BRITAIN AND INDEPENDENT AFRICA: PARTNERSHIP—THE UNCOMPLETED TASK

The rightness of representative self-government, the central principle of British colonial policy since Lord Durham reported on the affairs of British North America in 1839, has made itself apparent on every one of the many occasions in recent years that a newly independent African state has taken its place on the world stage. John Stuart Mill, a few years before the passing of the British North America Act of 1867, which launched the federal Dominion of Canada into full statehood, wrote that “there is no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power, in the last resort is vested in the entire aggregate of the community.”* The attitude towards independent Africa of Britons who share his views on the “ideally best polity”—and they are the large majority—must therefore be one of sympathetic welcome and congratulation.

Yet when we recall that the great liberal philosopher was also a realist, who insisted that representative self-government required suitable circumstances to make it “practicable and eligible”, it is appropriate to suggest that not only is each of the independent states of Africa today facing a challenge of internal democracy but that, viewed against the perspective of centuries, the continent as a whole has seldom been more vulnerable.

Africa’s selfhood was imperilled during the generations of the slave-trade, when her peoples were plundered by Europe, Arabia and South Asia. More recently, materialism and other alien philosophies have eroded wide areas of African traditional morality. The damage inflicted by outside influences has to some degree been mitigated by those who bore to Africa and shared with Africans the values and ethical practices which lie at the core of their civilizations: Christian, Islamic, Hindu or Judaic. Their gifts of science and technology also have contributed substantially towards restoring a balance between loss and gain.

So far as Western civilization is concerned, the supremacy of the

* Representative Government (1861), Chapter 3.
West during the past five centuries has led to the establishment of bases and bridgeheads in each of the separate lands of Africa. Everywhere there is to be found architecture, artefacts, languages and institutions of European origin. Despite urgent desires to "Africanize" the continent, elements of European culture remain prominent, sometimes starkly so, at this peak moment of the Western imperial recession. Independent Africa has not incorporated, nor is she yet wholly in a condition to incorporate, all such elements effectively into her own Africo-European syntheses. New nations must be united, new states strengthened, the arts and sciences of large-scale modern government, and of economic and social development, must be mastered. Until this is done and all the latent resources of Africa are fully mobilized a vacuum of power will exist, a vacuum tempting to giant nations confident in their ideology and with vast reserves of manpower on which to draw.

The challenge of choice to Britain and the West concerning Africa can be posed in alarmist terms. The past half-century has seen many references to the "Yellow Peril", to "Asian hordes", the threats of Communism, whether Leninist, Trotskyist, Stalinist, or the rival communisms of contemporary Russia and China. The inappropriate use of such terms by politicians in Africa and by colonial administrators has aroused scepticism as to the reality of the danger of communist subversion or the penetration into Africa of new imperialisms. With a recent, often painful, memory of the abuse of political terms many leaders of the newly independent states have understandably clutched at "non-alignment" as the only satisfactory working first principle for the conduct of foreign affairs. They ask for patience from the Western rulers who have transferred power to them and from the non-colonial powers of Europe and North America while they take time to assess the intentions of the non-Western nations from whom a long era of colonialism has kept them separate.

Yet Africa's leaders already have certain facts of which to take stock, not least the tremendous problems of population pressure facing Eastern régimes. The unused potential of Africa, agricultural and industrial, has impressed many high-level Asian observers, who have referred in the frankest terms to the greater beneficial use which Asian cultivators and workers would make of the available lands and materials. Where Africa's relatively poor agriculture has thus far had little appeal to the better-circumstanced European and North American producer, it has been viewed with different
eyes from the hard-pressed East. The mineral resources which have had greater appeal to the West might also be more attractive to Eastern countries, and likewise the general manufacturing potential of Africa. Certainly several Asian visitors to Africa have expressed a wholly unsentimental impatience with what they regard as an African want of industry and thrift, and they have made plain their view that Asians would make more efficient use of the resources. Such visitors from the East, like many from the West, have seldom grasped the reality of an African philosophy which includes contentment with a modest livelihood. Increasingly Africans have been urged to adopt a more militant, materialist ideology. “African socialism” may succeed in harmonizing African traditional thought with modern demands, but the concept is still in process of refinement and is meanwhile in competition with Communist ideology.

At the moment of Africa’s vulnerability, Great Britain, the preeminent imperial power in Africa during the past two centuries, has stood uncertain. Though the several countries of ex-British colonial Africa supply the most extensive, and some of the most strategically exploitable, areas for rivals and enemies of the West, Britain has felt unable to act constructively save in association with allies who can share the cost and burden of fulfilling the objective of bringing each former African ward, together with the rest of independent Africa, to a more “viable” or confident self-government.

It is important to consider why Britain left uncompleted so many of the tasks of trusteeship which she had undertaken before 1945, and which she redefined and amplified during and after the war. The Colonial Development and Welfare Acts give clearest expression to the spirit and intentions of the period. In Chapter 6 on Eastern Africa a special significance was attached to Mau Mau as leading to a wide-ranging reassessment of Britain’s position. Certainly Mau Mau serves well to direct attention to Britain’s crisis of resources in Africa and the wider world.

Open party political controversy over Mau Mau in Britain turned chiefly on issues such as the large number of convicted terrorists who were executed, the high proportion of Mau Mau killed to wounded among battle casualties, the treatment of “hard core” prisoners at Hola and other camps, and the harsh behaviour of individual military officers. Such detailed concern on the part of public representatives and the attendant full publicity were the normal concomitants of overseas engagements in which the United
Kingdom was directly involved. But at a deeper level there was an
assessment of the meaning of Mau Mau in terms of the future
government of Kenya, and of the wider colonial empire in Africa.
There were those who argued that the Kikuyu were a special case
and the members of Mau Mau only a small proportion who should
not be allowed to determine the fate of a whole embryo nation, or
of British Africa, by causing a premature abandonment of the
colonial mission, even though several who expressed this view con-
ceded that Mau Mau cohesion and strength had proved greater
between 1952 and 1958 than they would have predicted.

Those responsible for Britain’s policy in Kenya and Africa were
obliged to take account of a world context and of many besides the
purely military or strategic matters, not least the economic and
social implications of colonial responsibility in a new age of
universal welfare and development. Campaigns in Korea and
Malaya had stretched the military resources of Britain who, since
1945, had been burdened with inescapable defence commitments in
Western Europe on a scale which she had not known before. And
scarcely was Mau Mau contained in Kenya when the Suez campaign
revealed the difficulties for a national army which was integrated
into a Western alliance completing a large-scale independent
operation without the full backing of its partners.

As to the new “revolution of rising expectations” in Africa
requiring accelerated economic and social development, Britain had
been obliged recently to consider the skilfully presented demands
of Malta for full integration into the social security system of the
United Kingdom and comparable claims for assistance from the
British West Indies. Although each was presented as a special case
there were more general implications which could not be ignored
by a metropolitan government responsible, and responsive, to an
internal electorate. Mau Mau served to reveal the vast extent of the
educational, health and other investment required to achieve the
desired constructive rehabilitation of Kenya and the advancement
of East Africa as a whole. The resources required for this task were
plainly beyond the capacity of Britain alone to supply and each of
the wealthier members of the Western alliance, notably the United
States and West Germany, had to be looked to for a substantial
sharing of the burden.

Given the continuance of United States policy whereby, in the
“containment of communism” strategy, European colonial rule was
accepted as the best means of ensuring stability in Africa, United
Kingdom administration might well have been supported as the best agency for achieving the accelerated development required to prepare the British African territories adequately for effective self-government or independence. Surveys conducted even so late as 1958 revealed the poor state of preparation, especially in terms of trained manpower, of each of the non-self-governing territories of Africa, none being less ready than the lands of Eastern Africa. Given the handful of qualified African administrators, lawyers, doctors and other professional men in these territories in 1958 and the very few African pupils completing even secondary education, senior British administrators and educationists estimated that a minimum period of from ten to fifteen years was required for training and experience in office, if there was to be any confident expectation of future stability.

