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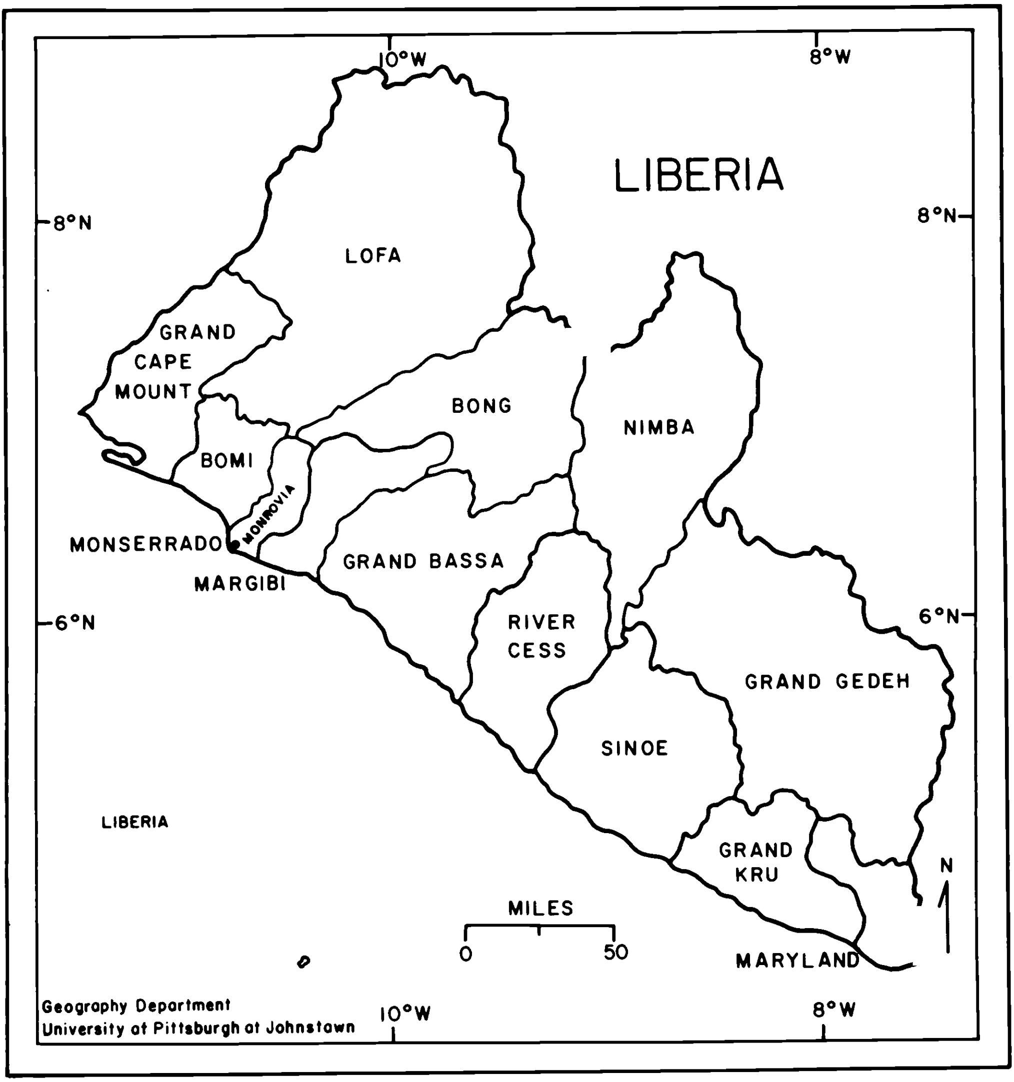

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The Liberian Refinery,
A Look Inside A Partially "Open Door" *

Garland R. Farmer

Fashions in economic development tend to change with a frequency rivaling that of *haute couture*, and few attitudes have been more fickle than that of policy makers—national and international—toward foreign investment. The courtship of every possible investor has alternated with degrees of restriction and exclusion. Liberia has a rich history from which to draw guidance in assessing foreign investment and the inducements used to attract it. A number of well-known studies of the subject already exist, and the present writer would not try to embellish on their scholarly pages. What follows is one of what may, given time and energy and a reasonably reliable memory, turn out to be several similar examinations of undertakings begun during the heyday of the Open Door Policy in which the writer either participated or was able, as with the refinery, to observe at close range. Perhaps such personal retrospections will flesh out the more formal studies and even be of some use to any future policy maker who may find value in past experience.

Few projects established under Liberia's Open Door Policy have endured and survived such controversy as the Liberian Petroleum Refining Corporation (LPRC) and its predecessor. Well-publicized maneuvering in 1987 about "privatisation" of the company gave way in 1988 to a furor over control of its funds, which reportedly contributed to the departure of American "experts" charged with tidying up Government finances.

Eagerness to own LPRC or to control its funds suggests it has been profitable. Indeed, Liberian President Samuel Doe said in his Annual Message on January 29, 1988 that higher payments by the refinery and the maritime agency produced a 5% increase in Government revenues in 1987 over 1986. As often the case with the refinery, however, things may not have been all they seemed. Consider its profitability in 1987 in the light of what the world's largest oil company, EXXON, told its shareholders in its Annual Report for the same year: ". . .earnings from refining and marketing operations were significantly below 1986. . .Refined product margins were severely depressed during most of 1987. . ." Or, the TEXAS MONTHLY magazine's report in May, 1988: ". . .the profit margin at oil refineries is as bad as the smell," because, "Prices for the products they sell. . .have fallen faster than the price of crude oil."

It is not unfair, then, to wonder whether LPRC's profits at a time when refineries worldwide were losing money arose from its monopoly on the supply of petroleum products rather than from any refinery operations. This thought is reinforced by the report that recent shortages of gasoline in Monrovia were due to the "late arrival of a cargo" from the Ivory Coast, or to shortages of foreign exchange to purchase petroleum products.

It seems timely to take a fresh look at this product of an Open Door Policy which, for better or worse, played a major role in shaping today's Liberia. There follows a two-part look at the refinery: first, its history; then, its finances. Together, these help provide some sense of the puffery, the peddling and buying of influence, and the complicated financial arrangements which sometimes surrounded projects launched during the 1960's.

PART I: THE HISTORY

Enter the "Texas Oilmen."

The refinery was the brainchild of a self-proclaimed "Texas oilman," who came to Liberia in 1961, complete with ten-gallon hat, cowboy boots and flamboyant manner: Alex W. Hutchings (later transmogrified in the local press to "Dr. Alexander Hutchings").

I first saw Hutchings at President W. V. S. Tubman's Totota farm in March of 1961. At the Saturday afternoon cocktail hour, the parlor was alive with grandiloquent talk of a refinery which Hutchings intended to construct in partnership with a companion, whom he introduced as "Mr. Wink, inventor of the Wink drill bit, who's ready to take a 'one bite'. . .In the oil business, Mr. President, a 'one bite' is a one million dollar participation." (The visibly uncomfortable Mr. Wink must have found the bite too big; he was not seen in Liberia again.)

Before sunrise the next morning, the President sent for me to join him for coffee on the veranda of the "farm house." As we watched the grazing zebras and giraffes, he asked what I thought of the refinery. Knowing only what Hutchings had said the previous evening, I could have no opinion, but did offer to try to find some expert advice, which the President asked me to do, together with his Ambassador in Washington, S. Edward Peal.

Friends in the "independent" sector of the oil industry suggested a petroleum industry expert, Walter Levy, whose objectivity and measure were impressive. Despite Levy's plea that he had no time just then, Peal was persuasive, and Levy was soon analyzing a letter agreement signed on July 10, 1961 by the Liberian Government and the Hunt International Petroleum Company, owned by the fabled Texas oil magnates, whom Hutchings had, by then, interested in the project.

Levy recommended against this agreement. Those who saw the report said his opinions were that:

—granting a monopoly to any key element of an economy is always a gamble;

—one might defend a monopoly on petroleum products if that would protect a refinery utilizing domestic crude oil, but such was not Liberia's case;

—the domestic Liberian market being limited, despite expanding iron mines, and not offering economies of scale, it was almost inescapable that such a monopoly would result in higher prices for Liberian consumers.

Then Secretary of Commerce Stephen Tolbert—ever suspicious of American business—rejected the report, contending that Levy was biased in favor of the large oil companies which wanted to block this potential competition. (In fact, the oil companies then operating in Liberia—Texaco, Mobil, B.P., Shell and Agip—did oppose the refinery, but Tolbert's suspicion about Levy's bias was not shared by the many governments which consulted him during the oil crises of the 1970's).

Even so, the government followed many of Levy's suggestions, negotiating a number of "Clarifications" of the Oil Refinery Agreement, signed on October 4, 1961, which:

1. Granted Hunt International Petroleum exclusive right to supply petroleum to Liberia for 25 years;
2. Provided a duty of 100% on any petroleum products imported by others;
3. Provided a payment to government of 50% of profits, after recovery of all investment.
4. Set product prices which were rumored to be higher than those then prevailing in Liberia;
5. Bound the refinery to use West African crude oil;
6. Promised the refinery 200 acres of sea front land and bound the company to build housing and clinics.

There was much foreboding of higher petroleum prices as a result of the "finder's fee" (later revealed to be 15% of profits) that Hunt was to pay Hutchings, through his Swiss firm, Geological Consultants, S.A. So, in April of 1962, many watched with fascination as the Legislature engaged in an unusual debate, with customarily silent members vigorously opposing the concession; one Senator, it was reported, spoke for the first time in his career. However, after an Easter recess, the committee in charge of the legislation reported it had met with the President "who had clarified the minds of members on various points brought up during the debate." Now "wholeheartedly convinced that the agreement is designed in the best interest of the country," it could recommend passage. (Quotations from the "Liberian Age" of May 11, 1962.)

Even after the Legislature ratified the agreement in May, 1962, the Hunts proved to be in no hurry to put up funds, partly because of several unresolved problems, the foremost being the site for the facility. In late 1962, M. G. Langhorne, lawyer for Hunt Oil Company, was sent to look into the project. He later said (to the writer) that he had recommended against further investment because:

—the refinery was too small to compete with the major oil companies then operating in Liberia;

—to make money, such a small refinery would not only have to be a monopoly but, sooner or later, would have to raise prices, probably above those prevailing in nearby areas;

—such action would have foreseeable political effects on the monopoly rights granted by the concession.

Exit Hunt Oil

Hunt International decided to pull out, and, on October 22, 1963, sold its concession to The Liberian Refining Company, formed and owned by Hydrocarbon Research, Inc., which had recently signed a contract to construct a $30 million petroleum refining complex in Kuwait. Hydrocarbon was the subsidiary of a Washington, D.C. firm, Dynelectron Corp. which had constructed various defense facilities for the American military.

Responding to government demands for improvement in the Hunt agreement, Hydrocarbon concluded yet another agreement with the government, dated July 28, 1964, undertaking, among other things, to offer stock in Liberian Refinery Company to Liberians.

Even so, government acceptance of the transfer of the concession was not automatic. Foreseeing possible complications, Hydrocarbon (which had already engaged Hutchings ". . .to perform liaison services between the Government. . ." and itself), in a tradition widely honored in world capitals, hired two local consultants. One was Fred Ryan, a well-connected American expatriate whose 20 years' experience in Liberia included a period as manager of the Saturday Afternoon Club where, until it burned in the late 50's, one could meet the nation's governing elite, including the President, taking their ease over Johnny Walker Black Label and poker. The other was W. V. S. Tubman, Jr., just starting the Tubman Law Firm and making it clear that no other law firm could represent its clients at the Presidential bedside before morning coffee.

These able consultants kept the refinery before the public and managed to fend off questions about performance for several fruitless years. In this regard, the refinery offers an example of a concession "developed" in the newspapers long before anything was done on the ground, as evidenced by these items stories taken from Liberian papers:

1963: "Operation This Year"

In January, 1963, under the headline "Liberia's First Oil Refinery Is To Start Operation This Year," the "Age" reported that Hutchings had arrived in the country to "begin preparations for setting up" the refinery.

1964: "Construction to start in six months"

On July 30, 1964, "Dr." Hutchings was quoted by "The Listener" as being ". . .here to finalize things for the erection of the Refinery headquarters on Bushrod Island which is to be started soon."

On Sept. 21 the "Age" reported that a Hydrocarbon Vice President had arrived to discuss the stock offering and to contract for a survey of the area on the north side of the port breakwater, preparatory to building the "$9½ million" plant. The same story added, "It is believed construction will begin within the next six months and production is expected within two years."

1965: "Production in 1967"

In mid-August, 1965, after signature of a lease agreement covering 40 acres near the north breakwater, Vice President Ryan announced that "Construction. . .will commence as soon as the site is cleared and soil bearing tests made. . . . The refinery is scheduled to go into production in 1967."

Occasionally public relations ploys went awry: In January, 1965, Ryan had announced that ". . .ground breaking ceremonies for the Liberia Refining Company installations in the Freeport Area of Monrovia will be held early next month,. . .following acceptance for the Company engineers of available land in the Freeport area." In June, however, the "Age" wrote that President Tubman had said at a press conference that ". . .he had 'lost confidence' in the Company, (having) found out that he was not being invited to (break ground) for the Refinery but for a guest house. . .They were making a fool of him, he said."

(Item of interest: In October, 1965, Texaco—"due to competition"—cut the price of high octane from 49 cents a gallon to 45 cents. The refinery project was having an effect.)

In 1966, a major step was taken: Hydrocarbon sold 51% of the project to Sunray DX Oil Company, a small but well-known American company from

Oklahoma, which would be financial partner, supplier of crude oil and manager of the plant.

Also, a solution was found to a problem which had plagued the project: Accelerated use of the port raised doubts about whether there were not better uses for the well-situated seafront area north of the breakwater which had been leased to the refinery in 1965. Gossip had it that Steve Tolbert, having resigned as Secretary of Commerce, desired the area for his rapidly-expanding fishery business, and, in fact, Mesurado Fisheries soon occupied much of this land, while the refinery was allowed to lease the 200 acres in the Industrial Park near Gardinersville which it now occupies.

Newspaper articles then began to foretell more concrete developments:

1966: "Operation in mid-1968"

In August, 1966, the "Age" headlined "Oil Refinery Ready For Construction;" Ryan reported that construction would commence in the forthcoming dry season and "The plant is expected to come into operation in mid-1968."

1967: "Operation by July, 1968"

In July, 1967, a $300,000 contract to construct foundations was signed. The "Age" quoted Ryan as saying that the "whole program is on schedule and that the refinery will be in operation by July, 1968."

In April, Alan Hall, Sunray's VP in charge of the project, was in Liberia denying local reports that LRC was planning to build a 1,000 mile pipeline to bring crude from Biafra, the war-torn breakaway Nigerian province.

(Also of interest were reports, in March 1967, that two Japanese companies had commenced construction of a $5.4 million refinery in Sierra Leone.)

Secretary of the Treasury J. Milton Weeks visited Sunray DX in Oklahoma in 1967, and was told that a 10,000 barrel-per-day facility, costing $12 million, would employ about 1500 Liberians during construction and about 250 Liberians and 35 expatriates thereafter. Retreating from the earlier promise to use only West African crude, the indication now was that 70% of the crude would come from Nigeria, the remainder from Venezuela.

1968: "Project 50% complete"

On June 4, the "Age" reported completion of 29 storage tanks and work on a 5-mile pipeline to bring crude oil from ships to the refinery.

On July 12, the first shipment of crude oil arrived from Venezuela. Also, there was a report that shares in the company would soon be offered to Liberians, probably at $10 to $15 per share. The "Age" added: "The cost. . .will be set at so small amount. . .(because) hundreds of Liberians have not been able to purchase shares in most of the existing industries. . .due to exorbitant rates at which they have been set." An earlier story had said that Liberians would be offered 40% of the company.

1969: Project complete

Operation of the refinery began in January, 1969. Total cost was reported at $17.5 million. Its monopoly was to run for 25 years from start-up, which had come 7 1/2 years after signature of the Hunt/Hutchings agreement.

Exit the Last of the "Texas Oilmen"

In September, 1968, LRC petitioned the Liberian courts to amend its consultancy agreement with Alex W. Hutchings, reducing his royalty from 5 cents per barrel of product (which replaced the 15% of profits originally agreed to by the Hunts) to 2 cents per gallon, probably lowering these payments from about $180,000 to about $72,000 per year. LRC's reason for the reduction was that Hutchings had failed to assure performance of many of the engagements incorporated into various agreements with the government. Some of its complaints were:

—annual rental on the land had increased from $2,500 to $10,000;

—after spending almost $20,000 to prepare the seafront site leased to it in 1965, LRC had been forced to locate further away and to duplicate the same expenditures at the new site;

—the delay in finalizing the site caused other costs;

—"The Liberian Government insisted that [LRC] concedes [it] cannot realize the product prices called for in the Concession, and that the maximum prices that could be charged would be import parity, based on recognized posted prices." (As had been foreseen years earlier by Levy and Langhorne.)

The petition said that Hutchings had been offered and had refused a lump sum payment of $900,000. No announcement seems to have been made of the outcome of this proceeding, but in 1974, when Sun Oil Company (which had taken over Sunray DX) tried to sell the refinery, it revealed that Hutchings' royalty rights had been bought in 1972 for a lump sum payment of $606,929.

Shareholding Opened to Liberians

In 1969, Hydrocarbon (HRI), through the Liberian Bank for Industrial Development & Investment, offered the Liberian public 101,250 shares (equal to 15% of the company, or less than half of HRI's 33%) at a price of $8. One-half, or $4, was to be paid in cash and the remainder paid by one-half of any dividends paid by LRC (a formula devised in 1958 by Lansdell Christie to facilitate Liberian investment in the Mano River iron ore mine). The price was, indeed, lower than the $100 price of stock common to earlier ventures. However, this payment went to one of the shareholders, HRI, not to the refinery. In other projects, Mano and Nimba among them, such payments were investments in the projects.

Total shareholder investment in this (now) $16 million project was $152,500, of which $67,500 had actually been paid in cash; the remaining $85,000 was in the form of "donated capital." In other words, having put up, in one form or another, about $50,000, HRI sold to Liberians 15% of LRC for $405,000 in cash, plus assignment of dividends amounting to another $405,000, and still kept 18% of the company. (To be fair, it is not known that, if anything other than the amount to Hutchings, HRI had paid for the concession in the first place; LRC's balance sheet carried no value for the concession or "good will.") Incidentally, these facts were revealed in LBIDI's advertisement offering the stock; however one-sided it may now seem, nothing was concealed.

(In August, 1973, LRC made an outright gift of 12,500 of its shares to the ruling True Whig Party, plus another 55,980 shares whose, unannounced, price was to be paid out of future dividends.)

Price Problems

The prices agreed to in the Hunt agreement were supplanted in the intervening agreements by a price-setting formula to be applied by a commission, headed by the Secretary of Treasury. Given the importance of petroleum prices to the economy, it is not surprising that the work of this commission proved difficult and protracted. LRC's first request for higher prices was made in December, 1969, less than a year after start-up. An increase averaging 1.9 cents per gallon effective for 6 months was agreed to on February 16, 1970. Toward the end of that period, stories appeared in the press that another increase would be put into effect, affecting "only concessions and distributors," which LRC denied. The commission extended the February price until the end of October, then again and again, until April 7, 1971, when new prices were set retroactive to January 1. A year later, on January 2, 1972, a notice appeared in the press stating that new prices should have been set as of January 1, but, the commission not having completed its work, the old prices would remain in effect until the end of January. This process, irritating and costly to both sides, continued until the end of LRC.

All pretense that the refinery would use West African crude had been dropped. As the professionals had said from the start, the petroleum products most used in Liberia could be refined only from "heavy" crudes, not the "light" type produced in Nigeria.

End of the "Private" LRC; Enter the "Public" LPRC

In December, 1976, a fire put the refinery out of operation for several months. In May, 1977, Sun Oil and HRI's parent, Dynelectron, charged that the Liberian government had "expropriated" the refinery by imposing "restrictive" price controls. The "Wall Street Journal" quoted Minister of Finance James T. Phillips' denial that the government had laid any claim to the refinery, along with his accusation that the two companies were trying to get out of the project in a way which would give them tax benefits in the U. S. Phillips also referred to "poor plant design, inadequate management and an 'extremely' unfavorable debt-to-equity ratio." Dynelectron said this charge was "terribly misleading and incorrect" because the debt-equity ratio had "resulted from extensive negotiations" with the government.

Almost a year later, in July, 1977, Minister of Commerce William E. Dennis, Jr. confirmed that Sun and Dynelectron had pulled out of the project and were claiming payment from the government of $9 million. Taking over the refinery, the government said it believed the facilities were not worth more than $5 million. Dennis stressed the "ridiculously low" debt-to-equity ratio, adding that the investors had been taking their money out in the form of dividends and "massive interest and principal payments." Within weeks, the LRC was succeeded by the LPRC.

PART II: THE STATISTICS

Investment and Financing

The following data, taken from the information circulated to potential buyers by Sun Oil in 1974-75, show there was basis for the government's assertions:

At the end of November, 1973, investment in "Property, Plant and Equipment," including furniture and vehicles, was $18,139,512 for a facility capable of producing 12,500 barrels per day. (Construction was underway or planned for expansion to 15,000 barrels per day, plus other improvements costing $1,185,000.) Of this investment, only $153,000 was in the form of share capital, or about 8/10ths of one percent.

Total indebtedness, including that for services or supplies purchased from the parent or associated company, was $21,608,524; $17,939,774 was payable on demand or within one year, with long-term debt being about $3.7 million.

Almost 94% of the total debt, $20,308,524, was owed to the Parent Company or an Associated Company. The remainder was a loan guaranteed by the Associated Company.

In late 1974, negotiations were underway for changes in the concession, one being that $4,847,000 of debt would be converted into equity. This was contingent upon an extension of the concession period. It is not clear that these changes were ever made, but the government was evidently working to improve the debt-equity ratio long before the 1977 blow-up.

Inte t Paid

In 1972, $1,516,520 interest was paid; in 1973, $1,521,466; in 1974, $1,384,162. Interest paid to Sun Oil, the Parent Company, was subject to Liberian interest withholding tax. Next only to crude oil, interest was the largest item of cost, exceeding salaries and wages, and depreciation.

Dealings with Parent and Associated Companies

In the beginning, Sun Oil supplied crude to the refinery, but, according to the Finance Ministry's annual report for 1973, it lost its source in the oil crisis that year, leading to dramatic, but not entirely successful, efforts by Finance Minister Steve Tolbert to obtain crude at concessionary prices from Arab producers. "Cost of Sales" (mainly the cost of buying and transporting crude) was $10.1 million in 1972, about 64% of total sales revenues of $15.86 million. In 1973, Cost of Sales was $14 million, or about 71.5% of the $19.63 million in sales. By 1974, the full effect of OPEC's actions had been felt; Cost of Sales, $46.2 million, was 85% of sales revenues of $54 million.

Payments on debt (mainly to Sun Oil and an associated company) amounted to over $1.6 million in 1972, but only $200,000 in 1973. Amounts owed to associated companies, in addition to debt and interest, at the end of 1972 were $1,682,132, and at the end of 1973, $2,632.766.

The other shareholder, HRI, had performed considerable work for LRC—design, procurement, engineering, etc.—for which it apparently was paid out of the loans made to LRC by Sun Oil. Unconfirmed reports at the time the plant was built were that much of the equipment was second-hand, having come from another project to which HRI had provided services.

Profit and Loss

In November, 1973, Accumulated Losses totalled $4,008,500. Total depreciation was $4,497,454. So, excluding depreciation, operations had produced a surplus of about $490,000 over the 5 years of operations. A profit was declared for the first time in 1974, amounting to $1,943,684. An income tax was paid for the first time: $850,000. About $1.1 remained for shareholders, but there is no indication that this was paid out. The 15% credited on the company's books to Liberian shareholders was $164,000.

What Did Liberia Get?

The first income tax paid by LRC was $850,000, in 1974. The same year, withholding taxes on interest paid to Sun Oil amounted to $305,121, and "Taxes (Other than Income)" were $81,577. In all, 1974 taxes totalled $1,236,698. By way of comparison, in 1968, the last year before refinery operations began, government had collected $1,451,000 in petroleum import tax. As the fire caused losses in 1974 and government took over in 1977, the only other year in which an income tax might have been paid was 1975.

The 23 expatriate and 267 Liberian employees received $1,250,000 in salaries and wages in 1974.

Local rentals cost $233,776, and "Advertising" cost $7,278 in 1974.

In sum, it would seem that employment was the principal benefit to Liberia from the petroleum monopoly in the years prior to 1977. The total cost to Liberia of having other peoples' crude refined on its soil is not readily apparent, but it would be interesting to know how pump prices compared to those paid elsewhere in West Africa.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

About "Promoters"

One troubling aspect of the refinery's inconclusive history is the role played in it, as in other projects, by exclusive rights accorded by the government to those whose interest is not in exercising such rights but in selling them to someone else. Hutchings was but one of many who made, or tried to make, money from selling a right granted by the Liberian government.

When it was observed to President Tubman that Liberia's reputation and, ultimately, its economy were harmed by people peddling its concessions around the world, he was quick to agree and, then, to express his quandary: How many big investors had come to Liberia on their own? Other than Firestone—a special case in a special time—none had come except as a result, direct or indirect, of the efforts of some individual using some exclusive right from Liberia as an attraction. He recalled that Lansdell K. Christie, later called "The King of Liberian Iron Ore" by "TIME" magazine, had been dismissed as a promoter when trying to interest steel companies in the Bomi Hill project. Johnston Avery, who took over the Nimba concession from Edgar Detwiler, was also considered a promoter until, after years of hard work, he attracted the Swedish iron mining company, Grangesborg, and Bethlehem Steel as partners in LAMCO. There were, of course, some investments which did not pass through the "promoter stage," but these came to be only after the pioneers—and promoters—had already proven Liberian grounds.

The President contended that if big investors could not be attracted without the efforts of promoters, then he had to work with promoters. His task was to see that Liberia got more from them than it had to give.

Local Participation

Without questioning the principle of local participation, the facts set forth here show that the benefits of shareholding can be exaggerated. If only one aspect of the refinery's story is retained, it should be that the much-heralded sale of stock to Liberians profited only one foreign investor, which realized a large profit on a minimal investment in a venture which was still unproven when it sold part of its stock. Did the Liberians ever receive dividends? What became of their shareholdings when the foreign owners withdrew?

That is as far as I can take the convoluted story of the refinery. Because they could help in future negotiations for similar monopolies, two capable, intelligent and faithful government servants who have served as Managing Director of LPRC, Cletus Wotorson and Phillip Davis, should be asked to tell the rest.

*A topical piece in view of recent reports that a private firm, "Tiger International," would soon take over management of the Refinery (The New York-based Liberian News Network, March 29, 1989) The Editor

HARVEY S. FIRESTONE'S LIBERIAN INVESTMENT (1922–1932)

Arthur J. Knoll

Harvey S. Firestone Sr. and the Liberian Elite

Harvey S. Firestone Sr.'s 1926 decision to begin large-scale rubber production in Liberia was a historic one. His firm, the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio developed the largest continuous rubber plantation in the world.[1] Nothing comparable existed in British or French West Africa. British authorities felt that large plantations might cause political problems for their colonies.[2] Firestone's arrival also represented another step in the abandonment of Liberia's national economy to foreign capital, a practice more common under President William V. S. Tubman (1944–1971). The Firestone corporation played a major part in Liberia's economic life, from 1926 to the present; Firestone's tax and rent payments to the Liberian government, originally minimal, amounted to 39 per cent of Liberia's total revenues in 1955. Firestone also remained the largest employer, taxpayer, and importer–exporter, at least until the 1960s, when the company relinquished its premier position to mining. In addition to its fiscal contribution, Firestone introduced Liberia to typical American production techniques: mass output, standardization of items, scientific management, as well as recruitment of voluntary labor and the introduction of the eight-hour day.

The Firestone operation in Liberia was the sole decision of Harvey S. Firestone Sr. A traditional early twentieth-century American businessman, Firestone was an entrepreneur on the make. A believer in free competition, he fought and won an expensive law suit in June 1917 against a fraudulent would-be patent monopolist who sought to prevent him from manufacturing demountable automobile rims.[3] From that time, Firestone remained the redoubtable adversary of the patent monopolist.[4] A versatile salesman from youth, Firestone loved to sell—be it lotions, carriages, or finally pneumatic rubber tires. As a calculated risk-taker, Firestone marshalled $10,000 in 1900 to begin his tire and rubber company in Akron.[5] In 1926 he would lend Liberia $5,000,000. Firestone believed in action, but it had to be purposeful. Most of his activity channeled in the search for future business bargains which Firestone was exceptionally adept at discovering. In March 1921 Firestone made available to U. S. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover the services of the "Firestone Ship by Truck Bureau," a novelty which would one day revolutionize land transport.[6] An important Firestone aim in the 1920s was to advance his company beyond its second position behind Goodyear in rubber consumption (and hence production).[7] Firestone, although a successful businessman–entrepreneur, was not in the earning category of a Henry Ford or a John D.

Rockefeller. In fact, an official of the National City Bank of New York, Firestone's lending agency, was concerned that Firestone might not have enough money for the Liberian venture.[8]

Firestone's frequent visits to Washington D.C. sometimes unnerved officials who resented his assertion of the priority of business opportunities over the international obligations of the State Department.[9] William R. Castle, Chief, Division of western European Affairs who also had charge of the Liberian desk, described Harvey Firestone as "a delightful man, self-made but quite simple, a little inarticulate but full of ideas." Somewhat later Castle mused: "he has no education, talks badly, understands nothing of society. . . But when he discusses business he becomes consumed. Fortunately he has a sense of humor."[10] As a polished diplomat and world traveler, Castle had little sympathy or understanding for the assertive and sometimes abrasive businessman from Akron. Harvey Firestone was indeed consumed when he talked of business and investments. In May 1923 he predicted to the Akron *Beacon Journal* that a $100,000,000 corporation would be formed to develop rubber plantations (with the possibility that Henry Ford might be an investor). Firestone broached this idea even before he considered Liberia as a possible plantation site.[11] One year later Liberia superseded other contenders after Firestone eliminated the Philippines and the East Indies from consideration.

The country that attracted Firestone's interest had long cultural and historic ties with the United States. From the time of the landing of African repatriates at Mesurado in April 1822, a special relationship existed between America and Liberia. The relationship was not between equals; it resembled that of patron to client. This special relationship was in part borne of adversity. The British in Sierra Leone and the French in the Ivory Coast halted coastal Liberians' expansion into the interior. The two colonial powers then proceeded to claim areas which the Liberians considered historically theirs. An unfavorable boundary decision in 1910 necessitated the surrender to France of large areas along the Guinean and Ivory Coast borders. Similarly in a treaty of 1911, Great Britain appropriated areas contiguous to Sierra Leone on the grounds that Liberia failed to provide effective occupation there. The aggressive actions of Britain and France led to the successful annexation of more than a third of the hinterland once claimed by the settler–Liberian government. Liberia was left with an area about the size of Ohio.[12]

Some among the settler–elite leadership of Liberia originally harbored a very providential vision toward the country. They viewed it "as an outpost of righteousness. . . " where a small group of repatriates could restore a race to its original integrity.[13] This vision, combined with other Western ideas and techniques, proved helpful in the elite's monopolization of positions of wealth and government on the coast and in their domination of people in the interior. Functioning essentially as a colonial plutocracy, the elite practiced indirect rule in the interior, created tribal land units closely resembling native reserves, and perpetuated the political fragmentation of hinterland tribes to facilitate a divide and rule policy.[14] It was with this elite that Harvey S. Firestone Sr. concluded his contracts to plant and harvest rubber in Liberia.

Rubber Regulation

The British government's attempt to bolster the price of natural rubber on the world market focused Harvey S. Firestone Sr.'s attention on Liberia. Crude rubber's price plummeted to $.14 per pound in August 1922 from its more normal price of $.33 per pound.[15] Consternation reigned among British rubber estate owners in Malaya and Ceylon who accounted for some 70 per cent of world production. The British Rubber Growers' Association in London recommended to its members that they curtail production. The tendered advice, although wise, apparently went unheeded. Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill took a hand in the matter. He accepted the recommendation of his committee chaired by Sir James Stevenson that colonial rubber exports be curtailed through the imposition of export duties. These would be governed by a sliding scale which imposed prohibitive export rates the moment the world price of rubber fell below the committee's declared pivotal price of $.30 per pound (later revised to $.42 per pound). When crude rubber approached the pivotal price, export duties would be proportionally reduced until the desired world price was achieved.[16] Even though the Dutch government refused to join in export restriction (it controlled about 25.5 per cent of world output),[17] Churchill and the Stevenson committee launched their plan on November 1, 1922. (It would continue until November 1, 1928). They were heartened by indications that world rubber demand, particularly in the United States, would increase rapidly.

