dialogue" or talks with South Africa, but the elaboration of a new strategy on how to liberate southern Africa by specifically strengthening ANC/Zimbabwe and SWAPO. He went on to stress the need to preserve African solidarity. In conclusion he called for the pursuit of a peaceful settlement of the crisis in southern Africa, if possible, and failing this, an intensification of the armed struggle.

Despite the frankness and depth that subsequently characterized the Council's debate, the "Diplomacy of Contact" that had been initiated by the frontliners, joined in by Liberia, and reflected in Nyerere's opening remarks was endorsed by the Council. The ultimately adopted Declaration of Dar-es-Salaam on southern Africa and the Resolutions on South Africa and Namibia, distinguished between "contacts" designed to facilitate liberation and "dialogue" designed primarily for détente with a view to facilitating trade and other relations between free Africa and Pretoria. Contacts were held acceptable while dialogue was not since the détente fostered by such dialogue implied unacceptable peaceful coexistence with apartheid.

In light of the foregoing, how may one assess the Liberian diplomatic initiative of which the 1975 Vorster visit was the most explicit manifestation? Our purpose, as stated at the outset, has been twofold: (1) to attempt a determination of Liberian motives and objectives, and (2) to explore the implications of the initiative for free Africa's relations with South Africa.

Already it has been suggested that Liberia was influenced by many considerations: some noble in intent and rational, others less so. Among the positive factors, perhaps, are the lessons derived from the Tubman/Kaunda exchanges; the desire to carry forward the initiative of the South West Africa case of the 1960's; Tolbert's propensity to break new diplomatic ground as also exemplified in the openings toward the communist world; and the desire to complement the known efforts of the frontliners in the hope of a possible breakthrough due to the changed circumstances in the region.

Less noble were such selfish and immoral considerations as the veiled pursuit of the Nobel Peace Prize and the hope, perhaps even the realization, of material rewards for undertaking the exercise

But if we return for a moment to the nobler intentions, several important questions arise. With all good intentions and the propensity for experimentation, how could one take such a complex issue and assume, with limited (even questionable) credentials, that success was possible where others possessed of impeccable nationalist credentials were treading cautiously and with no visible success? Why take such a gamble by risking a public summit on Liberian soil involving the prestige of the Liberian state when there existed only a slight chance for success? Any reasonable Liberian objective could have been pursued at far less risk at lower levels of diplomacy, opting for a summit only if signs suggested its utility. After all, the fact was long established that the "dialogue-détente-contact" initiative effectively originated with South Africa's outward policy of 1966. It was also clear that Vorster's motives were rooted in his government's self-interest and inimical to that of Black Africa.

Liberia's failure, therefore, to recognize the essential need for substantive preparation before determining the utility of

such a complex summit diplomacy and her unilateral action as opposed to the joint efforts of the frontliners exposed her (rightly or wrongly) to all kinds of ugly suspicions. One might possibly have concluded that she was part of a coterie of states which included Malawi, Ivory Coast and the Central African Republic (CAR) who sought material rewards; or that there was some truth to the South African revelation that five members of the ruling True Whig Party (TWP) ³⁰ received payments from South Africa in connection with the visit.

But the suspicions that this Liberian failure engendered insofar as it had some connection with Pretoria, were perhaps tempered by other considerations. If indeed Liberia was "in the dock" at Dar-es-Salaam (Dar) as Addis Ababa had demanded, it can be said that because of the coincidence of the OAU's consideration of all of the other recent contacts with Vorster, including that of the frontliners, the rebuke of Liberia was milder than it might otherwise have been. Rather than suffering isolation without recourse at Dar, Liberia fought to become a part of the Council's drafting committee. This she managed to do with support of key frontline states. Guinea's strident militancy was effectively contained, with Zambia's Foreign Minister, Vernon Mwaanga, derisively referring to Touré's representatives as "microphone revolutionaries." Perhaps the most important of the mitigating circumstances affecting the judgement passed on the Liberian initiative was the fact that the new African strategy adopted at Dar endorsed peaceful contacts if held in consultation with liberation forces and with their approval. But African leaders were also urged to have no contacts with "puppet" bantustan leaders, and not to extend invitations to them.

Dar/1975, thus, had become the new dictum in free Africa's relations with Pretoria. Dar ushered in a new phase (the Dar Strategy) in free Africa's response to South Africa. However, this new response did not simply result from initiatives exclusively emanating from South Africa. It represented as well free Africa's exploitation of the changed situation in the region precipitated by the 1974 Portuguese coup but rooted also in the pressures of the armed struggle.

May the relative calm that greeted the April 1982 Kaunda/Botha public summit not be a reflection of Africa's acceptance of the 1975 Dar strategy? Despite President Tolbert's acknowledgement in the writer's presence that the criticisms that had attended his initiative had developed in him a certain "cold-footedness" about proceeding any further, he did not cease his diplomacy of contact. While wisely not contemplating a repeat summit, he kept in communication with Vorster by other means.

The exchanges, while cordial in form, revealed the well-known gulf dividing free Africa and Pretoria. They also reflected South Africa's assessment of the efforts of her renewed outward policy some two years following the controversial Monrovia summit, and portrayed

Vorster's government pique over unabating³¹ Liberian criticism of the systems of minority rule and apartheid.

The first of the exchanges, also published fully in the May 20, 1975 issue of The Times of London, revealed significantly Vorster's desire to have Tolbert employ his good offices in arranging summits with Kenya, Zaire and Nigeria. Despite denials by both governments, the writer and Mr. Leonard Buckley of The Times had access to correspondence that revealed the respective positions and demands of Vorster and Tolbert. The latter demanded that the South African leader had first to do something spectacularly positive and concrete to convince Africa and the world of his sincerity in desiring change in southern Africa.³² Perhaps an interesting element in this exchange was South Africa's renewed attempt to buy détente with Liberia through the offer of material assistance. Tolbert rejected it flatly.

Another exchange in 1977 dealt with the health of the PAC's imprisoned leader Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe whom Tolbert was still attempting to get out of the country. Vorster had not changed his mind. Nor had he done so on the fundamental issues dividing free Africa and his government. In typical Kaunda fashion, Tolbert wrote forthrightly on September 14, 1977, emphasizing in strong language the views of the OAU on southern Africa. Vorster replied that he was amazed

by your implied criticism concerning Walvis Bay (Namibia). You seem to take it for granted that Walvis Bay forms part of South West Africa and that I have therefore gone back on my personal assurances to you that South Africa did not want an inch of South West African territory . . ."

But, Vorster asserted, the realities of history and the OAU principle of acceptance of boundaries drawn during the colonial period pointed in other directions.

Then offering an assessment of the renewed détente efforts and his government's disappointment, he wrote on November 21, 1977:

I have been saddened by the reluctance of the international community to recognize and to give credit to South Africa for what has been achieved in the negotiations concerning South West Africa and Rhodesia. For it is my view that some considerable progress has been made in this regard. These attitudes of the international community create the impression in the minds of South Africans that the more we are prepared to cooperate the more we are pressured for further concessions.

He concluded with an appeal to Tolbert: "Because of your close association with these matters, Mr. President, some positive comments from your side will contribute considerably to creating a more constructive atmosphere internationally."³³

The lack of such "positive comments" from Liberia had been pointed out most immediately following the Monrovia visit. Fres ost Session in Dar-es-Salaam in April 1975, Foreign attended a Special Session of the U.N. Security Cou June 2 of the same year. His state- ment before the following comment in a private note from Ta nister Malecela: "Ndugu Dennis," he wrote, "I si congratulations on your most wonder- ful statemen as hard-hitting and soul-searching to the adver an cause." South Africa protested privately to o er

By 1977 Vorster was calling the "posture adopted by your representatives in the United Nations distinctly unhelpful." And in a manner reminiscent of American and British "reporting" of Liberian officials to President Tubman in the 1950's and 1960's for not faithfully supporting the West in the U.N., South Africa in November 1977 informed Tolbert that South Africa was disturbed "by certain radical statements that were made recently in a speech" by an official of the Liberian Mission to the U.N.³⁴ Despite these representations, the "distinctly unhelpful" posture persisted.

The Monrovia summit had thus no visible effect on Liberia's views on the vexing problem of southern Africa. But what did the unilateral Liberian initiative imply for free Africa's relations with South Africa?

Right from the beginning in 1966 South Africa's outward policy has always clashed with free Africa's objectives in the region of southern Africa. While Pretoria initially sought a maintenance of the status quo of minority rule and apartheid, free Africa strove to end both. When changed circumstances led to South Africa's shift of tactics to achieve the identical objective, even if this meant sacrificing a "kith and kin" regime, free Africa did not relent. Its objective remained the same. What has under- gone change for free Africa has been the matter of strategy.³⁵ A significant element in this evolution of strategy has been the politics of unilateralism or the propensity of African states to engage in diplomatic contacts with South Africa outside of the OAU's frame- work.