Despite the readiness of certain Governors and their senior officers to state in private, if pressed a minimum period for intensive preparation for self-government, and an optimum period also—though this was less relevant to the immediate political climate—there was a general British unwillingness to accept any suggested time-table. This was true of Tanganyika, a British Trust Territory under the United Nations, no less than of the colonies or protectorates of East and Central Africa. The stubborn official British refusal to discuss a time-table is the more strange since a ten-year limit was placed on the Italian resumption of trusteeship for Somalia in 1950. Though the Italians behaved in the first years as if they believed that the period would be extended indefinitely, it was subsequently made clear that the United Nations would insist on adherence to 1960 as the date of independence, a development which led the Italian administration to anticipate the final date and advance the day of independence, in an understandable endeavour to transfer power with the maximum of goodwill. The value of the set span of years in the case of Somalia was that it led to the intelligent mobilization of all conceivable international as well as Italian aid and the training of key police, army, administrative and social welfare officers for the responsibilities which would inevitably be theirs after a defined period.

The Somalia time-table did, in the event, and as was predicted, influence the British Government to accelerate beyond reason the advance of the Somaliland Protectorate to full independence so that the British territory might merge with its ex-Italian neighbour to form a greater Somalia. In terms of even rudimentary preparation
the "Somalization" of key posts proceeded at a ridiculously rapid pace, involving overnight promotions of men with little or no serious training for senior legislative, administrative and judicial work. Only the ethnic homogeneity of the population, the presence of a few well-trained practical leaders who had proved good pupils of the British Military Administration, and the self-confident "flair" of the Somalis—with the devoted help of Somaliphil Britons—averted disaster.

In the case of the larger and more heterogeneous territories under British administration, it was estimated in 1958 that an optimum period of from 25 to 30 years' intensive training would prepare them for reasonably efficient and stable modern administration, an estimate in broad correspondence with that made in 1956 for the Belgian Congo by Professor van Bilsen. Although van Bilsen was subsequently criticized by Belgian authority for opposing the precipitate transfer of complete power to an ill-prepared Congo in 1960, he was in 1956 attacked by senior Belgians for allowing only thirty years for the process of preparation. Analysed purely in terms of the length of school and university education, professional training and experience required for a sufficient body of men from whom, for example, judges to compare with their fellows in Europe might be selected, thirty years was by no means excessive, given the fact that scarcely a handful of Africans from East Africa were receiving legal education in 1958. On grounds of practical international politics the period before independence had to be much shorter, but whether it need ever have been the totally inadequate one or two years which eventuated is open to doubt.

After 1956, however, the United States in particular of the Western Allies became increasingly impatient, and eminent American spokesmen, both official and unofficial, urged Britain and the other European colonial powers to hasten the advance of Africa to independence. The motives for the change in United States' outlook were varied. The traditional sense of domestic anti-colonialism was always in the background, a compound of the recollections of the War of Independence and the Monroe Doctrine influencing in a real if generalized manner even sophisticated diplomats of the United States Foreign Service. There was also a frank feeling that continued imperial rule by European nations was out of place in the new world of United States supremacy, and that African recognition of America's topmost position was affected by the continuance of European administration. Cold War strategy added its effect: it was
believed that goodwill towards the West on the part of African leaders, all aspiring to full self-government after Ghana’s rapid constitutional advances, could best be gained by early concession of independence rather than resistant tardiness. It was pointed out to American analysts that India’s maturity in government owed much to the patient determination which had been forced on the Congress, but arguments based on the importance of organization, administration and trained manpower were subordinated to those of political psychology. Argument held that such preparation and training must follow, not precede, independence.

African leaders in the British territories were for their part never so naïve as to press blindly for immediate independence. Though they could not make public pronouncements suggesting to their followers any readiness to mark time, and though they were not prepared to accept anything like so long a delay as Indian leaders had done, they indicated plainly in private that they were ready to postpone independence for some years at least, provided that they received assurance that money, materials and personnel would be forthcoming in more generous quantities from the metropolitan power to assist in the tasks of preparation. Even the radical and emotional Patrice Lumumba made plain his readiness to accept a delay of up to five years. All save Sekou Touré in France’s Afrique noire demonstrated openly the same awareness of a need for a continuing partnership with the metropole. Though material considerations might have been uppermost other elements are associated always with the material. African leaders in Britain’s territories were educated and Western-oriented men fully alive to the educational and economic needs of their countries. Certainly they could not reject offers of early independence when their public demands were accepted publicly at face value, any more than, say, Natal’s leaders had been able to do in 1893 when self-government was thrust upon them. It must always be regretted that definite time-tables backed by financial and other commitments were not openly assessed before the frank inspection of the world. When accepted by responsible African leaders and agreed by the United States and the “non-colonial” powers of the Western world, such time-tables could have achieved much and could have withstood the strongest criticisms of politically hostile and self-interested powers.

As it happened vast areas of vagueness were left in the negotiations preceding independence and there was minimal understanding and co-operation between the Western nations most directly
concerned—Belgium, France, the United States and Britain. Although every whit as concerned as the others, Portugal must be excluded if only because her ancient mystique of a closed imperium rendered dialogue difficult. It would, however, be harsh and inaccurate to say of British territories in Africa that, acquired absent-mindedly, they were allowed absent-mindedly to drift into a world where unsentimental and calculating forces of new and powerful imperialisms competed for their material and ideological domination.

In the rapidly changing circumstances of the world there were no clear-cut courses to be pursued by a nation with wide-ranging international commitments and responsibilities. For an empirically minded people whose homeland is dependent on world trade there were few practical guarantees, or examples based on sufficient evidence, to warrant absolute decisions. Clearly the fulfilment of the uncompleted tasks of the trusteeship era necessitated reliable partners among the well-endowed and reasonably well-developed nations. Britain was required to take stock of her several international associations. Each of these principal associations must be examined in turn with special reference to the British–African relationship.

Pride of place must be given to Britain, Europe and Africa because the United Kingdom's most emphatic recent decision in foreign policy, and one undertaken with the strongest backing of the United States of America, was her application to be permitted to unite, under the Treaty of Rome, with France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Pan-Europeanism, like Pan-Africanism, has a specially powerful appeal to United States citizens, nurtured in a tradition of Pan-Americanism, and the Anglo–American relationship would have suffered had Britain not made a determined effort to enter the European union.

Although a first emphasis was placed on the economic arguments, brilliantly marshalled by Mr. Heath, it was acknowledged that the political significance of Britain's entry into the European Common Market would be at least as great as the economic. The Treaty of Rome provided for a wide range of political developments of fundamental importance, not least the immediate concession of freedom of movement within the union for all citizens and workers of the contracting countries. While Britain's membership of the European Free Trade Area of the seven represented no more than participation in a local regional association, to be seen on a par with
several similar commercial arrangements, the European Economic Union required much more binding commitments involving in a deeper way questions of sovereignty, nationality and citizenship.

There was division of opinion in Britain over the proposed entry into the European Common Market, but what was perhaps of greatest import was the undoubted readiness of a majority of Britons, of all political parties, to take a decisive step in a direction opposite to that of British overseas policy throughout the long period of Western imperialism. Singularly few took seriously the arguments of the liberal-imperialist school who saw in the end of empire the logical and hopeful commencement of a new era of Commonwealth. Many more were disenchanted by the manner in which colonialism was seen to be drawing to a close; they were affected not least by the strident hostility towards the colonial powers of certain nationalist leaders. Surrounded by European neighbours who were experiencing similar reactions, it is not surprising that a pervading sense of a need to assert metropolitan independence was accompanied in Britain by a readiness to associate with others who had had similar experiences of decolonization.