Price increases exceeded the Committee's expectations, reaching a peak of $1.23 per pound in June 1925.[18] Supporters of the Stevenson Rubber Restriction Plan (as it became known) felt that it saved the British plantation owners from economic disaster. Detractors pointed to a wave of antagonism in the United States which strained the special relationship between the powers. Some parliamentarians viewed the American desire to control sources of rubber as nothing more than an attempt to expel the British from their established positions abroad.[19] Certainly the Stevenson Plan accorded well with the vision of British Colonial Secretary Leo Amery (1924–1929) to transform the empire–commonwealth into a global centralized economic unit almost autarkic in character.[20] Herbert Hoover, however, deplored such "monopolistic control."[21] He worried most about price fluctuations and their impact upon large companies which "cannot buy from hand to mouth."[22] Not to be outdone, Harvey S. Firestone Sr. released his own verbal salvo: "we are trapped by a maneuver for British imperial advantage. . . we can minimize the immediate cost to

America. . . by meeting an invading nationalism with a defending nationalism."[23]

This defending nationalism took the form of a buying syndicate. First suggested by General Motors and then adopted by Herbert Hoover as Secretary of Commerce, the syndicate would be a common purchasing agency to bargain industry-wide for crucial raw materials such as rubber, nitrate, sisal, jute, and potash.[24] When some rubber companies failed to support the syndicate and, instead, sought to come to terms with the Stevenson Plan, Firestone fumed that his wealthier colleagues were simply acting to protect their own high-priced rubber stockpiles.[25] Harvey Firestone supported the buying syndicate unequivocably. He urged his colleagues to retaliate against the British who had placed crude rubber supplies in the hands of the "broker and speculator."[26] He told his associates: "It is a vicious plan which will result in making Americans pay exorbitant prices for their automobile tires."[27] Not industry disunity, but opposition in Congress destroyed the buying syndicate proposal. Presented to the House of Representatives by Herbert Hoover as a bill, it drew the ire of the Democratic and farm bloc. Both saw it as a violation of anti-trust statutes. The bill was defeated on the House floor in April 1928.[28]

The British cancelled the Stevenson Plan on November 1, 1928. The rubber price tumbled to $.17 per pound. Firestone's losses were heavy since the corporation had replenished its stocks at inflated prices.[29] Although the Stevenson Plan provided high profits for rubber producers, it brought price instability to the world market. Absence of participation of the Netherlands was also a serious defect in the plan's operation. The Netherlands profited handsomely as its producers prospered more quickly from price fluctuations than the British who were bound to the rather inflexible regulatory schedule contained in the plan.[30] Surely, too, the American rubber conservation program initiated by Herbert Hoover helped defeat the plan. American tire consumption fell, and with it tumbled the price of crude rubber on the international market.[31]

A lasting legacy of the plan was Harvey S. Firestone Sr.'s antipathy toward Herbert Hoover and to the spirit of officialdom. True, Hoover and Firestone had stood together on the buying syndicate plan against industry defectors. Yet Firestone felt that Hoover should have done more—should have used diplomatic pressure on Britain. Actually Hoover was disposed to negotiate with the British for a fair rubber price.[32] Firestone wanted the Stevenson Plan cancelled. In his frustration he apparently charged Hoover with being sympathetic to British commercial interests and therefore secretly tolerant of the Stevenson restrictions. Hoover rejected the allegations as "false and slanderous." Further, Firestone's insinuation that Hoover's large interests in the British empire (presumably commercial) made him insensitive to the fortunes of the American rubber industry pained Hoover. The Secretary of Commerce penned a long rebuttal of these charges (which may not have been sent).[33] In 1925 Firestone asked the

Department of Commerce to employ one of his experts whose views, according to Firestone, were to be incorporated in a departmental position paper on world rubber supplies. Herbert Hoover replied that it was impossible for a person to be employed simultaneously by a corporation and by the government.[34] Hoover's reluctance in this and in other matters inspired Firestone's "profound distrust" of the Secretary.[35] William Castle reported: "he certainly has no use at all for Hoover."[36] Firestone's dislike of Hoover continued well into the latter's presidency.

Firestone Goes to Liberia

Harvey S. Firestone Sr. responded to the economic dislocation produced by the Stevenson Plan by turning to Liberia for a solution to the problem of rubber supply. Liberia came highly recommended by Walter F. Walker, former Liberian Secretary of the Treasury (1917–1920). Walker told American State Department officials in 1923 that the Liberian government was totally in support of a plantation undertaking, and whoever began one ". . . could get practically anything you desired." Walker continued: "American capital, push and enterprise could put the rubber growing industry in Liberia over in great style and that the first big concern starting operations there could be in a position to have a monopoly."[37] The State Department relayed this favorable assessment to Harvey S. Firestone Sr. through Mark L. Felber, his Washington representative, with an additional encouragement: if Firestone could arrange a loan of $2,500,000 to $5,000,000 for Liberia, "Mr. Firestone could virtually be the Government.."[38] Political influence, presumably, presented one of the best security scenarios possible for a large plantation enterprise.

In December 1923 Firestone sent Donald Ross, former rubber plantation manager in British Malaya, to evaluate Liberia's potential for rubber growing. Ross reported that labor was cheap—only $.24 per day—and yield per acre was far in excess of that in the Far East.[39] Ross' favorable estimate coincided with the State Department's desire for a secure source of rubber for America's expanding auto industry. Suffering rubber shortages as a result of the Stevenson Plan's operation, America sought security, but defined in economic terms. Its own principle of respect for the territorial sovereignty of a friendly power, however, forbade the Department from seeking a protectorate. In addition, the age was fast passing when American public opinion would tolerate intervention if it appeared to gratify the wishes of a corporation. If Firestone wanted to profit he would have to accept the risks; the State Department could only offer its good offices and moral support. The American government needed an informed agent, but one whom it could ill-afford to support publicly.

In June 1924 Harvey S. Firestone Sr. sent his personal secretary, William D. Hines, to negotiate three draft planting agreements with President Charles D. B. King. These opened the way for the Firestone Plantations Company, a

Firestone subsidiary, to begin its future rubber operations in Liberia. In January 1925 the Liberian legislature approved these drafts subject to later final agreement by both parties.[40] Having secured the planting agreements, Firestone's next step was to obtain protection for them. Firestone worried that his investments, which, in the case of rubber plantations, took at least five years to mature, might be endangered if the Liberian government collapsed.[41] Logically the State Department, thought Firestone, should commit itself to the company venture: "I don't think that we should make big investments in Liberia without having our government [in] back of them and I am sure that would be the most ideal thing for the Liberian government providing they do not allow their personal pride to interfere with the development of the country."[42]

In July 1924 Firestone sent three representatives to Washington D.C. to sound out State Department officials about a Firestone plan to loan Liberia $5,000,000 and to pledge the revenues of that country to the service of the loan. Additionally Firestone wanted Americans appointed by the President of the United States to collect and to disburse all the revenues. The reason for the loan, noted Leland Harrison, Assistant Secretary of State, was Firestone's need to counter expected strong foreign opposition (British and French), and also to guarantee the investment itself in Liberia. Harrison's recommendation was that the State Department "lend appropriate support" to Firestone's venture.[43]

After this favorable verdict Harvey S. Firestone Sr. went to Washington D.C. in December 1924 to commit Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes to his Liberia project. Hughes noted that the draft planting agreements now spoke of a loan to Liberia by the government of the United States or by private persons. The Secretary recognized Firestone's reasons for wanting a government loan, but he could not accept them. Hughes even rejected the words Firestone had written in of "protection and support" of the American government for the lender. They smacked too much or pressuring. The most the Secretary would promise was "appropriate diplomatic support" but no resort to force ever.[44] After reading the draft planting agreements Hughes left Firestone without any doubt about his position: "I may state that it is not the policy of the Department of State to obtain or negotiate concessions for American citizens . . . "[45] Thus the State Department's private enthusiasm for the Liberian venture was not reflected in any overt support. Firestone again faced administration reluctance of the kind he had encountered with Herbert Hoover in the Commerce Department.

Unable to count on Hughes, Firestone in late December 1924 added to the text of the second planting agreement a special clause (K) stating that its implementation depended upon Liberia's acceptance of a loan of $2,500,000 to $5,000,000.[46] Liberian Secretary of State Edwin Barclay, quite surprised, pointed out that the planting agreement's contents were fixed. Barclay continued that his government could not place itself under financial obligation to Firestone.[47]

Liberia wanted a loan, continued Barclay, but "from sources other than a corporation or individual operating commercially in Liberia . . . "[48]

Firestone now went directly to the top. He informed President Calvin Coolidge of his difficulty in securing Liberian approval of the rubber-planting agreements.[49] At the same time he gave President C. D. B. King of Liberia a reason why the loan needed to be integral to the planting agreement; it established confidence among American investors who might want to get into rubber growing. Firestone's rationale omitted any reference to the element of control normally prevalent in his thinking about investment in Liberia.

In May 1925 the American State Department used the gentle art of diplomatic persuasion on the Liberian government. The new Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg, told Monrovia that Liberia would benefit greatly from Firestone's investments and the Department awaited "with sympathetic interest the conclusion of the Firestone contracts . . . " He also pointed out that the Liberian government might find it very difficult to obtain alternate funding in the United States for future projects if the Firestone program were aborted. In short, without Firestone, Kellogg intimated, the bankers would view Liberia as a very poor investment risk.[50] Firestone remained adamant about fiscal control: "Impossible [to] make loan unless Liberia finances are administered by parties making loan" he cabled his secretary William D. Hines.[51] William Castle of the State Department reported: "Liberia is behaving pretty badly and Firestone is both angry and discouraged." Castle hoped that the Liberians' "silly pride" would not spoil their one chance of prosperity.[52]

Prospect of Failure Once

What William Castle viewed as "silly pride," Edwin Barclay, Liberian Secretary of State, saw as a real public-relations problem in his country. Liberians had enough of fiscal servitude to the United States.[53] Both Senator W. V. S. Tubman of Maryland County and Senator Brown of Sinoe County opposed a Firestone loan in the Liberian Senate. The Liberian People's Party also voiced its objections to the generous rental rates accorded Firestone (land at $.06 per acre).[54] Edwin Barclay was quite explicit about what had to be done to set the matter right:

> We have tried to impress you that a considerable amount of suggestive propaganda will have to be carried out by the Government before public opinion can be brought back to a favourable and receptive attitude towards this question. Until this is attained the Government can only speak to you with a great deal of caution . . . [55]

Clearly an impasse existed. The Liberian government was not, however, disposed to see the Firestone venture fail. As Firestone threatened to plant rubber elsewhere in May 1925, Monrovia suggested that a loan, even from private sources, might be acceptable if it were dealt with separately and not in the planting agreement.[56] Liberian public opinion would react strongly against signs of external domination, particularly since Liberia had previous unfortunate experiences in 1921 negotiating a loan with the United States Senate.[57] Harvey S. Firestone Sr. was quick to enter the open door. He assured the U.S. Department of State in May 1925 that the agency loaning money to Liberia would be distinct from the one formed to plant rubber.[58] On the other hand, Firestone told his Board of Directors two years later that the lending and planting agencies "will be owned and controlled by the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company."[59]

Since William D. Hines had broken off negotiations with the Liberian government in May 1925, Harvey S. Firestone Sr. insisted that a Liberian delegation now come to New York to close the loan negotiations.[60] Otherwise Firestone might plant rubber elsewhere than in Liberia. Harvey Firestone even urged President King to accompany a Liberian delegation.[61] The American State Department, fully immersed in the proceedings, added that a Firestone withdrawal would be regrettable, "and it is confident that the Liberian Government will realize the gravity and urgency of the situation."[62] Liberia did send its delegation to New York headed by Secretary Barclay who was regally entertained by the Firestone's. To placate the Liberians, Harvey S. Firestone Sr. made it quite clear that the personnel of the lending agency, the Finance Corporation of America, would be distinct form those in the Firestone corporation.[63] This separation of the planting from the lending agency proved to be the face–saving gesture both sides needed: three planting agreements and one tentative loan agreement were signed on September 16–17, 1925.[64]

Planting and Loan Agreements

Agreement Number One provided Firestone with a ninety–nine year lease of 1500 acres on Mount Barclay (annual rental fee of $6,000) for use as a rubber farm.[65] This area had formerly belonged to the Liberian Development Company, chaired by Colonel Cecil Powney of Britain, in which Sir Harry Johnston, the famous colonial administrator, also had an investment. Apparently the founders planned for a charter company with broad powers, not only to grow rubber, but also to seek for minerals, develop infrastructure, and help the Liberian government extend its jurisdiction inland. For Sir Harry Johnston such a company would be his avenue to re–enter African administration. The Liberian government, however, apparently developed doubts about the extensive powers visualized for the charter company.[66] Furthermore, Johnston's company was mismanaged financially according to London's financial circles. The Liberian government said the company owed it $23,700.[67] As a result Monrovia transferred the lease to Firestone. Neither the courts nor the Liberian government compensated the company's founders for the mature rubber trees left behind. Company remonstrations failed to move the Liberian government which supported the new Firestone lease.[68] For Harvey Firestone the Barclay plantation was a windfall; labor was plentiful and cheap and production costs low. Firestone came away convinced "that Liberia is a better place to grow rubber than any country in the East."[69]

Agreement Number Two provided Firestone with a ninety–nine year lease of one million acres (about 4 per cent of Liberia's land surface) at an annual rate of $.06 per acre. All machinery and supplies imported for plantation work were to be exempt from duties. In turn, Firestone agreed not to import unskilled foreign labor except in the event that local labor became unavailable. Highways, waterways, and railroads constructed by Firestone became the "exclusive right and privilege" of the corporation. Six years after acceptance of the agreement, Firestone was to pay a 1 per cent revenue tax on the value of all rubber exported.[70] This agreement became the basis for Firestone's Harbel and Cavalla plantation administered by the Firestone Plantations Company.

Harvey S. Firestone Sr. would not have undertaken this large responsibility—first year budget expenditures for planting 15,000 acres were $1,670,533[71]—if the Mount Barclay plantation had not proved so fruitful. When one Firestone vice–president, Amos Miller, opposed the Liberian venture as too risky, Firestone bought him out.[72] Firestone's negotiators secured terms commensurate with the risk involved. The company's initial contribution to Liberian development needed only to be minimal; it was based upon the Mount Barclay rental, the annual charge of $.06 per acre for selected plantations, the rubber export duty, and port and harbor dues.[73] Furthermore, the Liberian government did not receive contractual recognition of the right to renegotiate tax rates in the event that company profits increased markedly after the initial investment.[74] This failure to commit Firestone to great economic contribution may have derived from the settler–Liberians' historic disdain for business which has been well described by Liebenow.[75]

Agreement Number Three pledged Firestone to improve Monrovia harbor and to keep it in perpetual repair. For initial work the Liberian government earmarked $300,000—a sum which proved insufficient.[76] After an expenditure of $115,000 Firestone company engineers determined the task too immense to complete alone. Port improvement lagged until President Franklin D. Roosevelt met with Liberian President Edwin Barclay during the Second World War and became convinced that Liberia needed a good harbor. The United States Navy with a private company undertook completion of the task. After the expenditure of some $22 million, Monrovia port opened to commercial use in July 1948.[77]

The last agreement, a draft loan, signed by Liberia and the Finance Corporation of America, provided that the Liberian government would issue

$5,000,000 in forty year bonds at an interest rate of 7 per cent. The Finance Corporation of America would purchase one-half of the bonds at the face amount of $2,500,000. Liberia was permitted to sell the second $2,500,000 but the Finance Corporation was not obligated to make any additional purchases. For this loan the Liberian government agreed to do a number of things including: acceptance of a financial adviser designated by the President of the United States and approved by the President of Liberia who would supervise the Liberian budget to ascertain that amounts appropriated did not exceed the resources of the government; acceptance of an auditor who would supervise expenditure of treasury money; appointment of five officials approved by the United States Department of State to reorganize the customs and internal revenue administration of Liberia; appointment of four American army officers recommended by the President of the United States to lead the Liberian Frontier Force.[78] Harvey S. Firestone Sr. exulted to his Uncle Elmer that the appointment of so many officials by Americans gave the company "full control over Liberia" and the he felt "well protected" in investing there.[79]

Prospect of Failure Twice

What had Firestone accomplished with his loan? He had lent money at a favorable rate of interest, and he had guaranteed his plantation venture through control over Liberian finances. This was a profit endeavor with some idealism. Firestone felt that he was conferring a great benefit upon Liberia; what was good for Firestone was surely good for Liberia. The State Department also expressed its satisfaction that Firestone would make Liberia prosperous but not at the price of an "orgy of spending."[80] This euphoria dissipated in January 1926 when President King announced that he would not approve the draft loan agreement because the customs and internal revenues of Liberia were pledged as security for the loan.[81] King's reluctance both surprised and perplexed Firestone officials who assumed that Edwin Barclay has cleared the way for speedy approval of the loan. In actuality, at a meeting in December 1926 the Liberian Cabinet, Legislature, and the Supreme Court all rejected the loan agreement, pointing out that it would be very costly for Liberia to refund its debt at 7 per cent. The Attorney General even declared the loan unconstitutional.[82] King's capitulation to popular disapproval was a serious defection for Firestone. As the "presiding officer of the Americo-Liberian ruling class . . . "[83] King was a central figure in the unitary state. Firestone stood to lose the support of the elite whom he needed to mediate the loan.

Firestone was very upset. He wrote his son Harvey S. Firestone Jr.: "They think they have us now and they can secure a loan on their own terms, and it will be necessary to disappoint them. While I do not think we will entirely withdraw from Liberia, it is going to change our plans materially."[84] Firestone considered the planting and loan agreements binding contracts incapable of unilateral alteration. He felt, too, that if he tolerated change now the Liberian legislature might see fit to modify future commitments.[85]

The Liberian government, on the other hand, pointed out that Firestone had seen fit to amend the 1924 planting agreement on his own; the second agreements (1925) therefore, like the first, were not fixed but tentative. For Edwin Barclay the most important point was that the Liberian constitution required legislative ratification of all executive agreements,[86] and "Mr. Firestone should understand that the security of his investments lies in the Legislative approval of these contracts, not in the Executive's entering into them."[87] The American State Department agreed with Firestone. Secretary Kellogg informed Monrovia through its Chargé "that the Liberian Government should fulfill the Planting Agreements in strict accord with its pledged word."[88]

Stalemate reigned. The Liberian legislature felt that it had warded off Firestone's attempt to establish what it termed a "super-government" in Liberia.[89] The term "super-government," used in reaction to an article in the American press which described Firestone as coming to Liberia with 30,000 American employees, was a red herring.[90] The expense of government was the last obligation that Firestone wanted. He was going to Liberia to make money and not to rule. The prospect of so many Americans in Liberia excited portions of the British press which noted that 30,000 Americans would outnumber the total European population in Britain's four West African colonies, including the Europeans in the Togo and Cameroons mandates.[91] The "super-government" issue best revealed the sensitive nature of Liberian public opinion which objected to domination from abroad. Edwin Barclay, an architect of the loan agreement, became indignant over Secretary Kellogg's admonition that Liberia should honor its pledges. Pursuing the hard line, the Liberian government informed Chargé Clifton Wharton that if the entire planting–loan agreement fell through, Firestone could not continue his profitable Mount Barclay plantation.[92] If worse came to worse, this was the one entity Firestone chose to retain.[93]

In February 1926 it looked as if Firestone's whole Liberian enterprise was in jeopardy. William Castle at the State Department blamed President King for the impasse: "He wanted to hold everything in his own hands so as to assure permanence in office . . . "[94] Edwin Barclay faulted Harvey Firestone who, the Secretary said, should have approved the initial planting agreements.[95] Sydney De la Rue, the Financial Adviser in Liberia, cabled caution: Firestone's and Kellogg's high pressure tactics were proving counterproductive. "Try to stop Firestone and the Dept. acting too strongly. Situation can be handled by persuasion. Just now people very badly scared of Firestone."[96] James L. Sibley, an old African hand from the Phelps–Stokes Foundation, agreed. He thought Firestone lacked tact and needed some diplomats to help him along.[97] By June 1926 the impasse narrowed to two points: the refunding of loans to retire indebtedness and the arbitration of disputes. In regard to refunding, the loan agreement specified that until the principal was repaid, the government could not incur new indebtedness without the written approval of the financial adviser. The Liberian legislature amended the agreement to read that the government could, on its own, negotiate a refunding loan to help retire the debt.[98] In regard to arbitration of disputes, Harry S. Firestone Sr. wanted all matters in dispute to be referred to the United States Secretary of State. President King asked that all disputed issues be referred first to the Liberian courts and only second to the American Secretary of State. In the meantime President King had relented in his opposition to the loan clauses which pledged Liberian revenues as security for the loan.

Compromise

The State Department considered how best to persuade the Liberian president to concede on refunding and arbitration. In a meeting on June 16, 1926 William Castle discussed with Harvey S. Firestone Sr. and Colonel Crews of the brokerage firm of Shearman and Sterling if a contribution should be made to President King's re–election campaign. Bribing King and "fixing" De la Rue (Financial Adviser and proposed deliverer of the bribe) ". . . are undoubtedly necessary," concluded Castle, "but Firestone kicks because he has never in the past done anything even remotely approaching bribery and he wants to go into Liberia with clean hands."[99] There is no record to reveal if the contribution was made. If it had been tendered, Firestone would probably have disassociated himself from it.

From January to September 1926 Firestone and the Liberian government insisted on reiterating well established views. In a final effort at compromise, Harvey S. Firestone Jr. journeyed to Liberia in September 1926. He informed President King that Liberia would not be allowed to refund the loan for a period of thirty years. President King opted for a fifteen years hiatus. A final compromise of twenty years removed the issue from contention.[100]

Agreement Number Two, in which Firestone leased one million acres in Liberia passed both houses of the Liberian legislature on November 10, 1926.[101] Shortly thereafter Harvey S. Firestone Jr. and Edwin Barclay developed a compromise arbitration formula providing that in case of a dispute between Firestone enterprises and the Liberian government, the issue would be referred to arbitrators appointed by each of the disputants. If the arbitrators were unable to agree among themselves, the American Secretary of State could appoint a third arbitrator different in nationality from the previous two.[102] These compromises permitted the Liberian legislature to ratify the loan agreement on December 7, 1926.[103] With the exception of the arbitration and refunding clauses, the agreement was substantially that concluded in September 1925. William Castle considered the younger Firestone to be "a much better negotiator, I should think, than his father . . . "[104]

Aftermath

The planting and loan agreements permitted an American corporation to achieve a dominant economic position in Liberia. As an economic force, Firestone superimposed upon the local economy a corporate model in which the state became, in essence, an extension of the Akron enterprise. The loan of 1926 with its favorable interest rate of 7 percent provided a substantial profit for the Finance Corporation of America. Then the element of control, insisted upon by Harvey S. Firestone Sr. in order to guarantee his investment, pledged Liberia's revenues to the service of the debt. Officials such as the financial adviser, the auditor, and their assistants who supervised Liberia's revenues and expenditures worked not for Liberia but for Firestone. Since Liberia was not a colony, Firestone had free access to Liberia subject only to restrictions imposed upon the corporation by the government. The Liberian government could not remove the financial adviser, and it had no voice in choosing him. Nor did the American government supervise the performance of American officials in Liberia. Raymond Leslie Buell shrewdly noted: "The American State Department has less to do with them than does the National City Bank of New York"[105] (lending agency for the Firestone loan). If America had been a colonial power, it would have provided such benefits as infrastructure, schools, and a bureaucracy. Since Washington needed to do none of these things, it had the best of both worlds. America derived economic benefits from the Firestone enterprise without the attendant responsibilities of rule and development.

Why did Liberians accept the planting and loan agreements, basically on Firestone's terms? The explanation of some Liberian leaders was that Firestone would be an economic advantage. Edwin Barclay in later years took full responsibility for bringing Firestone to Africa stating it was "advantageous to Liberia."[106] Other Liberian officials such as President King shared this view. The *Liberian Star* expected increases in "rents, commissions and duties by the lessee" as well as the employment of thousands of Liberians.[107] If the cost of borrowing money was high, the Liberian leadership could still rationalize that long-term profits from Firestone would advantage the economy. Liberia did need funds to control the hinterland, to pay off previous foreign debts, and to provide better social services for its settlers.[108]

The second or political argument seemed more persuasive to Liberians than the case that Liberia needed Firestone economically. Edwin Barclay as Secretary of the State explained: "Frankly, what it has been hoped the Republic would gain from the encouragement of large American investments in the county is a counterpois[e] to other menancingly aggressive interests already established in this country, a balancing of foreign influences here and a new economic impulse."[109] The foreign influences alluded to were those of England and France. Here Firestone and the leadership were completely one. Firestone made it clear to his Board of Directors that the loan was necessary to eliminate foreign influence in Liberia.[110] Liberia used the loan money to buy up outstanding European bonds thus diminishing the role of England and France. Since the United States had been ineffective in preventing France from occupying disputed Zinta in eastern Liberia, the Liberian government had recourse to Firestone as a counterweight to its colonial neighbor.

The third reason for Firestone's entrance to Liberia was that the leadership wanted the corporation there. Essentially an expatriate aristocracy or plutocracy, the elite leaders had much in common with their foreign colleagues and little community with traditional societies in the interior. Settler–Liberians preferred dependence upon foreign investment rather than development of trade and investment in the hinterland.[111] The elite were willing to gamble with Firestone who seemed to promise security from Franco–British encroachment and economic development. Obviously a rubber plantation, like mining, is an extractive industry. The elite benefited from a spill–over effect from rubber production through higher salaries and wages for Liberians and consequent increased tax revenues. Harvey S. Firestone Sr. later announced that he had "spoiled" the Liberians through his investments and that they had not reciprocated properly.[112]

When the strictures imposed by the loan agreement became too burdensome, the elite simply refused to accept regulation according to the maxim "I hear but I do not obey." In 1930 Firestone's lending agency complained that the Liberian government, among other things, had not paid the salaries of the employees of the revenue service and that it had obstructed the financial adviser in the exercise of his authority over the Liberian fiscal service.[113] Harvey S. Firestone's confident pronouncement of October 1925 that he had "full control over Liberia" dissolved in elite intransigence. A disillusioned Finance Corporation of America ceased to lend Liberia any more money after 1930. The financial adviser also reported that he had made thirty–one recommendations for economic improvement to the Liberian government between June 1929 and September 1932—only two of which were addressed.[114] Since the American government would not enforce the loan terms, to speak of a practical American–Firestone protectorate over Liberia, as F.P.M. van der Kraaij does in *The Open Door Policy of Liberia*, is an exaggeration.[115] The settler–Liberian record of non–compliance illustrates an economic truism; the corporate model of development works only when all players accept its validity.

Although the link between the elite and the Firestone corporation was often strained, it held. Each needed the other. The elite benefited from the limited economic advantage conferred by foreign capital. Firestone, and later others, needed the elite to facilitate the entrance of their enterprises by such actions as preparation of public opinion or provision for land transfer.[116] In Liberia external economic power converted into internal political cooperation. Harvey S. Firestone Sr. might complain to President Herbert Hoover about Liberians who showed "disrespect" to Americans, who violated "almost every term of their agreements," and who were "antagonistic to both the United States Government and ourselves,"[117] but he could not do without them. Firestone soon became aware that the elite used him, just as he had planned to exploit his relationship with them. But Liberia was not Akron. The elite provided the link between corporation and countryside. They mediated and directed the new economic forces to local interests and institutions.[118]

Endnotes

[1]Robert W. Clower et al, *Growth without Development, An Economic Survey of Liberia* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1966), p. 153. In 1984 Firestone held concessions of 130,000 acres at Harbel in Montserrado County and 20,000 acres at Cavalla in Maryland County. Harold D. Nelson, ed., *Liberia, A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985), p. 162.

[2]G. A. Petch, *Economic Development and Modern West Africa* (London: University of London Press, LTD, 1961), pp. 42–43.

[3]Alfred Lief, *Harvey Firestone, Free Man of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw–Hill Book Company, 1951), pp. 136–138. Harvey S. Firestone Sr. was born in Columbiana, Ohio on December 20, 1868. As a young man he was a very adept salesman. Firestone sold carriages in Detroit and solid rubber carriage tires in Chicago. He married Idabelle Smith of Jackson, Michigan in November 1895. Together they had five sons and one daughter: Harvey S. Jr., Russell, Leonard, Raymond, Roger, and Elizabeth Idabelle. Firestone pioneered the pneumatic rubber tire for the Model T. His Akron corporation specialized in low pressure balloon tires for modern automobiles. Upon his death on February 7, 1938 Firestone's position as company chairman was taken by Harvey S. Jr.

[4]Frank Chalk, "The Anatomy of an Investment: Firestone's 1927 Loan to Liberia," *The Canadian Journal of African Studies*, I (March 1967), p. 16. Chalk's essay is an excellent introduction to Firestone's planting–loan venture in Liberia. This author's article, based upon some recently released Firestone archives and the William R. Castle Diaries, carries the Chalk investigation further.

[5]Alfred Lief, *The Firestone Story. A History of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company* (New York, McGraw–Hill Book Company, 1951), p. 9.

[6]Ernest Farvi to Herbert Hoover, March 16, 1921 in "Firestone Ship by Truck–Fisc.," Harvey S. Firestone, 1921–1928 and undated, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, Iowa. Hereafter as HHPL.

[7]P. L. Palmerton, Chief, Rubber Division, Dept. of Commerce, "Consumption of Rubber by American Companies," Dec. 16, 1925, marked "Confidential" in Foreign Combinations, Rubber 1925 and undated, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[8]July 21, 1926 in William R. Castle Diaries, MS AM 2021, Houghton Library, Harvard University. Hereafter as Castle Diaries.

[9]Journal Entry, January 26, 1933; Memorandum, Sept. 25, 1933 in J. Pierrepont Moffat, Diplomatic Papers, MS AM 1407, Houghton Library, Harvard University. Moffat was Chief, Division of Western Europe Affairs (1931–1933) with responsibility for Liberia. He followed William Castle in this post.

[10]April 4, 1925; February 6, 1926, Castle Diaries.

[11]Overman Files, Liberia, May 29, 1923 in William Harvey notes, Firestone Archive, Akron, Ohio in possession of Professor Svend Holsoe, Department of Anthropology, University of Delaware. Hereafter as FA. Firestone abandoned the idea of including Henry Ford when he found that he could Finance the Liberian venture himself. Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Elmer S. Firestone, October 1, 1925, Overman File, FA.

[12]J. Gus Liebenow, *Liberia. The Evolution of Privilege* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 22–23. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Liberia in World Politics* (Westport, CT: Negro Universities Press, 1970), pp. 104–105.

[13]D. Elwood Dunn and S. Byron Tarr, *Liberia: A National Polity in Transition* (Methuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1988), p. 45.

[14]Liebenow, pp. 57–58. J. Gus Liebenow, *Liberia: The Quest for Democracy* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press: 1987), p. 54.

[15]Sir Andrew McFadyean, ed., *The History of Rubber Regulation, 1934–1943* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd 1944), p. 28.

[16]Ibid., pp. 30–32.

[17]The Commerce Department urged the Dutch to stay out of the Stevenson Plan, holding out the prospect of more American investment in the Netherlands East Indies. Joseph Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy. Department of Commerce Policy, 1921–1928* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962), pp. 121–122.

[18]McFadyean, p. 33.

[19]Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy*, p. 126.

[20]Wm. Roger Louis, "The Straightest Man in Empire Politics." Review of John Barnes and David Nicholason, eds., *The Empire at Bay: The Leo Amery Diaries, 1929–1945* (London: Hutchinson, 1988). Review in *Times Literary Supplement*, August 26, 1988.

[21]Foreign Combinations, Rubber General, 1924–1926 and undated, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[22]Memorandum, Rubber, December 2, 1915, p. 4 in Foreign Combinations, Rubber, Confidential 1925 and undated, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[23]Quoted by Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy*, p. 117 who took the quotation from James C. Lawrence, *The World's Struggle with Rubber* (New York, 1931), p. 46.

[24]John J. Raskob to Herbert Hoover, August 18, 1926, Foreign Combinations, Rubber, February–December 1926, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[25]Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy*, p. 207.

[26]Harvey S. Firestone to Herbert Hoover, December 12, 1925, "Confidential," Foreign Combinations, Rubber, 1925 and undated, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[27]Lief, *Harvey Firestone*, p. 229.

[28]Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy*, pp. 100–101.

[29]Lief, *The Firestone Story*, pp. 169–170.

[30]McFadyean, *History of Rubber Regulation*, p. 35. *New York Times*, February 3, 1928 in Foreign Combinations, Rubber 1927–1928, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[31]Department of Commerce, Memorandum, April 27, 1926, Foreign Combinations, Rubber February–December 1926, HHPL.

[32]Brandes, *Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy*, p. 106.

[33]Draft, no date, Herbert Hoover to Mark Felber of Firestone Tire and Rubber Co., Harvey S. Firestone, 1921–1928, Commerce Papers, HHPL.

[34]Harvey S. Firestone, 1921–1928 and undated, Commerce Papers, no date, HHPL.

[35]December 23, 1925, Castle Diaries.

[36]January 31, 1925, Castle Diaries.

[37]Mark L. Felber to Harvey S. Firestone Sr., October 19, 1923, Overman File, FA.

[38]Mark L. Felber to Harvey S. Firestone Sr., March 6, 1924, Overman File, FA.

