THE DEVELOPMENT AND ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS

IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY:

THE CASE OF GHANA.

by

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SUMMARY.

This thesis discusses the development and role of trade unionism in the economic and political development of Ghana. It examines the factors which contributed to the growth of trade unionism, and answers the questions of why the unions arose when they did and why also they developed with such a high political content. The relevance of the British pattern of trade unionism when it was exported to the colonies, is also investigated.

After a chapter setting the political and economic scene in Ghana, the first part of the thesis concerns itself with an historical analysis of the rise of trade unionism from its beginnings, through the period of definite colonial and other external involvement, and finally to independence when the unions had to take on a form which, while owing something to the past, was in most respects, entirely new, that of the industrial wing of the Government in a one-party state.

Drawing on the historical material, subsequent chapters examine the pattern of development in terms of the various influences, both internal and external, which affected the form the unions were to take. The relationship between Nkrumah's Convention Peoples' Party and the unions is discussed in terms of the means of control available to the State in harnessing labour to its own ends. The possibilities for a realistic labour policy in such a situation are then examined.
A further role for the unions in Nkrumah's Ghana, that of their use as a tool for the extension of Ghana's foreign policy, through the agency of the All African Trade Union Federation, is the subject of another chapter. An examination of the prospects for a fruitful relationship between the unions and the new military government since the 1966 military Coup, completes the study.

This study concludes that the standard British conception of a trade union as primarily an institution of the industrial age, must be reconsidered. Unions functioning for collective bargaining purposes alone, cannot be expected to exist for long in a country at Ghana's stage of development. There, it is an élite group, and as such, it has different aims and attitudes. Prior to independence it is closely involved with the struggle for independence rather than with any class-struggle; after independence it is, of necessity, forced into a role of assisting the state in achieving national economic goals.
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Preface.

This study is based on research carried out in Ghana during the Academic Year 1963-64, while I was a student at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, as part of my training as a member of H.M. Diplomatic Service.

I had the opportunity to make two further brief trips to Accra in my capacity as a diplomatist during 1965, and this study would not have been possible without these opportunities given to me by the Foreign Office.

Because of my official work (and the rupture of diplomatic relations with Britain during the last eleven months of the Nkrumah government) it has not been possible for me to visit Ghana again since early 1965, and so the most recent events, to the small extent that they affect the substance of this thesis, are from second-hand sources.

Chapter VIII was, in an earlier form, presented at a Seminar on Panafri canism at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, on 25th November, 1965, one of a series conducted by Professor Dennis Austin. This was circulated as a duplicated paper: no other part of this study has been previously published.

Finally I am grateful to my Supervisors for tolerating my continuing with this study, despite my full-time membership of the Diplomatic Service.
INTRODUCTION.
Introduction

The economic progress being made by developing countries has been the subject of a great deal of attention in recent years, but the increase in trade union activity which contributes importantly to this development, has hardly been given its fair share of attention. This thesis seeks to show the significance of trade unionism in the economic, political and social development of Ghana, both in the rise of nationalism and later as a component of party and government in a one-party state. It examines the question of what internal and external conditions existed to cause the unions to emerge when they did, and to take on the extreme political character they did, and why eventually they turned completely away from the nature and role of trade unions in Britain. In this context, it is suggested that much British thinking about trade unionism has to be reformulated for the African situation, and that trade unions functioning for collective bargaining purposes alone may be very much confined to developed countries, if the necessary infrastructure of education and political stability is lacking. In Ghana, the trade unionist is shown to be a member of an elite group that has objectives which have always been and are now very different from those of the British Labour Movement.

Before the Second World War, trade unions in Africa were either non-existent or very much in their infancy, and now that they are attaining greater stature and importance, their
development has become a major object of national and international interest for a combination of economic, political and social reasons: economic, because the increasing level of industrialisation and the growth of large-scale enterprises leads to an ever larger working force which in turn gives rise to trade union activity to protect and represent the interests of the workers; political, since frequently under colonialism, the trade union provided a major and sometimes the only vehicle for the movement towards independence, and finally social, for, as a replacement for the traditional tribal organisations, the trade unions are a major means of adaptation to new conditions.

For these reasons it becomes evident that the subject of trade unionism in developing countries is worthy of more detailed study than has hitherto been devoted to it. Especially with regard to Africa, the whole question has been seriously neglected in the literature,¹ and an over-concentration on the nature and structure of political parties alone, has, or may have led to a misunderstanding of the process of political and economic development.

The secondary literature though growing, is extremely scanty, but there are several useful works on the subject, notably including Professor B.C. Roberts' book,

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Labour in the Tropical Territories of the Commonwealth,¹ and, with special reference to Africa, the book *Syndicalisme Africain* ² by Jean Meynaud and Anisse Salah-Bey; the recent *Collective Bargaining in African Countries* ³ by B.C. Roberts and L. Gréyfie de Bellecombe; S.E.D. Fawzi's *The Labour Movement in the Sudan*;⁴ J.I. Roper's short study on *Labour Problems in West Africa*,⁵ and the books by W.A. Warmington ⁶ and T.M. Yesufu ⁷ on trade unions in the Cameroons, and in Nigeria. An early study was *Le Travail en Afrique Noire*,⁸ a Présence Africaine Publication, and the recent Penguin, *African Trade Unions* ⁹ by Iocan Davies also has much material in it that is valuable.

Apart from the above, two useful pilot articles, both also originally published by Présence Africain, are G. Fischer's 'Syndicats et Décolonisation',¹⁰ and P.F. Gonidecs 'The development of trade unionism in Black Africa'.¹¹ Both of these tend to highlight the political element in trade union development. A further study from an entirely political viewpoint is Thomas Hodgkin's book *Nationalism in Colonial Africa*,¹² especially the chapter on Labour Movements.

Many of even the standard British texts on trade unionism and on labour relations generally almost entirely ignore the unions in developing countries. This unwitting and natural neglect highlights one of the major questions with which this whole thesis is concerned, namely the relevance of the British type of trade unionism to the situation in countries such as Ghana. In the context of this neglect, this study, in seeking to show the importance of trade unionism in the economic, social and political development of Ghana, does not set out to argue that the unions in themselves significantly represent the labour force here or in any underdeveloped country. The wage earning force, as will be shown later, is a very small percentage of the total working population, and of that number, only a small percentage is organised in any way into trade unions. In other words, trade union members, unlike their counterparts in Britain, are themselves a numerical elite, which gives them much of their importance within the State.

1. For example, J.T. Dunlop's, Industrial Relations Systems, (John Holt, 1958).

2. The role of Trade Unions in economic development has been examined, for example in A. Sturmtal's "Unions in Economic Development" published in Economic Development and Cultural Change (U. of Chicago, Jan. 1960) Vol. VIII.

3. See page 41
Within the political framework, this thesis discusses the role of trade unionism in contributing to the development of nationalist movements, a factor more or less ignored by most recent political studies, which have tended to over-stress the nature of political parties in isolation. More precisely, it is demonstrated that while trade unions in Ghana owe a great deal to their counterparts in Britain, the peculiar situation of colonialism, followed by the special problems facing the new government after independence, created many fundamentally different conditions to those found in a British trade union environment. Nonetheless I try to give some account of the ways in which the British pattern of trade unionism has been found useful in such a developing economy. It will emerge in the process that the peculiarities of the colonial situation made certain fundamental assumptions in traditional forms of trade union theory, such as the "class struggle" approach, seem somehow irrelevant, the argument of this study being that the class struggle was replaced in a generally classless society by the struggle for independence, in a situation where the expatriate employer was, in the minds of the indigenous worker, synonymous with the colonial (expatriate) government.¹

The approach of this thesis is to single out the case of Ghana for special study. To try to deal with trade unionism in underdeveloped countries generally would, with the very varied experience of ex-colonial countries, have been extremely dangerous, and would have allowed for too much generalisation chasing too few facts. But some precision in setting the scene in one particular country does give specific background for further discussion. The conclusions reached for Ghana cannot be held to have universal validity, but some of them certainly can be usefully applied in countries with roughly similar colonial experiences.

There are several reasons why Ghana is a useful choice as a subject. Of the tiers monde, West Africa is one of the most vigorously developing areas and certainly, with regard to political development, it left the rest of Africa very much behind. It was politically transformed from a state of almost complete colonial dependence at the beginning of 1957 to one of almost entire independence by the end of 1960. It is also an area that is rich in raw materials, producing among other things, two-thirds of the world's production of cocoa and one-third of its diamonds.

Is it arbitrary and artificial to try to confine the study to this particular part of Africa? I argue that this is not so, because Ghana's Colonial and Independent experience gives a more uncluttered example than might be given by the study of other parts of Africa. East Africa, for example, with its later colonisation, has its special settler problem, its less
developed and less well-educated indigenous population, and its comparative lack of industrialisation and urbanisation. Again, Southern Africa and the North African Maghreb region are special cases because of their geographical situation which caused a peculiar historical exposure to external influence. In French Africa, the history of trade unionism is very much one of the history of French Metropolitan union activity and competition in the colonies. Lastly, the ex-Belgian and the Portuguese areas of Africa are examples very much apart from the rest, mainly being regions more directly exploited by these two colonial régimes.

Within West Africa, Ghana is a special and most significant case because of her much earlier coming to independence, her greater economic potential and the generally higher level of education of her population. Here one has a longer period since independence for study, and the economic resources of the country suggest that Ghana may in the future be more likely to develop along modern industrial lines than many other African countries. Ghana, further, gives a politically robust example of what has happened in a milder form elsewhere, comparing favourably with most of French West Africa, (apart from some urban centres such as Dakar and Abidjan) which, at a much less developed level both economically and socially, also falls behind politically. The only ex-British colony which might compete for attention, Nigeria, has special Federal and tribal problems which make her trade union movement so fragmented that any value as a model for general application
is severely limited. This is not to argue that unions in French West Africa and in the remainder of British West Africa are, for social or political reasons, unworthy of study ¹, but simply to say that as an important model of union development, much more of general value can be gained from looking at the Ghanaian experience, where politically, trade unions played such an important part in the move to independence. Since 1957, they have afforded a good example of the general tendency of trade unions in underdeveloped countries to fall away from their earlier and transitory role of defending workers rights as such, and to become subordinated to the ruling party and government machine. Finally, Ghana has the advantage that there is a greater, though still very limited amount of written material available than exists for other parts of West Africa, though there are of course great gaps in the historical and statistical sources.².

In setting the scene for this study, it has been appreciated that the Labour situation in any developing country

1. There are of course several excellent studies of unions in Nigeria, e.g. Yesufu op. cit.; Wells and Warmington op. cit. See also Appendix H.

2. A discussion of sources is given in Appendix G. In the early stages, Government archives are the major source, since unions generally kept intermittent and rudimentary records. This places the researcher at some disadvantage.
is so vastly different in many respects from that in highly industrialised economies that the traditional assumptions regarding Labour supply have to be reconsidered. The intention in this thesis is to introduce an awareness of this and other similar problems, and not in any way to duplicate the considerable work already done on Labour supply and population problems in developing countries. 1. For example, however, in discussing employment, conditions frequently exist which can neither be classed as full-employment nor yet as unemployment. The proportion of the population which by British standards could be termed unemployed, that is, those who have no work at all, is very small. It is rather a question of underemployment and reflects the fact that there is seldom any social provision for the unemployed. In consequence individuals work to avoid starvation.

This underemployment means that in planning the development of a country such as Ghana, it can be assumed that there is an extremely elastic supply of labour for the modern sector of the economy. This is because, no matter what the wage level is, people will be attracted from subsistence level occupations. This is especially relevant to the growth of trade unions, and is one of the major factors leading to their weakness, because in bargaining with the employers, the latter

have an untapped "reserve army of the unemployed" or rather, underemployed, to draw upon in strike breaking, especially in the unskilled trades.

Given such fundamental differences in the labour market and in the economy generally, this indicates at the outset that ideas about trade unionism in a country such as Ghana, ideas, that is, about their role in society, must probably also undergo a complete revision. What kind of conceptual framework can we therefore adopt in looking at them?

The practice throughout this study is to look at the unions in terms of their objectives, and to examine how these objectives differ from those of the British labour movement. It is necessary therefore also to look at the many concepts of trade unionism and its objectives which have been formulated to fit the growth and ambitions of labour movements in industrial societies, and to see which of them are at all relevant to Ghana, or are helpful in gaining an understanding of the process of development. There are some admitted dangers in trying to formulate some sort of pattern of what happened to unions in industrialised or in developing countries, but since a great deal has been written on the subject in the past, it will help in understanding the differences that exist, to introduce an awareness of the problems they raise at this stage.

1. For example M. Perlman, Labour Union Theories in America, (Harper-Rowe, 1958).
A Marxist concept of trade union development, for example, on the face of it, appears as the most suitable, up to independence at any rate, since it expounds the concept of the trade union leading the political revolution as an intermediate component in the class struggle. This can be interpreted for Ghana if we replace the class struggle with the anti-colonialist struggle. Also relevant, perhaps, is the Webbs' idea of industrial democracy, that the unions arise as the result of the wish of the workers to have some say in the means of production control. The union benefits its members by overcoming competition between workers through restrictions of its membership and also by writing into the code of behaviour "the common rule of labour".

G.D.H. Cole suggests in turn that the trade union sets out to control industry in co-operation with the State, as opposed to the objective of the craft union which is mainly self-seeking. The trade union, according to this concept, will wish to control the supply of labour, and its main object is therefore to control job opportunities. This is the concept of "scarcity consciousness" which expounds the problem of job-sharing under full employment, and along with the Webbs' theory, can be demonstrated as being on the face of it somewhat too ambitious in the context of Ghana.

In addition to the above, other writers suggest that the trade union exists as a sort of permanent opposition to management, and that, through the process of collective bargaining with management, it achieves its own goals. The idea of the union having as its main objective the increasing of the share of National Income going to labour can also be shown as
being too subtle to be relevant here.

Can we then see any of these theories having real relevance in Ghana, or in any underdeveloped area, where relations between the state and the unions are to a great extent the determining factor? Many of the theories depend on the idea of control of labour supply, and they therefore appear somewhat inappropriate in conditions where the "reserve army of the unemployed" is to all intents and purposes, limitless. (Admittedly limits do exist, one great containing factor for example being education, especially in skilled or semi-skilled trades. This even applies in unskilled occupations when these require adapting to modern economic conditions such as the individual's ability to adapt to regular employment.)

With elastic labour supply, small basic membership and lack of sophistication, therefore, the assumption of this thesis is that most of these concepts of trade union behaviour and development have doubtful relevance, and more importantly, are not very helpful. One is tentatively left, in the colonial period, with the Marxist theory of the trade union leading the political revolution. The subsequent extension of this is through a presentation of West African trade union organisations as an expression not of the class-struggle but of the anti-colonial struggle. Later, the CoI idea of the trade union out to control industry in co-operation with the State, could be applied to the post-independence situation, but theories related to control of job opportunities have only slight relevance, as do ideas
about industrial democracy. The role of the union as something existing to overcome competition between workers, and discussion of "the common rule of labour" whereby the worker gets the same wage for the same job, is also somewhat too esoteric and nice for the African situation.

More relevantly therefore, I shall attempt to show that in Ghana, a trade union was, by its very nature, predominantly a political animal. The suggestion that it was in some way wrong for a trade union in a colonial, or in a newly independent state to be free from politics, indicates a failure to grasp the many differences which exist between trade unions in Africa and in the industrial West.

What are these differences? The structural and organisational differences which have evolved are essential background to the study, but what is important here, as was said above, are the differences in objectives, and the crucial question is how these objectives differ from those of the British labour movement.

In some of the theories outlined above, the exponents have argued that unions wish to control job opportunities, to control industry, and to achieve industrial democracy. But more

1. See Chapter VII, p. 244.

2. This is in no way intended to suggest of course that British unions had no political content. They are, and have been always very much politically orientated.
fundamentally, unions in any society, will first and foremost be interested in their right to exist and to negotiate, and all their actions will be geared to this. Secondly, as well as attempting to control the supply of labour, they will have certain functions and aims regarding conditions of work, seniority and apprenticeships. Thirdly they may have objectives of assisting management, and fourthly they will have the whole range of other collective bargaining objectives relating to rates of pay and conditions of service. Finally unions will always have political objectives which may override all others as the major method of getting what they want.

How do these objectives relate to the situation in Ghana? First of all Ghanaian trade unions were always interested in their right to exist and negotiate. Such was the political situation under colonialism and was also under Nkrumah, that it was all too easy for the union which conflicted politically with the current government point of view, to be disbanded or subsumed in some new organisation. On the other hand, their right to negotiate, if they were allowed to exist at all, was generally speaking, surprisingly little interfered with, both prior to and after independence. To a great extent this was due to the fact that the right to exist was usually dependent on political conditions, while the right to negotiate depended on the power of the (normally) expatriate employers, Overall, the unions related all their actions and objectives to this overriding one of being allowed to exist. Generally speaking, in Britain, once this right was guaranteed, there was
less for the unionist to get worried about. In Ghana, the very nature of the governments, and the highly political nature of the unions themselves, meant that their continued existence was far from being guaranteed, especially when the unions in question were in political opposition.

Secondly, control of job opportunities was difficult in conditions where there was an elastic labour supply, even though there were limiting factors of education and training. This was closely related to problems of conditions of service and related questions of seniority and apprenticeship laws which affect labour supply. The Ghanaian trade union did concern itself with such things, but other factors, such as the desire for power, meant that, when the primary object was to increase membership, then such aims counted for nothing at all.

The third objective, that of wishing to play a part in management, has also relevance to what happened in Ghana. Up until independence, the unions had, as one of their main aims, the taking over the means of production from the expatriate employers or exploiters. Their ability to do so was not guaranteed, and when independence came, this objective was not fulfilled to any real extent. Where the new State did take over some of the productive processes of the country, usually by nationalisation, then the unions nominally had their role in helping to run them as the "industrial wing" of the Party and Government. In the majority of cases however, the control of the industry in question remained as
remote from the unions as it ever was under colonialism, and the various nationalised trading and other organisations up until the 1966 coup, were run by civil servants. The industrial wing of the party did function in theory but only to the extent that unionists were forbidden to strike, since, by so doing, they would be acting in opposition to the party and the state.

The whole range of collective bargaining objectives, fourthly, were rather submerged in the other objectives of the union management. This was not to say that wage claims and conditions of service disputes did not arise. They did so, frequently, and certainly did under colonial rule as well, and, as will be seen, there are many examples of resulting industrial action. The major preoccupation of these unions till independence was however with the fifth objective, that associated with political aims.

The various ways in which Ghanaian unions went about achieving their political ends involved party activity as a means to an economic end, and partly political activity for its own sake. They were not necessarily bound to any political philosophy nor party and there were always conflicting politically-orientated groups of unions existing at any one time. Much of course rested on the fact that union leadership was normally highly politically orientated, especially under colonialism where other outlets for political expression were often lacking. This was to a certain extent so in the post-independence period as well, and there are frequent examples of
trade union leadership keeping very much in the political limelight where again this would be denied them with the emergence of the one-party system of government.

It is therefore suggested that the major objective of colonial trade unionism was to achieve certain political ends, and there is therefore a tentative relationship with the Marxist interpretation of the revolutionary nature of trade unions. After independence, the concept of the trade union out to control industry in co-operation with the state, what I call the "industrial wing theory," has its place with the trade union movement, a highly political animal. It is argued that objectives which concern wage rates, conditions of work, safeguarding job opportunities, and controlling the supply of labour, while not entirely neglected, took a low priority, and that the unions, in this Socialist, one-Party state, became instruments of progress along a chosen, highly political line of development.

Having posed some of the general questions discussed in this thesis relating to the role of the unions, it will now be useful to set out how this thesis is organised.

The first chapter does not do more than set the scene with basic factual information on Ghana prior to and after independence. The country is described from geographical, economic, social and political points of view, and the sources and the statistical material available, is examined in some depth.

1. Though see also Appendix G.
The next three chapters give an account in historical and non-anthropological terms, of the rise of trade unionism in Ghana. This is done in three basic time stages. First of all the early indigenous, co-operative and other socio-economic groupings are examined as predecessors of the modern trade union movement. It will be shown that there are four obvious "roots". First of all there were the Guilds, not properly trade unions, but more, organisations of skilled self-employed craftsmen; there were the ad hoc movements which arose to cope, as they have done in every society, with particular problems of economic adversity; there were the unions which came about as a result of the colonial situation; and lastly there were these unions which took their form almost entirely as a result of an international transplantation of a particular trade union model. This latter "root" arose at a slightly different time and will be dealt with at a later stage.

The first stage of the historical development is then that period up to the time of a definite Western involvement in trade unionism, and generally includes any of the early traditional economic groupings. The second phase begins in Ghana sometime about the beginning of the thirties, with the realisation by the British Colonial Government of the potential economic and, more importantly perhaps, political importance of the growth of trade unionism. This is a period in which the unions took on a definite role, and one in which various external agencies, other than Britain itself began to take an interest. From then on, the unions have a continuous
existence, not forming and dissolving with every fluctuation of the trade cycle.

The third phase in the development of trade unionism in Ghana begins with the ending of colonial rule, or more exactly, dating from the passage of the Industrial Relations Act in 1958. From then on, the Ghana trade unions broke away both from their traditional forms as economic security groupings of one sort or another, and also from those influences implanted by the colonial situation itself, and took on an aspect which was entirely new. It is in this last period that the relevance of the British Model of trade unionism is most seriously challenged, and in which questions about reformulating and rethinking our attitudes towards trade unionism in Africa have most application. This is the period in which the "trade union" in the British sense of the term begins to have little meaning, and what was the "union" becomes, in the one-party state, an extension of the party. In other words, the "industrial wing", the union as a branch of government, is formed.

These three phases must by their very nature be imprecise, and there are continuing sociological developments going on concurrently with them which cannot be so segmented into time periods. For instance there is the development of the so-called Tribal Unions. These arose as a product of urbanisation to keep alive the new immigrant town dweller's attachment to his village or tribe. Associations of this nature are not considered except in passing, in this study, but they were important, nevertheless, in providing mutual aid in new
surroundings and in conditions of economic uncertainty. Their functions closely match some of the functions of the more regular unions, and their membership will often have been, and still is today drawn from the same groups as comprise the regular union membership. They too will perform many political functions in a similar manner to those of trade unions, in assisting nationalist movements and post independence governments.

In Chapter V the pattern of development is examined. The basic aim here is to assess the various influences which have in some way acted on the formation of the trade unions. The factual and analytical background is followed in Chapter VI and VII by a consideration of the political and economic aspects of the rise of the unions. They draw on the historical material in order to analyse why the unions were so political in content, and they examine the means of influence and control available to the party to bring the unions to the stage of being an appendage of the party. With the political control apparently so complete, the prospects for a realistic labour policy in the context of the various Economic Development Plans for Ghana, are investigated. Fundamental to this is the fact that, throughout, the Government has been the largest employer of organised labour in the country.

A further role of the trade unions in Nkrumah's Ghana is examined in Chapter VIII, one which was peculiar to that country for the few years from independence until the 1966 Military Coup. This was their role as a tool in the extension of Ghana's foreign policy. The agent of this was the All
African Trade Union Federation (A.A.T.U.F.), a Nkrumah-inspired vehicle for the propagation of his pan-African ideas. The use of the unions in this way, through AATUF, brings out very clearly their potential use not only internally, but externally as a component of the party.

Finally, a look to the future and to the prospects for a fruitful relationship between union and government in the new environment created by the departure of Nkrumah. While there cannot be any precise answers to these questions, certain possibilities can be examined in relation to labour policies in developing countries. The prospects may be conditioned by the fact that trade union movements, as with student bodies, are habitual and organisable opponents of any restriction of their actions. To safeguard their existence and their rights, they may resort to political actions which may not prove acceptable in precarious political climates.
CHAPTER 1.

ENVIRONMENTAL BACKGROUND

I. Geography and Social Development.

II. Economy.

III. Population and Labour Supply.

IV. Political Development.
Before looking at the rise of trade unions in Ghana, it is necessary to give some attention to setting the scene. This present Chapter gives some background description of the geographical, economic and political climate in which the unions appeared and developed. An extension of this Chapter is the series of statistical appendices at the end of the thesis.

1. **Geography and Social Development.**

The difficulty of communicating physically across country has been an important brake on the growth, and the subsequent lack of cohesion, of trade unionism on any national scale in Ghana. Lack of reasonable roads and more modern means of communication such as railways and telephones, in a land area of 92,000 square miles, almost the same as that of the British Isles, was a hindrance never experienced even in the early days of British trade union development. This, combined with other natural barriers of a tribal and religious nature, made a formidable barrier to anything but extremely localised social development.

Without going into too much detail about the geographical structure of Ghana, the very different physical conditions prevailing in various parts of the country must be appreciated. The territory lies between 1° 12' East and 3° 15' West,

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Longitude, and $4^\circ 45'$ and $11^\circ 11'$ North, in Latitude, and
is bounded on the south by the Gulf of Guinea, on the east by
the Republic of Togo, on the north and west by Upper Volta, and
on the southern part of its western border by the Ivory Coast.
The climate is tropical and there are four climatic regions,
namely, the eastern coastal belt which is warm and fairly dry,
the south-west corner which is warm and very humid, and the
forest belt, also warm and humid, and the northern desert which
is hot and dry. There is a wet season which is generally from
April or May until October.

Notwithstanding the progress made in industrialisation,
the country remains predominantly agricultural. Production is
in the hands of African smallholders, the agricultural section
of the State Workers' Brigade, and the State Farms. Of
these, the first continues to be by far the most important as
regards total product. A variety of tropical produce is raised,
some of which is exported. Cocoa is by far the most important
agricultural export and is the subject of a separate section.

The main food crops are yams, cassava, cocoyams (grown over a
wide area), rice, plantains (grown in the south), millet, maize,
guinea corn and groundnuts (grown in the north). In the south
there still exists a little subsistence farming based on food

1. See page 233.
2. See page 29.
crops, but these are grown as cash crops to a steadily increasing extent. Other cash crops in the south are coffee, oil palm, copra, rubber and fruits. It is in this group that the State Farms have been most active. Nurseries have been established to raise a variety of seedlings and produce, such as rubber, copra, coffee, pineapples and palm nuts, on a plantation basis. Subsistence farming in the north is still important, although the growing of cash crops is receiving increasing attention. The main crops of the north are grain, food crops and kola and shea nuts.¹

The coastal region, only 4° 50' degrees north of the Equator, was influenced from the early sixteenth century by Western exploiting and trading missions, and developed in a very different manner from the hinterland of tropical jungle where communication was and is extremely limited. This latter area has, however, very large agricultural potentialities and when penetrated, provides a vast source of raw materials such as timber, cocoa, gold and rubber. The mainly negroid peoples there have tended to develop in very small social groups apart from such an obvious exception as the Ashanti Empire. Further inland again, in the northern savannah and desert area, communications become physically easier, despite desert conditions, and there exists, as a result, a long heritage of Islamic and other penetration and influence coming from across the Sahara. This created a peculiar situation, but not one which allowed for easy inter-social links. In Northern Ghana there are few agricultural

¹. See Section 2 of this Chapter.
opportunities, mainly because of lack of water and distance from markets, and as a result of this, there has been little to encourage development even where this was possible. The result has been the development of a mainly pastoral economy, dominated by the Fulani tribe, who run the cattle industry of much of West Africa.

It was in the coastal area that traditional society began to break down first, and indeed today there are only a few pockets outside this littoral area which have suffered a full erosion of the tribal structure, with the consequent adoption of European patterns or ideas. Where the traditional way of life disintegrated in this way, some new form of organisation had to take its place. The increasingly urban and detribalised areas along the coast produced, as a consequence, a large number of new social and economic groupings to cope with the new conditions, and it is with the study of them that the earlier part of the historical section of this thesis is concerned.

Ghana is a geographically compact country which allows it to escape some of the troubles which continue to face the larger developing countries of Africa and Asia, and though loyalty to tribes and villages exists, the worst characteristics of tribalism have been remarkably absent in Ghana in recent years.
2. Economy.

The economic development of Ghana tended to follow what has been an almost universal pattern under colonialism. The Colonisers came basically to exploit the mineral and forest resources in an area which, in the main, had an economic structure comprising only primitive agriculture, fishing and hunting. The imposition of some segments of a more developed way of economic life gave an impetus to more modern methods of agriculture, and in Ghana's case, particularly with regard to cocoa, upon which the modern economy depends. The latest layer in the strata of development, was the coming of modern industry, of modern methods of mineral exploitation, along with further development of agricultural and forest products.

The existing structure of Ghana's export economy was founded in the first decades of this century, when the products of the forest belt were developed and expanded, especially in cocoa farming and goldmining, and these two products have dominated the economy of the country ever since. This is reflected in the growth of the Gross National Product per head, which doubled in the period 1910-60 in the face of a rapidly rising population. By 1960, the estimated G.N.P. was £G470 million, giving a per capita income of £G70, which is very high compared with other parts of Africa. Over the period 1955 to

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The Ghanaian Pound (£G) was roughly equivalent to the Pound Sterling until decimalisation in 1964, and the introduction of the Cedi, which was about half the £G.
1962 the average annual real rate of growth in G.N.P. was 4.8 per cent, which, with a population increasing by 2.6 per cent, still gives an indication of a reasonable rise in standards of living over the period. Ghana is not typical of most developing countries in one respect: she has a high degree of capital investment, valued in 1960 at over £G 1,100 million, or £G 173 per head of population. About a third of this is investment in the cocoa industry.

In terms of employment, the majority of the population are engaged in subsistence-level agriculture, with, in some very restricted areas, pockets of intensive exploitive industry, mining and plantation work. It is estimated that fully sixty-two per cent of the population of Ghana are engaged in agriculture of one form or another. The most common form of farming follows a system where small plots of vegetation are cleared and after a few years of fertility are allowed to revert to bush. This simple type of what has been called African fallow farming, is obviously very wasteful though it has certain benefits in that it is simple and, more important in some areas, it cuts down erosion.

Important here is the question of land tenure which very generally speaking consisted, in the past, of a communal ownership of land, probably in the name of the Chief. With the advent of cash cropping and the rise of a money economy, individual ownership is now much more common. The question of land tenure has had an important position in British colonial
policy. In French West Africa, land was granted freehold to expatriates, giving rise to the plantation system in these territories, unlike the system in British West Africa, where non-Africans were not permitted to hold large areas of freehold land. In consequence, the plantation system of farming is uncommon in ex-British West African territories. This is of importance in this study of labour movements as causing union activity to be mainly confined to the urban areas.1

Pastoral agriculture gives little need for comment in this context, but what is of considerable importance is the exploitive mining in certain parts of Ghana. The gold mining and the excavation for manganese, diamonds and bauxite, has always been prominent. The growth of such mining enterprises in pre-industrial Africa gave the only early social footing to the rise of labour movements outside the urban areas, and away from the main lines of communication such as the railways.

By comparison with her neighbours, Ghana is extremely well-off with regard to raw materials, and there is great potential for mineral exploitation. In 1962, for example, exports of gold earned £11 million, manganese £5.5 million and diamonds £7.5 million. In addition, for the same year, Ghana's timber exports were valued at about £12 million. But by far the greatest export was cocoa and cocoa products, valued at £67 million.

1. In French West Africa, especially in the Ivory Coast, the plantation workers unions were among the most militant of all.
Ghana is the largest cocoa producer in the world, and with Nigeria, produces three-fifths of world production. The importance of cocoa to the Ghanaian economy is thus supreme, but the influence of the cocoa farmers in the political and social development of the country has been equally great. They are, after all, one of the few groups of reasonably large-scale indigenous entrepreneurs in the whole of Africa, unlike the operators of the exploitive mining and timber industries who, on the whole, were and are expatriate.

The unique position of cocoa farming and processing in Ghana's economy has brought many problems in recent years. Thanks to the introduction of improved planting methods and disease control, cocoa production has rapidly expanded in excess of demand since the early fifties. This caused the world price to fall rapidly. The ever increasing crop meant, however, that, even at lower prices, Ghana's foreign exchange receipts from sales were higher than before, but within the country itself severe financial difficulties were created. The Ghanaian farmer during this period sold his cocoa to the Nationalised Cocoa Marketing Board at a fixed price; the Marketing Board then sold the cocoa at the world market price and from the differential, covered its expenses and paid the Government an export duty from which much of the country's development has been financed. The fall in the world price over the past few

years to around or below that paid the cocoa farmer, meant that the Board lost heavily, and the Government had to go without its revenue from the export duty.

The above is spelled out in some detail to indicate the importance of cocoa in Ghana, not only for economic reasons, but also for the political dangers which were inherent in angering the very powerful cocoa farmers when the Nkrumah Government introduced the cuts that became necessary. The present Military Government has the same problems to face, though they have been much assisted by a large rise in the world price for cocoa in 1965/66.

Prior to the second World War, there were hardly any areas in West Africa which could be called at all industrialised. This was not, as has been argued by the more radical African National Leaders including Nkrumah and Sekou Toure, and by their apologists, because the colonial powers restricted industrial development in order to protect their home industries, but simply because of a lack of industrial requirements and of a local market for any goods produced. In the years immediately prior to independence and in the post-independence period, however, there was a great deal of industrial development, due, in part, to a real determination to become self-sufficient in certain fields and, in part, as a result of a belief in industrialisation as a prestige symbol.

Development planning in Ghana dates back to immediately after the First World War, when the then Governor, Sir Gordon Guggisberg, inspired a Ten-Year Development Plan aimed at providing an infrastructure for the economy. Communications, education, development of cocoa and forest products, along with the first survey of the possibilities of the Volta river hydro-electricity, were the main priorities in the plan. Thereafter came a long and unsatisfactory gap, due to firstly the world recession and then to the Second World War, and not really until the beginning of the fifties did the Colonial Government turn again to talking about planning. Even then there was little coherent co-ordination, but at least an attempt at fixing priorities was achieved.

Underlying all this, was, as has been stressed above, a fundamentally sound and viable economy based on a wide range of raw material resources. The following table gives some indication of this:

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1. See also Chapter VII, p. 232 ff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other agriculture</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other recorded private industries</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent, personal and household services</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government enterprises and public corporations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General government</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual item</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross domestic product</strong></td>
<td><strong>355</strong></td>
<td><strong>376</strong></td>
<td><strong>388</strong></td>
<td><strong>382</strong></td>
<td><strong>433</strong></td>
<td><strong>469</strong></td>
<td><strong>476</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following independence in 1957 the Ghana Government embarked on the construction of a Second Development Plan, with the close co-operation of Professor Arthur Lewis. But it was abandoned within a short time of its launching, and was followed by a new Seven-Year Plan which incorporated many principles of socialist economic planning on a national scale.²

1. Source: *Study of Contemporary Ghana*: Vol. I, op.cit., p. 177. See also *Table A*.

2. Fuller discussion of these and subsequent plans can be found in the *Study of Contemporary Ghana*: Vol. I, op. cit., Ch. V. See also Chapter VII, p. 232.
This introduced a completely new departure both economically and politically in Ghana, and exemplified what has come to be known as the period of Nkrumah's "lurch to the left". From then on, the controversial theories of those who called for increased industrialisation at the expense of improving existing agricultural and exploitive sectors of the economy were in the ascendant. These remained more or less the fashion, with certain modifications, until the coup d'état in the beginning of 1966 which removed Nkrumah from power.

Ghana at the time of the coup faced a financial crisis, both on her internal and external account, largely because of her gross mismanagement of her affairs, and Presidential extravagance. The foreign exchange reserves of about one hundred and eighty million pounds at Independence, were almost exhausted, and a formidable short term debt of over two hundred and fifty million pounds had been built up. The International Monetary Fund sent a Mission to Accra in May 1965 at Ghana's own request to study the problem, but at the end of that year, Ghana still showed no sign of introducing the reforms and economies it recommended.

An already difficult situation was aggravated, as was said above, by the dramatic fall in the price of cocoa. In 1964 in an attempt to obtain a price of £190 a ton, Ghana and other cocoa producers, at first refused to sell their cocoa.

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This in itself meant that Ghana earned no foreign exchange when she desperately needed it, and she sought refuge in dubious barter and credit arrangements with certain Continental and Middle Eastern agencies. The attempt to force the price of cocoa up to £190 a ton was ill-judged since the crop in 1964 was a bumper one, more than 20% above world demand. Thus, when sales were resumed, the price rapidly dropped to around £120, and continued to fall till the end of 1965, when it was below £100. Ghana eventually managed to dispose of all its crop, but because of its very size, it continued to overhang the market, keeping prices depressed and making the disposal of the following year's crop difficult.

The price paid the cocoa farmer in Ghana was, up till the Coup, always much less than the world price, but the increased production meant that his money income has increased greatly. This created a highly inflationary situation and the fall in the world price to its present low levels, inevitably raised the question of an adjustment in the farmer's prices. The I.M.F. recommended this, but the political implications were too serious for Nkrumah to face. The new régime has this problem to deal with now.


The size and density of the population must be one of the first considerations in any discussion of labour problems, in West Africa. There are probably about 80 million people in the area, scattered extremely thinly, the vast majority of them
engaged in subsistence level farming. The actual urban population, most of whom can not be considered as being even partially employed, probably amounts to not more than about seven million.

Of the $\text{11.5}$ million square miles of Africa as a whole, West Africa covers two and a half million square miles or approximately a fifth of the whole. But this population of 80 million is about 35% of that of all Africa; thus we can presume that by African standards West Africa is fairly well populated.

Before going any further in discussing population and Labour supply, it is necessary to take account of the paucity of the statistics available. This is a very serious deficiency, due to lack of funds, shortage of qualified personnel and trained field staff, and, most important, defective response caused inter alia by illiteracy and lack of co-operation. Lack of comprehensive establishment lists, incompleteness and unreliability of unemployment figures derived from employment exchange figures where registration was not compulsory, existence of data which were collected but not analysed, and a myriad of other similar difficulties exist. In international terms, much comparison is invalidated where, for example, the International Standard Classification of Occupations is in many respects totally meaningless in African conditions. Where unemployment statistics are lacking, however, there are ways round this in the highly dis-similar environment of these

countries, if at least the characteristics of the unemployed and underemployed are known, and in particular the factors associated with underemployment. The other important series of statistics concerns wage rates, and an attempt has been made to produce what exists in this field.

This said, in comparison with Western Europe, there is a very low population density in Africa, and this, combined with a lack of every modern form of communication, has meant that social development is, and has been highly localised in the main, though the great pre-colonial African Empires, and then the colonial administrative machine did surmount enormous difficulties in this field. There are some fairly large urban groupings particularly in Western and Southern Nigeria, and the largest town in West Africa, Ibadan has a population of about 1½ million, but these are exceptions. Of the eleven independent states which form West Africa, Nigeria has about half the total population, while, according to the estimate at the end of 1963, the population of Ghana is a modest 7.4 million inhabitants. The regional breakdown is estimated as follows:

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1. See page 42.

2. Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1, op. cit. p. 121. See also Table B.
Accra Capital District ... ... ... ... ...  491,060
Eastern Region (excluding Accra Capital District) 1,083,843
Western Region (including the new Central Region) 1,348,444
Ashanti ... ... ... ... ...  1,108,548
Brong Ahafo ... ... ... ... ...  588,724
Northern Region (including the Upper Region) 1,282,164
Volta Region ... ... ... ... ...  782,547

How accurate are the Ghanaian population statistics?
The answer is that we probably have as exact a series of data as can be expected in the circumstances. There were no federal or tribal incentives in Ghana (as existed in Nigeria) for distorting the 1960 census which was the major count to date, and this has allowed the figures at least to be politically acceptable. It was carried out with United Nations assistance, and was followed by a survey designed to check the enumeration, so there seems little doubt that the results are substantially correct. The results give a population density, fairly high for Africa, of 73 per square mile and a 1964 rate of population increase of 2.6 per cent per annum. There are of course many statistics not available which would have been of use, but the following general points should be noted.

Ghana in common with most underdeveloped countries has a very high proportion of the population under 15 years of age,

1. This compares with 573 per square mile in the U.K.
one estimate being about 45 per cent. The major consequence of this is that the labour force (accepting that a large proportion of these juveniles from subsistence level backgrounds will be "self employed") is comparatively small - a fact that has considerable relevance in terms of economic planning. This is due, among other things, to the consequent extra cost of education and social services, and the fact that each worker employed has to support a large number of dependents. A further consequence is the burden on the demand for labour created by a large number of school-leavers every year, a fact very obvious to even the casual visitor to Accra 1.

This burden on the economy is somewhat offset by the high percentage of women employed in Ghana. Most of the petty trading, and much of the work on the land, is carried on by women, the 1960 census estimating that a comparatively high 62 per cent of the adult female population is in the labour force. But despite this, taking into consideration the annual growth in the labour force caused by migration as well as by natural increase, the Ghanaian economy has not been able to provide sufficient openings in urban employment for those seeking to join the labour force. There is in consequence

a large proportion of unemployed, the actual size of which is difficult to determine for the statistical reasons mentioned earlier.

This of course raises the whole question of the real meaning of the term 'employment' in an underdeveloped country. This has been ably discussed elsewhere but it is worth pointing out briefly that about 62 per cent of the working population of Ghana are employed in agriculture - the vast majority of whom will be self-employed subsistence farmers, though an increasing number are entering manufacturing and service industries. The subsistence level "workers" would in any Western sense be unemployed, since they are not wage earners, but they should not be so categorised in Ghana.

1. Some of the tables here and in the Appendices use U.N. Statistics rather than National Statistics, even where the latter exist. Despite what was said on page 37 above, the tendency is for the U.N. series to be generally more acceptable. See Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1, op. cit., page 23.

The following table gives some indication of the problem:

### Labour Force, 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Classification</th>
<th>Male (Number in thousands)</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Employment Total</th>
<th>Per cent of employed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>1,579</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and quarrying</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas, water and sanitation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, storage and communication</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| | 1,573 | 988 | 2,561 | 100 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per cent of adults</th>
<th>68.6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total employed</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-makers</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total adults (aged 15 and over)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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1. Taken from Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1. op. cit. p. 178

See also Tables E. and F. The figures under each category are approximations. The totals do not therefor precisely conform to the sum of the individual items.
The enormous percentage employed in agriculture underlines one important fact, that the percentage of the adult population organisable into trade union groupings must be a very small percentage of the total working population, the 24 per cent in commerce and manufacturing providing the main source of recruitment, because it includes the more highly skilled part of the Labour force of the country. This is not to argue that agricultural workers will not combine - as will emerge from the historical survey that follows - but only to suggest that in general terms the most "organisable" sector will be the comparatively small, modern one.

With regard to the wage levels for labour over time, statistics are very hard to find. We must, by nature of the exercise, be talking about the industrial or modern sectors of the economy in the main, since in the pre-industrial and subsistence sectors the incidence of wage labour is very small.

Killick in his chapter on Labour in Ghana in the recent Survey supplies the most useful index available for the present purpose. He gives the following wage index for unskilled workers in Accra from 1939 to 1963:

1. Ch. VI of Study of Contemporary Ghana Vol. 1, op. cit. See also Chapter VII.
### WAGE INDEX FOR UNSKILLED WORKERS IN ACCRA, 1939-63

( May 1939 = 100 )

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Daily wage rate (shillings)</th>
<th>Money-wage index</th>
<th>Cost-of-living index</th>
<th>Real-wage index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May, 1939</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1941</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 1943</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 1945</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 1946</td>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 1947</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1948</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 1949</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1950</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1951</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1952</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1953</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1954</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1955</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April, 1956</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1957</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1958</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>104</td>
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<tr>
<td>December, 1959</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July, 1960</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1961</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1962</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 1963</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is notable from the table that the real wage rate for 1963 is well below that for 1939, though Birmingham, the compiler, advises us to treat the earlier figures with caution. The table will be drawn upon only as a guide for the present study. Wage rates for manufacturing industry including salaried employees and clerical workers can be seen from Tables D and F at the Appendix.

Having looked at the industrial classification and the wages structures\(^1\) in general, there is a further factor which plays considerably more part in Ghana and in many under-developed economies than it does, for example, in Britain. This is the question of migration. Migration in Ghana has been the subject of considerable study\(^2\), since the 1960 census demonstrated that only 43 per cent of men and 53 per cent of women were non-migrants. This partially reflects the high standard of living enjoyed in Ghana compared with her immediate neighbours. (In Britain the migration rate is comparatively very small despite much publicised questions of North-South drift, and the problem here is generally to encourage mobility of labour both geographically and between industries.)

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1. The Wages Structure, and the employment classification is discussed further in Chapter VII.

Migration of Labour

Migrants in the Employed Labour Force; 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thousands</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-distance internal</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-distance internal</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-migrants</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total employed</td>
<td>1,573</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Migration, as might be expected, is mainly from the less developed to the more industrial urban areas and to the mines, from both inside Ghana and from the surrounding ex-French territories. It tends to be seasonal, workers from the north moving south during the dry season and then returning to their farms during the rains. This greatly lowers, first of all, the potential for increasing the skills of migrants, and secondly, reduces the likelihood of consistent, organised labour organisations. Furthermore, from the point of view of the economy as a whole, the drift to the towns tends to be of the more educated sections of the rural population, a serious "brain-drain" problem where considerations of increasing the productivity of labour employed in agriculture are concerned.

2. The point is taken up in Chapter III - see also page 201. (University Paperbacks 1965).
The labour situation in Ghana is in sum so vastly different from that in the highly industrialised economies, that the tools of analysis have to be reformulated. The assumptions on which one bases one's analysis are also different; for example, when we talk about employment, we frequently have situations which can neither be termed full employment nor yet unemployment.

A major statistical difficulty, as was said earlier, is deciding what proportion of the population is actually seeking work in situations where there are so many family and handicraft businesses, and so much subsistence-level farming. This means that the concept of "unemployment" is of very limited value and the proportion of the population which by British standards could be termed unemployed, i.e., those who have no work at all, is probably very small. It is rather a question of under-employment than unemployment, and reflects the fact that there is little social provision for the unemployed.\(^1\)

This underemployment means that, in planning the development of Ghana it can be assumed that there is an extremely elastic supply of labour, since industrial or agricultural programmes, no matter what level the wages, will attract people from subsistence-level occupations. This is especially relevant to the growth of trade unionism, and is one of the other major factors leading to their weakness in bargaining with employers, where the availability of an untapped reserve army of the unemployed or under-employed makes militant unionism - in the unskilled trades at least - exceptionally difficult to create.

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Unemployment is a problem facing most underdeveloped countries and to reduce it appreciably requires capital investment on a scale not generally available. The problem of underemployment - the scale of which cannot be precisely known - makes for a similar drain on the national product. In addition, the low level of productivity of labour is another common feature of Ghana and of all under-developed countries. This is both a cause and effect of underdevelopment, and can only be rectified, among other things, through education, technological advances and higher capital investment. To a great extent of course, this low level is a result of the high percentage of the population employed in agriculture, where productivity is probably a tenth of what it is in a more developed country.

A factor which should be briefly mentioned in passing is the relevance of the slave trade. Slavery was a vital element in the economy of the great states of the interior, and the trade indulged in by Europeans was small compared with that engaged in by the Arabs over a period of a thousand years. Admittedly the Western nations engaged in the slave trade in a more intensive way, and it has been estimated that up to twenty million people were exported from West Africa within the last century of the trade. While this is very much a thing of the past, it has left some areas almost entirely depopulated, and in addition, in the North, it has left traces of semi-slavery or rather bonded labour, which has certain significance for the study of labour problems in the area.