This is precisely what Liberia did when she allowed a summit on her soil involving the Prime Minister of apartheid. In so doing she was following, by virtue of direct contact, a number of other OAU member states which included Malawi, Madagascar, Gabon and the CAR, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and Mozambique. But one must quickly add that there were differences in nature in these series of contacts with South Africa. Malawi, Madagascar, Gabon, CAR, Ivory Coast and Senegal were "dialoguers" apparently willing to risk OAU solidarity to pursue an experiment often seen linked to a strong desire for material reward.³⁶ For the four frontline states the motives involved seizing a perceived opportunity

for negotiating the decolonization of neighboring Zimbabwe and Namibia before undividedly pursuing the battle against apartheid.

While Liberia was influenced by both the dialoguers and the frontliners, her brand of unilateralism constituted a new category. There is no evidence of her being urged to do so by her American mentor, as certain francophone states were by their French mentors, even though material rewards were dangled before Liberia as before the dialoguers by South Africa. Her keen interest in and involvement with African affairs provided her access to the major diplomatic currents on the continent. Thus it was that the initiative of the frontliners became known to Liberia at an early stage. Since Vorster was throwing his diplomatic net in all directions, political ambition played a part in motivating the Liberian decision. But unlike the frontliners, it was Tolbert's political naïveté and personal ambition that led to a precipitous public summit when the identical objective might have been achieved in a non-summit contact. Liberia might have been spared the agony of criticism and suspicions, suspicions which were reinforced by a deteriorating domestic political situation.

Whatever the form of African unilateralism, however, problems were posed for Africa's strategy. The frontliners had engaged in a non-summit diplomacy of contact with South African officials in October 1974. The Ivorian and Senegalese Presidents had engaged in secret summit diplomacy on Ivorian soil.³⁸ Liberia, for her part, opted (alone) for public summit diplomacy. This evoked an immediate public outcry throughout much of Africa and beyond. Momentarily disturbed and withdrawn, Liberia prepared to face the other nations of free Africa, now seemingly transformed into adversaries, at the extraordinary Council meeting of the OAU in Dar in April 1975. But the conclusion seems inescapable that but for the hue and cry engendered by Liberia's outrageous initiative in meeting Vorster, especially in public, the matter of Africa's strategy may not have been clarified as early as it was. Thus Liberia's controversial public diplomacy appears to have contributed to bringing order into the unilateral component of Africa's then evolving new strategy. Dar/75, in endorsing qualified unilateralism, opened a new phase in the liberation struggle.

FOOTNOTES

¹Africa, no. 130 (June 1982), pp. 17-18. An even more recent case of "contact diplomacy" was the December 8, 1982 meeting in Cape Verde of the Angolan Interior Minister and the South African Foreign Minister. See "Soundings in Praia," West Africa, no. 3410 (December 1982), p. 3192.

²Organization of African Unity, "OAU Report of the Executive Secretary of the Lib. Committee to 25th Session," (LC. 25/DOC), 9 June 1975.

³"Vorster Verifies Visit to Liberia," Times (London), 17 February 1975, no. 5932 and New York Times, 18 February 1975 in AF Press, vol. 10, no. 7, 18 February 1975 (Washington, D.C.), p. 16; vide: BBC African Service, 21 February 1975.

⁴See memorandum of conversation between President Touré and Liberian Foreign Minister Cecil Dennis, 17 December 1975, pp. 10-11.

⁵Liberia's first known contact with South Africa in the post-war era dates to July 1947 when the Union of South Africa sent a delegation to her centennial celebrations. The delegation included W. Gordon Mears and Chief of Basuto, Josiah Moshesh. In a subsequent letter of thanks to the Liberian government, the Union's External Affairs Minister, U. Smuts, expressed the hope that the

". . . initial contact which has been established . . . in such happy circumstances will in the years to come prove fruitful in promoting sympathetic understanding of the interests we hold in common as a result of our individual efforts to promote the development of the continent of Africa and the welfare of its inhabitants . . ."

Later, in 1958, possibly in line with the "Open Registry" program Tubman approved a Liberian-State Department recommendation for the appointment of Captain M. A. Meny-Gilbert as Honorary Consul in Cape Town "since Liberia is now a large Maritime power . . ." See Tubman's 'Private Papers at Totota Estate for the President's Fourth Annual Message to the Legislature," 21 November 1947 and letter of Secretary of State Dukuly to Tubman, July 1958.

With the effective emergence of Africa on the world scene, Liberia changed course and aligned herself with free Africa by concerting with Ethiopia in the 1960 South West Africa Case. Henceforth Liberia was guided by OAU decisions on South Africa.

⁶For details of exchanges between President Kaunda of Zambia and Prime Minister Vorster of South Africa see Republic of Zambia, Dr. Mr. Vorster (Republic of Zambia: Zambia Information Service), p. 11 and Kaunda to Tubman, 29 April, 1971, p. 7.

⁷See the Lusaka Manifesto proclaimed by the Fifth Summit Conference of East and Central African States held in Zambia, 14-16 April 1969.

⁸See excerpts on the Vorster visit from Tolbert's First Inaugural address as quoted in "Official Statement," 11-12 February 1975, The Executive Mansion, Monrovia, Liberia, pp. 4-5.

⁹Tolbert, a staunch Baptist, was once President of the Baptist World Alliance and throughout his Presidency of the Republic was also President of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention. The Liberian Ambassador, a Baptist Preacher as well, informed this

writer that Tolbert had toyed with the idea of contact while still Vice President of Liberia in the late 1960's, but did not advance it because of Tubman's stance on the matter.

¹⁰Tolbert, "Official Statement," pp. 5-6.

¹¹Liberia was hoping to reseize an initiative that circumstances had taken away following the World Court's 1966 decision on the South West Africa Case.

¹²See interview with President Kaunda in Africa, no. 42, (February 1982) pp. 10-12.

¹³Writer's interview with Gerald Padmore, Special Assistant to the Liberian Foreign Minister, 1973 and June 1975.

¹⁴Interview with a former Liberian Ambassador whose name the writer is not now at liberty to divulge.

¹⁵See memo of conversation between Tolbert and Buthelezi, 2 January 1975, Executive Mansion, Monrovia. Also present were Vice President James Greene, Foreign Minister Cecil Dennis, Local Government Minister E. J. Goodridge, Presidential Affairs Minister E. R. Townsend and Assistant Foreign Minister Charles Ansumana Cooper.

¹⁶See memo of conversation between Tolbert and Nujoma, 4 February 1975, Executive Mansion, Monrovia.

¹⁷Vorster spent the one night in Liberia at the Finance Minister's private home in Bensonville (Bentol) and as Foreign Minister Dennis later mentioned in the writer's presence, Steve Tolbert's only regret was that he placed a white-bound rather than a black-bound Bible at Vorster's bedside table.

¹⁸See "OAU Reaction to Move" in The New York Times, 18 February 1975 in AF Press Clips, vol. 10, no. 7, February 1975, (Washington D.C.), p. 16

¹⁹The South African delegation included Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller, BOSS Head H. J. Van der Bergh, Secretary for Foreign Affairs F. A. Fourie and Ambassador R. F. Botha. The Liberian side included Foreign Minister Cecil Dennis, Presidential Affairs Minister Reginald Townsend and his Deputy Burleigh Holder.

²⁰Vorster offered in a November 1977 letter to Tolbert a wholly different interpretation of "territorial integrity," contending that Walvis Bay has not been a part of Namibia in the post-war era of African decolonization.

²¹Buckley, now retired from Times (London) has written a biography of Stephen Allen Tolbert as yet unpublished.

²²The Liberian Envoy was received by the Heads of State of Guinea, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Algeria, Mauritania, Zaire, Zambia, Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. Circumstances did not allow his meeting the Gabonese and Senegalese Presidents.

²³See memo of conversation between President Touré and Foreign Minister Dennis, 17 February 1975, Presidential Palace, Conakry, p. 8.

²⁴See memo of conversation between General Y. Gowan and Foreign Minister Dennis, 20 February 1975, Dodan Barracks, Lagos, p. 10.

²⁵Government of Liberia, The Joint Resolution, 48th Legislature, 4th session, 1975.

²⁶The two and one-half page letter from the CIO of Liberia (dated February 17, 1975) was signed by General Secretary Amos N. Gray, Executive Vice President James E. Bass, Assistant General Secretary J. Wellington Ross and President-General John Toh Pratt.

²⁷See "MOJA--Seven Years of Struggle," (1980), p. 12 and PAL, "An Open Letter," to Tolbert dated March 22, 1975 and signed by Chairman, Samuel P. Jackson.

²⁸See page three of Guinea's draft Resolution to the Dar-es-Salaam Council Meeting. Also Conakry Radio Broadcast, 22 February 1975.

²⁹The many weeks of preparation that had preceded the visit were exclusively devoted to mechanics and logistics, with no substantive diplomatic talks. The Baptist Liberian Ambassador and Finance Minister Tolbert were the only two senior Liberian officials talking directly with the South Africans prior to the visit. The Foreign Ministry was on the periphery of the arrangement.

³⁰See "Muldergate Scandal," Africa, (May 1979) which mentions Liberia as being one of three African states where former South African Secretary of Information, Eschel Rhoodie and his agents were active. The charges were categorically denied by the Liberian government. See "Government Blasts South Africa," Bentol Times, 23 May 1979, vol. 1, no. 18, pp. 1-8. See also "Pretoria Scandal," Newsweek International, April 2, 1979, pp. 20-24.