[39]Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, Firestone Tire and Rubber Co., April 28, 1927, Overman Files, FA.

[40]United States Government, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1925 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), II, 405. Hereafter as *USFR* with appropriate year and volume number. The conclusion of the draft agreements provided the opportunity for two sub-imperialists to enhance their position within Liberia. Both Sydney De la

Rue and C. R. Bussell worked in the Liberian Receivership or customs collection. They hoped that a new loan to Liberia would result in placing of all Liberia's revenue in the hands of the Receivership. Chalk, p. 19.

[41]Memorandum by the Assistant Chief, Division of Western European Affairs, Dorsey Richardson, November 13, 1924, *USFR*, 1925, II, 383.

[42]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to D. A. Ross, October 11, 1924, FA.

[43]Memorandum by Assistant Secretary of State Harrison, July 8, 1924, *USFR*, 1925, II, 380–382. Chalk, pp. 22–23.

[44]Memorandum of a Conversation Respecting the Desire of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company to Obtain a Rubber Concession in Liberia by Assistant Secretary of State Leland Harrison, December 12, *USFR*, 1925, II, 385–387.

[45]Charles Evans Hughes to Harvey S. Firestone, Sr., December 22, 1924, *USFR*, 1925, II, 403.

[46]Draft Agreement No. 2, *USFR*, 1925, II, 400.

[47]Edwin Barclay to William D. Hines, April 27, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 421–422.

[48]Edwin Barclay to Solomon Porter Hood, 432/D, April 28, 1925, *USFR*, II, 425.

[49]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Calvin Coolidge, April 30, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 426.

[50]Frank B. Kellogg to Solomon Porter Hood, May 1, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 427 and Frank B. Kellogg to Solomon Porter Hood, May 22, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 432.

[51]Cable, Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to William D. Hines, May 11, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 429.

[52]Castle Diaries, May 21, 1925.

[53]Edwin Barclay to Solomon Porter Hood, May 28, 1925, *USFR*, II, 434, 436.

[54]*The Liberian Age*, Special Edition, December 7, 1976, p. 6.

[55]Edwin Barclay to William D. Hines, May 25, 1925, Overman File, FA. The substance of this observation is also in Edwin Barclay to Solomon Porter Hood, 521/D, May 28, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 434.

[56]Solomon Porter Hood to Charles Evans Hughes, May 13, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 431.

[57]Edwin Barclay to Solomon Porter Hood, 521/D, May 28, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 434, 436.

[58]Frank B. Kellogg to Solomon Porter Hood, May 22, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 432.

[59]Harvey S. Firestone, Sr. to Board of Directors, May 24, 1927, Overman File, FA.

[60]Solomon Porter Hood to Frank B. Kellogg, June 11, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 442.

[61]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Charles D. B. King, June 12, 1925, *USFR*, 1925, II, 442.

[62]Frank B. Kellogg to Solomon Porter.

[63]Harvey S. Firestone Jr. to Harvey S. Firestone Sr., September 11, 1925, Overman File, FA.

[64]Texts of Agreements in *USFR*, 1925, II, 405, 454–460, 461–463.

[65]*USFR*, 1925, II, 405.

[66]Roland Oliver, *Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), pp. 344–345.

[67]J. Pal Chaudhuri, "British Reaction to the Firestone Investment in Liberia," *Liberian Studies Journal*, V, 1972–1974, No. 1 (Newark, Delaware: 1975), pp. 43–45.

[68]Excerpts from Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Board of Directors, May 24, 1927, FA.

[69]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Board of Directors, April 27, 1927, FA.

[70]*USFR*, 1925, II, 454–460.

[71]Harvey S. Firestone to Board of Directors, May 24, 1927, FA.

[72]Lief, *Harvey Firestone*, pp. 250–251.

[73]F. P. M. van der Kraaij, *The Open Door Policy of Liberia: An Economic History of Modern Liberia* (Bremen: Bremen Afrika Archiv 17\1, 1983), I, 61.

[74]Clower et al, *Growth without Development*, p. 83.

[75]Liebenow, *Liberia: Quest for Democracy*, pp. 75–76.

[76]*USFR*, 1925, II, 461–463.

[77]Wayne Chatfield Taylor, *The Firestone Operations in Liberia. United States Business Performance Abroad*, No. 5 (New York: National Planning Association, 1956), p. 15.

[78]Provisions of the Draft Loan Agreement are in *USFR*, 1925, II, 463–483. A good summary of the draft loan is included in Raymond Leslie Buell, *The Native*

Problem in Africa (Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books Reprint of 1928 ed., 1965), II, 839–845.

[79]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Elmer S. Firestone, October 1, 1925, Overman File, FA.

[80]Castle Diaries, January 7, 1926.

[81]Clifton R. Wharton to Frank B. Kellogg, January 23, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 506.

[82]Buell, *Native Problem in Africa*, II, 845.

[83]Liebenow, *Liberia, Evolution of Privilege*, p. 153.

[84]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Harvey S. Firestone Jr., February 4, 1926, Overman File, FA.

[85]Memorandum of Dorsey Richardson, Assistant Chief, Division of Western European Affairs, March 4, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 540.

[86]Clifton R. Wharton to Frank B. Kellogg, no. 336, February 24, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 534.

[87] Edwin Barclay to William Castle, 377/M.F., April 23, 1926, *USFR*, II, 545.

[88]Frank B. Kellogg to Clifton R. Wharton, February 5, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 518–519.

[89]Clifton R. Wharton to Frank B. Kellogg, February 12, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 520.

[90]Sydney De la Rue to Solomon Porter Hood, December 28, 1925, *USFR*, 1926, II, 491.

[91]Chaudhuri, "British Reaction . . .," pp. 31–32.

[92]Clifton R. Wharton to Frank B. Kellogg, no. 336, February 24, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 533, 535.

[93]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Harvey S. Firestone Jr., February 4, 1926, Overman File, FA.

[94]Castle Diaries, February 20, 1926.

[95]Edwin Barclay to William Castle, 377 M/F, April 23, 1926, *USFR*, 1926, II, 543.

[96]Sydney De la Rue to Hoffman, February 11, 1926, Overman File, FA. De la Rue, Collector of Customs in Liberia, hoped to enhance his own position after the conclusion of a Firestone loan. Chalk, p. 21.

[97]James L. Sibley to Dr. Anson, May 25, 1926, Overman File, FA.

[98]Buell, *Native Problem in Africa,* II, 838.

[99]Castle Diaries, June 16, 1926.

[100]Buell, *Native Problem in Africa,* II, 839.

[101]*USFR,* 1926, II, 561–568.

[102]Frank B. Kellogg to Chargé Clark, November 24, 1926, *USFR,* 1926, II, 571.

[103]*USFR,* 1926, II, 571.

[104]Castle Diaries, August

[105]Buell, *The Native Probl*

[106]Memorandum of Meet Barclay, February 20, 1936, Overman File, FA.

[107]Quoted in Buell, *Native* 829–830.

[108]Liebenow, *Liberia: Ques* .

[109]Edwin Barclay to Solomon Porter Hood, April 28, 1925, *USFR,* 1925, II, 424.

[110]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Board of Directors, May 24, 1927, Overman File, FA.

[111]Van der Kraaij, *Open Door Policy . . .,* I, xvii.

[112]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to Harvey S. Firestone Jr., October 27, 1928, Overman File, FA.

[113]National City Bank of New York via Finance Corporation of America to Liberian Government, June 14, 1930, William R. Castle Papers, Liberian Assistance, 1932–1933, HHPL.

[114]Department of State, Confidential Release for Publication, November 19, 1933, William R. Castle Papers, Liberian Assistance, 1932–1933, HHPL.

[115]Van der Kraaij, I, 53.

[116]Apparently former President Arthur Barclay (1904–1912) and future President William V. S. Tubman (1944–1971) both provided legal advice to Firestone Plantations Company. Van der Kraaij, II, 472, endnote 13.

[117]Harvey S. Firestone Sr. to President Herbert Hoover, September 26, 1932, Presidential Foreign Affairs, Countries, Liberia, HHPL.

[118]Ronald Robinson outlines the important role of the mediator in his "Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration," Wm. Roger Louis, ed., *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy* (New York: Franklin Watts New Viewpoints, 1976), p. 132.

LIBERIA AND ISRAEL:
The Evolution of A Relationship

Yekutiel Gershoni

The relationship between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Israel can be seen in the broad context of the relationship between Israel and other subsaharan African states. At the end of the fifties and in the beginning of the sixties the independent states of Africa built up a network of diplomatic and economic ties with Israel. These developments took shape in various forms of cooperation and assistance arrangements which included exchange and training programs; technical assistance; joint economic enterprises; loans and trade.[1]

Liberia, although not a newly independent state, was part of these developments. Israeli experts came to the black Republic, Liberian students studied in Israel and treaties of cooperation and trade were signed. In addition to this type of relationship, the black Republic and the State of Israel evolved a unique network of relationships which differed from ties with other African states, particularly during the administration of President William V. S. Tubman.[2]

This article will seek to understand and elaborate on the circumstances which brought about the exceptional relationship between the two countries.

Black and White Zionism

The ties between Liberia and Israel actually began long before the establishment of the State of Israel. The Liberian attitude was shaped partly by two distinguished black leaders, Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), a philosopher and politician who left his mark not only on Liberia, where he held several high ranking positions, but also on the African nationalist movement in general. The second leader was W. E. B. DuBois (1868–1963), an American black, one of the founders and leaders of the Pan-African movement.

Blyden, at one time a devout Christian, studied the history of the Jewish people and found that there were many historical parallels between Jews and Africans. As he put it: "Both Jews and Africans are children of endurance and suffering. . . . allied by a history almost identical, of sorrow and oppression."[3]

As one of the champions of the back to Africa movement, Blyden especially interested in those chapters in Jewish history where the Jews overcame slavery and oppression in the diaspora and managed to return to their fatherland, from Egyptian exile under Moses, from Babylonian captivity, and in modern times with the Zionist movement. In Blyden's eyes America, both North and South, was the Africans' "exile" and his message to the blacks was that they return to their own homeland.[4]

A more recent leader, DuBois, who fought for civil rights for Blacks in America, also saw the analogy between the history of Jews and Blacks as suffering peoples and drew a parallel between their fates as oppressed minorities.

Their positive attitude toward, and admiration for, Jewish history brought Blyden and later DuBois to support firmly the Zionist cause and the right of the Jews to a homeland of their own. As DuBois put it: "The African Movement means to us what the Zionist Movement must mean to the Jews, the centralization of race effort and the recognition of the racial fount."[5]

The settler-Liberian leaders seem to have adopted the views of Blyden and DuBois towards Jews and Zionism. Blyden saw in Zionism the fulfillment of biblical prophesies and promises. He firmly believed that it was indeed a "return" of the Jewish people to their historical and original homeland.[6]

Similarly, the attitude of President Tubman toward Zionism and Israel was forged by religious, semi-messianic beliefs. The restoration of Israel, the biblical country by the descendants of the ancient Hebrews, generated his special sentiment towards Israel, the country and its inhabitants. Tubman expressed these feelings while visiting Israel in June 1962: "When we arrived in the capital today a sense of history permeated our entire being; we thought of the great kings, prophets and priests, of the law-givers, the renowned statesmen... who have played such prominent roles in the history of their race and of the world .... For like the pious Moslem who is obliged to make a pilgrimage at least once in his lifetime, we feel that this visit is a fulfillment of our religious hope."[7]

Being Christians with particularly strong sentiments toward the Old Testament, the settler-Liberians believed in the sanctity of the land of Israel and in the outstanding abilities of the Jewish people. The land of Israel was referred to as the "Garden of Eden" and the Israelis as resourceful and capable.[8]

Some of the settler-Liberians did not separate religious sentiments from political considerations when relating to Israel. Israel was perceived by them as the birthplace of Jesus and not as an ordinary country. Even after the 1980 coup d'etat, religious motives were invoked by members of the People's Redemption Council as reasons for resuming diplomatic relations with Israel.[9]

These deeply religious sentiments toward Israel distinguished the settler-Liberians (and perhaps their indigenous-Liberian brethren who succeeded them in office) from other Africans who knew very little about Israel and Judaism. Those who had received a Christian education and heard about the Jews considered them as an historic people though they knew little about the modern Israel.[10]

The Black Republic leaders' identification with the ancient Hebrews made them feel there was a common bond between Liberia and the new state of Israel. As Tubman put it: "Moreover, our contacts with Israel—a land of living Biblical culture, antiquity, hope, promise and progress extends beyond the birth of the present state of Israel. We had known Israel long before the founding of Liberia, when, like Israel, our forefathers were bowed down and stricken with humiliation, oppression and slavery, they sang the song of 'Moses and the lamb.'"[11]

This feeling of closeness was not one-sided for the Israeli leaders acknowledged the historical parallels between the two nations and the special relations which developed between them as a consequence. President Ishak Ben-Zvi of Israel declared while visiting Liberia: ". . . . Jerusalem and Liberia are not only friends but brothers."[12]

Chanan Yavor, the Israeli Ambassador to Liberia elaborated on the subject when saying: ". . . . no Israeli can read the history of the creation of this nation [Liberia] without comparing it with the story of the revival of the Jewish state and nation. . . . for in both cases part of a persecuted people returned from beyond the seas to build their homeland."

Ambassador Yavor pointed to the fact that the Liberian constitution offers asylum to "all children of Africa who are persecuted."[13] This right enabling all blacks all over the world to become Liberian citizens resembles the Israeli Law of Return which grants the same right to every Jew.

The feelings of affinity between the two states had political consequences and helped to cement their political relations. A series of agreements were signed and visits of presidents and other high ranking officials were reciprocated. Actually the first agreement ever signed between the State of Israel and any independent African country was with Liberia. On April 9, 1959, a treaty of friendship was signed between the two states and was followed by five different agreements and three state visits between 1959-1973—President Tubman to Jerusalem in June 1962, President Ben Zvi to Monrovia in August 1962, Prime Minister Levy Eshkol to Monrovia in June 1966.[14]

The sense of a common history and the similarity between the Back to Africa movement and Zionism determined what place Israel was to take in Liberia's foreign relations. Tubman, who headed Liberia from 1944-1971, more than a quarter of a century, took a firm pro-Israeli stand. Thus, during the 1956 Sinai campaign a Liberian newspaper justified Israel's action against Egypt by describing it as a self-defense action on the part of Israel. Israel had no choice as it was ". . . . virtually strangled to death."[15]

In 1957 Liberia, together with Ethiopia and Ghana, resisted the United Arab Republic's attempts to secure an anti-Israel declaration from the Accra Conference of Independent African states.[16] After the 1967 Israel-Arab war, Liberia was the first African state to move her Embassy to Jerusalem and stood firmly against the wave of Arab condemnation which followed the move.[17]

In the international arena, Liberia adhered steadfastly to the Israeli cause from the very establishment of the state of Israel. She was one of the U. N. members who voted on 29 November, 1947, in favor is establishing a Jewish state in Palestine and this Liberian gesture was not forgotten by the Israelis. As declared on his arrival, the first Israeli ambassador to Liberia said: '. . . .the people of Israel will never forget Liberia for the support she has given them in the U.N. and also for being one of the first countries which recognized the new Middle Eastern nation."[18]

The stress on common fate found expression in Liberian government statements in U.N. committees. During a session of the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly, the Liberian delegate T. O. Dosumo-Johnson compared the arrival of the settler-Liberians in Africa in the 1820s with the arrival of the Zionists in Palestine. He reminded the other members of the committee that the establishment of Liberia was made possible only when the Africans ceded land to the newly arrived blacks from America.[19]

During the Tubman administration Liberia was one of the closest friends of the State of Israel. This fact was underscored by H. Boima Fahnbulleh Jr. one of contemporary Liberia's prominent politicians who served as Minister of Education and Minister of Foreign Affairs after the 1980 coup d'etat. "No amount of African and Arab pressure in and out of the Organization of African Unity" he writes, "could make Tubman change his stance with regard to Israel."[20]

Israel and the Unification Program

Feelings of common fate and similar history, important as they were, were not the only factors which shaped Liberia's attitude toward Israel. After World War II Liberia under Tubman had to cope with the new political order emerging in post-colonial Africa. The oldest independent black republic had to find its place among the newly independent nationalist governments. Liberia, which had close political and economic ties with the former colonial powers and with the U.S., and did not belong to either the Anglophone or Francophone zone, had to change her national priorities and focus on cultivating relations with the emerging states in Africa.

Tubman decided on a policy of support to African nationalist movements and newly independent states by taking advantage of Liberia's position as one of the few independent African states already with membership in the U.N. and other international organizations.[21]

The situation in Palestine in 1947, where Jewish settlers struggled to gain independence from British colonial rule, provided Liberia with an opportunity to join some African nationalist movements whose leaders viewed British colonial rule as the enemy and were thus eager to see an end to British colonialism. Liberia, seeking ways to find its place within the nationalist movements emerging in Africa, voted for the establishment of Israel in November 1947 not only because of her belief in the Zionist cause and historic parallel between the New World black settlers and the Zionist settlers, but also because of her wish to be part of the new political order emerging in Africa.[22]

At the same time, Tubman's government had to initiate changes in its internal policy as well. The population of the Black Republic consisted of two groups, the privileged settler minority and the mass of indigenous Africans who had little access to political power. This situation raised apprehensions that the new spirit of liberty and independence spreading in Africa, might sweep the indigenous Africans in Liberia towards ties with the emerging nationalist leaders of the formerly colonial neighboring states, in order to overthrow the yoke of settler-Liberian minority rule. The Tubman government therefore thought it expedient to launch two programs, namely, the Unification Policy and the Open Door Policy. The aim of the first was to integrate the two sections of the Liberian population. The Open Door Policy aimed to bring rapid economic development to Liberia, particularly to the hinterland where Liberia's mineral wealth and most of the country's arable land was located and where most of its indigenous population lived.[23]

The policy was designed to narrow the economic gap between settler-Liberians and indigenous-Liberians. Better standards of living, better education, would create social and economic mobility and thus bring about integration.

The new internal policies implied far reaching reforms in the economic, social, welfare and education spheres. The knowledge and experience accumulated by Israel could help Tubman's regime in implementing its reforms. The Open Door Policy meant, beside financial investment and mining of minerals, the development of agriculture. Renowned Israeli agricultural experts were the right people to assist in this area. When the Open Door Policy was initiated at the end of the fifties, Liberia asked Israel to send an expert to carry out a comprehensive survey of the possibilities of agriculture in the Black Republic. Two surveys were performed by Israeli experts. The first was conducted in 1958 by Chaim Gevati, retired Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture of Israel. This survey was followed by a thorough research which took place from October 1959 to May 1960. The report which followed the survey recommended ways of growing market crops in Liberia and the establishment of modern agricultural education programs.[24]

One of the results of these surveys was a $7 million grant for the construction and maintenance of a youth village in Harrisburg (Montserrado County) in which a modern farm was set up with the active assistance of an Israeli agricultural advisor.[25]

Another aspect of the Open Door Policy in which Israel was involved was a large-scale construction project carried out by a private Israeli company. The company was active mainly in Monrovia where it constructed the Ducor Hotel, the new Executive Mansion, the Monrovia City Hall, the Temple of Justice, the Department of Public Works, as well as a number of housing projects in Bong County, in the vicinity of the new iron ore mine.[26]

Beside these large scale operations Israel contributed to the Open Door Policy in small but importants projects. Modernizing the economy required high level trained manpower. Israel offered scholarships to Liberian students for a training period in Israel and sent, in 1959, a senior faculty member of the Technion, the Israeli technical institute, who organized and headed a science and technological department at the University of Liberia.[27]

In the sphere of medicine Israel had accumulated a great deal of experience in treating infectious diseases. Over ten per cent of immigrants to Israel between 1948-1958 suffered from all kinds of diseases which were successfully treated.[28] An Israeli eye specialist made a survey in Liberia at the request of President Tubman, another specialist set up the first eye clinic in 1960 and a Liberian doctor and several nurses were trained in Israel.[29]

However, the primary assistance which Israel could offer to Liberia related to Tubman's Unification project. The Liberian President's objective was to make of the indigenous Liberians and the settler-Liberians, "one consolidated whole."[30] In the process of implementing his program Tubman faced critics from several quarters of the settler-Liberian group. They were afraid that the modernization and westernization of the hinterland and of its people would close the gap between the two sections of the population and turn the indigenous people into a rival group capable of undermining the privileged position of the settler-Liberians.[31]

In order to convince his opponents and to secure aid for implementing his internal policy, Tubman turned to the Israeli example.

The unique position of Israel as a state, that on the one hand had to integrate Jewish groups coming from all corners of the world, and on the other hand had to find a way of cooperation and living together with other ethnic and religious groups, did not escape the Liberian leader. The enormous task of bringing together all of these groups to work as one nation was taken as the model for the situation in Liberia. The Liberian leaders apparently found a similarity between the "National Unification Council" instituted by President Tubman on 24 May, 1954 and the Israeli Committee for Interfaith Understanding established in 1959.[32] Their respective aims were to make the law and the principles of equality and integration understandable to every individual in order to eliminate ethnic and religious barriers between various groups.[33]

Israel's participation in the Unification Program and the Open Door Policy served to strengthen and intensify the relations between the Black Republic and the State of Israel. The material aid and the usefulness of the Israeli example went hand in hand with Tubman's views on the similar historical experience of the settler-Liberians and the Israelis. The practical aid sent by Israel cemented and strengthened Tubman's belief in the spiritual bond between the two nations. The triple task of Israel, as a spiritual fount, a model to be imitated, a source of practical assistance, was summed up by the Liberian President: "The history of the state of Israel is a great inspiration to the emergent nations of the world.... Your leaders and people have already achieved one of the greatest miracles of modern times by creating out of diversity a people who basically believe in the guidance of the greatest of all books."[34]

After Tubman

Tubman's death in 1971 closed a chapter in Liberia-Israel relations. A new period began under President William R. Tolbert Jr. which was characterized by gradual disassociation between the two states which deteriorated to the point of severing diplomatic relations by Liberia on the 2nd November, 1973. This process was a result of developments in the internal sphere in Liberia and of the growing erosion of Israel's position in the black continent.

Tolbert was associated with his predecessor Tubman whom he served as Vice-President for almost twenty years. When he succeeded Tubman, the new president not only tried to continue his predecessor's policy, but also to leave his personal mark on Liberia, and the sphere of foreign relations seemed to provide such an opportunity. Thus, following his accession to power, Tolbert gradually moved away from Tubman's conservative, pro-western policies and started to cultivate relations with the Eastern bloc and closer ties with the third world.

In 1973 Liberia established diplomatic links with some members of the Warsaw Pact, and two years later recognized Cuba and strengthened relations with Quaddafi's Libya.[35]

Although Liberia under Tolbert did not break away from the Western bloc, and particularly from her ties with the U.S., there seemed a downgrading of the ties with America and more emphasis was put on her relations with communist countries, with "African sister states" and other non-aligned nations. Tolbert made a point to stress Liberia's prominent place as part of the non-aligned bloc and his country's participation in its political activities. He served as vice-chairman of the fourth conference of the non-aligned countries which took place in Algiers on 5-9 September, 1973, and was a member of the Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries.[36]

From the Israeli point of view these developments meant stronger ties and cooperation between Liberia and states identified with anti-Israeli policy. Israel could no longer rely on the automatic support of Liberia. For example, at the OAU summit which took place in Rabat in June 1972 and in which Tolbert participated for the first time as the Liberian head of state, he accepted the resolution which supported unconditionally Egypt and the PLO, and demanded that Israel withdraw from all territories occupied in the June 1967 war.[37]

Warm greetings and praise which characterized public speeches concerning Israel during Tubman's regime, were replaced by a moderate, cautious tone of Tolbert's government. Reception of a new Israeli ambassador was usually accompanied by declarations which stressed the strong ties between the two countries, now the emphasis shifted from Israeli-Liberia relations to the relations between Israel and her Arab neighbors and Liberia's wish for a "satisfactory and permanent settlement of the conflict in the Middle East based on justice." Stating his opinion in these phrases, Tolbert hinted that Liberia accepted the Palestinian demands on Israel.[38]

Moreover, Tolbert demonstrated firmness towards Liberian officials who did not follow the new attitude towards Israel. In December 1975, he dismissed Liberia's Roving Ambassador to the U.N., T. O. Dosumu-Johnson—"for disregarding Liberian government policy by voting at the U.N. against a resolution calling for the Israeli authorities to grant protection under the Geneva Convention on Human Rights to Palestinians and others living in Israeli occupied territories."[39]

Another area in which Tolbert proved his independent stand was that of foreign aid programs. He reduced the close ties with the U.S. and with European companies and sought investments and aid from Asian and Arab countries. Early in 1973 Liberia entered into an agreement with the Peoples' Republic of China for the development of a sugar industry. According to the agreement, 40,000 acres of sugar plantations and a sugar mill were to be set up in Maryland county. The cost of the project was estimated at $40.6 million. Chinese technicians were to be sent to Liberia and Liberians to China for apprenticeship.[40]

In the same year the Liberian press announced that ". . . .tremendous contacts [were made] for Arab capital and oil money for potential investment in Liberia," after a tour made by the Liberian President's son, A. B. Tolbert, head of the Liberian Federation of Trade Unions, in Arab oil-producing countries.[41]

The ties between Liberia and Arab states grew stronger after the 1973 severing of relations with Israel. On the 26 March, 1974, President Tolbert went on an official tour of three Arab countries, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Libya. In Saudi Arabia, Tolbert received ". . . .an assurance from King Feisal that Liberia will receive its full supply of oil on favorable purchasing terms and will benefit from the Arab-African Development Bank."[42]

Growing investments from Arab states and aid agreements with the Peoples' Republic of China were indications that Tolbert was looking for new investment possibilities.

Tolbert's new policy in the sphere of foreign investments and development programs was motivated partly by mounting dissatisfaction with the Israeli assistance programs. Israel failed to supply a remedy for Liberia's economic and social problems and there was a growing disappointment with Israeli assistance in other African countries as well.

The realization that Israel could not supply a magic solution to the black continent's difficulties went hand in hand with erosion of the Israeli political position in Africa which occurred after the 1967 Six Day War, when black African countries expressed identification with the Egyptian stand and endorsed relevant OAU resolutions. Condemnation of Israel and the demand that Israel withdraw from all occupied territories gained more support as the years went by.[43] This process culminated with the severance of ties between black African states and Israel during and after the Yom Kippur War in October 1973.

Liberia's ties with the non-aligned states and her rapidly developing diplomatic and economic relations with Arab states made it easier for her to replace her relations with Israel with new partners.

Nevertheless, Liberia under Tolbert did not sever all relations with Israel. Although Tolbert pursued his preferred external sources of assistance, more than two decades of close economic ties with Israel could not be brushed aside. Israeli experts in banking and deforestation continued to work in Liberia. These Israeli experts were not sent directly by Israel but through intermediaries like private companies and international organizations.[44]

Moreover, the Tubman legacy of admiration and friendship toward Israel was not lost. Liberia did not accept the view adopted by some African states, mainly in North Africa, that Israel was an enemy of the black continent. Tolbert emphasized that any solution of the dispute with the Palestinian people in the Middle East should not be at the expense of the existence of the state of Israel.[45]

Moreover, the Liberian President took a clear and firm stand when rejecting some OAU members' suggestions to expel Israel from the U.N. On the eve of the OAU heads of state conference in Kampala in July 1975, President Tolbert stated ". . . .we should reject any suggestion, whatever its source, formulated with the design to expel Israel from the U.N."[46]

Renewing Relations

The coup d'etat of 12 April 1980 opened new possibilities for renewing diplomatic relations between Liberia and Israel. Rapproachement between the new regime in Liberia and Israel became possible when the Peoples' Redemption Council chose its foreign policy after a period of uncertainty and vacillation. The final decision was dictated by Liberia's urgent need for financial and economic aid. The new head of state soon realized that in order to overcome the problems—debts, inflation, trade imbalance, deficits and meeting the government's monthly payroll, U.S. support was indispensable. But the U.S., especially the Congress, tied financial assistance to progress toward democracy and improvement of the situation of human rights in the Black Republic.[47] Thus Doe's request for financial aid during his first visit to the U.S. in 1982 was turned down because of mounting criticism of his regime.[48]

The PRC sought other ways to overcome American reluctance to aid Liberia. When the new Liberian leaders decided to turn to America it was obvious that the question of Liberia's relations with Israel would surface. Israel maintained close ties with the U.S. and the pro-Israel lobby in Washington was considered powerful and influential.

In a document titled "Advice on Strategy" written by Major John G. Rancy, Minister of State, one of Doe's closest advisors, he stated: "Given America's past record in supporting the state of Israel, and knowing the role Jews play in the economic and political affairs of the U.S., it is my belief that re-establishing ties with Israel will win you enormous support in America."[49] Although the very existence of the above mentioned document was denied by Rancy, there is evidence that the particular piece of advice regarding Israel expressed a view prevalent in PRC circles at that time.[50]

During Doe's visit to Jerusalem in August 1983 it was reported that Liberia was seeking Israeli help in encouraging American Jewish businessmen to invest in Liberia. Israel had also reportedly promised to use its political influence in Washington on Doe's behalf.[51] In August 1985, a delegation of American Jewish businessmen visited Liberia and at the end of their visit promised to invest in Liberia.[52]

The issue of Israeli intervention on behalf of Liberia in the American Capital surfaced again when a delegation of senior Liberian officials visited Israel in the spring of 1986 and asked Israel to use its influence in the White House in order to secure the release of $73.5 million in military and economic aid to Liberia, a sum which was withheld by the American Congress until Liberia improved its human rights record by releasing all political prisoners.[53]

The final decision to resume diplomatic relations with Israel was not taken by the PRC in a political vacuum. Fundamental changes in the Middle East situation were invoked. The Camp David Agreements of September 1978 and the peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt which followed, altered the political situation especially from the point of view of Africa. Egypt, which demanded that the African countries participating in the OAU meeting of 1973 sever relations with Israel, now established diplomatic relations with it. Hence, Black African states considered themselves free of the 1973 OAU decision, and Zaire took the first step when in May 1982 it announced renewal of diplomatic relations with Israel.

This development coincided with a growing feeling of dissatisfaction and disillusionment with the Arab world. The black African states complained of the high oil prices demanded by the Arab oil producing countries which had done great harm to the economy of the poorer African countries. The sum of one billion dollars given by the Arabs to black African states was not enough to pay the mounting fuel bills. The general feeling among the African heads of state was that Arab countries had deserted them in spite of Africa's loyal support to Egypt and to the Arab cause in its dispute with Israel.

On June 20, 1981, at the OAU Foreign Ministers' meeting in Nairobi, the delegates overwhelmingly supported a decision calling for a summit meeting of Arabs and black Africans "to sort out their grievances." The Arab response characterized the Arab attitude toward black African states. Chedii Ayari, head of the Arab Bank for Economic Development dismissed the request saying, "a meeting of that kind is not necessary."[54]

Liberia shared the general disappointment of the black African states. On May 18, 1982, a letter to the editor of the *Daily Observer* called on the Arab countries not to use their oil weapon against African states who do not follow the Arab line.[55]

A more concrete statement against Arab policy towards Africa was published on July 12, 1983, in another letter to the editor in a Liberian newspaper. The reader raised several questions in his letter: "What has [sic] our Arab brothers done to assist Liberia surmount and/or subdue these economic diseases that are plaguing the continent of Africa? What have these Arab countries done to reduce the oil prices for their African brothers so as to enable them to keep up with their balance of payment deficits? . . . .Her Arab brothers whom she boldly stood out for and defended both in world and diplomatic forums are the same ones who are drowning her with exorbitant oil prices and denial of long term loans to solve her financial problems."[56]

Another issue which raised apprehensions, particularly among Christian black African leaders, was the rise of militant Islam and fear that it might be used to achieve political ends. The Christian leaders in Africa were alarmed by Quaddafi's call for a jihad against Christianity in Africa. The support given by Arab states to the Muslim separatist movements in Eritrea and to Idi Amin in Uganda as well as the Libyan open intervention in Chad were seen as threats by these leaders.[57]

Liberia, although a small state with a tiny Muslim community, felt also threatened by Libyan activities in countries surrounding it. Quaddafi's growing involvement in Chad, Bourkina Fasso, Benin, Ghana and the Central African Republic made the Liberian "Christian" regime apprehensive and suspicious.[58] As the Liberian head of state put it: ". . . .Quaddafi, the Libyan leader, was sending bribes, terrorists and ammunition throughout Africa in an effort to overthrow governments and take over the continent. . . .we in Liberia are aware of Quaddafi's threat and we're very cautious about it."[59]

Against this background of growing disappointment and suspicion toward the Arabs in general and Libya in particular, the PRC had its own internal reasons for renewing relations with the state of Israel. Beside Israel's political influence and ties with the U.S., it could offer technical assistance through high quality experts in a variety of ways. Liberia asked for Israel's help in the organization of airlines and maintenance of planes, agriculture, banking, medicine and construction projects.[60]

There is no doubt that the Liberian leaders carefully weighed the advantages and drawbacks of resuming relations with Israel. They might have reached the conclusion that the loss of Arab financial aid as a consequence of renewing relations with Israel could be compensated by aid from the U.S. government, investments by American Jewish businessmen and Israeli assistance. Thus Liberia would not lose by renewing relations with Israel. That was probably what Ernest Eastman, the Liberian Foreign Minister, had in mind when stating: ". . . .the restoration of diplomatic relations with Israel. . . .would define our national interests."[61]

Although the resolution to restore relations with Israel could be seen as a decision motivated by Real-Politik considerations and Liberian self-interest, it is interesting to note that the same Doe regime which ended settler-Liberian rule employed some of the old Tubman era phrases when referring to Israel; for instance, the emphasis on common bonds and historical parallels in the past of the settler-Liberians and of the Israelis. In an interview on 14 August, 1983, with the Libyan Foreign Minister, after the decision to resume diplomatic relations with Israel was taken, Ernest Eastman recalled the history of diplomatic relations with Israel and stressed the fact that Liberia "cast the tide-breaking vote at the U.N. that gave birth to the creation of the State of Israel. The Israeli struggle for independence evoked the same feeling and pathos of our history for freedom and the rights of man."[62]

Resorting to phrases and sentiments expressed by Tubman was not an attempt to cover up the utilitarian considerations of Doe's government. It is more likely that evoking Tubman's spirit in the case of Israel fits the general tendency of the new regime to restore Tubman's achievements and to portray the Tubman era as the golden age of integration between indigenous-Liberians and settler-Liberians. The military leaders looking for legitimacy for their regime could not draw it from their immediate predecessors whom they had ousted in a bloody coup d'etat. They treated the Tolbert era as an aberration from the Tubman reform period and recruited people with strong links to the Tubman regime, even some of his relatives, to senior posts in the government.[63] Likewise, the efforts of the military regime to "borrow" legitimacy led it to borrow phrases used by the Tubman regime to describe Liberia's relations with Israel.