1. See A Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1. op. cit. esp. Ch. VII. See also Chapter VII of this thesis for a discussion of Labour productivity.
The abolition of the slave trade has had one further important consequence. The return of freed slaves (Creoles)\(^1\) to Sierra Leone and Liberia among other places, brought in a large number of Western social influences and attitudes which have left their mark along the whole West Coast of Africa. This can be illustrated by looking at the situation in Freetown. This city was founded as a settlement for former negro slaves, whose descendants became known as Creoles. Since they had no common tribal background, they tended during the period of their slavery to adopt something approximating to western patterns of culture. As a result they consider themselves to be, and probably are socially more advanced than their neighbours, and from them have come much of the impetus for the formation of modern social organisations, including trade unions, throughout West Africa.

In Ghana of course there was no colony of freed slaves, but the influence of Creoles in the proto-nationalist movement was large, especially in the trade union movement, and numbers of highly-trained Sierra Leoneans such as I.T.A. Wallace-Johnson, had considerable effect on these new organisations.\(^2\) This point helps illustrate the restraining effect which tribalism has had on the development of trade unions, through this example of what happened where the tribal structure was forcefully broken.

The intention of the above section is to show an awareness of the existence of these problems, and not in any way to duplicate the considerable work already done on population statistics and supply and demand for labour in developing countries.\(^3\)

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2. See discussion of Mr Wallace Johnson as a source in Appendix B. His book, *Trade Unionism in Colonial and Dependent Territories* (London, 1946), was one of the first publications on the subject.

4. **Political Development**

Ghana, named after an ancient African empire which was situated well to the north-west of the present state, was formerly known as the Gold Coast, an area under British Administration since the late nineteenth century. It comprised what was known as the Gold Coast Colony along with Ashanti and the Northern Territories, and included, after the First World War, a part of Togoland mandated to British trusteeship by the league of Nations. This strip later became part of Ghana after independence, thus fairly successfully drawing the Togo-Ghana border along tribal boundary lines.

The history of the Gold Coast is well set out in two major books but it is perhaps worth briefly sketching in some of the more important events. The Gold Coast first became known in Europe through Portuguese navigators in the second half of the 15th century. The first recorded English trading voyage to the Coast was made by Thomas Windham in 1553 and in the course of the next three centuries the English, Danes, Dutch, Germans and Portuguese all controlled various parts of the Coast at different periods. By 1750, only the English, the Dutch and the Danes had settlements on the Coast. In 1821 the British Government assumed control of the British trading settlements and on 6th March 1844 the Chiefs in the immediate neighbourhood agreed to adhere to an Agreement or Bond from which British power and jurisdiction were generally derived. The Danes relinquished their settlements in 1850 and in 1871 the Dutch ceded theirs to the British. Under a Charter in 1874 the Colony was limited to the forts and

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settlements, but other territory under British influence was declared a Protectorate. In 1896, Treaties of Trade and Protection were concluded with several tribes north of Ashanti, and a Protectorate over the area known as the Northern Territories was established. Boundary Commissions in 1898 and 1899 fixed the borders of the Gold Coast and neighbouring French and German African territories, and the area of British jurisdiction was clarified in 1901 by Orders in Council which declared as a "Colony by settlement" all territories in the Gold Coast south of Ashanti, declared Ashanti a "Colony by conquest", and the Northern Territories a Protectorate under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890. It was thus not until 1901 that Britain assumed full responsibility for the government of the Gold Coast and its hinterland. In 1922, a part of the adjoining German territory of Togoland was placed under British administration by a League of Nations Mandate, and after the second World War, was placed by agreement under the trusteeship system of the United Nations. From that time it was administered by Britain as part of the Gold Coast, up to the date of Independence.

Constitutional advance began when the first Legislative Council was set up in 1850 in what was then the Colony Area; the first African unofficial member was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1888, and by 1916 the unofficial side of the Council consisted of three Europeans, three Paramount Chiefs and three other Africans. In 1925 a new Constitution was promulgated which introduced direct election in the urban areas and indirect election in the provinces of the Colony area ¹.

1. See D. Kimble op. cit. especially Ch. XI.
The next major advance was the Burns Constitution of 1946. Until then, Ashanti, and until 1951, the Northern Territories, were administered directly by the Governor, but the 1946 Constitution brought in the first Legislative Council in British Africa to have a majority of African members and it represented Ashanti as well as the Colony. The peaceful progress of the Gold Coast was marred in 1948 by disturbances which occurred in the southern parts of the country and a Commission of Enquiry (the Watson Commission) was set up to make a thorough investigation into the general conditions in the country. In its report the Commission made a number of proposals for constitutional reform, in particular that Africans should play a larger part in the proceedings of the Executive Council. As a result, an all-African Committee whose chairman was Mr Justice (later Sir Henley) Coussey, was set up in 1949. This Committee dealt in detail with the whole structure of government machinery from village area councils to the Executive Council, and the Governor's reserved powers 1.

The proposals of the Coussey Committee were accepted in general by the British Government, and in 1951, elections took place under a new Constitution based on its recommendations. This provided for an Executive Council or Cabinet with the Governor as President, and a Legislative Assembly with some members representing special interests, and 75 elected members with a fixed ratio between the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories. In 1952, the office of Prime Minister was created; in 1953 proposals for further constitutional reform were submitted to the British Government, and a new Constitution was introduced in 1954, with an all-African Cabinet and a Legislature of 104 members, elected by direct suffrage.

1. See Chapter III.
This was the Constitution in force up to the date of Independence. The Governor retained only certain reserved powers, including responsibility in his discretion for external affairs (including Togoland under United Kingdom trusteeship), defence and the police. In 1955 Sir Frederick Bourne, a former Governor of East Bengal, was, at the request of the Gold Coast Government, appointed Constitutional Adviser and in December of that year he published his recommendations, which were mainly concerned with safeguarding the interests of the Regions. On 11th May 1956, the Colonial Secretary announced that if a general election were held in the Gold Coast - the British Government would be prepared to accept a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth passed by a reasonable majority, in a newly elected Legislature, and then to declare a firm date for the attainment of independence.

A general election was accordingly held in July 1956, and Kwame Nkrumah's Party, the Convention People's Party (C.P.P.) was returned with a majority of over two thirds of the Legislative Assembly. The new Assembly approved a motion requesting the British Government to initiate legislation 'to provide for the independence of the Gold Coast as a sovereign and independent State within the Commonwealth under the name of Ghana'; on 18th September the Colonial Secretary announced the British Government's intention to do so, and that, subject to Parliamentary approval, independence should come about on 6th March, 1957. In May 1956 a plebiscite was held under United Nations' auspices in the Trust territory of Togoland, as a result of which, the United Nations agreed that the Trusteeship Agreement should end on the attainment of Independence by the
Gold Coast. On the 6th March 1957, Ghana attained complete independence as a fully self-governing Member of the Commonwealth with the Queen as Sovereign 1.

Following a plebiscite held in April 1960, a Republican Constitution was adopted on 29th June 1960 by the National Assembly, sitting for the purpose as a Constituent Assembly. The Constitution came into force on 1st July 1960. The Constitution provided for a President, elected by Parliament, who was both Head of Government and Head of State. The power of dissolving Parliament rested with the President. Executive power was vested in the President, who was to exercise it with the assistance of a Cabinet of not less than eight Ministers to be appointed by him.

The Constitution was amended in February 1964, when, following a referendum the previous January, Ghana formally became a one-party State, the party being Nkrumah's Convention People's Party. In June 1965, at a General Election, all the 198 candidates nominated by the C.P.P. were returned unopposed, and Nkrumah was re-affirmed in his Presidency for a further period of five years.

In February 1966 a new Military Government was formed under General Ankrah following the overthrow of President Nkrumah while the latter was on a visit to China.

Thus very briefly the constitutional development. As can be seen, for the past decade or so the political history of Ghana was dominated by the Convention People's Party and its leader Kwame Nkrumah. The C.P.P. was formed in 1949 when Nkrumah broke with the old United Gold Coast Convention (U.G.C.C.) a party formed two years earlier by the late

1. For a fuller discussion of the Constitutional Advance see D. Austin op. cit. Ch. VIII.
Dr J.B. Danquah with the express purpose of seeking eventual self-government. Nkrumah, partly for personal reasons and partly because he believed the U.G.C.C. was not active enough, broke away to demand the immediate summoning of a Constituent Assembly by the British Colonial Government. In the disturbances that followed, he and other C.P.P. leaders were arrested. On his release from prison in 1951 Nkrumah began his "Positive Action" campaign which, modelled on Ghandi's non-violent methods, aimed at immediate self-government.

It was then, as will be seen from Chapter III, that the trade union movement was of great positive help to the C.P.P. The opposition elements, mainly the National Liberation Movement (N.L.M.), the party of the chiefs and cocoa farmers formed in 1954, had little real power in the country, and at the most, held just over a quarter of the seats in the Legislative Assembly. After Independence the N.L.M. became the United Party, but remained with little power until they were finally suppressed following the 1964 Referendum on the one-party State. They never had very much trade union support except for a brief period in the early fifties, when some of the unions in the Ashanti area, for mainly tribal and regional reasons, gave them some limited support.

Throughout the period, Nkrumah with his professed policy of African Socialism or Nkrumahism, entirely dominated the politics of Ghana, and in the following Chapters his relations, and his attitude to the trade union movement, must be continually kept in mind.

One final point which is of importance refers to the condition of the Administration and Civil Service. For more than ten years,
whatever its faults, Ghana had a government highly stable in African terms. Its form—ultimately a one-party state with rule by President, offended many sectional interests, but did allow for easy decision making where the normal processes were allowed to operate. For Ghana had and has, by most standards, an extremely good senior civil service with members such as the Reith Lecturer, Robert Gardiner not uncommon within it. The tribal structure which bedevils Nigerian politics, and this was perhaps Nkrumah's main achievement, was never recently allowed to affect the administration of Ghana to any real degree.
CHAPTER 11

A SURVEY OF THE RISE OF TRADE UNIONISM IN GHANA -

The Formative Period.
A SURVEY OF THE RISE OF TRADE UNIONISM IN GHANA

1. The Formative Period

The traditional tribal form of economic organisation is important in placing a study of Ghanaian trade unionism in perspective\(^1\). This perspective is necessary to illustrate what influences, internal and external, have acted upon the development of West African trade unions and to show how these unions, once formed, help contribute to the rise of nationalism.

As was said in the Introduction, there are several questions which a historical survey should answer. The major one must be to ask why the unions emerged when they did and took the form they did under the existing colonial regime\(^2\). The second concerns the various factors which imparted particular strengths and weaknesses to trade union organisations in Ghana. Both these questions must be examined in the setting of the existing indigenous social organisations as well as in the light of those external influences which came to bear on them.

Consideration has already been given to demographical and geographical factors in the early parts of this thesis\(^3\), but the growth of labour groupings in Ghana must be seen again

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1. The Gold Coast was renamed Ghana after Independence in 1957. For ease of reference I shall consistently call the country Ghana except where particular titles or enactments dictate otherwise.

2. To assist in gaining perspective, constant reference is made throughout, to developments in other parts of British West Africa, especially Nigeria and Sierra Leone. See also Appendix H.

3. Much of the material in this chapter is taken from Labour Department Reports. What press existed in the early stages did not report labour matters except where there was industrial unrest. See Appendix G.

4. See page 22, above.
in relation to such factors as migration, subsistence and semi-subistence conditions, population size and distribution, education and social structure. Overall, these explain why, in Ghana, as in any under-developed area, organised labour, no matter how primitive that organisation may be, is and always has been a very small proportion of the total working population.

An attempt has been made where possible, to relate the growth of the unions to the particular economic situation pertaining at any time, but difficulty in obtaining basic statistics going back for any length of time, makes this a very rudimentary approach. This is especially true with regard to membership figures of Trade Unions. The trade union leadership, for status and other reasons, may, for example, even when members fail to pay dues, continue to list them as union members, and the figures which are presented in Government Publications of the period may, in consequence, often be grossly inflated. All statistics have therefore been treated with suspicion — whether or not they come from official sources, and this applies throughout the whole period of the study.

Finally, it must be made clear at this stage that no political judgements are intended over the differing forms of

2. See Table G.
trade union organisations which existed before or after the Industrial relations Act of 1958. The entire political structure and development of Ghana would have to be involved before any statement of what are the "proper" goals and objectives of trade unionism was made. This is not in any way to suggest that political matters can be ignored since trade unions are by their very nature political. Not only in the West has it proved convenient to pursue economic objectives through political channels. Political factors must always be prominently expressed in order to have a clear understanding of the changes that have taken place 1.

The historical development of trade unionism in Ghana can be conveniently treated as falling into three separate phases. The first phase is that period of time up to the beginning of a definite "Western involvement" in labour movements and generally includes any of the endeavours of early traditional and loosely structured economic organisations. It is only since the early years of this century that Labour associations akin to modern trade unions have been known in Ghana, since the problems of the relationship between employer and employee did not arise within the largely self-sufficient traditional organisations. Expatriate commercial and industrial activity did exist from the late nineteenth century, but often much of the necessary labour had to be imported from Liberia and from

1. See Chapter VI.
elsewhere along the Coast, since the inhabitants of the Gold Coast Colony and of Ashanti were averse to such organised employment. When they did leave their traditional occupations it was usually to seek education and compete for the few available clerical jobs in government service. There still exists a stigma attached to unskilled and semi-skilled work, but a more obvious explanation is that individuals able to make a reasonable living through agricultural pursuits such as cocoa farming were unwilling to sacrifice their independence in order to undertake heavy physical work in the mines and other industries. With the advent of the railway and the improvement of communications generally, the villages lost their isolation and there was a weakening of the customary authority which bound craftsmen to the local community. The earliest combinations were in the form of Guilds of such skilled craftsmen.

The second phase begins with the realisation by the British Colonial Government of the potential political and economic importance of the growth of labour organisations in Ghana. Throughout the British Colonial Territories, this can be dated from the early 1930s and the circulation of the so-called "Passfield Memorandum" by Sidney Webb (Lord Passfield), who was Secretary of State for the Colonies in the second Labour administration. This Memorandum was in the form of a guidance to Colonial Governments on the treatment and encouragement of

1. For an anthropological explanation of this see M.J. Herskovitz, The Human Factor in Changing Africa (London, 1962), page 400.
nascent trade unionism. This second phase was one in which the trade unions in Ghana took on a definable form, as distinct from that of the prior period where they were mere tribal or craft groupings, or ad hoc movements which arose to cope with particular economic situations. It was in this period of development also that external agencies, such as the international Labour Organisations and countries other than the Colonial power itself, began to interest themselves in influencing Ghanaian trade unionism. At this stage, what had been an internal indigenous movement became something more than this. Until then, trade unions as such cannot really be held to have existed in anything but the most crude form.

Since the growth of trade unions and wage earning employment generally arose, not as in the West with the transition of old forms of production to new, but rather with the growth of altogether new forms of employment, this is a significant factor in this particular phase of development.

The third phase in the development of trade unionism began with the ending of Colonial rule, or more precisely, dated in Ghana from the passage of the Industrial Relations Act in 1958. In this last period the Ghana trade union movement broke away both from the remnants of its traditional form as one sort or another of economic security grouping and from that produced by the colonial situation, and took on a totally different aspect, which, though owing something to its previous forms, was in many respects entirely new. It is in this period that trade unionism in Ghana takes on a form very
different from the type of organisation which can be called a "trade union" in the British sense, that is, primarily devoted to the economic interests and well-being of its members. It becomes instead a politico-economic organisation, also called a trade union, but whose main object is not concerned primarily with the well-being of its members but with the good of the State as a whole. The latter type of trade union (for it still must be called a trade union), takes on what may be a highly responsible role as the industrial wing of the Party or of the Government.

There are thus three phases of development, the traditional, the formative and the post-Independence. I now propose to examine them in turn.

2. Early Co-operative Movements in Ghana.

Can we find traces of indigenous socio-economic organisations existing in Ghana in the period before trade unionism as such existed, and before Britain began to foster its growth? There are two schools of thought on this, and to a great extent the argument turns on whether one can call the early economic groupings which did exist, "trade unions" or not. Thomas Hodgkin, for example, suggests that the tendency of African wage earners to form combinations for their mutual benefit, existed in British and French West Africa well before the Metropolitan Powers initiated programmes to help and encourage
trade union growth 1. He quotes in support, one of the most interesting and earliest reports on nascent trade unionism by Major Orde-Browne which was contained in a paper on the labour situation in British West Africa written in 1940, and indeed Orde-Browne had a certain amount to say about indigenous economic organisations. But he does argue the continuing importance of the tribal structure and adds that:

"The objects and scope of trade unionism are not fully understood, and many of the fallacies and misconceptions characteristic of the first half of the nineteenth century in Britain undergo a curious resurrection. Quite inappropriate purposes are contemplated as, for instance, the group who were anxious to form a trade union of Mohammedans. The line of demarcation between the activities of a trade union and those of bodies such as friendly societies, insurance companies or political organisations, is not understood." 2

Hodgkin suggests the spontaneity of African trade unionism, an argument which will be developed further below.

The opposing argument is that African trade unions emerged entirely as the result of the efforts of the left wing post-war governments in Britain and France in pursuing their colonial labour policies. Typifying this contrary


belief, the Secretary General of the French CGT, Albert Bouzanquet, echoing the paternalistic colonialism of the French in their overseas territories at the time, speaking in 1948, said that "trade unionism in the colonies must function on the same lines as in the mother country since it is copied from that model". "Unions", he went on, "exist only because they exist in the mother country". 1 Roberts 2 also holds that the socio-economic organisations which existed prior to the late colonial period and before the Metropolitan Powers interested themselves in the labour problems of the colonies, could no more be called trade unions than could the craft guilds in Britain prior to the industrial revolution.

It is certainly true to say that many of the so-called unions which existed in Ghana before the Second World War were hardly recognisable as such, but this does not presuppose that such organisations as did exist were not the fore-runners of unions. The truth rests partially on a matter of definition of terms, the precursors of modern trade unionism were certainly operating in Ghana well before the Colonial Government and individual British unions began to take an interest.

In part however, both the above theories have a certain validity in that the early, externally inspired, unions found their grass-roots

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support in the same way and from the same groups as did the truly indigenous organisations. The local tribal or village branch of a union, or the neo-tribal economic group in a detribalised situation, would have much the same form in the early stages - similarly employed workers gathering at the local meeting place or "chop-House" much as the early friendly societies and unions in Britain met as "Lodges", in non-conformist meeting places, or public houses rather than at their places of work. This was for two reasons. First of all, the employers in Britain as in Ghana would in all probability not permit such gatherings on their premises, and secondly, the purely "trade union" aspect of these organisations was but one part of a series of functions which might include a range of social services as well as having political motivations. Thus Orde-Browne's remark perhaps shows a lack of understanding both of the process of development, and of the vagueness on the "line of demarcation", in his failure to appreciate the Owenite universality of the functions of these early organisations, as much in Britain as in West Africa.1

It is important here to realise that the constant process of migration to the urban areas, and of detribalisation, is fundamental to this development.2 Migration tends to be of two sorts. Firstly, there is the short term migration to the towns, the seasonal migration of mainly male workers, after the harvest and in the rainy season, when there is little employment to be had in local subsistence


2. See page 43, above.
agriculture. Secondly, there is the long-term flow to the towns which is of a permanent sort, contributing to the increase in the urban population. Reasons for migration are obvious, but include the unremunerative character of agricultural work and the attraction of the town as a centre of civilisation with definite material benefits available. Migration between villages is uncommon.

Banton in his study of town life in Freetown considers the social adaptation of immigrants into towns round three particular tribal institutions, the tribal headmanship, the voluntary association, and the household. It is the second grouping which has particular relevance to this present study, and trade unions, though Banton does not mention them, presumably come within this group. The family and the tradition of chiefs are adaptations of the traditional institutions, "but the associations are a new form of social grouping learnt in the towns". As will be seen below, this is not the strict truth, since many voluntary organisations have existed well within the framework of tribal society.

Banton makes a further important point which has universal application when considering the process of detribalisation:

"The Temne immigrants (to Freetown) may come to set greater store by their membership of trade unions, political parties, the profession of Islam, which they share with members of other tribes, and to emphasise African Solidarity in opposition to Europeans, instead of Temne solidarity in opposition to other tribes."  

2. M. Banton, op. cit., Ch. XV.
From the analysis which follows, it will emerge that the origins of trade unionism in Ghana can be traced to four separate sources. Firstly, there were roots in the indigenous co-operative movements and tribal structures of pre-industrial life. Secondly, there were the ad hoc groupings which came into being as the result of some economic misfortune. Thirdly, there were the unions which came about as a result of the colonial situation, and lastly there were those organisations which almost entirely took their form as a result of other external influences. This latter will be dealt with at a later stage.

Firstly, guilds, occupational groups, and craft organisations often on a highly localised or village basis, are found in most parts of Ghana. The question of whether or not guilds were the forerunners of modern trade unions has frequently been debated in the British context. There is in this instance, a certain similarity between British experience and the Ghanaian colonial experience. The Webbs view was that there was nothing to suggest a close organic link between the unions and the earlier guilds and while on the one hand, the function of a trade union is to protect and represent the interests of its employee members, the guilds, represented only the interests of individual craftsmen. However, there are definite and obvious functional similarities between them, quite apart from whether one is a direct descendant of the other or not, as they both exist in order to represent economic interest groups, and to establish certain conditions and rules of behaviour among themselves. This point is demonstrated by the fact that

up till now, both unions and flourishing guilds in Ghana exist alongside one another, though cross-fertilisation of ideas has been unavoidable.

The Guild of Goldsmiths in the Gold Coast is one such example. It functions, and still does, more as an employer organisation, regulating such things as apprenticeship laws, wages and prices. It was formed in protest against the Gold Mining Protection Ordinance of 1909.¹ Discussing such semi-tribal and family associations as the Guild of Goldsmiths, the 1911 Gold Coast Census said that they "are not dissimilar in object and methods to a modern trade union".² The Goldsmiths' Guild, very strictly run and ruled by a council and a tribunal "professed to regulate wages, to make laws concerning apprentices, to guard against unfair competition, and to settle disputes among the craftsmen."³ It was in fact a guild and not a trade union as we defined it, since it was merely interested in the economic well-being of its individual craftsmen members, to all intents an employers' organisation. There were other guilds and occupational movements existing for most of the skilled trades in Ghana, and groups of blacksmiths and woodworkers ⁴ appear with functions not dissimilar in many major respects to the guilds in Britain, prior to the Industrial Revolution.

¹ O. Kitching 'History of Trade Unions in the Gold Coast' a lecture given at Akropong, Ashanti 1952, cited by Kimble, op. cit. page 44.
² Gold Coast Colony Census of Population (Accra, 1911).
³ Gold Coast Colony Census, op. cit.
⁴ The Gold Coast Carpenters' Association dates from 1910.
This is not meant to argue a very wide comparability with early British experience alone, but rather with a phenomenon found fairly frequently in most parts of Western Europe, and to some extent in the United States. The Low Countries and Germany produced many comparable federations of craftsmen which functioned in order to maintain standards and regulate employment in much the same way as the Guild of Goldsmiths did in Ghana. These organisations in their localisation and traditionalism were certainly craft-guilds, and not trade unions as we know them.

In Africa today the difference is that guilds are still found alongside modern unions in every class and occupation. Among the Yoruba in Nigeria, for example, hunting is so specialist that those who work at this do nothing else, and barter their kill for other commodities. They form guilds whose members work in concert under the direction of a leader, who tends to command considerable respect. The guilds from various areas form associations, which provide for the division of the hunting area, and mutual hunting privileges. Society organisations are also very common throughout West Africa, and are either based on religious (generally secret) or economic bases. Again, Yoruba traders, for example, belong to guilds, which necessitates the payment of a fee, and the acceptance of the rules of the guild. If an individual attempts to carry on a trade of a guild without being admitted to membership, he can be fined and may have his goods confiscated. Such indigenous trading organisations are of course

2. *ibid.* p. 163
not confined to Africa, and can be found in many underdeveloped societies.¹

Many of the earlier Guilds in Ghana, despite a fairly independent existence, do seem to have come under the control of the existing native authorities. Roper points out that the guilds about Accra were registered at the Native Court of the Ga Manche.² The second grouping of organised labour in indigenous Ghanaian society which has contributed something to the form of modern trade unionism is that of momentary or ad hoc movements which rose to cope with particular hardships or economic injustices and which just as quickly disappeared once the crisis passed. There are plenty of examples of spontaneous movements of this sort in every country throughout history, as the Webbs have pointed out.³ But can some short lived movement of this sort properly be called a trade union? The Webbs said that these "workers' revolts", possibly against oppressive employers, could not be so called, since it was only when the ad hoc arrangement was given some organisational structure and some degree of continuous existence to cope, not just with one instance or grievance but with several affecting the same group of people over a period of time, that one could say a trade union existed.

The influence of the Creoles, settled in Freetown, and to a certain extent in Liberia, did produce early twentieth century examples with a degree of continuity in working class activity. The tribal peoples were, in general, in opposition to the Creoles who sought political superordination,

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but on the other hand they found ties with Creole trade
unionists in working against their employers. One group, more
or less independent throughout, were the "literates" who, mainly
in the junior ranks of the civil service, were free from ties.
The purely tribal based group soon lost its significance in
urban society. In Ghana, Wallace Johnson, a Creole, does seem
to have organised a "proper" trade union of mine workers in
Obuase in 1934, which as a result of a serious mine disaster
there, was formed to press for better safety conditions and to
help the bereaved relatives of the many victims. But many
examples in Ghana prior to the beginning of the Second World
War were hardly more than temporary strike committees. Similar
examples are found all over West Africa. The Sierra Leone

1. For a discussion of the emergence of Friendly Societies,
and "Companies" (Compins) in Sierra Leone, see M. Banton's
West African City, op. cit., esp. Ch. II (p.163). Here
also one finds discussion of the various political,
religious and economic forces which draw the various tribes
together, through increasing consciousness of shared
interests. The role of these Compins seem to have been
primarily for funeral and other purposes, but also for
other forms of mutual aid, and for entertainment purposes.
A further function in some of the societies was to assist
capital accumulation. The member contributed a weekly sum,
maybe 5/- and then drew a large sum every six months when
his turn came (op. cit. p. 186). Such companies may,
depending on the extent of their mutual aid functions,
become almost indistinguishable from trade unions. That is,
except that they are not based on the principle of like-
employment. See also M. Kilson, Political Change in a
West African State, op. cit.

2. Wallace Johnson, the veteran Sierra Leone trade unionist's
views were mainly verbally expressed during frequent
discussions with him. See Appendix B.
Workers' and Railwaymen's strikes in 1926, and the Thies-Miger Railway Workers' strikes of the previous year, where unions formed for the duration of the action and then dissolved, are cases in point. Another example is found just after the First World War when workers in French West Africa were organised into short-lived "amicales" and engaged in work conflicts in the docks of Cotonou and Abidjan until they were granted the wage increases they wanted. Wallace Johnson holds that none of those involved in the strike committees or in the formation of ad hoc unions in Ghana at this time had had any contact with Western Unions, and indeed, scarcely knew of their existence. This endorses Hodgkin's opinion referred to above. In opposition to this view, as early as 1921, the Gold Coast Census Report stated that the trade guilds were "under the influence of agitators and of what the more literate members have read of the modern Trade Unions" and

"have assumed in some cases a different character. Organised strikes are not known in Accra even amongst the unskilled groups such as cooks and washermen. With the exception of Fishermen and Goldsmiths these Guilds are not of ancient origin and as a rule concern themselves with the regulation of such matters as apprenticeship and wages". 2

Wallace Johnson said that they were hardly "unions", and had no real membership list, nor rules, but there tended to be a small

1. T.L. Hodgkin, op. cit. page 125. There was an earlier strike in Sierra Leone in 1919 on the railways. It was well organised, judging by the reports of the Administration, which foreseeably attributed it to organised outside influences.

2. Gold Coast Census 1921 (Accra, 1921).
committee which by meeting from time to time kept the organisation together. Whatever else, this would seem to show that trade unionism, or something like it, is a fairly natural form of organisation in any society which has to cope with situations which affect the members of that society as a group.

Apart from these Guilds and the ad hoc manifestations mentioned above, in Ghana and elsewhere, there were few organisations which could be called truly indigenous to West Africa. What can be properly regarded as unions for the first time appear to have come into being entirely as the result of the colonial situation. These were types of organisation which began to appear in the period after the First World War, with the formation of groups of predominantly junior African Civil Servants, government employees, railway workers and teachers, which for the purposes of the present analysis are categorised within the "formative phase" of development. This is because they were not necessarily influenced, apart from their mere existence under colonialism, by pressure external to Africa.

The influence of organised employees in the Public Sector can be shown to have been one of the main determinants of the form taken by early Ghanaian trade unions at least up to the

1. Wallace Johnson recalled forming the "Temporary Outdoor Officers Union" of African Customs Officers in Sierra Leone in 1913, and another short-lived Clerical Workers Union in 1914 which organised a strike over wage-rates. See Appendix B.
beginning of the Second World War. In the history of their growth in the Public Sector, one can find early references to wage disputes involving members of the Gold Coast Public Works Department, first in 1919 and again in 1921. In April 1921 the Artisans' and Labourers Union (almost all Public Employees) of Accra, held a strike of mechanics over wage reductions and general labour conditions, including a demand for a seven hour day and free hospital treatment, which gave rise to a court case rather similar to the British Tolpuddle Martyrs Case in 1834. The Union itself had no status, and the strikers were heavily fined. The Gold Coast Railway Workers, also basically a group of public employees, organised a further strike in December of the same year over pay reductions, but to little purpose. Yet another example was a Gold Coast Civil Service Union which was founded just after the First World War with the object of promoting "the welfare and interests of native members of the Civil Service".

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1. It is usually and unfortunately the case that the only contemporary mention of such Public Sector unions is when they dispute or strike.

2. That same year, the Regulation of Employment Ordinance attempted to bring labour legislation up to date; the Master and Servant Ordinance, which had survived since 1893, was then repealed, see Roper op. cit. page54.

3. Departmental Reports, (Public Works) 1921, cited by Rimble, op. cit. p. 44.
This, after 1938, became the Association of African Civil Servants.¹

The growth of unions of Public Employees and these disturbances came during a period when, as will be fully discussed elsewhere, the Colonial Government was on the one hand wishing to encourage the growth of responsible labour organisations, while at the same time trying to ensure that in no way did they become too "political" or otherwise get out of control. This duality of purpose the "benevolent-paternalism" of the Colonial Government, led to an odd stop-go tendency to trade union development in Ghana between the Wars. This process was exaggerated by the equally ambivalent attitude of the employers and the traditional chiefs.

Much of the vigour of the trade union movement came from the public servants who were, of all the sectors, most influenced by this duality of attitude of the government. Kimble writes that the "Government clerks formed the largest single employed group; they were certainly the most articulate, and during 1918-21 the grievances of those who were civil servants became an important political issue. Owing to their special status and quasi-European habits, they were particularly vulnerable to rises in the cost of living. There seems no reason to doubt their claim that in eight years the purchasing power of the pound had fallen more than 50 per cent."²

It is fairly obvious that most of these Civil Service Unions and leagues of public employees were generally short-

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¹ Wallace Johnson (interview on 1.2.64). It, like similar organisations in Gambia and Sierra Leone, was prompted by low wages and rising prices after the Great War. There was a separate union of European Civil Servants.

² Kimble op. cit. page 45.
lived manifestations as well, throwing up \textit{ad hoc} committees formed to deal with particular economic grievances. It is from this group, however, the organisations of junior African Colonial Civil Servants, that the impetus was to come just prior to and during the Second World War. The teachers were another group which added another articulate and educated group. They formed a Teachers' Association under Government auspices in 1926, and by 1927 there were sixty two branches\textsuperscript{1}. It was really only with such organisations that conditions existed which were suitable for the formation of stable trade unions. The industrial and economic background which permitted the rise of trade unions in Britain were for the most part lacking, and while the craft guilds played a part, it was from these public servants that the main inspiration came.\textsuperscript{2} They alone benefitted from the necessary constancy of employment, wage levels and at least an elementary education, which were essential to Ghanaian trade union development.

There is at least one exception to this generalisation, the Associations of Motor Drivers. Wallace Johnson recalls organising a Motor Drivers' Union in Accra in 1934 for a purely political purpose. Its main object was to convey workers to

\begin{enumerate}
\item Kimble op. cit., page 116.
\item Civil Service salaries were generally raised after 1934, which toned down the move to have collective action in the public sector.
\end{enumerate}
the polling stations during the district elections of that year in successful support of Kojo Thompson's "Mambii Party" against the elite "Ratepayers' Party". But Wallace Johnson had by then, as he admitted himself, spent several years in Moscow and London. So here we get the beginnings of direct external trade union ideas and influences. The Ashanti Motor Drivers' Union - in existence by 1930, and possibly founded in that year - had aims of the legal protection of members, standardisation of rates and certain safety standards, and survived up until 1938. It organised two successful strikes in 1930 aimed at increasing transport charges, but collective bargaining was not one of the reasons for its formation. By that stage it had a reputed membership of over eleven hundred. It is interesting incidentally to note that this union had roughly the same basis for the collection of dues as does its modern counterpart. They were around sixpence per working day, and were generally collected at the town "lorry parks" - the termini for passengers

1. See Appendix B. Johnson was in Moscow in 1931-32 and was also in touch with some members of the British Labour Party, and also Liberals like Reginald Bridgeman.

2. See R.B. Davidson, article in Industrial and Labour Relations Review, Vol. VII, No. 4 (July 1954) 'Labour relations and Trade Unions in the Gold Coast'. These Motor Drivers' Unions apparently "existed as much for the adjustment of differences between the members as for mutual protection, and were to some extent involved in price fixing", p. 589.
and goods. This, with a union entrance fee of a shilling, indicates a very high income for the drivers at that time. Today payment of dues is still known, but as the town collects the lorry park fee, the drivers do not feel obliged to pay dues as well, and the present day "Teamsters' Union" gains very little revenue in this way.

While true unions are by definition institutions of the industrial age, an industrialisation almost entirely lacking in Ghana prior to the Second World War, such groups of individuals as those mentioned above, particularly the public servants, were certainly the forerunners of modern unionism. This can, with certain reservations, be compared to the situation pertaining in Britain prior to the Industrial Revolution, with regard to the general level of mass employment and to the degree of urbanisation. But Africa, with its background of colonialism, has many new and different factors which makes too close a comparison valueless. The most important difference from the Ghanaian point of view was that, during the period of development of trade unions, there were large industrial countries poised, external to the area, waiting to extend their influence over trade union development. The desire to extend influence was not the prerogative of the colonising power alone, and these competing external agencies comprise the fourth determinant of the form of modern Ghanaian trade unionism, one which will be fully studied in a separate section below.¹

¹. See also Chapter V
We can find from this early period in Ghana large numbers of examples of an indigenous capacity to form socio-economic organisations, most of which can hardly be called trade unions. They either took the form of friendly societies, which were really insurance schemes, such as those formed among craftsmen, seamen and woodworkers, of which the latter group's main object was to have the "insurance of a decent burial". A further small type of economic group was of the variety of the Gold Coast Food-Sellers' Union, really a small marketing organisation more than a friendly society or a trade union.

By the late 1930s, there were these three types of organisations in existence. There were the guilds of craftsmen or the friendly societies which existed on a regional or tribal basis; there were the groups which formed only to improve one economic crisis or objective; there were

1. K.A. Busia, Social Survey of Sekondi-Takoradi. (Published by the Crown Agents for the Colonies on behalf of the Government of the Gold Coast, 1950). Busia also describes a number of associations among market women - e.g. the Bread Sellers' Union and the Foodstuff Sellers' Union - which altogether not examples of trade union activity, illustrate a capacity for organisational activity of a purely indigenous kind.

2. Hodgkin op. cit. Chapter IV, Part II.
the unions which existed as the result of the colonial situation, the teachers, the railway workers and the 
African Civil Servants 1.

To these three "root" determinants will, as has been said, be added a fourth at a later stage which is entirely the 
result of external transplantation, the trade union brought in 
and adapted by various Western and other influences to meet 
the needs of African labour.

1. The pattern was similar in Nigeria, though there were 
a few Associations of the latter type in Nigeria which 
appear to have achieved a greater degree of stability 
and effective militancy than was the case in the Gold 
Coast. See Yesufu op. cit. Also Appendix H. 
The pattern was, however, very different in some 
tropical areas - e.g. the West Indies - where plantation 
and estate labour formed the basis of the trade union 
movement and where there appears to have been an earlier 
development of a modern class consciousness. 
See O.W. Phelps, The Rise of the Labour Movement in 
Jamaica. (Institute of Industrial Relations, Berkeley, 
Reprint No. 167).
3. **British Colonial Policy and the Rise of Trade Unions in Ghana.**

The second phase in the development of trade unionism in Ghana began with the realisation by Britain of the potential political and economic importance of labour organisations in that territory. This was the formative period in the history of trade unionism, when the external and institutional influences in the colonial environment became more marked. This section is concerned with the growth of the unions during this period, particularly with regard to their recognition by the Governments; the nature and content of the other external influences is treated separately.

Until the end of the First World War there was little legislation beyond ensuring a certain rudimentary legislation. This is hardly to be wondered at, since legislation, even in Britain, was still in its infancy, and was subject to such disagreement there that for the Governments in the Colonies to take any lead would have been remarkable indeed. But as early as 1852, some Ordinances, such as the one which provided for the enrolment and regulation of canoe men, and laid down a schedule of payment, did exist. "Regular employment was virtually unknown before 1874," though the Basle Religious Mission had encouraged organised African enterprise and established industrial workshops in the 1850s. The Gold Coast

Census of 1911 talks of labour movements and guilds "not unlike the modern trade union,"¹ and during the First World War a Government Central Labour Bureau was established, to assist in the recruitment of labour mainly for the mines, while Provisional Advisory Boards were set up at the same time, to help in arbitration and in setting conditions of work. These, too, were mainly concerned with African mine labour, but in practice they do not appear to have been very active, since they came into being mainly as a result of the demands of the British War effort, and peace reduced their value to the Colonial Government. The rise in prices in the immediate post-war years, caused a great deal of industrial action throughout the Territory, and forced the problems of labour on the attention of the Colonial Government. In 1920 for example, after a series of strikes for higher wages, the Gold Coast Government took an important step by helping negotiate the settlement, thus going some way towards accepting responsibility for general labour conditions². A year later, an "Ordinance for the Regulation of Employment"³ was introduced which was intended to help safeguard the rights of employees from dismissal without due cause. This did not, however, stop a group of Accra artisans who arranged a strike in 1921, from being heavily fined.

¹. Gold Coast Colony: Census of Population, (Accra, 1911).
². Roper op. cit., page 53.
³. The existing "Master and Servant Ordinance" of 1893 was then repealed.
The growing demand for raw materials from West Africa and the foundation in 1819 of the I.L.O., were further incentives to the development of a Colonial Labour Policy.¹ The latter, with its aim of focusing attention on Labour conditions in the colonies, forced not only Britain to be cautious of international criticism. With the advent of a Labour Government in 1924 and again in 1929, came further impetus for reform, with the setting up, with the help of the TUC, of a series of Commonwealth Labour Conferences, which were attended by trade unionists from the colonies. Ghana, however, did not participate until over a decade later.

The swift economic progress which came to much of West Africa during the twenties caused a rapid growth of urbanisation in Ghana, but this general prosperity meant that trade unionism made very little advance, and most of the spontaneous movements which did occur were hindered by an absence of all but the most rudimentary organisation. But with the advent of the 1929 collapse in prices, and the subsequent Great Depression which hit the West African raw-material producing countries especially severely, came rising social discontent. Civil Service and other wages for native workers in Ghana were reduced in 1930, and this, along with the rising unemployment, much encouraged the trade union movement at the very time that Britain was intent on improving its colonial labour policies. This coincidence of internal and external factors contributed

¹. See B.C. Roberts - Labour in the Tropical Territories of the Commonwealth, (U. of London, 1964), Chapter VII.
to the permanent establishment of various trade unions throughout Ghana. The British Colonial Development Act of 1929 played a large part in this, since it allowed for the setting up of Labour Departments in all the colonies, and for the appointment of Labour Officers, who among their other duties were to assist colonial unions to establish themselves on a firm organisation footing.

Up to this time there was nonetheless throughout British West Africa, considerable hostility to the growth of any labour legislation, or indeed to any organisation of native workers. This hostility came not only from the expatriate employers but also, and sometimes even more forcefully, from the native administrations and the traditional chiefs. The latter had been, after all, the major guides of all social activity and as late as 1940, Nana Sir Ofori Atta, a prominent chief himself, typified this belief in a speech, attacked the unions during a debate on the Trade Union Ordinance, saying that "they were not necessary, and ... it was enough ... that the position and duties of a chief require that he should concern himself with every phase of life of the community." This had

1. There are some indications that expatriate employers in West Africa held the opinions later expressed in a statement by the Transvaal Chamber of Mines in November 1946 that: "It is the opinion of the Gold Mining Industry that trade unionism is against the best interests of the tribal natives employed in the mines. They are not yet sufficiently advanced for trade unionism, nor do they themselves want it". The accusation was that the Government were wrongly forcing the pace. Quoted by R.E. Luyt, Trade Unionism in the African Colonies, (Johannesburg, 1949).

2. Quoted by George Padmore in his The Gold Coast Revolution, (Dobson, 1952).
in fact been very much the case, since all tribal labour both communal and private had been regulated by the chief and his elders. This, as Roper says,1 extended to their regulating movement of labour into and out of the village, craft apprenticeships and the settlement of labour disputes.

To a great extent this hostility was further due to an often unjustified belief that the new union leaders were both ineffective and inexperienced, so much so that it frequently happened that formal and informal groups of workers put forward their grievances to the employers rather through their tribal leaders, especially in areas where detribalisation was not too marked. The Ashanti Motor Drivers' Union up to the time of its strike in 1937, puts its grievances to the Government through the Asantehene.2

Generally speaking, Britain was ahead of France and Belgium in her colonial labour legislation,3 though the administrative awareness of her labour problems in British West Africa was probably only forced home after the Passfield Memorandum in 1930. This important document, as was said, urged the "controlled encouragement of native trade unionism" and from then on, in the eyes of the Government at least, trade unions took on more legal status. Inspired by a growing awareness within Britain


of the responsibilities of Colonialism,

"In this circular, the then Secretary of State expressed the view that in territories where no unions had so far been formed, it would suffice if simple legislation on the lines of sections 2 and 3 of the 1871 U.K. Act (34 and 35 Vict. Ch. 31) were enacted, and further suggested that the legislation should provide for the compulsory registration of trade unions. As regards territories where the movement had made some headway, he asked the Governors concerned to cause the existing legislation to be reviewed, to ascertain whether it was sufficient in the present circumstances."

While this was a welcome initiative, it appeared at the same time somewhat paternalistic. Sidney Webb (Lord Passfield) believed that the colonial unions should be compulsorily registered with the Government whose job it was to "guide, supervise and direct them." Yet this point of view is understandable when one realises that with the rise of modern industrial, mining and farming sectors in the Ghana economy, came the need to find more secure ways of coping with labour relations, to ensure, from the colonial government's point of view, that such workers' organisations as did arise were guided along "correct" lines and within the framework of its control. But on the other hand, in many ways, British policy seems to have, in an enlightened way, hastened the process by recognising unions before they existed in any strength. The Passfield Memorandum by suggesting that legislation in the

1. Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire: Col. No. 185, Para 22 (HMSO 1943).
2. Passfield Memoranda op. cit.
3. i.e. in accordance with British practice.
territories should provide for the compulsory registration of trade unions, and by asking that where such legislation existed it should be reviewed to make sure it was adequate in the current circumstances of trade union development, can be interpreted as an attempt by Webb both to anticipate developments and to encourage the development of social change along a prescribed route.

Despite this, progress towards introducing the minimum legislation requirements was slow; and though in 1930 the Labour Government set up a Colonial Office Labour Committee with members also coming from the Ministry of Labour, which was charged with drafting Labour Regulations in terms of the I.L.O. Conventions, by 1937, of the British West African Colonies only Gambia had a trade union Ordinance as such\(^1\). The process of adapting existing labour legislation was also slow but fairly consistent nonetheless, up to the beginning of the Second World War. The International Conventions on Forced Labour of 1929, and the recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention of 1936 among others, were automatically incorporated into the existing labour legislation.\(^2\) In the years 1937 to 1939 a series of circulars were sent out to Governors suggesting that a reasonable amount

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1. Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire; column 184, para 22.
   It is interesting for reasons of economic viability that Gambia, the first in this and in other social reforms, should be the last to gain independence.

2. Roper op. cit. page 58.
of the "increasing material prosperity should be passed on to the workers in the territories concerned in the form of improved social services", and that there should be a more rapid and efficient development of labour departments than there had been in the past. Following on this, from 1937 onwards, officers either from the Ministry of Labour or from the existing colonial administrations were appointed with the duty of fostering trade unionism and improving industrial relations generally. A proper Labour Department was created in 1938 out of the old Labour Bureau, which had functioned more as an Employment Exchange.

In order to have a more knowledgeable basis for the improvement of labour administration in these colonies, Major G. St. J. Orde-Browne, a former Labour Commissioner in Tanganyika and, thereafter Labour Adviser to the Colonial Office, was commissioned to produce a report on labour conditions in West Africa. Up till this time, practice and policy were conducted very much on an ad hoc basis, and the Labour "legislation" such as it was, consisted in the main of a series of memoranda and written recommendations, with little obvious consistence, to a great extent due to the large degree of freedom given to the Colonial Governments, and to the very different stages of

1. Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire: column 184, paras. 2 & 3.
3. Ibid.
development in the various parts of the Empire. The Orde-Browne report was published in 1940 and had considerable effect on colonial labour policy from then on. Orde-Browne could say that while trade unionism was in its infancy in the Gold Coast, certain unions were flourishing such as the Ashanti Motor Transport Union, the Gold Coast Railway African Workers' Union, the African Civil Servants' Association, and other small groups were in the process of formation. He notes that the "Chief Inspector of Labour is taking an interest in these developments and will give them such assistance and advice as may be possible." As yet, however, the leadership lacked experience or effectiveness, and so informal and formal groups of workers put forward their grievances through their tribal leaders in areas where detribalisation was not too marked."

"An interesting alternative to these modern methods of organisation exists in the shape of informal groups of workers under tribal leaders; the unsophisticated tribesman finds great difficulty in expressing himself through an alien leader, so a headman from his own people makes an acceptable mouthpiece... This system... is of course inapplicable to the detribalised worker from the south of the country..."

1. This gives the researcher a considerable problem in establishing or explaining the trend of development in British Colonial Labour Legislation. The result is bound to be an incomplete patchwork since the documentation is so scanty. On the Colonial Office approach to economic problems, see B. Biculescu: Colonial Planning, A Comparative Study (Allen & Unwin, 1958). This is compared with French and Belgian practice.

2. Labour conditions in West Africa (CMD 6277: 1941).

3. ibid.
In 1940 inspired more by the War than by Orde-Browne's report, a Colonial Development and Welfare Act was passed in London which stipulated that no colony would receive any assistance until it had passed legislation protecting the rights of trade unionists to combine. Despite the other preoccupations of the time in which it was drafted, it was remarkably farsighted in the assistance programme it outlined for colonial economic development. As a result of pressure from a group of Labour M.Ps, the clause on trade union legislation was written into it, which not only provided for the legal right of association, but also stipulated that, where aid was granted, any ensuing contracts must include a fair wage clause. These conditions gave the Colonial Office for the first time, a proper means of pressure on the Colonial Governments to ensure that Labour Legislation reforms were carried out. This was to set the tone for the next decade, and was very much behind the drafting of the 1941 Trade Union Ordinance in Ghana.