³¹To an invitation from Liberia to the imprisoned PAC Leader Sobukwe to attend Tolbert's inauguration in January 1976, an invitation induced by the OAU-recognized PAC, Vorster's reply was a flat refusal as his release to travel would adversely affect South Africa's interest.

³²See Times (London), 20 May 1975.

³³Vorster to Tolbert, 4 November 1977, p. 4.

³⁴Liberia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations to President Tolbert, 10 November 1977.

³⁵There has been an evolution of African strategy perhaps beginning with the Lusaka Manifesto, continuing with the 1971 Mogadishu Declaration up to the Dar Strategy, with varying degrees of emphasis depending on the particular stage of the struggle.

THE CONTEXTUAL MEANING OF "SII," EPILEPSY,
IN A PART OF GRAND BASSA COUNTY, LIBERIA

Corry Gerrits

Introduction

In collaboration with Dr. A. P. Hanson, Director of the Liberian Institute for Bio-medical Research, three Liberian co-workers and two Dutch doctors, I participated in medical-anthropological research into the problems of epilepsy in Grand Bassa County from October 1981 until May 1982.

The purpose of my part of the research was to find out if there was a problem of epilepsy, its proportions and the ethno-medical meaning of this illness.

In the area under study there exists the highest prevalence of epilepsy so far described in the literature on Africa south of the Sahel.

In this article I will discuss the meaning of "sii," epilepsy, for those who suffer from this serious illness.

The Area Under Study

The area under study is located in districts 3b and 4b of rural Grand Bassa County. The clans, in the meaning of geographical units, in these districts are: Gbawein clan, Seeyah clan, Whencegbahkon clan, Upper Gianda clan, Seeway clan and the Whroghbarh clan. The ethnic groups which inhabit the area are the Bassa and Kpelle.

The majority of the people in the rural areas under study live at a low subsistence level. The households are patriarchal and polygamous. There are hardly any schools or clinics, and motor roads are rare.

Most of the towns are small: 4-17 houses with a population density, estimated by me, of 14.79 per square mile. The population density of the whole country is probably about 24.1 per square mile.

Migration in Grand Bassa County is a normal phenomenon, as elsewhere in rural Liberia. People migrate into urban sectors or plantations in search of education or work. This results in the

absence of a part of the generation of adults between 20 and 40 (men migrate more than women).

The Method of Research

I did not know the area, so we asked the people where to go to meet the epileptic persons for interviews in districts 3b and 4b of Grand Bassa County.

Through their advice I was able to outline the area for a survey. The samples, however, were selected. In order to outline the area, I made clusters from the central and surrounding towns. In those clusters were interviewed the epileptic people, their families and other people from the various towns of the clusters.

I used a questionnaire with open and structured questions. The subjects of the questionnaire were: (1) the visible manifestations of epilepsy (history of illness, signs and seizures), (2) the economic and social background of the epileptic people and other town people, (3) the indigenous conceptions and explanations of epilepsy and (4) geographical information.

The survey was followed up by participatory research with open questions among the target group, nonepileptic people and the traditional healers. This research was necessary to analyze quantitative and qualitative data in the context of the Bassa and Kpelle.

I defined epilepsy symptomatically as a disease with a regular appearance of "grand mal" seizures.

Summary of Some Main Statistical Results

The survey which I carried out in districts 3b and 4b covered 37 towns (divided into 5 clusters) with a total number of 364 houses and an estimated population of 2,733. According to my informants 134 people of the total population in the survey (2,733) suffered from epilepsy, and 114 were interviewed in considerable detail by me and my co-workers. The prevalence rate of epilepsy, based on data of the survey, is extremely high: 49 per 1,000 (see Table 1).

During the participatory research I concentrated also on the data of one geographical unit, the Whroghbarh clan, in order to get a reliable prevalence rate which could be compared with the prevalence rate in the survey (see Table 2).

The prevalence rate in the Whroghbarh clan is 49 per 1,000, which is similar to the prevalence rate in the survey. The prevalence rate in other African countries is estimated between 7-13 per 1,000,³ Nigeria 8-13 per 1,000,⁴ in the Segokwe district of Zimbabwe 7.4 per 1,000,⁵ rural Uganda 2.1 per 1,000⁶ and in a city and a

village of Ethiopia the prevalence rates were respectively 5 and 5.4 per 1,000.

In comparison with recorded prevalence rates of epilepsy it should be noted that the prevalence rate in the area of the survey and in the Whroghbarh clan is extremely high. Though the prevalence rate differs between the clusters of the survey, an average of nearly 5% of the population suffers from this dramatic illness.

TABLE 1

Diagram of the clusters, the total population of these clusters and the total epileptic population in the clusters of districts 3b and 4b of Grand Bassa County (November 1981).

Cluster	Total number of houses per cluster	Total population per cluster	Average per house	Total number of epileptic persons	Percentage of the total per cluster
Mano Whea's T.	52	345	6.63	19	5.51
Juah Town	34	277	8.15	27	10.47
Fee-tua market	72	609	8.46	24	3.94
Baseegiah Town	145	1,048	7.23	41	3.91
Yoko Hoe Town	61	454	7.44	21	4.63
Total	364	2,733	7.51	134	4.90

TABLE 2

Diagram of the total number of inhabitants of the 37 towns and the total number of epileptic persons in the Whroghbarh clan, district 3b of Grand Bassa County (April 1982).

Total number of houses in the clan	Total population in the clan	Average per house	Total number of epileptic people in the clan	Percentage of the total
223	1,673	7.5	82	4.90

Table 3 shows that epilepsy is nearly equally divided between the sexes. However, the ages when the first signs of epilepsy are noticed by the Bassa and Kpelle interviewers differs. Most of the males get epilepsy before or during puberty, whereas many of the females get the same illness at the age of puberty or a bit later.

TABLE 3

The incidence of epilepsy according to sex and age group of the 114 interviewed epileptic persons in districts 3b and 4b of Grand Bassa County (November 1981).

Age Group	Sex and Percentage					Total	
	Male	Percentage of total	Female	Percentage of total	Number	Percentage	
0 - 4*	6	5.27	4	3.51	10	8.78	
5 - 9	24	21.05	6	5.26	30	26.31	
10 - 14	17	24.91	35	30.70	52	45.61	
15 - 19	7	6.14	13	11.40	20	17.54	
20 - 24	1	.88	1	.88	2	1.76	
25	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	55	48.25	59	51.75	114	100.00	

*In the age group 0 - 4 the 10 children were all between 4 and 5.

The first historical case of epilepsy, as far as remembered, occurred in 1939 in a nine-year-old boy of Mano Whea's Town (district 4b). He died two years later during a seizure. Therefore, people in the area under study already have had long experience with epilepsy. According to the people interviewed, the incidence of the illness has increased during the last five years.

The Economic and Social Background of the People Under Study

The Bassa and Kpelle people in the rural areas cultivate the soil according to the principle of "slash and burn" (swidden cultivation). The output of the farms hardly exceeds the level of subsistence. This means that most of the production is consumed within the households. Therefore, most of the people could be characterized as peasants.

The whole family is responsible for growing foodcrops. The work, however, is done mainly by women and children. Some men make cash-crop farms (sugarcane, coffee, rubber or cocoa), but the income is low, due to the absence of a well-organized local market system for the sale of cash crops and the bad terms of trade for many Third World countries. The women sell their food crops in the local market and this income is used mainly for domestic goods and articles.

Poverty and the struggle for survival may well be significant factors influencing the health of the people.

Social Protection and Isolation
of Epileptic Persons

Epilepsy is highly feared among the Bassa and Kpelle people. This is due to the dangerous aspects of epilepsy and also the unforgettable impression that a seizure makes on a bystander. The children and younger adults who suffer from epilepsy are surrounded with socially protective "laws" to limit the severe and often mortal risks of seizures such as accidents, burns and drowning.

Examples of socially protective "laws" are: (1) don't sit in a high chair, (2) don't climb trees, (3) don't fish alone, (4) don't go near the fire and (5) don't go a far distance alone.

As in many Third World countries⁹ burn injuries are a great risk factor with epilepsy in the area under study. The danger of burns is part and parcel of the daily household activities involved in such activities as preparing food and boiling bath water over a wood fire. From the 114 epileptic persons interviewed, 12 males (10.52%) and 19 females (16.67%) suffered from mild to severe burns. Two people (one male and one female) were crippled from burns. It is not surprising that more females risk burns because of the division of labor between the sexes in patriarchal households.

Besides the protective "laws" epileptic children and young adults are isolated in some ways. Children who go away to school and develop the illness outside their home village are sent back to their close relatives and are not allowed to go to school anymore.¹⁰ This policy originates with the teachers and the close relatives.