Two factors influenced the evolution of relationship between the Republic of Liberia and the State of Israel. The practical, utilitarian factor on the one hand and the emotional factor of a sense of similar history and fate of the two nations on the other. During the three Liberian regimes under consideration the emotional factor played a changing role, although it was a constant factor. On the other hand the practical factor moved according to circumstances and thus relations shifted from very close ties to disengagement.

During the Tubman administration the fabric of the relations with Israel was woven tightly by threads of both practical considerations and positive sentiments. At that time these two factors were interrelated and brought about close relations between the two states. Under Tolbert, new political developments overcame the sentiments and the Liberian stand shifted toward an anti-Israel policy.

Nevertheless, even when the disengagement between the two states was most pronounced, the emotional factor still existed and prevented Liberia from crossing over completely to Israel's enemies. Only after the collapse of Tolbert's regime and the emergence of the military government, which reordered Liberia's priorities, did practical considerations point toward Israel as a possible source of technical aid and political support.

The military government's tendency to "borrow" legitimacy from the Tubman era brought to the surface once again the feeling of closeness toward Israel and made the emotional factor no less important than the practical one.

Endnotes

[1]Bernard Reich, "Israel's Policy in Africa" in *Middle East Journal*, 28, No. 1 (1964), p. 14. For the scope of Israeli activities in Africa between 1958-1960 see: Elliot P. Skinner, "African States and Israel: Uneasy Relations in a World of Crisis," *Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1975, pp. 9, 10.

[2]The Tubman era is crucial to understanding the evolution of relationship between the two states. Tubman laid the foundation for the relationship and provided leadership for most of the thirty years of diplomatic relations between Israel and Liberia.

[3]Edward Wilmot Blyden, *The Jewish Question*, Liverpool 1898, preface as quoted in Benjamin Neuberger, "Early African Nationalism—Judaism and Zionism: Edward Wilmot Blyden" in *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. XLVII, no. 2, 1985, p. 159.

[4]Ibid., p. 160.

[5]*The Crisis*, Feb 9, p. 166, as quoted in Benjamin Neuberger "W. E. B. DuBois on Black ism and Zionism" in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXVIII, no. 2, December 1986, p. 142.

[6]B. Neuberger, "Early African Nationalists. . . .in *Jewish Social Studies*, p. 163.

[7]Speech on the occasion of a dinner in honor of President and Mrs. Tubman by the Israeli President and Mrs. Ishak Ben Zvi, Tel-Aviv, Israel, 15 June 1962, at The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace Collection.

The author wishes to thank Chanan Eynor, former Israeli Ambassador to several African states and the head of the African department at Israeli's Foreign Ministry, now Fellow at the Truman Institute, for allowing him access to the relevant material.

[8]Editorial, *The Liberian Age*, vol. 27, no. 77, October 9, 1973, p. 2.

[9]"Israel: Wounds Healed," a letter to the editor, *Daily Observer*, vol. 2, no. 60, May 18, 1982, p. 5.

[10]Elliot P. Skinner, "African states and Israel: Uneasy Relations in a World Crisis, *Journal of African Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1975, p. 6, Truman Institute Collection.

[11]Speech at dinner honoring the Israeli Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, Monrovia, 2 june 1966, p. 660, Truman Collection.

[12]"Liberia, Israel are Brothers," *The Listener Daily*, vol. 19, no. 86, August 17, 1962, p. 1.

[13]"Distinguished gathering attending 11th anniversary celebration of Israel here," *The Listener*, vol. 9, no. 347, May 15, 1959, pp. 1, 6.

[14]Treaty of Friendship was signed on 9 April, 1959, but was to be effective from 31.6.1961.

H. Aynor and Sh. Avimor (eds.), *Relations between Israel and states in Asia and Africa*, a guide to selected documentation no. 3, Jerusalem 1987, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, p. 12.

[15]Editorial, *The Listener*, vol. 7, November 10, 1956, p. 2.

[16]Arnold Rivkin, *Africa and the West*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1962, p. 78.

[17]H. Boima Fahnbulleh, Jr., *The Diplomacy of Prejudice*, Vantage Press, N.Y., 1985, p. 175, *West Africa*, no. 2674, August 31, 1968.

[18]"First Israeli Ambassador to Liberia, Ehud Avriel, arrives," *The Listener*, vol. 8, no. 137, October 15, 1957, p. 2.

[19]Report of the Commissioner-General of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the near East, Special Political Committee, 412th meeting, 19 November, 1962, U.N. General Assembly Eighteenth Session, p. 197.

[20]H. Boima Fahnbulleh, Jr., *The Diplomacy of Prejudice*, Vantage Press, N.Y. 1985, p. 175.

[21]D. Elwood Dunn, "Anti Colonialism in Liberian Foreign Policy: A Case Study," in *Liberian Studies Journal*, vol. 1, (1972-1974), pp. 51, 55.

[22]Elliot P. Skinner, "African States and Israel: Uneasy Relations in a World of Crisis," in *Journal of African Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1975, p. 7.

[23]At the first National Executive Council of Chiefs, Harper Maryland county, May 24, 1954, in R. E. Townsend (ed.) *President Tubman of Liberia Speaks*, London, 1959, pp. 236-237. Second Inaugural Address, January 7, 1952, in Lawrence A. Marinelli, *The New Liberia*, F. A. Praeger, N.Y. 1964, p. 75.

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[27]David Armon, Report, May 1961 to Department for International Cooperation, Israel, Foreign Ministry, Jerusalem, 3 June 1961, The Truman Institute Collection.

[28]"Israeli Diary," *The Listener*, vol. 9, no. 221, October 1, 1958, p. 4.

[29]"Practical Cooperation between Israel and Countries in Asia and Africa," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 22 May, 1960, p. 5, Truman Institute Collection.

[30]At the first National executive Council of Chiefs," Harper, Maryland County, May 24 [1954] in Townsend, pp. 236-237.

[31]Tubman attacked Americo-Liberian opponents of the Open Door Policy in a speech before the Africans who supported him. "Tubman responds to pledges: says he is amazed at the spontaneity of persons from afar," *The Listener*, vol. 5, no. 262-263, February 8-9, 1959, pp. 5-6.

[32]"Israel Forms Committee for Interfaith Understanding," in *The Listener*, vol. 9, no. 262-263, February 8-9, 1959, pp. 5-6.

[33]Ibid.

[34]"President Tubman and Israel," *The Listener Daily*, vol. 10, no. 85, August 15, 1962, p. 6.

[35]"President's Second Annual Message," January 23, 1973 in *Presidential Papers* of President William Tolbert, August 1, 1972-July 31, 1974, Press Division of the Executive Mansion, Monrovia, 1975, p. 212. "Fourth Annual Message," January 24, 1975, in *Presidential Papers* of President W. R. Tolbert, August 1, 1974-December 31, 1975, Press Division of the Executive Mansion, Monrovia, 1976, p. 250. *The Liberian Age*, vol. 28, no. 26, April 5, 1974, p. 2.

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[55]"Israel: Wounds Healed," in *Daily Observer*, vol. 2, no. 60, May 18, 1982, p. 5.

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[57]Arye Oded, "Africa, Israel and the Arabs: On the Restoration of Israeli-African Diplomatic Relations," *The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1982-1983, p. 55.

[58]"Doe goes to Israel," *West Africa*, no. 3446, 29 August, 1983, pp. 1994-1997.

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[62]Ibid., p. 1, 10. The fact that Eastman was a senior official in the Tubman government ought here to be mentioned.

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THE KRU COAST REVOLT OF 1915–1916

Jo Sullivan

Introduction

Relatively few scholars of Liberia have focused on the resistance of indigenous Liberians to government and settler control.[1] Most writers have chronicled the history of the Afro–American settler minority while referring to the indigenous majority in passing or in a single chapter. In general, Liberia historiography has not only viewed events from a settler point of view, but also assumed that Monrovia settlers were the norm. For example, Tom W. Shick and J. Gus Liebenow's analyses of settler and government politics have focused almost exclusively on the view from Monrovia.[2] Magdelene David has acknowledged the complexities of the Liberian State, but relied on a Monrovia–centered approach for her evidence nevertheless.[3]

In the case of southeastern Liberia, the strength of the indigenous economy and the poverty of the settlers complicate our analysis. The situation in southeastern Liberia indicates that the interrelationships between and among the Sinoe settlers, the Kru Coast towns, and the central government were much more complex than previously acknowledged. By examining the Kru Coast revolt, we can see the weakness of the government, the divisions and political factions within the settler community (especially between Sinoe and Monrovia), the complexities of Kru society, and the interactions between both of these groups.

Throughout the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, the towns of the Kru Coast were independent and economically and militarily strong, while the Liberian government and the settler community in Sinoe County were small in size and economically and militarily weak. Considering these circumstances, how then did the 1915 revolt come about, and how did the Kru lose? To answer this question, we must understand that the revolt was preceded by a long history of social, economic, and political conflict between the Kru communities and the Sinoe settlers and Monrovia government. This conflict was exacerbated in the early twentieth century when international events, the world economy, and local repression of Kru aspirations combined to bring this conflict to a crisis. When the Kru towns finally did achieve some unity and challenged the settlers, the government response was ultimately conquest, and not incorporation. This led to reprisals, devastation of the coast, and exile for many, with the effects lasting well into the twentieth century.

Social and Political Context

The Kru Coast is an ethnically, politically, and economically complex area of Liberia. The term Kru is linguistically difficult to define and the term as an ethnic label has changed over time. We do know that Kru-speaking peoples have occupied their present sites on the West African coast since at least the 1500s.[4] At least by the nineteenth century, the Kru were organized in small independent political units called *dake* (*dako* sing.), made of territorially based units of patrilineally related people.[5] Although these units have changed over time, they were the basis of relations among the various Kru groups and the Liberians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Ethnic identity as "Kru" is a recent phenomenon, fostered by migrant labor abroad and relations with the Liberian government.[6] Most *dake* had a defined location, except for the Kabor and Gbeta who had scattered settlements along the entire coast. Government was by concensus among the elders, with certain religious figures having influence; merchants and businessmen gained in importance in the late nineteenth century.

The Kru farmed, fished, traded, and traveled the length of the West African coast as mariners on European vessels, their most notable skill in the literature. Although many peoples along the Kru Coast fished, the *dake* of Kabor and Gbeta were the professional fishers of the Kru-speakers, dominating much of the trade, transportation, and intra-Kru communication along the coast.[7] Their involvement in wage employment had important consequences for the coast as a whole because the Kru were able to use wages and goods received in payment to establish themselves in trade. This source of capital and contacts with Europeans gave them a consistent advantage over the settlers in their midst in the nineteenth century. This edge not only prevented the settlers from becoming established commercially, but also enabled the Kru to resist settler control for almost 100 years.[8]

Because of these maritime resources, Kru *dake* competed with each other for access to the sea and to gain choice land for fishing and trading. Those *dake* that succeeded in maintaining their locations on the coast developed into large towns, with coastal settlements such as Settra Kru, Sasstown, and Grand Cess supporting populations of 10–20,000 in the nineteenth century.[9] This intra-Kru competition frequently prevented unity in the face of Liberian settler aggression. At crucial periods in the nineteenth century, however, Kru *dake* did cooperate and unite to fight settler encroachment on their lands and to defend their commercial interests.

The settler community on the Kru Coast arrived in the 1830s and they remained the smallest, poorest, and weakest of the Afro-American settlements.[10] As in western Liberia, the up-river settlements engaged somewhat more in agriculture than those living in Greenville, the coastal county seat. Most settlers, however, preferred to try commerce, but competition from Kru merchants was intense. They controlled most of the export trade and had extensive contacts with Europeans, so that even with the port of entry laws, which were difficult to enforce, the Kru dominated commerce.[11] Political office and government civil service positions provided some employment opportunities and access to tax and customs revenues and the ability to extort income from Kru merchants and migrants. Politics, therefore, became the dominant source of meager income, with competition for office and political favors fierce at times. Factions and divisions within the settler community were common throughout the nineteenth century, with the in–fighting noted often by Liberian presidents.[12]

Tensions were also endemic between the settlers and government in Monrovia and the Sinoe settlers. It may seem in retrospect that the Liberian settler elites were one force in their oppression of the African majority, but in fact this was far from the truth. Except for times of crisis, as we shall see below, the Sinoe settlers formed their own factions of the True Whig Party (TWP), and often contested elections against TWP candidates. Executive correspondence is replete with evidence of Sinoe defiance of national policies, legislative decisions, and presidential wishes.[13]

Kru–settler Relations in the Nineteenth Century

In general, Kru–settler relations were characterized by fear, suspicion, and competition. Although some settlers established alliances with a small number of weak Kru *dake,* throughout the nineteenth century, relations with Kru neighbors grew more and more hostile, conflict resulted, and eventually led to the revolt in 1915. Relatively speaking, Kru prosperity and settler poverty caused settler–African relations on the Kru Coast to differ from other parts of Liberia. Around Monrovia and in western Liberia, settlers arrived in much larger numbers, were more successful in agriculture and commerce, and were able to defeat or to coopt African neighbors at a much earlier date.[14] Unlike their counterparts in western Liberia, Sinoe settlers did not incorporate or coopt Kru into their social, political, and economic structures. Instead, they competed with the Kru, who had more people, resources, and weapons than the settlers.

Although early settler–Kru contacts in general were mixed, as elsewhere in Liberia, settlers' dealings with the Kabor and Gbeta fishing *dake* were harsh and hostile from the outset. Throughout the nineteenth century, and even as the settlement was being prepared for the new arrivals in 1838, Kabor and Gbeta attacked the settlements; settlers in return burned their villages, called in military assistance, and harassed their communities.[15] Perhaps because of Kabor/Gbeta travels along the coast, these groups were aware of the meaning of the new settlements and the consequences of immigration. Throughout the century, the Sinoe settlers persistently sought to remove the Kabor settlements from the Greenville area, thereby increasing the cycle of opposition.

During the 1840s and 1850s, the settlers expanded, signing treaties with Kru *dake* along the coast and moving inland along the Sinoe River. They also attempted to participate in the coastal trade, aggravating relations with their Kru neighbors. As a result of this expansion, the Sinoe settlement was attacked in 1855 by *dake* surrounding Greenville. Military assistance from Monrovia and American gunboats defeated the Kru. Towns, villages, and farms on both sides were destroyed, although the Kru suffered the most damage. With outside intervention, the settlers were able to temporarily defeat their neighbors and competitors, but the resulting resentment among the Kru Coast peoples was a bitter legacy.[16]

In addition to military response to these events, the Liberian government alienated the Kru Coast by taxing traders and returning migrant laborers and instituting custom duties. These were sources of revenue, but were also instituted in order to gain control of the coastal trade. Since the majority of trade on the coast was controlled by African businessmen, the government passed port of entry laws restricting official ports to only settler communities such as Monrovia, Greenville, and Bassa Cove. They did not, however, have the means or the manpower to enforce these regulations, so that Kru traders and Europeans, and some settlers themselves, defied these laws throughout the nineteenth century.

With economic decline in West Africa generally during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, competition and concomitant hostile relations increased between the Kru and Afro–American settlers.[17] The depression also brought increased fighting among Kru *dake*, competing for coastal land and reduced commercial revenues, and this was further aggravated by interference in these disputes by the Sinoe settlers.[18] During this period, settlers sought allies among interior and weaker Kru *dake*, in order to oust coastal groups, grab a share in the trade, and to prevent Kru participation in the Liberian polity. Although they succeeded in making alliances with some groups, these actions antagonized the more powerful *dake* such as Kabor, Gbeta, and Settra Kru, pushing these traditional competitors toward united action.

Settra Kru, Kabor, and Gbeta were the most persistent and successful at defying the port of entry laws and the years 1894–96 witnessed attacks on settlers and their allies and blockades to prevent interior groups from trading with Europeans. Achieving Kru unity was a difficult process, however. In spite of the vulnerable position of the settlers, several weaker *dake*, such as Wor and Nana Kru, recognized that in a crisis the settlers had outside support and these groups began to break away from temporary alliances with other coastal groups and to seek favors from the Liberian government.[19] It was not until the severe depression during World War I, therefore, that the Kru, under the leadership of Kabor and Gbeta, were able to unite to resist more massively the Liberian presence in their territory.

These alliances and antagonisms were complicated by other factors as well. There were grave tensions between the Sinoe settlers and the central government at Monrovia. The Monrovia government could control neither the Sinoe settlers nor the towns on the Kru Coast. These divisions aggravated the already poor relations between settlers and Kru, but in a crisis, the government supported the settlers. European traders sought their own best interests and often allied with Kru merchants and towns to subvert the Liberian laws. Many Kru sought their aid in difficulties with the Liberians, even expecting that the British government would come to their aid in a crisis. Although British traders did make alliances with some Kru leaders, in the end the official British position was support of the Liberian government.

Historically then, the Kru had many reasons to resist Liberian government control. In addition, they had the ability to resist in terms of economic resources, good communications networks throughout the Liberian and West African coast, and they had money for and access to weapons and ammunition. The economic and political events of the early twentieth century brought these historical grievances to a crisis, resulting in the 1915 revolt.

Immediate Causes of the Revolt

By the end of World War I, the Kru had lost their independence and Liberia had survived as a nation. The reasons for this were complex, but international events and the economy played a significant role. After the depression of the late nineteenth century, Liberia enjoyed a brief period of prosperity, but World War I brought grave political and economic consequences to Liberia, destroying its hopes for recovery from debt. Shipping, trade, employment, and revenues declined and the financial crisis which resulted made Liberia's continued existence as a nation precarious. British, German, or American take–over of Liberia was a real possibility and consequently consumed much of the time and energy of Liberian administrations during this period. In addition, long–standing grievances and the economic chaos because of the war increased intra–African conflicts and African resistance to the Liberian settlers and national government.

The Kru Coast revolt was not the only military resistance against the Liberian government in the early years of the twentieth century. Peoples in both western and southeastern Liberia fought the government over land issues and political participation.[20] On the Kru Coast, these issues had begun to surface, but the major factors were political and economic independence and control of trade. Settlers opposed Kru involvement in Liberia's economic and political affairs, old animosities remained, and Kru ports were not recognized. World War I was the last straw as duties and taxes increased while employment and incomes fell. These pressures led to conflict in 1910 and 1912–13 and culminated in revolt against the government in 1915.

The early twentieth century brought an increase in trade which raised Liberian revenues and benefited settler as well as African traders. Liberia remained in deep debt, however, as a result of the outstanding British loan.[21] The international loan in 1911, with foreign customs receivers and collectors, enabled Liberia to pay off most of her past debts, but left little to operate on, even for such a small country.[22] The decline in trade which followed during World War I left little revenue for either the loan payment or government expenses. During the years from 1913–1920, Liberia never had enough money to operate properly, could not pay officials, provide services, or maintain order.

Partly as a result of the increase in trade and partly because of proximity, by the beginning of the twentieth century, some Kru began to participate in Liberian and Sinoe political life. In spite of the significance of old grievances and the importance of the depression during World War I in bringing about the revolt, the economic boom of 1900–1913 and its effects on the Kru must also be taken into consideration.

Kru trade and labor recruitment increased during this period, resulting in Kru expectations of a broader role in Liberia. Evidence from court records, Liberian correspondence, and oral testimonies indicate the increased involvement of Kru in the daily economic and political activities of Greenville, as well as Liberia. Kru in the vicinity of Greenville traded produce to settlers and Europeans, these traders and other individuals employed Kru labor, and Kru families sent their children to live in the homes of settler families in the hope that they would learn English, western ways, and perhaps obtain some education.[23] Enough Kru owned property in Sinoe townships to have their deeds probated in order to vote. They did vote at least as early as 1915, and as a new factor in Sinoe politics, Kru voting resulted in criticism from some quarters.[24] Politicians such as S.A. Ross sought to register Kru as voters, while others opposed their participation in politics.[25] These aspirations for greater participation in Liberian affairs were met with opposition and sometimes with violence. Court records show that some settlers attacked Kru towns, attacked Kru migrants and imprisoned them, and then stole their wages; the attackers were inevitably acquitted.[26]

In Monrovia, urban Kru were well-organized and were recognized as a municipality under the Kru Corporation by January, 1916.[27] Educated Kru participated to some extent in Liberian politics, as seen in President Arthur Barclay's appointment of the Episcopal clergyman, The Rev. Z. B. A. Roberts to a commission to negotiate with Settra Kru in 1910 and the participation of Monrovia Kru Governor B. J. Davies in the attempt to settle the difficulties on the Kru Coast in 1915. Nationally, the Kru pressed for legal ports of entry, but the legislature, dominated by settler interests, continued to deny most ports official status.[28]

One of the most notorious incidents occurred over the issue of a port for Settra Kru. When the Liberian legislature named Settra Kru as a port of entry in 1905, Samuel Ross, the superintendent of Sinoe County prevented Liberian customs officers from going to Settra Kru, which never opened as an official port. When Settra Kru asked for new revenue officers, Ross had the town burned and sacked in 1910.[29] This incident and the Liberian government's inability or unwillingness to override Ross, added to the long-term bitterness over Sinoe settler treatment.

While Sinoe residents fought any Kru participation, at the national level, President Arthur Barclay was promoting a more pragmatic policy of cooperation—Liberian-style indirect rule. To increase control over African polities, Barclay urged alliances with Kru *dake* and their eventual incorporation into the Liberian political structure. In practice, his policy meant manipulation of Kru divisions, and in a crisis, support for settler interests above all. Knowing that he did not have the manpower to confront the Kru, Barclay always urged negotiation. When the Sinoe settlers prevented The Rev. Z. B. A. Roberts, a Monrovia Kru, from going to Settra Kru to settle government difficulties with that town over trade, Barclay expressed dissatisfaction with Sinoe and urged a change in settler attitudes toward Africans:

> The civilized African in Liberia has come to stay. . . The Americo-Liberian element cannot control the enormous native population of Liberia by military force. There is not enough of it. . . Therefore, we must trust and use the civilized Liberian to manage his own people or to assist us the Americo-Liberians in doing so.[30]

This articulates clearly Barclay's policy of using settlers and westernized Africans to govern and police the interior, non-settler areas of Liberia. In carrying out this policy, Barclay envisioned alliances with Kru *dake* throughout the coast:

> I wish to build up between Settra Kru and Batoo [Betu] a powerful combination leaning on the local government at Sinoe, and on the Central Government at Monrovia, for the benefit of your County. . . I think Settra Kru, Nana Kru, and Blue Barri ought to be made townships of Sinoe County, and their people given the right to vote.[31]

Barclay's limited policy failed on the Kru Coast. Most settlers opposed allowing any Kru voting, and of the coastal groups, only Wor and Nana Kru made successful alliances with the government. For Barclay's policies to succeed, the cooperation of all groups on the coast, settler as well as Kru, was necessary. The majority of the Kru towns saw more benefits in maintaining their independence and the Greenville settlers feared their own demise.[32]

Instead, from 1910 on, tensions on the Kru Coast escalated, often including violence, with the government taking sides to encourage alliances with certain

Kru *dake*. In 1910, when fighting took place between the people of Nana Kru and Nuohn Point, the Liberian government took the side of Nana Kru, both to end a trade blockade and to cultivate an alliance with Dippeh, the leader of Nana Kru.[33] The Liberian gunboat *Lark* bombarded Nuohn Point, people were driven from their homes, and a military barracks was built there.[34] When Kabor, who harbored some of the Nuohn Point refugees, protested their treatment, their leaders were flogged, resulting in the death of one of the leaders.[35] In disputes between Kabor traders and the Diu, an interior group fighting for a coastal location, the government consistently sided with the Diu, in spite of persistent attempts by the Kabor in seeking a government alliance.[36]

From 1909–1914, many incidents of fighting occurred in the vicinity of River Cess and Rock Cess. The reasons for the conflicts were resentment over the rising price of goods at River Cess, Kru desire to monopolize work on ships to the exclusion of the Bassa, and Kru freedom from Liberian control. Gun smuggling was reported in August 1914, in spite of attacks by the Frontier Force in 1912 and 1913. These disturbances presaged the events that would engulf the Kru Coast with the beginning of World War I.[37]

The events of this period resulted in increased awareness of being Kru and in wider Kru organization. Kru attempts at united action had already occurred in the nineteenth century and increased with settler resistance and harassment. Although economic and political activity among the Kru was *dako*–based, Kru had organized in the past to attack the settlements at Sinoe in 1855 and in the 1890s and to seek favors from the Liberian government. In addition, correspondence from *dako* representatives in Monrovia indicate an awareness of being "Kroo" in the 1890s.[38]

Events in the twentieth century show an increase in that awareness of Kru identity and cooperation in which the Kabor and Gbeta were key. All of the hostilities from 1910–1914 involved either Kabor or Gbeta. This increased their opposition to the Liberian settlers and national government, and in the growing Kru organization to defeat the settlers, the Kabor and Gbeta were the leaders. They had allies among most agricultural groups along the coast and settlements at significant spots from River Cess to Sasstown. As canoeists, traders, and migrant laborers, they had more access to arms than other Kru, whose access was extensive anyway. Arms smuggling from 1912 onwards indicated their expectation of violence and eventually led Kabor in the Greenville vicinity to send messages to *dake* from the entire coast, inviting them to join in a revolt against the government.[39] More than ever before, Kru *dake* saw their interests as Kru vis–a–vis the settlers.

The onset of World War I and the economic collapse of the Liberian and Kru economies precipitated the crisis which led dissatisfied Kru to revolt against a weak Liberian government. The war brought economic depression and hardship to all residents of Liberia, Sinoe and the Kru Coast included. Shipping was blocked, trade declined, import prices increased, and produce prices declined. Although the Sinoe economy had enjoyed brief prosperity at the beginning of the century, the war brought about a drastic decline in revenues because German shipping ceased and British vessels arrived infrequently.[40]

This decline in trade led to an increase in taxes. As revenue collection increased in importance in the finances of Liberia, the government began to put pressure on indigenous groups to pay head and poll taxes and to enforce the collection of customs duties on individual laborers returning from ships down the coast.[41] These taxes and duties had long been resented by Kru towns and individuals, but the depression in trade and labor migration caused by the war increased their inability to pay.[42] Ship employment had decreased considerably for Kru laborers, thereby causing drastic changes in the economy of the Kru Coast. Kru informants cited taxes as the most direct result of Liberian settler rule and one of the most important encroachments on their freedom.[43] This feeling was expressed most eloquently in the list of grievances given to the American investigators on board the *Chester* off Sinoe in 1915:

> The whole revenue of the coast is of our strength. We manufacture Palm Oil, Kernels, Fiber, etc. We go to work on steamers and pay head money to Government, then we are taxed customs on what little we bring back with us. We pay canoe tax, poll tax, and other taxes, but we get no protection, no justice, and no benefits.[44]

With even fewer services provided by the government for the settlers, nothing remained to spend on schools and facilities for Africans. Economic circumstances beyond the control of the Liberian government, settlers, and Kru towns increased the hostility and antagonisms that had built up over almost one hundred years.

Coastwide Revolt 1915–1916

During most of 1915, Kru towns and settlers feared imminent attack from each other, committed acts of hostility, and both sides collected arms in preparation for a conflict. Although some settlers in Greenville and the Monrovia central administration tried to contain the hostilities, they became too widespread to settle by negotiation. Indeed, the widespread Kru defiance of the government convinced local and national officials that Liberian authority was being challenged, the nation undermined, and the very existence of Liberia threatened. The aggressive assertion of Liberian authority that followed in turn convinced Kru towns that *their* existence and independence were threatened and they hardened their position.

In Sinoe, both groups committed acts of hostility. Following a Kabor blockade of trade and collection of arms and ammunition at Sanpropo, Sinoe traders requested arms from Monrovia.[45] When coastal Kru towns fought interior groups over lucrative sites on the sea, the Liberian government fined several *dake*, taking sides, often arbitrarily. These fines at such a tense time on the Kru Coast aggravated Kru animosity toward the settlers and the Monrovia government.[46] These tensions were followed by mutual attacks across the Sinoe River by Kru and settlers during the first half of 1915. In addition, settlers who traded at factories across the river near Blue Barre reported the assembling of Kru warriors.[47] While some settlers wanted to cross the river and attack the settlements at Blue Barre, others advised awaiting until further Kru hostilities.[48] Fearing Greenville settler actions against them, Kabor at Blue Barre notified other Kru settlements to prepare for defense, asking them to send warriors to Blue Barre point.[49] Both sides feared for their lives and independence.

In August, Kabor stopped all Liberian and German boats in the Sinoe River, stating that they were at war with the Liberians and the Germans and that they would not harm Dutch or British trade or subjects.[50] On the 10th of September, captured German boats returned from Sanguin, but they were filled with Kru warriors:

> . . .it became clear that those boats had on board between 100 and 120 Kroo warriors who were waving their hats when passing Greenville. Those boats are now in Blue Barre and another West boat is expected with another load of warriors.[51]

The war began two days later. Although few if any were hurt in an exchange of fire across the river, the settlers considered this as the beginning of the revolt. Notice was quickly sent to Monrovia asking for assistance in fighting the Kru. In response, settlers burned the Kabor town in Greenville, after the inhabitants had fled.[52] From September to October, although no further attack took place, all boats in and out of the Sinoe River were blocked by Kru canoeists. Their leaders reiterated the position that they were at war with the Germans and Liberians and supported the Allies in the World War.[53]

In terms of numbers and weapons, the Kru were in a favored position. Because of their profession and their communications system, they were well supplied with arms and ammunition. British soldiers had sold weapons to the Kru, Kru living in Freetown transported guns to the Kru Coast, and they obtained powder illegally through European firms in Greenville and by breaking into arms and ammunition stores located in Greenville and Bassa.[54]

Monrovia, however, was ill–prepared for a revolt. The Liberian government responded by trying to contain the revolt, to keep the antagonisms on both sides to a minimum, and yet tried to act decisively to assert Liberian authority. President Howard urged the people of Greenville and Buchanan to remain calm. Nevertheless, he stated that punishment of rebels would be harsh, to show the "true authority" in Liberia.[55] The Frontier Force was at its lowest number in years and was scattered in the interior of western and central Liberia;

it would take days or weeks to get them to the Kru Coast by foot and arms and ammunition were in short supply.[56] It is likely that the Kru knew the weakness of Liberia and Sinoe and timed their attacks accordingly.

President Howard was forced to seek outside assistance. Howard would not accept aid from the British because he suspected British encouragement of the Kru. The British denied providing Kru with arms, but some British attitudes and the poor timing of the arrival of a British war ship reinforced Liberian suspicions.[57] The government chartered a German schooner to transport Frontier Force soldiers to Greenville.[58] The most significant move, however, was the Liberian request to the American government for military assistance. President Howard convinced the American Charge d'Affaires to request the American cruiser *Chester* and an increase in numbers of American military officers who could lead troops of the Frontier Force.[59]

This aid proved crucial, for the Liberian government had neither the manpower nor arms to defeat the Kru towns. If it had not been for the American military intervention, the Kru Coast towns may have defended their independence. When the U.S.S. *Chester* arrived in Monrovia in November, it was sent immediately to Greenville. A hundred and seventy-five Frontier Force soldiers led by Americans Captain Frank Schofield and Major William York and a peace commission left Monrovia on the *Chester* November 15, to negotiate a settlement with the Kru, to establish their grievances, and to prevent further hostilities. The commission consisted of Reed Paige Clark, the American General Receiver of Liberian Customs, B. J. Davies, Monrovia Kru Governor, Dr. B. W. Payne, Secretary of the Interior, and a Monrovia settler named Cooper.