The common subjection of European nations to a heavy volume and wide variety of criticism, including criticism from the United States of America, for five centuries of colonialism supplied a political bond of real importance to representatives of European countries meeting in conference or informally. Together, many of them believed, a united Europe could hold her own against the world, including the United States, the Soviet Union and China. For those conscious of a responsibility to the wider world it seemed that the combined economic and other resources of Europe would permit greater contributions to overseas aid.

It is impossible to say whether a union contracted within such a climate of ideas would have prospered after Britain's accession. The veto of President de Gaulle was not only decisive in preventing Britain's admission but served also to remind Britons of the continuing potency of the idea of nation on the European mainland. De Gaulle might be widely assailed as wholly unrepresentative of the new spirit of Europe, but his rejection of Britain not only succeeded in rebuffing an actively sought-for alliance but compelled recollection of a wealth of similar acts by different national leaders of Europe during the twentieth century, not to mention comparable incidents, conflicts and wars during earlier generations.

It is perhaps worth observing that France's rejection, through
Charles de Gaulle, of a Britain which had been morally unassailable at the time of France’s deepest humiliation brought some solace to wounded French pride. It also helped other members of what has been called Europe’s “league of the defeated”—though many senior Germans, Dutchmen and other “Europeans” were undeniably grieved by the exclusion of Britain. This psychological levelling of Britain in the eyes of mainlanders may well prove of long-term value in helping Britain’s eventual acceptance into closer European association.

Stillborn, nevertheless, were the hopes of those in Britain who had looked to the European Economic Union as an immediate instrument for increasing economic aid to Africa. How strong was this group it is impossible to say, for many who were given to throwing in a reference to overseas aid as an extra argument were plainly obsessed by the vision of an economically powerful Europe which would be largely self-sufficient vis-à-vis other continents and inter-continental groupings. Also on the negative side were those in France who, while they wished to continue generous aid to the French-speaking territories in Africa and Madagascar, were reluctant to add a large number of needy ex-British African countries to the dependencies for whom the six Common Market countries had together been persuaded by France to accept a collective obligation. It would be unjust nevertheless to overlook the sincerity of the European unionists in Britain who believed that the closer economic and political integration of Western Europe would result in substantially greater surpluses for direct overseas grants and larger, more efficient factories and markets to stimulate international trade, notably trade with the economically underdeveloped lands of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Men of this outlook have given substantial support to the Organization for European Economic Co-operation and to its successor, now strengthened by American and Canadian accession to membership, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.).

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development perhaps provides the best transition to consideration of Britain’s second area of major international alliance, that of the North Atlantic Community. Although O.E.C.D. thus far has given priority to economically underdeveloped countries in Europe, notably Greece and Turkey, for whose benefit special consortia have been established, the Organization has a lively awareness of underdeveloped countries lying farther afield. Substantial work has been
done on the co-ordination of overseas aid by officers of the O.E.C.D. working under the direction of a Scandinavian secretary-general. De Gaulle might deny to Britain membership of a narrower union in which France had a decisive voice but he could not exclude her from older European associations. Still less could he reduce Britain's active participation in that trans-Atlantic co-operation which, from the beginning of Marshall aid, has been responsible for Europe's post-war recovery.

Although Britain will continue always to accept her close bonds with Europe it must be acknowledged that to many in the United Kingdom, as to many also in Eire, the concept of trans-Atlantic alliance, as embodied for example in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, has more powerful appeal than any purely European political and economic association. Voluntary societies such as the Atlantic Treaty Association and the English-Speaking Union work actively on behalf of the Atlantic idea and seek to extend activities far beyond those of defence.

The appeal to Britons of adding North America to any European alliance has many obvious reasons. The English language, spoken by fifty million in the British Isles, receives more than a fourfold increment when the United States and Canada are added. The whole web of Anglo-Saxon political and legal institutions and traditions is likewise strengthened. Most significant, perhaps, given the experience of two world wars, is the fact that the most powerful arsenal of democracy is incorporated into an Americo-European entity by means of North Atlantic treaties.

Beyond the Atlantic the American alliance is also welcomed. Although many in Britain were offended by the exclusion of Britain from the Anzus (Australia, New Zealand and United States) pact, there is widespread readiness to admit that the conception of Atlantic community must be extended to embrace Australia and New Zealand. Some spokesmen for this extension have emphasized the desirability of such wider union on frankly racial grounds, being advocates for the protection of "white interests"; but the majority have canvassed support primarily in terms of the need to strengthen Western cultural achievement, notably democracy and the rule of law. The Pacific outposts of the West have a vital role to play in demonstrating the work of democratic institutions and values and in serving as centres of education and other aid.

The common use of the English language has provided an incentive for "Anglo-Saxon" co-operation, notably Anglo-American,
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in Africa, in much the same manner as French has acted as an argument for the various advocates of specifically Franco–African or Latin–African associations. Despite the endeavours of organizations such as C.C.T.A. (Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara), the language barrier between the French- and English-speaking areas of Africa continues to remain high. Estimates of the numbers of English- and French-speakers on the continent vary greatly, but the principal fact to be noticed is the division which exists between the many millions who use one or other of the European languages as a lingua franca, or “vehicular language”, for the communication of ideas of modern science, technology, art and commerce.

Faced with the desperate urgency of Africa’s need for technical aid from outside, it seems inevitable that the greatest volume of assistance and co-operation between African and Western countries will flow within established language channels. Bilingualism in French and English is very desirable, especially at higher levels and in frontier situations. Current endeavours to expand the mastery of both languages must be supported. But Africans who already have had to become bilingual by adding a European language to their own traditional tongue can be helped most rapidly and effectively through the European language in their possession. This can of course be seen also in cases where Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish or German has been learned by Africans, but English and French affect by far the greatest numbers. The influence of language is made obvious by the co-operation between French-speaking scholars and students in Africa, France, Belgium and the French-medium universities of Canada. It is also reflected through the long-established links which exist between French Catholic and French Protestant missionary societies and African churches, schools and hospitals.

A fact which must be emphasized, disturbing though it is to France and to admirers of the French language, is the growing preference for English in Africa. Within the foreseeable future every possible French school and college and other centre will be required to work at fullest capacity to assist in meeting Africa’s educational needs. France, officially, is already alert and active and determined to maintain the widest usage of the French language. But circumstances of the modern world, notably the division between political East and West, which emphasizes the importance of the Russian and Chinese languages and the desirability of learning
one or other of them, has led to English acquiring pre-eminence as the language medium of the West.

Had the United States chosen to be multi-lingual and not to have adopted English as the sole official tongue of the Union the position could well have been otherwise. But the presence of 200 million English-speakers, in addition to America's vast material resources, has been decisive in tilting the balance towards English in Africa. Ethiopia, despite close historical and economic ties with France, has in recent years substituted English for French, as the European language of the empire, Amharic remaining the other official medium. This notable accession to English, and the continued use of English in Liberia, has greatly reinforced its position in a continent where generations of British administration and English-medium education have given the language extensive expression, albeit sometimes in forms not immediately recognizable to Western users.