Other aspects of isolation include the denial of permission for children with epilepsy to play with other children because of the belief that the foam of an epileptic person is contagious.¹¹ This belief explains why epileptic persons are not allowed to eat from the communal foodpot. They have their own spoon, plate and drinking cup. Younger epileptic men and women seldom have a chance to get married because of the fear of this illness. Adult women can get pregnant normally, but the boyfriend often runs away.¹²

It was remarkable that though epileptic persons are excluded from school, none of them is excluded from participation in secret societies: the Poro society for boys and the Sande society for girls.¹³ This might indicate that epileptic persons remain part of the ritual rebirth and membership of the Bassa and Kpelle communities. No epileptic, however, has become a powerful person within the towns or the secret societies surveyed. This is probably due to the fact that epileptic persons usually die young and old age is a criterion of power and status. It appears that all those who suffer from epilepsy hardly reach the age of 30! Only 5.26% of the interviewed epileptic population was 30 or older (5 females and 1 male). According to the census of 1962¹⁴ 24.7% of the Liberian population was between 30 and 50: only 11.9% was over 50 years of age.

It might be possible that nearly 95% of the epileptic population dies at a young age because of the serious and often mortal risks during seizures such as burning, drowning or a status epilepticus as long as the illness is not treated adequately. The above described causes of death were frequently mentioned in 42 remembered cases of persons who died of epilepsy. The age and year of death were not well-known--a common problem for research in an area where oral tradition is usual and records are not kept.

According to my informants 20 females (17.54%) and 19 males (16.67%) from the 114 epileptic persons interviewed were mildly to severely disturbed. For the Bassa and Kpelle people to be "mentally disturbed" means that, "though the body is not crippled, the person is not able to participate fully in the household, farming and social activities of the families and communities." According to my informants hardly any of the patients were disturbed before epilepsy became manifest, and crazy people did not get epilepsy. Those children and younger adults with severe mental disorders are seen as of "no use" anymore. When their behavior is very disturbed and dangerous they are, to protect themselves, tied to a chain. This is an understandable though unpleasant method of protection in the absence of alternatives. Such mental disorders may be due to brain damage caused by a progressive stage of epilepsy.

To sum up, the epileptic persons lead a more or less isolated social life. If still able, they are integrated into the domestic and farming activities. Their future expectations are low as a result of stigmatization and the fear of early death.

Indigenous Conceptions and Symptoms of Epilepsy

As mentioned before, I defined epilepsy symptomatically as a disease with a regular appearance of "grand mal" symptoms.¹⁵ Epilepsy or "sii" is for the Bassa and Kpelle, however, an illness because being ill as a phenomenon is for them part and parcel of daily life, the social and economic relations, the culture and the belief system.

The Bassa and Kpelle distinguish two types of epilepsy: (1) "to drop the head in the pan" and (2) the "big jerking." In Western medical terminology the first type shows similarities with "petit mal" in children. This type of epilepsy is noticed by the informants mostly during the social events of sharing meals together when children are watched more carefully. If a child has "petit mal" seizures during dinner it can drop his head in the pan and it often drops the food from his spoon or hands. The second type, the "big jerking," could be compared with the "grand mal." The differentiation of the "grand mal" category is, without diagnosis, only possible to a limited extent.

General complaints after seizures were tiredness, sleepiness, headache and in some cases a painful mouth. In the last case these

persons could not eat pepper for about three days. None of them, however, damaged their teeth. This is not surprising because no sticks or spoons were "protectively" put into the mouth during a seizure. Those epileptic people who fell into the fire or the water during a fit, were rescued immediately if people were present.

From the 114 epileptic persons interviewed, 87 (76.32%) showed signs just before the seizure varying from (1) bodily sensations (e.g. dizziness, blackouts, ear-buzz), (2) behavioral sensations (epileptic yell, aggressiveness, restlessness, listlessness, etc.) to (3) a "cultural sign (e.g. a dream about an evil spirit).

Among the women suffering from epilepsy I noticed that the seizures did not necessarily increase or decrease before, during or after menstruation. In some cases the seizures decreased during pregnancy but increased again after delivery. None of these women mentioned such an incident during the exhaustive labor or childbirth.

Indigenous Explanations of the Cause

The majority of the informants related the cause of epilepsy to evil spirits or to witchcraft. This is rationally related to the cultural context of the complex belief system of the Bassa and Kpelle people.

Evil spirits came into question when in the context of a dream a dead person was forcing the subject to eat, drink or do something:

My brother he died of epilepsy. When he comes in my dreams he forces me to drink liquor. When I drink the liquor now, the fit grabs me. (Informant)

Not in all cases was the evil spirit a dead person. Sometimes the evil spirit is associated with the "Mame Wata," the water spirit. This spirit appears mostly as a white lady, a mermaid,¹⁰ and sometimes as a white man in the form of a seducer:

When I dream I see a white man. He smokes a pipe. Then he shares the pipe with me. After some time he gives me some money and wants to make love with me. If he grabs me, the fit comes. (Informant)

In the case of witchcraft it concerned a person who was still alive and who bewitched somebody, thus causing epilepsy:

You see plenty people in my town suffer from epilepsy. It started long time ago. One woman, she was not able to get child, so she witched some children. Those children got epilepsy. We believe the foam of those children is contaminous. That is why plenty people in my town have epilepsy. (General town chief)

Epilepsy is considered by the Bassa and Kpelle as dangerous and fearful but is, in contrast with other African cultures, not seen as spirit possession.

A minority of the informants explained, "we know this sickness is epilepsy, but the real cause we don't know." Many of these informants--as did most of the people--went to the country doctor (the traditional healer) to find out the cause. Explanations given by country doctors varied from witchcraft and evil spirits to "The sickness came from the sick person's head." In these cases it concerned a history of illness in which the epileptic person suffered from a serious infectious brain disease before epilepsy became manifest.

Relations with Causes Known in the Western Medical World

In some cases I was able to relate causes of epilepsy with certain ones known in the Western medical world such as birth accidents, convulsions in childhood (fever), cerebral malaria and other infectious brain diseases. This was, however, the case in a minority of the persons interviewed. Furthermore, it is not sure if the above mentioned causes are an explanation of epilepsy in the target group. The majority of the 114 interviewed epileptic persons had exhibited no such causes. Many of them suffered (only) from a chronic headache before the incidence of the illness. Relations with epidemiological causes like viruses are under study.

The Moon As Time Factor

The number of seizures is probably related to the type and severity of the epilepsy. "Petit mal" spells manifested themselves a few times daily; the "grand mal" a few times weekly or monthly. Those who had a regular number of episodes every month related time to the different quarters of the moon.

Among many ethnic groups in Liberia, the moon is a well-known integrated cosmological time factor in the conceptions and daily life of the people. An example is when a woman "did not see the moon" she knows (again) what time it is: she is pregnant (again).

The Treatment of Epilepsy

The Bassa and Kpelle people go for treatment of epilepsy mostly to a country doctor or, in rare cases, to a prophet church. The treatment of country doctors is a ritual one to limit the evil forces. Furthermore, a daily herb treatment along with a fatless diet is prescribed. The seizures, however, did not decrease. In the case of my informants this treatment did not decrease their seizures.

Another reason why the treatment could not be effective lay in the fact that the area is poor to afford medicine and the cost of the period. Many people are treated illegally and the prices are outrageous.

Many people who have been treated at a far-off clinic or drugstore have finished the illness because the informants. A special hospital for the treatment of epilepsy in this rural area, collapsed in 1979 after a short period.

With our participation and action people in the remotest part of the research area were able to build a self-help clinic financed by the "small projects program" of the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

Summary and Conclusions

Epilepsy in districts 3b and 4b of rural Grand Bassa County is not only a medical but also a severe social and economic problem.

The area surveyed is underdeveloped. The people live at subsistence level. Data from my study has been derived from a survey among the various clans of the above mentioned districts and from participatory research. The Bassa and Kpelle people already have long experience with and a rational understanding of epilepsy. They were open and very cooperative during the interviews. They did not hide their epileptic children and (young) adults.

Epilepsy is highly feared among the Bassa and Kpelle people; not only because of the belief that the foam of an epileptic person is contagious, but also because of the severe and often mortal risks such as accidents, burning, drowning or death during a seizure. This could be the reason why people who suffer from epilepsy don't reach middle or old age when the illness is not treated adequately.

Those who suffer are surrounded with protective "laws" to limit the risks during seizures. As long as they are able to work they are economically integrated into the domestic and farming activities of their households. Socially they are, to some extent, an outcast group in their communities.

Conceptions and explanations of epilepsy offered by the people in the area under study are rationally related to the complex cultural context of their belief system. The indigenous treatment does not seem sufficient to prevent momentary lapses or seizures.

The prevalence rate of epilepsy is high in the area under study: 49 per 1,000. The influence of migration might have some relation

to the high rate. The scientific explanation of this endemic epilepsy is not known yet. More interdisciplinary research seems necessary

Without adequate medical control and social guidance, the human tragedy will continue for all those who suffer from epilepsy.

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FOOTNOTES

¹Department of Planning and Economic Affairs, Annual Report (Monrovia: October 1966). Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Population Census (Monrovia: December 1975).

²One hundred and twenty-one houses of the 364 were enumerated with precision. The total population of these 121 houses was 915. The average per house was 7.56. This calculated average was used in the survey in all those cases where the total population in the various towns had to be estimated.