The leaders of the Kru, fearing for their lives, refused to come to Greenville or to board the *Chester* to talk with the commission. Schofield, Clark, and Payne went to Blue Barre to discuss the Kru grievances. These included government opposition to their trade and independence, harassment, and sometimes murder, which was never punished by Greenville authorities, and the harsh penalties inflicted upon Kru towns for port of entry violations. Kru leaders demanded that all soldiers be removed from the Coast, that the Kru be allowed to carry arms, that new ports of entry be made, and that there be no taxes for towns with no services.[60]

The commission tried to convince the Kru leaders that their demands were not substantial, were not enough to warrant a conflict, and that defying the government would result in violence. The commission issued the following demands on behalf of the Liberian government: cease all hostilities, return to their villages, return all captured surf boats with their cargos, give up for trial all persons concerned in the seizure of surf boats, give up the port of Blue Barre point, and give up all guns belonging to the Kabor living at Blue Barre. These demands were presented to the Kru on November 19; they asked for three days to deliberate on their answer. On November 22, they refused to comply with the demands.[61]

In retaliation, on November 24th, the Liberian military took action; at dawn the Frontier Force and the Greenville militia carried out a well-coordinated attack on Blue Barre from inland. Many Kru were killed, hundreds ran away into the bush, and the entire settlement was burned to the ground; as many as 1000 houses may have been burned.[62] Kru informants considered the dawn attack as the beginning of the 1915 war.[63]

The attack on Blue Barre, viewed as settler and American aggression, angered the Kru throughout the coast. As a result, with their communications network, Kabor and Gbeta spread news of the fighting and the revolt expanded.[64] The conflict continued for the first six months of 1916 and the government responded with ground attacks led by American officers and by the bombardment of coastal towns.[65] From January to April 1916 many settlements on the Kru Coast were bombarded and burned to the ground. Settra Kru, Wlokli, Little Kru, Krobar, Sanpropo and numerous other Kru settlements from Rock Cess to Betu were burned.[66]

The government then focused attacks on the scattered Kabor and those towns harboring Kabor warriors and refugees. In March, a proclamation closed factories at Sobo, Wissepo, and Nifu for harboring Kabor refugees. Betu, which had not participated in the fighting, allowed Kabor to remain in Betu. For this, the Frontier Forces and Diu allies attacked Betu from the rear and bombarded the town by ship at the same time.[67]

Nevertheless, Kabor resistance continued and in May the war was still going strong on the coast. Liberian government forces, with the American officers, were determined to defeat the Kru. The Kabor strongholds that had not been burned suffered from a lack of arms and ammunition. On June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th an American, William Roundtree, and his forces attacked Gbeta and Kabor at Rock Cess and Sanguin. The Kabor fled, their towns were burned, and they were forced to surrender.[68] Informants described Roundtree as able to survive any onslaught of bullets. They appropriately attributed their defeat to the superior power of the American assistance given to the Liberian government.[69]

By September 1916, one year after the revolt began, many leaders of the revolt had been captured by Roundtree and taken to Greenville and Monrovia; others, such as Bob Roberts and Saywon Elliott, escaped to Sierra Leone.[70] Elders as well as military leaders were among those captured. When the *dake* were militarily defeated and towns had been burned, the government insisted that the Kru towns send their leaders to talk about a settlement and to sign agreements for living under Liberian rule. When the leaders arrived for talks, they were taken into custody, jailed in Greenville, and some were taken to Monrovia. Many were later executed. According to informants, *dake* such as

Betu and Gbeta, who were willing to name quite a few leaders, suffered a greater loss than those who sent fewer men. The revolt was over and the leadership decimated.[71]

Although the revolt included most sections of the Kru Coast from River Cess to Betu, not all Kru *dake* participated. The decision to join the revolt or support the government divided towns and neighbors on the Kru Coast. These choices were based on historical alliances, recent grievances or debts to the Liberians, loyalty to *dako* and neighbors, and the pragmatic decision that the Kru could not win. The Kru can be divided into *dake* who supported the government, those who fought the government, and those that were split.

Sections of Wor, Tartwe, and Diu, for example, participated in fighting by joining with government troops; Nana Kru and King William's Town housed Liberian troops but did not fight. Kabor and Settra Kru were among the first to join the revolt against the government; others such as Nifu and Betu joined after bombardment and harassment by Liberian and American troops.[72] Even in cases in which a *dako* agreed to join with fellow Kru, the decision was not always unanimous. In discussions of whether Settra Kru should join the revolt, some businessmen and traders urged the *dako* not to fight. They were outnumbered.[73] This is further evidence of the ambiguity brought about by the prosperity of 1900–1913 and its effects on settler–Kru relations. Some traders saw their own, and possibly the *dako*'s, best interests in remaining neutral. Some split, such as the Gbeta, joining their agricultural neighbors for or against the revolt. For example, the Gbeta settlement of King William's Town did not fight, as Nana Kru did not. Wlokli, located near Settra Kru, joined the revolt.[74]

Because of the crucial role of American financial and military aid, which enabled the beleaguered Liberian government and Sinoe settlers to defeat the Kru, it is unlikely that a different set of alliances would have affected the outcome of the revolt. The majority of Kru towns and *dake* did join the revolt. Although those that assisted the government or remained neutral provided support, warriors, and advice, ultimately it was not the Kru allies of the government that made the difference. If all *dake* had united and fought the government, the American aid would probably have still succeeded in bringing victory to the settlers and defeat of the Kru.

Immediate and Long–Term Punishment

> Our policy is going to be to put down this rebellion fully or die in the attempt. There shall be no quarter for the loser. I take no prisoners, death and destruction is my policy all the time until the aim of the gov. has triumphed or utterly broken, so choose now your cause, you must now decide.[75]

These were no idle threats and the punishment for the revolt was harsh and undiscriminating. In order to assert authority and to prevent the uprising of other groups, the Liberian government took immediate and direct measures to punish Kru towns that participated in the revolt and indirect measures that punished the Kru Coast in general. Captured leaders were hanged, arms confiscated, garrisons established, fines imposed, and land appropriated.

A special commission was formed to try the captured leaders in Greenville. By January 1917, the commission's court martial had found 67 chiefs and headmen guilty of rebellion and murder; President Howard sentenced them to die. International pleas persuaded Howard to grant clemency to forty men, but his message reached the coast too late; forty-seven had been hanged, some at Jidiwa, the settlement at Blue Barre, and others at Bame Town near the Sanguin River.[76]

Military barracks to quarter members of the Liberian Frontier Force were erected at Blue Barre and at Settra Kru. The government attempted to establish a barracks at Tarsu, but the inhabitants made the soldiers so miserable that they were forced to leave. Although officially under the administration of Greenville, some towns made it difficult for a resident commissioner to remain in the area. Settra Kru informants said that settler commissioners came regularly to collect taxes, but that none would live in Settra Kru for fear of losing his life.[77]

Long-term punishment was also severe and included fines, taxes, harassment, exile, famine, and destruction of trade. Significantly for the rest of the twentieth century, almost all the peoples of the Kru Coast, regardless of their position during the revolt, received general punishment. Allies and enemies alike were subject to fines in money, livestock, and produce. Soldiers stationed in Sinoe, who had to be self-sustaining, exploited people by forcing them to work, carry loads, and provide shelter and food. With no weapons available, the Kru could not resist. Taxes were collected on a more regular basis than before. Taxes and labor were expected of all *dake*, and those who had supported the government resented receiving the same treatment as the rebels. Informants noted that they received no special favors or rewards for their loyalty to the government. There were no more schools, clinics, or services in loyal areas than in those that rebelled.[78] One group, the Wor, did benefit in the area of land. The government had been trying to assist Wor in establishing themselves on the beach since at least the 1880s. After the defeat of Blue Barre in 1916, the government gave Wor title to all the Blue Barre territory, pushing the few remaining Blue Barre residents into the interior.[79]

Reports reached Monrovia that Kru in Freetown, led by exiles Bob Roberts and Saywon Elliott, were collecting money and buying arms and ammunition to transport to Liberia.[80] No further revolt was mounted, however. Too many leaders had been killed or scattered throughout West Africa and the people on the coast did not have the morale or the means to continue the revolt.

By 1919 a situation approaching famine existed on the Kru Coast. Because of the European war, shipping had not picked up. There was no European food, no work available for hundreds of young men who depended on the sea for their living, and a widespread crop failure occurred. Many died of starvation and influenza, the latter aggravated by the lack of food.[81] The food shortage was affected by another result of the war. Not only had hundreds of men and women died in the fighting and burning of towns, but many people fled to other parts of West Africa, especially the ports in British colonies such as Freetown, Lagos, Sekondi, Takoradi, and Accra. This exile affected the ability of towns to feed themselves and retarded development long after the military defeat.[82]

Conclusion

The political and military upheaval on the Kru Coast during 1915–16 had both historical and immediate causes, resulting in devastation which has affected events in that area for most of the twentieth century. The long–term causes were a result of the economic, political and social relations among the Kru Coast towns and the Liberian settlers and their government. Kru communities in the nineteenth century were powerful, independent, and relative to other Liberians, both settler and indigenous, prosperous. To preserve their political and economic independence, the Kru opposed the presence of settlers in their midst and resisted Liberian attempts to control their societies. Their dispersed settlements, mobility, and relative wealth enabled them to resist the Liberian government longer than many of their neighbors. More immediate causes were Kru attempts to participate in Liberian economic and political life and settler rejection, grievances against the Sinoe settlers and the government, especially from the 1890s and into the twentieth century, the depression brought on by World War I, and the taxes and repression that followed.

With the military assistance of the United States, the government defeated the Kru communities, but did not integrate them into the Liberian polity. Bitterness, reprisals, and repression—towards the entire coast—continued for many years, causing the Kru Coast, in spite of its history and the talent and education of individuals, to be ignored at best and punished at worst, suffering from the labor scandals of the 1920s and 1930s, the Sasstown war, and a lack of services and infrastructure for decades.

The fate of the Kru Coast in more recent history needs to be explored. The connections and linkages between the events of 1900–1920 and later history must be examined and Kru responses to recent events are an intriguing research topic. Not surprisingly, southeastern Liberians were members of the original People's Redemption Council in 1980 and the area has since been given the status of a county, Grand Kru, leading to government positions and legislative representation. This has potential for access to resources and a role in the political process, but given the severe economic restraints and political instability since 1980, increases in services, infrastructure, or political power are unlikely in the short term.

Endnotes

[1]Warren D'Azevedo, "A Tribal Reaction to Nationalism," *Liberian Studies Journal [LSJ]*, I(1916), II(1970), IV(1970–71); Jane J. Martin, "The Dual Legacy: Government and Mission Influence among the Glebo of Eastern Liberia, 1937–1910," Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1968; M. B. Akpan, "African Resistance in Liberia: the Vai and the Gola-Bande," Liberia Working Group paper, 2(Bremen, 1986); Monday B. Abasiattai (M. B. Akpan), "Resistance of the African Peoples of Liberia," *Liberia – Forum*, III4(1987).

[2]J. Gus Liebenow, *Liberia: The Quest for Democracy* (Bloomington, 1987); Tom W. Shick, *Behold the Promised Land: A History of Afro-American Settlement in Nineteenth Century Liberia* (Baltimore, 1980).

[3]Magdelene David, "The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here (an Analysis of the Development of the Settler State in 19th Century Liberia)," *Review of African Political Economy*, 31 (1984), 57–70.

[4]For a discussion of the origin of Kru settlement of the coast see Ronald W. Davis, *Ethnohistorical Studies of the Kru Coast* (Newark, Del., 1976).

[5]Merran Fraenkel, "Social Change on the Kru Coast of Liberia," *Africa*, 36(1966); Elizabeth Tonkin, "Sasstown's Transformation: The Jlao Kru, 1888–1918," *LSJ*, VIII, 1(1978–79).

[6]On Kru ethnicity see Frederick McEvoy, "Understanding Ethnic Realities among the Grebo and Kru peoples of West Africa," *Africa*, 47(1977) and Lawrence Breitborde, "Some Linguistic Evidence in the Study of Kru Ethno-linguistic Affiliation," *LSJ*, VIII, 2(1978–79).

[7]For more on the Kabor and Gbeta see Jo Sullivan, "Fishers, Traders, and Rebels: the Role of the Kabor/Gbeta in the 1915 Kru Coast (Liberia) Revolt," in J. C. Stone (ed.), *Africa and the Sea* (Aberdeen, 1985).

[8]The most comprehensive discussion of Kru maritime activities is George Brooks, *The Kru Mariner in the Nineteenth Century: a Compendium* (Newark, Del., 1970). On Kru migrant labor in Nigeria, see Jane J. Martin, "Krumen 'Down the Coast': Liberian Migrants on the West African Coast in the Nineteenth Century," Boston University, African Studies Center Working Paper, no. 64(1982).

[9]Although possibly exaggerated, these figures should be considered large for thinly populated Liberia. Thomas Ludlam, "An account of the Kroomen on the Coast of Africa," *African Repository [AR]*, I (1825–26), 44.

[10]Jo Sullivan, "Mississippi in Africa: Settlers among the Kru, 1835–1847," *LSJ*, VIII, 2(1978–79).

[11]There is no evidence that these laws were "effectively giving Liberian merchants a near monopoly of the coastal trade." David, "Love of Liberty," 64.

[12]See Sullivan, "Settler Politics in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of Sinoe County, Liberia," African Studies Center, Boston University Working Paper No. 33, for more on political competition.

[13]*Ibid*. This *does* reinforce David's point that the state represented an elite segment within the Liberian settler community. David, "Love of Liberty."

[14]Cf. Shick, *Promised Land*, and Svend Holsoe, "A Study of Relations between Settlers and Indigenous peoples in Western Liberia," *African Historical Studies*, IV (1971), 331–56. Akpan shows evidence of Vai resistance to Liberian rule, indicating that the groups that did resist ended up on the British side of the border, Akpan, "The Vai and the Gola-Bande."

[15]"Ninth Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Colonization Society," *AR*, XV, 3 (March, 1839), 73, 78; Horatio Bridge, *Journal of an African Cruiser* (New York, 1853), 63–64.

[16]*Liberian Herald*, 19 (March, 1856), in *AR*, XXXII, 6 (June, 1856), 164; Interview, Bluntsville, 23 March 1975.

[17]H. Johnston, *Liberia* (London, 1906), 402–3; M. B. Akpan, "The Liberian Economy in the Nineteenth Century: The State of Agriculture and Commerce," *LSJ*, VI, 1 (1975), 1–24; Dwight Syfert, "The Liberian Coasting Trade 1822–1900," *Journal of African History*, 18, 2 (1977), 217–35. This conflict is described in J. M. Sullivan, "Prelude to Revolt: Economic Decline and the Deterioration of Kru-settler Relations, 1870–1900," paper presented at the 29th Congress of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 1984.

[18]S. R. Miller to J. J. Cheeseman, 18 February 1894, Executive Correspondence [EC] 1893–94, Liberian Government Archives [LGA].

[19]See Sullivan, "Prelude to Revolt."

[20]See Akpan, "The Vai and Gola-Bande," and Martin, "Dual Legacy."

[21]J. Pal Chaudhuri, "Anglo-German Rivalry in Liberia, 1912–1920," paper presented at the 9th Annual Liberian Studies Conference, 1977.

[22]Wolf Schmokel, "Liberia, Germany, Britain and the United States, 1905–1918," paper presented at the 9th Annual Liberian Studies Conference, 1977; Chaudhuri, "Anglo-German Rivalry."

[23]Court of Quarterly Sessions and Common Pleas (CQSCP), 1900–1922, LGA.

[24]H. C. Birch to D. E. Howard, 4 March 1915; Samuel Grigsby to Howard, 5 May 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howard, LGA.

[25]Grigsby to Howard, 10 May 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howard, LGA.

[26]CQSCP, 1900–1902, 1904–1905.

[27]FO 371/2024: "An Act Providing for the Government of Krutown, Monrovia and Constituting the Same Corporation," January 29, 1916.

[28]Arthur Barclay to H. C. Birch, 12 September 1910, EC 1905–1912, LGA. Sasstown was opened officially as a Liberian port in 1910, but this only increased the resentment of other powerful towns such as Settra Kru.

[29]Major Charles Young to State Department, 7 October 1915, Dec. File 882.000/514; Schofield to State Dept., 30 November 1915, Dec. File 882.000/522, United States National Archives [USNA].

[30]Barclay to Birch, 12 September 1910, EC 1905–1912, LGA.

[31]Barclay to Birch, 26 May 1911, EC 1905–1912, LGA.

[32]Barclay to Birch, 8 December 1910, EC 1905–1912, LGA.

[33]Interviews Greenville, 16 May 1976; 4 June 1975; Barclay to Birch, 16 March 1911, EC 1905–1912, LGA.

[34]Barclay to Birch, 3 January 1911; Barclay to Captain Phillips, 18 March 1911, EC 1905–1911, LGA.

[35]"The Conference of Kru Chiefs, Freetown, Sierra Leone," [hereafter "Kru Conference"], 15–18, Dec. File 882.000/528, USNA.

[36]"Report of the Nana Kru Expedition," 3–4; "Report of the Interior Dept., —Section of Sinoe County," *Liberia Official Gazzette*, I, 11–12 (April–May, 1913); "Schofield Report," 6.

[37]M. Massaquoi to Howard, 20 October 1912, EC 1905–1912; W. F. Stanford to Howard, 11 August 1914, Liberian Frontier Force, Executive Mansion 1915, LGA; for a full account of the hostilities, see Davis, *Ethnological Studies*, 51–53, based on USNA files.

[38]Tobey et. al. to Cheeseman, 17 January 1894, EC 1894–1896, LGA.

[39]W. F. Stanford to D. Howard, 11 August 1914, Liberian Frontier Force, Executive Mansion 1915, LGA.

[40]FO 372/2696: "Customs Revenue."

[41]Howard to Birch, 27 February 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howard, LGA.

[42]FO 371/2394: King Boka of Betu to the Governor of Freetown, Sierra Leone, 10 November 1915. Increases in tax collection began as early as 1911, Barclay to Chiefs and Headmen on the Sinoe Coast, 12 June 1911, EC 1904–1912, LGA.

[43]Interviews Greenville, 29 September 1975; 10 May 1976; Bafu Bay, 8 May 1976; Kulu, 15 May 1976; Butaw, 13 December 1975.

[44]"Schofield Report," 9. See also FO 458/7: Benjamin Smith, Chief of the Krumen Sanguin to FO, 15 January 1909.

[45]J. J. W. Johns to Howard, 29 January 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howrd, LGA.

[46]Howard to Birch, 8 April 1915, Howard to Johns, n.d. 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howard, LGA.

[47]Interviews Greenville, 14 June and 4 May 1976; Louisiana, 27 May 1975; FO 371/2695: Annual Message of Daniel Howard, 1915.

[48]Interview Louisiana, 27 May 1976.

[49]Interviews Settra Kru, 30 April 1976; Sasstown, 22 May 1976.

[50]Walter B. Williams to Messrs Woermann at Cape Palmas, 15 September 1915, Sinoe County–Executive Mansion 1915, LGA.

[51]Williams to Van Heusden, 12 September 1915, Sinoe County–Executive Mansion 1915, LGA.

[52]Interviews Greenville, 10 May 1976; Louisiana, 27 May 1975.

[53]D. E. Thomas to A. Woermann, 28 October 1915, Sinoe County–Executive Mansion 1915, LGA; FO 371/2394: Maugham to FO, 21 October 1915.

[54]Interview Greenville, 14 June 1976; Enclosures 1 and 2, with Schofield to Secretary of the Navy, 8 January 1916, Dec. File 882.000/529, USNA.

[55]Howard to Superintendent Innes, 22 September 1915, Dec. File 882.000/ 446, USNA; "Schofield Report," 3–4.

[56]King to Bundy, 27 September 1915, Dec. File 882.000/446, USNA.

[57]Although support for the Kru was not the official British position, British individuals did sympathize with their grievances. FO 371/2394: Bank of West Africa Manager R. R. Appleby to Chief Manager, 21 October 1915.

[58]FO/371/2394: Appleby to Chief Manager, 21 October 1915.

[59]King to Bundy, 27 September 1915.

[60]"Schofield Report," 9; FO 371/2695: extract from letter of Mr. John Hughes, Agent to the Atlantic Coast Development Company in Liberia, 28 January 1916. The Monrovia Kru Governor Davies ran away from the proceedings and rejoined the cruiser, saying that local Kru threatened to cut off his head for allying with the Liberians.

[61]"Schofield Report," 10–11.

[62]*Ibid.*, 2; B. W. Payne to Howard, 25 November 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howard, LGA; Interviews Greenville, 10 May 1976; 4 September 1975; Louisiana, 27 May 1975. This area was never resettled by the Kabor and Blue Barre inhabitants. The Greenville port is now located at Jidiwa, the Kabor settlement.

[63]Most Kru interviews, for example, Wlokli, 29 April 1976; Settra Kru, 30 April 1976.

[64]"Schofield Report," 3.

[65]The government also attempted to buy the loyalty of Monrovia Kru. In January 1916, in the midst of the revolt, the Kru Corporation of Monrovia was approved by the Liberian legislature. Kru Town was given corporate status as a municipality with its own leader, the governor, and an advisory board which would regulate life in Kru Town. "Act Providing for the government of Krutown."

[66]Extract of a letter of Mr. John Hughes. . . 28 January 1916; Walter B. Williams to Rev. North, 19 May 1916.

[67]Catholic priests tried to prevent the attack by speaking with the commander of the ship, but to no avail. Interview, Betu, 23 May 1976; FO 371/2957: Rev. J. Ogé (Sasstown) to British Consul General, 23 February 1917.

[68]James L. Curtis, U. S. Minister Resident in Liberia, to Secretary of State, 13 June 1916, Dec. File 882.000/546, USNA.

[69]Interviews Greenville, 10 May 1976; Butaw, 13 December 1975.

[70]Curtis to Secretary of State, 30 September 1916, Dec. File 882.000/546, USNA.

[71]Every interview with a Kru informant.

[72]Interviews, 1975–76.

[73]Interview Greenville, 14 June 1976. This informant stated that many from Settra Kru resented the opinions of the traders and wanted them killed or sent away. Elders, however, suggested that if they lost, the traders would be needed to pay the Settra Kru fines.

[74]Interview Wlokli, 29 April 1976; Innis to Howard, 19 September 1915, Correspondence of D. E. Howard, LGA.

[75]FO 371/2957: Major William York, Liberian Frontier Force to the Chief of Sasstown, February 1916.

[76]Interviews Greenville, 16 May 1975; Blue Barre, 20 June 1976; Curtis to Secretary of State, 21 March 1917, Dec. File 882.000/562, USNA. One wonders

about the timing of the notice to Sinoe, since messages from Monrovia often reached the coast in one day's time.

[77]Interviews Bafu Bay, 8 May 1976; Settra Kru, 30 April 1976.

[78]Interviews King William's Town, 1 April, 1976; Wortch, 7 November 1975; Nana Kru, 2 April 1976.

[79]Interviews Blue Barre, 20 June 1976; Wortch, 7 November 1975. Land disputes resulting from the war were still in litigation in the 1970s. Some Blue Barre went into exile in British colonies and others went to Monrovia.

[80]William Roundtree to Secretary of War, 3 December 1917, Miscellaneous Letters, 1902–1920, LGA.

[81]Interview Sasstown, 22 May 1976; Williams to North, 21 January 1919, Methodist Archives.

[82]Interviews Settra Kru 30 April 1976; Betu 23 May 1976. Individuals and families remained in the British colonies until relatively recently. Some never returned; others have come back to Liberia since the independence of Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Ghana, having lost what they considered to be their special privileges under the British.

European Intervention in Liberia With Special Reference to the 'Cadell Incident' of 1908–1909

Monday B. Abasiattai

Historiography on the Scramble for, and Partition of, Africa (1880–c. 1914) initially focussed almost exclusively on the Europeans as governments or individuals.[1] The main themes included the Europeans' motives for aggrandizing African territory; the rules the Europeans laid down at the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 to regulate the process of aggrandizement; the subsequent keen competition among the European powers to amass African territory; and the supposed benefits European "civilization," introduced after the imposition of European rule, would bring, or was bringing, to the Africans.[2] These were considered "steeped in the depths of savagery, barbarism, heathenism and misery;" while Africa was dubbed the "Dark Continent."[3] Since mostly European authors dominated these earlier writings on the Scramble and Partition, including European missionaries and colonial administrators who actually participated in the imposition of colonial rule, their Euro-centric bias was understandable.

As from the late 1950's, historiography on the Scramble and Partition shifted emphasis from European activities to the role of the African peoples. The issues discussed included the Africans' perceptions of the advent of the Europeans; their reactions to European conquest and the imposition of European colonial administration, expressed through apparent "collaboration," resistance, uprisings and the like; and social change among Africans under colonial rule.[4] The perspectives of scholars who properly emphasize the African role and point of view are usually characterized as "Afrocentric."

In most of the writings on the Scramble and Partition, Liberia is seldom mentioned, or is mentioned in passing, as she was never conquered by Europeans or subjected to European colonial rule. Hence unlike the two approaches mentioned above, this paper examines how Liberia, which was already an independent African state by mid nineteenth century, organized basically along Western lines of government, fared with the Europeans particularly during the Scramble and Partition. Looking beyond the fact of non-colonization, one sees that Liberia experienced grave, protracted European intervention much of which was an expansion of the Partition process. This paper examines both this intervention and its impact on Liberia particularly during the crucial years, 1907–1909. The issues examined include European economic and territorial interests in Liberia; active European intervention in Liberia to foster those interests and its consequences on Liberia's social and political stability; and Liberia's reactions to the European intervention.

Liberia and the European Powers – 1906: European Encroachments on Liberia's Territory

Several factors or considerations influenced Liberia's relations with foreign governments and their nationals during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They included the slave trade and legitimate trade; the quest before 1880 by both the Liberians and Europeans for land from the African owners to establish trading posts, naval stations and settlements; the Scramble and Partition after 1880 by the European powers and the establishment of the colonies of Sierra Leone, Guinea and the Ivory Coast adjacent to Liberia; as well as the necessity to safeguard the interests of foreign investors in Liberia.

The Liberian state was founded in 1822 by the American Colonization Society (ACS) in collaboration with the United States Government. It gradually expanded from its nucleus at Monrovia both along the Atlantic coast and into the African hinterland as more Afro–American repatriates—amounting to about 18,000 by 1906—arrived, annually, and formed settlements on land they acquired from the indigenous Africans of the region. Having thus "sold" or ceded their territories to the Americo–Liberians—as the Afro–American repatriates and their descendants became known—the Africans and their territories became part of Liberia with the Americo–Liberians who controlled the new state. In 1847 the Liberians formally proclaimed their country's independence from the ACS.[5]

For several reasons the European powers, notably Britain and France, and their nationals were prepared to assist, or co–operate with, Liberia—understandably in areas where their interests were similar to, or did not conflict with, Liberia's interests. As a "Christian State" founded on abolitionist principles, Liberia could, and did, assist the Europeans in diffusing Christianity in Africa, in campaigning to abolish the slave trade in the continent, and in developing the West African trade in which European merchants and governments were interested. Not surprisingly, individual Europeans and European governments occasionally aided Liberia with funds for her internal development or with arms for her defense.[6] Indeed Liberia expected aid from Europe and America as fellow Christian nations and for the "moral obligation" they owed her in respect of the slave trade and slavery.[7]

Underneath the amicable European–Liberian relations however, disturbing currents already existed before the Scramble. Racially–prejudiced Europeans ridiculed Liberia and her leaders, or opposed Liberia's collection of customs duties at specified Liberian ports–of–entry to which Liberian law obliged all Liberian and foreign merchants to resort as from 1839 for payment. When the Liberian Government sent its gunboat and troops to chastise British subjects—mostly Sierra Leonean Blacks—who refused to pay Liberian duties, as in 1845, 1860, 1868, 1870, 1871, 1882 and 1896, by confiscating their property, the British

Government retaliated by bringing its gunboats to Monrovia harbor and extorting heavy compensation from the Liberian Government for the British traders.[8]

The fact of the matter was that where Liberian and European interests clashed, the Europeans did not scruple in their dealings with Liberia. This was particularly true of the issue of the territory to the north-west claimed by Liberia adjacent to the British colony of Sierra Leone, and of the territory to the south-east claimed by Liberia adjacent to the French colony of the Ivory Coast.

After disputing Liberia's claims to that coast for several decades, the British Government annexed it to Sierra Leone in March 1882 following the commencement of the Scramble for Africa by the European powers, despite protests from the Liberian Government. In doing so the British took advantage of the local Vai population's discontent with Liberia's trade and custom's policies.[9] After fruitless appeals to "Christian nations" and "the civilized world" for help to recover the district, Liberia signed an agreement with Britain in November 1885 which fixed Liberia's boundary with Sierra Leone at the River Mano to Liberia's disadvantage like her exclusion from navigation of the River.

Similarly, the French annexed the disputed district to the Ivory Coast in May 1891 taking advantage, like the British, of its Grebo inhabitant's discontent with Liberia's trade and customs policies and Liberia's lack of effective occupation of the district. Once again, the Liberians issued an emotional appeal to "the civilized Christian nations of the world" to intercede on their behalf, but in vain.[10] Helpless and powerless, Liberia concluded an agreement with France in December 1892 which fixed Liberia's boundary with the Ivory Coast at the River Cavalla and thereby gave France the Cavalla–San Pedro district and a large slice of Liberia's hitherto undefined hinterland, purportedly in return for France relinquishing some vague claims to certain portions of the Liberian Coast, viz: Garraway, Buchanan and Butaw. Ominously for Liberia, a "reservation clause" in the Agreement stipulated that France would be bound by its terms only so long as Liberia remained independent and did not alienate any portion of her territory.[11]

Clashes of interests over territory between the European powers and Liberia and Europeans' expropriation of territories claimed by Liberia understandably increased during the Scramble and Partition (c, 1880–1914). Notably in 1900, Sierra Leonean troops occupied the Kanre Lahun district of North–Western Liberia after driving invading indigenous Liberians back into the district. Although the Liberian Government subsequently urged the British Government to withdraw the troops, it did not. Eventually in March 1907, Liberian customs and administrative officials commenced to administer the district in the hope that the British troops would eventually withdraw.[12]

Partly to persuade Britain to withdraw from the Kanre Lahun district and to guarantee Liberia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and partly to re–negotiate the terms of a loan which Liberia had obtained in 1906 from London Bankers, Erlanger and Company, through a British mining and rubber firm in Liberia, the Liberian Development Company, President Arthur Barclay (1904–1911) visited London and Paris in September 1907. Informed in London that Britain's attitude to Liberia's territory depended on France's attitude, Barclay proceeded to Paris. But the French Government would not give any guarantee; rather it drew up, almost unilaterally, a boundary "agreement" which gave France a further slice of Liberian territory beyond the Makona River, and committed Liberia to establish military posts on the Franco–Liberian frontier "which the French authorities would be allowed to occupy (temporarily) if the resources of the Liberian Government do not allow her at the time to keep up a garrison there herself." When Barclay's fervent appeal to the American Government through the American Ambassador in Paris for "substantial" diplomatic support to modify this "Agreement" yielded only "token" support, Barclay signed the "Agreement" in the end.[13]

When Barclay returned to London and the British Government learnt from him about the Franco–Liberian "Agreement," it became markedly hostile to Liberia, apparently envious of the French gain of Liberian territory and taking advantage of Liberia's indebtedness to British bankers and financiers. It charged the Liberian Government with corruption and inefficiency and demanded drastic reforms. It proposed that Liberia organize an efficient frontier Police Force for better control of her hinterland. Furthermore, it demanded that Liberia should transfer the Kanre–Lahun district to Sierra Leone purportedly to bring "this troublesome district" wholly under British jurisdiction, since its principal chief, Fah Bundo, opposed the Liberian Government, which had been unable to maintain order there. Barclay rejected this request, whereupon the British Government refused to guarantee Liberia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Faced with this deadlock, and apprehensive, Barclay returned to Liberia.[14]

Anglo–Liberian relations sharply deteriorated after this deadlock culminating in Britain's formal annexation of the Kanre Lahun district to Sierra Leone in October 1908 after expelling the Liberian customs and administrative officials from the district. Britain then fixed the new Sierra Leone–Liberian frontier at the "natural boundaries" of the Rivers Moa and Mafissa. After several years of fruitless protests, Liberia signed an agreement with Britain in January 1911 by which Britain retained the Kanre–Lahun district but ceded to Liberia the much less desirable territory between the Morro and Mano Rivers and Paid £400 "Compensation" to the Liberian Government, with which to develop the territory ceded.

France, as would be apparent by the discussion thus far, was even more forthright in encroaching on Liberia's hinterland than Britain. Although the

Franco–Liberian treaty of 1892 had defined France's and Liberia's territories, it was afterwards discovered that the actual geography so differed from the hypothetical geography of this treaty that the frontier would have to be re–defined. But attempts by Liberian delegations to Paris in mid 1904 and late 1905 to resolve the boundary dispute failed as the French Government would not co–operate.