The ovulation of British policy briefly set out in the above section must be read with the understanding that the Colonial Government followed a policy, as far as the process of detribalisation made possible, of ruling through traditional chieftains and making use of local institutions. This policy of "indirect rule" propounded especially by Lord Lugard in his

1. B.C. Roberts, op. cit. 197.
governing of Northern Nigeria, was from time to time attempted in Ghana, though some of the ideal conditions for its success were not present. For example, there was not the situation, as in Northern Nigeria, where the Traditional Rulers were of a different society or culture from those ruled. Further, there were conflicts embodied in this policy which obviously stemmed from the discrepancies between the objectives of Britain and those of the traditional societies. The more obvious discrepancies included the fact that the very presence of the imperial power negated the traditional independent entity of the tribal unit. Secondly, the Government interfered in internal matters, such as in land use and stooling and de-stooling chiefs, which greatly contributed to the breakdown of the tribal system.¹ Thirdly, the attempts to modernise Gold Coast society led invariably to the breakdown of existing patterns and introduced or developed new, less controllable groups and leaders. Thus in the Gold Coast this process of indirect rule had little validity, but none the less the attempt to get "Imperialism on the cheap" ² is a factor that has to be considered, and its importance certainly emerged during the debate on the 1941 Ordinance when some of the chiefs took a strong stand for preserving the traditional institutions.

Different opinions have been advanced to explain the change in colonial policy with respect to trade unions in British West Africa. The modern sector was of course growing


larger and there was a belief among administrators and political leaders alike that it was necessary to find some legitimate and peaceful means of resolving the labour disputes that were bound to occur. There was also the fear that in the absence of "legitimate" unions, the leadership of the workers might be taken over by people who were more militant and whose objectives would be primarily political. As was said earlier, Britain was, despite her slow and ad hoc approach to Labour problems in her colonies, well ahead of France and Belgium in this field. This was to a great extent because of the metropolitan system of government in the French colonies, where all organisations, including the unions, were based and run from France, thus allowing local conditions the more easily to be ignored. With regard to Belgium, her labour policies were, to say the least repressive, being mainly dictated by business interests. The case of the Congo is too well known to require further discussion here.

A further reason for Britain's lead was simply because British Trade Unionists were very much drawn into the process of developing colonial labour policy within the framework of such organisations as the Commonwealth Labour Conference, and the Colonial Office Advisory Committee mentioned above, quite apart from their own individual efforts in providing trade unionists as advisers.
4. The 1941 Gold Coast Trade Union Ordinance.

As with other colonial territories, there are two distinct aspects to British influences on the formation and development of Trade Unionism in the Gold Coast. On the one hand, the role of the British Government in recognising and encouraging their growth can be examined, and on the other, the activities of the British TUC and of individual British unions such as the NUM in fostering unionism from an "unofficial" angle have equal relevance. At times the two streams of influence seem to merge, yet while this was seldom a deliberate policy, the TUC often had the support and encouragement of the British Colonial Office. The 1941 Trade Union Ordinance, with its regulations for the registration and running of the unions, was certainly an attempt by the Government of the time to foster the development of trade unionism in the Gold Coast. But this raises the question of why it was introduced then and not earlier or later, and also on what basis were the rules laid down that it introduced.

The partial answer to the first question is that unions in Ghana, having gone through a stage, (as in 19th century Britain) of having been repressed, and having also passed through the phase where they were tolerated but no more, were now advanced

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1. See Chapters IV and V below, pp. 164, and 180.
2. This is obvious from a reading of Labour Department Reports of the period.
enough for the Government to wish actually to foster their
growth. Admittedly it can be argued that British Colonial
legislation was more than permissive from the start, indeed from
before the unions themselves existed in any strength at all.
This was certainly not the case in other parts of West Africa,
and in the French territories, the right to strike and bargain
was really only finally accepted in 1946, with the legal status
of unions finally formalised in the "Code de Travail" of December
1952. This is comparable with the 1940 Colonial Development
and Welfare Act which legalised the right of association and
the right to strike and picket in the British Colonies.

A further reason for the ushering in of much legislation
at this time, (though not universally valid, since it did not
play quite such an important role in the French colonies), were
the political pressures existing in the Metropolitan countries.
On the one hand, the Socialist parties and the unions in the
Metropolitan countries 1 deserve considerable credit for
bombarding Colonial Governments with propaganda, and organising
pressure groups in support of the rights of the native African
workers. These pressures contributed greatly to the reforms
which were brought in at the beginning of the Second World
War since they brought to light the benefits of encouraging
unions and collective bargaining, as one of the best methods

1. i.e. Britain and France. There were also Liberals like
   Sir Sidney Oliver, a former Governor, who was much
   involved in Labour Questions in the colonies. Also
   the British unions played a part.
of maintaining contact with the colonial workers. A second factor was of course the attitude of employers to their African workers which under the more severe colonial regimes proved of enormous importance. Employers were, of course, both public and private and the former, that is the government, in the main, led the way through introducing self-imposed legislation to effect the rates of pay and conditions of work and many other matters. Normally, with conditions laid down for government workers, civil servants and teachers, the private employer was obliged to follow suit, even though his hand was not forced by actual legislation. In all this, the strength of the trade union became of fundamental importance. A final impetus was that imparted by the enforced "modernisation" brought about by the Second World War, and the recruitment of troops from the West African labour force. In addition, rising prices and the resultant discontent made such steps all the more necessary.

The situation as applied to Nigeria was very similar. There, a Trade Union Ordinance was passed in 1938, again in anticipation of the process of development and of industrialisation. Like the British Act of 1871, it gave legal protection to the unions, but unlike that Act, it made their registration compulsory. This, according to contemporary views was in line with British experience, and in the light of that experience appeared "sound", in the underdeveloped situation where it was applied.  

1. i.e. Belgium and Portugal.

2. For Sierra Leone see M. Kilson: Political Change in a West African State op. cit. See Also Appendix H.
These factors above were the main reasons for the introduction and content of the 1941 Ordinance. As was the case elsewhere, the new legislation had to cope with the structure of existing societies exaggerated by the colonial practice of indirect rule. The latter system which gradually eroded with the advent of urbanisation, still left some vestiges of traditional power such as the social control which many of the chiefs exercised. I quoted elsewhere Nana Sir Ofori Atta, one of the most influential chiefs of his day, objecting to Trade Union leaders having any way over the social well-being of individuals from his tribe, since it was the duty of the Chief alone to look after every phase of the physical well-being of his subject. By so saying Ofori Atta was also objecting to the fact that Trade Unions should be made legal under the terms of the Trade Union Ordinance, and that their legislation should be with the District Commissioner and not with the native authorities. Opposition to Trade Unionism in Ghana was thus greatly an internal phenomena.

1. Page 32 above.
3. Ofori Atta was also of course objecting to the rise of the young men, the "upstarts" who might challenge traditional authority. He objected in much the same way to the National Congress (1920-30) movement, and its intelligentsia leadership.
The desire of the British Colonial Government to ensure "correct" development of Trade Unions is implicit in the speech by the Chief Inspector of Labour when he moved the second reading of the Trade Union Ordinance on the 20th of February 1941. He said:--

"In the Gold Coast we have people with a genius for collective bargaining and organizing, and a number of associations are already in existence. There are the Motor Drivers' Union, Postal Agents' Union, Engineers' Union and several others which are probably trade unions. When this bill comes into law these unions will be made legal and an endeavour will be made to educate them and see that they develop on the right lines." 1 He went on to say,

"I was very anxious that we should not encourage any organisation which would be hostile to the native authorities";

an indication of the desire of the Government not to antagonise traditional rulers.

The Ordinance itself had four major points. 2 Firstly, trade unions could be established by five or more members of any occupational group. Secondly, any such group had to submit to the District Commissioner (always an expatriate) and thereafter to the Registrar for Trade Unions, a copy of its rules and regulations, and had to satisfy him that its activities came under terms of the Ordinance. This, of course, was freely interpreted later by the Colonial Government when political

1. The Gold Coast Legislative Council Debates : Colony Session, 1941. Issue No. 1. p. 43. The value loaded words "correct" and "right" implied of course, a political "correctness" and avoidance of improper and subversive activities, out of keeping with the required apolitical unionism.

activities, under the guise of trade unionism, were considered inadmissible. Thirdly, the unions had to keep accounts and have them audited and inspected by the appropriate authorities. This too was an effective regulation in a situation where any ability to keep such financial accounts was infrequently found. Fourthly, any "legal" union and its members was unable to be prosecuted for conspiracy of "action in restraint of trade, the so-called right of association". While this later clause seemed to allow for the freedom and liberation which trade unions in Britain had had to fight for over many decades, in fact, when this was put to the test, especially when political under-tones were suspected, the actual right to strike was frequently called into question.

The passage of this Ordinance also was a sign for the expansion of a trend of assistance from Government and trade unions in Britain. But it did not immediately cause an increase in trade union activity, and despite the background of unionism in the Gold Coast in the '30s, and perhaps partially also as a result of the War, the membership and number of trade unions remained small.

In recent years there has been much criticism of the methods adopted by the Colonial Government to help establish trade unions under this Ordinance and the honesty of its actions is doubted by the "anti-imperialists". According to the Ordinance, any five persons, by subscribing their names to the rules of the union and complying with the provisions of the

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1. The Trade Union (Civil Servants) Order No. 19 of 1941 authorised the registration of Civil Service unions.
Ordinance, could form a trade union. This encouraged the 
mushrooming of countless small unions. Thus, according to the 
critics, the workers remained divided and at the mercy of the 
employers. Further, as the chief employer was the Government 
itsclf, through the Labour Department, the latter was able to 
forestall any attempt by the workers to build up their own 
unions by presenting them with the trappings of unionism without 
the reality.¹

It certainly can be argued that the organisation of unions 
horizontally instead of vertically into "house unions" would 
have enabled the movement to reach maturity far sooner than it 
did do. But how possible was this, since trade unionism was a 
ew idea? There was no experience of industrial life and 
problems, nor any deep understanding of the management-labour 
conflict and the advantages to be obtained from workers' 
organisation on a large scale. While it was comparatively a 
straightforward matter to bind together the workers of individual 
companies who already had something of a common identity, it 
can be argued that it would have been far more difficult to 
encourage, at this stage, the idea of national organisations 
catering for identical or similar occupations throughout the 
country. To do this would have required a vast programme of 
education and the services of numerous experts. Even if the 
cost were not prohibitive and even if suitable personnel had

¹. This was the line adopted after Independence 
by the C.P.P. press.
been made available, there would still have been the problem of poor communications which, besides hampering efficient nation-wide organisation, would also have prevented the early establishment of the idea of common identity which would be so essential to such a scheme. The Labour Department, faced as it was with these poor communications and depending upon a few devoted and energetic officials, took the more practicable course of instilling the habit of combination among workers on a local rather than a national level, with no obviously evil intent, but rather with the understanding of the greater administrative efficiency that would result in the prevailing conditions.

But as this Chapter has shown, the groundwork was now done. The right of establishment, within certain political limits was confirmed. The Colonial Administration had become aware of its responsibilities, and it now turned to codifying them.
CHAPTER III

TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT AFTER THE 1941 ORDINANCE.
The number and the total membership of the unions remained small even after the passage of the 1941 Ordinance, partially as a result of the War. The Western Province Motor Drivers' Union was one of the only four unions registered in 1942, and in 1943, there were still only that number, with the others being the Cooks and Stewards Union of Ashanti and Northern Territories, the Central Province Motor Drivers Union and the Gold Coast Railways Employees Union. The latter was the only one that survived any length of time as an independent union though the two Motor Unions combined in 1950 with another, registered in 1947, to form the Gold Coast Motor Union.

The unions which were established in this period were small and most of them had less than 50 members. Moreover, they were highly unstable. They had very little financial strength and many disappeared shortly after they had been formed. The Labour Division of the Department of Trade and Labour reported in 1954 that from the passage of the Ordinance up until the end of 1954, there had been a total of 113 unions registered. Of these, nine were recorded as being "defunct", one "dissolved", fourteen "inactive", twelve as having their "certificates cancelled", and a number of others had formed amalgamations. This only gives the situation as at the end of 1954, but in previous years the fluctuations were just as striking.

1. The response in Nigeria, where a similar Ordinance had been passed in 1938 was much more rapid, Roper op. cit. p. 60. See Appendix H.

2. The most recent being the 'Cable and Wireless Employees Union' at Accra with 16 paid-up members. Labour Department Report. (1954-55).

3. See Table G. on Trade Union Membership.
Many unions encountered serious, if not insuperable, problems in maintaining adequate financial records and minutes, and the employment of full-time officials was out of the question. Moreover, the size of individual unions varied substantially from year to year, and in these circumstances, sustained trade union work, needing a fairly stable income, became almost impossible. The funds of even the largest unions were meagre, thus the typical pattern was small, unstable, financially weak unions.

As few unions were unable to employ full-time officials, there was considerable dependence on the Labour Department officials who were meant to provide advice to the Unions. In 1942, the Colonial Office recruited to the Civil Service a British trade unionist, Mr I.G. Jones, "to assist in the building up of sound trade unionism in the Gold Coast and to instruct workers in the principles of industrial negotiation." He eventually became Commissioner of Labour, finally leaving Ghana.

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2. The Gold Coast Railways Employees Union, for example, one of the most militant and stable of the unions, was reported as having 2,842 paid up members in 1945. 5,560 two years later, 5,769 in 1948, and then following the 1950 strike, membership fell below 1,000 in 1951 and below 750 in 1952. By 1954 it had picked up again to 2,853.


4. Employers in Nigeria not infrequently refused to bargain with unions led by outsiders.

5. Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire (HMSO, 1943).
in 1957. The Ghana Worker (controlled by the Ghana TUC), in its issue on March 1957, said of Mr Jones: "He will be long remembered in the Ghana Trade Union Movement as one from the ranks of the workers of Britain who nursed and brought the Ghana Labour Movement up to its present standards. Our present status and influence in the affairs of the nation will long remain his memorial in Ghana." This statement was made at a time when criticism of British trade unionism and hostility towards the Labour Department was already very much a part of TUC policy.

Such dependence gave rise to a certain paternalism which may have had some good effect, but inevitably meant that the relationship at that time, between trade union and Government, was more intimate than that which occurred during the development of British trade unions.

Moreover, the unions themselves tended to be either 'company unions' or 'employer based' unions where the membership was drawn from all or part of the employees of a particular company - or else they were unions of Government employees. While this type of union was not so common nor so 'company-controlled' as they were in the Congo, or in the Rhodesias, where settler-employer 'paternalism' was a very dominant feature, in Ghana it did put another dampener on the scope of union activity.¹

It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that at any time it could be assumed that half the workers were in the 'modern sector' and more than half those in large establishments. The importance of the Government as an employer gives several more reasons for the

¹. For further discussion of this and other weaknesses of unions see Chapter V, p.197.
relations between Government and unions being different from those in Britain - and in general accounting for the close relationship between them. First, the official advisers were put into an anomalous position due to their double loyalties, though in general they seemed to manage extremely well.

Secondly, the Government was the wage setter in the economy because of the size of the public sector. Finally the wages both in Government and private sectors were much affected by the awards of official Commissions and Arbitration Boards. These factors put the Government/Employer/Union relationship on a very peculiar footing, yet there is little to suggest, despite this, that the Government did not divide its functions with remarkable impartiality.

Despite the above, there was a considerable upsurge in union membership at the end of the War. It has sometimes been suggested that this was due to an increased political awareness of returning ex-servicemen who had served overseas, but more importantly it reflects the general growth in the 'modern sector' of the economy. Whatever else, the end of the War brought in a new phase of interest in trade unionism by the Colonial Government. This was underlined in a despatch by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of the Gold Coast in 1946 when he wrote:

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1. Yesufu says in Nigeria "...periodically every major demand on the part of the workers for wage increases or reviews since the War has been settled, not through collective industrial machinery, but by special committees, Commissions or by arbitration." op. cit. p. 59. See also his Chapter 1.

2. Quoted by R.E. Luyt, in Trade Unionism in African Colonies (Johannesburg, 1949), p.1. Despatch of Oct. 10th 1946. This was true in other parts of British West Africa: e.g. in the Gambia, wage increases and awards were dealt with by the Ministry of Labour, the Joint Industrial Council (representing Companies and Chambers of Commerce) and the unions. Jointly.
"I have no doubt that it is already generally appreciated by Colonial Governments and their Senior Officials that the development of the trade union movement in the colonies has for many years been a cardinal feature of British Colonial policy, and that it is the wish of His Majesty's Government to see the trade union movement in the Colonies supported and developed to the fullest extent that local circumstances and the varying degrees of social advancement in the communities concerned, admit."

2. The Development and Political Activities of the Ghana Labour Movement 1945-1965. 1

In 1945, the many small unions in Ghana joined together in a very loose framework called the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress (GCTUC) which was recognised by the Colonial Government and had declared sympathy with the Convention Peoples' Party. The first Congress was held in September of that year, mainly on the initiative of the Railway Workers Union. From the beginning there were 14 registered unions in it with a paid-up membership of about 6,000. Its constitution was based on that of the


2. The Convention Peoples' Party was from 1948 the major Political party in Ghana. Led by Kwame Nkrumah, its main policy was towards getting immediate independence. For a political background, see D. Austin: Politics in Ghana (1946-1960), op. cit.
British TUC, and it was from its foundation affiliated to the British TUC. Its main concern in the initial years was with labour matters and the welfare of its members, rather than with political affairs and the independence movement. However, during the early part of 1948, growing dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Colonial Government was handling the problems of rising prices, coupled with growing nationalist agitation, led to riots in Accra and other major towns.2

It is certainly worth going fully into the causes and circumstances of these first "national" industrial conflicts in Ghana.

The role of trade unions, or of trade union members in these riots is not well-documented,3 but the report of the Labour Department for that year says:

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1. The first Trade Union Congress was established in 1943, but the relationship between the central organisation and the members was very weak with very little money at its disposal.


3. See Appendix G.
"At the beginning of 1943 it appeared that there was a general desire among industrial workers who were in employment, for a period of peace in order to consolidate and enjoy the benefits they had gained in 1942. The more responsible trade union leaders encouraged this feeling and it was largely because of this that industrial workers generally took little part in the disturbances which arose in Accra and the Eastern Province during February. Only later in March were the trade unions involved to a limited extent by the action of certain leaders in Kumasi and Sekondi in the endeavour to exert pressure on the Government for political purposes."

The report goes on to say that the willingness of the Government to meet the TUC averted the possibility of a general strike which had been threatened on the 10th of March.

In addition to these political activities, there were two major strikes in the period, by the Mineworkers and by the Railway Unions, in pursuit, among other things, of higher wages. The Labour Department in its Report praised the miners' leaders for the discipline shown by their union, as a result of which this particular strike was more or less free of disorderly incidents. Discontent, however, was fairly widespread in the mining industry as a whole, stemming from the...

1. Report of the Labour Department (Accra, 1943-9): page 9. It goes on to say 'The Trades Union Congress gave evidence before the Commission of Inquiry (into the political disturbances) on a wide variety of subjects, some of them unconnected with the normal functions of Trade Unions. Political Activity in the trade union movement may be said to have started at this period and gathered momentum throughout the year. One of the less desirable developments from this natural interest in political matters has been the tendency of certain trade union leaders and in particular those of the Railway Employees' Union to attempt to exert pressure on both Government and the judiciary in cases where trade unionists or political leaders are indicted before the Courts for offences against the criminal law'.

fact that during the War employment had been reduced, with the result that the miners had been unable to campaign freely and effectively for higher wages. The union involved, the Mines Employees Union, which had been formed in 1944, had little standing with the employers, and there were two strikes during 1945 at the Ashanti Goldfields. In the short run the strikers gained very little, but after the Union had been officially registered in September 1945, it successfully campaigned for an official enquiry into working conditions in the Industry. The result was the appointment of Mr Justice Gorman to act as arbitrator in Ghana's first industrial arbitration case, and the enquiry found in favour of the miners and against the Chamber of Mines.

The Gorman award was followed by a review of Civil Service salaries in Ghana by the Harragin Committee in January 1946, and thereafter the Korsah Committee reviewed the wage rates of unestablished Civil Service workers in February 1947. These three awards did something to quell the discontent in the Mining and public sectors which accounted for a very large part of the wage earning population. However, not all was well, and there was mounting discontent, aggravated by the numbers of returning servicemen for whom there were no jobs readily available.

The Labour Department was becoming more and more concerned by the political activities of the unions, as is clear from the comment in the following year's report:

1. See Chapter I. p. 41 also Tables E. and F.
"The tendency shown by certain trade unions, particularly those in the government industrial departments, to attach more importance to the attainment of political objectives by threats of strike action than to the constructive organisation of their own internal economies and the advancement of their members' interests by patient negotiation and the improvement of standards of education, employment and social security. The unremitting efforts of the Department to build up negotiating and consultative machinery in Government Departments and commercial and industrial undertakings have, too frequently, met with suspicion and active opposition from the Trade Union Congress and from some of the larger unions."  

From this it is evident that the Public Section employees were making much of the running, especially in the more political aspects of the movement.  

In the legislative Council in July 1949, the "Officer Administering the Government" in the absence of the Governor, delivered a warning to trade unionists. He said that his complaint was not aimed at the "TUC and the trade unions (for I claim that we understand each other already) but at those who may consciously or unconsciously be seeking to weaken the constitutional position and rights of the Congress and the Trade Unions by misleading their members." He went on to say that he directed his remarks "at those persons who put the Workers' well-being second to personal politics." More definitely, dealing with public sector employees, he said that  

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"a government employee participating in a strike voluntarily terminates his employment." 1 This move ushered in a period of harsh Governmental attitudes to labour disputes which frequently seemed to camouflage whether the strikes that followed had political or genuine economic bases.

In January 1950, there was a general strike, or what the Labour Department called a "partial" general strike. There has since been some discussion as to the real political content of the strike. Hodgkin wrote that "sometimes general strikes have been undertaken with a Utopian, Owenite end in view, 'to disorganise the whole fabric of the old world, and transfer, by a sudden spring, the whole political government of the country from the master to the servant.'" The Gold Coast general strike of January 1950 was essentially a strike of this sort, called by the Gold Coast TUC in support of the Convention Peoples' Party's campaign of 'Positive Action' 2 and demand for 'Self-Government Now'; a strike which was politically useful to the CPP, but left the trade union movement seriously weakened." 3

Nkrumah's own account presents a slightly different picture;


2. "Positive Action" was a proposed programme of non-violent resistance in the Ghandi image, to force the British Government to grant independence.

3. Hodgkin "Nationalism..." op. cit. Chapter 4.

4. By then undisputed leader of the CPP.
"... a dispute had arisen between the Meteorological Employees Union and the Government. Negotiations between the two parties broke down, and the meteorological workers appealed to the TUC, who sympathised with them and indicated their readiness to give their support. It was agreed that if the demands of the Meteorological Employees Union were not accepted, the TUC would declare a strike. The threat of a strike at this particular time increased the popularity of "Positive Action". When I realised on my return that all chance of settling the dispute had broken down, I made an attempt to intervene to see if I could settle it, but this was not accepted by the Government. By intervening however, I succeeded in my intention which was to postpone a strike at that particular time, as this might have endangered the success of "Positive Action", if and when it came into operation." 1

This would seem to indicate that in this case, the trade union leaders jumped the gun.2 It was two days after the strike that Nkrumah called for "Positive Action", "The response of the people was spontaneous. The political and social revolution of Ghana had started."3 There is no obvious reason why Nkrumah should have played down his initiating role, so one must assume that, whatever the reasons, the trade union leaders precipitated the crisis.


2. Dennis Austin op. cit. page 89, footnote, quotes Sir R. Saloway in an article "The New Gold Coast" in International Affairs (Oct. 1955 p. 47) "Nkrumah publicly called off "Positive Action" (and) tried hard to get the Trade Union Congress to call off the General Strike, but the TUC no longer had any control over the men."

This dispute with the African civil servants, used as an excuse for political action was, however, of long standing. As early as August 1948, observers employed by the Meteorological Department presented a petition to the Government over some of their grievances. The Government investigated the matter, and in October of the same year, replied rather negatively that "conditions of work were favourable and could not be altered".¹

In the following year, the same group of workers formed a union. After applying for registration as a trade union but without waiting out the probationary period, they approached the Labour Department in May 1949, with the same grievances they had produced the previous year. According to the Labour Department, they were in the middle of considering the serious implications of the case when the union "presented an ultimatum, couched in uncompromising terms and went on strike", on the 5th October. The Department, in its Report for the year, claimed that the workers showed total disregard for "the essential principle of industrial negotiation, viz., that arbitration may only be resorted to after deadlock has been reached in negotiation ... this left the Government with no alternative but to take disciplinary action" which took the form of dismissing the workers concerned.

The result was that the TUC threatened to strike after a series of fruitless meetings between them and the Government. At midnight on the 6th of January 1950 a partial general strike

was called which lasted until the 20th of January. The Mineworkers played no part in it, but the Labour Department described it as a complete failure, which was hardly a justified claim. The Government for one thing, had to declare a State of Emergency from the 11th of January until the 6th of March. On the day the strike itself ended, several trade union leaders, including John Tettagah 1 were arrested, and Nkrumah also went to jail.

The dismissals from the Meteorological Department were the excuse rather than the cause of the strike. Behind it lay important political events such as the resignation of Nkrumah from the UGCC in the previous October and the subsequent publication of the pamphlet on Positive Action, which threatened strikes and boycotts.2 The Ghana Representative Assembly which met on the 20th of November 1949 in Accra "the first of its kind ever convened in the Gold Coast, attended by over eighty thousand people, representing over fifty organisation ... "3 was, according to Padmore, called by the CPP "in association with the TUC". Nkrumah says that the TUC's role was somewhat less important: "I called together the Ghana People's Representative Assembly ... The Assembly demanded immediate self-government." 4

1. Tettagah from 1945 till the coup remained the most ardent extreme Left wing union leader, and probably one of the most forceful and best known unionists in Africa.
2. Wallace Johnson (interview, 1/2/64).
4. Nkrumah, Autobiography, p.115. But Dennis Austin op.cit. p.89, (footnote)says: "It was difficult to draw any clear distinction between the TUC and the CPP: H.P.Nyemitei, for example, was president of the Meteorological Workers' Union and assistant general secretary of the CPP: but Anthony Woods, Pobey Biney, and Turkson Ocran were leading figures in both the TUC and the Sekondi branch of the CPP who liked to interpret the nationalist movement in simple Marxist terms, and they constituted a small 'left-wing' trade union section of the party."
On the role of the TUC, the Labour Department reported that on the 6th of January, at a meeting with the TUC and the Joint Provincial Council of the Chiefs of the Gold Coast, two proposals were put forward by the TUC which had nothing to do with the dispute in question. One demanded the withdrawal of a circular issued by the Government which concerned the political activities of civil servants, and the other demanded immediate Dominion Status for Ghana. According to the Labour Department, there was nothing to indicate that any of these points had been discussed by the unions or put to a ballot.

It emerges clearly from the above that the TUC was concerned with political, rather than with industrial objectives and that the leaders, with their strike, precipitated the beginning of Positive Action. What does not emerge is how much this move was supported by the union rank-and-file. The Labour Department claimed that the strike did not at any time involve a major percentage of the workers and went on to say:

"There is no doubt that the essential core of Trade Unionism in the Gold Coast is worthy of very high praise, considering the immaturity of its existence, for the understanding and sense of responsibility to its members, and to the general public which it displays. The policy of the Government in encouraging the trade unions and emphasising the importance of free collective bargaining between employer and employee had proved a sound investment."

"A strong and responsible trade union movement which can only be created by the experience of voluntary collective bargaining is of paramount need in the Gold Coast."

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The Governor, Sir Arden Clarke in a speech to the Legislative Council described his actions and went on to give the official viewpoint:

"In case any doubts still remain on the point, I wish here to state categorically that the Trades Union Congress had no mandate for a general strike and did not call a general strike. No trade dispute had been declared to exist between any of its constituent Trade Unions and the employers. The Trade Union Congress had been warned that in these circumstances, strikes would be illegal and these warnings were repeated to all unions. From the start of the first strike, the Executive of the Trades Union Congress appears to have gone into liquidation. No reply could be obtained to any communication addressed to it, and no contact could be made with the majority of its members. From all the evidence at present available, it seems clear that the strikes that have occurred have been engineered by certain members of the Convention People's Party who had gained positions of influence on the Trades Union Congress Executive Committee and on the committees of various of the Unions, and that they were brought about in pursuance of the Party's policy of "Positive Action", and for no other reason whatsoever. These are well-known tactics advocated and practised by Communists and others whose aim it is to seize power for themselves by creating chaos and disrupting the life of the community which they propose to dominate." 1

It should be borne in mind in assessing the degree of support for this political action, that there had been a consistently high degree of grass-roots support for the CPP. To balance this however, it is significant that the Mineworkers, the largest union in the country, took no part in the strike. There were also at this stage, some trade union leaders who questioned the wisdom of subordinating collective bargaining to political action, even though they might well have approved of that political action in general terms. The political and the

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trade union goals were popularly identified with the national goal, and it would have been very difficult indeed to have opposed these objectives, even if any particular union leader had so-wished. 1

I have dealt with this particular strike and the events which surrounded it in considerable detail, since it was the first large-scale industrial dispute in Ghana, and also because it indicates the increasingly evident political motivations behind the leadership of the trade union movement, that of the anti-colonial struggle, with independence as the ultimate objective. What is not entirely obvious, is whether the union membership was, of itself, primarily concerned with this political goal, or whether the nationalist leaders were merely using the unions as a weapon. In any event, the outcome was the same.

The history of the next few years of the Ghana Labour movement is very much one of the central trade union organisations. There was a continuous series of splits and amalgamations brought about as much by conflicts of personalities as by ideologies.

By 1951, an even more overtly political group was formed by a number of CPP leaders newly released from prison. These, along with some of the workers who had lost jobs as a result of the 1949 strike formed the "Gold Coast Unemployed Association" (GCUA) which they called a trade union. This organisation was

considered necessary, because the GCTUC was blamed by some sections of the trade union movement for having been responsible for the abortive nature of the strike and for failing to support those who had lost their employment as a result of it. Agitation for their re-employment was just as great a factor as the political ones, for the formation of the GCUA.

The GCUA held its first meeting at Sekondi on the 13th of April 1950. Its principal supporters were the Railway Trade Unionists of Sekondi, and its founder was I.K. Kumah. Attempts to get the dismissed men re-employed continued into the following year, and in February 1951, two Convention People's Party members of the Legislative Council, Anthony Woode, the ex-General Secretary of the GCTUC, and Pobee Biney, gave their backing to the new movements. In June of the same year, Nkrumah promised the Accra branch that he would do his best to help the workers get reinstated.

Kumah remained President of the GCUA from April 1950 to June 1951, and in August 1951, it changed its name to the Ghana Federation of Trade Unions 1 (G.F.T.U.) on which date it held its Inaugural Conference. The true political significance of the new organisation became clear when Anthony Woode, a Communist, declared that the object of the GFTU was to become a

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militant political force to "oppose Nkrumah and any form of imperialism" (sic). The G.F.T.U. made steady headway by attracting labour, particularly in the Western Province. From the start, Nkrumah attempted to promote the fusion of the GFTU and the GCTUC, but his overtures were finally rejected by Kumah in November 1951, on which date, the GFTU changed its name once again to the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC). At the time of its inauguration it consisted of seventeen affiliated trade unions. It was not recognised by the Government, and all its members were of the extreme left-wing of the CPP. This did not give it much concrete political support however, since the CPP were still backing the GCTUC, from which the GTUC hoped to attract members. Nkrumah continued to keep the door open for negotiations between the two bodies. The former TUC meanwhile licked its wounds and began to build up its former centres of power.

The Government, in March 1950, introduced and passed an "Ordinance to amend the Trade Union Ordinance of 1941" which concerned the rights and obligations of unions wishing to set up a political fund. Henceforth, contributions to any political fund would be made only by those members of the union who specifically contracted in. This compared favourably with legislation in Britain, and was passed without dissent. Those who contracted out could do so without becoming ineligible for the benefits of union protection. Finally the Ordinance

stipulated that the unions which wished to set up a political fund must have it approved by ballot at the union's Annual Conference. The Colonial Government was evidently becoming increasingly worried by the political motivation of the trade union movement.

The situation at the time is best illustrated by pointing out that the rival Congresses were most openly divided by their attitudes to the international labour organisations, with the GCTUC affiliated to the ICFTU from 1951, and the newly-formed GTUC aligned with the WFTU. The GTUC gradually took a harder line, and became more militantly political and anti-imperialist. The attitudes of these two groups to the international organisations, is fully discussed in Chapter VIII below.

Having considered the history of conflict among the central trade union organisations, and before going on to look at the relationships that existed between them and the Convention Peoples' Party up till Independence, it is perhaps useful to look individually at two of the most important of the early unions in more detail.

The first of these unions was the United Africa Company Workers Union which was formed in December 1945, with the express function of representing the employees interests over

1. The President of the GTUC was I.K. Kumah, and then General Secretary Aquah Robertson. J.H. Mensah was one of the ten man Executive Committee. Anthony Woode was given a pre-eminent position as "Leader of the Congress."
certain anomalies in a UAC pension scheme. By the beginning of 1947, the Union had branches in the 16 UAC organisations throughout the country, the Accra Union Branch alone having some 400 members with funds of over a hundred pounds - a considerable wealth for the time. This union held its first congress in Accra at Easter 1947, a meeting attended by 20 delegates from the 16 branches. On the 4th of April these delegates formed the Gold Coast UAC (African) Staff Union, which was registered as such in April 1948. By August of that year the total membership stood at about 1,500.

In 1949, the UAC Management suggested the setting up of a Joint Consultative Council. Some union members feared that this would lead to the victimization of representatives, but eventually these fears were overcome and the first meeting of the Council took place in January 1951. A full-time Secretary was appointed in 1951, and a full-time Regional Secretaries in 1953. An intensive and successful campaign for funds during 1952 enabled the union to buy its own premises, which made it the first union in the Gold Coast to acquire premises of its own. At the end of 1956, the paid-up membership was 2,500 with another 1,200 non-paying. In 1958, the management agreed to the introduction of a "check-off" system. As a result, paid-up membership reached the three thousand mark.

The General Secretary of the U.A.C. Union, S. Larbi Odam, played an important part in building up the Ghana TUC in its early days. But after 1955 both he and his Union broke away from it, after critics of the Union claimed that it was too...
of management and did not really represent the workers. This later criticism was in all probability fair. The Union depended very much on the Management for its continued efficient existence, and the Management were careful not to antagonise it too much, to avoid driving it back into the arms of the TUC. It is interesting to note that current criticism of the Union was that it was further weakened by poorly informed membership, and that the UAC Management had no difficulty in keeping the organisation satisfactorily divided.

A very different type of organisation was the Ghana Mines Employees Union. It was registered in 1945, but as was seen in Chapter 11 it had a long history dating well before the Second World War. In this later period its strength depended very much on the character of its President, Daniel Fonvie, who made it a very strong force within the various national trade union organisations that came and went. The Labour Department's Report for 1948-9 for example, stated that "The Mines Employees Union is the largest Union in the country, and it has also pursued a more consistent and responsible policy than certain of the others, possibly because there were few changes in its leadership."¹

¹. Labour Department Report, (Accra, 1948-9.) See also G. Macdonald, Report on Conditions of Mining Labour in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. (The Ross Institute, 1952),
An investigation into conditions in the mines known as the Gorman Tribunal was set up in 1949, (Mr Justice Gorman had already found in favour of the miners in 1945) and as a result of its findings, a joint National Negotiating Committee was set up in 1950, with representatives of both the Union and the Chamber of Mines represented on it. This Joint Negotiating Committee had a fairly successful history, with one break in November 1955, when the miners struck for a total of a hundred days. About 24,000 men were involved, and it is still the longest strike of the country's industrial history.

These two unions, plus the various Civil Service unions, accounted for most of the organised labour force in the country. To a great extent they pursued their own individual policies, but more and more they found the political pressures in the country difficult to resist, and they too became closely involved in the anti-colonial movement. Again the next period of trade union history revolves round the relationship between the central TUC's and the Convention Peoples' Party under Nkrumah's leadership.

1. See above p. 106.


3. Relations between the GTUC and the CPP.

In mid 1952, Nkrumah proposed definite steps to subordinate organised labour to the CPP. He proposed the formation of a Workers Bureau within the CPP to bring together the leaders of the GTUC and the CPP. Woode, Biney and Kumah were all on the Workers Bureau Council, though Woode continued to hold the belief that the GTUC should remain independent of the CPP, and he was backed by most of the GTUC leadership in this view.

On the other hand Nkrumah viewed with disfavour the GTUC's renewal of its affiliation with the ILO and spoke of his dislike of affiliation either to it, or to the WFTU. But by the Spring of 1953, the CPP and the GTUC began to come increasingly together, even to the extent of sharing office facilities, though Nkrumah continued not to commit himself beyond continuing in his efforts to unite the GTUC and the GCTUC.

From 1952 onwards, Nkrumah, assisted by Kojo Botso, had been trying to form a "Committee of Workers-Organisation" to bring about the merger, but matters came to a head in May 1953, when Nkrumah, who had, if anything, been favouring the GTUC, attacked Woode for concealing the affiliation of the GTUC to WFTU, while Woode in his turn attacked Nkrumah for supporting the GTUC. Nkrumah rallied the CPP members of the GTUC and Woode was roundly condemned, and it was under these conditions that the GTUC and the GCTUC agreed to amalgamate in July 1953.

1. See Chapter VI for a more theoretical discussion.

2. Later (1965) Minister of Foreign Affairs.
The GTUC and the GCTUC, to a great extent due to the efforts of the Department of Labour, agreed to this merger. The immediate result was an attempt to subordinate the new organisation to the CPP. Under the terms of the amalgamation, the GCTUC undertook to disaffiliate from ICFTU, and at the Conference at which the merger took place, it did so in the following terms, which have since become somewhat typical of the Ghana TUC.

"Whereas, it is known that the ICFTU is a breakaway International Labour Organisation, inspired by America and Great Britain, which is still the Colonial Exploiter of the Gold Coast; whereas there is abundant evidence that the function of the ICFTU has been hostile to world unity among workers; whereas it is apparent that the establishment of the West African Information Centre in Accra and the support being given by the Congress to the Centre has already broken the unity of the workers of the Gold Coast and is causing confusion which is only to the advantage of capitalism.

Whereas it is known that the CIO which is the spearhead of the ICFTU in America, supports the ruling clique in making attacks on the workers and opposes unity between Negro and white workers, and the British TUC which is the spearhead of the ICFTU in the British Empire supports the denial of freedom to the Gold Coast and did not raise any voice in protest to the massacre of Gold Coast patriots in cold blood by Mr. Imray, although they were very influential in the then Labour Government. Be it resolved, and it is hereby resolved, that the Gold Coast Trades Union Congress, disaffiliates from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and take no interest in the present hostile international atmosphere, and be independent in all things but neutral in nothing affecting the destiny of the workers of the Gold Coast. (sic)"

The new amalgamation was to keep the name GCTUC. From then on the CPP had fairly effective control of it and the trade

1. Wallace Johnson, (Interview 1/2/64).

2. A police Superintendent in charge of riot police when some demonstrators were killed.
unions as a whole, but the price they had to pay was the gift of a substantial number of posts in the new organisation to ex-GTUC people.

In October 1953, John Tettegah who had been a member of the GTUC became the Secretary-General of the new organisation in succession to Turkson-Ocran who was removed because of alleged Communist attachments, and Woode was also suspended from the Party. 1 Kumah withdrew his support from Woode and his pro-WFTU group and henceforth pledged his loyalty to Nkrumah. The office-bearers of the new reformed GCTUC were, as President - F.E. Tachie-Menson, Vice President - I.K. Kumah and General Secretary - J. Tettegah. The latter was formally elected full-time Secretary of the united TUC at the 11th Annual Conference in September 1954.

The new GCTUC which had disaffiliated from ICPTU, now found itself accused of being infiltrated by a Communist element. Nkrumah denied this, pointing out that the new organisation was not officially affiliated to the Communist WPTU. It emerges from all this that there were, and had been for some time, three clearly defined groups within the Ghanaian Trade Union Movement and the newly formed GCTUC was no exception. First of all there was the pro-Western group led by Larbi Odum, which was in favour of non-political trade unionism and sought re-affiliation with the ICPTU. This wing encountered strong CPP

1. Woode was charged among other things with having attended the Vienna meeting of the WFTU in March 1953. Austin op. cit. page 170, (footnote.) Also Wallace Johnson - (interview, 1/2/64.)
opposition on both counts, and was even then significantly small, because of its lack of appeal to the "nationalists". Secondly, there was the ex-GTUC group led in practice by Woode, who even after his suspension, was in favour of WFTU affiliation and was extremely opposed to Nkrumah. Finally, there was the CPP group which denounced the ICFTU continually, but was not as left-wing as that group led by Woode.

In February 1954, the first group, despite its size, managed to win the day, and the CPP was unable to withstand the growing pressure to reaffiliate with ICFTU. This found formal expression in a resolution by the General Council of the GCTUC on that date, and Nkrumah hesitantly gave his agreement when faced at the same time with opposition from the Woode faction. The decision to reaffiliate was ratified by the GCTUC Annual Conference in September 1954,¹ and Tettegah himself became a representative on the Executive Board of the ICFTU.²

On a more practical note, the TUC at its annual Conventions began to turn its attentions to the structural weakness in the Ghana trade union movement as a whole. The major discussion revolved round the multiplicity of unions, and at the eleventh Annual Convention held in Accra in 1954, a committee under the chairmanship of I.K. Kumah, then a vice-chairman of the TUC,

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divided the seventy-five unions then in existence into "operational groups" in an attempt to get more cohesive action. Following on this initiative, a number of amalgamations took place voluntarily, and more broadly based organisations were formed such as the National Building and Construction Workers Union, the Union of Distributive, Retail and Allied Workers, and the Local Government Employees Union. But from then on, little was done to improve the structure of the unions until October 1956, at the 13th Annual Convention, when the Congress resolved to dissolve all affiliated unions, and to form a single national structure. From then on, there was another pause until the 1958 Convention at Cape Coast.

4. The 1955 Split in the CCTUC.

The dismissal of Turkson-Ocran mentioned above was but the first act in a turbulent period. Allegations were being made by various unions that the TUC leadership was behaving in an undemocratic manner. Correspondence between TUC and unions was becoming rather sharp with the minimum of courtesy on the part of the TUC. The uneasy equilibrium in the CCTUC was again destroyed in 1955 over the issue of whether the Trade Union


2. Wallace Johnson had some of this correspondence in his possession.
Movement should be independent or dominated by the Party. Eventually, on 16th April, 1955, after considerable rumblings below the surface, the situation erupted. The President adjourned a meeting of the General Council following the refusal of a member to leave after he had been ordered to do so. Members considered the President's action to be out of order, but he refused to return to the meeting and was supported by the General Secretary. On 17th April 1955, Tettegah, who was a loyal CPP man, was dismissed by the General Council of the GCTUC for "violating the authority of the Congress" and he was replaced by Joe Meyer. Tachie-Menson remained as President, despite his politics. The new man, Meyer, was a non-political trade unionist who believed in trade unionism for its own sake. The General Council of the GCTUC was further divided over the issue of a Federal Constitution for Ghana, and in practice for some time the General Council met in two separate halves. On April 20th, Tettegah apologised and asked to be reinstated. He explained that he had been misled by his interpretation of the Constitution into remaining loyal to the President instead of the Governing Council which was the governing authority of the TUC. The CPP section voted confidence in the leadership of Tettegah and Tachie-Menson, but the supporters of the ICFTU voted against the CPP, as also did the pro-Woode faction. An attempt to obtain an injunction against Tettegah, who was GCTUC representative of ICFTU and the ILO, failed.

1. Ashanti Pioneer, (Kumasi, 18th April 1955.)
On May 7th a Meeting of the General Council held in Accra ended in uproar with the police being called in to restore order. The meeting was convened jointly by the President and the Administering Council, but the President did not attend. He sent a telegram from Kumasi saying that he was indisposed. J.N. Ebury (3rd Vice-President), who took their Chair, stated that no observers were entitled to be present. After considerable argument, the observers were ejected, but some made repeated attempts to force the door. Heated argument then took place in the council hall as to whether Minutes of the previous meeting should be read. When a member moved the suspension of the reading of Minutes there was general uproar.¹ There was every indication that fighting was about to occur and Larbi Odam (UAC Union), on the instruction — so he claimed — of the Chairman, telephoned the police. Their arrival further infuriated members, but after a short struggle they were made to return to their homes. Shortly afterwards, seventeen members of the Council held another meeting — this time at CPP Headquarters. A vote of confidence was passed in favour of Tachie-Menson and Tettegah, together with a resolution recommending the dissolution of the Administering Committee. On May 9th Tettegah nonetheless resumed work as General Secretary.

There then commenced an extremely confused period, with Tettegah being recognized by some sections of the labour movement and not by others. On May 10th three members of the Administering Committee instituted a civil action at Accra...

¹. From various Newspaper Reports of that date.
District Magistrate's Court for an injunction to restrain Tettegah from "holding himself out as General Secretary, and interfering with the property and entering the office of the TUC." On May 12th, Tettegah flew to Brussels to represent West Africa at the Fourth World Congress of the ICFTU, to be followed by the 38th session of the ILO at Geneva. On May 25th the Court ordered Tettegah to cease acting as General Secretary pending the hearing of the case. On the 26th, the administering Committee nominated its own representative for the Geneva Conference, but on June 7th the Government refused a request for travel facilities as it did not feel it would be justified in replacing Tettegah "with another workers' delegate nominated by any section of the TUC while the matter is subjudice." 1

On August 27th the Court decided that the plaintiffs were not sufficiently representative to bring the Action. On his return to Accra, Tettegah was recognised as the leader of the trade union movement, not only by the majority of the unions, but also by the Government and the ICFTU. In fact, it could with truth be claimed that it was Government and ICFTU support which enabled Tettegah to maintain his position.

While it is understandable that the CPP should take this opportunity to entrench its position within the labour movement, it is perhaps not so apparent why the ICFTU, through its local representative, should also have sided with the move towards

a politically dominated TUC while at the same time removing its support from, and losing the confidence of, some of the more moderate leaders. At the time, it may have appeared that the alternative was to hand the movement over to Communism. This was perhaps an incorrect assessment and the result of this action was that a number of the more moderate leaders (including those who were sympathetic to the British and American patterns of trade unionism) were prevented from exercising any further influence outside their own organisation.

By September of that year, the split in the movement was so manifest that there was a Trades Union Congress centred in Accra and dominated by the CPP and a second larger Trades Union Congress centred in the Western Province dominated by Woode. The GCTUC Annual Conference which took place in October 1955 increased the split. It had been intended that the 1955 Conference be held in Sekondi-Takoradi, but this was now altered to Accra. Eight of the Western Region unions claimed that this was done so that CPP influence could be more easily brought to bear, and decided to hold their own conference in Sekondi-Takoradi. There were still the three definite groups, two of which were dissatisfied with CPP domination. Firstly, there were the above eight unions led by Woode, approximating to the old GTUC. This group, which was centred on Sekondi, adopted the title of the Congress of Free Trade Unions. It disaffiliated from the GCTUC in January 1955. The second group, including the Gold Coast Mineworkers Employees Union and the UAC Employees Union, also disaffiliated, but stayed independent of Woode's group.
The UAC Union gave as its reasons:

"(1) That there are far too many irregularities in the administration of the TUC which are caused through the continuous non-observance of the rules of the TUC by the present officers.

(2) That the present officers have by so doing made it impossible for any compromise to be reached on the disagreements on the irregularities existing.

(3) The TUC is politically dominated."