The flow of American Peace Corps and Crossroads volunteers to independent Africa in numbers greatly exceeding those from similar organizations in the United Kingdom highlights in one form the contemporary importance of the Anglo-American alliance. Such co-operation at youthful, junior levels serves to crown the economic, political, military, educational and medical activities in which both the United States and Britain have engaged and combined for several generations. Early in the nineteenth century American missionary, educational, health and welfare centres were already strongly established in British colonies alongside commercial and industrial concerns. It is essential that such Anglo-American co-operation in Africa should continue and expand as rapidly as possible side by side with the fullest preservation of British and European co-operation in the continent. One must question, in this context, the views of certain global strategists who would assign a more substantial role to the United States in independent Africa in exchange for an increased British priority in Latin America, so that "neo-colonial" misgivings in both continents might the better be mitigated. Such superficial expedients produce little or no profit, save perhaps in the shortest term for commercial companies and the like. Both Britain and the United States have deep roots in Africa and Latin America, and all constructive associations of the past and present require to be nourished and extended, not terminated or abandoned in the pursuit of doubtful ephemeral advantage.
Increasing co-operation, either British-European or Anglo-American, in respect of Africa should not be allowed to minimize or damage either the Commonwealth of Nations or the United Nations. These associations comprise the remaining two major alliances of which Britain is a member. The dichotomy in British attitudes towards the United Kingdom's "colonies of settlement", or "Dominions", on the one hand, and her "colonies of administration", or "exploitation", on the other has had an unfortunate effect on the whole approach to both the new "multi-racial" Commonwealth of Nations and the multi-racial United Nations. There has been an unmistakable tendency within both organizations for "ethnic associates" to side defensively with one another rather than to display greater trust in people of different racial and cultural origin. Africans, Arabs, Asians and Latin Americans have demonstrated this characteristic and it has accentuated an entrenched reaction among North Atlantic nationalities. We have made evident already why this tendency is not difficult to understand, given the weight of "social-Darwinist" history among the latter and the volume of criticism of the "imperial West" among the former, but it is none the less unfortunate.

The Commonwealth must be taken first of the "multi-racial" associations. Great Britain is the founder and the principal member, and it is difficult, though perhaps not impossible, to conceive the association continuing without Great Britain's membership. In respect of Africa, Britain has perhaps revealed most clearly her indecision as to the future of the multi-racial Commonwealth. This indecision springs primarily from a dualism in past African policy which has never been faced with sufficient frankness. Until the eleventh hour of empire the association once known as "Great Britain and the Dominions", or "The Anglo-Saxon Commonwealth", continued to enjoy a special relationship and most intercourse of a consciously Commonwealth kind took place within it.

It must be repeated that, given the circumstances of history, it is wholly natural that there was such intensive Anglo-Saxon or European intercourse through organizations such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Royal Empire (now Royal Commonwealth) Society, and various sporting bodies such as those responsible for the "Empire Games", cricket, rugby and the like. The particular history of the British colonies of settlement in South Africa also explains why the Union of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia were included as members of the inner association and
why Southern Africans and East Africans, of both British and Dutch descent, were recruited alongside Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians and Britons for service in Britain's colonies of administration throughout Africa and the wider empire. The imperial contribution of men like Rhodes and Smuts, Schlesinger and Oppenheimer also explains why men of European origin in Africa have traditionally been accorded a substantial place in British universities, and centres concerned with Commonwealth and international affairs.

But though the special treatment of such South, Central and East Africans is historically understandable, the extreme inertia which has characterized the separation between the “white” and “non-white” parts of the Commonwealth must be criticized. The tardiness in recognizing opportunities for fruitful co-operation was never shown more strikingly in recent times than in 1959, when the Monckton Commission was appointed to review the constitution of the now defunct Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the preamble of which had emphasized the objective of inter-racial partnership. The suggestion that wider Commonwealth resources be drawn upon was accepted by the United Kingdom Government to the extent that a Canadian and an Australian were appointed as members under Lord Monckton. But there was no apparent response to the suggestion that eminent Africans and Asians from outside Central Africa should be added. A senior Indian or Pakistani civil servant and a West African judge could have made particularly beneficial contributions. All too little evidence has been shown in African policy of a readiness to mobilize or to draw upon all the available resources of the multi-racial Commonwealth which has been in being since 1947. On the many occasions when Britain has been faced with difficult problems more of the imaginative realism which was so evident during the last war might have been displayed. Individual ability was then used on a best-man basis without regard for country of origin.

Lack of imagination has been stressed rather than a Machiavellian determination to “divide and rule” because it would appear to be the more potent cause of the widespread failure to mobilize available ability in the service of Commonwealth Africa. It would be inaccurate to dismiss all charges of divide and rule tendencies, and very misleading also to deny the play of party politics, notably the general practice among cabinet ministers and politicians of ignoring inconvenient evidence or of by-passing individuals whose
advice might not be in accord with current party aspirations. But all political viewpoints of the United Kingdom, conservative, socialist, liberal and neutral, are shared by individuals and groups in Africa and Asia. They share also the metropolitan concern for competent organization and the preservation of high standards in the conduct of the public services. The presence on appropriate commissions or boards of Africans and Asians would have helped to remove or minimize the ethnic, racial or cultural suspicion which has regretfully undermined the effectiveness of many valuable recommendations.

Outside Africa, Commonwealth citizens of appropriate qualification might have been recruited from countries which have had experience of the problems of plural or multi-racial societies. Ceylonese and Malayan constitutional experience has much that is instructive for Africa. Caribbean and Mediterranean history—British Guiana and the defunct Federation of the West Indies, or Cyprus and Malta—can teach not only citizens of their own particular territories. Within Africa, South African history from 1497 offers a rich record both of heartening success and dismal failure.

Some administrators and scholars have perceived the value of comparative study. Milner, faced with the task of devising workable constitutions for the colonies and territories of Southern Africa after 1902, urged that some help be sought from Colonial Office files stuffed with precedent. Bryce, an eminent contemporary of Milner, drew on a very wide framework, including both South America and the United States of America, in his approach to British overseas policy. Later examples are Professor Sir Reginald Coupland, Beit Professor at Oxford, Professor Sir Fred Clarke* and Professor W. M. MacMillan, whose Warning from the West Indies: A Tract for the Empire, published in 1936, shows how a background of detailed research in Africa enabled him at once to identify and to illuminate certain fundamental problems elsewhere. Professor Sir Keith Hancock's surveys of British Commonwealth Affairs and other writings demonstrate the same gifts from an Australian background.

Yet though these examples serve to bring home the value of comparison and co-operation, such men and women have been exceptional. Seemingly few of those in positions of power and influence have incorporated within one perspective the comparable

* See his Quebec and South Africa. A Study in Cultural Adjustment (O.U.P. 1924).
problems of the Dominions and the colonies of administration. Rather has there been a distinct compartmentalism which is discernible in University and Church as well as State.

Thus in university organization the substitution of "Commonwealth" for "Colonial" studies has sometimes brought little change in emphasis. The traditional dichotomy between the study of the "old Dominions" and "the colonies" has been perpetuated even though "new states" and "underdeveloped" territories from outside the Commonwealth may have been added to supply academic ballast. The effect has been to continue traditional separation. Australian, Canadian and New Zealand students have been kept away from active involvement in discussion of territories recently under British colonial administration. Such students, by virtue of their origin and tradition, are readily absorbed into British life, and so participate with the majority of Britons in courses of study which touch little upon peoples of non-Western culture and tradition. African studies have had their own most unfortunate divisions until the last few years.*

The Church is little different in its organization. The Christian church has possessed its own distinctive compartments which have served to divide believers. The traditional division between "metropolitan" and "missionary" is understandable, and there is no need to dwell upon the important role of specially trained Christian evangelists in the process of Western expansion overseas. But a profound inertia has retarded the modification of traditional ecclesiastical organization in order to bring it into line with modern requirements and, above all, to attune the Church to African cultural needs and aspirations. The principles of authority and celibacy of the clergy appear to have assisted Roman Catholicism in certain areas to act more independently of restrictive opinion, in promoting African priests and in advancing oversea provinces more rapidly from missionary status in the hierarchy. Where African clergy have been sympathetic to traditional cultural traits, specially useful bridges have been built. But even within the Church of Rome there has been extreme caution. Westernized Asian and

* Only in 1963 was a multi-disciplinary African Studies Association of the United Kingdom instituted. The Oxford University Africa Society first came into being in 1955 to bring together members of the separate regional societies. In formal academic organization an inter-faculty liaison committee in African studies has still to be created at Oxford, although such committees have now been set up for Russian and Middle East studies.
African clergy of all denominations have frequently taken refuge in excessive Westernism.