³L. F. Levy, J. J. Forbes, and T. S. Parirenyatwa, "Epilepsy in Africans," Central African Journal of Medicine 10 (1964): 241-49. J. E. Cosnett, "Neurological Disorders in the Zulu," Neurology 14 (1964): 443-54. H. Gastaut, J. Roger, and C. A. Tassinari, "Colloque de l'Epidemiologie de l'Epilepsie," African Journal of Medical Science 1 (1970): 115-23 (editorial).

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⁵Levy, Forbes, and Parirenyatwa, "Epilepsy in Africans," pp. 241-49

⁶J. H. Orley, "Epilepsy in Uganda: A Study of 83 Cases," African Journal of Medical Science 1 (1970): 155-60.

⁷R. Giel and J. N. van Luijk, "Psychiatric Morbidity in a Small Ethiopian Town," British Journal of Psychiatry 115 (1969a): 149-63. R. Giel and J. N. van Luijk, "Psychiatric Morbidity in a Rural Village in Southwestern Ethiopia," International Journal of Social Psychiatry 16 (1969b): 63-71.

⁸J. C. Scott and B. Kerkvliet, "The Politics of Survival: Peasant Responses to Progress in Southeast Asia," Journal of South-east Asian Studies 4, 2 (1973): 241-68.

⁹D. C. Gajdusek, "Urgent Opportunistic Observations: The Study of Changing Transient and Disappearing Phenomena of Medical Interest in Disrupted Primitive Human Communities," Health and Disease in Tribal Societies (August 1977): 69-102.

¹⁰See also W. R. Billington who describes the same phenomenon for Uganda in "The Problems of the Epileptic Patient in Uganda," East African Medical Journal 8 (1968): 563-69.

¹¹See also B. O. Osuntokun, "Epilepsy in Africa," Tropical and Geographical Medicine 30 (1978): 28.

¹²See also J. H. Orley, Culture and Mental Illness: A Study from Uganda (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1970).

¹³G. W. Harley, "Notes on Poro in Liberia," 1941, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, p. xix.

¹⁴Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Population Census Provisional Estimates (Monrovia: 1962).

¹⁵In this paper I use the concept "illness" instead of "disease" which originates from ethnomedical sciences. "(Disease) Designates altered bodily states or processes that deviate from norms as established by Western bio-medical science (Illness) Designates that someone is sick, but the criteria are social and psychological and logically separate from those employed by Western medicine . . . all illnesses are folk in the sense that native categories always structure the form, content, and interpretation given to an illness" (Fabrega, 1971: 213). "The final illness then, may be conceptualized as an ordered behavioural form which has social, psychologic and cultural roots" (Fabrega, 1977: 212). H. Fabrega Jr., "Medical Anthropology," Biennial Review of Anthropology ed. by B. J. Siegel (1971): 167-230. H. Fabrega Jr., "The Scope of Ethnomedical Science," Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 1 (1977): 201-88.

¹⁶I. Szombati and J. Fabian, "Art, History and Society: Popular Painting in Shaba, Zaire," Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communications 3 (1976): 1-12.

¹⁷Spirit possession was, for example, mentioned among the Yoruba. See B. O. Osuntokun, "Traditional Basis for Neuropsychiatric Practice Among the Yorubas of Nigeria," Tropical and Geographical Medicine 27 (1975): 428. According to Giel some people in Ethiopia refer to the cause of epilepsy as possession of devils or seizure by

a bad spirit. R. Giel, "The Problem of Epilepsy in Ethiopia," Tropical and Geographical Medicine 22 (1970): 440.

¹⁸J. Gbadywe, "Epilepsy a Growing Concern in Grand Bassa County," Outlook 1 (1978): 29.

THE PARADOX OF CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

IN LIBERIA 1847-1930

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The great monotheistic religions, Christianity and Islam, emerged in Africa alongside the traditional religious forms. The appearance of Christianity and Islam in the western part of the black continent did not start under the auspices of a state or an organized religious institution. Islam in particular penetrated little by little from North Africa to the African states in the Sahel. Muslim traders carried their religion with their merchandise which they then spread along the major trade routes. Religious scholars and their students settled in trade centers and seats of government, gradually establishing Muslim centers there, for instance in the capital of ancient Ghana, in Timbuctu and in Jenne, all trade towns that turned into Muslim religious centers in West Africa.

In a similar way Christianity penetrated first into West Africa with the help of missionaries who accompanied Portuguese traders. When the Portuguese had lost their exclusive position as the only Europeans in West Africa, and traders accompanied by missionaries from other European countries took their place, the newcomers eventually introduced the entire gamut of different Christian religious sects to this part of Africa.

However it seems that both Islam and Christianity achieved their greatest successes when supported and directed by a political power. The Sokoto Khalifate forced Islam on the Yoruba people and those who refused to convert to the Muslim faith were obliged to look for shelter in the forest region. The Muslim state of Massina and the Empire of the Tukulor imposed Islam on the Bambara tribes. Samori declared on some occasions that Islam was his state's religion and strove to enforce it on his subjects.

The Christian missionaries, although by different means, succeeded in penetrating and extending their influence in cases when the colonial administration backed their activities in a certain area. Mission influence in territories ruled by the British intensified when the British decided to place the task of education in the colonies entirely on the shoulders of the missionaries. It seems then that there existed a correlation between the ability of a religion to penetrate a territory and the extent of support it received from the ruling power. For example after the French had separated state from church in 1905, government support for the Catholic Missions operating in West Africa was stopped and as a

consequence their ability to influence the population was reduced considerably. In a similar vein the British forbade missionary activity among the Hausa Fulani in Northern Nigeria, and this area has remained Muslim up to this very day.

If we wish to verify the assumption that the influence of any religion grows when it receives support from a political body and when the government is interested in spreading its tenets, then an obvious model for proving such a correlation would be the Republic of Liberia.

I

From the outset there was complete accord between the interests of the founders of Liberia and the Christian missionaries who operated in the country. The American Colonization Society (A.C.S.), founded in 1817, took upon itself the task of establishing Liberia. The Society's constitution stated: "The object of the Society shall be to aid the colonization of Africa by voluntary colored emigrants from the United States, and to promote there the extension of Christianity and Civilization"²

The A.C.S., which managed the colony of Liberia between 1821-1847, instructed its agents to do everything in their power to promote the spreading of Christianity among the Africans and to instruct them in "the arts of Civilized life."³

When Liberia became an independent state her leaders adhered to the objectives set by the A.C.S. The first Presidents of Liberia, Joseph Jenkins Roberts, Stephen Benson and James S. Payne, all emphasized on various occasions that Liberia's goal was the bringing of Christianity and civilization to the tribal people, helping them to step out of their ignorance and heathenism and integrating them into one black nation.⁴ It is evident from these declarations that missionary activity in the colony and later the state of Liberia served the interests of her rulers and so it could have been expected that the missionaries should receive every encouragement and support from the government. But, as it happened, the situation was quite different. The Black Republic, whose rulers saw themselves as Christians, followers of western civilization, whose constitution copied that of the United States and whose motto was the spreading of Christianity and civilization in the black continent, piled difficulties in the missionaries' way and obstructed their freedom of action in the territory.

The purpose of this paper is to detail the process and examine the reasons that moved the Liberian authorities to oppose missionary activity.

The task of spreading Christianity was performed in Liberia mainly by two Protestant Missions--the Methodist Church and the Protestant-Episcopal Church. The missionary organizations of these two churches were both the most extensive and most active in Liberia from the first half of the nineteenth century. Many of the first immigrants belonged to the Methodist Church even before coming to Liberia. In addition to the church activity initiated by the immigrants themselves, the Methodist Council in the United States sent a group of missionaries in 1833 with the task of organizing the church activity according to the Methodist doctrine and maintaining the contact between the community in Liberia and the Methodist church center in the United States.⁵

The Episcopalian mission's agents started their work in Liberia four years after the first Methodist mission. On the 4th of July 1837 three Episcopalian missionaries arrived in Cape Palmas in the southern port of Liberia.⁶ The structure and the working methods of the two missions resembled each other. Both were connected with their church centers in the United States and both received instructions from the churches as to the policy to be followed. They depended on the churches financially and administratively. Both the Episcopalian and Methodist churches preferred to charge white, American missionaries with the task of spreading Christianity in Liberia. There were, however, some differences between the objectives of the two missions. The Methodist missionaries worked mainly among the Americo-Liberians and endeavored to convert the "Congoes."⁸ On the other hand the Protestant-Episcopalian missionaries received instructions upon being sent to Liberia to work among the Africans and to convert pagans, since the Americo-Liberians, being Christian, needed no conversion to Christianity.

The different environment in which they had to conduct their activities, the Methodist among the Americo-Liberians and the Episcopalian among the tribal people, mainly the Grebo tribe in the south of Liberia, underlined another difference between the two churches. The Methodists cooperated with the Americo-Liberian administration and tried to avoid conflicts with the government. The Episcopalians and other missionaries operating among the tribal people were openly sympathetic towards the Africans, especially the Grebo tribe. They saw themselves as defenders of the weak and as followers of a church which was at that time leading a crusade for the defense of the Cherokee Indians of Georgia in the United States and condemned the repression of the Zulu people by the Boers in South Africa. The missionaries compared Americo-Liberian immigrants and the Colonization Society agents to the Federal government of the United States or the Boers in South Africa, and considered themselves as defenders¹⁰ of the Africans against any possible persecution by the government.