This group contained the majority of registered workers and was largely non-political. ¹

The remainder, which stayed with the headquarters in Accra, continued to call itself the GCTUC. The Accra part of the conference expressed its confidence in the President and General Secretary, and expelled those Western Region leaders who had maintained their independent attitude. A courteous letter was sent to the UAC Union expressing sympathy for the UAC workers who "would suffer hardship through the action of their leaders." It also stated that consideration of any request to re-affiliate would be subject to the trial of S. Darbi Odam (Secretary of the UAC Union) for his "misdeeds". From time to time the UAC Union initiated negotiations to produce a

¹ For a short time this group called itself "Congress of Free Trade Unions" and allied itself to the National Liberation Movement (NLM) the official opposition to the CPP. - U.A.C. Note on The Present Situation in the Gold Coast TUC. (Accra, 1955).
reconciliation, but these always came to nothing because of the TUC's denial of the UAC Union's right to retain its chosen leaders. It represented fewer workers than Woode's group. It did, however, enjoy recognition by the CPP Government, and its President remained Tachie-Menson with John Tettegah as Secretary-Treasurer. The alliance between it and the Convention Peoples' Party was cemented at the 1955 Annual Congress when a resolution was passed which stated:

"Whereas it is a historically established fact that trade unionism is inseparable from politics and further that the political set-up determines the freedom with which the Trade Unions operate, whereas in the Gold Coast the Convention Peoples' Party is in the main and in our view a workers' party, considering the bulk of its membership is of the working population, the 12th Annual Conference in session resolved to appoint a committee charged with the responsibility of writing out an alliance with the CPP with a view to encouraging national unions to seek direct affiliation with the view to maintaining the CPP as a Socialist Party."

The first group mentioned above continued from then on to try to undermine Nkrumah's popularity and to gain control of the CPP. From the time of the split, the WFTU took a considerable interest in Woode's faction. It initiated a programme of training visits and summer schools and also helped organise the Congress of Free Trade Unions. This situation of a three-sided Trade Union Movement dominated the entire latter part of the second phase of development in Ghana, and continued very much the same until Independence.

This chapter has described the development of trade unionism in Ghana during the last years of colonialism, a period during which the earlier, almost entirely British
orientated and assisted structure became eroded. It pointed out the importance of the large Government Sector in the early paternalistic colonialism, and later, as the new nationalist movement became more powerful, it has indicated why this contributed to the high political content of the unions. For this process to become complete, independence was necessary, but it was, nonetheless, well advanced before March 1957.
CHAPTER IV

THE GHANA TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

SINCE INDEPENDENCE
With Ghana independent from March 1957, came the third phase in the process of development. It was a period dominated at the start by the rivalries between the various factions over what form the new trade union structure should take. On one side were the defenders of the inherited tradition, on the other, those who demanded a new model more in keeping with the new national aspirations. One of the first moves was for the Gold Coast Trades Union Congress (GCTUC) to adopt the name of its old rival, the Ghana Trades Union Congress (GTUC). The new GTUC's main objectives were to consolidate the Trade Union organisations in Ghana under CPP control and, in addition, to make the Trade Union Movement an agent in Ghana's foreign policy. For a short time after independence, the extreme left wing part of the trades union movement under Woode became increasingly isolated and Woode himself received no government appointment.¹

More important organisational and structural questions now began to replace the earlier bickering; and the question of which model of trade unionism it would be appropriate and practical for the unions in the new Ghana to follow, to a great extent camouflaged the inter-personal vendettas that had plagued the movement before 1957. Even prior to independence and especially at the Thirteenth Annual Congress of the GCTUC in October 1956, there had been outspoken criticism of the existing framework and structure of trade unionism. The model provided by the British was condemned as being "too complex to operate." At this time it was agreed that the Israeli Histadrut would provide a better example on which

¹ Much of the material in this Chapter is based on Press Reports, and on the evidence of I.T.A. Wallace Johnson. Much of the rivalry is also illustrated repeatedly in the Parliamentary Debates of the period.
to base independent Ghanaian trade unionism, and at the Thirteenth Congress, the following recommendation of the executive Board explaining the reasons for the choice of this model, was adopted:

"Despite all our efforts there are still too great a multiplicity of Trade Unions in a small country like Ghana with a population of only 5 million. We must now positively consider the feasibility of merging the various registered trade unions into the Trades Union Congress so that Congress can become a negotiating body. Departments can be created and a centralised Executive to direct our affairs throughout Ghana. Our experience is that the present structure has become too complex to operate. We must turn to something like the General Federation of Jewish Labour in Israel (HISTADRUT). This is a new nation and we must build trade union machinery that can hasten the building of socialism and raise the standards of the working people. The British system of Trade Unionism suits an industrialised and capitalist state like Britain or America. In our view it is an imposter (sic) on Ghana and not suitable for us."

Congress must consider the feasibility of sending a Trade Union Study Mission to Israel. In our present financial position Government must finance this Mission which is of the utmost importance to our building a socialist economy and nation. Congress views will be appreciated on this issue and this is the only way by which we can overcome our present shadowy position.

Also, if Trade Union Finance is concentrated into a single pool, labour will be in a position to supply the trained personnel which is needed to guide the labour movement in the difficult days ahead.

In May 1957, the Executive Board therefore agreed that John Tettegah, the General Secretary, should make a study of various centralised structures. This he did during the following months, paying

2. Ibid.
special attention to the Histadrut\textsuperscript{1} and the DGB\textsuperscript{2} of Germany. In October 1957 the Secretary visited Israel to study trade union methods. This very much suited the policy of CPP which was to try to achieve a monolithic structure under control of the Party, a structure which embraced the entire labour force.\textsuperscript{3} The suggested adoption of the Histadrut model fitted in with this and in addition gave an excuse to the Party to get rid of the section in that trade union movement which still believed in a non-political trade unionism. In May 1957, D.K. Foevie, the General Secretary of the Mineworkers' Union, resigned from the GTUC General Council in protest over this issue, but despite this and other protests, Tettegah's visit was followed in January 1958 by another large GTUC Study Mission to Israel.

At the 14th Annual Trades Union Congress held at Cape Coast in January 1958 the Party continued to crystallise its actions. Tettegah, drawing on his experiences during his Israel visit,\textsuperscript{4} proposed constitutional changes which included the consolidation of the existing trade unions into 16 large organisations.\textsuperscript{5} He also proposed that the payment of dues should be made directly to the Central Organisation which would then redistribute the money to each individual union according to

1. See Appendix D.

2. See Appendix E. The D.G.B. Records in Germany have not proved of much value to the researcher.


4. Fully reported in his A New Chapter for Ghana Labour, (GTUC, 1958.)

5. See Appendix A. and E.
its size. Nathaniel Welbeck, who was Minister of Labour at the time and despite being a strong Party man, said that any amalgamation of this sort must be voluntary and not imposed by legislation. This was, of course, supported by Foeve and his followers who in any case believed in a Trade Unionism free from Party control. But despite this it was Tettegah's ideas that were developed in the "new Structure" of the labour movement, which was ushered in later that year.

With regard to the search for a new model, the Israelis were not slow to back up the Ghanaian move. It is difficult without a full discussion of the entire Histadrut system to see the full amount of the similarities between the two systems, but the centralising influence is certainly great. Tettegah, returning from the visit in October 1957 said:

"The responsible position that Histadrut has played in the development of the state of Israel has enhanced the dignity of labour. Trade unions are no longer regarded as agitators fighting always for wage increases, but in Israel the dignity of labour is supreme, and membership of the Histadrut is an honour to be coveted."

The move at this Congress and the implementation of the "New Structure" which followed it, derived something from the West German Trade Union Federation (DGB) as well. It also had sixteen unions in its organisation. Tettegah spent three days in May 1957 with the DGB in Düsseldorf, and Frankfurt. He reported that:

"Although the German Trade Union Movement functions in a highly industrialised society the structure is more co-ordinated than the weak federal structure of the British T.U.C. The DGB situation allows a great deal of autonomy to the 16 individual unions. They are for example allowed to carry out their own negotiations and to conclude collective agreements. The DGB is the co-ordinating machinery for the general task of fixing Trade Union policy with regard to the political situation. It acts as a proper spokesman for the whole of organised labour in Germany."
Tettegah went on to say that:

"In Germany as in Ghana, there is no constitutional relationship between the Socialist Party and DGB but this does not prevent the German Trade Union Federation from co-operating to the full extent with the SPD which represents the Socialist members of Parliament, loyal to the whip of the SPD. This is a parallel position to what now obtains in Ghana in which the Trade Unions, although they have no constitutional alliance with the C.P.P. co-operate with the Party to the full extent and thousands of our members regard the Convention Peoples Party as the Political Wing of the Labour Movement. Of course, no one can drag away the Trade Unions from their socialist friends and we see in the German experiment a shining example of how fruitful this co-operation can be, used in improving social legislation in furthering the working condition of the workers." 1

The Congress itself adjourned for some time to receive a Report from its Standing Order Committee, which was to take over the affairs of the Congress until a further Congress could be held, and was to canvass the views of all the unions on the Tettegah proposals for reorganisation. In fact what happened seems to be that the Congress adopted the new organisation in principle, but deferred a decision as to the details. It appears also that the opposition that did exist to the proposed centralisation, was to a great extent concerned with matters of detail and not of principle. But there were some more concrete misgivings. First of all, there was the rigid nature of the New Structure which fixed the number of national unions at sixteen. This would not permit unions which formerly catered for a variety of trades to maintain their separate identities. A "house union" which decided to affiliate, would have its membership absorbed into the new unions by their individual occupations; the habit of loyalty to the old leaders

1. Appendix E.
would be broken and these latter could be dispensed with if they maintained an independent attitude at variance with the wishes of the TUC. Secondly there was the centralisation of power in the hands of the Executive - especially the General Secretary. The Executive Board would consist of the Secretary and sixteen members elected by Annual Congress; the Chairman was to be elected by the Executive Board; nine Executive Secretaries would be nominated by the General Secretary and appointed by the Executive Board. Although each union would be considered autonomous, the Executive Board would have considerable power to intervene in the affairs of any individual union. Finally there were misgivings over the extent to which funds would be controlled by the TUC. The ultimate complaint was the introduction of a check-off system through which subscriptions would be paid directly to the TUC which in turn would pay back 50% to the individual National Unions.

Despite the above, it looked as if it was mainly going to be up to the unions to implement these decisions. Welbeck, then the Minister of Labour, in addressing the Congress said that he presumed that the changes necessary to bring about the reorganisation would be voluntary, and "it was not the intention of the unions to seek Government legislation. This would indeed be exceeding the powers of the Government."\(^1\)

Tettegah, the General Secretary, in his speech, made it clear that he considered the adoption of the new Constitution as inevitable. As a way out of financial difficulty, pending the adoption of a check-off system, he suggested that a loan be obtained from the Government. Much emphasis was laid on relations with the CPP:

\(^1\) Welbeck was quoted by the *Ashanti Pioneer* on 28th January 1958.
"For the benefit of the British Press and those who talk flippantly around the world and in this country without knowing the facts, it is important on this occasion to explain our relationships and friendships in the Ghana society. During these years of our struggle, our relations with the Convention Peoples’ Party have been ideal and typically friendly and constructive. You know the leaders of the Party and the leaders of the Ghana Labour Movement have long been comrades in arms. Over these years our relations have been so close, our objectives so identical that there has never been the need to emphasise the difference between the CPP and the TUC. In fact, there is only a division of labour between us." 1

The General Secretary in addition had, for a long time, maintained a public hostility towards the Labour Department. He took the opportunity to continue the feud:

"I knew that we still have to get a showdown with the silent hands in the Labour Department who are sometimes so voluble in their sympathy for the welfare of Ghana workers and those who see no good idea in any new revolutionary changes. We do not want to be bothered with Cambridge Essays on imaginary ILO Standards, with due emphasis on voluntary associations. Of course, some of these people have no experience except from Ruskin, and we can appreciate their difficulty to grasp the real feelings of the working people who are in the shoes and so know what changes they desire to make." (sic) 2

In reply, Nathaniel Welbeck, the Minister of Labour, defended his department and made it clear that he was not going to be rushed or browbeaten. He emphasised that although he favoured the establishment of large unions, the Government should not legislate to enforce this; it could only advise. On the question of "check-off" he did not commit himself except to say that if introduced it must be on a "contracting in"

basis. His speech was received with mixed feelings, but the general opinion was that the TUC had suffered a reverse at the hands of Government.

Over the next few months there were many statements and counter-statements of intent which have little relevance here, since the final upshot was that the Government brought in the Industrial Relations Bill to Parliament in May 1958. Before going on to look at this new Act it is perhaps of interest to note the numerical strength of the unions as a background to the criticism that existed of the prevailing system.1

Bearing in mind what was said in Chapter 1 about the suspect statistical standing of the membership figures of Ghanaian trade unions, by 1944, there were 11 registered unions with about 400 paid membership. By 1946, the figure had risen to 24 unions of some 10,976 members.2 In 1950 there were 61 unions with 28,170 members, and in 1952, 73 unions with 35,129 members.3 The Annual Report on the Labour Division of the Ministry of Trade and Labour 1955/56 gives the following account:

1. See Table G.
2. Trade Unions by Membership Groups 1955/56 (from Labour Division Reports).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Group</th>
<th>Total Number of Unions</th>
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<td>under 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 - 250</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>5000 and over</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

3. See Table G.
"As at 31st March, 1956, 128 Trade Unions had been registered during the period 1942/56. Of these 9 had amalgamated with other unions, 1 amalgamation was pending, 20 had had their Certificate of Registration cancelled, 4 had dissolved and one had become defunct. Twelve new unions were registered during the year. Of the 91 unions remaining in existence 55 were active (of which the membership figures of 49 were known to the Labour Division) and 36 unactive (of which the membership figures of 31 were recorded.) The total membership of the 80 Unions for which figures are available was 67,173 which is 23,081 greater than the figure for the previous year."

By Independence at the end of 1957, the TUC claimed that 72 of its affiliated Unions had a membership of 154,000.

2. The 1958 Industrial Relations Act

The Industrial Relations Bill was introduced into Parliament by Kojo Botsio, the Minister of State, in May 1958. It was significant that Nathaniel Welbeck, who had been Minister of Labour, in the light of his earlier criticisms, did not introduce the Bill. It was finally passed on 31st December 1958, and from then on the Central Committee of the Party had the power to determine what unions could exist, to call any strike illegal, and to revoke any collective agreements. But those who supported Nkrumah's determination to gain firm control of the unions under the Party, had still to compete

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with a group of veteran trade union leaders who opposed this control, and these latter launched into strong criticism of the Act as being contrary to the ILO Conventions.

It is not clear what happened between the January Congress and the introduction of the Bill. One reason for the change round was that Ako Adjei had succeeded Welbeck as Minister of Labour. Introducing the Bill, Adjei said: "Experience in other countries has shown that this is an efficient form of organisation and the workers have therefore decided to adopt it as the best suited to their needs."1 Speaking later in the debate, he said, that the TUC "representing the unions had appealed to the Government for this new structure, to give it legal recognition."

The Industrial Relations Act was finally transformed into what has been called the "New Structure" of the GTUC which was inaugurated in April 1959. The major objective of this New Structure was to control rather than to represent the workers and to bring all organised labour in Ghana under the control of the CPP. There were four major features of this move. First of all, there would be only one Union to each Industry, twenty-four in all. There had admittedly been a proliferation in the past of small unions and there was a consequent need for

1. See Ghana Parliamentary Debates Vol. 12, 1st series, especially column 557 ff.
amalgamation. The 1941 Ordinance allowed any five persons to form a trade union, which led to the mushrooming of countless small unions and this, according to the critics, left the workers divided against employers. But against this, in the amalgamation process, of course, many of the Unions which had opposed the CPP were abolished.

The second feature was that union dues were to be compulsory. The right to contract out was later repealed in 1960. The actual rate was set at 2s. per month, payable by each Trade Unionist to the Central Organisation, and employers were required to deduct the sum from the workers' pay and send it direct to the Union. The third provision was that the Government had the right to decide the structure and composition of each of the unions and to have absolute control over their finances. Finally, it was laid down that employers could only negotiate with a union which was "official" under the terms of the New Structure, and it was an offence to negotiate over rates or conditions with any person other than a recognised union official. This latter proviso was emphasised and strengthened in the Amendment Act of July 1959.

1. Roper in his book (Ch.6), op. cit., written in 1958 before the New Structure, was very critical of the old proliferation of small unions.

2. See Appendix A for a note on the more detailed organisation under the New Structure, organisation charts, and a breakdown of the internal management and structure of a trade union. See also: A New Chapter for Ghana Labour by J.K. Tettegah (Ghana T.U.C. 1958).

A compulsory system of conciliation and arbitration was introduced at the same time which meant that either the employer or the union could ask for the services of a conciliation officer, the unions application being made through the TUC. Such an officer would then be appointed, but if he failed to get an agreement, an official of the Labour Department would take over. In the event of even this being unsuccessful, either party could ask for the dispute to go to arbitration, a decision which was left to the Minister. Thereafter, when four weeks had elapsed, and no agreement had been reached, the parties could then, but only then, resort to a strike or lockout. On no account could an unregistered union engage in a strike. These regulations on the face of it, did not appear to constitute a wholly bad step, and it was fairly widely welcomed by both sides of industry. What was provided by the "New Structure" was, in the words of the Education and Publicity Department of the TUC, "an elastic system of negotiation and conciliation which makes strikes almost unnecessary."

Certainly, not all the features of the "New Structure" could be held to be objectionable, but from then on, the new TUC came completely under the control of the Government. For example, one minor clause was that the Government had control over the TUC's funds, and could freeze them if required, or if they were misused. The 24 recognised unions, later reduced to 16 by the Amendment Act,¹ were thus at the mercy of the

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¹. Appendix A, Annex 1.
Government, through the Minister of Labour, which could also
decide their composition and vary their number at will.
The Government also had the power to proscribe any local trade
union branch and to certify particular unions as having the sole
right to bargain with particular groups of employers.\(^1\)

It is interesting at this stage, and before going on to
look at the implementation of the legislation, to note how the
Convention Peoples' Party went about presenting the Bill, and to
see to what extent the United Party's opposition to it was
effective.\(^2\) The Minister, Ako Adjei, in introducing it, gave
one of the first explanations by the Government of what will be
called the "Industrial Wing" concept of the trade unions functions.
In giving "maximum protection to the rights of the workers"
commensurate with the "smooth running of the industry", the
Government's socialist policy of support for the workers in all
their legitimate claims was co-ordinated with its desire for
economic expansion and financial independence. The unions must
work in co-operation with the State, and the TUC in being given
greater power, must also submit to certain safeguards to avoid
misuse of that power. This, according to the Minister, was to
ensure that the TUC could not act "contrary to the interests of
the workers they represent."

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1. See two brief but useful articles on the Act in
   West Africa (January, 1959).

2. The opposition claimed that they had not enough time for
   full discussion, that there was no warning of the debate,
   and that the Government forced an early closure
   (Parliamentary Debates, Ghana Official Report, Vol. 12,
   1st series). The United Party never had any real foothold
   in the trade union movement, even in days of the
   pre-independence schism.
Ako Adjei then moved from discussing aims to outlining the means, especially to the part of the Bill dealing with the certification of the Unions for the purposes of collective bargaining. He stressed correctly enough, that the employers were faced all too frequently with a large number of small and unstable unions which were unable to guarantee any contract with them.\textsuperscript{1} It would be dangerous if an employer were allowed to choose the union with which to deal, and so the Government's intention was to issue a certificate which would state that the union concerned was "an appropriate body to conduct collective bargaining on behalf of the class of employees that will be specified in the certificate." Included at this stage were instructions to employers about deducting union dues, permitting meetings on company premises, and listing the classes of employees, especially civil servants, who were not eligible to form unions but who could bargain through agencies.

Criticism from the Opposition was foreseeable, and highlighted the main issue of the evident power of a Minister to add or delete from the list of recognised unions without reference to the Union or even to the TUC. Under the existing legislation, a certificate could only be withdrawn if there was evidence that it had been obtained by fraud, or if the Union became defunct, or if it was formed for the pursuit of illegal objectives. This latter meant that it was arguable

\textsuperscript{1} Vide Nigeria (and Britain) today. See Appendix H.
how much extra political power the new Bill was providing since the Colonial Government, in its day, made strong use of the "pursuit of illegal objectives" clause for any union it did not approve of. Admittedly, the new legislation \(^1\) went further in allowing for the TUC as a whole to be suspended if it took action "not conducive to the public good." The relationship between the TUC and the Convention Peoples' Party was a second major basis for criticism. The Opposition claimed that there was a lack of distinction between funds to be used for the normal union business of collective bargaining, and funds for political purposes. One of the TUC's aims as stated in the Constitution, was to "uphold the aims and aspirations of the Convention Peoples' Party, through financial and organisational support in its struggle to create and maintain a socialist state in Ghana." The Opposition, of course, thought it improper that all trade union members should be required to contribute to the political activities of the CPP. The existing system provided for special and separate funds for political purposes which only applied to those members who "contracted in" to the political levy.

The Committee Stage of the Bill served to indicate that in addition to the official opposition there was not to be altogether full support from the unions. There were still strong groups within the movement which were doubtful of the benefits reorganisation would bring. It is difficult also to

assess whether or not the union leaders involved in proposing the opposing of the Bill were supported by a majority of their members. The Opposition came especially from a minority of trade union leaders who had been influenced by the British Colonial tradition that the trade union movement should be independent of the Government. The major unions, whose leaders were of this view, were the two Railway Trade Unions and the United Africa Company Union. It would, however, be wrong to attach much weight to the opposition to the New Structure and most of the unions themselves seem to accept it without any real complaint.¹ From then on, the identification of the Government and Party with the "interests of the workers", became ever more frequently expressed.

Nonetheless several of the weaknesses of the old structure can be considered removed to the benefit of the Trade Union Movement as a whole. First of all, as it has been extremely difficult to get workers to attend Trade Union meetings, an alliance with the political party meant that there was an additional attraction. Secondly, there had been in pre-Independence days, far too many weak and badly organised Trade

Unions. Thirdly, the Trade Unions had a severe shortage of funds, a situation which the amalgamation and the general implementation of the new structure was to do away with. With consolidation of the trade union movement into sixteen national unions, it is certainly arguable that each union was from then on in a stronger position to bring pressure to bear on behalf of its members and for a few years thereafter the union leadership appeared on the whole to perform its functions fairly properly by helping to redress genuine grievances. But some of the benefits were rather submerged by the restrictions which the new legislation brought in.

Most importantly, freedom to fight for better working conditions, including bargaining for increased wages, and with the ultimate right of withdrawing labour, were not always entirely clear. In practice, from the New Structure up until the coup there were hardly any strikes and remarkably few labour troubles. This may well have been because the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act included a clause about "workers who incite others to strike without going through the proper procedure of conciliation and arbitration, are liable to prosecution." No workers were prosecuted for some time, but in December 1959, following a short unofficial strike by the Railway Workers, Krobo Edusei, who was then Minister of Transport and Communications, was quoted as having said that

1. For a list of Collective agreements negotiated to 1961, see In the Cause of the Ghana Workers (CITUC, printed East Berlin, 1961).

"The entire Executive of your Union would have been arrested and detained under the Preventive Detention Act if you had not called off the unconstitutional strike you staged some time ago."

3. The Industrial Relations Act Amending Bills of 1959-60.

The 1959 Amending Bill sought to tidy up the situation after the passage of the 1958 Act. There were still, for example, some unregistered unions which, though not members of the TUC, continued to negotiate on behalf of some groups of workers. The Government was determined to bring this state of affairs to an end, and these unrecognised unions were given two months in which to amalgamate or dissolve themselves. This was a strong attempt to ensure that the previous situation of a large number of small unions, did not reappear, firstly for reasons of industrial efficiency, but more importantly because from a political point of view, it was very much easier to control a few large groups. At that time the most important offending union was the United Africa Company Employees Union, and it is significant that its leadership was politically very much opposed to the CPP.

A second Industrial Relations Amendment Act was brought in late 1960, which was rushed through by the Government with hardly any warning and no time for debate. The major purpose of the Bill was to gain even more central control over the unions, but it also established the Union Shop, and attempted to bring in legislation to speed up the arbitration procedure. Behind this

2. See Appendix A.
Bill lay several months of trouble in the TUC and union organisation between the Party men, and those who either belonged to the United Party Opposition, or were strong believers in the freedom of the movement from Government control. From then on there was no opportunity for union members to avoid paying dues, and every worker was obliged to be a union member. Employers merely deducted dues from the wages of each employee and sent them to the appropriate union headquarters, where there was no differentiation over who contributed to the political fund. One Party M.P. Miss Asamany, spelt out the consequences. She said that the Bill

"... makes it possible for the officials of the various unions ... to be controlled by the TUC", and went on

"... some members of the unions are going about making false allegations about the Government. I think it is true to say that the TUC is the CPP, and the CPP is the Government, and that is why some officials of the TUC should not ... spread false news about the Government. Now as a result of this Amendment, the officials of the TUC branches will be controlled by the TUC, and they will take instructions from Accra and will therefore behave." 1

The Minister winding up the debate, summed it up:

"... The TUC is an arm of the CPP ... that being the case, the TUC is also a branch of the Government ... and in consequence (of the interests of the workers being synonymous with those of Nkrumah's Government) no Industrial Bill can be introduced against the interest of the workers of this country." 2

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2. Ibid. cf. B. Fitch and Mary Oppenheimer, Ghana: End of an Illusion. (Monthly Review Press, 1966). From the authors Marxist viewpoint, Nkrumah's Ghana was not a socialist state, and in the '60s, the C.P.P. was not a mass party. Corruption in it and in the unions, led to the alienation of the masses, See also Bruce E. Miller, The Political Role of Labour in Developing countries, (The Brookings Institute, Washington, 1967).
The final seal on the take-over came the next year when Nkrumah tore up his union card at a public meeting, and announced that in future, membership of the CPP was "sufficient" for the workers. Since Independence, for better or for worse, along with the experience in other sectors, the TUC had become an arm of the Government.


The ushering in of the New Structure, the amendments to the Industrial Relations Act, and the take-over of the TUC by the Party and Government, did not entirely mean the death of free industrial action. In September 1961, an important series of strikes involving thousands of dock, railway and other workers in Sekondi and Takoradi was called, the overt cause of which was the introduction of a budget which imposed compulsory savings schemes and taxes on industrial workers who had, to date, been fairly exempt from taxation.

1. In April 1959, J.F. Meyer had said "The TUC and the CPP are one. This is not without precedence. The British TUC and the Labour Party are one." Dr Nkrumah, in his speech on 9 July 1960, re-emphasised the closer ties which were to link the unions and the state. He said "The workers are for the state and the state for the workers and thus they are working for themselves. To achieve the maximum results and prove that public enterprises can be successfully run, the Trade Unions must assist in increasing productivity and the national consciousness of the workers."

2. Since this was written another version of this story has appeared in Government versus The Unions, The Sekondi-Takoradi Strike. p. 67-118 in Gwendolen Carter (ed.), Politics in Africa: 7 cases. (Harcourt-Brace, 1966).
There were several other factors contributing to the 1961 Strike. One was that some measures in the Budget of that year increased duties on the important trading commodity of cotton cloth and imported clothing. A further reason was that well-publicised increases in the pay for Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament did nothing to pacify the workers in their attempt to get higher wages. A final point was the belief among the trade unionists that John Tettegah, who was now a member of the Cabinet as well as the head of the trade union movement, was no longer a free enough agent to be able to bring pressure to bear on the Government for higher wages.

This has to be seen in the context of the Government's position as the biggest employer in Ghana. Nearly half of the people in paid employment were Government servants and if one includes the municipal workers, then the figure was well over half. Private employers in Ghana also resisted the workers' demands for higher wages by taking the line that it was in the country's interest for private firms to keep in step with the Government. Nkrumah had tried to check the unions earlier in the year, and in his famous "Dawn Broadcast" on 8th April he said:

"This is not the time for unbridled militant trade unionism in our country... At this stage I wish to take the opportunity to refer to an internal matter of the Trades Union Congress. It has come to my notice that dues of 4s. per month are being paid by some unions, whereas others pay 2s... I have therefore instructed... that union dues shall remain at 2s per month." 1

The strike began on the 4th September among the Railway Workers, spread to the Port Workers, and then to the Railway Workers in Kumasi and later Accra, and for some time the railways were completely paralysed. As a result of a mixture of threats and promises, some returned to work.

1. i.e. a check on possible strike funds.
after a week, but most of them held out until the 22nd. On the 9th, the Government declared a limited State of Emergency, and President Nkrumah who was in the middle of a tour of the Soviet Union, returned to Accra on the 16th to try to persuade the men to return to work. When the emergency was declared, the Government announced that the striking workers would be dismissed unless they returned to work within the next ten days, and on the 11th, about a quarter of the striking railway workers returned to work.

The Government further accused the workers of intimidation and sabotage and imposed a curfew in Sekondi-Takoradi on the 14th of September. When the President appealed for a return to work on his arrival, the strike leaders replied that they would not go back until they had some guarantee from the Government that it would review its budget. Nkrumah's view was that:

"If the Railway Workers disagreed with the policies of their constitutionally-elected Government, they had every right to make their views known ... through their Members of Parliament ... or the TUC. But what is the nature of these supposed grievances which have prompted these workers to take this illegal and disgraceful action? They object to the compulsory savings scheme, to the monthly deduction of income tax and to the Government's taxation policy as a whole, in fact to the whole budget."

Thus far at any rate, the economic aspects of the strike appear to have been at the fore. However, financial and other pressures caused a general breakdown, and nearly all the workers had returned by the 22nd of September.

What lay behind this strike apart from the obvious objections to the new taxes and other factors mentioned above? A brief attention

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1. Quoted by Austin, Politics in Ghana, op. cit. p. 401, from Ghana Today, 27th September, 1961. For further description of the political background, see Austin, op. cit., pps. 400-401, and 404.
to some of the other issues involved serves to indicate that there were far-reaching political motivations as well. It is, however, very difficult to do more than guess at some of them, since by reason of there being only a Party-controlled press, and press censorship, it was only by an amount of field research in Takoradi among some of the strikers, that some picture has emerged.

There was certainly at a later stage in the strike, attempts by opposition groups, particularly the United Party, to prolong the situation and play the strikers for political ends. They were, however, fairly slow in making the most of it, and by the time that the Government's indictment of it as a "wider conspiracy" was more justified, most of the workers had decided to go back to work. From the first, of course, it was not a purely industrial affair, intended as it was to bring pressure on the Government to modify its Budget policy. At first there was a degree of sympathy from both the TUC, which, while calling for a return to work, did say that they would investigate their grievances, and from the Party press, which admitted that there were some reasons for complaint. The Party press began by being sympathetic to the strikers, saying that the budget was the fault of the bureaucratic inefficiency left over from colonialism, but gradually got tougher with warnings about returning or losing their jobs. This probably came with a fear that to acknowledge the strike, might be construed as an admission of weakness. Eventually, the Western Regional Commissioner was quoted as saying that the strike was
"a deliberate attempt to undermine the State." It was finally branded as a political plot which attempted to reduce the power of "foreign capitalists." It did however definitely develop almost to the size of a "counter revolution" as Tettegah called it, and some of the leaders in Takoradi still admit to using it as a vehicle for their opposition to the Convention Peoples' Party and the trend to one-party government. Dr J.B. Danquah and Joe Appiah, as leaders of the United Party, were accused of complicity in the strike, and there is every reason to believe, no matter how true this accusation was, that it would have helped their interests. Needless to say, the "Imperialists" were also held to have some responsibility, but this is more indicative of a general trend to cry this throughout the developing Socialist economies, to distract attention from domestic problems.

The aftermath of the Strike came early in October, when the TUC announced that its Executive Board would take over the running of the Union of Railway and Harbour Workers for a period of six months. The TUC, throughout the 1961 crisis, operated on two levels, as part of the régime's apparatus of control and, almost in spite of itself, as a normal organization.

1. Ghana Times, September 13th, 1961. See also B. Fitch and Mary Oppenheimer: Ghana: End of an Illusion. (Monthly Review Press, 1966). Here the Sekondi-Takoradi strike is seen as an attempt by the Imperialists to overthrow a Socialist Government. The authors see the background to the C.P.P. takeover and suppression of the unions, the imposition of "Labour aristocrats," and the drop by 15% in the real wages of the workers as a result of the 1961 Budget, as indications of a non-existent revolution, which the workers were called upon to defend. To these authors, Ghana was not socialist enough, and the unions in their privileged position, did not perform their functions in a proper socialist way. Cf. Bruce H. Millen: The Political Role of Labour in Developing Countries (Brookings Inst. 1963, pp. 75-76.

2. Tettegah had been General Secretary of the TUC since 1960. D.K. Foevie was the Chairman.
negotiating body. On neither level did it do very well. On the 23rd of October about a dozen officials of the Industrial, Commercial and General Workers Union who had taken part in the strike were expelled, and the Sekendi-Takoradi Branch of the Union was disbanded. Some twenty other political and union figures were arrested under the terms of the Preventive Detention Act. This was explained by Tettegah: "By allowing themselves to be used by foreign agents and subversive politicians, the detainees have forfeited and misplaced any confidence reposed in them by the rank and file, and are no longer entitled to any sympathy of the Trade Union Movement, and must be so condemned."\(^1\)

On the 11th December, the Government issued a White Paper\(^2\) which talked in terms of "terrorist tactics backed by industrial disturbances" and went on to paint the whole episode as a political manoeuvre, one of a series linked with attempts to assassinate the President. It was run by political figures who "met frequently for the purpose of planning industrial action as a means of overthrowing the Government, and by June of this year had succeeded in establishing close relations with some influential members of the Railway and Harbour Workers Union."\(^3\) Two of the political figures implicated, Dr J.B. Danquah and Victor Owusu, were supposed to have provided funds so that the local "Market Women" could be shown to have provided "free" food to the strikers, to show that it had "popular support". Control, according to the report, passed entirely to the hands of the Opposition politicians when the industrial

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leaders of the strike found that they had been hoodwinked and could not defeat the Government in such a manner. It finally accused one of the strike leaders, Mr W.N. Grant, of admitting freely that the intention was to overthrow the Government. The truth probably lies somewhere between. The twin towns of Sekondi-Takoradi, populated by different tribes from those in Accra, along with the Ashanti in Kumasi, were long opposed to the Government whose major support came from the Accra conurbation. It is therefore not difficult to understand that political pressures were very much to the fore throughout.

The strike was the last major attempt until the 1966 Coup at organised opposition to the Nkrumah régime. It had some economic roots, but political reasons were the real motivation. While it failed, it demonstrates once again the overriding political nature of the unions, and that political commitment rather than any desire to strike for collective bargaining purposes was behind it.

By the time of the first biennial Congress of the TUC held in Kumasi in March 1962, the problems engendered by the Takoradi strike had been forgotten or suppressed, and the movement in Ghana had turned even more into a major political organisation.

1. Field study shows that Mr Grant was a local organiser of the Opposition United Party.

The Congress emerged as a mere propaganda rally with hardly any matters for decision before it, though there was a strong undercurrent of feeling on major issues affecting the degree of independence of the TUC. This was the first conference to take place since the New Structure was brought in in April 1959.

Any comment on the role of the trade unions in the State was submerged under discussion of the evils of colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism and monopoly capitalism. There was practically nothing in the way of an Agenda, only an ad hoc timetable and there were no previously circulated resolutions of any substance. In sum, the whole affair was planned not as a congress but as a propaganda rally. Nkrumah's speech set the tone. He talked of the Government formed by the Convention Peoples' Party as being a peoples' government, and that therefore the interests of workers were well enough catered for by the State. The trade unions therefore had a different role from that of trade unions in a capitalist society, and trade unions and their officials must discard their colonial mentality and methods and remember that they were not struggling against capitalists but should spearhead the effort to raise productivity and production. Leadership of the trade unions and the leaders especially, must inculcate into the working people the love for labour and increased productivity. The trade unions must assist in explaining the socialist policies which the Government were pursuing to assure their members that they would be of ultimate benefit to the workers. Party officials and trade union officials should work hand in hand in raising
the ideological consciousness of the workers.

Among the points raised by the Annual Report presented by Tettegah were discussions on national production competitions, an incentive wages scheme which was to be reviewed annually, speeding up of the training of Ghanaians for management and key technical posts, continuous ideological training programmes for trade union leaders, union branch executives to be renamed trade union committees, further union amalgamations and the division of commercial and industrial workers' unions, national trade unions to derive the whole of their incomes from a central fund administered by the headquarters of the TUC instead of receiving a fixed percentage of dues, and dues to be increased on a sliding scale. All these points put forward in the Congress by Tettegah were unanimously adopted and came into force automatically on presentation. Discussion of the Report took precisely twenty minutes. After a promising start, the outlook was bleak.

From 1962 until the Military Coup which removed Nkrumah from power, the history of the labour movement in Ghana was distinguished by few significant events. The GTUC was a major wing of the Government machine, working closely with the AATUF Secretariat and the Bureau of African Affairs, \(^1\) and

\(^1\) A C.P.P. organisation for the training of "African freedom fighters" in Accra.
there was a consequent decline in the importance on the one hand of the individual unions, and on the other of the Ministry of Labour. Significant in this was that while Tettegah as the Secretary General held Cabinet Rank, (though he lost it when Nkrumah saw him as too much of a rival 1) the Minister of Labour did not.

It was a period also when the State was very much involved in its programme of Nationalisation, which included both the larger expatriate and indigenously-owned industries and trading concerns. Accusations of past exploitation of the workers was one of the main planks justifying this operation. But the unions played little part in this process, except as willing members of mass demonstrations in support of government policy. 2 At a later stage, the TUC did turn to attacking the Administrations of these new Public Enterprises and State Corporations, which in the main, being run by civil servants, had perhaps tended to expect the same employer-employee relationship as existed generally in the Public Service.

In February 1964, there was some unauthorised industrial trouble in Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi. This took the form of a short-lived strike by employees of a British-owned engineering firm, which was called an "unauthorised demonstration" by the Government-controlled press. 3 It was quickly disowned by the two unions concerned 4, and the TUC decided that those

1. When he turned his full attention to the Secretary-Generalship of AATUF, he was replaced by S.D. Magnus-George.
2. The mass demonstration was a common feature of the period.
4. The Industrial, Commercial and General Workers Union, and the Timber and Woodworkers Union.
"officers concerned in the two unions should be expelled for not using the machinery provided for by the Industrial Relations Act, to deal with such disputes." This was duly carried out.

Again in May 1964, the TUC felt it necessary to take some of the heat out of their members grievances by going through the motions of protesting to the Ministries of Labour and Trade, concerning labour costs and redundancies. Discontent was widespread among the workers for these reasons, but any "demonstrations" were branded as political and against the interests of the State. The TUC in order to contain this widespread movement of discontent, and possibly also because the then Secretary General of the TUC, S.D. Magnus-George, felt in a strong enough position vis a vis the discredited Minister of Trade, A.Y.K. Djin, (who was currently bearing the whole brunt of the unpopularity of the Government's economic policies which had led to rocketing cost of living, and scarcity of food) issued a statement critical of the policies leading to redundancy, though directing the complaints mainly to the private sector. It announced that :

"in an effort to protect the interests of its members the TUC is submitting proposals to the Government to take steps to offset any hardship on the workers" (sic).

2. Ghanaian Times, (11th May 1964). Magnus-George himself was purged in August 1964, and replaced by J.K. Ampah, another hostage to the Government's unpopular policies. Most of the Secretaries-General of the individual unions resigned at the same time.
This statement was accompanied by one in the *Ghanaian Times* of the same date, to the effect that the approaches to the Government had revealed "that allocations for essential goods submitted by importers had been met and that there was no justification whatsoever for some employers to declare workers redundant." There were no other obvious results of this move.

Generally, and apart from the above, the unions and the TUC were little in the news during this period. What the workers felt is only occasionally glimpsed at, between the lines of the government-controlled press. There was no obvious starvation, but urban employment was high, and the move back to the countryside was pronounced. The Workers Brigade, mentioned earlier, took up some slack, which probably postponed the growth of organised opposition.

There was one further isolated event which caused some individual unions briefly to rebel. This was the introduction of a National Provident Fund in 1965. Employees contributed 15 per cent of their weekly wages to this and employers paid at a 15 per cent rate. But the initial protests - to trade unions, employers, to the various Ministries, gradually changed to reluctant acceptance. The cost of living had continued to increase, and whilst manufacturers had in general, not been able to pass on their 15 per cent in the form of higher prices, due to price controls, and world market prices, the opportunity had been taken to reduce labour and cut costs by not replacing

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1. *ibid.* Government import controls were so strict and mal-administered, that for some months, virtually nothing came into the country.

2. *i.e.* mainly in cocoa.
wastage, and discharging excess labour which it was previously politically expedient to carry.

During 1965, a further development was the decision to cut the sixteen existing unions to only ten.¹ This was proposed on the grounds that the existing structure was still too complex and expensive. It never fully came into operation before the coup, though it was promulgated in the 1965 Industrial Relations Act, which also laid down new regulations with regard to collective bargaining, and as to who could negotiate. It set out strict penalties for failure to enter into negotiations.² The Act in addition set up a new Unfair Labour Practices Tribunal ³, consisting of five members, to investigate complaints relating to strikes and lockouts. This too had no opportunity to get into gear before the coup d'etat.

Throughout this period the Ghana Labour Movement had only brief contacts with the British TUC ⁴, though it had been affiliated to it from 1945 onwards. By the time of Independence, the Trade Union Congresses of Britain and Ghana were hardly on the best of terms. Ghana resented what it considered as the British paternalistic colonial tendency to give advice on Trade Union matters.

1. These were: The Mineworkers; The Teachers and Educational Workers; The Agricultural Workers; The Industrial, Commercial, and Catering Trades; The Posts, Transport and Maritime Workers; The Constructions and Woodworkers; The Public Services; The Railway Workers; The Hospital Workers, and The Local Government Workers Union.


3. Ibid. Section 31.

One major point of conflict was over the "New Structure" of the Ghana Trade Union Congress. In 1959 Sir Vincent Tewson, the General Secretary of the British TUC, wrote to Nkrumah as follows:

"It has been brought to my notice that a report of a speech made by you in Sekondi included a reference to the British TUC."

"The report says ... Dr Nkrumah told the Trade Union leaders that ... the TUC New Structure was government-sponsored and he personally supported it. The British TUC, which had fought for similar changes, had not achieved such recognition as the workers of Ghana had ..."

"This report, if correct, would indicate that you were under the impression that the British TUC would support legislation such as the Ghana Industrial Relations Act if it were introduced into this country. I wish to make it clear to you that such legislation would be in conflict with our basic operation as a Movement free and independent of government (irrespective of party) and would be resisted here by our whole Movement."

This quotation from Tewson's letters shows the basic difference between the two structures. The British TUC's General Council reported in September 1959 at some length on the situation in Ghana. It says:

"The General Council took special note of this development which represented a departure by the Trade Union Movement of an ex-colonial territory in the Commonwealth from the conception of independent Trade Unionism held in this country ... The Secretary General wrote to Dr Nkrumah to inform him that the British TUC would not support such legislation if it were introduced into this country since it would be in conflict with the basic operation of the Movement, as a Movement free and independent of government."

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1. GTUC (typewritten) Report (April 1959). Copy held by Mr Wallace Johnson.
2. British TUC General Council Report (September 1959)
The past three chapters have examined the development of trade unionism in Ghana in terms of the political environment, without proffering any moral judgements, or suggesting what should be the "proper" goals of the unions. This has, in the main, been associated with the contact between the TUC, and individual unions and the Party. Too often of recent, the alternative to involvement with the Party was non-involvement in politics, while in fact, the anti-colonial nature of the early unions did not stipulate that they were particularly unique to the CPP. There certainly was a division among the leadership of the unions over the form of political leadership, just as there was a division over the function of the unions. To see the unions as entirely within the CPP framework is to misjudge the situation. This clearly emerges when one distinguishes between the actions of the unions in the anti-colonial struggle as against one or other party group internal to Ghana.

What these three chapters have illustrated is the historical influences that acted on the development of Ghanaian trade unions, how they arose, why they arose when they did and assisted in the anti-colonial struggle in the way they did, at least up to Independence, when they found their new role in co-operation with the State. This is enlarged upon in the
following chapter. It has emerged that these unions grew in a very different manner from those in Britain. The conflict between the traditional, and the process of modernisation existed in Britain of course, but not that between the native society and the Colonial régime, a conflict that has had considerable influences on their development.

On the other hand it was far from being all conflict, and the Colonial Power and the metropolitan unions gave a great deal of assistance at an early stage, indeed almost before the unions actually existed. While we have seen that early socio-economic groupings and nascent unions did exist prior to the Second World War, it is probably true to say that most of the unions which appeared from then up at least until the mid-fifties, would either not have come into being at all, or would have petered out very quickly without the help of the Colonial Government and its Labour Department in overcoming difficulties of administration and tribal barriers. But conflict there was, with the unions as one weapon against a colonial government, but a government which was also the trend setter, and the employer of at least half of the Modern sector in the Ghanaian economy. Conflict finally there was, as was mentioned above, between the modern and the traditional, the union loyalty or loyalty to tribe or chief.
CHAPTER V

THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT:

THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FORMATION OF TRADE UNIONISM IN GHANA.
CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

1. Introduction.

In the previous chapters the historical development of trade unionism in Ghana was examined in some detail. The present chapter seeks to analyse more precisely the various influences which had a bearing on the development, in an attempt to answer the questions of why the trade unions rose when they did and took the form they did during the period under study.

I distinguish two categories of influence. The first of these, what I have termed the internal factors, includes such considerations as the economic environment in which the unions emerged. For example the growth of a money economy is one sine qua non of trade union development anywhere. Another relates to the increases in urbanisation with the concurrent acceleration of social change. The second category of influence concerns those external forces emanating from the West and elsewhere under the aegis of colonialism itself and equally from those agencies opposed to colonialism. Western patterns of trade unionism for example were imported through the medium of metropolitan-trained leadership and in a wider context by direct and indirect contact with other foreign trade union organisations and the great Internationals, the W.F.T.U. and the I.C.F.T.U. In the formative period, the influence of the union structure of Britain was of major importance, but since independence, other external agencies and the union movements of third countries played a much larger part. Included in this is the influence of what I have called the institutional factors.
This is at first sight somewhat similar to what pertained in
nineteenth century Britain, namely the attitudes of Government and employers
first of all in combating the rise of trade unionism, and later tolerating
or even encouraging its development. Here it is interesting to note at the
outset, the lack of the typical tripartite situation of workers,
employers and government in Ghana. But frequently in the colonial situation
the latter two worked as one, and even where this was not entirely the case,
in the minds of the trade unionists they were one, which was all that
mattered.

2. **Internal Economic and Social Factors.**

In the modern period, trade unions have become a mark of social progress
and industrial achievement within a state, and this has contributed greatly
to their rapid emergence. This process has been accompanied by the desire
of the newly independent governments to keep them under their control,
with aims which are first and foremost committed to the national interest,
Stimulated by increasingly large measures of self-government, political
parties prior to independence came to recognise the advantages and added
strength that control of trade union organisations would give them. Both
these points are of particular relevance to Ghana. On the other hand,
the trade union movement was not only used to further the campaigns for
independence, but also to give expression, especially in Ghana, to
international policies such as the Pan-African idea. It is within this
political framework that the following is relevant. But before these
objectives can be fulfilled there are certain basic prerequisites of trade

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1. See discussion, Chapter VIII below.
union development. I have isolated some which are of universal application, and which had equal place in the growth of trade unions in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

One first precondition is the growth of a money economy and the consequent emergence of a sizeable wage-labour force. Concurrent with this is the general acceleration of economic activity. A money economy means money wages, which in turn create a market for new goods and commodities at an international level. This tends to lead to a more stable wage labour force within which trade unionism can thrive. These necessary conditions began to appear to an appreciable degree in Ghana in the years between the Wars. Again economic individualism and more highly developed concepts of capital accumulation, land tenure and employment come into being. This tends to weaken communal and lineage responsibilities, which in turn makes the individual more vulnerable to economic exploitation. The trade union comes into being as a natural replacement for the security afforded by traditional society.¹

With the growth of a money economy comes the realisation of the Ghanaian wage earners that the betterment of their own economic well-being and status is best achieved through co-operation and collective bargaining, with a common generally expatriate economy. This appreciation is exaggerated by comparisons made with the salaries and living conditions of the colonists, and by the growth of international comparisons generally, though admittedly discussion of black-white wage differentials did not arise in Ghana until after 1945. In the odd instances elsewhere where African and White workers did the same jobs, for

example in immediate post-war French West Africa, the wage differential could be as much as ten times, and this was therefore an extremely effective tool, especially when used in France itself by African and Socialist deputies in the National Assembly. There was little similar campaigning in Britain for the right to higher wages for Africans in British West Africa, due to less centralised administration of our colonial territories, and in any case there were hardly any cases of Ghanaians and Europeans doing the same jobs until very much later. The change from a subsistence economy, assisted in the main by the British Colonial government, tended to widen the range between economic prosperity and security, and gave in consequence further scope for grievance. These grievances could, in modern conditions, be most easily dealt with by communal activity, through the use of unions, which were given strength and direction by having money wages to pay for education and organisation.