Part of the Franco–Liberian Boundary problem was settled by the treaty signed by Barclay in Paris in September 1907; and a joint Franco–Liberian commission began boundary delimitation work in July 1908.[15] However, up to the mid 1920's, the French still occasionally threatened to seize Liberia's territory.

Thus one major impact of the European Scramble and Partition on Liberia's territorial integrity was the loss of large expanses of Liberian territory to Britain and France. Anglo–French rivalry and jealousy, Liberia's military weakness and lack of effective occupation of large sections of the Liberian hinterland, and European covetousness of Africa's territory and resources partly accounted for the situation.

European Intervention in Liberia's Internal Affairs, 1907–1909

Side by side with European encroachments on Liberia's territory discussed above, Liberia's largely unsatisfactory social, economic and political conditions and European self–interest led to European intervention in Liberia's internal affairs.

Many Liberians depended for their income on profits from domestic trade and import–export business, and the Liberian Government, on Customs duties levied on the foreign trade. Liberian planters of coffee, Liberia's major export commodity, similarly relied on the briskness of trade. But the world–wide depression of the last quarter of the nineteenth century which featured drastic price–fall, decline of trade and cut in production, ruined many Liberian traders and planters. Consequently by the 1890's Liberia's import–export business had passed almost exclusively into the hands mostly of German, British and Dutch merchants, and Liberian merchants became at best "factory hands" or store–keepers for the Europeans. Similarly, many Liberian coffee plantations became abandoned and overgrown with weeds.[16]

Lacking funds, the Liberian Government borrowed several hundred thousand dollars from British Bankers and financiers in London in 1871 and 1906 at high rates of interest and generally unfavorable terms of re–payment. She also borrowed heavily from Liberian and resident British, German and Dutch merchants.

In these circumstances what was the attitude of the European powers towards Liberia? Naturally it increasingly concerned them that the Liberian

Government should re–pay its debts to the European creditors promptly. Thus as from 1907, the administration of the Liberian customs was placed under British officials to ensure re–payment of the loan of 1906 and effective collection of the customs duties. Furthermore the European powers increasingly realized the shortcomings of the Liberian Government: the corruption of many of its officials, and maladministration of Liberia's financial, economic, social and political matters, and eventually they asked for reforms.

Britain's attitude to Liberia was dictated to a great extent by her territorial interests discussed above, by Britons' investments in Liberia's trade, and by the indebtedness of Liberia to British creditors. At the beginning of 1907 British interests in Liberia included a rubber concession (to the Monrovian Rubber Company, 1904); the two £100,000 (or $500,000) loans of 1871 and 1906; a contract of the British firm, the Liberian Development Company, with the Liberian Government to develop infrastructure in Liberia using part of the 1906 loan; and Britons serving the Liberian Government in its Customs Department, all of which Britain might wish to "protect."[17]

France, although less harassing to Liberia than Britain, never dissembled her intentions to seize more Liberian territory, partly implied by the "reservation clause" of the 1892 Franco–Liberian Agreement. The Liberian Government therefore remained suspicious of France. As President Barclay observed in August 1908, whereas Britain had "tried to do something for Liberia," France, "while professing friendship," had only "absorbed a large portion" of Liberia. "The plain truth," he added, "seems to be that France regards both Liberia and Sierra Leone as impediments to the formation of the Great West African Dependency which she had created and whose frontiers she desires shall be washed by the Mediterranean and Atlantic."[18]

Germany stood between Britain and France in the reckoning of many Liberians. Her gunboats, invariably brought into Monrovia Harbor by the Governor of the Cameroun, intimidated the Liberian Government though less frequently than British gunboats: in February and October 1881, in August 1897, January and September 1898, and December 1912.[19] On each occasion the German Government extorted financial indemnity ranging between $3,000 and $60,000 from the Liberian Government on mostly trivial grounds—particularly alleged "insults" by Liberian officials to the German Consul or German merchants in Liberia—who invited the German intervention.[20]

German interests in Liberia comprised mostly German merchants, Liberian Government's indebtedness to them which amounted to $120,000 in September 1905, and several coffee plantations owned by some of the merchants. One of these, named Koch, a particularly painful thorn in Liberia's flesh, invited the German intervention of January 1898 when Grebo Liberians attempted to evict him from his coffee plantation and repossess the land. Furthermore it was because the German Consul in Monrovia disputed the decision of the Liberian Supreme Court in a case involving a German firm "and intimated that an indemnity would probably be demanded," that Liberia's Secretary of State, H. W. Travis, visited Berlin in 1904 where the German Government reportedly assured him that Liberia would "receive at all times just and considerate treatment."[21]

Although Germany possessed no territory contiguous to Liberia, she actively promoted her interests in the Republic and, like France, envied Britain's dominant position in Liberian affairs. The Liberian Government well understood Germany's position in Liberia. In September 1905, President Barclay classified the German residents in Liberia into: "the party of the mailed fist" which took "every opportunity. . . to misrepresent matters and claim an indemnity," and "the party of intrigue" which saw its opportunity in the "disorders" of Liberia's finances "and in the influence which capitalists easily acquire in backward countries." Both parties, he asserted, had really identical aims; and it was common knowledge that Germany desired "to increase her colonial possessions."[22]

Liberian leaders, conscious of its military weakness, counselled, in the words of President Barclay, that it was "well" and indeed "urgently necessary to keep in good terms" with the Europeans despite their provoking and harassing Liberia and interfering in her internal affairs.[23]

In fact, Liberia was the worse off in many of her European connections, particularly with regard to the loans from resident European merchants and from British bankers and financiers whose terms were very unfavorable to Liberia. Take the $500,000 loan of 1906, for example. $150,000 of it was given to the Liberian Government for liquidating the country's floating indebtedness and Treasury Notes, while the balance was given to the Liberian Development Company on contract for developing Liberia's infrastructure, paying off certain of the Company's debts, and financing a bank.[24] By mid 1907 the Company had spent about $252,000 of the loan purportedly in developing several infrastructural projects. The most significant projects were about 20 miles of unsurfaced road from White Plains towards Kakata, and the purchase of a gunboat, "Lark," from Britain and of a steam launch for transportation on the Saint Paul's River. In actual fact however, the Company, under its Managing–Director, Sir Harry H. Johnston, already a renowned British imperial agent, had used most of the loan funds in furthering its own private interests like payment of salary of its workers and of the cost of the Company's prospecting for minerals and rubber in Liberia.[25] And, repeatedly asked by President Barclay to submit reports on how the Company was spending the loan money, Johnston steadfastly refused.[26] Not surprisingly, Barclay terminated the Company's contract and disbursement of the loan money about August 1907 and managed to recover the unspent balance. The following month Barclay re–negotiated the terms of the loan with

Erlanger and Company.[27] In this way Liberia's indebtedness increased rather than diminished as a result of the loan of 1906.

The "Cadell Incident," 1908–1909

The three years, 1907–1909, witnessed an unprecedented escalation of interference by Britain, France, and Germany in Liberian affairs. The issues involved included: obvious deplorable economic, social, and political conditions in Liberia outlined above; the rivalry among European powers for influence and territory in Liberia at Liberia's expense; and Liberia's indebtedness to these powers or their nationals.

The first stage of interference, adumbrated above, occurred in September 1907 when, during Barclay's visit to London and Paris, the French and British Governments suggested the formation of a Liberian Frontier Police Force and reforms in the Liberian Government.

On January 14, 1908, the British Consul–General in Monrovia, Braithwaite Wallis, presented a note to the Liberian Government about reforms. The note began by reminding President Barclay of the demand made to him in London for reforms, when the British Government purportedly told him:

> ". . . that a critical moment had arrived in the history of the Republic, that however it might have been 20 or even 10 years ago, the time had now gone by when Liberia could re–enact the part of a hermit, and that she must not lose a moment in setting herself seriously to work to put her house in order, or be prepared, at no distant date, to disappear from the catalogue of independent countries."[28]

The note added that "his Majesty's Government do not consider that the Government of the republic is either stable or effective," and that although the Liberian customs were improving under the management of British officers, similar improvements were necessary in Liberia's Judiciary and Treasury Departments and Government's control of the Liberian hinterland. The note reiterated Liberia's need to organize "an efficient, well armed and well disciplined" Frontier Police Force under European officers; and it demanded the appointment of three more "European Customs experts" to the Liberian Customs, and that Lamont, one of the Britons administering the Liberian Customs already appointed Financial Adviser to the Liberian Government, "should be made so in actual fact."

It further demanded the Liberian Government to stop smuggling by German firms, which was contrary to existing Anglo–Liberian treaties; if not, "the British Government must insist that a similar favour be granted to British trade." The note warned that if the Liberian Government effectuated these reforms within six months (reckoned from October 1907 when Barclay returned from London to Liberia), Britain would give co-operation; if not, she would take steps to obtain various financial obligations owed by Liberia to the British Government and British citizens and to safeguard the interests of Sierra Leonean and British trade with Liberia.

Awed by the tone of the British note, the Liberian Government organized a Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) of about 400 men in March 1908 under a British army Major, R. Mackay Cadell, assisted by two British officers and subordinate Liberian officers.

Cadell and Wallis apparently hoped to use the Frontier Force to impose British influence, if not British rule, over Liberia. For Liberians soon discovered to their dismay that most of the soldiers recruited by Cadell were Sierra Leonean citizens—Mende, Temne and Limba people—and that Cadell, although employed by the Liberian Government, would take instructions from Wallis only, who himself closely liaised with British authorities in Sierra Leone over Liberian matters.

Cadell's recruitment of the Sierra Leoneans had far-reaching consequences. First, it evoked jealously from France and Germany. The French Consul in Monrovia, E. Hantz, described the Force as "a regiment of English occupation," and demanded "the IATE addition of French Officers to the English officers and equal in number to those of the latter," and the appointment of French officers to the Liberian Customs. Claiming that past Franco-Liberian treaties gave the French "the indisputable right to engross ourselves" in Liberia's future, Hantz further demanded that the recruits be "sent back to Sierra Leone without delay."[29] Similarly, in July 1908 Germany urged Liberia through a Liberian goodwill mission then visiting Berlin to appoint German officers to the Liberian Customs in view of the large volume of German-Liberian trade, and ironically, to redress "the perpetual complaints" of German merchants against smuggling by British merchants, which the Liberian Customs Service was not checking.[30]

While the Liberian Government studied the French and German demands, and indeed commenced to implement some reforms, Wallis visited Sierra Leone to consult with the Governor and the British Foreign Office. He returned to meet the Liberian Cabinet when apparently unaware of the German demand, he read from a typewritten manuscript purported to be his instructions from London demanding that the Liberian Government "**must protest**" against Hantz's demands; if not, "the British Government would then take the initiative in suggesting to the French Government the advisability of occupying the country by filling its chief offices on the sea-coast and in the interior with French and British subjects."[31] Truly the Europeans' intense, childlike jealousy enraged and perplexed President Barclay, his cabinet and the Liberian leaders generally.

However, probably more fearful of the French than the British, the Liberian Government appointed a French Physician from the University of Paris, Dr. E. Jourdran, to the Frontier Force as "Inspector of General Hygiene," housed and paid a salary by the Liberian Government although allowed to practice privately as well.[32]

Meanwhile, Cadell, asked by the Liberian Government to dismiss the Sierra Leonean recruits or compel them to take the oath of allegiance to Liberia, demurred partly because the Government owed them several months' salary. Thus when the Liberian Legislature met in December 1908 and investigated the Force, it found it composed entirely of British recruits. Consequently the Legislature decreed the re–organization of the Force and dismissal of Cadell, which Wallis interpreted as an attempt to thwart the proposed reforms and obstruct President Barclay. Wallis's reaction to the decree precipitated a chain of events known as the "Cadell Incident" (February 11 and 12, 1909), which seemed to most Liberians the closest point Liberia had ever come to losing her independence to a foreign power. The incident created tremendous excitement and apprehension among Liberians.

First, Wallis warned that should Liberia not implement the reforms "in toto," Britain would have to consider "the advisability of the introduction of the rights of extra–territorial jurisdiction."[33] Second, on February 1, 1909, at Wallis's orders, Cadell removed all the ammunition and guns (supplied to Liberia by the British Government "on special terms") from the LFF's Camp Johnson Barracks near Monrovia to the Warehouse of Elder Dempster and Company Limited, a British Shipping firm, in the town for shipment back to Britain by an expected British warship. Third, Wallis forbade the British Commander of the Liberian gunboat, "Lark" (sold by Britain to Liberia in 1907 on easy terms), from bombarding the Kru people of Grand Cess by orders of the Liberian Government for their collaborating with British smugglers; and Wallis threatened to remove the guns on the "Lark" donated to Liberia by Britain should the Government attempt to carry out the bombardment—as he believed that the Grand Cess Kru were innocent. On February 10, 1909 a British war–ship arrived in Monrovia harbor purportedly "to protect British interests and safety of British subjects."[34]

In the end, as Cadell resigned from the LFF in the morning of February 11, 1909, having apparently already incited the soldiers to mutiny partly for non–payment of their salaries, he handed a letter to President Barclay in which he warned that should the soldiers not be paid by the morning of the following day he would not be responsible for any acts of violence they might commit even on the President's life.

Cadell's letter threw Monrovia and the neighboring Liberian towns into great excitement. What was worse, towards evening of the same day (February 11, 1909), the Frontier Force did mutiny: They marched menacingly (but without arms) into Monrovia and attempted to secure some of the ammunition deposited with Elder Dempster and Company Limited. But Monrovia's militia, then performing their regular drills and already ordered by President Barclay to guard the town, barred them and for some moments fighting between both groups of soldiers seemed imminent, before the recruits returned to Camp Johnson.

The tension and excitement continued into February 12, 1909 as hundreds of armed Liberian militia-men, alerted, poured into Monrovia from neighboring Liberian towns to defend their country's independence. The presence of the British gunboat at Monrovia harbor and the announcement by Wallis that another warship was to arrive within two days to consider British monetary claims against Liberia greatly added to the excitement and Liberians' suspicion of Britain's designs against Liberia's sovereignty. Hence, feeling very apprehensive, President Barclay wrote to Cadell an ultimatum through Wallis to evacuate the Sierra Leonean recruits from Camp Johnson or "bear the consequences." About 6:00 p.m., Cadell and the recruits reluctantly evacuated the Camp. On visiting the Camp the following day, General G. S. Padmore, commander of the Liberian militia force, found, as evidence of Britain's ill-designs against Liberia:

> . . . that Cadell had erected a strong breast works [sic] with two sides, well supplied with port holes, in a position to command the whole of the beach front, as well as the bush road leading into the barracks from Town, and a clearance of about 200 yards or more all around the Camp. This really was a secret kept from the Government.[35]

Cadell and the recruits were repatriated the following month and Liberians felt much relief from this seeming threat to their country's sovereignty. The official, confidential *Diary* of the Executive (or Presidential) Mansion (or Office), for example, thus expressed this relief in its entry for March 10, 1909:

> Major Cadell, Captain Blyth left here today. Thank God. May he never see Liberia again, nor may we ever have such a man, in our country again.

For the rest of 1909, the British Government tried to induce the United States, German, and French Governments to co-operate in demanding reforms in Liberia.

Other aspects of foreign meddling in Liberia's internal affairs were as provoking as the demand for reforms. The European consuls in Monrovia, influenced partly by racial prejudice, greatly disrespected the Liberian Government. Wallis felt it was: ". . . a fiasco and a farce. There is in fact no Government in Liberia."[36] During April-July, 1909 Wallis, after traveling by sea to Freetown and up the Sierra Leone railway, toured north–western Liberia (bordering Sierra Leone and French Guinea) and allegedly held meetings with the Bandi, Bunde and Loma chiefs of Liberia prejudicial to the Liberian Government. Significantly, immediately after Wallis's return to Monrovia, Cadell also toured and "inspected" the same region. Wallis and Cadell reportedly found the French actively consolidating their jurisdiction near the region but hardly any signs of Liberian Government authority[37]—a "discovery" which strengthened Britain's position against Liberia.

Furthermore, in December 1908, the Liberian Legislature had invited Lamont to explain "why he refused to lift his hat" while Liberia's National Anthem was being sung at the close of an official ceremony. Because the Legislature insisted that Lamont must stand while addressing, or being addressed by, the members, Wallis protested to the Liberian Government that Lamont had been "grossly insulted." He warned that "the security and proper treatment" of British officers and resident Britons "as the subjects of a great Empire will be maintained if necessary, by recourse to extreme measures." The same day, Wallis demanded that some regulations drawn up by Lamont for reforming Liberia's Treasury Department should be approved promptly by the Liberian Legislature, and should any of the regulations conflict with the Liberian Constitution, "the latter ought to be amended" as, in his view, it had sometimes been "antagonistic to modern requirements and the carrying out of the suggested reforms."[38] Wallis's successor, Baldwin, also radically prejudiced, described the "ideas of administration" of the Liberian leaders as "limited to the imposition of taxes; and as individuals they are totally wanting in capacity and in the sense of responsibility and justice. . ."

The grounds for protests by the French Consul included smuggling by British merchants, and Liberian Government's alleged failure to invite him to unofficial functions and entertainments (held, however, in government buildings), viz: a concert, dance, musical show, and the like.[39]

As for the German Consul, Herr Fritage, he attempted to foist a German loan on Liberia and to establish a German bank—at a tempting time when the Liberian Government was almost bankrupt and resident foreign merchants had refused to lend it further funds to run essential state matters or pay already cut salaries. Fritage also protested, ironically, to the Liberian Government against British and French "aspirations" in, and "penetration" of, Liberia, and their smuggling along the Liberian coast.[40]

The Impact of the European Intervention On Liberia

As was noted above, European intervention in Liberia led to the loss of Liberia's territory to Britain and France; and particularly as from the 1870's, it served to exacerbate further Liberia's declining economy and the penury of the

Liberian Government. But it also had far-reaching effects on Liberian politics and society.

President Barclay, of British West Indian background, and his Secretary of State, F. E. R. Johnson, being obviously pro-British, were opposed by a pro-American group and "sons-of-the soil" (that is, settler-Liberians born in Liberia) led respectively by Vice-President J. J. Dossen and Secretary of the Treasury, Daniel E. Howard (whose powers conflicted with those of Lamont). Howard, being also the National Chairman of the ruling True Whig Party (a post he inherited from his father), was perhaps "the most powerful and influential politician" in Liberia. Barclay's opponents resented the British reform programme and the over-bearing conduct of Wallis, Baldwin, Cadell and Lamont. They charged Barclay with selling Liberia to Britain. While appreciating the need for a Liberia Frontier Force, they nevertheless feared that Sierra Leonean recruits and British officers constituted "the first step to a protectorate" for Liberia under Britain. They would have preferred officers from "small, neutral powers" like Holland and Switzerland not interested in annexing Liberian territory.[41]

On January 8, 1909 Barclay's opponents organized a massive demonstration in Monrovia which petitioned the Liberian Legislature for "the speedy removal" of Barclay from office. Moreover, Wallis reported verbal threats by these opponents to assassinate Barclay and the British officers in Liberia's service.[42]

On January 15, 1909, a "counter demonstration" by Barclay's supporters also presented a "Citizen's Petition" to the Legislature which successfully absolved Barclay from his opponents' charges[43] and thus gradually mitigated the opposition to his policies. These demonstrations, reported by Wallis to London as a breakdown of law and order and opposition to reforms and President Barclay, partly induced Britain to seek United States, French and German "co-operation" to ensure that Barclay and the reforms were sustained.[44]

The employment of the Europeans at high salaries and implementation of so many reforms simultaneously greatly strained the Liberian Government's already depleted revenue. Much depended on what the United States chose to do to check Liberia's harassment by the Europeans. Up to the ending of 1908 the American Government had, as a rule, been very apathetic to Liberia and mostly satisfied to go along with the often exacting position or initiative taken by the European powers about Liberia.[45] However, constantly prodded by the American-Minister Resident in Monrovia, Ernest Lyon, an Afro-American thoroughly in sympathy with Liberia and the anxiety of her leaders to obtain American support, and by the Afro-American leader, Booker T. Washington, the United States Government became increasingly interested in, and knowledgeable of, Liberian matters.[46] It eventually acted to mitigate the interference by Britain, France and Germany in Liberia's affairs. Subsequent to Cadell's resignation, the LFF was put under Major Lomax, a Liberian, who set about recruiting and training Liberians. But it was clear that to achieve efficiency, external aid in officers and money was necessary. Accordingly from May to August 1908, a Liberian Commission had visited Washington, D.C. (and subsequently Germany) to secure United States' guarantee for the integrity of Liberia's territory and the temporary assignment of American officials to Liberia's customs, postal, educational, military, and agricultural departments. Before rendering any specific aid, however, the United States sent a commission to investigate Liberia's affairs and indicate the nature of possible American assistance.

The Commission arrived at Monrovia on May 8, 1909. Given a most elaborate and generous hospitality by an expectant Government and people, the Commission reported very favorably on Liberia. It recommended American assistance in organizing the LFF under an American military officer, and exclusive American control of the Liberian customs under an American "customs receiver" who would also act as "financial adviser" to Liberia. More important perhaps, the Commission drew attention to past British and French aggressions against Liberia and warned that unless Liberia had "the support of some power commensurate in strength with Great Britain or France, she will as an independent power speedily disappear from the map."[47] In many ways the Commission marked a turning point in America's Liberian policy from apathy to commitment to aid Liberia and sustain her independence. As the Commission ended its work, Lyon summed up the prevailing mood among Liberians: "Bitter anti-British feeling; mistrust of the French; returning faith in the Germans; unlimited confidence in the United States."

British, French, and German struggle to promote their respective interests in Liberia made the realization of exclusive American control of Liberia's revenues which the Commission recommended impossible. The scheme adopted by the United States was an International Receivership with an American as General Receiver assisted by British, French, and German Receivers. The United States State Department then got certain European banks to loan Liberia $1,700,000 at 5 percent interest to mature within forty years. "For the future security of the revenue," the Liberian Government agreed to maintain a Frontier Police Force and to request the United States President to designate trained military officers to organize such a force.

Conclusion

The analysis above shows that in spite of European powers or their nationals not actually subjugating or administering Liberia as a colony at any time, these powers' and their nationals' intervention in Liberia was real and sordid up to 1909. The situation was understandable in that up to about 1880 trade was the primary concern of these powers. While they did co-operate with the Liberian Government and individual Liberians to foster this trade, they did not hesitate to deal ruthlessly in the event that their (European powers') trading interests were threatened or jeopardized by acts of omission or commission of the Liberians or the Liberian Government. These powers' various acts of intimidation or aggression against Liberia had even by 1880 helped to hurt the Liberian economy and strain Liberia's delicate internal situation.

Conflict between the European powers and Liberia understandably accentuated when the Scramble commenced in the early 1880's and lasted beyond 1909, the terminal date of this study. In this latter stage, the conflict and European intervention in Liberia generally were extensions of the Partition process then taking place in most of Africa; but the powers, owing primarily to rivalry among themselves, could, or probably desired to, seize only portions of Liberian territory and not the entire country. In all this, European colonial officials "on–the–spot" in Liberia or the West African colonies often took the imperialist initiative, as indeed their counterparts did in other parts of Africa, in intervening in Liberia's internal affairs.

By thus intervening in Liberia particularly as from the 1900's, the European powers and their nationals were already setting a pattern of socio–political and economic involvement in an independent African State that remarkably foreshadowed what they later did to African states after their independence in 1960. Thus a study of European intervention in Liberia and its impact on the Liberian polity is not only a study of a special case of the Scramble and Partition and European colonial subjugation of West Africa, but also of the earliest manifestations of neo–colonialism in West Africa which most authors have seldom noted.

Endnotes

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[43]Bacon to Hill, February 26, 1909, 1208, *R.D.S.L., 1909–1929.*

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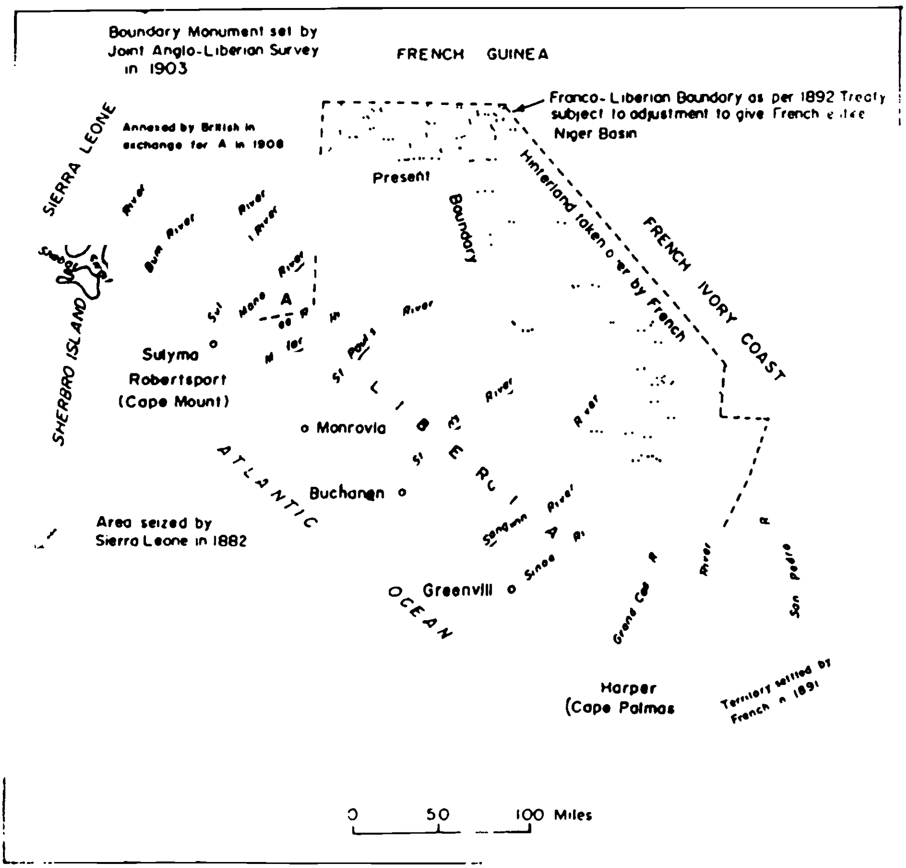
[46]United States ent of State, *Report of the Commission of the United States of America to t c of Liberia* (Washington, D.C., October 1909); Lyon to Secretary, May, 1909, *D.U.S.M.* (*N.F.*),795/295.

[47]Ibid.

BRITISH AND FRENCH ENCROACHMENTS ON TERRITORY CLAIMED BY LIBERIA (1882–1909)



Adapted from Robert E. Anderson, *Liberia: America's African Friend,* (Chapel Hill, 1952).

Of the territory seized by the British in 1882, Kittam lay on the littoral between the Bum and Gallinas Rivers, Gallinas, between the Gallinas and Sulymah Rivers, Gbenmah, between the Sulymah and Mano Rivers, and Tewah, east of the Mano River.

Production Targets and Input Usage in the Agricultural Development Projects in Liberia (1978–1983): A Linear Programming Solution

Jacob Pereira–Lunghu

Introduction

In an effort to boost rice production in Liberia, the Ministry of Agriculture has set up a seed production project known as the Smallholder Rice Seed Project (SRSP). The objective of this project is to produce, process, pack, store and distribute recommended seed varieties to the Liberian Smallholder farmers. As of June, 1983, however, the SRSP annual report has this to say about chemicals and fertilizer usage by the project:

> Inventories (of fertilizer and chemicals) seem to be very high as compared to our consumption. As a result huge amounts stand blocked. We may in future have our inventories in relation to forecasted consumption and sales to avoid blocking off.[1]

To fix one's ideas, the dollar value of farm inputs inventories amounted to $130,904.85.

In order to fully appreciate the source of the above mentioned problem of input inventories, one has to understand how the SRSP Management, which is the decision-making body, arrives at its own decisions. It seems as though the usual practice is to set production targets of rice seeds, and then with the help of available information on yield per hectare calculate the required amount of land. Other inputs such as fertilizer and chemicals are all bought in bulk without properly being integrated into a general plan of production, in which constraints and possible interaction effects between inputs are all taken into consideration. Failure to do so of course, has resulted in a heavy, unexpected, waste of unused fertilizer and chemicals at the end of every production period.

To the best of our knowledge, very little or nearly nothing has been done to solve this resource allocation problem. Even the study by Epplin et. al. (1985), the only study we are aware of, that attempts to develop a mathematical programming model for a representative Liberian farm, does not use data of the agricultural development projects. The objective function of Epplin's model is to maximize annual returns to family labor, land, and capital, subject to the family consumption demands.

This paper attempts to show how rice production targets in this context could be incorporated into a standard linear programming problem where the basic constraints are in the form of inputs used in production, in order to allocate available resources. We initially develop a model whose objective function is to be optimized subject to a given set of input constraints (such as fertilizer, chemicals and other inputs) and production targets. The model is then iteratively solved and the results are presented. Finally, a summary of and conclusion derived from the results are made.

Data

Data for this study were collected mainly from the 1982–83 SRSP annual reports. Other data were collected from studies on family labor and farm budgets by the Lofa County Agricultural Development Project (LCADP).

Two basic production units are considered: the outgrowers group consisting of independent Smallholder farms that get their seeds and other inputs from the SRSP, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the Kpain Farm which is under the direct management of the SRSP. Two types of land are available for growing rice in Liberia, namely the upland and swampland. Resources are therefore expected to be allocated between these two production units in order to produce swamp and upland rice. It was assumed that all the required inputs included in the plan are necessarily used,[2] even though evidence shows that not all types of fertilizers and chemicals are actually applied in the fields. For upland and swamp rice four types of fertilizers are included in the plan: NPK 15–15, Urea, Triple Superphosphate, and muriate of Potash. The chemicals include Grammoxone, Stem F-34, Round-up, MCPA, Malathion, Furadan, and Sevin. The cost on the labor component includes the value of labor services of the operator, family, hired and help.

The costs are variable expenditures on labor, seed, fertilizer and chemical inputs. Costs of shovels, hoes, cutlasses and rakes were left out because it was felt that expenditures on these items are so minute that their absence would not materially affect results. Other costs not included are costs of polybags, jutebags, lubricant oils, spare parts and batteries.

The Model

In this section an attempt is made to formulate the theoretical model of analysis. The section itself is divided into three subsections. The first subsection specifies the objective function, the second and third specify the input constraints and transform the production targets into restrictions, respectively.

The Objective Function

The objective function to be specified here is the total cost of growing upland and swamp rice.

Table 1 below displays the data on the required amount of fertilizer and chemicals per hectare of land. The cost estimate per kilogram of fertilizer and chemicals are to be found in table 2 below.

Plann ts For
Ri y
Kpai ers

Type of Input	U land Kpain Farm		Swam ain Farm	Rice Outgrowers
Land (ha)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Seed (Kg/ha)	65	65	45	45
Fertilizer (Kg/ha)	350	350	350	350
Chemicals (Kg/ha)	41.01	42.46	74.27	42.46
Processed Seed produced (ton/ha)	1.3/1.5	1.5	2.0/3.0	2.5

Source: SRSP, 1982 Annual Report, July/December, No. 2, pp. 6–9.

Table II
Farm Inputs Used by Kpain Farm

Description	Quantity	Cost($)	Total Cost ($)
T.S.P.	200kg	0.50	100
Urea	200kg	0.53	53.7
Amonium Sulphate	300kg	0.23	69.0
NPK 15–15–15	1200kg	0.43	516
Muriate of Potash	100kg	0.28	28
Furadan	50kg	6	300
MPC	5Lt.	4.8	24
Grammoxom	18Lt.	16	288
Dieldrin	25Lt.	6	150
Malathion	25Lt.	6	150
Round–up	25Lt.	7	175

Source: SRSP, Report for the period July 1–December 31, 1982, p. 10.

It is by combining the information contained in tables I and II above that we arrived at the dollar cost of one hectare of land that uses a given amount of fertilizer and chemicals.[3]

Table I above also contains information on the seeding rate per hectare. The cost of seeds is taken to be $6 per bag of 20 kilograms.[4] This information enabled us to compute the dollar cost of seed used per hectare of upland and swamp rice.

Labor input is valued at the time of the production. The average wage is taken to be $1.50 per manday which is also considered as the true opportunity cost of the operator and his family.[5] For a summary of labor-mandays per hectare, see tables III and IV below. Upland rice requires 185.7 mandays per hectare, and swamp rice 218.65 mandays per hectare. With this information the computation of labor cost per hectare of land is straight-forward. Labor cost per hectare of upland rice turned out to be $278.55, and that of swamp rice per hectare, $218.65.

Table III
Swamp Rice Production (1979–1980)
Summary of Labor-Manday/Hectare

Activity	Operator	Hired	Family	Help	All
Development of the Farm	4.65	11.5	–	–	15.7
Maintenance of the Farm, harvesting, hauling produce and others	42.0	53.0	92.0	16.0	202.95
All Labor	46.65	64.0	92.0	16.0	218.65

Source: Family Labor, Ministry of Agriculture, Lofa County Agricultural Development Project, p. 9.