In church debates the missionary clergy and their supporters rightly remind their audience of the continuing importance of evangelical work in overseas areas and the special need for financial and other assistance to African, Asian and Amerindian peoples. They also emphasize the need to preserve separate churches wherever the use of different languages is necessary to preach the gospel and otherwise to minister to pastoral requirements. The substance of criticism here as in the university context is not directed so much towards separate organization within the church, which is historically explicable, but rather towards the slow tempo of adjustment to meet changing situations. Many African university graduates, including Catholic graduates, have expressed strong resentment after being assigned automatically, without thought, to a missionary priest or chaplain when they have been in pursuit of information on questions of advanced theology rather than pastoral guidance as members of a particular ethnos or community.

In the realm of Government the inertia of organizational separation has been at least as apparent as in the worlds of Church and University. There have been ministerial and official critics of barriers between “Foreign Office”, “Commonwealth Relations Office” and “Colonial Office”, but for the most part the divisions have been accepted. The general view among individuals who gave any thought to the matter, and they are fewer than might be supposed, since most citizens are preoccupied with domestic issues within the purview of the home departments, is that since the overseas world had to be divided for convenient treatment, “foreign”, “Commonwealth” and “colonial” ministries and secretariats supplied sufficient answer. And, as in the cases of university and church, the historical logic of the arrangement is not easy to assail. What must be questioned once more is the continued failure to respond effectively to changing world circumstances. Where a keen sense of the dynamic was essential, satisfaction with the static too frequently has been allowed to prevail. Organizational upheavals are disliked always by those in senior office or in the middle rank of a set career, and civil servants are at least as prone as others to resist changes in their bureaucratic structures.

Internal changes within one department evoke resistances enough but when, as in the case of the three overseas departments of state, there were substantial differences in pride, behaviour and outlook,
the obstacles to re-organization have been both more apparent and more serious. The Foreign Office has taken pride in professional diplomacy, in detached analysis, in "realistic", unsentimental appraisal of countries and situations. The Colonial Office has placed contrasting emphasis on "responsibility", trusteeship, involvement, tutelage. The Commonwealth Office has tended to be forced into a somewhat savourless neutralism which cannot be described simply in terms of a position intermediate between the other two. It has been rather a buffer department which has had to absorb as best it could the strains and uncertainties of constantly altering relationships within a highly dynamic international association possessing ill-defined objectives and a varied, turbulent membership. Now, as a result of the recent belated and reluctant rearrangements compelled by the rapid dwindling in the number of dependent territories under the aegis of the Colonial Office, a hasty conglomerate has been contrived of the "Commonwealth and Colonial Office" alongside a politically neutral "Department of Technical Cooperation".* In order to deal belatedly with outstanding Central African questions, an *ad hoc* Central African Office was created.

A word on the barriers between colonial powers as well as interdepartmental barriers is appropriate here. There have been many criticisms of the failure of Western nations with specific overseas responsibilities to engage sufficiently in frank discussion of common colonial problems in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. That such criticism is warranted must be acknowledged by anyone who has participated in attempts to secure a more effective sharing of knowledge and experience based on different or varying principles of policy and practice in differing environments. Every credit is due to those few in government, and in voluntary organizations such as the International Institute for Different Civilizations (formerly the International Colonial Institute) and the Atlantic Treaty Association. Such organizations have attempted, usually with the co-operation of universities, to bring together responsible officers from Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, the United States and Britain to discuss common problems. But it seems regrettably true that the processes of "decolonization" were attended by as great and competitive a scramble on the part of each nation to "get out" of Africa as there was to "get in" during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Congo disaster has served to highlight the Belgian failure to heed the experience and advice of her Western

* See Postscript note on new Ministry of Overseas Development.
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associates, but no metropolitan country has shown any real readiness to listen to others or to act in concert with them, even though co-ordinated disengagement and mutually agreed transfers of power would have better served the interests both of the West and of Africa.

Yet critics of the barriers of "nation" which have divided the colonial powers must be the first to acknowledge the reality of departmental—and comparable—walls within each of their own countries. Such internal barriers have very frequently proved as powerful as those between countries. In fact, to the commonplace observation that scientists and artists are international in outlook there might be added the reminder of the genuine freemasonry which has existed between individual metropolitan officers responsible for overseas government and development. Both in the field and at home such men and women have shown a genuine spirit of colleagueship. It seems the more regrettable therefore that in respect of British African responsibilities the pattern of United Kingdom departmental organization should have been one of separate compartments and of competition rather than of co-operation. It is the custom to dismiss such division in humorous terms and, in particular, to cite treasury control as the over-riding incentive for the competition which is acknowledged to exist. But the truth is that separation and competition in domestic departments have had serious consequences abroad. Otherwise admirable traditions of individualism and of amateurism have helped to prevent the active sharing of relevant knowledge and experience, and foolish pride has been allowed to damage relations between colleagues engaged in overseas service.

Africa has experienced metropolitan compartmentalism to the full. The Foreign Office and the Sudan Service, the India Office and Indian Civil Service, the Colonial Office and Service, the Dominions and Commonwealth Relations Offices, the Central Africa Office, are state departments which have each exercised substantial responsibilities for separate portions of the continent. The armed services, Navy, Army and Air Force, likewise have had their distinctive associations. One of the commonest explanations for the traditional lack of inter-service liaison is to be found in the answer from serving officers that they have had more than enough to do within their own immediate service or territory; also that the Treasury has shown little inclination to subsidize the exchange of visits, for observation or for conferences, especially in a continent so large as Africa. The
Nile Valley, the Gulf of Aden, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, the High Commission Territories of South Africa, South Africa: each sector or region was more than sufficient in itself to require a lifetime for its comprehensive understanding. Such were the arguments at best when eyes could be lifted from the workaday demands of an active career. Yet, as visiting commissioners saw clearly enough from time to time, great gain flowed from visits of liaison and comparative study. No territory or people was so isolated, nor its problems so peculiar, that something of general interest and overall value might not be learned from it.

Central Africa, as has been suggested before, provides perhaps the clearest recent example of a failure to bridge sufficiently the traditional gulfs in governmental organization. The Zambesi was a frontier both in Whitehall and in Africa. Profound mutual ignorance divided civil servants in London and administrative officers in Central Africa. Since 1923 the paths of organization had diverged increasingly between the “Colonial Office” territories of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the “Dominions Office” territory of Southern Rhodesia. The Limpopo also supplied too great a divide between neighbouring countries, part of the same Commonwealth. The instructive details of the lessons of South Africa were a closed book to almost all in Whitehall and in the Central African territories; while the remoter lands of West Africa were scarcely encompassed in comparative thought. Desperately, and during its days of dissolution, the Central Africa Office referred to above was created in London to deal with the affairs of the Federation and of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland. But the mobilization of all available resources, British, Commonwealth, Colonial and Foreign, was required in the early 1950’s, the years of decision, not in the 1960’s, the years of dissolution. This was pointed out plainly at the time, chiefly by the few students of recent African history and international affairs in the universities of Britain and the Commonwealth; but politicians and career administrators were on the whole not only unheedful, but determined that particular personal convictions should prevail.