Secondly the degree of urbanisation, industrialisation or concentration of production in farms, factories and towns, the degree of large-scale entrepreneurship and of better communications is fundamental to the development of trade unions. Collectivisation into towns and in production units, allows for this necessary communication between sizeable numbers of wage earners for the first time. This raises the question: is the degree of unionisation proportional to the degree of urbanisation. Almost certainly it is, especially if one includes, as a determining factor, the degree of communication, for both urbanisation (collectivisation and commercialisation) and communications are necessary for a trade unionism hoping to cope with modern circumstances. The strongest unions, in the French as in the British colonies, were as we have seen in the towns - Dakar, Cotonou, Lagos, Freetown and Accra - nothing much existing in the hinterlands.
In Ghana there were, however, two exceptions to this general rule. First of all from 1934 onwards unions appeared round the expatriate-controlled mines and other exploitive industries such as the timber extraction concessions which began operating about this time. These establishments provided the necessary prerequisites, namely collectivisation into units or groups of units for communication purposes, and also the unity of economic interest of those concerned. The second exception were those workers employed in communications themselves, the Motor Drivers, who had a union from 1931, and the Railway Workers Union which had a national structure (as far as the railways extended nationally that is) with well-supported and informed union branches, from the late thirties. Here again the conditions of ability to keep in contact and a similarity of interest were fulfilled.

A third factor concerns the strength of traditional ties. This could either have a beneficial or retarding effect on development. Existing ethnic patterns may make trade unions superfluous in coping with the problems of insecurity, so that the friendly-society type of organisation proves unnecessary even in modern conditions. But in a new urban environment this will seldom be sufficient, when it is necessary to campaign against modern forms of government or employers. Trade unions replace the tribe and family, and have to cope with the whole range of economic necessities for the members. They may become a combination of friendly society, insurance company and trade union, looking after the sick, running savings schemes and even educational projects, as was the case with some of the
earlier Nigerian trade unions. The almost "Owenite" belief in trade unions as multi-purpose organisations which were intended to replace the traditional tribal societies by attempting to meet the whole range of the workers' needs, suggests, as was discussed earlier, that this was not in the first instance simply an attempt to copy contemporary Western trade union patterns. But as the experience of early trade unionism in the Gold Coast showed, while this belief in "one-big-unionism" was current in the beginning, increased specialisation quickly followed.

Tribal ties on the other hand may seriously weaken the unions, and the existence of tribal rivalries may make it easy for employers to break strikes organised by unions with a one tribe membership, by calling in workers from other tribes, as happened in strikes involving the Ashanti in the post war period. The tribal factor is an extremely important one throughout, and needs constant emphasis, and even strong national unions used the existing structure for their own ends. The Ashanti Motor Drivers' Union for example, up till its strike in 1937, continued to put all its grievances to the Government through the Asantahene and other local chiefs.

The general level of economic prosperity or depression, fourthly, is a universally important factor in trade union development. Workers will combine to cope with general or particular conditions of adversity, but in fact, will be strongest in a buoyant or inflationary situation. When

1. of Nigeria. See Appendix II.
2. See Chapter II
production is booming, the desire of employers to avoid strikes is favourable to trade union demands for better pay and conditions of service. While as a general statement this probably holds good, it is very difficult to substantiate in statistical terms. To strike in boom conditions is not always remunerative in West Africa due to the very elastic nature of the labour supply, especially in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations. Though skilled workers will tend to have more continuous bargaining power even where there is considerable depression, in Ghana there was always a reasonably educated reserve-army available for strike-breaking when the need arose. This is still true today with the presence of the large numbers of underemployed middle-school leavers referred to above. Outside Ghana, similar problems faced the trade unions, as was exemplified by the 1953 pre-"Code de Travail" strike in Conakry which was broken by calling in replacement workers from Senegal, and even using a group of transient fishermen from Dahomey. Because of the weaknesses of West African unions in this respect, and due also to their inability to provide the necessary strike funds, they have been wont to employ the token (and as a consequence usually well disciplined) short-period stoppage, to show their disaffection. The Ghanaian unions employed the lightning strike technique on numerous occasions during the early fifties. This method causes maximum inconvenience to employers with minimum harm to the strikers.

Finally, the size and distribution of the wage labour force, as determined by the degree of urbanisation will be important for the development of the unions through
providing effective numerical strength, sufficient facility of communication and the necessary funds. We have seen what a small percentage of the total working population unionised labour may be, but if reasonable numbers are grouped within a fairly small geographical area, then the process is greatly assisted. The strength of unions in the southern parts of Ghana, especially round the mines and in the cocoa and timber producing areas, illustrates this obvious tendency.

The above environmental factors along with the other sociological conditions discussed in the Introduction, are enough in themselves to explain the rise of trade unions in Ghana as simple and natural combinations of workers which form to cope with certain economic situations. There are of course many other conditions within the area which will influence the type of organisation which eventually emerges, and these perhaps should be given a place with those listed above. In many situations, just as important as tribal and geographical divisions is the level of experience and education of the working population.\(^1\) A certain minimum level of the latter is required to ensure an efficient and viable trade union organisation and leadership, and to retain a check on individual leaders' honesty of purpose and practice. It is certainly difficult to give weight to these factors, and many are frequently not as real as they are apparent. Success in the

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1. See Section 4, below.
long run may be hindered or denied by personal ambitions and rivalries such as would apply to any organisation anywhere.

3. **External influence on the development of West African Trade Unions.**

In the years immediately preceding the second World War, various external influences quite apart from that of colonialism itself, began to make themselves felt on the social and political organisations which existed in West Africa at the time. With regard to trade unions in Ghana, this section shows what form these external forces took, where they originated, and what they hoped to achieve by the expenditure of large amounts of money and resources. Having discussed the methods by which they influenced the development of Ghanaian trade unionism and what their objectives were, I go on to analyse their successes and failures. As the major agency is that of colonialism itself, incorporated into this will be a discussion of the relevance of the transplantation to Ghana of British trade unionism. Whereas in the older industrialised countries such as Britain, trade unions and the procedures for conciliation and arbitration which come with them, evolved through many decades, in Ghana, as has been seen, they are for the most part a quite recent growth. Something of the British experience, though as will be demonstrated, this may tend to be irrelevant or misplaced, has been transmitted through the medium of the Colonial Civil Service, the presence of British and other Expatriate management and the more deliberate
presence of British-based trade union advisers. The following section discusses these and other agencies in more detail. The array of such external forces active in the trade union field is fairly large, and the object is to attempt to categorise the major groups.

It is argued that trade union organisations in underdeveloped countries have been materially affected by these extra-territorial forces to a degree which has often been underestimated. Proceeding on the assumption which is supported by much of the literature,\(^1\) that trade union organisations are an essential part of the development and that they may be a major guide to their nation's political future, it is hardly surprising that countries and organisations from outside those whose union organisations are to be influenced, have devoted a substantial amount of money and effort to their labour programmes. It becomes immediately obvious that one must from the beginning take issue with Rostow in this particular context when he argues that "movement along the road of modernisation will be determined in each society by unique factors in its history, culture and ambitions which a society outside can only influence marginally".\(^2\) One must admittedly distinguish between the long and the short term, but Rostow's thesis no matter how generally intended, would

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seem to contradict the facts in Ghana where external forces very obviously have played a large and continuing part. George Lodge also maintains that the external influences are of more importance than Rostow admits.¹

The initiative for influencing trade unions in this way has not originated solely among external forces, and the desire to establish control of the Ghanaian trade unions was of course limited by the above mentioned internal conditions. But since the possession of a trade union organisation has become a mark of social progress and a sign of industrial achievement, help will be accepted where help is offered. This was especially true of Ghana both before and after independence. In the context of Mkrumah and the G.P.P.'s interest in having a model trade union organisation which, in the main, was committed first and foremost to the national interest, and only secondarily to its own self-defined goals, a large variety of agencies were allowed to influence and assist in their varied ways.

But in the end it can be shown that while external interests and internal needs have to some extent complemented each other, it is the outside influences that have played the major part in moulding the present structure of Ghanaian trade unions. The experience of those countries which are now fairly industrially advanced is very similar. European trade unions certainly borrowed or shared each other's experiences and

ideologies in shaping their character and their relations with the state, the employers and the political parties. Similarly, they came together in international solidarity movements to foster a continuous interchange of ideas.\(^1\) This obviously large amount of mutual influence among these now advanced nations in their trade union affairs, naturally extends to the developing countries as well, and Ghana was no exception in this process.

It is difficult to assess the degree which early external influences among the developed nations affected or determined the ideologies and structures of their own national trade union organisations. In some cases, it might well be argued, as by Rostow, that the internal political and economic circumstances were ultimately the deciding factor in shaping their character, but even if we accept this for the long run, the difference, when we come to deal with Ghana is that there was neither the government nor the labour organisation which would guide from an internal source, the growth of trade union organisations by means of organised, sustained and well-financed pressures. What unions existed were therefore very much at the mercy of external influences.

In was in the inter-war period, as has been seen from Chapter 11 of this thesis, that trade union organisations in Ghana first became the objective for guidance and control among

external forces. What were these influences? I distinguish three separate groups, which came at different stages in the development process, and have, of course, not yet finally proved their degrees of relative superiority. Firstly there were these forces stemming from the colonial situation. Secondly, there were those which came from "third" countries, such as the United States, the Soviet Union, and Israel. Thirdly, and perhaps in the long run this may prove to be the most powerful influence of all, there were the pressures exerted by the international labour organisations, and associated bodies. These divisions are of course not rigid ones, and for example most of the important national trade unions of the developed countries are affiliated with one or other international body through which they channel much of their labour assistance to under-developed countries. But at the same time, many of them also act individually whether in consultation or co-operation with their own governments.

4. The Colonial Influence.

Certainly the first and most positive influence was that of Britain itself. This whole subject was discussed at some length in the Historical Section above.¹ Its influence on trade union development was channelled in a wide variety of ways,

¹. Chapter 11 to IV.
by means of the government itself, its labour advisers, by expatriate employers and by individual unions in Britain.\footnote{1}

It might be convenient therefore when speaking in general terms, to further sub-divide into governmental and non-governmental influences. The activities of some national trade union organisations such as the National Union of Mineworkers, equalled or even exceeded the efforts of the Government, though of course not all of them felt compelled to participate. In countries other than Britain which have a single national trade union federation, this organisation has frequently both the duty and the franchise to operate abroad as the executive agency of the government's international labour policy. In the case of Britain there always has been some need for independent governmental efforts since the policies of the trade union movement and of the government or party in power do not necessarily always reflect each other. But there are in fact very few cases in relation to Ghana where there was not a broadly similar objective in international labour policy, and co-operation rather than competition between the Government, the TUC and individual unions has been the rule. The Government's colonial and international policy towards Ghana has normally been based on complementing the TUC's actions no matter what has been in power. The phenomenon is even more obvious in the United States, where American Government and the AFL-CIO work in active and effective co-operation, in their attitudes for example, towards the I.C.F.T.U.

\footnote{1. For a discussion of France's practice see J. Meynaud and A. Salah-Bey, \textit{Le Syndicalism Africain} (Payot, 1963).}
The earliest signs of this in Ghana were in 1930, when Lord Passfield, as Secretary of State for the Colonies in the second Labour Administration, suggested to British colonial administrators throughout the Empire that the growth of trade unionism in the colonies was desirable per se, and a legitimate feature of industrial and social development. The "Passfield Memorandum" is an excellent starting-point for any consideration of external influence on trade unionism in Ghana. The British model was, at that stage, held to be the best suited for the purpose, just as the unions of French West Africa were to be structurally modelled on those of France.¹ A study of the growth of interest of Britain and France in trade unionism in their dependent territories shows as was seen in the preceding chapter that in both cases there was a realisation of the importance of trade unions before any real organisations of workers existed. The metropolitan countries' roles were natural in the colonial situation, but the reins were not to be left entirely in their hands.

In the non-Governmental field, it is again not surprising that British patterns of trade unionism in both structure and organisation, were adopted in the main, since the object was to cope and bargain with British patterns of capitalism and employment. The structure of unions, from local branch to national union, and to federation of unions on both horizontal and vertical patterns was entirely based on the British system. The British

¹ See I.F. Gonidec 'The Development of Trade Unionism in Black Africa' - Bulletin of the Inter-African Labour Institute (May, 1963). This has a discussion of the links between French unions and those of her colonies.
T.U.C. maintained a continuing liaison with the GTUC and individual unions, and it often furnished a service of experts, financed small scale training programmes, and gave scholarships to trade unionists to go to Educational institutions such as Ruskin College. But individual trade unions in Britain, such as National Union of Mineworkers, also played a prominent and independent role in for example helping the Ghanaian Union of Mineworkers in both its financial control and organisation.

5. The Influence of Third Countries.

But Britain was not to be left alone to influence the Ghanaian trade union structure unhindered. For a variety of reasons, philanthropic or self-seeking, third parties began to enter the scene just prior to, and more extensively after, the Second World War. From the moment that Russia began to look outward, African trade unions became an important object of attention, often for purely political reasons. The United States concurrently or as a result, also began to take a similar interest. Other countries entered the field at a later stage, notably Israel, Egypt and West Germany.

1. See Chapter IV, Section 6. Also a fairly full discussion in F.T. De Vyver's *The Transplantation of Trade Unionism to British Colonial Africa* (Duke University, 1962)

2. At a later stage, it was in Ghana, if anywhere, that Russian patterns might have been expected to have been adopted. See Chapter IV.
Until the nineteen fifties, Communist influence in Ghanaian trade unionism was negligible, but with the growth of nationalism and the move towards independence, along with an increase in travel and educational facilities in Eastern Europe, a new interest in Communist ideas was ensured. This process was assisted by the WFTU and the Communist Party of Great Britain. There were certainly Communist or East European interests before this, and as early as the 1930s, trade union leaders such as Wallace Johnson of Sierra Leone, were being trained on special courses in Moscow at the University of the East. The Soviet Union also understandably sought to influence the shaping of trade union movements in Ghana itself, through local leaders and organisations, in order to safeguard its political and economic interests abroad, as much as to extend its ideological beliefs. With initially quite modest results, the Soviet Union established itself, with the assistance of many Ghanaian Political leaders,¹ as a considerable influence in Ghanaian trade unionism for about a decade. The ideology of the C.P.P. was of considerable assistance in this respect.

From the end of the war, the other large victorious powers, especially the United States, entered the field as well, and began attempting to give direction to the trade union movements in West Africa. The United States Government has declared ²


policy of "strengthening free democratic trade unions, to raise standards of living through improved labour-management relations." To implement this, it had a vast programme of educational and training schemes, and in the period up till 1962, there were hundreds of visits to the U.S. of one kind or another, by labour leaders from Ghana. Thereafter, Ghana's anti-American policies became so marked that such invitations were neither proffered nor accepted to any great extent. Again technical assistance to the Ghana Labour Department, labour attachés and advisors in the U.S. Embassy in Accra, loans and grants to individual trade unions, these were the media of influence of the United States government, aimed not entirely selfishly, at promoting efficient organisations as well as American political influence in Ghana. ¹ This process too was eroded after 1962. Also from the United States of America, the AFL-CIO, assisted by some of its constituent unions, started an active programme including direct financial assistance to individual Ghanaian unions, exchange visits of trade union leaders and other educational ventures. The recently established American Institute for Free Labour Development, an AFL-CIO propaganda agency is now, post-coup, again taking a close interest in Ghanaian trade union activities.²

¹ For a view on what the U.S. has done and should be doing see A. Zack Labour Training in Developing Countries, op. cit. ¹² et seq. See also Paper by Zack "Trade Unions and the Development of Middle Level Manpower". Paper presented at First International Conference of Africanists (Accra, December 196 ²).

Important in the list of the developed nations which have guided the efforts of African trade unions especially in Ghana, as was shown in chapter IV, is Israel's Histadrut. It developed close links with numbers of trade union leaders after the ushering in of the "New Structure" in 1958. Tettegah and others made frequent visits to Israel up till the time of the 1966 Coup, and the GTUC adopted many of its practices, as befitted the desire to have a highly centralised organisational structure within the State. Histadrut's Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies, which obtained quite a lot of its finances from the AFL-CIO, enabled it to advise on the structure and co-operative enterprises for trade unions after the "New Structure" - a rather ironic use, in the short term, of American finances.

The West German Federation of Labour (DGB), again, became an increasingly prominent source of assistance to Ghanaian trade unionism. Its structural organisation, which, like the Israeli one, was to the Ghanaians appealingly centralised, caught the attention of Ghana's trade union organisation and government especially when that country started thinking in terms of a one-party State. Ghana's adoption, after 1958, of the sixteen union structure for the trade union movement appears, to a great extent, to be based on the DGB pattern. It is politically

1. See also Appendix D. and Chapter IV.

2. See Appendix E; also Chapter IV page 136. Information on the DGB's involvement is scanty. The D.G.B. Records in Germany have not proved of much assistance.
interesting that the Israeli's and the Germans have spent so much money and time on Ghanaian and other trade union organisations throughout Africa. Both of these countries feel it of supreme importance so to do because of their very much single-handed rivalries, the one with the Arab states, and the other with East Germany. Their opponents have in general terms been notably unsuccessful within the trade union movement, all the more surprising because of the generally extreme leftwards-looking policies of the recent leadership in the African States concerned.

A final point has to be made here. In recent years, following the example of the industrialised countries, much of the "external influence" is coming from within Africa. The Ghana TUC, throughout the early sixties especially, advertised itself as relevant model for trade union organisations in other African countries. Unilaterally and through the AATUF\(^1\) in which it played a leading role, it attempted to set up trade union groupings or to dominate already existing ones whose ideological outlook harmonised with its own.

An even more exhaustive list of national trade unions with programmes in Ghana and the other countries of West Africa would not reflect a large number of communist orientated bodies. The reasons for this are several: first of all, the communist trade union organisations tended to have a rigorous division of functions. Again, the control exercised over contacts with foreign countries and the trade unions within them, led to more centralisation in labour activities through the WFTU, as part of overall communist foreign policy. As a result the WFTU in Ghana has a history less hampered by the conflicting activities of its affiliates than is the case with the ICFTU. This, up to the time

\(^1\) See Chapter VIII below.
of the 1966 Coup was becoming less and less so; the East Germans, the
Yugoslavs and the Czechs recently appeared to engage in independent and
even competitive policies. More recently the position of the Chinese
Confederation of Trade Unions had a character just as devious as its
Government has within the communist bloc, and with it much depended on
the prevailing state of Sino-Soviet relations. But it, even at the peak
of Nkrumahism, had a negligible influence on trade unions in Ghana.

6. The Influence of International Bodies.

Thirdly, there are the international labour organisations, most of whom
contribute a major portion of their resources to the underdeveloped areas.
There are three major international trade union organisations in this
field. First there is the International Confederation of Free Trade
Unions (ICFTU) together with its administratively subordinated regional
body working in Africa, (AFRO), and the closely associated International
Trade Secretariats (ITS) which are groups of national unions related by
industry or occupation. The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)
the communist labour organisation, is its opposing force. The trio is
completed by the International Confederation of Christian ¹ Trade Unions
(IFCTU-CISC), smaller and poorer, yet still professing a global
jurisdiction even in West African areas where the Islamic faith
predominates. It has had very little following in Ghana at any time and
is in consequence disregarded in what follows.

The weakness of these organisations in their vulnerability to charges
linking them with the commercial or strategic interest of one of the major
power blocs, partly accounts for the rise of the independent regional type

1. To cope with areas where Islam holds a strong position, this
organisation's title was changed from "Chréien" to "Croyant" - i.e.
"believing" workers, in 1958.
of international labour organisations in West Africa. The All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF) with its Pan-African aspirations, matches the African Trade Union Confederation (ATUC) which seeks orientation more closely with the West.1

Outrunning all the above, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) stands out as being most significantly concerned with the development of trade unionism in underdeveloped countries. Its establishment in 1919 as an instrument to achieve world-wide industrial progress, was aimed at the development of a minimum standard of international trade union policies. The international influence which the ILO has exercised since the Second World War at any rate, has played a major part in shaping the trade unions of the emerging nations. Using its international Conventions, especially those relating to the freedom of association, the ILO exerted moral pressure on the governments of member countries to conform, or at least appear to conform to international standards of conduct towards trade unions. Ghana, even at the height of the purge of the unions, was careful to pay lip service support to the ILO Conventions. The ILO has been successful partially because it has no bias towards any particular power bloc and partially because some of the more restrictive countries like Ghana have been held in check because they have ratified conventions which are commonly thought of as signs of political maturity. With its International Institute for Labour Studies as further assistance, the ILO has, most important of all, exerted its influence as a result of a general belief in its objectivity and its success in avoiding too close an identification with any particular social or economic system. The Ghanaian trade union movement seldom turned to attacking the ILO, though over several years, the ICFTU unsuccessfully brought complaints against the Government of Ghana.

1. These organisations are discussed in more detail in Chapter VIII.
before the ILO, alleging the monopoly of the GTUC, the enforcing of union membership, interference in the internal affairs of the GTUC and other matters with regard to the treatment of the unions and their members within Ghana.\(^1\)

7. **The Objectives of External Agencies.**

The objectives of the above-mentioned external agencies in spending large amounts of money and resources on Ghanaian trade unions are many. Basically the intention is to propagate a model, to create technically proficient organisations which will assist economic development, and probably most important to achieve political objectives through the infusion of an ideology. The mechanics of trying to bring about these objectives consisted, in the main, in spending large amounts of money and in operating large-scale training projects. The form and approach varied from period to period depending on the agency in question. In some, a long term programme for training Ghanaian trade union leaders was adopted, in others, at the opposite end of the scale, a simple bribe was more likely to achieve the objective. It is difficult to judge to what relative degree these forces had a noticeable impact on countries such as Ghana whose industrial system became the object of concerted efforts to alter its existing structure and ideology. Except where systems paralleling that of the Soviet Union emerge, as they did to some extent in Ghana, the results achieved are not always noticeable, probably because the forces of tradition and habit under the colonial system proved more decisive that the attraction of new models.\(^2\)

\(^1\) See for example ILO Bulletin (April, 1966) Vol. XLIX No. 2.

The pattern was that the leadership of trade unions in Ghana was either Western educated or influenced, from the very beginning. The British TUC gave numerous grants for training trade unionists in Britain from the immediate post war years onwards. Siaka Stevens, the veteran Sierra Leone trade union leader, was the first sponsored by them to go to Ruskin College, and the present Secretary General of the GTUC, B.A. Bentum was another candidate. Individual British unions such as the National Union of Mineworkers had similar programmes of training at their British headquarters. Certainly it was generally hoped that in Ghana, local editions of the British TUC would emerge, exercising guidance independent of government or political party.

"Third" countries on the whole were most interested, in the pre-independence period, in the fact that since Ghanaian trade unions were a fundamental part of the move to political and economic development, influencing them might well guide the nation's political future. Seldom was the assistance and advice given in a disinterested manner, nor was it so accepted, and the result was a far from smooth pattern of development. Only in part were "philanthropic" motives the real ones. The British objective, however, either through the medium of the Colonial Government, through the TUC or individual unions, was to bring about technically sound unions based on the British model which could cope with British patterns of Capitalism and employment. The mistake was that the model was not sufficiently pliable to fit in with conditions peculiar to Africa. Similarly, though in a less co-ordinated manner, with France and the French possessions. The Catholic, Socialist and Communist metropolitan-based unions competed to ensure maximum efficiency in their branches.

Alongside this model-building and acting as the driving force, the transplantation of an ideology was the major objective. Concepts of the internationalism and dignity of labour, of Marxist and Communist ideas sympathetic to Africans in their colonial environment, had their effect, as had the beliefs of the British and French Socialists and in the latter country's Catholic parties. Without entering into any ideological controversies themselves, the African unions came involved in conflicts entirely foreign to the African situation. In the AOF, for example the presence of the metropolitan-based P.O. (Force Ouvrier, the anti-Communist Socialists) the CGT (Confédération Générale de Travail - mainly Communist biased) and the CFTUC (new CATC, 1 the Catholic or "creyants" union) might have caused certain disunity. But, in fact, in the African context, there existed a great deal of co-operation between these splinter unions which proved impossible in France. The events in Congo Brazzaville in 1962 which resulted in the overthrow of Abbé Youleu testify to this co-operation. Such disagreements based on metropolitan conditions were rare in Ghana however, but are interesting for comparative purposes. What did emerge in Ghana was conflict on the wider ideological issue of the freedom of the unions acting qua unions, or as the industrial wing of the C.P.P.

Thus the various power blocs were primarily motivated by political and ideological wishes, and this has also tended to be behind the rules of the ICFTU1 and WFTU, despite their protests to the contrary. The ICFTU has certainly been an ardent supporter of the rights of trade unions unfettered by governmental and party political ties. The perhaps naive belief that this would work in countries such as Ghana any more than that unions anywhere can be free from politics, has however doomed much of the ICFTU's more philanthropic approaches to failure.

1 From July 1956.
The International Labour Organisation has managed to steer an admirable but lone course, remarkably free from ties, and dedicated to the interests of the workers themselves. Ideology, apart from this belief in unfettered unionism, has been subsumed by the genuine and generally accepted desire to promote technically proficient organisations capable of coping with particularly African problems. The ILO resolutely refused to be drawn into any political or partisan controversy in the field of trade unions and industrial relations activity in Ghana, as the cases brought to it by the ICFTU proved.

In conclusion, it is impossible to find any single motive for this interference in any particular case. The two major goals were the philanthropic wish to propagate a model which would create a proficient trade union organisation, and, more ubiquitously, to put forward an ideology favourable to the motivating country or organisation. The latter was obviously always a key objective since in it is included the determination of various alternative courses of economic and political development.

8. **External Agencies - their successes and failures.**

Having examined what these external agencies hoped to achieve, it is perhaps useful to conclude this section by analysing the relative successes of the various forces which competed with each other to influence Ghanaian Unions. Much of this discussion must revolve round the effectiveness of the transplantation of what I have called the "Westminster Model" of trade unionism.¹ This latter title must be understood to include a model

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¹ For a discussion of this as regards to Government generally, see 'Westminster Export Models: The Legal Framework of Responsible Government' by S.A. de Smith in the *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* (November, 1961).
of trade unionism stemming from the experience of Britain. "Westminster" is more suitable, especially in the British context, than perhaps the "TUC - Great Russell Street" model, since most of the initiative came from the British Government through the Colonial Office and the Ministry of Labour, and the little that did come from individual unions or the TUC in Britain was normally channelled through the Government.

Looking first at these Governmental influences described above, it must be appreciated that in even one of the oldest of the industrialised countries such as Britain, there are constant industrial relations difficulties, despite the fairly high level of leadership and discipline in the unions. It is therefore hardly to be expected that such a system transplanted in toto into the very different conditions prevailing in Ghana could last long or work well. Perhaps the most surprising thing is that so many of the British concepts, at least with regard to the lower levels of the trade union organisation, have stayed, and that given this expatriate heritage, the union system worked at all. In the long run, the area's own experience must shape its own scheme of trade unions and industrial relations.

Adapting social or political institutions and organisations from one environment to another tends to be difficult, and the results are unpredictable. The structure of these social and political institutions and organisations under Colonialism were often exported in their original form, complete with detailed functions and goals, because as George Fischer has pointed out,¹ the original form of the organisation concerned is considered by the Coloniser to be the most appropriate one. He calls this the attitude of 'absolutist universalism' and points out how

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1. G. Fischer 'Syndicats et Decolonisation', *Présence Africain*, (October, 1960.)
prevalent this belief is throughout the political field. Trade unions are no exception and British policy has certainly in the past been partly based on the belief that it was possible to export the "Westminster model" of trade unionism (or Government) to Africa, and then to expect it to work. This slowly changed and there were signs from the early fifties of a more realistic approach. A Royal Commission set up to deal with East Africa in 1955, eventually concluded that "the attempt to encourage the growth of trade unions on the British model, is likely for some time to come, to represent an expenditure of effort which might be employed more effectively in other directions."\(^1\)

In attempting to propagate the Westminster model, the British were doing something which other metropolitan countries were guilty of as well. Communist trade unions certainly attempted a like model throughout the world, but that does not mean to say that they were proven any more effective. There were just as many obvious though different weaknesses in trying to transplant any institution from the Soviet Union to an underdeveloped West African country, as there were from the West. This point of discussion is crucial to this question of the relevance of the British model. Obviously structural form and functional behaviour are causally related.\(^2\) But, the degree to which they are so depends on a large number of interrelating factors, and it is relevant to the success of the transplantation whether the model itself is a precise and

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1. *East African Royal Commission Report* (1953-55) H.M.S.O. This point is also made by Fischer op. cit.: in Civil Service phraseology, these are strong words.

2. Fischer op. cit.
specific thing which in this case it is not, and again, the force and persuasion with which it is sold in to its next context is important. The resultant transplantation may be successful or not according to the skill, attitudes and resources of the organisation or country attempting the task. Success will also be curtailed, since no one force was allowed to work in a vacuum and each had to compete with others vitally opposed to it and of course, most importantly, there was opposition from the unions themselves. For Britain there is no precise model, rather there is an imprecise ideal which, given an often uncoordinated transplantation process, in part answers the question of the relevance of the British model, by explaining why it in general failed.

The conclusion from this must be both general and imprecise. If we look for success in terms of how like our own system are the unions of Ghana, then we may certainly believe that we have failed. Any success lies in the fact that some of the original has remained, even though it is not always and immediately recognisable. The understanding must be that the Ghanaian situation has dictated many severe and unique changes, making it impossible to explain the situation in British terms alone. What and how fundamental these changes are, and how we should approach the new form of trade unionism that has emerged, is discussed at length elsewhere.¹ In sum, the British model has relevance when attempting to understand the emergence of development of Ghanaian unionism, but is not enough in itself to allow a full analysis.

¹. See Chapters VI and VII below.
9. **Weaknesses of African Trade Unions**

From the above analysis is it possible to draw any precise conclusions about the structure of the trade union organisations that finally emerged, especially in relation to their inherent strengths and weaknesses? Is a strong trade union possible in the circumstances prevailing in Ghana, and has this even been realised?

Let us look first at the question of tribal structure as a barrier to cohesive trade unionism. The presence of tribal groups presents an ingrown barrier to cohesive trade unionism on a national scale, and examples were shown of entirely tribally-based unions within one particular type of employment. Even when urbanisation leads to a breaking up of the traditional ways of life, tribal and village loyalties frequently remain strong, so much so that certain occupations are closed to people from certain tribes, even in the modern sectors of the economy. This in the past has led to even less obvious reasons why strong unionism has not been possible especially in the less skilled occupations, due to the availability of strikebreakers from other tribal groups, who might be only too glad to meet the request of employers for reasons not only of new employment possibilities but also as a result of tribal rivalries. This was successfully done during the Longshoremen's strike in the Gold Coast during 1930 when stevedores from Dahomey were brought in in large numbers by the shipping companies. Other examples of this were given in Chapter 11.

This leads on to more political reasons for the weakness of trade unions in the context of the problems of regionalism within a country. In Ghana the division of the country into
separate regions for administrative purposes where the unions had to treat with different native authorities did not facilitate cohesion. As a result of this and of the remaining tribalism one can in general terms extend the argument and say that there appears to be a relationship between the political structure in the country, and the strength of the trade union movement. This is illustrated by comparing Ghana and its one strong nationalist movement, the Convention Peoples' Party, with the situation in Nigeria up till independence where there was no one political party in the majority. In the latter most social and political organisations including trade unions, were split by regionalism.\(^1\) Even after independence there were two major "national" trade union movements in Nigeria, the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria and the Nigerian Trade Union Congress, the former supporting and supported by the ICFTU, and the latter by Ghana and AATUP. In Ghana the GTUC and the C.P.P. as was seen in the historical survey, worked most of the time in close co-operation. There were of course exceptions to this general rule, and from time to time the N.L.M. had some opportunistic support from the additional trade unionists. The argument here is that a strong and unified nationalist movement will lead to an equally unified trade unionism. Where factionalism is rampant in politics, this will almost certainly have its effect on the trade unions as well.

Although there was a tendency for workers not to take unions too seriously, there was a general realisation that the T.U.C. must become involved with the political struggle.

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\(^1\) For a good discussion of the effect of several strong regional parties on national unions, see T.M. Yesufu, Industrial Relations in Nigeria op. cit. especially Ch. VIII. See also Appendix H.
for Independence. The enemy in both cases was the same - the "imperialist" European. The senior civil servant and the manager of the commercial firm were highly paid expatriates with a culture and a way of living alien to Africa. The Ghanaian, whether he was a politician or a labourer, had a unified primary aim - the removal of the foreigner from the position of power. But that was the aim in the early stages. Later, and once it was realised that the struggle for freedom was approaching a successful conclusion, the political problem changed its character. It was no longer a question of how to get rid of the European, but of who was going to replace him. The C.P.P. with its comparatively good organisation had captured the imagination of the workers and was accepted with few exceptions as the "Workers' Party".

There were some, at the second stage, who objected to any direct alliance with the C.P.P. Some had alternative sympathies with other political groupings such as the United Party. Others were reluctant to see unions accepting any political commitments. The consequent unrest was aggravated by the scramble for personal power and the result was a further weakening of the fabric of trade unionism in its early form. Few members of the trade union movement had any real qualifications for the job, and advancement was achieved by playing on the ignorance of the workers. Enthusiastic speeches proclaimed workers' rights, denigration of rivals by accusations of "imperialist" or "communist" sympathies as befitted the mood of the moment, and uncertainty and suspicion was created through misleading statements in the Press. As was seen, coalitions
formed and fell apart. Disgruntled leaders who were ejected took sections of the membership with them and formed rival unions. Energy which should have been devoted to building union organisation and training full-time officials was squandered on the struggle for personal supremacy, an easy task in a situation where illiterate membership allowed for corruption of power. All these things led to trade unionism - for political reasons alone, becoming or remaining weak and disorganised.

Turning now to the economic reasons for the inherent weaknesses in the trade union movement in Ghana, a basic cause is simply that large scale development is comparatively new, and trade unions have not had sufficient time to get over their teething troubles. Again, as has been stressed earlier, trade unionists are only a small percentage of the total working population and though they do in general constitute a better-educated élite, they still are not necessarily conditioned to coping effectively with the creation of such organisations. It becomes very much a matter of the existence of the "right" attitude of the workers to their unions.

In societies in which the mass of the people are accustomed to wage earning, and in which they depend upon regular paid employment for the necessities and luxuries of life, the trade union is an insurance against unfair discrimination and a weapon to be used in the fight for higher standards. It is in the workers' own interests that he should support and strengthen the union. In Ghana, however, there
is not yet this sense of urgency about the need to work. The family system ensures that if the worker loses his employment, he can return to his village until such time as something else turns up, and in many cases he is able to fall back on subsistence farming. Increasing urbanisation and desire for the products of European civilisation, however, are increasing the desire for permanent, well-paid jobs, but at the moment there is still perhaps an overall lack of a sense of urgency and need for unions for these reasons. The worker, although he may be willing to receive protection from the union, tends not to be very ready to pay dues. He has little sense of responsibility towards the union and is not concerned to keep in good standing with it, and the unions accept this in the knowledge that for prestige purposes, non-paying members are better than no members at all. The knowledge that he can still exist without a wage leads the worker as an individual and as a union member, into somewhat irresponsible acts which weaken his case. He is quick to go on strike, and the fact that the union has no strike fund does not matter in the short term, since the family will provide. The argument that a union needs to build up a strike fund is not effective when campaigning for payment of dues. A result of this attitude is, of course, that managements are slow to show respect for, or confidence in, workers' organisations.

Again this inherent lack of support for unions is made more serious by the fact that a large percentage of labour is migrant. All statistics relating to migration in West Africa must be treated with suspicion. But, as was said in
Chapter 1, if allowance is made for unintentional exaggeration or misinterpretation of questionnaires, they can still provide a fairly accurate picture of a general trend. Why does the vast migration process affect the strength of the trade union movement? First of all, it will lead to an unstable membership as a result of having a fluctuating labour force. Secondly, it will work against an increase in skills due to lack of consistency. This makes the union bargaining position very much weaker, since the worker may not be home-based but may depend entirely on the employer for the season of his employment. Thirdly, the habits of migration allow for a preservation of tribal allegiances, though this may, in certain circumstances, be useful where unions are tribally-based. Overall, in an industry such as the mining one, where in the late 'fifties as much as forty per cent of the employees came from outside Ghana,¹ (a proportion which, while probably being much improved, will still be very large today,²) the resultant weakness in the labour movements is very noticeable.

The rapid turnover is one determinant, the inexperience, illiteracy and apathy of the rank and file is another. That individuals have been able to use their positions as union leaders for personal advancement at the cost of weakening their organisations, that they have been able to misuse funds without

1. 'Notes on Migrations into the Gold Coast': J. Rouch. op. cit. See also Chapter 1, p. 43.
2. See Appendix E. and p. 43.
questions being asked, that they have been able to make wildly optimistic promises and then conveniently forget them, is an indication of the inexperience of membership. Inexperience has combined with illiteracy to delay the growth of a rank and file conscious of its own responsibilities and capable of determining the acts of its leaders. Apathy prevented it making any serious attempt to overcome these difficulties, especially in a situation where knowledge of the basic principles of trade unionism was lacking. Tribal language differences made difficult the dissemination of educative literature, and union officials still had at times to converse with members through an interpreter. Poor communications made personal contact with local branches additionally difficult. The lack of basic education prevents the rise of well-informed leaders from the ranks, and officials are therefore very often still obtained from outside the particular trade or industry. These, more often than not, have only a sketchy knowledge of practical economics and trade union organisation, and some are leaders in two or three different unions. But this did not necessarily create any conflict of interests under Nkrumah as they were first and foremost servants of the TUC/CPP.

The need for trade union education has been recognised as the main way out of these difficulties. Much energy has been expended in the past with little practical success, despite officials of the Labour Department spending a great deal of time on courses and giving lectures. For some years the Extra-mural Department of the University of Ghana did
useful work by providing lecture courses and schools in trade unionism, though this was hampered by the antagonism of the TUC. The ICTU, as was said earlier, also attempted to give instruction but again disagreement with the TUC prevented anything substantial being achieved. The TUC itself through the Workers Educational Association provided lecture courses, but results were never impressive due to the dubious quality of the tuition. Many union officials have travelled abroad on study courses in Israel, Germany, the United States and Britain. Some students found their way to Ruskin College or American Universities. But the trade union movement did not obtain any obvious advantage from the training received by these people. Either the student was already indoctrinated with suspicion of the "imperialists" or, if he accepted the instruction provided, he was no longer acceptable to the TUC. In the latter case, he was shunted on to minor tasks or ejected from the trade union movement. Latterly, for example, Ruskin College was more or less, a proscribed institution in the CPP's eyes.

How far then can trade union organisations in Africa be said to have been assisted or influenced by outside agencies providing training schemes? On the face of it, the real lessons of unionism, the ability to negotiate and combine for mutual advantage, are learnt in the factory or plantation and not in the lecture room. Most prominent African Trade Union leaders have risen only on their own practical experience, the danger being that formal training may produce leaders both unrepre sentative and divorced from reality. Despite the above,
a basic knowledge of techniques is useful, and if successfully imparted, may be spread over a wide area. But as Zack has pointed out the main weakness of labour training programme in Africa is that they have too often been glorified tourist trips, and concludes that only training on the ground can have real value.

But organised labour training such as that indulged in by the ICFTU can become highly suspect, and political overtones tend to lap other objectives. As Zack says with regard to the U.S. policy, "trade unions are important politically because of their potential for teaching responsible democracy to the most influential segments of the new nations." But in fact he believes that government participation in, or support for union education is only acceptable if it does not restrict trade union freedom of action.

All these difficulties are to a great extent due to - and are themselves the cause of - one particular factor, the lack of finance. Poor organising ability led to wastage of funds, and ignorance and apathy of members enabled unscrupulous leaders to misuse collected dues. Collection of dues was and is hampered by the reluctance of members to accept the full responsibilities of membership. In turn,


lack of funds meant that suitable candidates were not able to take extended courses, and it was not possible to employ sufficient full-time officials with the task of touring the country to maintain and increase contact with members, to organise recruitment campaigns, and produce propaganda to encourage payment of dues. Transport facilities were poor, but few unions could afford to provide their officials with vehicles. Office equipment was lacking, as were the offices themselves, and it was not unusual for the local union leader to carry his "office" about with him in a suit-case. Letters were written by hand, and the circularisation of members could only be undertaken on rare occasions. Attempts were frequently made by the TUC and individual unions to produce magazines and information bulletins, though these usually collapsed after two or three issues through lack of finance. The TUC itself was never much more financially stable than its members since very few affiliates paid dues to the Congress. This was one reason why it was so anxious to bring in the New Structure, since up till then, it only kept going through aid from the Government. Finally, lack of finance meant that the possibilities of strike action in any serious way was limited, though with a high percentage of migratory workers and those who could easily return to subsistence-living, this was not as real as it was apparent.

In conclusion, and overriding the above social and economic reasons for the position of trade unions in Ghana
is the fundamental question about the attitude of the Government. This relationship between Government and union is the subject of Chapters VI and VII. Prior to independence the position was clear cut where generally speaking the division between men and management was highlighted by their different languages, cultures and colours, but since independence the Union's autonomy or lack of it, was never quite so obvious. Nonetheless, the categories of influence are quite clear. Both internal and external factors were important in the resulting form that the trade union movement adopted. Though in the early stages the unions that existed were very much at the mercy of external influences, the stage of development was soon reached where internal political and economic conditions ensured an entirely individual pattern of structure and function very different from that pertaining in the west.
CHAPTER VI

POLITICS AND THE UNIONS:
An analysis of the means of influence and control.
The purpose of this chapter is to examine, in the context of the relationship between the trade union movement and the movement for national independence, the emergence of the resultant extreme form of Political Unionism. Drawing on the material given in Chapters 11 to 14, it asks why the trade unions had such a high political content and goes on to analyse the various means of influence and control available to the Convention Peoples' Party, to bring the unions to the stage of being an almost entirely political appendage of the Party. Some of these means were deliberate and carefully planned, but often more important in practice, were those innate factors of a unity of outlook and purpose shared by both Party and unions. Nor was the influence entirely a one-way flow, and in many respects what influence there was, came as much from the unions to the Party as vice versa, thus modifying and limiting the degree of control. I distinguish five factors which are particularly important in this process. They are leadership, which will often be shared, organisation (including the structure of command and communication which will also often be joint), membership, common funds, and finally ideology.

It will be useful first of all to look at the economic background to the emergence of political power in this situation. In the first place the influence of trade unions or of any economic interest group, was not the sole economic factor behind the rise of nationalism, and forces which contributed to national economic growth, to the rise of a money economy, to the economic viability of independence and to the degree of expatriate business control, played an important part in the effectiveness and speed of development —
of political life. But the diverse and often complex groups which existed for some basically economic reason were important in both the early and later stages of Ghana's political development. They not only acted as pressure groups, but were one of the only organised sources of party funds.

These groups included co-operative organisations based on common-trading, production or geographical ties, such as the Association of Women Market Traders in Accra; professional or semi-professional associations or friendly societies with a mainly economic raison d'être, such as the Ghanaian Union of Teachers and the Civil Servants' Association; and thirdly, there were the trade unions. These all came into existence, in the main, to foster their own economic well-being, but this did not mean, especially with a politically orientated leadership, that they left to a later stage their concern for the well-being of the State as a whole, and most of them, from their inception, considered their nationalist activities to be predominant.

It is seldom easy to distinguish in any precise way between socio-economic and political forces working within a State, especially since under colonialism most economic objectives can only be gained through political channels. The trade unions in Britain were "political" too, and campaigned mainly through Parliament for the introduction of better working conditions and wage levels, for national insurance

schemes and humane factory legislation, but first and foremost for recognition by employers and government - the legal right of association.\footnote{cf. A. Flanders and H.A. Clegg, The System of Industrial Relations in Britain. (Blackwell, 1956), p. 189.} In Ghana, even the simplest strike over wages tended always to be thought of as "political", by the Colonial Government. It is not therefore unreasonable that union leaders began to think of it as a political weapon.

Much of the activity towards betterment of social and economic conditions, and for the right to exist, has therefore been camouflaged by the fact that Ghana's trade unions, by their very nature, were invariably and primarily concerned with assisting the nationalist struggle for independence. The birth of the Convention People's Party with the help of the unions was in part a desire to replace the employer/employee struggle, by the anti-colonial one as the major objective, and though to a certain extent these two conflicts were one and the same the latter was the one emphasised.

In addition to the above, with the growth of a wage-labour force came the natural desire for co-operation which was well utilised by a nationalist movement. Nkrumah very cleverly used the unions in this way following on his break-away from the UGCC in the early Fifties. The unions in their turn managed to be very much behind the political-economic programme of the political movement, ensuring their own best interests in the process. They orientated the Party leaders (where leaders were not in fact shared) to thinking in terms of
gaining control of the means of production, while providing funds for the organisation of the movement in the process. The struggle against (European) employers was easily transformed to the struggle against (European) colonisers. The trade unions' part in this resulted as we have seen in the CPP becoming more than a political party and rather a national political movement.¹

Given the peculiarities of the African labour situation, where industrialised wage labour is likely to be a very small percentage of the total employable population, were the unions of much real assistance? We have said that they had certain weaknesses due to the lack of education, dispersed nature, migrant characteristics, and overall subsistence-level standing of the population. But the vast majority of the population were unorganised and unorganisable, and this must be remembered in speaking of the influence that unions exerted. In comparative terms, such weaknesses had little relevance therefore, and while organisation may have been poor, and the numbers involved small, the unionists were nonetheless as much an elite and significant group as could be

A strong trade union is after all one that can achieve its own objectives of better conditions of work and increased real wages rates for its members through its own actions, either by bargaining or by striking. The inherent weakness in Ghanaian unions sprang from such limiting factors as the inability to pay the necessary strike funds. They thus had to look for less regular methods of ventilating grievances. One was through the straight-forward political demonstration. Another was the token strike lasting long enough for the disruption of the enterprise, yet not long enough to put the unionists to any great financial hardship. Combine the two and one has a strategy which could be brought into play with little or no planning and which was quick and effective. Over and above the advantages the token strike had of speed and surmounting the problem of strike funds, there were two further factors which made it extremely useful for political purposes. It ensured that there was a good turnout, good strike discipline which might otherwise be lacking, and it did not allow the employer time to get round to employing the ready supply of strike-breakers which tended to be generally available, should a strike be in any way prolonged.