Table IV
Upland Rice Production (1978–1979)
Summary of Labor-Manday/Hectare

Activity	Operator	Hired	Family	Help	All
Development of the Farm	28.3	25.5	24.2	19.0	97.0
Maintenance of the Farm, harvesting, hauling produce and others	14.1	2.9	58.7	13.0	88.7
All Labor	42.4	28.4	82.9	32.0	185.7

Source: Family Labor, Ministry of Agriculture, Lofa County Agricultural Development Project, p. 14.

Table V
Total Cost (In Dollars) of Used Labor, Seed, Fertilizer and Chemicals per hectare of Upland and Swampland Rice Planted By Outgrowers and Kpain Farm

		Type of Rice	
		Upland Rice	Swamp Rice
Producer	Outgrowers	963.78	953.21
	Kpain Farm	952.24	1206.42

Source: Final computations by the Author

When the total use of the four types of inputs discussed above is taken into consideration, the total cost per hectare of rice is simply the sum per hectare of fertilizer, chemicals, seeds and labor costs. Table V displays these costs. It costs the outgrowers group or independent Smallholders $963.78 to grow one hectare of upland rice, and $953.21 to grow one hectare of swamp rice. It takes the Kpain Farm $952.24 to grow one hectare of upland rice and $1206.42 to grow one hectare of swamp rice. Letting X denote the amount of hectares of land planted with rice, the total cost of growing rice by both group of producers can be written as

(1) $Z = 963.78\, X_{11} + 953.21\, X_{12} + 952.24\, X_{21} + 1206.42\, X_{22}$

where X_{11} = amount of hectares of upland rice cultivated by the Outgrowers

X_{12} = amount of hectares of swamp rice cultivated by the Outgrowers

X_{21} = amount of hectares of upland rice cultivated by the Kpain Farm, and

X_{22} = amount of hectares of swamp rice cultivated by the Kpain Farm.

Thus, the $X_{ij's}$ are the choice variables that will optimize (minimize) eq. (1).

The Input Constraints

In tables I, III and IV above are displayed the input coefficients of fertilizer, chemical, seed and mandays requirements per hectare of upland and swamp rice grown by Kpain Farm and Outgrowers. In order therefore to specify the input constraints we need only one additional information: the available quantities of these inputs. Table VI contains, among other information, the available quantities of fertilizer and chemicals;[6] while table VII carries data on the available rice seed stock.

Table VI
Major Farm Inputs Required During the Year
For Stock Purchases, at 30th of June, 1983

Type of Input	Quantity Purchased (tons)	$ value of Stock	$ Value of Consumption
Fertilizer	175	51,825.00	6,300.00
Chemicals	2.7347	21,346.76	7,544.26

Source: SRSP, 1983 Annual Report, July/December, No. 4, p. 29.

Table VII
Rice Seed Stock and Quality

Seed Variety	Real Germination Capacity (%)	Quantity (Kg)
LAC–23	–	–
LAC–23	93	4375
Suakoko–8	93	45
Suakoko–8	77.5	4350
Suakoko–8	98	1332
IR–5	87.5	45
IR–5	95.5	1350
IR–5	97.5	11997
Grand Total		23494

Source: SRSP, 1983 Annual Report, January/June, No. 3, p. 23.

For the labor input, the budget appropriation towards labor is set at $166,560, a figure which is based on expenditure target on the labor component at Kpain Farm for the 1983 operation year. For consistency, this figure was converted into available mandays, which turned out to be 111,099.08 mandays.[7]

The above data resulted in the following system of constraints:

(2) $350\,X_{11} + 350\,X_{12} + 350\,X_{21} + 350\,X_{22} \leq 175000$

(3) $42.46\,X_{11} + 42.46\,X_{12} + 41.01\,X_{21} + 74.26\,X_{22} \leq 2734.7$

(4) $65\,X_{11} + 45\,X_{12} + 65\,X_{21} + 45\,X_{22} \leq 23494$

(5) $185.7\,X_{11} + 218.65\,X_{12} + 185.7\,X_{21} + 218.65\,X_{22} \leq 111099.08$

where inequalities (2), (3), (4) and (5) are the fertilizer, chemical, seed and labor constraints, respectively.

However, we avail ourselves of the fact that in 1983 all the swamp rice was reportedly produced by Outgrowers. Thus, we simplify the problem by assuming that all upland rice is produced by Kpain Farm. This reduces the solution set to the hyperplanes represented by the constraint inequalities from a set of points in R4 space to a set of points in R2 space. That is, the choice variables that are expected to optimize (1) reduce from four to two, X12 and X21. Thus, the model becomes one of minimizing the criterion function

(1b) $Z = 953.21\,X12 + 952.24\,X21$

Subject to the side conditions

(2b) $350\,X12 + 350\,X21 \leq 175000$

(3b) $42.46\,X12 + 41.01\,X21 \leq 2734.7$

(4b) $45\,X12 + 65\,X21 \leq 23494$

(5b) $218.65\,X12 + 185.7\,X21 \leq 111{,}099.08$

In the subsection below, we will now attempt to transform the production targets into some sort of restrictions built into the linear programming model.

Production Targets and Their Transformation Into Restrictions

Over the years the SRSP Management has often set production in response to expected demand for rice seeds.

Table VIII below has some of these targets for 1983 and 1984.

Table VIII
Production Targets of Upland
and Swamp Rice Varieties

Type of Rice	Production Period 1983	1984
Upland Rice (tons)	116	700
Swamp Rice (tons)	160	50

Source: SRSP, 1983 Annual Report, No. 4, p. 47–48.

In 1983, the upland rice target was set on the basis of a conservative yield estimate of 1.6 tons per hectare. In 1984, some 50 tons of seeds were expected to be retained in order to produce 700 tons at the end of the year. This assumed a yield of 1.5 tons per hectare by all farmers, at a seeding rate of 65 kilograms per hectare. For swamp rice, 160 tons of swamp varieties were planned in 1983, and 50 tons for 1984.

In 1983, however, the SRSP Management discovered that the demand for upland rice seed was greater than that for swamp rice seed. In that year only 22 tons of produced swamp rice seed were purchased by independent farmers. As a result, the 1984 production plan of swamp rice seed was revised to a level of 50 tons, in anticipation of a demand of not less than 22 tons. In order to handle this aspect of the problem, the following strategy is suggested in this paper. For 1984 production target we may set upper and lower bounds for the swamp rice production such that

(6) $22 \leq SR \leq 50$

where SR, the tons of planned supply of swamp rice could be greater than or equal to the expected demand (22 tons), but less than or equal to the production target of 50 tons. Using the information on yield per hectare, inequality (6) may be converted into hectares of land, which in our model constitute the decision variable X_{12}. In doing so, we obtain

(6b) $8.8 \leq X_{12} \leq 20.$

Similarly, for upland rice, the production target of 700 tons may be expressed as

(7) $0 \leq UR \leq 700$

where UR stands for tons of planned supply of upland rice. When converted into hectares of land, (7) becomes

(7b) $0 \leq X_{21} \leq 53.46.$

Note that, for upland rice, since we have no numerical information on either present or past demand levels, the lower bound of (7b) had simply to be made greater than or equal to zero. When this problem is stated in terms of 1983 production targets, inequalities (6) and (7) may be respectively written as

(8) $0 \leq X_{12} \leq 64$

and

(9) $0 \leq X_{21} \leq 89.23.$

Hence, the programming problem is of either minimizing (1b) subject to (2b), (3b), (4b), (5b), (6b) and (7b) or subject to (2b), (3b), (4b), (5b), (8) and (9). In order to close the model, since no negative quantities of land can be used, we also have the constraints that the $X_{ij's}$ should be non-negative; that is

$X_{12} \geq 0$ and $X_{21} \geq 0.$

Numerical Results

In this section we present and interpret some empirical results. Due to lack of computer facilities the model was solved with the help of a desk calculator and graphical solutions are provided. For the simplex algorithm for problems with bounded variables see Bazaraa et. al.; and Kolman et. al.

This model was first solved without production targets. When this was done, the most feasible decision would be to grow only 64.41 hectares of swamp rice at a cost of about $61,396.27 (see table IX below or corner C of figure 1 in the appendix).

Table IX
Programming Solution Without Production Targets

Truncated Solution Vector	Value of Objective Function $Z = 953.21\, X_{12} + 952.24\, X_{21}$	Production Decision
X_{12} = 64.41; X_{21} = 0	61396.27	Produce Swamp Rice Only
X_{12} = 0; X_{21} = 66.68	63495.36	Produce Upland Rice Only

The second best alternative is to plant only 66.68 hectares of upland rice at a cost of $63,495.36 (see corner D of figure 1 in the appendix). Any other solution could relatively turn out to be very expensive.

When the 1983 production targets are incorporated into the solution, results seem to indicate that production targets would be satisfied as long as the chemical constraint remained relaxed.[8] Production targets would be met if 64 hectares of swamp rice and 89.23 hectares of upland rice were planted at a cost of $145,973.8 (see table X below or point I of figure 2 in the appendix).

Table X
Programming Solution With 1983 Production Targets

Truncated Solution Vector	Value of Objective Function $Z = 953.21\, X_{12} + 952.24\, X_{21}$	Production Decision
X_{12} = 64; X_{21} = 0.42	61405.38	Produce both Swamp and Upland Rice
X_{12} = 0; X_{21} = 66.68	63195.36	Produce Upland Rice Only

Otherwise production targets ought to be revised or scaled down to lower levels. For example, costs would be minimized to a level of $61,405.38 if 64 hectares of swamp and 0.42 hectares of upland rice were planted (see table X above or point F of figure 2 in the appendix).

For the 1984 production targets, the optimal solution consists of 20 hectares of swamp land and 45.98 hectares of upland rice at a cost of $62,848.00 (see Table XI below or point J of figure 3 in the appendix).

Table XI
Programming Solution With 1984 Production Targets

Truncated Solution Vector	Value of Objective Function $Z = 953.21\ X_{12} + 952.24\ X_{21}$	Production Decision
$X_{12} = 20$; $X_{21} = 45.98$	62848.20	Produce both Swamp and Upland Rice
$X_{12} = 8.8$; $X_{21} = 57.57$	63208.71	Produce both Swamp and Upland Rice

The alternative is to cultivate 8.8 hectares of swamp rice and 57.57 hectares of upland rice at a cost of $63,208.71 (see point L of figure 3 in the appendix). But the production target of 700 tons of upland rice would only be met if the fertilizer and seed constraints were relaxed. An alternative is to scale down production targets so that 8.8 hectares of swamp rice and 355.35 hectares of upland rice are planted at a cost of $346,766.73 (see point M of figure 3 in the appendix).

Summary and Conclusions

In developing the model we assumed that all required inputs included in the overall plan were actually used even though records show that not all types of fertilizer and chemicals are necessarily applied in the fields. Notwithstanding, the results of our model seem to indicate that lots of fertilizer would still be left over even if all types of fertilizers were applied in the fields. For example, using the optimum plan for 1983 production targets, Kpain Farm would have utilized 147 kilograms of fertilizer and 17.224 kilograms of chemicals,[9] while the independent farmers (Outgrowers) would have used 22400 kilograms of fertilizer and 2717.44 kilograms of chemicals. Thus, total use of fertilizer in 1983 could have amounted to 22.547 tons with about 152.45 tons left over, and that of chemicals to 2.7346 tons, nearly exhausting the entire stock of chemicals. The optimum plan for 1984 production targets seems to indicate that swamp rice production would have used up 7000 kilograms of fertilizer and 849.2 kilograms of chemicals. Upland rice culture would have used 16093 kilograms of chemicals. Thus, 27.093 tons of fertilizer would have been required in toto, while 151.907

tons would have remained unused. Of chemicals, 2.7348 tons would have been used up with nothing remaining.

On the basis of the above results we draw the following policy implications. First, it is apparent that because of lack of proper planning inputs that are mostly needed are perhaps bought in smaller quantities (i.e. chemicals) and others are bought in quantities that far exceed the needed consumption levels (i.e. fertilizer). The purchase of large quantities of some of these inputs is questionable for one obvious reason: the keeping of such large inventories entails some storage costs with a high probability of being affected by the rain, heat and insects for lack of proper storage facilities. Second, the results of our model, especially on the use of fertilizer, are typical of all agricultural development projects in Africa. State moneys are spent on inputs creating jobs for the suppliers of these inputs and yet the farmer does not get all the inputs which often turn out to be very expensive or the farmer just doesn't get them from the management of the project (for evidence on this, see for example, Hart, 1982). It is this waste of resources that often tends to lengthen the infancy gap of many of these projects to a point where they never become self–financing, thus making these projects dependent primarily upon additional borrowing of funds from international donors. But additional debt could result in (a) more taxation in order to pay off debts or (b) outright closure of the projects for failure to pay off debts.

We would like to suggest a shift of emphasis from fertilizer use to policies that would encourage more use of land and labor thus providing employment for a greater number of rural dwellers. This would release resources such as foreign exchange that otherwise would go into the importation of fertilizer. Already there are studies in Lofa County showing that the LAC–23 rice seed variety seems to give higher yield when planted in an area with more fallow period without fertilizer than the one with fertilizer (Lalugba, 1986). One way of accomplishing this is by choosing rice growing counties on the basis of their comparative advantages so as to minimize use of expensive technologies such as fertilizer.

Another means which the government may employ to help smallholder cash cropping is land colonization, immigration, and resettlement on large irrigation schemes.

Also, land reform should probably be undertaken to free some of the land for smallholder rice cash cropping, especially in Bong County where there is already a problem of land shortage for upland rice culture. Most of the upland area is occupied by rubber plantations, and farmers often resist doing swamp rice cultivation, for cultural reasons and fear of water borne diseases (see Pereira, 1987).[10]

Finally, the model developed in this paper is perhaps too simplified and highly aggregated. Better results might be obtained if (1) the input constraints were disaggregated, and many other possible constraints were incorporated, and (2) instead of two or four activities more were to be considered, e.g. Coffee and Cocoa productions which are also an integral part of the present agricultural development projects in the country.

Also, we are cognizant of the fact that the results of the present model are contingent upon the reliability and validity of the data used in the model. It is therefore suggested that the coefficients in the model be refined as additional information becomes available.

Endnotes

[1]See 1983 Annual Report, No. 4, p. 29.

[2]This plan consists of planned farm input requirements and seed production figures over the 6 year project period. See SRSP Annual Report for the period July 1 – December 31, 1982, pp. 6-9.

[3]For example, since according to table I, one hectare of land requires 350 kilograms of fertilizer, the total cost of one hectare in terms of fertilizer use is simply the average price that can buy an average kilogram of fertilizer (see table II) times 350 kilograms of fertilizer.

[4]See Lofa County Agricultural Development Project Farm Budget, 1978-1979, p. 2. We have assumed that this is the cost for both upland and swamp rice seed. But this may not necessarily be true now. The computed cost of seed used per hectare of upland rice at a seeding rate of 65 kilos per hectare was found to be $195 and that of swamp rice at a seeding rate of 45 kilos per hectare, $135.

[5]See Lofa County Agricultural Development Project Farm Budget, 1978-1979, p. 2. This wage is probably too low now. A realistic figure would probably be $2.50 per day.

[6]Some data on chemicals had to be converted from liters into kilograms using information on weights and measures in Webster, p. 1688. In doing so we had to heroically assume that the difference in viscosity between dry and liquid chemicals is quite negligible. I am indebted on this issue to Dr. Abid Shafi, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Cuttington University College.

[7]In order to convert the budget cash for labor into available mandays, we needed only solve equation

$$\frac{404.35}{606.53} = \frac{X}{166650}$$

where X is the available mandays, 404.35 are the total required mandays per hectare of upland and swamp rice, $606.53 is the total cost of 404.35 mandays per hectare, and 166650 is taken to be the available dollar resources to be spent on the labor component.

[8]That would mean increasing the available quantity of chemicals or lowering the requirements of chemicals per hectare of land.

[9]Just to demonstrate how these results were derived, note that the optimum plan for the 1983 production targets calls for planting 64 hectares of swamp rice and 0.42 hectares of upland rice (see Table X). Thus since 1 hectare of upland rice uses 350 kilograms of Fertilizer (see Table I) then 0.42 hectares would use 147 kilos of fertilizer, since 350 kg/ha x 0.42 ha = 147 kilos. For chemical use, 1 hectare of upland rice uses 41.01 kilos of chemical (see Table I). Hence, 0.42 hectares would use 17.224 kilograms of chemicals since 41.01 kg/ha x 0.42 had = 17.224.

[10]For some report on cases of schistosomakaematobiun and schistosoma mansoni among swamp rice farmers and school children, see Bong County Agricultural Development Project–Annual Report, October 1, 1984–September 30, 1985, pp. 60-61.

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Appendix

Included in this appendix are three graphical solutions of the linear programming model. Figure 1 offers a solution of the model without production targets. Figures 2 and 3 give solutions incorporating 1983 and 1984 production targets respectively.

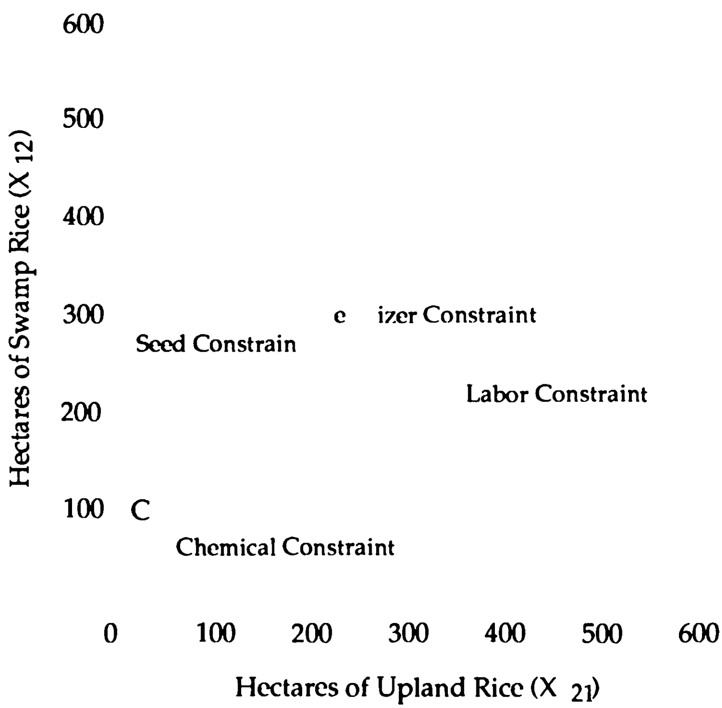

Fig. 1
Production Possibility Space Without Production Targets

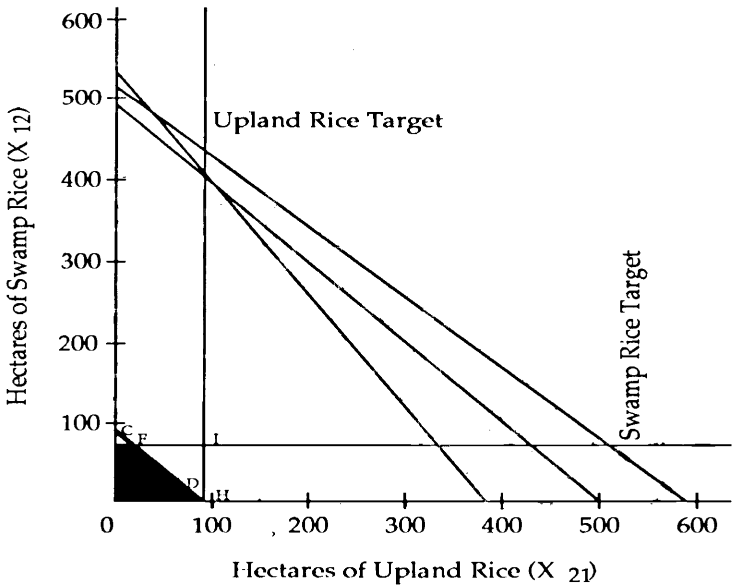

Fig. 2
1983 Production Possibility Plan

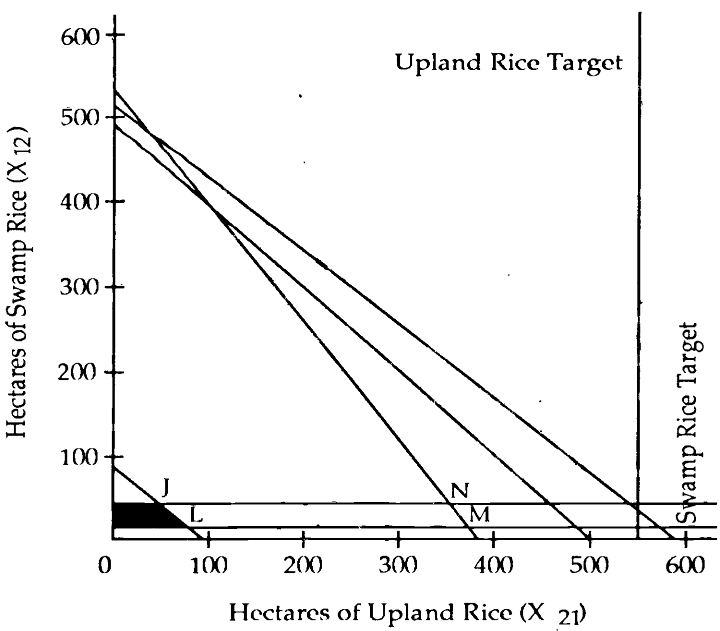

Fig. 3
1984 Production Possibility Plan

D. Elwood Dunn and S. Byron Tarr, *Liberia: A National Polity in Transition* (Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1988, 259 pp. with index and illustrations, $32.50).

During the military *coup d'etat* in Monrovia on April 12, 1980, soldiers murdered the chairman of the Organization of African Unity—Liberian President William R. Tolbert, Jr.—and publicly executed thirteen prominent Liberian leaders on the beach several days later. Rioting and violence in the capital city, Monrovia, terrified the Liberian elite as well as members of the western business community, the diplomatic corps, and the legion of Lebanese traders in the country. Many of the expatriate men and women with their families fled the country taking as much money and as many valuables as they dared with them. Some were fortunate to be able to flee with their lives alone. Soldiers and their families and people from rural areas came into Monrovia and took up residence in the houses of their fallen leaders and the military confiscated other properties and assets. Government and business leaders who were unable to escape were herded into jails where some were beaten and mercilessly interrogated about their assets and political ties with the Tolbert government. The *coup* ushered the nation into a period of tense uncertainty.

The Liberian elite, composed of descendents of new world blacks who emigrated to the West African coast during the nineteenth century, had finally been deposed after over a century and a half of domination over the indigenous groups within the Liberian borders. Observers who had been predicting this type of civil conflict for years, were nevertheless startled by the ferocity of the rage that the *coup* unleashed and were horrified by the sight of men and women looting, chanting, and dancing in the streets for joy because the "first Republic" (the authors' term) had come to an end.

In the years since the *coup*, the master sergeant who led it, Samuel K. Doe, has sought to promote himself from military leadership to the constitutional presidency of the second Liberian republic. The authors discuss the means Doe used to consolidate his power and the type of leadership he has provided for the nation. In the preface the authors raise questions about whether the election of President Doe in 1985 was the result of fraud and military force rather than the legitimate transfer of constitutional authority. In the text the authors leave no question in the mind of the reader that Doe, unwilling to face the possibility of losing his power, utilized both guile and force to steer the election in his favor.

The authors, D. Elwood Dunn and S. Byron Tarr, were government officials both in the pre-coup years and during the Doe administration. Under Tolbert, Dunn served as the minister of state for presidential affairs, and Tarr, under Doe, as minister of planning and economic affairs. Thus, the reader expects this book to give an insider's view of Liberian political life in the recent past. The authors begin their work by giving historical and geographical information about the early inhabitants of the West African coast and a brief synopsis of the colonization movement which engineered and financed the movement of settlers to Liberia. They explain the way in which the first westernized, Christianized settlers expressed attitudes of superiority to their African hosts thereby establishing antagonistic relationships with them from the beginning. With the aid of their western allies the settlers were able to dominate those African groups in whose midst they found themselves and over the decades only grudgingly allowed them political representation and a share of the nation's resources.

This book provides a synopsis of early political administrations but focuses on the Tubman, Tolbert, and Doe years. Approximately half of the two hundred page text deals with Doe. The authors give some information about the rising discontent that fueled the desire of indigenous political leaders to completely overthrow the domination of the descendants of the repatriate community. They discuss the economic and social policies of both Tubman and Tolbert but do not leave the reader with a decisive assessment of the factors leading up to the *coup*; neither do the authors give a clear description of what happened during the *coup* itself or in the period immediately following Tolbert's overthrow. They mention the public executions of Liberian government leaders on April 22, 1980, only in passing (see pp. 68 and 205 note), and give scant information about the means by which Doe consolidated his power. The authors suggest that Doe's ethnic group, the Krahn, has cloaked military might in constitutional dress and has become the new political elite demonstrating differences in the wielding of power from their repatriate predecessors only because of their inexperience and comparative lack of education and training. Yet, the authors do not decisively state that this is indeed the case. There is a discussion of the drafting of the new Liberian constitution and the difficulties the constitutional committee faced in their dealings with the Doe administration but little specific information about the new constitution and the controversies that surrounded it.

The most detailed and useful chapter, "The Liberian Economy," addresses the enormous problems that Doe has faced in managing the nation's limited resources. The rice riots of 1979 showed the Liberian people's discontent with constantly rising prices and diminishing income. Many of the problems that both Tubman and Tolbert faced in the economic realm had as much to do with the unstable international economy as their own domestic programs. The discontented in the nation only viewed the rich getting richer while they got poorer. Doe, totally inexperienced in both economic planning and governmental administration, promised to provide a better standard of living for the common people. He initially raised salaries and lowered prices only to find that there were no resources to match his action. In Chapter Six, "Foreign Relations," the authors state that United States "aid to Liberia. . . has shattered all previous records" since the *coup*, rising from an annual average of eight million dollars during the two decades before 1980 to over sixty million dollars yearly (page 176). This aid has probably kept the Liberian economy from collapsing. The authors state that the most compelling reason for such an outpouring of aid from the United States is the desire to keep Liberia in its traditional pro-western sphere of influence.

This work provides a synopsis of recent Liberian history. Because of the scope of the subject it sets forth to explore—the Liberian polity—and the brevity with which the topic is addressed, the book leaves the reader hungering for more detailed data on one hand and for Dunn and Tarr's frank assessment of the Liberian situation today on the other. There are a number of seed ideas that would have been extremely interesting avenues of exploration if the authors had pursued them. For example, they touch on some of the problems of the Tubman and Tolbert administrations as well as those of earlier presidents but they do not offer clear conclusions themselves about the impact of those administrations or the reasons for the degree of discontent those leaders engendered. They point to Doe's election fraud and force against political contenders, students, and the Nimba people but still do not come out with a clear indictment against him. They state that Liberia is still "a polity in transition" but offer few suggestions about the direction that that transition should take.

A few editorial quibbles present themselves. The authors sometimes use abbreviations without explaining what they stand for or discuss political parties or individuals without explaining what or who they are. Neither the Fahnbulleh nor the Flanzamaton affairs—both mentioned several times (see, for example, pages 65, 91, 97, 194)—are adequately explained. John Seys is identified as a black American (page 168) but he has been described by earlier Liberian historians as a West Indian with no indication that he was of African descent.

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Manuscript Division
Library of Congress

Veronika Fuest, *Agricultural Training in Liberia: An Empirical Study of the National Youth Training Center and its Graduates* (Bremen, West Germany: Liberian Working Group, Paper #8, 1987, 3–926771–07–0, pp. iv, 118).

This monograph is one in a series published by the Liberia Working Group and edited by Robert Kappel and Werner Konte—two fine German scholars on Liberia. The series includes, among others, an excellent work by Amos Sawyer entitled "Effective Immediately; Dictatorship in Liberia, 1980–1986: A Personal Perspective" (#5, 1987). That work was reviewed by A. B. Konuwa in Vol. 13, #1 issue of the L. S. J. (pp. 133–135).

Fuest's work revolves around a project undertaken by the governments of Liberia and the Federal Republic of Germany to jointly promote a development in agricultural training for Liberian students. The project, lasting from 1978 to 1985, was to teach the participants various skills enabling them to become independent farmers in rural Liberia. The project was terminated at the end of 1985 partly due to the inability on Liberia's part to meet its financial obligations.

A training center was built about 35 miles northeast of Monrovia to house the trainees. The teaching period was to last approximately 20 months for each group and provide intensive training in agriculture and related fields. Soon after the first group finished the course of study, however, it was discovered that most of the graduates looked for employment in the cities or returned to their home villages. As a result of this evidence, the author decided to study the female graduates of this project. After some time spent in Liberia studying this group, the author found that majority of female graduates also chose to live in some urban areas of Liberia instead of pursuing agricultural careers. The author explains, in the first part of the book, the method used in her research, the areas covered (primarily focusing on Bong and Nimba counties), and the difficulties she had in tracing down some of the graduates since she ". . .did not have a vehicle" (p. 6).

The section entitled "Historical, Social, and Economic Background" on Liberia offers some curious statements like ". . .Liberia has enjoyed none of the. . .benefits of European colonization. . ." (p. 11) and Liberia ". . .belongs to the fortunate African countries which have rich natural resources. . ." (p. 12). Another statement referring to the nation as being "sparsely populated" (p. 12) can also be misleading if one deals only with the issue of densities and not with arable land. Overall, however, this section gives a solid background of Liberia's land and agricultural situation.

Chapter 2 gives an excellent and a detailed portrait of the National Youth Training Center including the target population, recruitment of trainees, living conditions (p. 25: ". . .houses were all modern style with cement walls and zinc roofs, equipped with electricity and running water"), curriculum for the students, methods of training, and social characteristics of the trainees. The chapter was well written and well supported with 49 footnotes.

Chapter three examines the ". . .quantitative and qualitative data about the NYTC graduates." The author does a detailed analysis of the center's graduates and has a good grasp of Liberia's society. She states on page 43 that "Educated Liberians are not expected to return to the villages but to find salaried employment so that they are in a position to support "their people financially." Great majority of the graduates did not return to do agricultural work even though agricultural training was the sole purpose for operating the center. The author clearly spells out the economic and social constrains which the graduates encountered and points out the general discontent and frustration among the graduates. She goes on to show the pattern of residence and residential distribution among the graduates (Table 1, p. 53), and the economic activities in which the students were engaged after graduation (Table 3, p. 58).

The author concludes the chapter with actual case studies of five male and four female graduates, and with an examination of how the students felt about the center after graduation. As can be expected, people's attitudes ranged from very positive views about their training experience to those who felt it was a "waste of time."

In the conclusion, the author points to a number of findings which show the failure of the institute to achieve its set goals. One was that the majority of graduates lacked the motivation to become directly involved in agricultural production. They rather expected, backed by their relatives, to attain white–collar jobs (p. 82). Another was that most graduates settled in urban areas, and only a few in villages. The choice of this lifestyle, obviously, prevented them from doing what the institute was training them to do.

The last part of the book deals with perspectives for an integrated rural training in Liberia. This somewhat theoretical discussion, however, does not fully address nor totally answers the posed question.

A few errors like "per caput" (instead of per capita), p. 12 or the use of p.c. instead of per cent, along with two poorly done maps (pp. 110 and 111) should not detract from a solid piece of research that went into this work. It is a "must" reading for someone interested in Liberian agricultural training and good supplementary reading for anyone interested in Liberia in general.

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Charles S. Johnson, *Bitter Canaan: The Story of the Negro Republic* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1987, pp. vii, 256, $29.95)

Introduction: The Problem of Forced Labor in Liberia

Bitter Canaan is the work of Charles Johnson, a prominent black sociologist who was chosen as the U.S. representative to the League of Nations International Commission of Inquiry in 1929. The "Christy Commission," as it came to be called, was charged with investigating allegations that Liberian officials were profiteering in forced labor. Some were said to be selling indigenous men into slavery on the plantations of Fernando Po, then a Spanish possession off the coast of Nigeria. Thomas Faulkner, an American emigre to Liberia who became mayor of Monrovia and its most successful businessman, brought the scandal to public attention on the pages of the *Baltimore Afro-American* in July 1929. Faulkner had run unsuccessfully against King in the presidential election of 1927. In publicizing reports of forced labor, he may have been seeking revenge for an obviously "rigged" election or simply pursuing the reforms of his party platform.

Although the commission uncovered no evidence that Liberian officials were selling Africans into slavery, it did find that several officials had profited from compulsory labor. The scandal prompted the resignations of President C. D. B. King and his vice president, Allen Yancy. Yancy and a partner, Postmaster General Samuel Ross, had been the chief recruiting agents for "the boy traffic" with Fernando Po.

This chapter of Liberian history is admirably treated in Ibrahim Sundiata's *Black Scandal*. Sundiata refers to the 1930 draft of *Bitter Canaan* on deposit at Fisk University.[1] The manuscript was revised throughout the next two decades but went unpublished until this volume appeared in 1987 as part of the "Black Classics of Social Science" series from Transaction Books. Credit for its publication must go to John Stanfield, associate professor of sociology and Afro-American studies at Yale, who wrote the introductory essay and epilogue.