The Methodist mission concentrated its efforts among the Americo-Liberian immigrants but at the same time saw as its duty the spreading of Christianity to the indigenous population as well.

The Episcopalians worked among the Grebo but wanted to expand their sphere of activity to other regions. In the third decade of the nineteenth century, Methodist missionaries were sent to Boporo, to the Vai in Cape Mount, to the Gola and to the Grebo in Cape Palmas. The Episcopalians operated in Sinoe, Bassa Cove, Cape Mount and Monrovia.¹¹

Missionaries from both churches believed education was the best means of spreading Christianity among the Africans. The various bishops made great efforts to establish a school network for the Americo-Liberians and the Africans alike. In 1836 the Methodists established a vocational school in White Plains. Three years later they set up an academy of classical studies and English and a girls' school in Millsburg.¹³ Later these schools also accepted African students.

The number of Methodist schools grew steadily. In 1898 Bishop Harzell turned the Monrovia elementary school into a college named the "College of West Africa" and in 1904 a theological class in Monrovia. Along the coastal strip from Cape Palmas to Cape Mount, the Methodist Mission kept thirty-three schools.¹⁴

The Episcopalians opened a school in almost every mission station. As their activity concentrated in Cape Palmas, the Grebo people had access to a relatively large number of schools.

On the whole, missionary activity in the Republic went hand in hand with the objectives of Liberia's leaders. They frequently expressed their consent to that activity and asserted in public the identity of their respective goals.

Educating the Africans as Christians could have been, according to President Benson, a means of integrating them into the Americo-Liberian community. After having absorbed Christian values and religion it would have been possible to turn the Africans and the Americo-Liberians into one nation striving for a common goal.¹⁵

In 1874 President Roberts called in his Inaugural Address to bestow western values on the Africans, so that they should be able to appreciate the value of democracy, understand its institutions and its procedures. Having absorbed these values the Africans would be less dependent on politicians, of whom some were exploiting their ignorance for dishonest purposes.¹⁶ Beyond the different attitudes of each of the churches towards the Liberian authorities, there was consent concerning the ultimate objective and the means to achieve this objective.

II

The harmony and consent between the state and the missionaries came to an end in the 1870's. In those years the Liberian government's policy towards the missionaries turned sharply from one of support and cooperation to one of overt objection to their activities in the Republic. An expression of the new attitude can be found in the declaration of the Republic's leaders. In 1875 one of the senior ministers said the government "was considering whether to demand the removal of the [Episcopalian] mission or to let it go under restriction."¹⁷ In 1878 the Episcopalian missionaries applied for permission to establish a mission station among the Vai tribe in the Cape Mount area, a request that would have been favorably received before, but at that time it was turned down because the encouragement of missionary activity was deemed undesirable.¹⁸ Other missions and missionaries, too, encountered official opposition. In 1881 an American Methodist missionary named Kellog asked to leave his post as director of the Seminary in Monrovia although he had not completed even one year of service in Liberia. One of the reasons for his request was: "The ill-concealed hostility of the Liberian Government . . ."¹⁹ During the same period the Liberian Legislature issued new regulations according to which all the missionaries were obliged henceforth to pay customs duties for goods that used to be exempt from payment up till then.²⁰

The immediate reason for the sudden change in the government's policy towards the missionaries and the rift between the state and the missions is to be found in the eruption of an uprising in the southern part of Liberia among the Grebo people, an uprising which was directed against the authority of the Liberian government. The first step which led to the revolt was the organizing of all the clans of the Grebo people in a common political framework named the "Grebo reunited Kingdom or confederation." The convention of the Grebo people, which announced the establishment of the confederation on the 31st of December 1873, took place in the Hoffman mission-station.²¹ The Confederation leaders refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of the government of Liberia and disobeyed the instructions of its agents in Cape Palmas. An attempt made by President Payne in June 1875 to persuade the Grebo to accept the authority of the government failed.²² In the beginning of September 1875 there were a few clashes between the Liberian soldiers and some Grebo, encounters which had unfortunate results for the Government forces.²³ The Government succeeded in suppressing the revolt only after having received the support of an American Navy battleship. Under threat of the commander that his ship's guns would be used against the Grebo villages, the Confederation leaders consented to sign an agreement with the government accepting its authority.²⁴

The Liberians saw the Episcopalian missionaries as directly responsible for the outbreak of the revolt. As mentioned before,

the convention which announced the establishment of the confederation on the 31st of December 1873 took place in the Hoffman Station, one of the Episcopalian mission-stations. The head of the Episcopalian Church in Cape Palmas, Johann Gottlieb Auer, backed the establishment of the confederation.²⁵ The initiators of the idea of a renewed confederation were the educated grebo men, graduates of the Episcopalian Mission schools.

The influence of the missionaries on the founders of the confederation, the prominent part played by the Episcopalian mission graduation and, above all, the direct involvement of the head of the Episcopalian Church in Cape Palmas, convinced the Liberian authorities that the Episcopalian missionaries' activity should be restricted. Later other missions' activity was circumscribed.

The rift between the State and the missions continued and expanded even after the Grebo revolt had been crushed and the tribe's people had accepted Liberian authority. The government took a series of steps which were part of a policy designed to curtail the missionaries' freedom of action among the tribal people.

A report of the schools' inspector published in 1910 stated

. . . Pupils coming to attend mission-schools for however short a period leave with a feeling of antagonism to constituted authority, or at best with no sentiments of congeniality with the civilized element either in aspirations or ideal. On returning to their homes they develop into pernicious . . . demagogues. Fomenting the tribal spirit in opposition to the national ideal they frequently lead their people to foolish and irrational measures and stir up misunderstanding and discord between them and the government.²⁶

Two years later, in his Inaugural Address President Howard blamed missionaries for causing misunderstanding and conflicts between the Americo-Liberians and the native people:

. . . much of the dissensions and misunderstanding of the past have been due to machinations and subterfuges of some unscrupulous aliens, among whom have been some missionaries who have done all in their power to make and widen the breach between the two elements of our citizenship.²⁷

In January 1920 the Episcopalian Church's periodical published an article written by ex-President Barclay's daughter. Regarding the missions' activity, she wrote that missionaries often sowed seeds of discord in the minds of heathen children by suggesting that they were superior²⁸ to Americo-Liberians and making marked distinctions between the two. The hostile attitude towards missionary activity among the Africans did not stop with newspaper articles and presidential messages; some concrete measures were taken too. The government

prevented the building of new schools and mission-stations among Africans, especially among groups known for their hostility towards the government. In 1916 the Kru people complained that the government deliberately prevented the building of new government and mission-schools in their region, and government officials made no secret of the reason: ". . . they (the Americo-Liberians) were often heard expressing themselves thus 'It is no good educating the Country,²⁹ man, lest, they all join and pull together against us, the Liberians.

Missionaries who wanted to open stations or schools in the hinterland were confronted with restrictions intended to reduce their activities among the tribal people. In 1924 the Secretary of the Interior, John L. Morris, turned down the request of a missionary named Rev. James White to open a school³⁰ in Ganta, claiming that a school already existed in that region.

Missionaries wishing to operate in the hinterland had to overcome many obstacles on their way. They had to obtain a permit from the Ministry of the Interior to go to the hinterland and a permit to hire a limited number of porters from the District Commissioner. They were forbidden to build their houses inside the African village, they could live only on the outskirts or on a site approved by the authorities. If they wished to erect a schoolhouse, it had to be large enough to serve the whole region.³¹ Those restrictions made it easier for the Liberian government to keep an eye on the missionaries' activities and to limit the number of their schools because no permission was granted to build if a government school already existed in that region. Besides regulations restricting the freedom of action of the missionaries' operating among the tribal people, an attempt was made by the Liberians to encourage the establishment of a local mission which would be under government influence and which might gradually drive out the foreign missions. The first attempt to establish an independent mission probably took place in 1879 when the Legislature ratified the founding of a missionary order named "The Humane Order of African Redemption," the goal of which was to spread Christianity, civilize the Africans living in Liberia and in the adjacent territories.³²

In 1880 the annual conference of the Methodist church in Liberia discussed the possibility of establishing an independent church. The proposal was not supported by the Church members in Liberia, but was accepted with enthusiasm by the politicians. President Hilary R. W. Johnson speaking on Independence Day said: "Liberia should be independent in her religion as well as in her politics," and added that in Liberia there should not exist an organization having authority beyond that of the government. He saw in the power wielded by the foreign churches a threat to Liberia.³³ In 1880 a Liberian named J. W. Howard proposed to establish the "Home Missionary-Society" which could be organized and managed by Christian Liberians, members of all the churches and which could become a basis for a great African Church in the

future.³⁴ A church of that kind did not materialize, but the state continued supporting every attempt to found an independent Liberian church for many years to come. In 1925, following a dispute between the Protestant church and Americo-Liberian ministers, a proposal calling for the establishment of an independent Liberian church came up again. President King gave his blessing to the proposal and said that the churches in Liberia should free themselves from foreign influences and from the financial support which bound them to foreign organizations.