It is impossible to assess in any detail the damage wrought by particular political and constitutional acts. And, as we have remarked before, the student who is critical of enactments such as the South Africa Act of 1909 or the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland Order in Council of 1953, sometimes to the point of tracing many subsequent major ills to them, must be prepared
always to weight the evidence against his point of view and to take note of the undoubted gains. But there can be little doubt that the granting of majority powers to the minority of whites resident in the Central African territories in 1953, in the face of virtually unanimous African opposition, was a most grievous blow to the prospects of inter-racial partnership in Africa and throughout the new, self-consciously multi-racial Commonwealth which was launched effectively in 1947, when India and Pakistan became full members. Had there been any substantial initiative after 1953 to reveal a readiness to work towards internal partnership as rapidly as possible and to draw on the resources of the wider Commonwealth, including at least a quota of co-operation from the independent Asian and African member nations, the situation might have been saved, though even that must be doubtful, given the vehemence of the African protest against the imposition of federation. But only during the death throes of the Federation, and as a device to try to prevent a hasty declaration of independence by the Rhodesia Front Government in Southern Rhodesia, was the principle of consulting the multi-racial Commonwealth invoked by the United Kingdom Government.

Yet, if Britain's insistence on the need to consult the wider Commonwealth over the case of Southern Rhodesia may be taken as a precedent, as the initiation of an important new general procedure, it could prove of great long-term benefit. What has been lacking in the Commonwealth since 1947 is a readiness to define the principles and methods which are required to give coherence and assure consistency and continuity. Given British ways of thinking and behaving, in government as in every other sphere, it is wholly understandable that an experimental period should have been allowed, albeit sometimes unconsciously, to test empirically the reality of the multi-racial Commonwealth before seeking to define any principles which might be held to govern relationships. But no association can continue indefinitely without damage unless there is some agreed consensus, some framework to ensure "expectability", to use a valuable word of Sir Ernest Barker's.

The "Anglo-Saxon Commonwealth" of Great Britain and the Dominions possessed the Statute of Westminster, 1931, as well as important preparatory declarations such as that of the Imperial Conference of 1926, which emphasized the principles of Dominion autonomy and equality in allegiance to the Crown. And it is directly relevant to the argument for new, comprehensive definitions for the
Commonwealth to acknowledge that the primary pressures for the declaration and enactment of the 1925–31 principles came from the non-English elements of the Commonwealth—the Irish, the French-Canadians and the Afrikaners. “European” by “race”, they were more conscious of certain important differences in their “cultural” heritage which they wished to preserve within the overall context of Commonwealth unity.

If this lesson from earlier Commonwealth experience had been understood more widely, especially the priority of “cultural” or “national” feelings over the purely “racial” or “colour” factors, there would have been better preparation for the emergence of the so-called “multi-racial” Commonwealth between 1947 and 1957–64. The Irish of the Twenty-Six Counties, the Quebecois, the Afrikaner nationalists made plain early enough that preference for the widest and frankest consultation as well as for the principle of republicanism which was insisted upon later by India, Ghana and Nigeria in more recent times. In numerous ways also these earlier “colonial nationalisms” served as valuable portents of the adjustments which would have to be considered or made if the association were to take the strain of the complete transformation from empire to commonwealth. As it happened, few frank discussions took place and no clear signposts were erected and South African governments, for example, were allowed for far too many years to believe that apartheid could be compatible with Commonwealth membership. Other member nations also in recent years have received wholly contradictory indications of British and other attitudes towards their suppression of the independence and freedom of their judiciaries, political parties, the Press, the universities, religious organizations and individuals.

An exceptional opportunity to give leadership towards the explicit clarification of a concept fundamental to the new Commonwealth was lost when the United Kingdom, between 1951 and 1953, rejected the repeated suggestion that the objective of “partnership” should be defined in the case of British Central Africa. The related suggestion that African, Asian and other member nations be associated with the formulation of an acceptable definition therefore fell away. The use of the word “partnership” in the preamble to the constitution of a new political association within the Commonwealth, especially one located between apartheid-governed South Africa and Mau Mau-stricken Kenya, offered a major challenge to the intellectual resources and combined
experience of all members, not least the new members facing problems comparable to those of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland.

But definitions were held to be "un-British" and more apposite to "foreign" international associations like the United Nations. No great depth of thought accompanied such vague dismissal, but it possessed sufficient plausibility to ensure acceptance among well-placed politicians and journalists. In one sense, namely that of evading trouble, the avoidance of definition may be counted to have proved beneficial to the Commonwealth, since it was left to the United Nations both to venture upon definitions and to handle the several subsequent international conflicts, including sharp controversy between Commonwealth countries. Thus India's recurrent charges against South Africa from 1946 over the treatment of the Indian-South African minority, and associated questions, were fought out in the forum of the United Nations, not the Commonwealth of Nations. The issue of the South-West African mandate, and more recently that of Southern Rhodesia, have likewise been given first prominence within the world association, not the more intimate body of the Commonwealth. Certainly the existence of the Charter of the United Nations, more of a constitution than anything available to the Commonwealth, and detailed statements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declarations on Race have prompted and facilitated world debate and action. Only if the avoidance of debate in pursuit of the lowest common denominator of cohesion is thought preferable will the continuing absence of defined procedures and principles in the Commonwealth be understandable.

Such debate and action have point and purpose, stimulus and challenge, which in the long run are likely to prove beneficial to the United Nations Organization and to mankind. The first short decades of United Nations' existence have certainly witnessed sustained attacks against the Western nations and European peoples; but increasingly there have been signs of a readiness to apply more widely, including within the Afro-Asian world, tests hitherto applied exclusively to the conduct of Western powers. This trend is likely to gather momentum as more and more states and peoples gain experience and sophistication through increased participation in regional and international assemblies.

The Indo-Chinese conflict, the Indonesian-Malaysian confrontation, the cleavages between the "Casablanca" and "Monrovia" groupings in Africa are but early manifestations of encounters
which have provoked reflection and dialogue of the kind required if headway is to be made towards the eradication of double standards and towards better world organization and production. The shirking of definition and open argument which is possible, perhaps even desirable, within a country like Britain is scarcely helpful in the international context, given the diversity of peoples and interests which exists throughout the world. Only delusion at high levels encourages facile optimism such as that which governed the British advocates of appeasement in the thirties, or that which so misled those who naively believed in de Gaulle’s readiness either to accept, or to be manœuvred into accepting, British entry into the Common Market in 1963.

The Commonwealth is a microcosm of the United Nations, and the principles and methods devised for the world organization, many of them by British thinkers, are applicable also to the more restricted association. Self-deception over this matter has perhaps been encouraged by the excessive and superficial use of terms such as “family”, “club” and the like to describe the Commonwealth. Unnecessarily extravagant claims have been made also about the importance of the Crown as a result of the acceptance by all members of the Queen’s headship of the Commonwealth. Proper emphasis must be given to important unifying elements, notably a person and symbol of the quality and distinction of the Queen and Crown, but they are not served by the misleading glossing over of significant differences in attitude between peoples of the different realms and republics which now compose the Commonwealth. African citizens of the Commonwealth, like Asians, French-Canadians, Afrikaners and Irish before them, have been embarrassed or irritated by the repeated assumption that they must feel precisely the same personal and national loyalties as are felt by natives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Greater emphasis on considered principle, less on blind allegiance, would have helped.