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1. This view is of much more importance than Berg and Butler make out in Ch. 9 of Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa by J.S. Coleman and C.G.Roseberg (eds), (U. of California 1964) p. 340 et seq. They say that "What is striking about the political role of Labour Movements in the countries of Tropical Africa is their failure to become politically involved during the Colonial Period, their limited political impact when they did become involved, and their restricted role after independence." The latter point is justifiable, but the others can hardly be substantiated, at least with regard to Ghana.

2. See page 205.
prolonged.¹

Having seen that there are common interests which bind together the interests of the unions and the Nationalist movement, what are the more detailed structural and ideological means whereby mutual influence is built into the system? The party will firstly be able to utilise or share in union leadership. In many cases the political leader and the trade union leader will be one and the same person. Tettegah and Woode and, later, most of Nkrumah's henchmen, the "veranda boys"² of the middle and late 'fifties, had had trade union connections. This is a feature common throughout Africa, since, especially in French Colonies, political experience except in trade unionism might be hard to find, if not expressly forbidden. Sekou Touré of the Guinea CGT, Dr Endeley of the Cameroons CPNC, Félix Houphouët-Boigny in the Ivory Coast, Abdoullaye Diallo in Mali, and Cyrille Adoula in the Congo were all members of the sâle élite which later provided the political leadership. In British Africa there were many similar figures such as Tom M'Boya in Kenya, Joshua N'Komo in Rhodesia and Siaka Stevens in Sierra Leone.

¹ The same was true in French West Africa. See J. Meynaud and A. Salah-Bey, Le Syndicalism Africain (Payot, 1963) Chapter III, Section I.

² A term of abuse, later turned into a status symbol - i.e. those young men with no work or homes who slept on the verandas.
With the possible exception of Stevens and Abdoullaye Diallo, none of these figures were "true" workers, due in the main to a lack of skilled labourers as a source for leadership. It exaggerated a trend unknown and unthinkable in Europe, of the leadership being, by virtue of both education and experience, quite separate from the masses in its approach. The Unions, quite simply were a means whereby individuals could come to political power. The other way to this political power was through teaching or through the elite class of the junior African Civil Service. To enter the latter, there was a high education and "Acceptability" barrier and it was in consequence in the trade union that the would-be African leader, lacking formal education, found the backing and necessary training. This shared leadership demonstrates one reason why the unions from the outset were open to so much political pressure both internally and internationally. Whatever their background, these leaders were politically interested to a degree not found elsewhere, and their leadership in turn conditioned the nationalist movement in its attitude to the economic gains from independence. Eventually, after independence, the trade union leaders and the political leaders were, and had to comprise the same people.

In this context it is difficult to understand why Berg and Butler, though they admit the impressive list of trade unionists in high political office,¹ claim that the labour

movement has not been a prolific source of political leadership. They argue that leaders such as those mentioned above often had other interests and allegiances as well. This is of course true, since unions, as was said, often were merely a channel for political advancement. But their importance remains for precisely this reason. Because they were party militants as well, does not detract from the importance of their union leadership. It merely adds strength to the present argument of the usefulness and frequency of shared leadership.

After leadership, a second factor essential to the development of a political movement is organisation. The structure of command and the channels of communication were, in practice, shared to good advantage both by the unions and the CPP through use of common information, accommodation and individual activists. Until independence there was no question of the CPP forcing itself on the trade unions, since they did not have the strength to do so. It was a matter more of the trade unions either being fully in sympathy with the Party, or at least not wishing to expend energies in open conflict with it. The inter-involvement was on a voluntary basis and common services, offices and staff meant that not only was this less expensive where funds were scarce, but more important, the trade unions were, despite their many faults, probably one of the best organised and articulate groups and therefore a perfect structure for political education. The GTUC was also helpful to the Party as a channel of information, even though it only tended to function well during crises - as it did during the 1950 strike. In practice, regional secretaries of the
CPP were often also office bearers in the local unions, and, in some cases, the union leaders were automatically on the CPP Regional Assembly Committees, especially in Ashanti, where the opposition was strongly based.

In discussing organisation, the structural strength and the length of time a union has been in existence must be considered to have some bearing on its effectiveness. One cannot argue, however, that a long heritage of militant unionism always leads to militant nationalism. Labour unionisation in Senegal, for example, (and in other parts of French West Africa) was in some ways more advanced and more militant than it was in Ghana at the time when nationalist movements were beginning to emerge. But in the long run, this militancy was not always transferred to the nationalist movement for independence. What is the explanation for this? The difference lies in the fact that in Ghana, the Convention Peoples' Party, in its structure, was more a movement than a party. Unlike its opponent the National Liberation Movement, (later to become the United Party), the CPP was moulded by Nkrumah out of a vast range of subsidiary organisations. Youth Associations such as the Youth Study Group in Accra, ex-servicemen's organisations, the market women, the young radicals such as Kofi Baako's League of Ghana Patriots, along with traditional movements such as the Asafo Companies (traditional warrior groups) joined the mainstream party activists and the trade unionists, in supporting the CPP and in helping to expand its network of subsidiary
organisations. The unions were one of the two most widely spread of these, the co-operatives such as the United Ghana Farmers' Council, were the other. As Apter says,¹ "By the action of the government, which consolidated the trade union movement and instituted an automatic check-off system, and by the action of the Party, which made Tettegah an Ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, with an office in the new CPP building in Accra, the TUC was transformed into a vanguard movement for the building of Nkrumahism". In Senegal on the other hand and in French Africa generally, the Party was almost entirely one of "élites" - the chiefs and religious leaders - rather more comparable with what happened to the United Party in Ghana. These groups did not feel the need to cultivate the unions, and the unions felt no sympathy with them. The result of these organisational bonds in Ghana after independence was a natural extension of the colonial situation in that the CTUC was given representation on the National Executive of the Party, with the right to send a specified number of delegates to the National Congress, and the Secretary Generalship of the TUC became one of the key posts in the CPP organisation.

"Hence a dual organisations prevails: the party branch with its executive, the constituency, and the regional organisation with its executive and secretariat reach out into each area; the functional organisations, particularly the union locals and co-operative associations cut across the geographically based party units." 1

With leadership and organisation, the membership of trade unions and Party is a closely related third factor. Both the unions and the Party suffered from great instability of membership due to migration and to the other causes mentioned elsewhere. But the unions perhaps if anything, suffered less, due to the binding force of a common economic interest, and their members, among the best educated and articulate group, and having a built-in desire for economic gain and for a co-ordinated effort to achieve this, were a ready made channel for political education and indoctrination.

The type of membership, or rather the type of union was also important. The compactness of government-employee unions in the fifties, for example, meant considerable influence internal to the administration, and on the attitudes of the British government. Union membership was less useful where, with small membership the numbers of unions themselves were large. But on the other hand a few members of skilled or semi-skilled unions could well have much more effect than a vast, loose membership of unskilled workers.

Fourthly, funds and the sources available for obtaining them are crucial to a modern party and trade union wishing to

1. D. Apter op. cit. (Coleman and Roseberg) page 300.
to campaign against wealthy colonial institutions, be they private employers or governments. Unless there are individual wealthy backers (and wealth, even indigenous wealth, tended to support the *status quo*) or foreign sources of revolutionary funds, organised labour may be the main or the only stable source of such money. It will get its finance from dues, which can be used by the Nationalist movement, either because there are conjoint party/union funds, or because there is some sort of direct political levy tied in with union membership. The CPP imposed the direct levy system from the mid-fifties onwards, and one of the most obvious ways in which union funds were utilised by it was through trade union and political bulletins and newspapers. The "Ghana Worker" was one such paper. Other countries had similar publications, as with "Le Proletaire" in Senegal, the "Bulletin des Travailleurs des Pays Coloniaux", (both CGT publications, the latter an inter-colonial newsletter) or the large number of publications associated with Wallace-Johnson throughout British West Africa. Up until independence therefore, it was very much a case of the unions helping the Party through financial contributions. Thereafter, the process was reversed, and Nkrumah's Government subsidised the GTUC to a considerable degree, so that it could play the internal and international role required of it.

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1. Berg and Butler say that contributions were small (p.363) but the amount must be considered in relative, not absolute, terms.
Over and above all the foregoing, the ideology finally, which the Party and the unions shared and thus to a great extent the strategies which they adopted, were in an important position in this catalogue of influence. The degree of commitment to policies and party overrode everything else. Unions must be politically active by their very nature, but in Ghana they also had to adopt programmes which accorded to the colonial situation. Where a union failed to do this it conflicted with the nationalist aspirations of its members, and it was this to a great extent which led to the frequent conflicts between the GTUC and the CPP. At a later stage this meant that when the GTUC became more determinedly nationalistic the contact it had with the British TUC fell away. Such a move was a further step towards adopting an ideology which was free from metropolitan influence and more in tune with the political movement.

Most African leaders, from Nkrumah to Senghor, have said at one time or another that it is the essential duty of the trade union to help the politicians implement their programmes. This is taken as meaning that the unionists must be closely allied with the ideologies of the party, so that they can act as activists or as subordinate organisations which realise that nationalist economic objectives can best be

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1. Berg and Butler op. cit. page 341. They appear to produce evidence that refutes their own case - that there was no serious union involvement in pre-independence politics (page 351).
achieved through a common effort. Tettegah expressed it well in 1956 on his return from Israel. He foresaw a properly organised trade union movement, "with a general staff capable of taking decisions and manoeuvring with monopoly capital in securing for the workers economic independence in an independent Ghana."\(^1\) Economic and political objectives were utterly intertwined.

The flow was not all one way and the CPP not to pay a price when it transformed the TUC into a auxiliary organ of the party. In order to bring about the new political and social way of life it was campaigning for, it tied trade union membership to this goal and, not through party loyalties alone, but through the organisation and loyalty of members to a basically voluntary organisation. To do this satisfactorily it had in turn to give the unions a status within the party by allowing the TUC representation on the CPP executive. This meant that not only was the union politically affected, but also that the party had to pay attention to the economic objectives of the unions, such as the betterment of working conditions in comparison with European standards of living.\(^2\) The policies of party and union once united, it was a simple step to the stage of trying to influence through propaganda or to win political advance through collective bargaining. Strike action also proved to be most effective in getting a message across not only in the colony but also in the British Parliament.


The above shows, in conclusion, why and how the unions were of importance in the development of nationalist movements and that a natural unity of outlook and purpose existed between them. Not only was it the numerical strength of membership that was of use, but also it was a membership that was organised, that had funds at its disposal and that had a leadership which shared the ideology and nationalist beliefs with the party. These enforced a very high degree of mutual dependence.

Finally, since to a very large extent the CPP was Nkrumah, it is interesting to note how he himself saw the role of Trade unions, in relation to the Party:

"I have actively encouraged since the beginning of our struggle, the building of a virile and responsible trade union movement because I believe it is necessary for the great exercise of the industrial and economic reconstruction of our country."

"The Government which is formed by the Convention Peoples' Party is a People's Government - indeed a government of the people - free, strong and independent, pursuing a socialist pattern of reconstruction. The interest of workers is well cared for by the State. The trade unions, therefore, have a different role from that of trade unions in a capitalist society."

Much of what has been said above conflicts with the views of Berg and Butler already referred to. They argue the failure of the unions to become politically involved, and their limited impact even when they did so. The preceding

2. Berg and Butler op. cit. p. 363
chapters and indeed their own material refutes this. Through this chapter, the emphasis has been on the pre-independence situation, and relations with the Nationalist Party. After independence as has been seen, the relationship was much clearer and more one-sided. It then became an enforced relationship brought home to the unions through a mixture of rewards, threats and in the final event by legislation.

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1. See Chapter IV.
CHAPTER VII

NATIONAL PLANNING AND LABOUR

POLICY IN GHANA.
Earlier chapters have given the historical framework within which the unions came into their own, and described how Governments both prior to and after independence adapted or adopted policies to utilise and control their activities. Drawing on this material, this Chapter discusses the divergence between theory and practice in labour matters, what actually happened in the context of the Nkrumah Government's political objectives, as opposed to what was outlined in the various National Economic Development Plans, and from this to suggest the possibilities for, and the requirements of a realistic labour policy in such a situation. It will demonstrate that, as foreseen in the 1964 National Plan, conditions do exist for a high degree of governmental direction in labour matters, but that there is, judging from past experience, a requirement for strong administrative and political leadership, if it is to be successfully carried through. It does not seek to duplicate the considerable attention given by economists to the position of labour in economic development 1 though the findings, in giving paramount importance to the "political will" required, put many of the purely economic arguments in second place. It will demonstrate that the nuts and bolts of wage negotiation and collective bargaining between employers and employed had little place in Government policy. The need for collective bargaining

procedures was often written into Plans, but the actual free play of market forces had been abandoned.

Under these various plans, the role of the trade unions is relegated to one of exhorting their membership to accept the proposals of the planners, especially in mobilising support behind a wages policy and restructuring employment in the economy, in order to achieve higher productivity. In the light of the various theories of the labour movement discussed in the Introduction, this allots the unions very much a second-class role, and co-operation with the State becomes an entirely one-sided relationship.

The formulation of labour policy in Ghana has to be seen in the light of the dual position of the Government's control over the labour force due to its predominant position both in determining labour legislation, and equally as the largest employer in the State. With regard to the former, the minimum wage legislation, for example, which was introduced into Ghana in June 1960, resulted in the general level of wages not only in the public sector but throughout the whole economy being shifted sharply upwards, and it also had the consequence of significantly increasing the registered number of unemployed.¹

¹. This was the first legislation of its kind in Ghana, though it had been proposed on previous occasions, and had applied for some time in the retail trade. The minimum rate was 6/6d per day, (except in agriculture where it was much less) and it meant something like an additional shilling a day on the pay of unskilled workers. Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1 op. cit., page 137.
This points only too clearly to the influence of such a Governmental measure on both incomes and on the size of the total employed population.1

The dominant position of the Government as a large employer secondly, is shown by the Census Report for 1960, which demonstrated that the public sector in that year accounted for thirty-eight per cent of total wage employment. As a percentage this has been increasing steadily.2 A word of caution is however necessary in order to avoid over-stressing the position of the public sector. It is relatively easy for statistics to be obtained for Government employment, but as was noted in Chapter 1 it is very much more difficult to get reliable private employment figures. The result is probably that the public employment figures tend to be too high, but reliable trends can nonetheless be indicated. On the other hand, of the higher categories of employees in the labour force, a very much greater percentage of them are employed by the public sector. In 1960, an estimated 83 per cent of the professional and technical classes were in the public sector. Probably as a result of this, the large private employers and even many of the smaller ones in these categories, are generally forced to follow Government wage rates.3

1. Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1 op. cit. page 137.
2. ibid p. 125.
For the above two reasons alone, government influence especially in the higher occupations in the labour market is very large. As this is especially so with regard to wage rates, the result is that wage questions have become as much of political as of economic debate. The emphasis on the high political content of a wages and labour policy is therefore highlighted once again.

Before turning to what was recommended in the various National Development Plans and comparing this with what actually happened under Nkrumah, it is worth reviewing the objectives of the Colonial Government with regard to Labour policy, which the Nationalist Government later was to inherit. The underlying trend was one of liberal-paternalism, for example in encouraging trade union development, while at the same time ensuring that such development was contained within the control of the Colonial Government. Yet the legislation tended, as was seen in Chapter III, to be at the same time permissive, rather than obligatory. A union could bargain and strike, but only within certain set limits. This it knew, just as it knew that if it overstepped these limits, its continued existence could well be threatened. The Development and Welfare Act for example introduced the principle of

1. Some limits on this influence are suggested in the Study of Contemporary Ghana, Chp. 6, p. 138. It suggests that smaller firms will ignore government rates, especially outside the towns, where, in any case, rates in local government do not conform to pay in Central Government.
registration and supervision \(^1\), which was not in keeping with British practice at home, where there was no question of registration nor of governmental supervision of internal administration. In Ghana this was therefore intended as a mainly political check on the development of opposition, and it resulted in all union activities and organisation being acceptable to the Government - the argument already stated of ensuring development along the "right" lines, \(^2\) though it in practice, might admittedly also mean more effective negotiating machinery, better training for efficient and responsible union leadership and adequate organisation from the very lowest "shop-floor" level, since there was also quite obviously a strong element of organising labour to achieve greater efficiency in output.

This was the inheritance, and in the early years of the Nkrumah Government, the policy objectives were much the same with regard to Labour. It was in the methods adopted to achieve these objectives that the great changes appeared, though to a great extent much of the system of control and supervision, inherited by the National Government, was adopted. Hardly to be foreseen by the Colonial Administrators, the limitations, for example, on arbitration and on the right to strike, were gladly accepted and expanded by the single-party state that followed. In practice, even after the passage of the 1958

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2. See above Chapter 11, p. 95. Another term often used is "sound lines" cf. Sierra Leone Labour Department Report (Freetown, 1949) para. 133.
Industrial Relations Act, it took some time before grass-roots structures and attitudes changed. Certainly not all the policy motives behind the Act and the subsequent, less democratically adopted legislation were wholly bad, and as Rimmer says the new pattern should not be regarded as an aberration. The existing structure was extremely confused and there were very large numbers of small unions which made even attempts at collective bargaining difficult. The "New Dealers" had some justification when they argued that the existing framework was "too complex to operate" in the circumstances, and that one union for each industry was a reasonable step towards simplification. The real motives, however, apart from a conscious wish to break away from the British structure, were quite clearly nothing to do with labour policy as such. Nearly every step was aimed at cementing the unions to the C.P.P. and to the State. Measures such as making collective bargaining with licensed trade unions obligatory for private employers, practically abolishing the right to strike and only allowing officially approved unions to exist, were part and parcel of this policy.

The stated economic basis for these highly limiting moves can be summarised by saying that strikes and labour


2. For a useful discussion of Collective Bargaining in English speaking African countries generally, see Chapter 4 (I) of B. C. Roberts and L. Greyfle de Bellecombe op. cit.
disputes were liable to impede the economic development of the country and therefore were undesirable per se, and in any case, politically ... "As the Government are a Socialist Government based on the votes of the masses ... the needs of labour will always be in the forefront of their policies." 1

In the end, the unions, as Chapter IV showed, were political organisations tied to the Government as an industrial wing, bent entirely to the service of the State. This was done by not only making all trade unionists members of the C.P.P, but also by obliging all wage earners to be trade unionists. As will be seen from Chapter VIII, a further motive was to extend and strengthen Ghana's role overseas through the medium of the All African Trade Union Federation.

Little was said about incomes or wages policy or the more bread and butter aspects of collective bargaining. Labour policy amounted to keeping labour politically controlled. A policy of wage restraint, where it existed at all, was pursued on an entirely ad hoc basis. The nuts and bolts were little attended to, since in this political environment they were irrelevancies, and the vagueness of their definition in Government documents must be seen in part as a deliberate act of policy. The doubt that the administration would have been up to coping with a Labour policy must also exist however, given the economic and political instabilities existed in Ghana.

2. The Possibilities for an Incomes Policy - The Development Plans.

In the light of the above and of what actually happened, one is forced to ask whether it is practical or possible to have an incomes policy in a country at Ghana's stage of political and economic development. Are the fluctuations in political and social stability such that this becomes too much of a luxury, and if not, how does one explain the divergence between theory and practice when it came to implementing a wages policy in Ghana.

The major problem as Turner points out, is that the country is underdeveloped. Lest this seem facile, it has been demonstrated that while standards of administration are high for Africa, they are still not high enough, nor is control widespread enough to make even what does exist, workable. At the same time, because of the poverty in international comparative terms, there is an admitted concurrent and natural desire by the Government to try and remedy matters by taking control of economic planning. Ghana has had several National Plans, the last one being in 1964. In every case they were drafted with considerable expatriate advice, (the earlier ones by Western economists, the latter by advisers from the socialist countries) and in every case they were never really

put into operation. They included labour policies and attempts to relate prices to incomes. Why were they not implemented? It was in the main both because of the lack of an administrative infrastructure capable of carrying them out, and more importantly because of the generally politically unacceptable belt-tightening involved. Economic priorities were dictated quite clearly by the mood of the moment, be it as first class dual-carriageway from Accra to Tema (on which there were few cars to run) or be it a policy of ad hoc wage restraint, or of generosity, where Ministers or the President felt appeasement was necessary, or that displeasure could be risked. No underlying reasons other than this can be seen from a study of wage and labour policy in the post-independence period.

Economic Planning, as was said in Chapter 1, dates from the 1919 Guggisberg Ten Year Plan, but neither it nor the next one of any consequence, the Ten (later Five) Year Plan on 1951, said anything much about the problems of the Labour Market. They were based on a series of, in the main, unco-ordinated "sectoral targets" and though they contained recommendations on training and Africanisation of the skilled-labour force, it was not until the second Five-year plan of 1959 that any mention was made, for example, of increasing employment

1. With Sir Arthur Lewis as Economic Adviser. See also the Report by him Industrialisation and the Gold Coast, (Accra, 1953).
opportunities in the modern sector. Even here the plan was of little practical use, in that it contained no estimate of expected population rise over the period, nor of manpower resources, nor any real assessment of how to achieve full employment. A more detailed formulation of any comprehensive labour policy had to wait for the 1964 Seven Year Plan.

An intermediate study was the 1960 Survey of High Level Manpower in Ghana which demonstrated clearly, though in a fairly limited context, how great the scarcity was of highly skilled workers, notwithstanding the very large wage differential between them and the unskilled workers. It estimated the requirements for the country over a five year period and suggested that these requirements could be met, given advance planning and efficient use of scarce manpower resources.

1. One measure adopted by the Government at this time in order to counter the rapidly rising level of urban employment, was the formation of the so-called "Workers Brigade". It was created on military lines, and this "army of the unemployed" was used by the state as labour for road building and other public works. The workers were given uniforms, their keep, and a very small allowance. See P. Hodge, 'The Ghana Workers Brigade'. British Journal of Sociology (June, 1964).

It assumed that these requirements having been fulfilled by planning and good management, the most serious manpower problem would not be one of shortage but of low productivity. It criticised the lack of planning and co-ordination of policies to develop and conserve high level manpower to the best advantage of the economy and recommended that a Manpower Bureau be established, to suggest policies and co-ordinate the activities of the Government through a Manpower Development Plan. Assessing the needs in various sectors such as engineering, teaching and agriculture, it recommended a programme of scholarship to encourage the best students and also a nation-wide training programme in the fields where there was a particular shortage.\(^1\) It did not discuss wage policy or salary incentives at all.

This Survey highlighted once again a major difficulty discussed in Chapter 1, in that statistics of the numbers of workers in this class of occupation in no way tallyed with the similar tables prepared in the 1960 Population Census, which latter produced very much higher totals. This is important since the 1964 Plan used the Census figures, while the Survey certainly seemed to be the more accurate.\(^2\) For

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example, the results obtained from the two sets of figures in the Plan period show a required increase in high-level manpower of 100% using the Census figures and of nearly 300% using the Survey figures. The target, as set out in the Plan, might just have been feasible in that to increase the level by 100% might be possible in seven years. But it is likely that the Survey figures are more accurate, and in this case a 300% required rise within the same period was entirely out of the question.

Finally, before turning to a detailed discussion of the 1964 Plan it is worth briefly mentioning the 1962 Isaacs Report on "Questions of Wage Policy in Ghana." While its major recommendations were incorporated into the 1964 Plan and will be discussed at a later stage, it was here for the first time that a wages policy was seriously considered in Ghana. The Report usefully highlighted one or two interesting facts, for example that there were large wage differentials within the public sector between central and local government in the same jobs, and it also showed that in the smaller private concerns, wages might differ enormously from the norm to similar occupations in large firms, and might not even conform to existing minimum wage legislation. It set out the main difficulties of administration and implementation in adopting a wage policy, points which were all taken up by the 1964 Plan.

1. Professor J.E. Isaacs op. cit.
2. See page 237, below.
One other useful point which the Isaacs Report discussed was the startling range of wage differentials throughout the country. By means of a series of international comparisons over a wide range of occupations it showed that the Ghanaian figures gave by far the highest differentials especially between skilled and unskilled workers. It might be difficult to substantiate some of the comparisons used, but suffice it to say here that the Report certainly did indicate a very definite tendency on the above lines. This immediately suggests that there was enough incentive built into the wages structure in the country to attract workers to the higher skills, but often unfortunately the emphasis seems to be wrong, for example, between the skilled and clerical workers where as is discussed in the latter part of this chapter there is an incentive but in the wrong direction.

The Report unfortunately rather set too much store on the dominant position of the Government as an employer for the reason set out at the beginning of this Chapter.¹ Writing at the peak of the Nkrumah Government's power it suggested that nearly all wage decisions in the Government sector would be followed automatically by private employers.² The importance of the Government as a wage leader has been emphasised throughout this thesis, but it appears overstressed in this particular Report, partly as a result of the tendency for Government employment figures to be exaggerated due to

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¹ See page 226, above.
better statistical coverage in the public sector, and also partly because the statistical material available tended to cover only the larger private concerns, whose position politically if nothing else, forced them to follow the Government lead.¹

3. The Seven Year Development Plan.

It will be useful at this stage to examine in detail what Ghana's 1964 Seven Year Development Plan² said with regard to labour and wages policy. It was a Plan which never was put into effect, first of all because of its complexity and the lack of a necessary administrative infrastructure to cope with its implementation, and secondly for obvious political reasons culminating in the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966. What it said about Labour policy is worth studying however, in that despite its obvious practical failings it was as considered and useful an exercise and also one of the best constructed available to date. It was, in addition, freer from political propaganda than any other Government document of the period.

Chapter 7 of the Plan concerns Education, Manpower and Employment. It estimates that in the period 1963 to 1970 the population of Ghana would grow from 7.2 to 8.6 million. During that period 1.3 million young people would enter the labour force, of which six hundred thousand would be required to replace the natural wastage in the existing labour force, leaving therefore about five hundred thousand for whom new

¹ ibid page 138.
² Ghana Seven Year Development Plan, (Accra, 1964).
employment opportunities had to be created. This would entail expanding the labour market by approximately 3 per cent per year over the period. This was quite apart from taking into consideration the serious unemployment and underemployment that already existed, especially in urban areas, and a major objective of the Plan was that of full employment.¹

Against this background, the Plan highly optimistically called for the absorption of these new workers, in the main into industry and modernised agriculture, and it laid particular emphasis on the question of training and re-training not only in the high and middle-level employment groups but also among the unskilled and agricultural workers. Implicit in this was the understanding that it would be necessary to encourage labour differentials, especially among the high and middle-level employees,² and for this reason it called for an intensive training programme to ensure systematic upgrading through the means of incentive payments and in-service training programmes. This was recommended against the background of a labour force where only 4 per cent were employed in so-called "high-level" occupations and about 16 per cent in "middle-level" occupations.

¹ The Plan rather begs the question by matching the estimated Supply and Demand for Labour. The rapidly rising supply is one reason why the Plan attempts too much, and as Killick says - "the labour supply in Ghana could, therefore, be regarded as a source of weakness, for, given the Governments objective of full employment, it is one of the factors which has required a plan so ambitious as to subject the economy to the severest strains." Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. I, op. cit. page 150.

This was compared with something like 50 per cent in those two categories in more advanced economies. If these targets were to be met therefore this would have meant increasing the percentage in middle and high-level occupations from 20 per cent to about 26 per cent over the period, involving the training of over half a million workers to fill jobs in these categories. The Plan therefore set itself a very considerable task, and in addition, there was the burden of the fact that slow rates of growth in these categories would almost certainly continue, due to the length of training required and also because of the slow rate at which members of high level occupations could be absorbed into the economy. This was a result of the fact that, in general, as the Plan itself recognised, each employee at this level required an estimated five supporting technicians to make his employment worthwhile. The same problems also had to be faced, but to a lesser extent, for those employed in middle-level occupations.1

The general requirement of the whole Plan was to try to ensure that by 1970 the gross supply of trained manpower would be substantially in balance with demand, but it was emphasised that the most important hindrance to this happening was that, without direction, the labour force in Ghana would not be able to fill the jobs or stratify themselves in the way that a more experienced labour force would. In was therefore necessary to review supply and demand in each individual

1. See A.M. Zack 'Trade Unions and the Development of Middle Level Manpower' op. cit.
category of employment to try to correct these imbalances. It was appreciated that such imbalance would not only affect the economic stability of the country but also its potential for growth, unless a suitable incomes policy was both worked out, - and, more importantly, that it was consistently applied.

By saying this, the Seven-Year Plan at least laid down the basis for such a policy, and it gave as the two main objectives economic growth, and increasing the productivity of the labour force. The former objective was a factor of a situation where only some 20 per cent of the working population worked for wages and salaries. Economic growth entailed an increase in this proportion, with the eventual goal of nearer the 80 per cent of the total labour force in developed countries, an 80 per cent taking say, 75 per cent of National Income. In this context, the Report had this to say:

"It is important to recognise that the 20 per cent of the Ghanaian labour force who work for wages and salaries earn far more on the average than the 80 per cent who do not work for wages and salaries. In the rural areas of Ghana during March 1961, earnings per worker ranged from £ G.35 in the Northern and Upper Regions to about £ G.106 in the Brong-Ahafo Region. Since wage earners have a guaranteed minimum wage of £G.101 per annum it is evident that the exclusion of wage earners from these figures would show that the non-wage earning section of the working force earns on the average not more than one-half of the minimum wage earned by the more unskilled labourers in Ghana. This fact must profoundly influence wages policy for many years to come".1

The differential between wage earners and self-employed as we have seen causes a large inflow to the former from the latter group. The Plan did recognise this and saw the

1. Ghana Seven Year Development Plan op. cit. page 166.
necessity for regulating the relationship between wage rates in the modern sector, and also "earnings" in the non-wage sector, to allow job opportunities in the modern sector to keep pace with the migratory process and avoid the urban unemployment with its political and economic dangers. The Plan also appreciated that

"the average wage of labour determines how far any given volume of aggregate investment is able to provide employment opportunities. The higher the average wage rate is set, the smaller the ability of the wage-employing sector to offer employment opportunities. An excessively high wage rate therefore may benefit the labourers who are employed at any one time but it works against the interests of those who are trying to enter the wage labour force. On the other hand an excessively low average wage rate leads to inefficient use of labour, which Ghana cannot afford, because in the final analysis this country is relatively under-populated and must husband her labour supply very carefully."1

With regard to the second objective of increasing the productivity of the labour force,2 the authors of the Plan, while accepting that the level of education and the availability of training facilities set an absolute limit on the potential productivity level, did realise how powerful a strong wage-structure is in regulating the use of available manpower through encouraging people to improve their skills by a reward system of wage differentials. The wage differentials

1. Ibid p. 166. This of course is a very long term view. See Study of Contemporary Ghana: Vol. 1, p. 150.

2. D.F. MacAleese reviewing H.A. Turner's book (op. cit.) in the Economic Bulletin of Ghana, Vol. IX (1965) argues that the unions should, in the national interest, concentrate on increasing output, rather than devoting energies to sectional interests. Free trade unionism might not be responsible in this - therefore political authorisation becomes necessary. This was the standard Nkrumahist view point.
throughout the country were rather optimistically regarded as sufficient for the purpose. Rather surprisingly the Planners also said that the rewards for similar skills in wage employment throughout the economy were already substantially uniform, due to the existence of the collective bargaining system, (which as we have shown, hardly existed) and also, (and if this argument is true this must be held to be the major or only reason,) because of the widespread tendency for both the level and structure of wages to follow the pattern in the Public Sector as the largest in the economy. Having said this, they suggested that the major exception to this was in public enterprises and other quasi-Governmental agencies. It recommended that this be corrected immediately without elaborating on the sources for this rather odd statement, which seems difficult to justify. While it argued that the differentials were in general sufficient, it did qualify this by admitting that the existing structure underpaid certain technical skills, and the Authors rather support Turner's argument 1 in suggesting that the wage relationships between jobs requiring technical skills (i.e. skilled artisans) and white collar jobs should be reviewed to encourage the former.

The Authors also advocated a scheme of payment by result to increase productivity, by ensuring that earnings bear some

1. H.A. Turner op. cit. page 22. He suggests that the traditional practice of paying the lowest paid clerical workers at a rate higher than that of the skilled manual worker should be gradually eroded.
relation to actual output. This practice within the economy was at the time only reasonably well practised in the building and construction industries, in retailing and in the extractive industries. Once again this had fallen down in the Public Sector, since, while the wage structure was well adjusted at the initial entry into employment level, this was not automatically followed up at later stages within any particular grouping, and therefore tended not to be related to performance on the job.

The Authors tended to advocate the system of payment by results without emphasising the drawbacks. Such a scheme only works firstly where the individual can increase his earnings by his own efforts (i.e. not limited by technological or other considerations). Secondly, the job had to be capable of precise definition and the worker's performance able to be measured by the management. This of course requires a high degree of record keeping and of clerical work which would have certainly been difficult to achieve in Ghana at least in the initial stages. Thirdly, the management would have to be of sufficient quality, and supervision at shop-floor level would also have to be competent, something which, as the Planners recognised, was lacking at this stage of development. If these conditions were not fulfilled, the individual worker could be penalised by such factors as the incompetence of management and thus the objective would be nullified.

Fourthly, the education of the worker to a level whereby he realised that the incentive was built-in, was by no means a simple prerequisite with regard to individuals coming into
wage employment for the first time.

Such schemes were proposed in the Plan, but in general, the pros and cons were not fully discussed. One concrete proposal was that in order to establish the norms of labour productivity, a National Productivity Centre was to be set up to help bring job differentiation to some degree of order by defining occupations, norms, gradings and other details. This to some extent, would, if fully brought into practice, have made a scheme of payment by result something more of a practical proposition.

One alternative method of introducing higher labour productivity through the wage system was briefly considered. This was to relate earnings to overall results such as the profits of the enterprise concerned. It was wisely dismissed by the Authors of the Plan as being ineffective in an underdeveloped economy, since the enterprise might have its success or failure entirely governed by markets, price controls, etc., which were quite outside the control of individual workers and therefore no incentive to them. This method of bringing about higher productivity in the labour market could only be by ensuring a scheme of profit-sharing along with a minimum level of earnings, this ensuring that in a declining sector, the individual would still be above the subsistence level.
4. Wage Policy.

Given that a wages and incomes policy had to be brought in to increase productivity and the rate of economic growth, the Plan set a rather hesitant tone by saying -

"Decisions will be taken about wage levels and wage structure from time to time. These decisions will always seek to protect the interests of the workers and the farmers in the distribution of the national income. But the share of the nation's wealth which accrues to the people is not measured only by the wages and other incomes they receive. It is also influenced by the amount of public services that is available to them and by the prices that they pay for the goods which they buy. It is an essential part of the socialist philosophy of the Government that the need for an adequate level of public services should not be sacrificed to the demands of individual interest. A share of the national income must be secured to the state sufficient to allow it to provide for the population as a whole what is considered to be an adequate level of public services in the light of the given economic circumstances of the country and the ultimate objectives of Government in the modernisation of Ghana." \(^1\)

It went on in a vague way to suggest ways of relating prices to incomes and to say that the Government intended to bring about an increase in the standard of living not merely by paying higher incomes, which could be nullified by movements in prices, but also by keeping down prices of essential consumer goods, in particular food prices. It was planned to allow for an increase in the level of nutrition (a fundamental factor in increased productivity) without any significant increase in outlay on food. Similarly such things as rents were to be controlled. The section on prices generally was so vague and

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imprecise that it is difficult to see how it could be administered, especially in conditions at that time where black market transactions were almost the norm.

Turning to the machinery for implementing a wages policy, the Plan suggested that the management of a realistic wage policy designed to achieve these objectives, required a system which was not subject to the haphazard and erratic influences that "govern wage movements in so many other economies".¹ By this it must be read that the Authors were also talking of Ghana, though in the political circumstances they were too polite to say so. It is in phrases like this one that the political conditions prevailing at the time can be read. The Authors therefore proposed the formation of a National Wages Commission of three independent members who would work out the wages structure and wages policy in the light of general economic considerations, in particular with regard to economic growth. It was recommended that they consider particularly the questions of the national minimum wage which had been in operation since July 1960 and of the wage structure as it affected the inter-relationships of "a limited number of selected grades in the semi-skilled, skilled, technical, executive, administrative and professional levels and the determination of minimum and average payments standards under a system of payment by results."² The Planners were thereby attempting to get something off the ground which might

¹. Ibid page 170.
². Ibid page 171.
conceivably be impartial, and be a little sheltered from political hazard.

The difficulties of servicing such a Commission were appreciated and it therefore recommended that the Division of Employment and Manpower in the Office of the Planning Commission would assist the Commission in its work. This particular body was to a very large extent composed of European Advisers. There was, of course, in existence the network of Public Employment Centres, which were mainly concerned with the registration and placement of unskilled and middle level workers. The new functions of the Employment Service were seen as coping also with all skilled and highly trained workers. One further recommendation was the formation of a Central Employment Office purely for high-level, technical and professional personnel.

Finally the Employment Service was to be responsible for collecting information on labour market conditions, and a beginning was certainly made on this, at least so far as regarding finding some suitable staff to operate it was concerned. It did for a short time work in co-operation with the Labour Department and the Central Bureau of Statistics, and it began to collect and analyse information in order to try to gauge manpower requirements.

The role of the trade unions in the machinery was described as follows :-
"In a developing country, the trade union movement must carry a heavier responsibility than unions in more mature economies for promoting increased productivity and hence economic growth. The Trades Union Congress has been made joint founder, along with Government and employers, of the National Productivity Centre. Union representatives will be expected to point out the problems that stand in the way of higher productivity, to take part in the search for solutions to these problems, and to propagate and win acceptance for these solutions at work sites, in the factories and on the farms. In carrying the message of productivity to the individual worker the Congress will by teaching him at the same time that increased happiness and prosperity for the individual Ghanaian is dependent on increased productivity." 1

The Congress was apparently therefore supposed to play a crucial role in getting the National Incomes Policy off the ground through advancing the material prosperity of its members, while also maintaining an adequate level of employment. More importantly, in reality, it had to mobilise the support of labour behind the Incomes Policy. In this it was exhorted to assist in bringing in the new wages structure through getting new wage differentials accepted, along with the many other wage and employment relationship which would have to be radically altered. In addition, support for new production norms, new skills, payment by results, and other incentive schemes were also to be canvassed by the unions while at the same time, rather wishfully, they were expected to continue with their "traditional responsibilities for negotiation and

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1. Ibid page 172. See Also A.M. Zack 'Trade Unions and the development of middle level manpower' op. cit.
implementation of collected bargaining agreements."¹

This latter reference to collective bargaining was mere lip-service window dressing. It was not really foreseen by the planners that free market forces would or should operate in this way.²

These were the main recommendations of the 1964 Plan.

To suggest that it failed is of course not quite correct, since it was never to any real extent put into action. Even if it had been, and even given a more stable and less volatile régime, the difficulties to be surmounted would still have been enormous. It would not alter the basic problems of under-development, the enormous dependence on the cocoa crop, the problem of population growth, of migration, of subsistence agriculture, of lack of sources for internal revenue, and above all the growing problem of unemployment and under-employment. Ghana is fortunate in many ways, but she has insufficient growth in the modern industrial sectors to absorb the labour surplus from the traditional sector to the extent required.

¹. Ibid p. 172. Turner op. cit. page 34 describes collective bargaining as a "sacred cow, the merit of which is more generally asserted or taken for granted than objectively examined." He and a reviewer of his study: D.F. MacAleese, writing in the Economic Bulletin of Ghana. Vol IX (1965) agree— it has little practical place in wage determination.

². The exhortation to the unions was contained in a pamphlet: The Tasks Before Us, issued by the G.T.U.C., (Accra, 1965).
Even within the relatively small wage-earning section of the community, when the Planners talked about wage differentials, they did not give enough attention to the fact that these may bear no relation to the relative qualifications of the individuals, nor to the degree of scarcity in the market. Payments may and frequently did depend on such things as personal requirements and relationships to the employer,\(^1\) and even within one class of employment they may in consequence be of different, completely random levels. This frequently meant that any question of incentive payment, so important in any country wishing to improve skills, had no relation to individual productivity. To say, as the Planners did, that rewards for similar skills were substantially uniform, was demonstrably untrue. The *sine qua non* of a wages structure would be to create these differentials and incentives out of what is, today, a highly random relationship in even fairly advanced sectors of the economy.

These problems are fundamental but equally so are those of an organisational nature. The rudimentary and unused nature of collective bargaining procedures, due to the fierce political nature of the Nkrumah Government's limitations on their effectiveness, was admittedly coupled to a minimum wage system, but this too was, after its initial impact, \(^2\) more

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1. H.A. Turner *op. cit.* page 46.

2. See above page 225.
or less ineffective due to the gradations of underemployment at the bottom of the labour strata. Minimum wage legislation really only applied to the Public Sector, and to a certain extent to the large expatriate firms, thus benefitting those already favoured sections of the community, to the further detriment of a sound or more realistic system of differentials. The question arises in relation to the introduction of a national minimum wage, whether wages should be kept as low as possible in order to encourage labour intensive production, thus absorbing the maximum number of people in a population with a high proportion of unemployed or underemployed. On the other hand, should the minimum wage, as in Ghana, provide at least adequate nutrition, as a prerequisite of higher labour productivity, and along with this, allow for the fact that wage employment should be permitted to grow only as fast as jobs can be created. This requires certain administrative pressures perhaps through the trade unions, to persuade people to stay in the non-wage sector of the economy. The latter policy for Ghana seems to be the better one in circumstances where there is no land scarcity, and subsistence living does not involve the hardships found in other parts of Africa. The effectiveness of a policy designed to try to keep people in the non-wage sector might be in doubt however, since a minimum wage policy will, of itself, create such large differentials as to continue to attract people into the urban areas where there are at least possibilities of wage employment.
In the last two years of the Nkrumah era the lack of regulation was coupled with a fairly rapid inflation, but despite this, political pressures allowed for little or no sensible wage restraint or any attempt to begin with some of the Plan's recommendations. Some months before the Coup, an I.M.F. team had demanded some restrictive measures however, before it would consider shouldering any more of Ghana's considerable international debt burden, and there were signs that this external pressure might overrule internal political expediency. This is not to argue that a more widespread system of wage regulation would have helped, or will help in any major way without the additional conditions mentioned above. Indeed to foster such would, in all probability, only distort further the existing imbalance between the various sectors of the economy, particularly between the urban and rural labour forces. This the Planners realised was especially dangerous, as such distortion, in increasing the differential between wage and non-wage sectors, would add to the unemployment caused by inter-sectoral mobility.

What then is required, given the dominant role of the Government not only in determining wages in the Public Sector but also in influencing the Private Sector? The need is certainly for a set of simple and deliberately constructed principles, which can be effective in both public and private

1. See Chapter 1, page 33.
2. See above page 240.
sectors in relation to the prevailing stage of economic development. These principles should allow labour productivity to rise faster than real wages, provided that the standard of living and perhaps money wages rise sufficiently for the purposes of achieving higher productivity through incentives. Secondly, it should try and restrain any further tendency for wage differentials to grow any greater, and such differentials should be more precisely tied to skill, and not to historical accident or tribal favour. This must also be extended to the differentials between the modern and traditional sectors of the economy as well, though it could only admittedly be accomplished by a deliberate political act, since free market forces are unlikely to produce any such reconstruction in the foreseeable future. But in educationally status-conscious Ghana, the difficulties inherent in altering the status of learning requisite of a clerk as opposed to an artisan, suggest a fundamental educational programme to change attitudes before this could happen.¹ The public sector could perhaps help, and rather contrary to what Turner argues about the barriers created by ignorance on the supply side, information is easily transmitted due to the high degree of geographical and intersector mobility of labour in Ghana. Also necessary would be

¹ "How could one justify the relative pay scales of the clerical officer (£G 175 - 325) and the artisan (£G 175 - 325). In both cases they would have the same standard of literacy (middle school) but the artisan would have had in addition five years training as an apprentice." Isaacs Report op. cit.
more precise and uniformly applied legislation on wage limiting and minimum wage levels, since as has been demonstrated, the collective bargaining system in view of the vast "reserve army of the unemployed" - or underemployed, would too easily lead to exploitation. Finally, there is the need to introduce new labour from the traditional non-wage sector of the economy only as and when required. This would benefit both the economy as a whole, through checking urban employment, and also the wage-labour force generally, by assisting in the stratification and improved conditions for those already employed.

In conclusion, under Nkrumah, and indeed under the new military régime, conditions did and do exist for Government direction in matters of wage and labour policy, much more so than is possible in the freer employment structure, and less Public-Sector-orientated Western economies, given of course an efficient enough administration to carry it out. Certainly there was little allowance made for collective bargaining and free play in the labour market, and therefore the function of the trade unions in this field was and is completely abandoned. But there exists an overriding requirement for a strong political leadership, backed by union support, to allow a labour policy to be successfully implemented. Given the recent British experience, this is no surprising conclusion. With all the theory and expertise available here, an incomes policy cannot even be begun to be
implemented without the political will and political ability to convince the unions of the benefits of such a policy in order to ensure its effectiveness.
CHAPTER VIII

Trade Unions in Ghana: Their Involvement in the Pan-African Field
This chapter looks in more detail at Ghana's involvement with pan-African trade union movements. It particularly concerns itself with the Nkrumah Government's support for and leadership of, the All African Trade Union Federation (AATUF), which, at first seen as an entirely African labour organisation, later became a political tool of Ghana's foreign policy, fitting in with that country's belief in the trade union movement as a component of the national Government. I By examining the debate among African trade unions over the question of affiliation to non-African trade union internationals, this Chapter also highlights the basic reasons for the lack of unity among African unions and gives a comparative picture of the position of trade unions throughout Africa in relation to Ghana's pre-1966 attempts to dominate the field.

To understand this involvement with the various pan-African trade union movements, it is necessary at the outset, to look at the history of Ghana's relationships with the major labour internationals both in the colonial and post-

I. The sources of information in this chapter come, in the main, from first hand interviews, personal attendance at conferences etc. There has been little satisfactory study of pan-African trade unionism to date. See however relevant chapters in Ioan Davies op. cit. Menaud and Salah-Bey op. cit. and C. Legum's Panafrikanism. This chapter, in an earlier form, was presented as a paper at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (U. of London) Seminar on Pan-Africanism on 26th November, 1965, one of a series conducted by Dennis Austin.
independence periods. Under colonialism, the Gold Coast trade unions had few external contacts outside those which existed with Britain itself, at least until the early fifties. Before that, contacts that did exist were maintained with, or through the Gold Coast Labour Department, the British T.U.C., and, to a lesser extent, with individual British Unions, such as the National Union of Mineworkers. The Labour Movement in Ghana was affiliated to the British T.U.C. from as early as 1945, but the link was somewhat tenuous, and the real involvement outside Ghana did not come until the late forties and early fifties when the three large international trade union organisations, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions (IFCTU) - this latter to a much smaller degree - began to compete for the favours of the Gold Coast workers.

2. **Pre-Independence Ties**

Ghanaian contacts with the WFTU grew slowly, and one of the first brief contacts was in 1947 when the latter organisation organised an African Trade Union Information Conference in Dakar. Nothing came of this Conference, and further progress in relation to Africa generally was halted by the split in the International Trade Union Movement, which led to the foundation of the ICFTU in December 1949.