The Liberian leaders' wish to establish a local church fully controlled by the government is easily explained. All the missions active in Liberia, particularly the two large missions, the Episcopalians and the Methodists, were connected to their church centers and were administrated from abroad, mainly from the United States. Any open attempt to stop mission activity would have aroused waves of protest and reproach. These would undoubtedly have harmed the image of Liberia as a Christian state having as its proclaimed objective the spreading of Christianity and Western civilization among the Africans. Moreover, such protestations might have been followed by pressure on the American government to react against Liberia's behavior. Thus Liberia would have endangered her relations with the power that had furnished her main support in the past. In order to avoid any harm to their relations with the United States, the leaders of the Republic had to choose indirect tactics, hoping to achieve their objective without unnecessary complications.

The tactical considerations of the Liberians could be understood, but their strategy is more difficult to grasp. For example, why did the Black Republic's leaders want to get the missionaries out of Liberia? The outbreak of the Grebo revolt in 1874 and even another attempted revolt in 1910 do not explain the consistent anti-missionary policy of the different governments of Liberia and do not suffice to give adequate answers to the question of why the rift between state and missions grew wider as the years went by. The answer might be found in the situation of Liberia in two spheres--foreign relations and internal affairs. There is a close relation between the problems encountered by the Liberian government in those spheres and her policy towards the missions.

III

In the sphere of foreign relations Liberia was involved since the 1860's in border disputes, both with the British authorities of Sierra Leone and with the French authorities in West Africa. The customary method of asserting sovereignty over territory in the latter part of the nineteenth century was by examining documents signed by each state with the local African rulers. On many occasions the chiefs themselves were requested to give testimony as to the validity

and legality of the treaties signed by them or by their predecessors with Europeans or with the Liberians.

In the years 1869-70 both the British and the French Foreign Office discussed the problems of the border between their respective territories in West Africa and Liberia. The British Foreign Secretary Clarendon related to his French colleague impressions based on his own experience in conducting border negotiations with the Liberians. Among other remarks he wrote:

There could therefore be no objection on the part of England to recognize the Sovereignty of Liberia over the greater portion of these Countries were it not that the local chiefs particularly . . . repudiate the alleged cession of their territories to Liberia and deny that she had any legal claim to them, and as her Majesty's government is unwilling to be a party to handing over the Native Chiefs with whom treaties of Peace and Commerce have been concluded and faithfully observed, against their wishes and upon insufficient evidence of title to the Jurisdiction of Liberia. . . ."

Clarendon continued:

In the year 1862, President Benson came to England and proposed that an arrangement should be come to regarding the Sovereignty over disputed territory and the proper Boundaries of the Republic. Her Majesty's government immediately entertained this proposal, and while they declined to accept the deeds of Cession which the President offered to produce as sufficient evidence of the justice of the pretensions of Liberia, without first consulting the native chiefs, they agreed to submit these Deeds to a mixed British and Liberian Commission This commission met, but failed to accomplish its purpose because the Liberian commissioners refused to allow the testimony of the Native Chiefs to be admitted as evidence against the title Deeds"35

In April 1879 there was another meeting of representatives of the British and the Liberian governments and the chiefs in a place called Sulima in order to establish the borderline between Liberia and Sierra Leone. Various documents and treaties signed in the past were presented and the chiefs or their heirs were requested to approve the validity of the agreements.³⁶ As can be seen the chiefs' point of view had great significance and at times their opinion decided the issue. Chiefs who were hostile to the Liberian rule could bring about loss of territory which Liberia claimed, as indeed happened in Sulima.³⁷ Similarly, in 1894, the French governor of the Ivory Coast annexed the Liberian territory of Half-Cavalla to the colony, after the inhabitants had rejected Liberian sovereignty and hoisted the French flag.³⁸

The Liberian government was helpless when encountering problems of that kind. It lacked the financial resources and the manpower necessary to force its authority over the tribal people in the areas claimed. Thus in the long process of outlining the Black Republic's borders great importance was attached to the goodwill of the chiefs and their willingness to cooperate with Americo-Liberian government officials. Any attempt to undermine that willingness might have had serious consequences for Liberia.

The problem of outlining the borders between Liberia and the British and French territories remained unresolved for a long time, and its settlement took place intermittently until the end of the 1920's. Throughout that period the Republic leaders upheld the view that the spreading of Christianity among the Africans by means of the foreign missions did nothing to bring the Africans closer to the Americo-Liberian administration. On the contrary, it possibly caused resistance and even rebellion against the Liberian authorities and consequently increased the possibility of a further loss of Liberian territory.³⁹ That was the primary reason why the Liberians resented foreign missionary activity and restricted it.

The prolonged border negotiations had repercussions on Liberian internal policies. The deeper the colonial powers penetrated into the continent, the more urgent became the problem of delimiting the Liberian border in the hinterland. Both Britain and France requested that Liberia prove her effective rule in the territories she claimed. The Americo-Liberians, who were hardly capable of maintaining their rule along the forty mile coastal strip, faced a most difficult problem--the need to establish government administration throughout the hinterland. A chronic lack of capital, failing economy, lack of manpower and absence of a military power worthy of its name, forced the Liberians in the early years of their independence to work out a system of rule based on the participation of chiefs in the ruling process. It would seem reasonable that the missionaries could have played an important role in the process of imposing control over the people of the hinterland. The missionaries were close to the Africans and most of them spoke the local language, particularly the Episcopalian, who conducted all their work by means of the tribal vernacular. The missionaries' experience and their familiarity with local customs and language could have been instrumental in making contacts with the administration. They were above all in a position to use their sermons to persuade the Africans to obey government agents. There were indeed some missionaries who did so, the most prominent being Bishop Samuel David Ferguson (1884-1916). Ferguson was an exceptional case; he was one of the first Americo-Liberians to be appointed bishop and to head a church. After his sudden death in 1916 the Episcopalian Church reverted to appointing white ministers for the post of bishop in Liberia.⁴⁰ Ferguson was also an exception in that he supported the Liberian authorities and endeavored to associate the church with the state in the effort to take control over the population of the hinterland. He used to justify and explain the Liberian government

policy, and, in contrast to his predecessors, stressed the positive aspects of the Americo-liberian rule. Ferguson fought against the accusations published in the United States about the existence of slavery in Liberia and tried to explain Liberia's attitude in her border dispute with France.⁴¹ He made a point of keeping his followers from identifying with anti-government elements. During the hostilities which arose among the Grebo in 1893, some of the Episcopalian Mission workers in Cavalla rejected the authority of the Liberian government. When Ferguson heard about this he promptly dismissed the minister and the four teachers involved. Moreover, he declared that the church would not permit its people to undermine Liberian government authority. On the other hand Ferguson was not oblivious to the negative sides of the Americo-Liberians; he condemned falsification of election results and worried about the undesirable effects of the Americo-Liberian policy towards the Africans in the hinterland. In spite of that, he believed that the tribal people's interests lay in support of the Black Republic's government.⁴² Ferguson's efforts were welcomed by the Americo-Liberian leaders and during his tenure harmony existed between the administration and the Episcopalian mission. They praised his work on many occasions. For instance, President Arthur Barclay in his Inaugural Address of 1904 devoted part of his speech in praise of Ferguson and his work.⁴³ However, Ferguson's attitude and his efforts to bring about cooperation between the state and the missions in the process of imposing Americo-Liberian control were but a passing episode. The Americo-Liberians continued to have apprehensions regarding missionary activity among the tribal people. Their main fear was that missionary activity in the hinterland might result in the emergence of an African elite, no less educated than they themselves, which might become a rival endangering their status as rulers. Like the Europeans in West Africa, the Americo-Liberians held the position of a ruling minority in their country. But, unlike the European colonial rulers, they lacked the necessary economic, political and military power. As a result, their sensitivity to the repercussions of missionary activity among the Africans was much greater than that of the British or the French.

Another cause for the apprehensions of the Americo-Liberian elite was the possibility that the foreign missionaries might discover and publicize wrongs and vindictive acts committed by the Americo-Liberians against the Africans. Those discoveries might have hurt the image of Liberia and endangered her ties with her main ally--the United States. There was indeed a good reason for those fears. The discoveries at the end of the 1920's of the existence of slavery in Liberia, which led to the sending of an Inquiry Commission by the League of Nations and to the resignation of President King and Vice-President Yancy, started with a confidential report sent by a missionary named Robert W. Patton to the head of the Episcopalian church in the United States.⁴⁴

It might be assumed that the Americo-Liberians considered the damage likely to ensue from the missionary activity as outweighing its usefulness. Therefore it is surprising that the Liberian government found it sufficient to restrict missionary activity and to try (unsuccessfully) to establish a Liberian Church. The reason mentioned above for not expelling the missionaries altogether (namely the Liberian concern for their image and fear of alienating the Americans) does not fully explain their behavior.