Thus, if the Commonwealth is to survive and to fulfil its potential as one principal means of bridging the continents and sharing between peoples important values and institutions of universal merit, then a greater readiness to be explicit about the definition of objectives and procedures seems essential. There need be a minimum of sanction or penalty and a “family” readiness to lean wholeheartedly towards assisting those in difficulty or default to return to the paths of open democracy and justice if and when
they deviate from them. But the attainment of worthy ends is scarcely likely unless those ends are specified in plain language, and acceptable methods of proceeding towards them are made equally clear.

The new states of Commonwealth Africa have made evident their own desire for a declaration of Commonwealth principles or objectives. Time and again in every university of British origin in independent Africa, and elsewhere at unofficial conferences, attacks have been made on unsatisfactory vaguenesses in Commonwealth relations. Frequently the attacks have come from those who have in fact exploited vagueness to their own ends, but most critics have shown a readiness to face the fact that definition can be a two-edged weapon and that principles, whether of law or custom, must possess that generality of incidence which alone can make for equity and acceptability. In other words, thoughtful Africans concerned for their countries' future are eager to reject double standards. Many insist that mature nationhood and worthy political systems can come only from the application to their own leaders, political parties, courts and other institutions of the criteria of conduct which they formerly expected and demanded from Western administrations during the colonial era.

In the Organization of African Unity, formed in 1963, member nations of the Commonwealth are prominent and it is through them that important values and institutions which stem from Britain, and have been absorbed into an Africo-British synthesis, can best be transmitted to the African continent as a whole. Several distinguished civil servants from the Sudan, Ghana and Nigeria have demonstrated already in Pan-African contexts not only their personal quality but the general merit inherent in the British system of civil service training and conduct. The same is true of policemen and soldiers, especially where the depth of training and experience has been sufficient to result in the firm acceptance by the individual of particular values and practices of police and military behaviour, above all a sense of personal responsibility and a trust in one's fellows which encourages the taking of initiative when necessary.

In parliamentary-type debate, as at councils of the Organization for African Unity or general meetings of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, ministerial and other representatives from Commonwealth African countries have likewise shown certain distinctive and desirable qualities, such as practicality, economy and responsibility, which again reflect an important
conjoint, Africa–British tradition. At more junior level, as at Pan-African student conferences, assumptions about orderly procedure, relevance, rules of debate, have manifested themselves to the general benefit. African judges, magistrates and prosecutors from Commonwealth Africa have enjoyed regrettably limited opportunities outside their own countries to reveal their important distinctive qualities, but independent Pan–Africa already has had cause in several areas to remark and admire the independence and integrity of individual judicial officers, and the soundness of the principles by which they consciously regulate their behaviour and that of their courts.

No cultural chauvinism is advocated for Commonwealth African countries in their relations with independent Africa. The merits of other Eurafrikan syntheses are recognized and welcomed. But no serious student with experience of comparative field study should undervalue the particular merits of Africa–British qualities nor blind himself to Africa’s urgent need for more men and women like them, and for the wider adoption throughout Africa of the codes or norms by which they operate. Since the rejection of Britain by the Common Market there has been evidence of a readiness even on the part of hitherto unsympathetic Britons to give greater priority to the strengthening of Commonwealth links and established British–African associations. But, to be effective, very much more must be attempted and performed. Through the bridgeheads available to Britain in Commonwealth African states, and in countries still linked closely with the United Kingdom—for example the Sudan and South Africa—Britain can continue to offer her special “gifts”. If accepted, there can be confident expectation of mutual reward both in the long term and the short term, though the proper emphasis should perhaps be on generations rather than decades, on decades rather than years.

The publication of the Plowden report necessitates the insertion of a brief additional comment at this point. If acted upon vigorously and in the right spirit it could mark a significant turning point. In the course of an able analysis the need is recognized to achieve the optimum mobilization of Britain’s resources of knowledge and experience in the service of more effective overseas policy. The importance of removing or reducing domestic departmental barriers is stressed, especially those between the Foreign and Commonwealth Offices. A single diplomatic service is recommended with interchangeable representation. It is proposed, however, for the
immediate future at any rate, to continue with a Commonwealth as well as a Foreign Minister, the view being taken that there is a sufficiently distinctive relationship with Commonwealth countries to warrant two Ministries. It was also believed that overseas Commonwealth sentiment would prefer the preservation in London of a special minister. Whether this last assumption is correct is difficult to determine until there are sufficient considered reactions from members of the Commonwealth, though there is a view that rather than a single special Commonwealth Ministry in London there should be direct and closer relations between ministers and civil servants in every department of state—finance, education, defence, agriculture and fisheries—and their opposite members in New Delhi, Canberra, Wellington, Montreal, Lagos and the other capitals.

The important thing is that the Plowden report, wholly correct in its essential diagnosis, should not be allowed to deepen division and to damage both foreign and Commonwealth policy. The danger was made manifest by a letter in The Times of 2 March 1964 from Lord Gladwyn, prominent in the Britain in Europe movement, who after an unexceptional general comment on the Plowden report proceeded to draw a false distinction between Commonwealth and other countries by positing, in emotional words, a choice for Britain between "France" and "Zanzibar". If the debate is to be conducted in such terms by experienced ex-ambassadors there can be little hope of achieving the necessary domestic re-organization and inter-departmental co-operation in the interests of Britain.

Each of Britain's international associations—European, trans-Atlantic, Commonwealth and United Nations—are complementary. By accident of recent history, the Commonwealth and trans-Atlantic alliances have involved Britain in deepening comradeship of a specially intimate kind. The cemeteries in the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in France and North and East Africa, and countless other corners of the world, including United Nations cemeteries in Korea and those everywhere over which fly the flags of the United States and Britain, provide but one simple proof of this inescapable fact as well as perennial reminders of basic values held in common. As Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper has reminded us, national history cannot be repudiated save with
moral damage.* Zanzibar, East Africa, and other parts of the Commonwealth may at times be politically and economically inconvenient, but some recognition of historical responsibility by Britain is imperative.

There is fortunately no need for Britain either to seek to abandon responsibility or to repudiate her imperial past. There are no inherent incompatibilities between Britain's four principal international associations and her long-term goal of a politically united mankind, the overall objective stated by Sir Julian Huxley and other British thinkers who have devoted much of themselves to the creation and strengthening of the United Nations. Whether Britain might most effectively promote international peace and security by strengthening European regionalism, or assisting African unity or development, or by extending North Atlantic co-operation is impossible to determine; also such activities are consistent with United Nations purposes as laid down in the Charter. So also is active support for the Commonwealth, which we have described already as a microcosm of the United Nations and which might properly be seen also as it prototype or nucleus since so many of the ideals and principles expressed in the Charter, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Trusteeship Agreements, and in the constitutions of the several United Nations regional economic development associations, and other agencies, owe much to British thought and practice.

Yet while it is both right and necessary to remind ourselves of British contributions to the United Nations, the fourth of Britain's major international associations, it would be disingenuous to pretend to any substantial warmth for the political aspects of the United Nations on the part of Britain. The genius of individual Britons has given depth to its philosophy of world unity, and the ability and character of others have added quality to a wide range of specialized operations. In education, food and agriculture, world health, irrigation, refugee and rehabilitation work, the checking of slavery and forced labour, British men and women have won praise. Their intellectual distinction, sense of responsibility and determined achievement have repeatedly given the lie to those who have alleged that only the less competent and unwanted of the United Kingdom have opted for international service. For the practical organization

* The point was made with reference to the holding of a war crimes trial by the West German Federal Government, but it has general applicability.
of aid in times of disaster or of task forces in emergencies British individuals have earned high reputations. In the lobbies and corridors beyond the chamber of the Security Council and the hall of the General Assembly the official, political representatives of Britain are also held in regard for practical wisdom, straight dealing and a genuine liberalism. There is nevertheless not only an overall attitude of cool correctness on the part of the United Kingdom towards the United Nations, but an undeniable ambivalence in the United Nations' attitude towards Britain.