The Official Report and Its Unofficial Companion

The "Christy Report," for those unfamiliar with it, is only obliquely concerned with Fernando Po.[2] Because the commission's charter required that it investigate "forced or compulsory labor" (and because the U. S. State Department did not wish to offend Spanish sensibilities), Johnson and his colleagues, Cuthbert Christy and Arthur Barclay, pursued a broad investigation into Liberian interior administration—into road building, taxation, courts, chiefs, "public works" and porterage. They listened to more than 250 witnesses in Monrovia, Maryland

and Kakata (xlii).[3] Their report, replete with quoted testimony incriminating a host of officials, catalogues the abuses of hinterland administration in the 1920's. It is in many ways a dismal, depressing document, but for scholars interested in the period, indispensable.

Bitter Canaan is a sort of companion volume to the official report, the book Johnson felt compelled to write after listening to African grievances. At the outset of the investigation, he expressed the hope that the Settler–Liberians "will be able to save their faces. . . that they have noting to hide" (xlii). But the extensive government repression that he helped uncover disenchanted Johnson about Liberia as a symbol of black self rule. *Bitter Canaan* is his attempt to explain what went wrong with the Liberian experiment. In Part I (78 pp), Johnson examines the motivations that supported colonization as a solution to 19th–century America's "Negro Problem." He portrays the early years of the colony and the many hardships suffered by the settlers, their campaign against slavers, disdain for agriculture, ephemeral commercial prosperity, independence, insolvency, and threatened sovereignty.

For students of Liberian history, these are familiar themes, having been treated in depth during the past 30 years.[4] Yet it would be unfair to compare this work with more current scholarship. Although arguably the most brilliant researcher to have worked in Liberia, Johnson did not write *Bitter Canaan* for an academic audience. Instead, he fused his research and writing skills to create what Stanfield aptly calls a "literary essay" (xi). In this first section, the emphasis is distinctly literary, the social scientist overshadowing the raconteur.

Assuming the melodramatic tone of the 19th century sources like Ashmun and Gurley, upon whom he relies heavily, Johnson relates a story that is alternatively moving and ironic. We learn that the Sierra Leone colony, Liberia's forerunner, was founded with "an almost hysterical philanthropy" that paired black freedmen with London prostitutes in the expectation that the novel circumstances would reform the women "into faithful and fertile spouses of the returned sons of Africa" (18). Johnson reveals that, while Liberia's founders similarly professed optimism in the colonists as agents of civilization, they generally despised their charges. General Harper, for whom Maryland County's capital is named, believed free blacks "a greater nuisance than. . . the slaves themselves." Henry Clay (Clay–Ashland) thought them ". . . the most vicious population" in America, while Samuel Mills (Millsburg) stated his ambivalent attitude succinctly: "We must save the Negroes or they will ruin us."

In general, the Africans on the coast also viewed the settlers with contempt. From the first, relations were fraught with misunderstanding. The coastal peoples saw the colonists as dangerous interlopers, begrudging them as little as the land in which to bury their dead [41]. The colonists clung precariously to their coastal foothold, enduring disease and depredation. Because of their bravery, occasional outside help, the good will of some local peoples and a flow of migrants from America, the settlers survived and began to impose their will upon the indigenous people. If they began to victimize the natives, it was because they themselves were victims of their slave past and the harsh circumstances under which they were forced to struggle. "Unable to free themselves from the icy grip of America" (11), they fashioned a society along the lines of the ante–bellum south, becoming increasingly dependent on politics as a profession and on native labor for productivity.

Johnson's Pro–Native Posture

Though Johnson understood the difficulties faced by the settlers and their descendants, he decided even before arriving in Liberia that, as an investigator, his sympathies would like "with the natives" (xxxix). The results of this decision become particularly evident in the latter section of Part II (145 pp), *Bitter Canaan's* "contemporary" chapters, which are based largely on Johnson's travel notes. A good portion of that travel—two of the four months he remained in Liberia—was spent in and around Monrovia. Although they resented the commission, the citizens of the capital tried to impress Johnson favorably. The sociologist benefited from conversations with influential Monrovians, but generally remained unswayed by propaganda. In its brief portrayals of prominent officials like Charles King, Allen Yancy, Edwin Barclay and Momolu Massaquoi (Chapter 15, "Pillars of the Republic"), *Bitter Canaan* is even–handed, avoiding any unwarranted praise as well as the sniping criticisms typical of European and American narratives.

Johnson's most compelling voice, however, is not found in portrayals of Monrovia insiders, but in his advocacy of the upcountry people. In this context, *Bitter Canaan's* treatment of "native policy" contrasts with other hinterland accounts written during the 1920's and early 1930's. Etta Donner, Graham Greene, George Harley, Lady Dorothy Mills and George Schwab were among those to publish works dealing with interior conditions during these years, works that, for the most part, conspicuously omitted any references to official corruption. Some, notably Greene and the Harleys, were even beguiled by interior officials into dismissing accounts of abuses.[5]

On one occasion, Johnson himself has difficulty reconciling reports of cruelties by the Frontier Force officials with whom he had been socializing with the amiable company of these men. When his conversation with one is interrupted by the arrival of a hinterland chief and his retinue, the officer is transformed; he addresses the Africans with the demeanor of a plantation owner granting audience to his slaves. Johnson is amazed by the change, concluding, "Truly has it been said that race prejudice is least of all racial" (218)—that is, not fundamentally a matter of color. Johnson's assessment of race in Liberia as a symbolic formation (being "civilized"), manipulated by the settler elite as a rationale for subordinating the indigenous peoples, foreshadows contemporary views of ethnicity in the social sciences.

Bitter Canaan's Weaknesses

This prescience is, of course, offset by *Bitter Canaan's* datedness. As intimidated above, the reader will find weaknesses stemming from the book's long delayed publication. If Johnson has a fault worth noting, it is that his pro–native stance often lapses into idealization. Dismissing the myth of the constitutionally "lazy native," he can allude in another breath to the African's "innate politeness" or contrast the superior vitality and intelligence of the indigenous population to the "mentally and physically slothful" Settler–Liberian elite (223). Even in the context of a work of "muckraking sociology" (lvii), Johnson's advocacy of the indigenous cause seems extreme. Stanfield perceives a relative balance between humanistic and sociological perspectives in *Bitter Canaan*, but one could argue that Johnson's humanism—as evinced by his pro–native perspective—distorts his understanding.

The fit between Stanfield's introduction and the substance of *Bitter Canaan* also deserves mention. In researching the work, Stanfield delved deeply into Johnson's life, reading all of the sociologist's major publications as well as the documentary literature relating to his work on the commission. An obvious admirer of Johnson, he conveys his enthusiasm for his subject well, but in doing so credits *Bitter Canaan*, Johnson's "labor of love" (xi), with more than it was intended to deliver. For example, Stanfield speaks of the book's statistical and ethnographic emphases (xi), yet ethnographic insights emerge no more frequently than in a travelogue, and little evidence appears of the statistical work for which Johnson was acclaimed.

Neither does *Bitter Canaan* quite fit Stanfield's description of it as a precursor of Walter Rodney's scathingly anti–imperialist *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (viii).[6] Liberia was, as Stanfield asserts (viii), "America's major. . .colonial extension into Africa," yet Johnson was more apt to chide the United States for its indifference toward the republic than for imperialism. Much as his commission absolved Firestone of wrong–doing in labor recruitment, his book offers a favorable assessment of the plantation's role in the Liberian economy.

But these reservations are quibbles. In discussing the evolution of Johnson's thought and how Bitter Canaan fit into the overall context of his career, Stanfield's exhaustively researched introduction and epilogue serve as valuable additions to the text.

The Irony of *Bitter Canaan*: Johnson's Best Work Unpublished

Of course, if *Bitter Canaan* is so good, why did its publication take 40 years? Johnson considered it his major work—representing "probably the best writing

I can do" (lxv). s, the demands of a hectic schedule—he was appointed reside University in 1940—caused Johnson to push the manu 1947. He abandoned efforts to have the manuscript publish ision was unenthusiastically received by Black America thetic to the Settler-Liberian elite and conscious of Liberia can nationalists, they gave *Bitter Canaan* ambivalent praise. commending him for his "deadly facts" and "damnin hatever doubts Johnson may have had about the wisdom accentuated by this reception. Fearing that the manuscrip was osin opicality, his publisher pressured him for another revision, this one informed by more field research. Johnson declined and shelved the work. Nine years later, he died.

Stanfield must be lauded for his efforts in bringing "one of the lesser known great men" (227) greater, and much deserved, attention. What was "out of date" in 1947 is topical 40 years later as frank assessments of Settler-Liberian rule become more common. Graham Greene traveled in the Liberian interior in the 1930's looking for a certain "quality of darkness."[7] Johnson's account is particularly good in illuminating the darkness of that period. Accompanied by Stanfield's commentary, it also directs light upon Black American intellectual history.

Endnotes

[1]I. K. Sundiata, *Black Scandal: Americans and the Liberian Labor Crisis, 1929–1936* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1980), 218. Sundiata's work was reviewed in this journal (XI [1, 1986]: 93–4).

[2]League of Nations, *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry into the Existence of Slavery and Forced Labor in the Republic of Liberia* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1931).

[3]Elsewhere Johnson says that "eight hundred were heard" by the commission in Kakata alone (203).

[4]Staudenraus on the colonization movement, Syfert on "merchant princes," Hlophe on the divisions within settler society, Schmokel, Holsoe, Shick and others on settler-indigenous relations.

[5]Graham Greene, *Journey without Maps* (Harmandsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), 173.

[6]Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1974).

[7]Greene, *Journey without Maps*, 20.

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Comments

We would like to hear from our readers from time to time, and we specifically invite comments on articles and other features of the Journal.

<u>The Editor</u>

F. P. M. van der Kraaij on Arthur Knoll's "Firestone's Liberian Investment"

Liberia's recent economic history, which to a great extent is influenced by foreign capital, is closely linked with names such as Firestone, Christy, Stettinius and Detwiler. Undoubtedly though, Harvey S. Firestone's name is the most widely known—both inside and outside of Liberia. Several reasons account for this reputation, most prominent among which are:

Firstly, the changes which occurred in this country after the installation of the rubber magnate were more significant than any others in its recent history.

Before the arrival of Firestone (in the mid-1920's) the monetary economy of Liberia was virtually negligible and, besides, was found only in the coastal areas which were politically dominated by the descendants of the first settlers, although the aboriginal, tribal, Liberians outnumbered them more than fifty times. The fear of an uncontrolled increase of the power of the aboriginals was (rightfully) believed to form a threat to the dominance of this settler-elite and was certainly one of the driving forces behind the Settler-Liberians' invitation to foreign capital and know-how through an "Open Door Policy." This resulted in a situation in which each needed the other: the political elite on the one hand, the foreign capitalists on the other. Firestone was the first one to benefit on a large scale from this situation.

Secondly, the concession agreement signed between Firestone and Liberia was unprecedented in nearly every respect: duration, size of the concession area, (too many) rights obtained and (too few) obligations accepted by the investor, but above all by the construction which linked the three Planting Agreements—among which the famous 99-year concession agreement entitling Firestone to an area of one million acres (over 4.000 km2), which represented some 10 per cent of all arable land in the Republic—to a Loan Agreement which by its conditions reduced the sovereignty of Liberia to a token level as far as the financial management of the country was concerned.

The predominance of Firestone over the Liberian Government is illustrated by the 1951 situation when the profits retained by Firestone–Liberia **after** tax had been paid to the Liberian Government still amounted to three times the total income of the Liberian Treasury for the same year. Thus, Liberia was known in the 1940's and 1950's as the "Firestone Republic."

Thirdly, Firestone's labor recruitment policy, at least until as late as 1962, had very bitter connotations. The forcible character of this recruitment has been denounced many times, in various places and as early as 1930 when a commission of inquiry of the League of Nations concluded that forced labor was used on the Firestone Plantations, recruited for it by the host Government.

Arthur J. Knoll's article on Harvey S. Firestone's Liberian investment, covering the decade 1922–1932, presents an interesting insight into the personality of the U. S. businessman. He accurately places Firestone's motivation for coming to Liberia against the background of the British Rubber Regulation Plan commonly known as the Stevenson Plan and he describes in detail the investor's relations with U. S. Government officials, notably with Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover.

Knoll has used original material as is shown by the sources he consulted. It is interesting to note that most of this first–hand information is in the U.S.A. I wonder whether this is available in Liberia. Personal experience in digging in Liberia's (unorganized) archives makes one doubt whether these sources, if at all existing, can be traced.

Knoll also elaborates on the difficulties and on the prospects of failure with which Firestone was confronted even before the agreements were legalized. The final, positive result, the signing of the three Planting Agreements and the Loan Agreement, can only be explained by the reason which Knoll gives at the end of his article: "Each needed the other." This, however, is neither a revealing nor a shocking truth since it has already been said before, by other authors.

Relations between Firestone and Hoover though initially good later deteriorated, as shown in detail by Knoll. It is a pity that the period covered by him ends in 1932 since in 1933 Herbert Hoover, now President of the U.S.A., broke off diplomatic relations between the two countries after the unilateral decision of President Edwin Barclay (the same who negotiated the three Planting Agreements and the Loan Agreement on behalf of the Liberian Government) to impose a moratorium and to send home one of the U. S. supervisors appointed under the 1927 Loan Agreement.

Knoll's discussion of the provisions of the three Planting Agreements and the Loan Agreement which were eventually concluded hardly presents any new information. This is understandable since the contents of these agreements are publicly known and have been the subject of many publications.

However, this should have been one more reason not to make an incorrect statement such as the one with respect to the Third Agreement. The Liberian Government never actually earmarked $300,000 for a port near Monrovia. In the Agreement, the Firestone Plantations Company obligated itself to construct a port near Monrovia, within five years, whereas the Government accepted the obligation to repay a sum not exceeding $300,000 for the construction of this port. The agreement is vague as to whether this meant that the cost of construction was not to exceed $300,000 or that this sum would be the maximum amount refundable by the Government of Liberia.

Equally amazing is the author's incomplete presentation of one of the main characteristics of the Loan Agreement. This results not only in a partial picture of the attempt at "financial strangulation" of the Republic—as it has been described by Liberians—but also, as an inevitable consequence, in an incorrect, and all-too positive image of the U.S. rubber investor. Through this Loan Agreement, Liberia's Public Debt, which in 1926 was decreasing and stood at less than $1.9 million and of which almost 90 per cent carried an interest rate of 5 per cent or less, was eliminated and replaced by a $5 million loan which was placed at a rate of 90 per cent, had an interest rate of 7 per cent, and a maturity of 40 years. Last but not least, through this Loan Agreement the Liberian Government was forbidden to contract new loans without the written consent of the Finance Corporation of America, a Firestone subsidiary, which was the official lender.

This leniency of Knoll towards Firestone (based on lack of information?) may have led him to state that I exaggerated in my book on "The Open Door Policy of Liberia—An Economic History of Liberia" when speaking of "a practical American-Firestone protectorate over Liberia." This necessitates two comments.

Firstly, the exact wording of my description of the situation which resulted after the signing of the four Agreements differs from Knoll's formulation. Secondly, my statement that the provisions of the four Agreements, notably those of the Loan Agreement, almost turned Liberia into an American protectorate are in accordance with the 1933 situation when Harvey Firestone in vain tried to persuade the U.S. Government to invade Liberia.

Whereas this attempt of Firestone to keep things in Liberia under control also took place after the period under investigation by Knoll, this is not true of the labor situation and Firestone's labor recruitment policy. Here a very interesting historical comparison could have been made and it really is a pity that Knoll in the beginning of his article states that "(. . .) Nothing comparable existed in British or French West Africa.(. . .)". He could have referred to the British Gezira Schema in Sudan (although in East Africa), which had started in 1911—producing mainly cotton, however, and no rubber. The 0.9 million hectares (over 2 million acres) involved in this irrigation scheme represent some 10 per cent of the total cultivated area of this country (Africa's largest country!), which justifies even more the comparison with Firestone's claim on Liberian territory. Similar to Firestone's plans the original Gezira Scheme, necessitated a total labor force to realize the plans which was in no way compatible with the country's reality. In the case of Liberia the realization of Firestone's plans would have meant that almost the entire adult male population of the country would have been employed on the Firestone plantations.

Ironically, the mistake of underestimating the labor constraint in the realization of large land development schemes, eventually leading to (to say the least) the use of involuntary labor, has been made in three different regions in Africa, each with a different administrative and political system, and in more or less the same period.

These three territories were an independent African State (Liberia), a British administered territory (the colony of Sudan in East Africa) and a French governed territory (the colony, Sudan, nowadays called Mali, in West Africa).

From the early 1920's French agronomists, engineers, and industrialists dreamed of developing a vast area in the Niger River Valley, involving some 1–1.5 million hectares, or between 2,5 million and 3,5 million acres. Like Firestone in Liberia, only a relatively small portion was really developed, partly due to the labor constraint, whereas what really was achieved started on the basis of forced labor. Against this background Knoll's statement that "(. . .) Firestone introduced (. . .) recruitment of voluntary labor (. . .)" would at least have merited some comment. Besides, I do not think it correct, historically, to state that the voluntary labor which also was recruited by Firestone represented a novelty in the country. Long before the installation of Firestone in Liberia, Kru men were recruited on foreign ships whereas immediately prior to Firestone's arrival in Liberia the (voluntary) employment in the monetary sector of the economy, though very limited, did exist (in the civil service and by some trading firms).

With this article Knoll has made a significant contribution to our insight in Firestone's planting–loan venture in Liberia. As he correctly states, his article, based upon some recently released Firestone archives and the William R. Castle Diaries, carries Frank Chalk's excellent investigation further (see Chalk's article in the Canadian Journal of African Studies of March 1967, "The Anatomy of an Investment: Firestone's 1927 Loan to Liberia"). Knoll's article can be considered complementary to publications of Chalk and of other authors with respect to the start of a venture which still impacts Liberia. The fact that from 1927 the financial affairs of the first African Republic were controlled by a group of U.S. financial experts should be part of the working knowledge of present–day Liberian politicians and decision–makers in the light of the decision, about sixty years later, to grant some 17 U.S. experts a similar position.

Knoll's strength appears to be more in the use of original than of secondary material since his presentation of the latter information sometimes is inaccurate. The episode which he describes and analyses is a fascinating and important one, not only in the history of Liberia, Africa's first and oldest Republic, but also of Africa as a whole.

The historical background of the return to Africa of "freed blacks and men of color" and the development of this portion of the West African coast which they subsequently colonized is of interest in itself.

Its analysis allows the development of more insight into, and eventually a theory of, the contribution of foreign capital and know-how to the development of Africa. This makes Knoll's article interesting and even compulsory reading for those interested in the past, present and future development of the continent.

News and Notes

1989 Liberian Studies Conference

With the theme "Perspective for the Ni e 21st Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association conve ssboro State College, New Jersey, March 23–25. In addition to sever focused on such issues as Liberian Demography, Liberian–Sierra Leo ns, Education and Human Resource Development, the Conference featured three invited addresses. Dr. Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman (former President of the University of Liberia and Visiting Professor, Cornell University) spoke on "Perspective on Education in Liberia." Dr. Warren L. d'Azevedo (Professor Emeritus, Anthropology, University of Nevada, Reno) addressed "Heritage of a Vanishing Hinterland: Liberian Ethnography." And Dr. C. E. Zamba Liberty (former Vice President of the University of Liberia and Visiting Scholar, Marquette University) presented "The State in Historical Perspective: Revisiting Liberia's First Republic."

The 22nd Annual Conference (1990) is tentatively scheduled to be held at Marlboro College and School of International Training in the state of Vermont.

Cuttington University College Celebrates One Hundredth Anniversary

On February 22, 1989, Cuttington University College, located at Suacoco, Bong County (Liberia), marked its centennial year with appropriate celebrations. Formally founded February 22, 1889 with the laying of the cornerstone of its first permanent structure, Epiphany Hall, in Maryland County, this institution of the Episcopal Church was relocated at its present site in 1949. The celebrations featured symposia reflecting on the college's contributions to higher education in the past, and projecting future agendas for the second century. Also featured were fund–raising efforts initiated by the Alumni Association and the college with a view to placing finances on a sounder basis.

Liberian M.D. Graduates of Howard University and Meharry Medical Schools, 1872–1974

1. James R. Priest, 1872-74, Howard, (no record of graduation)
2. J. H. Roberts, M.D., Howard, 1876
3. Thomas D. Campbell, M.D., Howard, 1890
4. Paulus Moort, M.D., Howard, 1893
5. James A. Peal, M.D., Howard, 1948

6. Edwin M. Barclay, M.D., Howard, 1951
7. Robert J. Boakai, M.D., Howard, 1974
8. John H. Jones, M.D., Meharry, 1894
9. B. W. Payne, 1901 Freshman Class (no record of graduation)
10. N. D. Merriam, M.D., Meharry, 1904
11. S. F. Clark, 1914-1915, Meharry (no record of graduation)
12. John Zeo Bargyh, 1914-1915, Meharry (no record of graduation)
13. Estelle Olivia Brown, 1914-1915, Meharry (no record of graduation)
14. Theodore M. Bli, 1920-21 Freshman Class (no record of graduation)
15. Samuel W. Nyaffor, 1920-21 Freshman Class (deceased Sophomore yr)
16. Joseph Nagbe Togba, M.D., Meharry, 1944
17. Henry Nehemiah Cooper, M.D., Meharry, 1954

DOCUMENT: Last Will and Testament of Joseph Jenkins Roberts, First President of Liberia, Admitted to Probate March 6, 1876, Signed M. I. Clunty, Clerk, Monthly and Probate Court, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia

In the Name God, Amen

Know all men by these Presents that I, JOSEPH JENKINS ROBERTS, of the City of Monrovia, County of Montserrado, and Republic of Liberia, being of sound mind and body, and mindful of the uncertainty of human life, do make, publish and declare, this my last **Will and Testament** in manner following, that is to say:

FIRST, I give and bequeath to my faithful and affectionate wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, for and during her natural life, the following specified real property: two lots of land situated on Ashmun Street in the City of Monrovia, and bearing in the authentic records of said city, Number Ninety–Five and Ninety–Six, together with my mansion home and all other buildings and improvements thereon and thereto belonging or pertaining. Also one acre of land on the corner of Fort and Back Streets, being the western portion of farm lot Number One adjoining said City of Monrovia, which one acre of farm lot Number One, I have leased to Thomas Hadskin for ten years commencing from the first day of January, Eighteen Hundred and Seventy Five, free from any charge, except that he shall pay the annual taxes, assessed thereon by the Government and by the corporate authorities of the City of Monrovia.

I also give and bequeath to my aforesaid wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, for and during her natural life, my coffee farm situated and lying on the north and west sides of Cape Messurado, said farm lands were purchased of Government and deed respectively May 1st, 1863, September 20, 1865, December 14, 1864 and September 25th, 1866; and containing one-hundred and two acres of land; and in every of the aforesaid: together with all and singular, the buildings and improvements, of whatsoever nature, thereon and thereto.

SECOND, I give and bequeath to my daughter SARAH ANN (was wedded to William Andrew Johnson, one of the sons of Elijah Johnson), her heirs and assigns forever, two lots of land in the City of Monrovia, and bearing in the authentic records of said city Number One Hundred and Sixty One and One Hundred and Sixty Seven, together with all the improvements thereon and appurtenances there-unto belonging.

THIRD, I give and bequeath to my four grandsons, the children of my daughter SARAH ANN: LEWIS RAE JOHNSON, JOSEPH JENKINS JOHNSON, HILARY TEAGE JOHNSON, and ELIJAH CALLIN JOHNSON, all of my farm lands at King Governors, on the South East bank of the St. Paul River and containing One Hundred and Sixty acres, more or less together with all the improvements, thereon and appurtenances there-unto belonging, to have, hold and enjoy the same, in just tenancy their heirs and assigns forever.

FOURTH, I give and bequeath to **WENDALL**, the youngest son of my late Brother, JOHN W. ROBERTS, his heirs and assigns forever, two lots of land in the township of Millsburg, and bearing in the authentic records of said Township of Millsburg, Number One and Twenty Four; also a certain piece or parcel of land in the City of Monrovia, deeded to me by my late Mother of precious memory and being part of a lot originally owned by the late CHARLES B. BRANDER, and in every of the aforesaid, together with all and singular, the buildings and improvements of whatsoever nature, thereon and thereto belonging.

FIFTH, I give and bequeath to **JOHN HENRY**, son of my late Brother, **HENRY I. ROBERTS**, his heirs, and assigns forever, one lot of land in the City of Monrovia Number One Hundred and Seventeen, originally owned by A. SKINNER. Also a tract of land lying south of the City of Monrovia bordering on the Sea, and containing fifty acres, more or less, including ten acres originally owned by WILLIAM RUFFIN, and purchased by me from JAMES S. PAYNE and wife: also after the death of my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, aforesaid, I give and bequeath to the aforesaid JOHN HENRY, his heirs and assigns forever, the one acre of land on the corner of Fort and Back Streets as mentioned and described in the **First** section of this instrument and given to my wife for and during her natural life.

SIXTH, I hold a Government Certificate for Three Hundred and Seventy acres of land, which, presuming the Government will allow the Legates respectively to select the number of acres hereby bequeath to each, and will deed the same accordingly—I give and bequeath the aforesaid Three Hundred and Seventy Acres of land as follows:—

that is to say I give and bequeath to the three daughters of my late Brother JOHN W. ROBERTS, viz. SARAH, CATHERINE, and ELIZABETH, twenty-five acres to each, and to the daughters of my late Brother HENRY J. ROBERTS, viz. JANE, ELIZABETH, One Hundred and Fifty acres; and to JOSEPH, son of G. MOORE, One Hundred acres; and to JOSEPH, son of J. S. SANDERS, Forty Five acres. Also, after the death of my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, aforesaid, I give and bequeath to JANE ELIZABETH, aforesaid, daughter of my late Brother, HENRY J. ROBERTS, her heirs and assigns forever, the lots of land on Ashmun Street in the City of Monrovia, Number Ninety Five and Ninety Six, together with my mansion-house all other buildings and improvements thereon and thereunto belonging being the same as mentioned and described in the First section of this instrument, and bequeathed to my wife for and during her natural life.

SEVENTH, I hold Ten Thousand Dollars in United States Five Per Cent Bonds; and I do hereby give and grant to my faithful and affectionate wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, for and during her natural life, Three Hundred Dollars annually, of the amount of interest accruing on said bonds, and payable to her order. I also give and grant to my daughter, SARAH ANN, for and during her natural life Two Hundred Dollars annually of the amount of interest accruing on the above-named bonds; which amount shall be drawn and paid to her by my Executrix hereinafter named.

After the deaths of my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, and of my daughter, SARAH ANN, the interest accruing on the aforesaid United States Bonds, shall be set apart, used and applied to the purposes of Education as hereinafter named and directed. It is my Will and Desire and I do hereby so direct that should the death of my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, occur before the death of my daughter, SARAH ANN, my daughter, SARAH ANN, her heirs and assigns shall not be entitled to claim or to receive any part of the sum given and granted to my wife for and during her natural life of the interest of the aforesaid bonds; and in like manner, should the death of my daughter, SARAH ANN, occur before the death of my wife, JANE R. ROBERTS, my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, her heirs and assigns shall not be entitled to claim or to receive any part of the sum given and granted to my daughter, aforesaid, for and during her natural life; But that in either case, the sum to be set apart, used and applied to the purposes of Education.

EIGHTH, I have had in contemplation for years past, to erect a suitable building in the City of Monrovia, to be used as a school house; but circumstances have prevented me, up to the present, from putting up such a building. Having still a strong desire to have the Educational Facilities of the County increased, and with the view of erecting one or more suitable buildings for school purposes, and for keeping the same in repair; as well as providing for the salaries or salary of one or more teachers, I give and bequeath, after the death of my wife and daughter, aforesaid, and to be applied thereto inperpetuity, the entire amount of annual interest accruing on the aforesaid United States Bonds; and also in like manner, and to be used for the same purpose, after the death of my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, the net proceeds of all moneys accruing from the lease or rent of my coffee farm, as mentioned and described in the First section of this instrument, and bequeathed to my wife, aforesaid, for and during her natural life. It is my Will and desire that said Coffee Farm shall **NEVER** be sold, but leased or rented for a term of years at a time. And I do hereby direct that no part of the **Ten Thousand Dollars** being the principal of the aforesaid **United States Bonds** shall ever be used or consumed for any purpose whatsoever, but shall, together with my Coffee farm aforesaid, remain a **PERPETUAL FOUNDATION** for the object herein stated. As the object of this bequest is for increasing the Educational facilities of the Country, it is desirable that it should be managed judiciously and with strictest economy and accountability; I therefore direct that the management of it, and whatsoever pertains thereto, shall be placed in the hands and under the control and direction of the Stewards of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the City of Monrovia, who shall be and are hereby authorized and fully empowered to transact all business in relation to this bequest, and in carrying out the object of the same in conformity with the provisions herein contained. I desire that the aforesaid stewards of the aforesaid Church in the City of Monrovia shall affirm the three Trustees aforesaid, as soon as practicable after the death of my wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS. The said Trustees shall be accountable to the said stewards for the conduct of the business placed in their hands. It is desirable that all business transactions relating to this bequest should be above the signatures of these Trustees, nevertheless the act or acts, of any two of them within the scope of this instrument shall be valid and binding.

The said Trustees shall lay before the Stewards of the aforesaid Church, annually, a statement of their doings, showing the condition and prospect of the school, or schools and an account of the receipt and disbursements of the year; these being found satisfactory, the Stewards shall grant from the fund of this bequest such remuneration to the Trustees, as in the Judgement of the Stewards, shall be deemed reasonable and proper for their services of the past year.

The school or schools that shall be established from this bequest, shall be located in the City of Monrovia, or elsewhere within the corporate limits of the same as the aforesaid Stewards shall direct.

NINETH, After my funeral expenses, and all my just debts are paid, I give and bequeath to my dear, affectionate and faithful wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, in her own right to be used and disposed of by her according to her own will and pleasure—all the moneys specie .... or currency that may be in my possession and belonging to me at the time of my death; also all my household and kitchen furniture, all of my live stock and all of silverware, and indeed all the rest, residue and remainder of my personal estate, goods and chattels, of what nature and kinds ever; also all other money or moneys which may be due to me on mortgages; not including, however, the United States Bonds above referred to further than what relates to her life estate.

If, at the death of my wife; there shall be remaining any part of the silverware, furniture or other personal property of my Estate, and which shall not have been, in any manner, disposed of by my wife before her death, it is my will and desire that the same shall be given to my daughter, SARAH ANN, and in case my wife shall survive my daughter, then all said personal property that may be remaining and shall not have been disposed by my said wife before her death, by will or otherwise, shall descend and go to my niece, JANE ELIZABETH, daughter of my late Brother, HENRY I. ROBERTS, her heirs and assigns.

, All the rest, residue and remainder of my real estate not herein mentioned and disposed of, of which I may now be possessed, or shall become possessed before my death, I give and bequeath to my nephew, JOHN HENRY, son of my late Brother, HENRY I. ROBERTS, his heirs and assigns forever.

EL , I, the said JOSEPH JENKINS ROBERTS, do hereby appoint and constitute my said wife, JANE ROSE ROBERTS, sole Executrix of this, my last WILL and TESTAMENT, hereby revoking all former wills by me at any time made.

TWELFTH, My Estate being entirely unencumbered, except, perhaps, there might be two or three trifling debts against it—it is my desire, and I do hereby request the Judge of the Probate to admit to probate, this my last WILL and TESTAMENT, without requiring my said Executrix to file an inventory of my property or effects, either real or personal and therefore, of course, no appraisers need be appointed, which would only incur needless troubles and expense. And for the same reason, as above stated, that my Estate is unencumbered, and also for the reason that I do not with my wife, as the Executrix of my Estate, to be placed under the slightest needless inconvenience in relation thereto; and especially as I have implicit confidence in her judgement, ability .... I therefore, desire, and do hereby request that the said Executrix of my Estate shall not be required to execute or file any bond for the faithful discharge of her duties as Executrix under this Will, or for any other purpose whatsoever relating to my Estate.

The whole of this foregoing, contained on this page, and the preceding pages subscribed by me are my wishes and directives in respect to the distribution of my Estate, real and personal, after my death, and which I trust will be faithfully and strictly observed.

In witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my seal this tenth day of June in the year of our Lord, One-Thousand Eight-Hundred and Seventy-Five.

S.S.

Seal: Court of Quarter Sessions 1875

Signed: J. J. Roberts

The Testator, JOSEPH JENKINS ROBERTS, Named in the foregoing Will, in the presence of each of us, and at the time of signing the same, declared the above and foregoing instrument to be his last WILL and TESTAMENT and each of us at the request of the Testator and in his presence and in the presence of each other do:

/Sgd./ HENRY W. DENNIS
W. M. DAVIS
J. E. MOORE

Courtesy of William R. Davis, Jr. a Descendant.

The Editor

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