It seems there were additional considerations for not cutting off relations with the missions. One of them was the complete dependence of the Black Republic on the missionaries in the sphere of education.

The role of the Methodist missionaries as teachers in the Americo-Liberian community and the schools they established has already been mentioned. The Liberian government, too, tried to establish a school network for the Americo-Liberian children; in 1900 a Bureau of Public Instruction was established in order to deal with all matters regarding education and to inspect the schools in the Republic.⁴⁵ In the years that followed the Bureau's powers were extended. In 1908 the Bureau's head became a member of the cabinet and education inspectors were appointed in every country.⁴⁶ In 1912 a compulsory education law was enacted.⁴⁷ However the attempts to establish an education system were not very successful. A report published in 1909 stated that the Liberian education system suffered from every possible defect. The only proof of its existence was the daily meeting of teachers and pupils. The laws, continued the commission's report, were adequate, but it was impossible to enforce them without a proper budget. This Liberia was unable to provide.⁴⁸ In 1922 the Episcopalian church commission's report was published. The commission members inspected the Liberian education system and came to the conclusion that the number of schools established by the government was negligible. Those few operating

. . . the type of education in which they are interested is so exclusively concerned with preparation for clerical pursuits and government service of a literary character as to exclude any effort to prepare the youth to deal with the hygienic, agricultural, industrial, and social needs of either the Americo-Liberians or the native masses.⁴⁹

As a matter of fact a government education system did not exist in Liberia. The Report of the Public Instruction Commissioner of 1908 stated that there were ninety⁵⁰ government schools and ninety-four belonging to various churches. But the government schools had no buildings of their own and most were located in churches and missions, thus being practically mission schools⁵¹ in all respects, except for the government support they received. In 1925 President

King admitted that insufficient attention was given to the Bureau of Public instruction in general. He emphasized public and for its inhabitant mentioned ten new schools built that the government's part in establishing formal approval and blessing of Lutheran missionaries ran and directed

Until welfare services of any kind in Liberia after severe economic difficulties, constant debts and lack of manpower, prevented the establishment of health, welfare and education facilities even for the Americo-Liberian community. As a matter of fact the missionary-school network was the only institution providing education facilities. Ejecting the missionaries from Liberia would have meant the loss of a vital service. That was probably one of the main reasons for the decisions not to cut off relations between Liberia and the missions. Hence missionary activity in the hinterland was only put under certain restrictions and the Liberians made attempts to replace them by a local, independent Liberian church.

The relations between the state and the missions since its foundation until the 1930's passed through several stages, from complete identity of goals and close cooperation, through suspicion and reservation, to breach and hostility. Notwithstanding the Americo-Liberian appreciation that missionary activity harmed government attempts to control the hinterland and to outline the borders of the Republic, they did not oust the foreign missions from Liberia. The price they might have had to pay for breaking off their relations would have been much greater than the harm they perceived would result from continued missionary activity among the tribal people of the hinterland.

FOOTNOTES

¹M. Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p. 363.

²Werner T. Wickstrom, The American Colonization Society and Liberia (Monrovia, Liberia: College of West Africa, 1960), p. 40.

³American Colonization Society, Instructions to Samuel A. Crozier, December 20, 1819 in Bernard J. Blamo, "Nation Building in Liberia: The Use of Symbols in National Integration," Liberian Studies Journal 4, 1 (1971): 29.

⁴"Inaugural Address of President J. J. Roberts, 3 January 1848," African Repository and Colonial Journal 24, 4 (April 1848); "Inaugural Address of President Benson," Liberian Herald, 4 January 1860 and

African Repository 36, 4 (April 1860): 119; "Inaugural Address of President Payne, 6 January 1868," African Repository 65, 5 (May 1868): 136.

⁵ Willis J. King, "History of the Methodist Mission in Liberia," Liberia University Library (Mimeographed), p. 13.

⁶ D. H. Holt, "Change Strategies Initiated by the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia from 1836 to 1950 and their Differential Effects," (Ph.D dissertation), pp. 85-86.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 125, 142. Willis, "History of the Methodist Mission," p. 25..

⁸ "Congoes"--recaptured Africans freed from slave ships by the U.S. Navy and sent to settle in Liberia.

⁹ Holt, "Protestant Episcopal Church," p. 84.

¹⁰ J. J. Martin, "The Dual Legacy: Government Authority and Mission Influence Among the Glebo of Eastern Liberia, 1834-1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1968), p. 122.

¹¹ John W. Cason, "The Growth of Christianity in the Liberian Environment (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1961), p. 123.

¹² Holt, "Protestant Episcopal Church," p. 118.

¹³ Cason, "The Growth of Christianity," p. 121.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 259-60.

¹⁵ See message of the President of Liberia, 9 December 1859, pp. 132-33.

¹⁶ "Inaugural Address of President Robert, 5 January 1874," in African Repository 50, 7 (July 1874): 197.

¹⁷ Martin, "Dual Legacy," p. 311.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 313.

¹⁹ Cason, "The Growth of Christianity," p. 253.

²⁰ Martin, "Dual Legacy," p. 313.

²¹ African Times 13 (April 30, 1874): 39.

²² Nyebo Weo, "The Gedebo Account of the War: December 14, 1875 January 8, 1876" African Times 16 (March 1, 1876): 98.

²³"President J. J. Roberts Message to the Legislature of the Republic of Liberia, 17 December 1875," African Repository 53, 1 (January 1877); Times (London), 13 November 1875.

²⁴Martin, "Dual Legacy," pp. 285, 288

²⁵Ibid., p. 291.

²⁶H. A. B. Jones, "The Struggle for the Political and Cultural Unification in Liberia, 1874-1930" (Ph.D. dissertation), p. 162.

²⁷Inaugural Message of President Howard, January 1912, p. 19.

²⁸R. A. Sherman, "A Plea for Industrial Schools in Liberia," in Dean Arthur Holt, "Protestant Episcopal Church," p. 242.

²⁹U.S.A. National Archives, Education, Records of the Department of State relating to internal affairs of Liberia 1910-1929, Roll 4, "A Petition and Appeal for Intervention Towards Peace: How Grand Bassa Country Is in the War," 10 October 1916, p. 36.

³⁰See John L. Morris to C. D. B. King, 21 February 1924, L. N. A.

³¹Ibid.

³²Martin, "Dual Legacy," p. 314.

³³Cason, "The Growth of Christianity," p. 252.

³⁴Martin, "Dual Legacy," p. 314.

³⁵See Lord Clarendon to the Marquis de la Vallette, 28 January 1870 Afrique 6, Dossier 24B, B.A.N. (Copie).

³⁶Harry Johnston, Liberia 2 vols. (London: Hutchinson, 1906) 1: 270.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Le Gouverneur au Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat des Colonies, 6 Janvier 1894, Afrique 6, Dossier 121B B.A.N. Le Gouverneur au Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat des Colonies, 8 Janvier 1894, Afrique, Dossier 121B B.A.N.

³⁹See inaugural address of President Payne, January 1876 and inaugural address of President A. Barclay, 1904.

⁴⁰Cason, "The Growth of Christianity," p. 354.

⁴¹Holt, "Protestant Episcopal Church," p. 210.

⁴²Cason, "The Growth of Christianity," pp. 176-77.

⁴³See the inaugural address of President Arthur Barclay, February 1904

⁴⁴Jones, "The Struggle for . . . Unification" (Ph.D. dissertation), p. 220, footnote 30.

⁴⁵R. W. Nelsen and S. Hlophe, "Education and Politics in Liberia and the U.S." UMOJA, 1, 1 (1977): 58.

⁴⁶U.S.A. National Archives, Department of State, Numerical and Minor Files, 1906-1910, Roll 797. "Republic of Liberia.

⁴⁷Raymond Leslie Buell, The Native Problem in Africa, 2 vols. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1928) 2: 757. It should be noted that the appointment of education inspectors concerned the counties only. Until 1964 the division into counties existed only in the coastal strip populated by Americo-Liberians. Thus the education facilities, including compulsory education laws, were intended mainly for the Americo-Liberian community.

⁴⁸U.S.A. National Archives, Department of State, Numerical and Minor Files, 1906-1910, Roll 7, "Liberia, an Historical and Descriptive Record, Appendix to Report of the Commission of the U.S. to the Republic of Liberia."

⁴⁹Thomas Jesse Jones, "Report of the African Education Commission," in Holt, "Protestant Episcopal Church," p. 249.

⁵⁰Stanley Padmore, Department of Public Instruction to the Senate and House of Representatives, December 8, 1908 in U.S.A. National Archives, Department of State, Numerical and Minor Files, 1906-1910, Roll 796.

⁵¹U.S.A. National Archives, Department of State, Numerical and Minor Files, 1906-1910, Roll 797, "Liberia, An Historical and Descriptive Record, Appendix to Report of the Commission of the U.S. to the Republic of Liberia."

⁵²See the 1925 annual message of President C. D. B. King, December 16, 1925

Cover photograph: figure of mother and child by carver Jallah Jackie.
Collected in Monrovia, Liberia, 1975. Wood, 12" high. Edward J.
Biggame Collection.