Relations between Gold Coast trade unionists and the new

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1. See Chapters I, III and V.
WFTU started straight after the schism and revolved round the figure of Anthony Woode, a Ghanaian Marxist, who was imprisoned for his part in the 1950 strike in Sekondi. Following on the strike, when the Gold Coast TUC was accused of incompetence, and an organisation called the Gold Coast Unemployed Association was formed, the latter, calling itself a trade union, established further contacts with WFTU again mainly through the agency of Woode.¹

In 1951, I.K. Kumah, another left-wing trade union leader, asked the WFTU for recognition and help, and formally applied for affiliation for his break-away Ghana TUC² in April 1952. During that year the British Communist Party sent a team out to help organise the GTUC, but further Communist links came to an apparent halt in August 1952, when Nkrumah's Cabinet ordered a ban of WFTU and other Communist publications. Despite this, two major unions, the Gold Coast Maritime Workers Union and the Timber Workers Union, sought help at various times during this period from the WFTU. Further slight contacts with the WFTU were provided by the French-African unions which were allied with the Communist Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire (CGT). The latter organisation arranged a confer-

¹ See Chapter III, page 115.
² See Chapter III, page 114.
conference of pan-African trade unions in Bamako in October 1951, which was also backed by the WFTU. The WFTU had, earlier in the year, tried to hold a similar conference in Douala, in the Cameroons, but the French authorities refused them final permission.

With regard to the ICFTU, the Ghana TUC and the CPP had a rather casual and opportunistic attitude. It was an ally when needed against Woode and his faction, but it was discarded from time to time as the situation allowed. After its foundation in December 1949, the ICFTU started sending delegations to plead its cause in various parts of Africa. One went to West Africa in 1951, and thereafter the ICFTU with the blessing of the French, held a conference in Douala, in March of that year, to which the Gold Coast sent a delegation. That conference recommended certain steps in regional co-operation, and as a result, a West African Information and Advisory Centre was set up in Accra early in 1953, under the British trade unionist, Albert Hammerton. It organised trade union training courses and a number of West Africans were sent on courses to Brussels in the years that followed. The Gold Coast TUC affiliated to the ICFTU in July 1951, and was represented on

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on the Executive Board from 1953 onwards, with a short break from August 1953 to February 1954 due to internal conflicts.

As a result of the location of this Information Centre, Accra was an obvious choice for the first African Regional Conference of the ICFTU which was held in January 1957, just before Ghana's independence. Seventeen African countries were represented, and four others sent observers. Accra was beginning to establish herself as a centre, and Nkrumah himself opened the Conference. In his opening speech\(^1\) he warned that while he supported free trade unionism, and welcomed help from outside, African unions should not blindly copy what had been done in Europe and America. The Conference recommended that various Regional Committees should be set up, for North West, South East and Central Africa. Despite the criticism that fell on the shoulders of the ICFTU since Ghana's Independence, it is perhaps fair to claim that this Conference and these Committees were really the beginning of the pan-African trade union movement. But the strong start provided by the creation of the ICFTU West African Regional Organisation suffered a setback in 1959 when Ghana, as the strongest organisation in ICFTU in the area, stated that the proposed West Africa Committee should not

\(^{1}\) 'Ghanaian Times' (29th January, 1957).
be formed until the ex-French African States had an opportunity to join. She went further than this by suddenly disaffiliating from the ICFTU early in 1959, giving as the reason that affiliation to any of the three trade union Internationals was a disruptive element which African workers could no longer afford.

The IFCTU's interest in Ghana was marginal, since its essentially Catholic bias had little appeal in British West Africa as a whole. Its main support came from the French African States, and its existence was one reason why up to independence, contact between French and British African trade unionists was slight. Relations with organisations such as the ILO also existed but these were, in the main, conducted through the Colonial Government's Labour Department. Finally Ghana did have certain links with the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions after it was formed in March 1956, but it was by its nature, excluded from full membership or association.

3. Ghana's Role in the Post-Independence Moves for a pan-African Movement

Quite apart from the restrictions on international contacts imposed by the Colonial Government, there was, more simply, little incentive in Ghana to create or take part in the work of any international bodies until independence had been achieved.

1. Ghana was a member of the I.L.O. from May 1957. See Chapter V, page 189.

2. For the classic view see George Padmore, Panafriicanism or Communism (London 1956)
There were, however, considerable unifying forces at work in the French West African States, a factor of the administrative unity of the area, and of the fact that for Metropolitan political reasons, the three major French union groups competed for support in their Colonies.

Ghana had, however, taken some bilateral steps in meeting trade unions from other British West African countries, in an attempt to get some sort of integrated programme of action, and as the first West African State to gain independence, she was in a good position to take the lead. Contacts with some of the Nigerian unions, for example, go back as far as 1950, and the Nigerian trade unionist W.O. Goodluck was active in Ghana in the years 1950 to 1954. A planned All-African Conference of Trade Unions intended for Accra in October 1956, which was eventually abandoned through lack of support, gained revival of interest during the 1958 All African Peoples Conference (AAPC) in Accra.

In West Africa, however, only Ghana was independent at that time, so it was understandable that while the idea of an All African Trade Union Federation was conceived there, little action was taken to follow up the recommendations that were made. Thus, three years later at the First Conference of AATUF in Casablanca, the Report of the Secretariat which had been set up, had to admit that little had happened in the meantime. The countries concerned were too busy trying to gain their own political independence to concern themselves with new external allegiances. The AAPC's Trade Union Committee did, however, give certain expression to the idea of trade union unity in Africa, by
drawing up a series of detailed proposals, which led to the First Preparatory Conference of AATUF which was eventually held in Accra in November, 1959.

But the AAPC was not alone in seeking unity, and the French African states also had taken steps in this direction. In 1955, Sekou Touré the leader of the trade union movement in Guinea, with the help of Houphouet-Boigny the Prime Minister of the Ivory Coast, broke away from the Communist-orientated CGT and formed the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Africains (CGTA). The CGTA in turn formed the nucleus of the Union Générale des Travailleurs de l'Afrique Noire (UGTAN), which was founded in January 1957. A meeting of the latter was convened in Conakry in January 1959 by Sekou Touré to consider Proposals for the founding of a more widely based Union of Negro Workers, which would include workers from Anglophone states.

Ghana was itself affiliated to UGTAN, and at the January 1959 meeting John Tettegah was elected First Vice-President under Sekou Touré as President, but any practical results of this link between Ghana and UGTAN were not obvious, rather in keeping with the results of the Ghana-Guinea political union. In any case by 1959, UGTAN had almost no support outside Guinea due to the latter country's deteriorating political relationships with the other

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I. Report of the General Congress of UGTAN, (January 1959), Présence Africaine). Although UGTAN included many Communist unions, its driving force was African Nationalism, and it sought no affiliation with existing Trade Union Internationals.
French African countries, especially encouraged by the schism between followers of Sekou Touré and Houphouet-Boigny.

The French African influence at this stage was still fairly strong however, due to the long tradition of interstate trade union co-operation in the French Colonies, which had been assisted by the three metropolitan union groupings, the CGT, the CFTC and the Force Ouvrière. While the CGT group had formed the basis of UGTAN, the CFTC formed the Confédération Africaine des Travailleurs Croyants (CATC) in July 1956, and the Force Ouvrière formed the Confédération Africaine des Syndicats Libre (CASL) in February 1953. All three became structurally free from their parent organisations to varying degrees after independence. There were also moves in the Arab-African trade unions, and a conference of Arab Trade Unions was held in Cairo in April 1959. These separate meetings suggest that the time was politically ripe for such moves, since at that stage, there was little if any contact between any of the organisations concerned.

Yet one more step has importance. Representatives of trade union organisations in Ghana and Nigeria met in August 1959 in Lagos, in the hope of establishing a Federation of West African

I. The CATC later formed the basis of the Union Panafricaine et Malgache des Travailleurs Croyants (UPMTC) set up under Gilbert Pongault as Secretary General at Brazzaville in January 1959. (Also referred to as the UPTC.) See Chapter III of J. Meynaud and A. Salah-Bey, Le Syndicalism Africain. (Payot, 1963)
Trade Unions to cover English, French and Portuguese speaking areas of West Africa. This bilateral step was very much out of tune with the mood of the Ghana trade unions at the time and in the event, little came of it.

But it was round the AAPC's activities that the main impetus can be seen, and right from the start, Ghana had a large share in the plan. The Organisation's "Steering Committee" met in October 1959 to review the current developments, and to find means of giving expression to the earlier recommendations. Its Secretary-General, Abdoulaye Diallo of Guinea, asked the Ghana TUC to constitute a "Convening Secretariat" for a preparatory conference of the Federation in Accra. This first Conference was held in November of the same year, and was fairly successful from Ghana's point of view, despite the fact that its timing conflicted, perhaps deliberately, with the ICFTU's Regional Conference being held in Lagos.

In setting up the machinery of AATUF, it was decided that the Headquarters should be in Accra, thus giving Ghana a large initial advantage. The Committee elected to carry out the wishes of the Conference, was a more representative one than any which appeared in AATUF meetings thereafter. There were nineteen members which

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1. The ICFTU were accused of trying to sabotage the Accra meeting as a result of this conflict of dates, but as the chairman of this AFRO Conference was Tom M'Boya of Kenya, and Ghana was still wooing him, current criticism was muted. The decision to hold this meeting was taken without reference to AAPC or its chairman. (see C. Legum, Panafri canianism op cit page 84.)

2. The Committee of the Preparatory Conference was composed of the Ghana TUC, Nigerian Labour Movement, Gambia Workers Union, Sierra Leone Council of Labour, Uganda TUC, Union Marocaine de Travail, Egyptian TUC, UGT of Algeria, and the UGTAN.
number could be increased depending on new affiliations to the Federation. As well as the general committee, there was also a seven-man Secretarial Bureau elected, with, as President, Ben Seddiq of Morocco and six "Secretaries" including Joe-Fio Meyer from the Ghana TUC, Abdoulaye Gueye and Seydou Diallo from UGTAN and W.O.L. Goodluck from the Nigerian TUC. The Bureau was meant to meet every two months on the initiative of the President, or more often if circumstances warranted. It was charged with certain tasks to do with organising the Congress, which included the preparation of reports, collection of funds and propaganda on behalf of the Congress. In order to function, the Preparatory Secretariat had to have funds, and founding Member organisations were asked to contribute, but with an almost entirely negative response. Ghana stepped in with a commitment of £10,000 from the GTUC, mainly because it was the host organisation. Thus there was, despite the apparent impartiality of membership of the various committees, both the headquarters in Accra and financial control there as well. It was not, therefore, surprising to find that the expressed doctrine of the movement was, almost from the start, in terms of "the compelling need for unity and the necessity for carrying out the liberation struggle of the African workers, independent of the forces at variance in the International Trade Union Movement."¹

¹ "African Unity" was the major policy of Nkrumah in international affairs. From the Report of the Activities of the Secretariat, presented at the first AATUF Conference. Much of the information in this section comes from this Report.
The foundations having been laid by the Accra Conference of 1959, a further step was to be another "Constituent Congress" planned for Casablanca in May of 1960. Eventually however, this was never held, and there followed a period during which it became fairly obvious that there were very few countries which were in any way interested in furthering the cause of trade union unity. AATUF was later to argue that "it was at this crucial moment that the enemies of pan-African Trade Unionism began their intrigues and subversion by every conceivable means." It was in this light that the holding of the above-mentioned African Regional Conference of the ICFTU was in Lagos just a few days before the 1959 Preparatory Conference of AATUF, was considered. Other examples were frequently cited of a plot to halt the advances of Labour unity. Yet AATUF was able to sympathise, and said that it was natural that unions which owed their continued existence to subsistence from International trade union organisations, would have by necessity, to follow the dictates of their benefactors.

AATUF Reports contribute other reasons for this slow development towards unity. It was argued that under the colonial situation, African Unions were compelled to accept the unwanted paternalism of the metropolitan unions, and to affiliate to these unions. Then there was the problem of the International Trade Union Organisations, affiliation to which has been the major stumbling block to unity right up till the present.

I. Ibid.
Initially, it appears that there was much argument in favour of complete non-affiliation. As has been pointed out, the connection either with the ICFTU or the WFTU would, it was held, lead to splits within Africa which were not relevant in the African context. In addition, the "enemies" of African trade union unity were accused of "exploiting the basic cause of division by deepening the ideological gulf between the two groups". "The obvious aim of these enemies is often to de-neutralise the pan-African trade union concept by making its advocates parties to the conflict."¹

With the failure of the proposed AATUF conference in May 1960 in Casablanca, but with the decision to call a further Preparatory Conference taken, Ghana decided that nothing was to be left to chance. John Tettegah of the GTUC, having attended the Steering Committee meeting of the All African Peoples Conference in Dar-es-Salaam in November 1960, went on a whistle-stop tour of trade union organisations in Africa, to gauge their feeling and win their support. He paid special attention to supposed "moderates" such as Tom M'Boya of the Kenya Federation of Labour, and the two signed a declaration reaffirming their support for AATUF. They agreed that AATUF should not be affiliated to any of the Internationals, and both further agreed to "recognise the right of each National Centre (the KFL and the GTUC) to decide on its international relations."²

¹. Ibid.
². C. Legum, Panafriicanism op. cit., page 85
it was not a position that Tettegah maintained for long. About the same time, the ICFTU convened another African Regional Conference, this time in Tunis, to discuss the problem of re-groupment of African labour, and as a result, it was held by AATUF to be a further attempted sabotage of their own efforts. They need not have worried, since it in fact achieved very little.

The second Preparatory Conference of AATUF was eventually held in Accra from the 2nd to the 4th of December 1960. Abdoulaye Diallo, the Secretary General of the All African Peoples Conference, covered the financial aspects with a grant from the latter's funds of some £2,000. Eighteen African trade unions were represented by some thirty-five delegates. Its achievement was instructing the Secretariat to work out the details of convening the first Congress of AATUF in Casablanca.

There were to be two final Preparatory meetings of the Secretariat before the whole movement could finally get off the ground. The Preparatory Secretariat of AATUF held an extraordinary meeting during the All African Peoples Conference in Cairo in January 1961, and decided to meet in April in Conakry to finalise arrangements for the inaugural conference. They met under the chairmanship of the President Mahjoub ben Seddiq of the Moroccan UMT. The Meeting was opened by Sekou Touré who spoke in general terms of the philosophy of the African Labour Movement, and the role of trade unions in the struggle for liberation. Apart from this outward show, the meeting got down to some serious work and prepared a detailed programme

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1. The material in this section comes from the AATUF Secretariat Report.
for the Inaugural Conference which was finally set for the 25th to 28th of May 1961 in Casablanca. Its sponsors were to be the "Foundation Members", and each of them could nominate six delegates. A Mandate Commission was set up which was to sit in Casablanca before the start of the Congress to decide on the status and number of other trade union organisations which might turn up. The power given to this Mandate Commission was thus potentially large, but in the end, it was decided that there should be a general appeal to all trade unions in Africa to participate. Morocco, the U.A.R., Guinea, Mali and Ghana each offered £6,000 for the running of the conference, and a further £6,000 came from the All African Peoples Conference. The technical arrangements were left in the hands of the UMT of Morocco, the Ghana TUC, and Guinea's CMTG. A list was also prepared of which international and other trade union organisations should be invited as observers. Special invitations were issued to Sekou Touré as President of UGTAN, and to the Labour Attachées of foreign Embassies in Morocco. The stage was set.


The first Conference of the All African Trade Union

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1. The UMP, Ghana TUC, UGT Algeria, UNT Egypt, CMT Guinea, (UGTAN), UNT Mali, UGTAN, UGT Tunisia.

2. In French speaking countries AATUF is known as the Conference Syndicale Pan-Africaine (CSPA).
Federation was finally held in May 1961 in Casablanca, under the Chairmanship of ben Seddiq, Secretary General of the Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT). From the first, there was little question that the unions which were present did want to found AATUF, but that was where the agreement ended, and it is worth going into some detail over the debate since it shows that the major stumbling block was the question of affiliation to the Trade Union Internationals. Even the moderate ben Seddiq who at first was in favour of allowing the separate National Unions to decide their own affiliation, was later prevailed upon to follow what was to be the unwavering Ghanaian line of not allowing any allegiances outside Africa. He had been an important figure in ICFTU, so it was fairly understandable that he should have begun by trying to resist moves in this direction.

When the Conference finally opened after many disagreements behind the scenes, there was an equally large amount of public criticism on questions of organisation from those delegates who had not been in at the formative stages. Their main accusations were of prior rigging, based on the composition of the Steering Committee which was, in their view, heavily weighted in favour of the "Socialist" countries. A second complaint was that there was no attempt during the Conference to adopt Standing Orders, and there was apparently no fixed voting procedure. Finally, the composition of the Conference itself was very heavily criticised. The actual choice of organisations invited was, it was claimed, biased in favour of
those likely to support the preconceived resolutions, and few pro-ICFTU organisations had received an invitation. In fact several turned up, including the Uganda TUC, the Liberian CIO, the Cameroon USLC and the Malagasy CMTC. Also there were a few delegations from IFCTU-affiliated unions including the Chad CATC, the Congo (Brazzaville) UATC, the Dahomey CDTC and the Malagasy CCSM. These uninvited guests were at first only given observer status, but later on, after pressure from two prominent unionists, Borha of Nigeria and M'Boya of Kenya, they were allowed to become delegates. This side issue was further held to indicate the biased nature of the Steering Committee.1

After an opening speech by Tettegah on the activities of the Preparatory Secretariat, and a historical sketch of the moves leading up to the Conference, the delegates spent most of their time listening to a series of reports of activities and statements of aspirations. The tone of the Conference was set by ben Seddiq in his Doctrine and Orientation Report, which seems to have consisted mainly of his own thoughts. Despite his earlier hesitancy, his ideas as set out in this document, laid down the foundations of the doctrine opposed to dual-affiliation.

I. The Steering Committee was composed of Tettegah (Ghana), ben Seddiq (Morocco), Mamadou Sissoko (Mali), Kaba Mamady (Guinea), Ahmed Tlili (Tunisia), Answar Salama (UAR), Salem Shito (Libya), K. Maachou (Algeria).
Tettegah's speech and the one that followed it, that concerning the "Programme of Action" presented by Diallo Seydou, the General Secretary of UGTAN, set out between them, the principles on which the opposition to external affiliations were based. The latter speaker, having defined what were the major objectives of an African working class, stressed the need for his Programme of Action which would "raise the level of consciousness of the African worker", so that he could see his plight in perspective. But the attempt would have to be made within the framework of the different political and economic structures of the Member States, and would have to cope with the continuing controls of foreign colonial and neo-colonial powers. The trade union's role in this must be to help the state protect what it had gained, and government of that state might, in consequence, wish "to direct the union in the general interest". This was, in other words, an admission that there might be circumstances when it would be necessary to limit the powers of trade unions, but from within, not from without. He continued with a bitter attack on those states, which, going under the "mantle of independence, were really bound hand and foot to Europe". In all, it was the cry that was to go out continually from AATUF conferences thereafter, the African worker's battle

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I. The strictures suggested were not greeted with favour by the delegates. Even the more extreme unionists - especially from the supposedly more "moderate" ex-French states had everything to fear from state control of the unions.
against imperialism, militarism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. In this, the most immediate example of this was external affiliations by African Trade Unions. In order to achieve real independence it was essential to combine:

"L'absence d' une Organisation Syndicale Pan-Africaine fortement structurée, en face d' un patronat et d' un imperialism monolytique, a diminué considérablement le potentiel combatif du movement syndicale Africaine. Il faut créer un enthousiasme réel, mobiliser les masses laborieuses autour des mots d' ordre précis, il faut s' atteler sans retard à une formation syndicale poussée de nos militants."

These speeches set the tone. The political objectives against economic colonialism, against racial discrimination, and for non-alignment; the economic objectives, for an African Common Market, and against any extension of the European Common Market; the cultural objectives of preserving African cultures "stifled by colonialism"; the social objectives of "better conditions within the structure of unity and democracy". The solution was to be reached through a common programme of action and trade union unity on a continental plane. The report of

I. **Rapport sur le Programme d' Action**, by Diallo Seydou. He recommended a training college for African Trade Unionists, a Newspaper "to carry the fight into every corner", and the creation of a Committee of Solidarity to co-ordinate the battle.
the "Commission de la Redaction de la Charte"\textsuperscript{1} again discussed this question of affiliation, but could not agree whether or not disaffiliation should be a requirement of AATUF. The members agreed that unity was incompatible with pluralism, and that African trade unionism must be adapted to African needs alone, rejecting external ideologies in the process. On general trade union independence, the report stated that there should be no restrictions on trade union freedom, and that Governments should never interfere in the internal workings of the unions, - a very different view from that expressed by Diallo Seydou. The report was explicit however in stating that trade unions originating outside Africa must be adapted to African requirements, criticising those of some of the ex-French territories, where the African unions were merely branches of the Metropolitan ones. Finally, in regard to international relations, the Committee were agreed that non-alignment was essential, and that no foreign interference in their affairs should be tolerated. What they were not agreed about was affiliation, and also how international relations in the framework of the African trade union system should be conducted.

I. The members of the Commission de la Redation de la Charte included M'Boya, (Kenya Federation of Labour), as Chairman, Heymann (Ghana), Tlili (UGTT), Seydou (UGTAN), Borha (TUCN), Diallo (Mali), and also representatives of the UGTA, UGTS, CNTG, UAR, and the UMT of Morocco. They failed to reach agreement on the Report, thus delaying its presentation. Looking at the composition of the Commission, this is understandable. An interim report was presented by Benslimane of the UMT.
It was the problem of disaffiliation that was the main stumbling block throughout, one group wishing to ensure the disaffiliation of unions from all external organisations as a prerequisite of membership of AATUF, while the other, the moderates, considered that this was unnecessarily demanding, and that to clarify the doctrine and objectives of AATUF was of much more importance than any question of structure. The problem was put to the Plenary Conference, at which the most important speech on the side of the moderates was by Tom M'Boya who spoke against severing the links with ICFTU. He said that although his organisation, the Kenya Federation of Labour, was a member of ICFTU, he had not come to defend it, yet on the other hand he saw no reason why they should leave it. It did no harm, and had a long record of doing good. He referred at some length to a paper which was circulating, purporting to be a British Cabinet paper, which ran him down. He "knew it for the lie it was", designed to drive him to the other camp. But he was not going to be driven unless he thought it would be good for his country alone. In his attitude M'Boya was strongly supported by Ahmed Tlili of Tunisia, who argued that, while he was opposed to union organisations being puppets of metropolitan unions, he was just as much opposed to those who were under the control of their respective governments. His own UGTT was a member of the ICFTU and yet kept completely independent. There was no reason why such membership should be considered neo-colonialist. The ICFTU had no ideology but had principles of defending the
weak and dependent territories at the United Nations. Why was this so evil? He was of the opinion that disaffiliation was a major problem, requiring intrigue and counter-intrigue, which was endangering the whole opportunity of success. Tlili received little applause, but he argued as a straightforward unionist, ready to see the reason on both sides. Another voice for the Moderates was Borha of the Nigerian TUCN who said that affiliation also referred to contacts with the East, the WFTU. He presumably referred to Tettegah when he said that there was a so-called non-aligned unionist who was going to Moscow straight after this Conference. What was the real meaning of non-alignment if this could happen. His speech was followed by Kaba Mamadi of Guinea CNTG, Boubakar Diallo of the Mali UNTN and a large number of other speakers all critical of dual affiliation, and wishing it abolished. Many tended however to stress that disaffiliation must apply to both of the world blocs. Djibo Bakary of Niger's USTN, appealed at the end for calm consideration of this question which was dividing the movement, and appealed to delegates to concentrate on the future health of AATUF, an organisation which was in danger of collapse before it had fully come into being.

I have gone into this debate in some detail, for it shows that the question of dual affiliation was, from the start, the most important stumbling block to unity. Ghana had, behind the scenes, been extremely busy, and had fairly overtly, circulated a great deal of propaganda running down the opposition

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1. Later Niger's major opposition leader in exile.
to the anti-affiliation move. M'Boya's experience was typical, but Tlili, as might be expected, came in for much abuse. Both openly attacked Ghana alone for its behaviour, and gained some support in the process. The bitterness was such that by the time of the final session, the only ICFTU-affiliated delegates present were the UMT and the UGTA. Nigeria and Tanganyika deliberately left early, and in the end it was mainly a Ghana, Guinea, Morocco, UAR group that passed the final resolution which gave a ten-month transitional period for disaffiliation. This was not a step likely to win any of the less extreme members into the other camp, as was proved by the events that followed.

5. The Formation of A.T.U.C.

As is obvious from the above, AATUF was, from its foundation at the 1961 Conference, so dominated by the Casablanca powers and their demands on the fundamental question of external affiliation, that the unions from the so-called "Monrovia Group" of moderates, felt it necessary to take some counter-action towards pan-African Trade Unionism. In consequence, the concept of a new pan-African organisation was given shape at an ILO Conference of "free" Trade Unions in Geneva in June 1961. At this meeting, the UGTS of Senegal was charged with convening a conference of African Trade Unionists to be held in Dakar during the following year. The main supporters of this move were the Union Général des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT),
the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL), and the Union Pan-africaine des Travailleurs Croyants (UPTC). Notwithstanding the opposition from the Casablanca group to this move, the Conference finally took place in Dakar in January 1962. Its principal stated aim was to represent the African Trade Union Movement more adequately than AATUF had succeeded in doing.

Representatives of forty-one trade union organisations from twenty-nine countries\textsuperscript{1} attended, but though invited, representatives of unions from the Casablanca Group did not attend. Tettegah dismissed it as a "Puppet Conference of International Imperialism."\textsuperscript{2} Despite the absence of the Casablanca Group, there was still a great deal of disharmony. The three major differences involved again the vexed question of affiliation, the attitude that ATUC should adopt to AATUF, and finally the question of the speed at which association to ATUC should be forced. This disagreement alone showed that it was in no way a "puppet conference", further, there were many resolutions passed on anti-colonial themes, in support of unity, and against racial discrimination which would have been perfectly in keeping with any AATUF meeting.

\textsuperscript{1} Tunisia, the two Congo's, Niger, Upper Volta, Nigeria, Mauritania, Malagasy Republic, Cameroon, Dahomey, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Mauritius, C.A.R., Togo, Kenya, Tanganyika, Senegal, Somalia, Liberia, Gabon, S. Rhodesia, N. Rhodesia, Angola, Port. Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nyasaland, Libya and Uganda.

\textsuperscript{2} Ghanaian Times, 9th January, 1962.
Apart from basic questions of organisation which were the main preoccupations of the Conference, perhaps the most fruitful contribution was given by David Soumah of the Senegal CATC, in his position as President of the Political Economic and Social Committee of ATUC, when he spoke of the necessity to change the attitude of African unions from those of the Colonial era when they had deliberately made excessive social claims out of proportion to the economic possibilities of the countries concerned. This had been done with a view to weakening the fabric of colonial exploitation. Now the unions should turn to helping the state in its battle for speeding up economic development. It was decided from the beginning that ATUC would only recognise one trade union organisation from each member country, a very sensible move in the situation that existed in most African countries. It was a further expressed aim that the Organisation of African Unity should have an "authentic counterpart" in the African Trade Union Movement, with, ideally, ATUC itself filling the role.

More important than the Inaugural Conference is perhaps, how the movement emerged thereafter. Most of its strength (as

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I. A praesidium was appointed with members: Ahmed Tlili of the UGTT, Borha of the TUCN, Abdoullaye Ba (UGTS), Lubembe (Kenya F.L.-M'Boya's deputy) and Pongault (CATC-Congo). Mamadou Diallo of Gambia was elected President of the Charter and Statutes Committee, and Soumah of the Political Committee, - the two working committees or the Organisation.
with Ghana and AATUF) lay in support from the Senegalese Trade Union Movement, with the exception of its office bearers who wielded a slight and unsure power. ATUC always allowed its members to retain their international contacts, though it had no formal ones itself. It did however have a close working relationship with the ICFTU, and to a lesser extent with the IFCTU. The UPTC was represented in the ATUC Executive.

The desire for unity with AATUF appears on several occasions to have in fact been thwarted by ATUC. In February of 1964, the ATUC Secretariat met in Dakar, a day before it was meant to meet AATUF for joint talks in Algiers, and eventually never turned up. On this basis AATUF seemed justified in its claim that ATUC was the stumbling block to unity.

6. The UPTC in Africa

The UPTC had since its formation in Brazzaville in January 1959, pursued an entirely independent line as a regional organisation of the IFCTU. It is worthwhile just briefly mentioning its activities in the period. From its foundation until 1964, the UPTC was heard of but little, but at the end of 1963, Gilbert Pongault, its Secretary General, called a colloquium of "free African trade unionists" for Brazzaville to be followed by a conference in January 1964. This was in fact the Second Conference of the UPTC. Support for the Conference was not entirely from French speaking Africa, and Sierra Leone, Nigeria the Gambia, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanganyika sent delegates or
observers. It was considered by AATUF to be a further neo-colonialist plot to be used to postpone the proposed joint ATUC/AATUF meeting in Algeria, but it has emerged that the much more likely reason for its revival was a move by Pongault and others to break away from the ATUC, and the control Senegal had over the latter.

Pongault emerged from the meeting as a very competent performer, and spoke at length of the real meaning of trade union freedom, especially in relation to the one-party state. His criticism of AATUF predominated the Conference. The UPTC had sent delegates to the first conference of AATUF but had withdrawn "disillusioned by the intrigues". "The AATUF exists only on paper", he went on, neglecting to discuss the material existence of his own organisation. It was not AATUF alone that he criticised however, and ATUC also came in for the complaint that it was ineffective and dominated by the Senegalese unionists.

Despite the vigour of the Conference, the UPTC in the following year had little support outside Congo (Leopoldville), Gabon and Senegal. In co-operation with the IFCTU and the French CFTU, it carried out a reasonable training programme at several training schools in West Africa which briefly gave it more standing than either of its rivals, but it fairly soon virtually ceased to exist; its headquarters in Brazzaville were closed in March 1965, following a change of government and Pongault had to escape to Leopoldville.
7. **The Division in the African Labour Movement**

There are various causes for the split that occurred in the African Labour movement following the conference, or more precisely, reasons why at that stage the unions from the Casablanca and Monrovia Group countries could never effectively come together, because it is meaningless to talk in terms of a split between unions which never before had occasion to cooperate. It was rather that the situation at the end of the fifties was hardly right for such a pan-African move in the political, let alone the trade union sphere. Most of the states involved had just become, or were in the process of becoming independent, and for them there were too many pressures in other directions. Newly independent African states, for example, while paying lip service to the complaint that colonialism had bequeathed them arbitrary and unnatural frontiers, (a view that has some justification) had tended to reinforce their international political frontiers in a natural attempt to create the concept of "State" and to give some form to national identity. At such a juncture there was no immediate desire to give up even the slightest amount of hard-won sovereignty, even in the minor realm of trade unionism.

What one did get, however, were splinter groups from certain trade unions, which felt they had had a bad deal since independence, and who were looking to extra-territorial commitments in order to further their aims. Thus in many countries, while the major trade unions were establishing their positions under
their own independent governments, there were small groups, calling themselves "representative", who took a large part in budding pan-African movements.

Such "splits" as existed were thus frequently, but not entirely, internal to each individual country, a product of that country's political environment. But just as important, were the groupings engendered by the emergence of new states from their different colonial backgrounds, the different language groupings, ethnic and religious differences, and most importantly, political alignments. There was a natural tendency for the majority trade unions to be only interested in pan-African groupings if there was no suggestion of giving up any sovereignty, nor any possibility of interference in the internal workings of member organisations. They had to consolidate their internal position first. The splinter groups on the other hand, with the backing of one or two of the large Socialist union-groupings, such as Ghana and Egypt, were perfectly prepared to co-operate internationally. It was with this highly political background that these movements for unity came into being.

AATUF, with Ghana's backing, gave its full attention to the splinter groups, and assisted what were, in the main, very weak organisations, both financially and materially, so that they could "achieve their freedom from foreign trade union paternalism, and assert their right in determining their own future."[1] The Report of the Secretariat of AATUF states

that "much as we (the Secretariat) deplore the existence of splinter organisations within the trade unions in Africa, we accept the unavoidable situation as a historical necessity". One of the dangers of such action on AATUF's part, or perhaps one could say on Ghana's part, was that it brought down the criticism not only of the established trade union organisations upon itself, but also the ill-favour of many Governments, since these splinter groups frequently indulged not only in trade union opposition, but also political opposition. This was certainly the case in Nigeria, where W. Goodluck of the Nigerian TUC, a small organisation compared with the TUCN, certainly was very much involved in extreme left wing anti-government activities. Djibo Bakary of Niger was another well known trade unionist and opposition leader in exile.

Moreover, no-one even in the ATUC, openly at least, disagreed with the concept of unity, though more often than not it was lip-service support. There was simply a straightforward dislike of the way Ghana and AATUF were trying to organise things. AATUF on its part could not admit that there were certain properly constituted African unions and governments opposed to its policies. Those who were opposed were "neo-colonialist organisations such as ICFTU", who feared for their standing in Africa, and who, rather than attacking themselves, diverted "the conscious fight of the African working masses to internal conflict of interest".¹

¹. Ibid.
Such statements were hardly conducive to gaining support from the more moderate countries.

When AATUF itself examined those factors which it thought were the major ones contributing to disunity, it came to the conclusion that "trade unions which have risen to eminence and power with nationalist political movements in Africa, are assertive of their inherent consciousness in support of trade union united action because they maintain latitudes which correspond to the whole sphere of their political expression and which are in harmony with the common aspirations of the freedom movements of Africa." I Besides these revolutionary trade unions, there were apparently others which though conscious of the revolutionary moves going on, had "fallen prey to hostile governments", and therefore were unable to declare their stand. Finally, there could be isolated the worst form of trade union in Africa, that resulting from the metropolitan trade union influence, unions which were founded with the help of the colonialist unions, unions unable to exist without external support.

Whatever the arguments, it is certainly true that Accra was becoming a veritable sanctuary of trade unionists and dissidents from countries whose governments were hostile to pan-African trade unionism on the AATUF model. Ghana and AATUF conjoint, reaped a great deal of criticism as a result, becoming branded and linked equally with the Communist

I. Ibid.
Internationals, and the WFTU. The end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties saw so many changes within Africa, that they could not but help have an effect on the pan-African trade union movement. If Ghana was so much in the fore, what of the other members of the AATUF Committees? Insight into this is perhaps given by AATUF's Preparatory Secretariat having to communicate with President ben Seddiq in Morocco in late 1963, to "express the urgent need for reconvening a Preparatory Conference". In fact, it emerged that ben Seddiq had more or less nothing to do with the workings of AATUF between the two meetings. It was run entirely by Ghana and by the dissident exile trade unionists, who frequently were doubling as "governments in exile". It is fair to say that, throughout the period from its formation till the coup, without Ghanaian support, AATUF would not have continued to exist. This is proved by the immediate collapse of AATUF following on Nkrumah's downfall.

The most recent and only other AATUF Conference was held in Bamako from the 10th to the 14th June 1964, and has certain relevance in a study of the recent developments in pan-African Trade Union Organisations. The Conference was attended by some

1. The other organisation in Accra which worked closely with A.A.T.U.F. was the "freedom fighter" training organisation, the "Bureau of African Affairs".

2. The writer attended most of the sessions.
one hundred trade unionists representing about forty trade
union organisations and about twenty-five separate countries,
at least six of which were "Governments in Exile", with the
headquarters in Accra. From the start Ghana had the
Conference well under its control. John Tettegah was pro-
moted from Secretary to Secretary General, and the location of
AATUF's headquarters for the future was agreed upon as Accra.¹
The detailed lists of participants and the minutes of the
discussions were not fully published but since it emerged from
Ghana news-agency reports (with no attempts at modesty) that
some sixty of the delegates had stopped off for some days in
Accra both before and after Bamako, it would seem fair to assume
that the Conference had been highly weighted in Ghana's favour.²
Indeed she was accused of having become fairly adept at organ¬
isation of trade union conferences, all of which were roundly
condemned by ICFTU as being at least "unrepresentative."

Much of the conference was given up to listing the political
objectives of the CPP in relation to colonialism, neo-colonialism
and imperialism with full attention to the situation in South
Africa and Southern Rhodesia. As became the custom, there were

². Ghanaian Times 9th June 1964. The delegates also returned
via Accra. See Evening News (17th June 1964).
few resolutions of particular reference to trade unions as such. Two interesting points did, however, emerge. First of all, John Tettegah in his opening speech did appear to make a concession over the matter of contacts with foreign and international trade union organisations. He made the careful distinction between AATUF members being affiliated to international organisations, and their being allowed to co-operate with them, but at the same time he stressed his long held belief that such co-operation must come from the central trade union organisation in the state. This centralised union body should be strong and unique, for plurality of the trade union movement within a state would only serve to continue the colonial policy of divide and rule.

The second interesting point was an statement by AATUF defining the role and position of trade unions in a one-party state. The conference produced a resolution which defined the role of trade unionist in three types of African situations. The three situations were countries, first of all, still under the yoke of colonialism, secondly, under neo-colonialist or reactionary governments, and thirdly those countries following what was termed the "revolutionary road". Trade Unionists in these three circumstances must behave accordingly. Trade

Unions, such that were allowed to exist, as they were not for example in the Portuguese territories, must campaign by every means available in order "to free themselves from their chains". Under a reactionary or neo-colonialist régime (which might well be one-party, presumably such as Senegal or the Ivory Coast), trade unionists, if enlightened, must act much as under the colonial situation, "waging war against economic exploitation and rallying patriots to the cause".

Consideration of the role of the Ghana TUC in the pan-African trade union movement over the last few years of Nkrumah's rule showed that, self-styled as an arm of the ruling CPP, it had become not only an executive arm of the Party internally but also a vehicle for the expression of Ghana's foreign policy in Africa. The GTUC's fairly full control over the workings of AATUF added the influence of that body in Ghana's favour as well. But Ghana's status and influence in the pan-African union movement was to a great extent conditioned by her political standing in the OAU and in Africa generally, for the simple reason that the trade unions of Africa had such a high political content. In general terms this was true of nearly all pan-African or national trade union movements, since they were all, to some degree or other, under government control or provided a propaganda platform and foreign policy instrument for special

I. See Evening News 17th June 1964
national interests. Some amount of restraint was and is inevitable even in those countries attempting to govern in non-totalitarian ways, since in order to raise standards of living and face up to the problems of underdevelopment, it is perhaps a luxury to tolerate a trade union movement which is sectional and unrestrained.

In sum, the pan-African trade union movements, like all inter-African movements, tended to be entirely subject to the dictates of the member governments. The easiest way to illustrate this point is to return to the debate on dual-affiliation. Why exactly did this idea caused so much division, apparently out of all proportion to its real importance. It was in effect nothing to do with trade unionism per se, but was a cover for a simple political argument as expressed at every OAU meeting, on the question of different interpretations of non-alignment. Thus the almost non-existent distinction made by Tettegah at the AATUF Bamako meeting between "affiliation" and "co-operation". There was no difference in practice between the two terms certainly in terms of relationships between AATUF and WFTU on the one hand, and ATUC and ICFTU on the other. Both sides were arguing the principle of non-

I. It is interesting to compare A.A.T.U.F. with the Pan-American Federation of Labour, re the political nature of unions: see Charles W. Toth 'The Pan-American Federation of Labour: Its political nature,' "The Western Political Quarterly" pp 615 - 620 Vol. XVIII, September 1965.
interference, AATUF condemning external affiliations as extensions of the colonial situation, while ATUC used the same principle in claiming that constituent unions should have freedom to affiliate where they chose. Perhaps Modibo Keita best summed it up in a speech in January 1963 when after referring to AATUF he warned against "une autre espèce d'assimilation", and went on to argue that the truly non-aligned should not concern themselves with the unimportant question of affiliation, but should rather concentrate on the attitudes and training of the trade union leadership, to avoid the latter becoming dominated by any external influences.

On this basis, what was the future for pan-African trade unionism? This chapter has shown that despite what Ghana or AATUF, or Senegal or ATUC said, these two organisations were, in the main, mere paper tigers, each with an ill-defined and wispy membership and an equally uncertain organisational structure. This was demonstrated by the immediate collapse of AATUF following Nkrumah's downfall, a combined result of mere lip-service support from most countries and from unions which were more concerned with putting their own very differently structured houses in order first, coupled with a fact which sunk President Nkrumah's call for Union Government at successive OAU meetings - simply that no country, newly independent and struggling against tribalism and disunity within itself, was prepared to sacrifice even a small portion of its economic and political sovereignty. Ghana's continued failure to have AATUF adopted by the OAU as
the "official" pan-African body was symbolic of these factors, coupled with the awareness that since, as has been demonstrated in this Chapter, nearly all national unions in Africa were one way or another tools or extensions of government, the dangers of domination and of an African inspired "neo-colonialism" by the more powerful states were only too obvious.
CHAPTER IX

Recent Developments: Trade

Unionism and its Prospects

Since the 1966 Coup
The purpose of this Chapter I is to recount events immediately following the Coup of the 24th of February 1966 which overthrew President Nkrumah. It discusses the moves which culminated in the Reconstitution Congress of the G.T.U.C., and, in conclusion, comments on the major problems facing trade unions under Military Rule in Ghana.

Following the Army Coup of 24 February, the principal leaders of the G.T.U.C. including the Secretary General, J.K. Ampah, were taken into custody, and B.A. Bentum was appointed by the National Liberation Council (N.L.C.) as interim Secretary-General. The appointment was neither understood nor popular at first because, from September 1964, Bentum had been a Minister in the Nkrumah administration. He has since claimed that throughout this period, he was secretly collaborating with the Chief of Police, Mr J. Harlley, the architect of the coup, and as he was the only Minister not arrested, his claim appears to be credible. His status as a trade union leader was not in doubt, as he had been active in the movement for many years, and immediately before September 1964, he had been Secretary of the Agricultural Workers' Union and Chairman of the Executive Board of the G.T.U.C., posts from which he had been removed by Nkrumah when he sought an investigation into suspected financial malpractices by the G.T.U.C.'s

I. The source material for this chapter are ILO Reports, Newspapers, and the GTUC Reconstitution Conference Report.
senior officials. More probably he was removed for being insufficiently dedicated to the CPP.

Bentum announced that the priority tasks were to hold a reconstitution congress as speedily as possible, to expose the corruption of his predecessors in office, and to re-establish contacts with the trade union movements in neighbouring countries. He then appointed a one-man Commission to investigate the finances of the G.T.U.C., but in April, the Commissioner was supplanted by the Munifie Commission appointed by the N.L.C. It is not clear whether Bentum had asked for the change because the evidence being ventilated was leading to public disorder, or whether the N.L.C. preferred the adoption of an orthodox enquiry under its own control.

A Reconstitution Conference was arranged to be held in May, but it was postponed, the main reasons being that the new draft Constitution, produced by an eight-man committee appointed by Bentum, was considered insufficiently democratic and because the workers had not been afforded adequate opportunities to study the proposals and offer alternatives. There were also suggestions that Bentum was attempting to steam-roller through a constitution which would give him, as the potential Secretary-General, a position of authority reminiscent of the Nkrumah régime and that he was being imposed upon the G.T.U.C. by the N.L.C. These criticisms were sustained by a campaign in the Press inspired by members of the United Party (U.P.) who had returned from exile or detention. They were naturally
suspicious of Bentum because of his acceptance of a ministerial post under Nkrumah. In addition, there was opposition from most of the national union and regional secretaries of the G.T.U.C., the majority of whom had been C.P.P. supporters, had been trained in Eastern Bloc countries, and had been appointed by Nkrumah. Finally, there was an understandable division within the trade union movement about the desirability of reconstructing the movement from the top, the G.T.U.C. view, as opposed to starting first at the bottom, supported by local and branch elections.

To resolve their doubts about the draft constitution, the N.L.C. called in Sam Nettey who had retired prematurely from the post of Commissioner of Labour when the Nkrumah Government's adjustment of the labour laws to suit its policies went too far. Under Nettey's guidance, what was considered a more liberal and democratic draft Constitution was produced and circulated to the unions. He was also able to satisfy the N.L.C. that the draft did not conflict with the provisions of the Industrial Relations Acts of 1958 and 1965, which at that time had neither been repealed nor amended by the new Government.

A Mr. de Jonge, a representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (I.C.F.T.U.) was sent in May from Brussels, to help with the organisation of the Reconstitution Congress. Concurrently Bentum seized the opportunity afforded by the postponement to travel about the country to present his policies, explain his relationships with the
Nkrumah regime and the N.L.C., and to clarify the provisions of the draft Constitution. He addressed mass meetings in all the main towns and the success of his exercise became apparent at the Congress which was eventually held on 4 and 5 June.

The delegates numbered 40 members from each of the National Unions. The expenses of the Congress were covered by a gift of £10,000 from the I.C.F.T.U. which can be held as indicating the way the wind was blowing. It was hoped that the entire seven-man National Liberation Council would attend the opening session of the Congress, and that General Ankrah would open the proceedings with a policy statement on labour and social affairs. In the event, most of the N.L.C. attended the ceremonial re-opening of the border with Upper Volta at that time, and General Ankrah, although he was in Accra, did not attend, perhaps deciding that it would be unwise to identify the N.L.C. too closely with the TUC, but rather to emphasise the freedom of the workers' movement from state control, and to remove any lingering suspicion that the N.L.C. sought to impose Bentum on the T.U.C. The sensitivity of the N.L.C. on this last point had become apparent when, during the discussion about the postponement of the congress, Ankrah made it clear to Bentum that he was an interim, not an acting Secretary-General, an impression which had become widespread.

The opening address was delivered on behalf of the N.L.C. by Rear-Admiral D.A. Hansen, chairman of the Greater Accra Committee of Administration and Head of the Ghana Navy. The
The main points from the address,\(^1\) which was taken as a definitive statement of government policy, were:-

(a) The workers' organisations which had been subordinated to political control during the Nkrumah era would now have full freedom to draw up their own Constitution, to elect their representatives and to organise their administration, activities and programmes "provided they kept in mind the higher interests of the nation."

(b) The N.L.C. would observe and comply fully with International Labour Convention No. 87 concerning the freedom of association and the right to organise (during the Nkrumah era the I.C.F.T.U. had complained to the I.L.O. about Ghana's non-compliance with this convention, despite ratification).\(^2\)

(c) The free labour movement should avoid political involvement and ideologies and should be "non-aligned in the real sense of the word."

(d) The Industrial Relations Act, 1965, (which, inter alia, forbade strikes and lock-outs while conciliation procedures were being followed) was still valid and firm. Steps would be taken to deal with workers who disregarded its provisions.

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2. ILO, Official Bulletin Vol XLIX No.2 (April, 1966)
Consideration would be given to winding-up the private pension funds whose assets had been frozen, to reducing the workers' and employers' rates of contribution to the National Provident Fund and to lowering the age of retirement.

The National Advisory Committee for Labour would be revived and would provide a channel for trade union representations to the N.L.C.

The trade unions should avoid actions which might prejudice economic recovery and should encourage greater productivity.

The Constitutional Rules and Bye-laws of the GTUC which were eventually adopted unanimously by the Congress, were more liberal and democratic than their predecessors. Their final form reflected two important trends which characterised the debates. These were to reduce the powers and influence of the GTUC and its Secretary-General, and to lessen the risk of political infiltration or domination. The first was achieved by giving more authority and freedom of action to the national unions both in administrative and financial matters; by increasing the powers of the Finance and Executive Boards, the latter being enlarged by the inclusion of both the President and Secretary of each of the National Unions; and by limiting to two years (renewable) the Secretary-General's term of office. An attempt to achieve the second was the insertion of a clause which debarred the Secretary-General and top officials of the GTUC from holding office in any political party.
The Congress adopted a "Programme for Progress" which summarised the broad lines of the GTUC's future policies and aspirations, and a number of resolutions which were said to represent the more immediate demands of the workers. Although there were several references during the discussions to the considerable rise in the cost of living since 1959, and the absence of compensating wage increases, there was no demand for an across the board increase of wages and salaries. In its place there were requests for a review of wages and conditions of service, and for reductions in the rates of contributions to the National Provident Fund. It is interesting to read of workers' representatives making a case for the reduction of impositions upon employers, and refreshing that the radical proposal to reduce the workers' contribution from 7½% to 2½% was amended to the more sensible figure of 5%.

The important question of international relations engendered surprisingly little emotion or polemics. Despite fairly obvious behind-the-scenes pressure from the ICFTU, there were no resolutions calling for disaffiliation from the Nkrumah-inspired All African Trade Union Federation (AATUF) or for affiliation to the ICFTU. There seemed to be a genuine feeling that the trade union movement in Ghana would have sufficient problems within the country as to preclude much extra-territorial interest, a welcome break with the past. The Congress decided that the question of the GTUC's future international relations should be determined by the
Executive Board. To students of Nkrumah's Ghana it is significant that the hackneyed subjects of imperialism, capitalism and neo-colonialism were not once ventilated.

The elections for the posts of Secretary-General, Chairman of the Executive Board and five-man membership of the Finance Board, were conducted with an ostentatious display of democracy in order, as the GTUC Public Relations Office said, to emphasise the transformation from the Nkrumah era, when elections were controlled, contrived or non-existent. The members of the Finance Board appeared to have been well chosen on the basis of reliability and long service in minor positions, rather than for more brilliant qualities. The new Chairman, David Egyir, had been active for many years in the Railway Workers' Union, and since the coup, had been chairman of its Executive Council. Bentum was elected as Secretary-General, and the result was a complete vindication of Bentum's policies and his approach to the reconstitution of the GTUC.

The Congress aroused considerable interest in Africa and elsewhere. There was no official delegate from the AATUF, but the acting Administrative Secretary, A.M. Issifu, was present throughout. Invitations to the original (postponed) Congress had been sent to all African National Trade Union centres, the international trade union organisations and to

I. Which continues nominally to exist.
many other national trade unions. The despatch of invitations to the actual Congress was timed to obviate the attendance of delegates who might have engaged in subversive activities.

The foreign delegates, particularly the Africans, were quoted as being much impressed by the orderly nature of the proceedings, the freedom of speech allowed participants, the sound organisation and the democratic ballots. During recent years the GTUC, as was said in Chapter VIII, had been regarded with suspicion by many other trade union movements because of its domination by the CPP, its propagation of Nkrumah's policies and its links with the Eastern Bloc. The open demonstration of new-found freedom may result in the GTUC being accepted again in Africa. The Congress placed Bentum in a strong position, but he, and the GTUC, now have to face a number of problems which will require careful handling if the organisation is to develop on permissible lines. Not the least of these is the need for Bentum to consolidate his own position and at the same time to avoid any attempt to dominate the movement. He was appointed by the NLC and elected by the delegates more because there was no obvious acceptable alternative, than because he was the universally desired candidate.

The problems of finance, organisation and administration also loom large. The GTUC was saddled with debts which were said to total about a million pounds, although only a fifth

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1. From Press Reports of the time.
of that sum represented genuine indebtedness, the major part being paper transactions, for example state loans and subsidies, of dubious morality. The GTUC's income from its share of check-off, amounts to over £12,000 per month but its current expenditure on salaries and rents absorbs the whole of this sum, leaving nothing with which to clear its debts.

The GTUC was and is organizationally grossly over-staffed, both at its headquarters and in the many regions, and many of the staff are of poor quality. But the declaration of redundancies at a time when unemployment is rising would not be popular and in any event, would be counter to NLC policy. Related staff problems are the identification and control of those members who were CPP stalwarts, and who, if retained, might sabotage democratic development and the allocation of work to returned exiles and detainees who have jumped on the GTUC band-wagon. Sooner or later the problem of the ex-National Union, and Regional Secretaries must arise. Although they were at first all swept into detention, it seems fairly certain that several of them were not implicated in the alleged conspiracy to assist Nkrumah's return, hence most have been released. Whilst they may have received training behind the Iron Curtain, there were many of them who were, nevertheless, experienced trade unionists. As the new GTUC lacks such men,

I. - early 1967
it may be useful if their services are not lost to the trade union movement. Whether or not such people return, the trade union movement will have need of trained and experienced cadres and until any internal schemes can be organised, this is a field where help from overseas could be most beneficial.

The new conditions in Ghana create special problems for trade union leaders. Under Nkrumah, strikes were outlawed so there has been a natural reaction since the Coup for groups of workers to strike for trivial reasons, to exercise their freedom. Such actions are already declared as "not in the national interest", and in the industrial field it will doubtless be one of the tasks of the new GTUC as well to "educate workers to realise that rights are accompanied by responsibilities". Similar exercises will be required of them in the employment field, particularly if unemployment continues to rise as a result of the Government's economic stabilisation programme, and in the economic field, to limit demands for wage increases unrelated to increases in productivity, and beyond the capacity of the economy to grant.

The GTUC is not at present equipped or organised to cope successfully with the tasks which confront it. Bentum has realised this and has made it known that he will welcome assistance from foreign trade unions and other organisations, provided the minimum of strings are attached. The financial

I. Ghanaian Times (June 1966)
and practical help given by the ICFTU to enable the Reconstruction Congress to be mounted was much appreciated, the more so because it was unobtrusive and therefore, it could be claimed, free from political or ideological complications.

The greatest immediate need is the training of trade union officials and in workers' education. The GTUC has to this end, set up a Workers' College with the assistance of the I.L.O. and with promised support from the Ghana Employers Association. The problem in this, as the new Government realised, was the lack of suitably trained Ghanaian personnel. They wished, for obvious reasons, to avoid employing expatriate lecturers, so that there would be no repeated attempt by any one country to gain a monopoly, with the consequent accusations of neocolonialism, and interference in Ghana's internal affairs. What has happened, however, is that various countries have been asked to sponsor short courses. Germany's Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for example, ran a three week course at the College in the Autumn of 1967. In July the independence may appear to have been somewhat jeopardised with the appointment of an American, Mr J.N. Gould as the College Principal.

In the present political vacuum the trade union movement is, apart from the security forces, the only organised section of the community. Given the right leadership, help and guidance it could make a substantial contribution to economic stabilisation and recovery. But it could become a barrier to
progress and even become a centre for counter-revolution. For the present, it will be subject to and will have to accept, certain limitations on political and economic activities, of the kind mentioned above, and the economic situation will restrict the implementation of necessary improvements in wages, working conditions and social amenities.

One might say that while trade unions and their leaders usually prosper on the militant pursuit of their claims on behalf of the membership, for the next few years in Ghana, this will have to be tempered with an appreciation of national need, and the leadership will have to educate their followers with the realisation that rights are accompanied by responsibilities just as the 1964 National Plan advocated. On present form, they will probably be aided in this task by restrictions, explicit or implied, imposed by the National Liberation Council. Military regimes are habitually the opponents of trade union movement; they do not talk the same language and they do not welcome the development of possible alternative bases of authority.

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I. The N.L.C.'s reportedly exceedingly sharp reaction to a strike in late 1966, at the Ashanti Goldfields is indicative of this.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION
This thesis has demonstrated that British concepts of trade unionism as primarily an institution of the industrial age, must be reconsidered for a developing economy, and that trade Unions functioning for collective bargaining purposes alone may be very much confined to the developed countries of the West. Where political pressures are strong, and political leaders are insecure, any organised body, (and the trade union movement is, apart from the armed forces, the only major one in Ghana) will have to remain under the control of the central Government machine, if it is to continue to exist. Otherwise it remains a threat to the existing leadership. It is, in consequence, unlikely that the movement in Ghana will throw up, or return a leadership unconnected with the Government, and its influence and role will continue to depend on the broader developments in the field of politics or in the Army. Nevertheless, the trade unionist is very much a member of an élite group in the community, by virtue of the fact that wage-earners in a developing economy are themselves an élite. As such, he has political aims and importance very different from his counterparts in the British Trade Union movement.

This underlines what this whole study seeks to demonstrate, simply that the political content of the unions is potentially very much higher in Ghana than in Britain. As was shown, this stems from the tradition of opposition to authority which grew up under the colonial system and which was so closely allied to the political opposition following independence. It
It was only natural therefore that the two sides of the partnership should have remained together. In addition, despite the British influence in the past, there is no reason why the universality of any system which the former Colonists believed should be the norm, (any more than was the case in the field of politics or in the structure of government) should have been expected.

With only a few years of independence behind them, most West African countries are faced in their internal economic affairs with two related problems. Firstly there is the slow rate of development caused by a severe shortage of both international and internal financial resources, and secondly there is a growing popular demand for a speedy transfer from a subsistence to a money economy. These two problems were inevitable, and would have caused social difficulties even had the countries remained dependent on the former metropolitan powers. But independence has brought an aggravating factor into play. Whereas formerly, the bulk of the African population was greatly separate from the colonial administration as far as living standards were concerned, it is now the turn of a new class of educated, wealthy Africans, who may have not resisted the attempt to increase their affluence out of proportion to that of the mass of the population they govern. The former was more easily acceptable than the latter, to the urban workers and their leaders. Thus, modern trade unions in the new Ghana and in Africa generally can, if allowed, play a large part in the growth of an economic and social discontent which
no longer is related to anti-colonialism. To a new and aspiring government, this is intolerable, and the result is that possible unrest is met by totalitarian actions as with Nkrumah's Ghana, firm authoritarianism as in Cameroon, or strict paternalism as in Liberia. Today probably only in parts of Nigeria and in Sierra Leone can the unions have some severely limited freedom in labour matters. It is not too early to suggest that the new régime in Ghana will have to cope similarly with this threat.

A government is therefore concerned to give intense application to the root cause of such possible dissatisfaction, since, even where the unions are weakly led, they are potentially attractive to anti-government elements, and the tendency has been to move away from diversionary and extravagant prestige projects in to the less exciting fields of rural development and social improvement schemes. Even Nkrumah latterly was coming to realise this. In this plan of things, the unions play a large role, if only because they exist. No country in Africa has so far found it politic to suppress them entirely, since they are, if nothing else, essential to the image of progressive development, especially with countries seeking foreign investment and wishing to give a picture of stable labour and industrial relations. Despite the dangers of their being an organised instrument of public discontent, they can become a constructive force for good in any country's development, by their capacity to formulate the real needs of a large part of the population.
Trade unionism arises basically as a form of opposition to something either institutional, like a hostile management or government, or natural, like economic adversity. In Ghana as this thesis has demonstrated, this role as an opposition during the period from Independence until the Military Coup, became, from one point of view, entirely suppressed and eroded. From another, it had become unnecessary, or had been superseded by the creation of a one-party, neo-socialist State, where unions worked in co-operation with the State as a highly controlled extra stimulant to the higher productivity needed.

This thesis has argued that the trade union has, too sweepingly, been considered primarily an institution of the industrial age. In fact, on the one hand, it is a social institution which comes into being as an insurance or protest against adverse conditions experienced by any group of similarly-employed workers, and its appearance thus can be held to be a natural consequence of urbanisation and industrialisation when these modern phenomena break down the traditional ways of life. But on the other hand, the Trade Union is not just this, not just a social institution that acquiesces in whatever social environment it finds itself. It has been considered in Britain as an instrument for helping on the emancipation of the working class. But the emancipation of the working class does not begin and end with the factory, and the Trade Union is very much concerned with questions of social and political environment. This environment can be positively favourable, merely
accommodating, or definitely hostile, to the idea of the emancipation of the working class through the medium of trade unions.

Accordingly the Trade Union can become an instrument of consolidation and progress along a chosen line of development or it can become an instrument of combat, depending on whether the society is in favour or hostile to this idea of emancipation. Here then, the Ghanaian experience. Under colonialism as under capitalism, the Trade Union in its early stages was, in the main, an instrument of opposition, combining its prime function of organising labour for its own immediate betterment, with the more political task of ensuring the emancipation of the workers or of those colonialised. The conclusions drawn lead to the discarding of the idea that unions are primarily institutions of an industrial age, but argue that they do, especially in a Socialist one-party state, become instruments of progress along a chosen highly political line of development. But above all, they are political, and the Colonial Government helped enormously in this, since under colonialism, even the most straightforward strike or other industrial action tended to be thought of as "political" by the Government. It is not therefore unreasonable that the union leaders began to think of their organisations as entirely political weapons.

With this said, the question remains how really practical in British terms, trade unions are in a developing economy, which does not possess the necessary infrastructure of education and the political stability necessary for the
formation of efficient economic groupings. One answer is that unions in Ghana, again talking in Western terms, never really functioned properly as mere workers' organisations negotiating for better wage levels and working conditions. Certainly in the earlier pre-war and wartime years there was a certain amount of activity which approximated to British trade union activity, but this was on an ad hoc and short-lived basis. Certainly also since the early fifties, the main objective has not had a peculiar economic basis, but one almost entirely directed towards anti-colonial and other political activities, and with a leadership, by virtue of both education and experience, quite separate from the masses in its approach.

This leaves a continuing question about what are the "proper" functions of a trade union. This thesis demonstrates that trade union functions in Britain such as gaining improved conditions and higher wages, were not in the forefront in Ghana either before or after Independence. This is not to argue that these were in any way the sole objectives, nor that there was not a high political content in unionism in Britain, but such things were considered as being among the proper functions of unions in Britain. But now more "socially conscious" functions are being brought to bear on British unions to accept the conditions of working more in co-operation with the State in wages policies and in seeking national economic goals. Thus there is no universally valid function for unions here nor elsewhere over time. But the Ghanaian scheme of working with the State may well emerge as not altogether different from what
is emerging as the British pattern. Without wishing to place too narrow a view on the objectives in these two countries, the differing roles British and Ghana unions had in the past, on the one hand of seeking better conditions and on the other of overthrowing colonialism, have been eroded. The replacement has something more in common than anything that existed in the past. The only difference is that in Britain it has taken a century for the unions to begin to think in terms of working along with Government Policy, while in Ghana they were forced into so doing almost from the beginning.
Appendices.

A. A Note on Trade Union Organisation under the New Structure, with Annexes 1 to 7.
B. A Note on Wallace Johnson as a source.
C. Pan-African Trade Unionism. - A Calendar of Events.
D. A Note on the Structure of the Israeli Histadrut.
E. A Note on the Structure of the German Trade Union Federation (D.G.B.)
F. Map of Ghana.
G. A Note on Sources.
Appendix A

A note on the Trade Union Organisation under the New Structure.

This note, with its Annexes, describes in somewhat more detail the national organisation of the Trade Union Movement after 1958, and its relationship to the individual unions. This description is contained in an Appendix rather than in the main text, since, though important as background, a discussion of the structure does not particularly contribute to an understanding of the events that followed.

As was said in Chapter IV, there were, first of all, to be twenty-four National Unions, later reduced to sixteen. These are listed in Annex I to this Appendix. At the top of the new TUC there was the Secretary-General, and his Second in Command was the Chairman of the Executive Board. The Executive Board was composed of the Chairman, the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General and sixteen Members elected by the National Unions and by the Regions, plus six other ex-officio members from the Secretariat Bureau, making a total of twenty-four. The Secretariat Bureau included the eight Heads of the Departments of Education, Publicity and Administration etc. (See Annex 2.) In addition, there were Regional Secretaries of the TUC stationed in the eight regional centres of the country. Then there were the General Secretaries and Treasurers of each of the National Unions, and, below them, Regional Secretaries

for each union. All officials were fulltime and most of them had, in theory, to graduate to their positions through the lower ranks of the Trade Union Movement. The Chairman of National Unions and Branch officials were normally part-time officers who had their other jobs. These officials were, and by 1958, had been for some time, appointed by the Government, and not elected by members, a system which naturally caused some discontent, since Party members were given preference.

The internal structure of the TUC and its relation to the sixteen unions is given in Annexes 2 and 3 to this Appendix. The double link with the centre which the unions in the Regions had, is also shown on the same chart. The Local or Branch was linked, first of all, to the District Headquarters of the Regional Organisation, and then to the eight Regional Offices, all of which, as was said, had members on the Central Executive Board. But there was the second chain of command through the National Unions as well, all of which, as is shown in the diagram, had their Regional Offices, District and Local Branches as well. The Individual Local branches were meant to have some autonomy, but in practice this did not happen outside the immediate Accra area, and most District Offices combined both the functions of the Central Organisation, and of the individual unions. At Local level, where there were only part time officers, there was seldom any trade union activity, and it would be the District Office, or latterly, the Regional Office that would take charge in any problem or dispute that wasn't immediately referred to the top-heavy Central Secretariat. Even very minor disputes
about dismissals were either settled on a completely ad hoc basis or were dealt with at the topmost level. In any case, as most of the local officials doubled as the C.P.P. officer—since they had perhaps the same office hut and the same typewriter, they had little to do with trade unionism except in name. But even union-cum-political demonstrations would mainly be organised at District or Regional level. A list of the Regions, the towns where they were centred and their Regional Officers after the New Structure is given in Annex 4 to this Appendix.

One of the objectives, as set out by the Inauguration Conference of the New Structure in April 1959, was to maintain, establish and assist Regional, District and Local Labour Councils or Committees composed of respective Regional, District and Local units and branches of unions, for the purpose of coordinating their work, particularly with the intention of politically organising the workers. These in the main, failed to get off the ground, but their functions and their organisation are given in Annexes 6 and 7.1

Finally, with regard to funds, as was said in Chapter IV, these came either from the monthly compulsory check-off, which was enforced by legislation, or from Government grants. After the New Structure, the TUC was given £25,000 by the Government

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to help its reorganisation, in addition to a further £100,000 for building the Hall of Trade Unions. After the initial grant, it was intended that the check-off system would make the unions self supporting, but such were the ties between the unions and the Party, that any subsequent attempt to differentiate between the funds proved impossible. The financial regulations of the TUC are given in Annex 5.
### Membership after the "New Structure"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Unions</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>General Secretary-Treasurer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>J.A. Appiah</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union of Railway &amp; Harbour Workers (P.O. Box Takoradi)</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>J.A. Appiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Railway Engineers' Union (P.O. Box Takoradi)</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>J.K. Omane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Construction &amp; General Workers' Union</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>R.E. Dampare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Timber &amp; Woodworkers' Union</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>T.H. Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Industrial, Commercial &amp; General Workers' Union</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>B.T. Bartimeus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Municipal &amp; Local Government Workers Union</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>J.T.V. Kwegyir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Mine Workers' Union</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>D.K. Foevie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Government Clerical &amp; Technical Workers' Union</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>G.K. Mingle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Health &amp; General Hospital Workers' Union</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>V. Narh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Transport &amp; Telecommunications Workers' Union</td>
<td>13,200</td>
<td>P. Ofei-Henaku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Union of Catering Trades</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>E.A. Cowan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Public Utility Workers' Union</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>S.K. Asare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Teamsters &amp; Private Transport Workers' Union</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>W.R. Otoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Union of Teachers and Cultural Services</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>E.B. Caulley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Union of General Agricultural Workers</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>R.O. Effah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Maritime &amp; Dockworkers' Union</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>K. Amponsah-Tawiah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE TUC NEW STRUCTURE

ANNUAL CONGRESS

25-MEMBER 1
EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECRETARY GENERAL

Permanent Executive 3 Board
With Nine Departments.

Sixteen National Unions 2

Individual Regional
Organisations

Eight T.U.C. Regional
Organisations

T.U.C. District
Organisations

Individual District
Organisations

Locals

Locals

1. See page 315.
2. See page 319.
3. See page 321.
4. See page 322.

--- Indicates cooperation on a regional basis.
GHANA TRADES UNION CONGRESS

(After the New Structure)

Secretary General: John K. Tettegah
Chairman, Executive Board: D.K. Foevie
Deputy Secretary General: S.D. Dawson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of Departments</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union Department</td>
<td>J.N. Ebuary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Enterprise</td>
<td>S.J. Anie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Publicity Department</td>
<td>J.P. Addei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Accounts</td>
<td>F.C. Campbell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Affairs Department</td>
<td>C. Heymann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Head (Economics)</td>
<td>S.K. Djanie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Secretary</td>
<td>G.A. Balogun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>A.A. Moffatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti</td>
<td>Kumasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accra</td>
<td>Accra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Koforidua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volta</td>
<td>Ho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Takoradi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Tamale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Cape Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brong-Ahafo</td>
<td>Sunyani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FINANCE

1. The funds of the Trades Union Congress shall be collected through the appropriate voluntary check-off Legislation on behalf of National Unions of Congress and be expended in the manner laid down in these Rules and Bye-Laws.

2. Membership dues of every worker who is a member of a National Union of the TUC shall be at least 2/- (two shillings) per head per month.

3. National Unions in trades in which the check-off system is not applicable, or whose membership is composed of self-employed members, may fix membership dues at levels as they may think reasonable, provided that they are not lower than 2/- (two shillings) per head per month.

4. The collection of dues by the National Unions and the collection of the revenue and expenditure from dues shall be subject to audit control by the Executive Board of the Congress which shall have the power to appoint the Finance Board to effect this control.

5. The establishment of a voluntary check-off system, whereby Union dues are deducted by employers from wages and paid, shall be an objective of the TUC and its National Unions, for the purposes laid down in Article II.

I. Article IV of the Constitution of the GTUC.
6. Dues collected through "check-off" system unless otherwise directed by the Executive Board shall be payable by employers directly to the following:

A. Local Union .... .... .... 15%  
   National Union .... .... .... 40%  
   General Administration  
   and Regional Organisations  
   of the T.U.C. etc. .... .... .... 45%

B. The Congress shall open the following Account:
   Solidarity Fund  
   Social Welfare & Insurance

7. Transfer of money accumulated in any of the funds referred to in paragraph 6 of this Article to any other of these funds shall require a resolution of the Executive Board by a majority vote.
Appendix A - Annex 6

The Functions of the Regional Councils

1. The Regional Council derives its power from the Executive Board.

2. Being an integral part of the regional framework of the Convention Peoples' Party, the Regional Council shall be most responsible and co-operative with its Regional organisations and related bodies, give platform to its leaders and spokesmen, stimulate attendance at party rallies, meetings, celebrations etc., distribute its publications, and assist all activities directed towards the strengthening of the Party and the achievement of its aims and aspirations.

3. The Regional Council shall co-operate with the Regional and District Authorities of the Government, initiate and participate in the various joint advisory bodies, assist in handling and solving labour problems, and in the implementation of labour and social legislation, support successful observance of national holidays and celebrations, inform workers by addressing rallies, seminars and meetings of labour achievements, and so forth.

4. The Regional Council shall assume responsibility for the carrying out in the respective Regions of the policies laid down by the Executive Board and its various Departments. Monthly

I. From A guide for Ghana Labour Officials, by J.K. Tettegah. (Published by the GTUC, 1960)
reports shall be submitted regularly to the Secretary-General or Departments or Offices authorised by him.

5. A comprehensive and practical programme of its work for the coming year will be elaborated by the Regional Council and submitted for advice and approval of the Secretary-General. Plans and proposals within specific fields of operation will be submitted to the various Departments concerned (for example: budgetary yearly estimates to the Finance Board, educational programme to the Education and Publicity Department, etc).

6. The Regional Council shall supervise and co-ordinate all the activities in the respective regions, assuring regular reporting of the Regional Organisers to their National Unions. In order to avoid any confusion, emphasis must be laid on the whole-hearted co-operation of all the TUC Staff in the Region in regard to all the matters and interests concerning the entire membership. Nevertheless, unnecessary interference in specific matters dealt with by the National Unions shall be avoided.
7. The Regional Council shall form District and local councils of labour, guide and co-ordinate their functions, step in with all the necessary machinery to eradicate slackness and assist in reviving even the weakest units.

8. The Regional Council shall make all the necessary arrangements for the visits of the Secretary-General to the Region and put in maximum effort for their full success.

9. Frequent visits shall be encouraged to the regions by the General Secretary/Treasurers of the National Unions, Heads of Departments and Organisers as to bring organisation to town and village and have direct and regular contacts with the rank and file. Emphasis will be laid on visits to rural areas, whereby personal contact with the masses will be enhanced and confidence in TUC strengthened. Trade Union organisations ought by no means be confined to the municipalities, but must by its very essence and spirit be extended to the villages where there are industrial workers as to stand at the grass roots of the Movement. (Sic)

10. The Regional Council shall, directly or through District Labour Councils and Branches, make efforts for organising the unorganised workers and employees, assist in supplying of the new Party membership cards, initiate membership cards drives, set up "home unions," and until catered for by any National Union, effect the collection of Union dues and so forth.

1. ibid.
11. The Regional Council shall advise National Unions to send organisers to the Region, where there is evidence of a comprehensive number of their membership. In the case of a part-time vacancy, it will be advisable to engage the services of a part-time employed organiser, who is already reporting to other National Unions.

12. The Regional Council shall be responsible for the regular summoning of meetings of all the representative and functional bodies in the Region (Council, Committees).
Appendix B.

Note on Mr I.T.A. Wallace Johnson as a Source.

Mr Wallace Johnson, the veteran Sierra Leone Trade Union leader, kindly gave me several long interviews during February and March 1964, prior to his death in a road accident in Accra in 1965.

He had studied in Moscow at the University of the East in 1931-32 with Jomo Kenyatta, and came back to Sierra Leone in 1932 where he founded what he called the first "proper" trade union there, of African Civil Servants. He claimed however to have formed a union of sorts as early as 1913, called the "Temporary Outdoor Officers Union" of African Customs Officers. But the union was short lived. At that time he had no contact with any external unionism. Later he had contacts with the British Labour Party as well.

After a few years in Sierra Leone he was banned by the colonial government, and went first to Nigeria where he edited a newspaper with Nnamdi Azikiwi, and then to the Gold Coast, where in 1934 he founded among other things, the Union of Mineworkers in Obuase.

He was a dedicated pan-Africanist, and one of the founders of the International African Service Bureau and of the Pan-African Congress, both pre-War organisations whose function and aims were the elimination of colonialism throughout the continent.

He published large numbers of pamphlets and newspapers
continuation of Appendix B.

during his life, mostly on trade unionism, notably the book Trade Unionism in Colonial and Dependent Territories (1946) and he gave me access to many of his papers. It must be admitted that much of his personal writing was rambling and discoordinated. His library on African trade unionism was, however, certainly unique, in a field where there is so little written material, except Government publications, and without his help and assistance, the earlier parts of this thesis would have been very much more difficult to complete.
Appendix F.

(Map of Ghana)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March</td>
<td>ICFTU Regional Meeting in Douala.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>ICFTU Regional Meeting in Abidjan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Foundation of the Confederation of Arab T. U.'s (CATU).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Sekou Toure founded the Confederation Generale des Travailleurs Africain (CGTA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Foundation of CATC out of CFTC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>First African Regional Conference of ICFTU in Accra decided to take steps to set up AFRO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January</td>
<td>UGTAN founded by Sekou Toure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Foundation of CASL out of the F.O.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>AAPC in Accra proposed foundation of AATUF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Union Panafroicaine et Malgache des Travailleurs Croyants (UPMC) set up in Brazzaville.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Meeting between UGTAN and ICFTU in Conakry to consider more widely based Union of Negro Workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Conference of Arab T. U.'s in Cairo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Foundation Conference of CASL in Abidjan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>First Preparatory Conference of AATUF in Accra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Second Conference of AFRO in Lagos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Plenary Meeting of AAPC in Tunis endorsed the principle of AATUF.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
continuation of Appendix C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 1960</td>
<td>Postponed date of AATUF Conference in Casablanca.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1960</td>
<td>Third Conference of AFRO in Tunis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1960</td>
<td>ILO First Regional Conference in Lagos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1960</td>
<td>Second Preparatory Conference of AATUF in Accra. (2nd - 4th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1961</td>
<td>Meeting of AATUF Preparatory Secretariat in Conakry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1961</td>
<td>Constituent Conference of AATUF in Casablanca. (25th - 31st)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1962</td>
<td>Foundation of ATUC in Dakar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1964</td>
<td>AATUF Conference in Bamako (10th - 14th).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Note of the Structure of the Histadrut

The Histadrut is the General Federation of Labour in Israel, composed of 21 occupational divisions or unions. It is not a precise federation in that it is built on individual membership, and its central organs have theoretically unlimited powers. About a quarter of the membership are of self-employed workers, not belonging to any of the occupational divisions, but usually members of Kibbutzim.

Dues are collected centrally, and the central organisation allots funds to its constituent bodies. Dues are levied at 3 to 4½ per cent of salary. The central power is that of the Convention, whose membership is based not on the various industrial divisions, but on a country-wide vote from a single list of candidates. These candidates will, on the whole, be nominated by the different Political Parties in Israel. The same applies to the central bodies such as the General Council and the Executive Committee of Histadrut. The General Council meets twice a year to decide on matters of principle, the Executive Committee meets every fortnight to supervise the Executive Bureau, which acts as a sort of Cabinet. Because of its constitutional ties to the National political framework, the Histadrut is organised both to look after the interests of the workers, and also the needs of the National Economy.

The Histadrut also runs a large number of industrial enterprises such as Solel Boneh, which is the biggest contracting
company in the country. Its Board of Directors are appointed by the Histadrut. In sum it is very much more than a National Trade Union organisation, spreading its interests as it does, into every walk of life.
Appendix E

A Note on the organisation of the German Trade Union Federation (DGB)

The post-war Founding Conference of the D.G.B. was held in Munich in 1949. It set up a Federal Congress which meets once every three years. Congress members are delegates from all the 16 industrial Unions, elected in proportion to membership. The Federal Congress, which normally brings together about 500 delegates, elects a Federal Committee, representative of the 16 Industrial Unions, which meets at least twice a year. The Federal Congress also elects an Executive Board of 25, composed of one representative each from the 16 National Industrial Unions and the 9 Permanent Executive Officers who man the various Departments of the DGB. The DGB itself maintains local organisations in the various Landes in Germany and the same happens in the National Unions. The Permanent Executive Staff of 9 act as a Cabinet in carrying out the day to day administration of the whole Federation.

The DGB recognised in its Constitution only the following sixteen industrial unions:

1. The Industrial Union of Workers in Building, Quarrying and Public Works Contracting
2. The Industrial Union of Mine Workers
3. The Industrial Union of Chemical, Paper and Pottery Workers
4. The Industrial Union of Printing and Paper Processing Workers
5. The Union of the Railwaymen of Germany
6. The Union of Educational and Scientific Workers  
   (Association of German Teachers)
7. The Union of Horticultural, Agricultural and Forestry Workers
8. The Union of Salaried Employees in Trade and Commerce,  
   Banks and Insurance
9. The Union of Woodworkers
10. The Union of Artists (incl. Stage Variety, Film Radio,  
    Musicians, Commercial Artists, etc.)
11. The Union of Leather Workers
12. The Industrial Union of Metal Workers
13. The Industrial Union of Food, Drink, Tobacco and Catering  
    Trade Workers
14. The Union of Workers in Public Services, Transport and  
    Communications
15. The German Postal Workers Union
16. The Union of Textile and Clothing Workers

The Constitution allows the individual unions a great  
degree of autonomy in negotiating collective agreements. The  
Unions also collect their own membership dues, allocating 12½  
per cent of their annual income to the DGB for administrative  
purposes. The dues amount to 2 per cent of salaried workers'  
monthly earnings.

There is no constitutional relationship between the DGB  
and the German Socialist Party (SPD). A study of the records  
of the DGB in Germany with regard to its relations with the  
G.T.U.C., have not revealed much material of value.
Appendix G.

A Note on Sources

The problem of sources is a considerable one, though Ghana is certainly better off in possessing written material, than most of her neighbours. The Public Sector with regard to trade unions, tends to be better documented than the Private. But Government Reports in the early years usually mention unions only when there were strikes or other industrial unrest. Union records where they exist, are rudimentary, intermittent and often illegible, and seldom are they available in libraries, though Accra's Padmore Library and the University of Legon Library have some useful material.

Thus Labour Department Reports are an essential source of information, and though by their nature they will be "partisan" so also will be the memories of such Ghanaians still alive, who were involved in the early unions. These latter were hard to trace, since many of the prominent ones were not at liberty during the latter years of Nkrumah's reign, when the field work for this thesis was carried out. (See however Appendix B on Wallace Johnson). Those at liberty tended also demonstrably to have their recollections "blurred" or perhaps guided by the then-present Nkrumah overlordship.

For the above reasons it is often difficult to establish a proper flow of events, and there must be considerable gaps. For example, I have found no major written reference to the important National Mineworkers Union in official and semi-
Official documents between its foundation in 1934 and the end of the Second World War.

In addition to the **Labour Department Reports**, and the literature noted in the introduction and Bibliography, the most useful other sources are **Legislative Council Debates**, and **Ghana Parliamentary Hansards** were also of use, especially during the periods when the press was controlled, and it was only through them that occasionally one would get the political overtones to trade union conflicts. Further Governmental publications included the **Blue Book** for the Gold Coast (up to 1937) and the **Colonial Annual Reports**. As a first Class chronicle of events in West Africa, the London publication **West Africa** is essential reading. The major newspapers, **The Ghanaian Times**, **The Ashanti Pioneer** (Opposition until it was banned) **The Daily Graphic** and the **Evening News** were also useful. The **Bulletin of the Economic Society of Ghana** had some interesting material and reference is given where appropriate in the text. The sources of Statistical material were discussed in the introduction and in Chapter I. The most useful material is now (1966) the publication of **Volumes I and II of A Survey of Contemporary Ghana** edited by Walter Birmingham and others.

As a final foot note, it is worth recording that I was shown in a room in AATUF Headquarters just before the coup, what I was told were 10,000 copies of a book by a Ghanaian
trade unionist E.A. Cowan, entitled *The Evolution of Trade Unionism in Ghana*. It was, on examination, a rudimentary collection of quotes from GTUC publications and of speeches by President Nkrumah and J.K. Tettegah. It was very badly printed and had apparently not pleased the principals, so that book was not published and had been condemned to be burned. I managed to obtain a copy. Nothing of it has been used in this thesis, but it indicated the sort of second-hand material often available, and its probable fate if it did not "conform".

I. Published by the GTUC (1965)
Appendix H.

A Note on the Development of Trade Unionism in Nigeria

Reference has been made throughout the text to concurrent developments in other parts of West Africa. It is nonetheless useful for comparative purposes to set out briefly as an Appendix, some of the main phases in the history of trade unionism in Nigeria. It is in no way meant to be a definitive list of major developments, but merely a description of those events which assist in an understanding of the pattern in Ghana.

Prior to 1939 in Nigeria, there were, in the main, unions only of public servants, such as the Civil Servants Association, the Nigerian Union of Teachers, and the Railway Workers Union, since the requisite pre-conditions, such as work-skills and the incentives to organise were lacking outside the public sector. A Trade Union Ordinance was passed in 1936, prior to which, any group action in the furtherance of a labour dispute was the subject of legal action. This Ordinance, as in Ghana, was in anticipation of the process of development. Like the British Act of 1871 it gave legal protection to Trade Unions, but unlike the British Act, it made registration compulsory.

The Second World War, in quickening the pace of economic expansion, and increasing the size of the wage earning class, along with a growth in nationalist feeling especially in the South led to the speedy growth of unions. Government policy at the time, as in Ghana, encouraged the development of trade unionism along the lines which, in the light of British experience, appeared sound.

To assist in the orderly development of industrial relations, a Department of Labour was set up in 1942. Legal provision was made for voluntary arbitration in industrial disputes, and Government practice from then on, was to consult both sides of industry in labour matters. In 1946 a separate Trade Union Section of the Department of Labour was set up, to advise unions on administration and the education of trade unionists. The British trade union movement assisted considerably in the development.

In the Post War period the number of trade unions rose rapidly. While in 1946 there were 78 registered trade unions with 27,000 paid-up members, by 1959 there were 280 unions, with a quarter of a million claimed members. Though the growth was substantial, it was small in comparison with other countries in West Africa, and small trade unions proliferated and still do, because of the size and Federal Structure of the country, the lack of communications, and the lack of administrative experience, (as was also the tendency with the political parties). This promoted Craft unionism and bred a chronic tendency to dissention. Even in the public sector,
sectional organisation was common, again as a result of the Federal structure of the country.

Since 1948, the Nigerian trade union movement has been bedevilled by division between left and right wing factions. Periodic reconciliations have been of a temporary nature only, and have been repeatedly broken on the issue of affiliation to the WFTU and AATUF on the one hand, and the ICFTU and ATUC on the other. (This shows again how important is an understanding of Pan-African trade unions movements in trying to analyse national trade unionism).

The post-War history of the trade union movement in Nigeria is more orthodox, but even more intricate than that in Ghana, as a result of the various regional groupings in Nigeria. Individual trade unions were first effectively, if somewhat loosely federated in 1948, but by 1949, the left wing of this organisation had broken away to form a rival body seeking affiliation with the WFTU. In 1950, a partial reconciliation took place, but the left-wing faction held the power, and succeeded in getting affiliation with the WFTU. This was short-lived, the extremists overplaying their hand and disaffiliation took place in 1951, though individual contacts with the WFTU were maintained.

A new body was formed in 1952 under the name of the All Nigeria Trade Union Federation (ANTUF) but it suffered from the same tensions as its predecessor. Stalemate was more or less preserved until 1957, when, as a result of a two-fold
desire to curry favour with the government, and to break individual trade union links with the ICFTU as the price for affiliation of the ANTUF as a whole, it was agreed that affiliation should be applied for. But the ICFTU rejected the application, since ANTUF's executive was held to have formed too many communist associations to be "acceptable". At that time, rivalry between the anti-communist faction in ANTUF and its communist controlled executive reached a peak, and five of the right wing union leaders resigned as a result. This led to the formation of a rival right wing body, which in 1958 obtained affiliation to the ICFTU.

Approaches by the decimated ANTUF for a reconciliation were at first rejected, but at a conference in 1959 it was agreed that a new comprehensive organisation should be created. It was called the TUC-Nigeria (TUCN), and its president was from ANTUF, but all the officers were from the right-wing opposition. So without status, there were substantial numbers of disappointed left-wingers to make mischief, and the position over international affiliation was deferred.

The President of the new organisations pro-communist tendencies, helped towards a split in the TUCN in 1960, much in the manner of its predecessors. A working committee, suspended the President, then he suspended them. Finally, the organisation broke in two, with the right wing keeping the TUCN as its name, and the left wing becoming the Nigerian TUC (NTUC). Individual unions chopped and changed between
the two, but the TUCN increased its lead. There was a further attempt to bring the two sides together at a "Unity Conference" in May 1962, but the only outcome was a temporary change of name. The right wing TUCN became the United Labour Congress (ULC), and the left wing NTUC became the Independent United Labour Congress (IULC), the break-down coming, as in the past, over the problem of international affiliation.

Meanwhile the independently minded trade unions were growing impatient with the warfare between the two factions, and in 1962 representatives of some thirty-eight of them formed a new National Labour Unity Committee, and threatened to form a United Labour Congress of their own, unless the two sides made up. The membership of the independent unions (142,000) in 1962 was greater than the combined membership of the ULC (85,000) and the IUCL (48,500).

The NTUC/IUCL were closely in touch with the communist WFTU, but at its inaugural meeting in 1960 it decided to affiliate, not with WFTU but with AATUF, and through AATUF came a certain amount of trade union contact with Ghana. From 1958, the ANTUF (but not its right wing rival) had been sending delegates to such things as the All African People's Conference in Accra, and the leader was a signatory to the declaration calling for the foundation of AATUF. They later participated in the preparatory stages of setting up AATUF, and the left wing was accused of receiving money from the GTUC and the
NTUC in order to favour AATUF, to the detriment of the TUCN.

The situation in 1963 was therefore that there existed the ULC, (now recognised by the Government and affiliated to the ICFTU) and the IULC (in covert association with the WFTU). They represented the traditional ideological split. In addition there was the IFCTU-backed Nigerian Workers Council, and the break-away Northern Federation of Labour.

In September 1963, the UCL and the NTUC (IUCL) formed a Joint Action Committee, which called on the Government to institute a high level enquiry into wages and working conditions throughout the economy, which it was hoped would lead to a considerable increase in the minimum wage in the public sector, (5s.10d a day in Lagos) and have a similar effect on wages in the private sector. The Government rejected this demand and offered instead a limited examination of regional differentials where anomalies had crept in. In return, the Joint Action Committee threatened a general stoppage of work to begin with the declaration of Republican status for Nigeria on the 1st of October. Had it been left only to the ULC and the NTUC it is clear a general strike could not have been effective. The Government would then, on expedient if not on moral grounds, have been justified in its stand. But by about the middle of September some very powerful unions formed the Labour Unity Front I and announced their intention to go in with the Joint

---

I. Composed of unions of electricians, teachers, civil service, railway workers etc.
Action Committee. The Nigerian Workers Council, for what it is worth, had already joined up.

Work stoppages in public services, particularly the railways, began as soon as the men received their month's pay, rashly augmented by a government approved Republic Day advance. By the 30th of September, the eve of Republic Day, it was obvious there was to be a complete national shut-down, and after a lengthy meeting between Ministers and the leaders of the Joint Action Committee the Government capitulated. A Commission of Inquiry of six members and headed by Mr Justice Morgan, was to be set up with terms of reference that met most of the union demands.

In June 1964 there was a further two-week general strike following the report of the Morgan Committee which called for a "living wage" for the lowest paid workers. This was not granted by the Federal Government and the strike was a natural follow-up to this. It showed that in difficulties the various trade union groupings, once united, could produce a formidable strength. They again formed a Joint Action Committee and for a short period demonstrated a unity lacking in the Government generally.1

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1. For a number of years, Ghana's John Tettegah had been forbidden entry into Nigeria. This was reinforced during the Strike, because of his "subversive activities". *Ghanaian Times* (3rd July, 1964).
Since then the two major union groupings have again parted and as in Ghana, at an earlier period, they have continued up to 1966, to follow the pattern of being split on a right-left pattern with regard to questions of external affiliation, as well as internally.

Following the series of coups and the civil war, the unions have not played any decisive part in affairs. In time however, if and when regional and tribal differences can be overcome, they could on the basis of mutual need, play a much more important, and increasingly political, role.
Tables

A. National Income Statistics.
B. Population Figures.
C. Unemployment.
D. Earnings in Manufacturing.
E. Number and size of Establishments and Firms.
F. African Earnings by Industry. (1955)
G. Trade Union Membership Figures.
Table A.

NATIONAL INCOME STATISTICS - GHANA

(in millions of £ Ghanaian) ¹

Source: U.N. Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. ²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National Income</th>
<th>Gross Domestic Product at mkt. price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>793</td>
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1. In 1964 Ghana introduced decimal currency with the CEDI as the unit, equal to about half the Ghana pound.

2. See footnote, page 39, on Statistical Sources.
Table B.

Population Figures
(in thousands)


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Figures (in thousands)</th>
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<td>1949</td>
<td>3811</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>3870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td>4478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>4548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>4620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>4691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>6250</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>6420</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>6590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>6777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>6960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>7148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>7340</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>7537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>7740</td>
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</table>

I. New Estimates by U.N. replacing previous national figures.
<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
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<td>1960</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>1961</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>1963</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>11.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table D.

EARNINGS IN MANUFACTURING
(in shillings per month) (including Salaried Employees)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>259</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of Establishment</td>
<td>All Industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of estab-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL EMPLOYEES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All establishments</td>
<td>3,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 persons</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 persons</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 50 persons</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 100 persons</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 500 persons</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 500 persons</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

|                       |               |                                 |               |              |               |              |               |              |
|                       | 2,282         | 107,687                          | 296           | 12,606       | 32           | 12,008       | 268           | 14,853        | 169          | 22,903        |
| Up to 5 persons       | 887           | 2,509                            | 25            | 83           | 2            | 9            | 95            | 272          | 10           | 29           |
| 6 to 10 persons       | 430           | 3,282                            | 63            | 513          | 1            | 10           | 50            | 378          | 10           | 89           |
| 11 to 50 persons      | 646           | 15,694                           | 164           | 3,799        | 10           | 266          | 79            | 1,953         | 82           | 2,425         |
| 51 to 100 persons     | 124           | 9,017                            | 24            | 1,615        | 4            | 289          | 10            | 712           | 24           | 1,703         |
| 101 to 500 persons    | 164           | 36,192                           | 36            | 6,229        | 11           | 2,416        | 32            | 7,976         | 39           | 10,548        |
| Over 500 persons      | 31            | 40,993                           | 3             | 2,619        | 4            | 9,018        | 4             | 4,573         | 40           | 42,505        |

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

|                       |               |                                 |               |              |               |              |               |              |
|                       | 751           | 137,391                          | 52            | 28,274       | 1            | 39           | 12            | 1,283         | 40           | 34,402        |
| Up to 5 persons       | 23            | 56                               | -             | -            | -            | -            | -             | -            | -             | -             |
| 6 to 10 persons       | 23            | 133                              | 1             | -            | -            | -            | 1             | 7            | -             | -             |
| 11 to 50 persons      | 210           | 4,650                            | 2             | 79           | 1            | 39           | 7             | 192           | 2            | 70            |
| 51 to 100 persons     | 93            | 5,533                            | 3             | 206          | -            | -            | -             | 73           | 2            | 136           |
| 101 to 500 persons    | 217           | 25,174                           | 19            | 2,452        | -            | -            | 2             | 500           | 5            | 1,337         |
| Over 500 persons      | 185           | 101,845                          | 28            | 25,537       | -            | -            | 1             | 511           | 31           | 32,839        |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Establishment</th>
<th>Electricity, Water and Sanitary Services</th>
<th>Commerce</th>
<th>Transport, Storage and Communications Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of establishments</td>
<td>No. employees</td>
<td>No. of establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL EMPLOYERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All establishments</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7,124</td>
<td>1,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 persons</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 50 persons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 100 persons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 500 persons</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,171</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 500 persons</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5,783</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIVATE ENTERPRISE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All establishments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 50 persons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 100 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 500 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 500 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC AUTHORITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>All establishments</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 50 persons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 100 persons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 to 500 persons</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,171</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 500 persons</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5,783</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Division</td>
<td>No. employed</td>
<td>Average earnings</td>
<td>Private Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Employees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Industries</strong></td>
<td>245,078</td>
<td>12 12</td>
<td>107,687 12 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</td>
<td>40,880</td>
<td>8 4</td>
<td>12,606 7 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and Quarrying</td>
<td>12,067</td>
<td>14 19</td>
<td>12,008 14 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>161,356</td>
<td>12 4</td>
<td>1,085 12 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>57,305</td>
<td>9 12</td>
<td>22,903 10 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Water and Sanitary Services</td>
<td>7,124</td>
<td>10 6</td>
<td>32 55 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>25,760</td>
<td>16 10</td>
<td>24,586 16 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage and Communications</td>
<td>22,655</td>
<td>14 7</td>
<td>5,513 13 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>63,171</td>
<td>13 14</td>
<td>15,186 14 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>African Employees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Industries</strong></td>
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<td>9 18</td>
<td>104,027 9 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</td>
<td>40,657</td>
<td>7 13</td>
<td>12,520 7 3</td>
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<td>7 4</td>
<td>11,131 7 4</td>
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<td>15,755</td>
<td>10 0</td>
<td>1,497 9 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>56,595</td>
<td>8 4</td>
<td>22,478 8 7</td>
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<td>12 7 7</td>
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<td>Transport, Storage and Communications</td>
<td>22,377</td>
<td>13 4</td>
<td>5,394 11 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>61,863</td>
<td>11 10</td>
<td>14,755 11 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(2) Although there are only a very small proportion of Europeans employed, their presence is enough to increase the 'average wage' by about 30% - from £9 18 0 to £12 12. 'All Employees' average is higher in the private enterprise sector, but the 'African Employees' average is higher in the public sector.
Table G.

GHANA TRADES UNIONS: MEMBERSHIP (1942-58)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Unions</th>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>24 (1)</td>
<td>10,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30,458</td>
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<td>38,135</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>28,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>32,908</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>35,129</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>46,309</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>47,500</td>
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<td>98</td>
<td>101,319</td>
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<td>111</td>
<td>137,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>154,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>16 (after Re-organ-</td>
<td>c.200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>c.300,000</td>
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</table>

Sources: Labour Department Reports.

1. of 89 in Nigeria, 9 in Sierra Leone.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY


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