The reasons for Britain's difficulties with the United Nations are not difficult to discover. Put simply Britain is a "have" nation of long standing with so deep a history of complicated relationships as a "great power" throughout the world that she has accumulated substantial entries on both sides of her national accounts—moral, social, economic and political. Nor have the negative entries lacked British initiation. Frequently the force and detail of weighty criticisms have derived from British originators possessing easy access to official and other evidence and to all the means of open inquiry and exposure available in a free society. Voluntary associations such as the Movement for Colonial Freedom have had indefatigable members of Parliament, like Mr. Fenner Brockway,* to press remorselessly for detailed answers to parliamentary questions. Newspapers, books and journals have accumulated and presented strong criticisms, and the radio and television programmes have permitted the expression of strong condemnations of the Government and of national policy. University teachers and research workers likewise have enjoyed substantial freedom of inquiry and criticism; their colleagues in the churches also. Britons overseas have insisted upon comparable freedom. In the earliest days of the Cape Colony editors Fairbairn and Pringle withstood an autocratic governor hostile to Press freedom; in more recent time individuals like the late J. D. Rheinallt Jones, Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations, have produced voluminous documentation, all of "decimal-point accuracy", on the condition of the African, Coloured and Indian populations of South Africa.

Such evidence has been seized upon and used to maximum effect by "have not" nations and underprivileged peoples in a United Nations which is most to be distinguished from the League of Nations by the majority representation which it provides for what Trygve Lie called the "rising non-European nations of the world".

* Now Lord Brockway.
Understandably there have been few ethical misgivings about launching strong attacks based on evidence supplied by self-critical nations themselves, or by groups from within them. Rather has there been delight at the nature and quality of the evidence provided. The day may arrive when other nations choose to emulate the British example of allowing substantial freedom to those who attack their own official overseas policy, or the treatment of minority groups or underprivileged peoples within their own countries, but the time is not yet.

Given the fact that "anti-colonialism" is the contemporary rallying cry for the overwhelming majority of members of the United Nations, it is not surprising that Britain has been a butt of criticism since 1946. In Africa criticism has focused on Britain's exercise of international trusteeship in respect of Tanganyika, British Togoland and the British Cameroons; the character of her administration of her non-self-governing territories; Britain's reluctance to join in attacks on South Africa over apartheid, South-West Africa and the Union's treatment of her Indian minority; and, more recently, her refusal to admit that internal events in Southern Rhodesia offer a threat to international peace and security. To each charge under these heads Britain has a reasoned answer. In many instances her record is good and has won praise, as from certain impartial visiting missions to the Trust Territories.

In the field of direct international politics, as distinct from more administrative or historic responsibilities, Suez and the Congo stand out as major African actions involving Britain which have punctuated the first twenty years of United Nations existence. The first proved disastrous to Britain's position in the Middle East. It also damaged her relations with the United States, with many members of the Commonwealth, and with the United Nations. Relations with France, principal ally in the Suez venture, were also adversely affected by the halting of operations. France for her part thereafter abstained from the United Nations' Congo operation by refusing to contribute to either expenses or forces. In other ways she sought with Gallic logic to reduce to a minimum her obligations to a world organization whose principles and methods seemed incapable of achieving the declared ends of international peace, security and justice in a manner consonant with French interpretations. Britain's more pragmatic leaders adopted no such clear-cut position after Suez and the United Kingdom in due course accepted her measure of responsibility for assisting the United Nations in
the attempts to repair the Congo breakdown. Whether, in the eyes of the world, Britain emerged with credit from the Congo, is doubtful. Commonwealth African policemen and soldiers from Nigeria and Ghana, together with British officers, won praise for their good discipline and competence. Individual representatives also earned good reputations. But as is perhaps made most clear in Dr. Conor Cruise O’Brien’s *To Katanga and Back*, there were doubts as to the United Kingdom Government’s single-minded support for United Nations policy, notably in respect of the forceful subjugation of President Tshombe’s régime to the authority of the central government in Leopoldville.

We said above that Britain has answers to criticisms of her administration of Trust Territories and to other charges. She also has a case to present over Suez and the Congo. Lord Avon’s memoirs and other documents which have been published recently assist understanding of Suez. The more recent Congo operation is also being presented in clearer perspective.* It is not to be expected, however, that the majority of the members of the United Nations in their present mood will accept the British official versions. Still less is the majority likely to prove responsive to *tu quoque* replies to charges, no matter how well justified or appropriate they might be. As in the case of the multi-racial Commonwealth it must be accepted that double standards do exist and that the stronger criticism is likely to be the lot of the United Kingdom for years ahead.

More important, however, is the development throughout the United Kingdom of a progressively more constructive attitude towards the United Nations. This is essential for world peace. It is equally necessary if Britain’s uncompleted task in Africa is to be discharged more satisfactorily. The United Nations may not have the highest priority in Britain’s conception of associations or alliances but it must be fostered alongside each of the others. European continental *apartheid* is impossible, the isolation of wider “white” ethnic associations equally so. Conceptions of Pan-European solidarity may be necessary to reassure certain elements who are anxiously aware of the minority position in the world of “Europeans” or “Caucasians” or “whites”. And it is a fact to be taken into account that people who think defensively in that way appear to be either increasing in number or strengthening in organization and publication, in North America and Europe today,

side by side with “Black Muslim” and other militant “anti-white”
racial societies. Through the Commonwealth of Nations and other
historic links Britain is provided with abundant bridges to other
races and cultures overseas, almost all of whom share with her
national memories of mutual trust and confidence in circumstances
both adverse and propitious. The partially built Commonwealth
must be completed and strengthened over future decades. It can-
not, however, be an end in itself but must serve rather as one of the
surest means of advance to an eventual stronger world unity.

Neither the improvement of Britain's relations with the United
Nations nor the reform of the organization itself will be achieved
easily or in short term. Yet both must be attempted without respite
at official and unofficial levels. Internally, within Britain, efforts
must continue to reduce damaging separations between voluntary
bodies such as the United Nations Associations and the various
Commonwealth Societies. The latter can be offensively nationalistic
or jingoistic, the former perversely blind to the reality and value of
the Commonwealth. But comparatively little often needs to be done
by way of leadership and education to bring home to those inclined
to support the one at the expense of the other that what they hold
in common far outweighs any difference.

At official level Britain must not seek to improve relations with
the majority of the United Nations at the expense of important
principles. Responsible membership requires a readiness to be un-
popular and to take issue with the most materially powerful nations
over fundamental questions. The defence of constitutionalism
even on behalf of deservedly unpopular governments is an impor-
tant act of maturity. So also is the insistence that major powers meet
their financial obligations or suffer the penalty prescribed for de-
faulters. Little of worth can be achieved by an organization if
members are allowed either to exploit their majority position at the
expense of proper procedure, or to use their might to exert power
without responsibility or a sense of financial obligation.

If the United Nations can succeed in strengthening itself in the
ways which have been indicated it can have a substantial beneficial
influence in Africa. A constructive administrative achievement can
be claimed already for the Trusteeship division. Its work in pre-
paring Italian Somaliland for self-government as well as its super-
vision of British and French Trust Territories has on balance
proved satisfactory. The Economic Commission for Africa with
headquarters in Addis Ababa has also demonstrated its worth and
potential. Social as well as economic development has figured prominently in the plans of the principal officials, among whom there have been notable Sudanese and Ghanaian graduates from Oxford. In addition to valuable economic surveys of the continent conferences on education have been held. Health and community development also have received priority. Through technical cooperation in support of endeavours under the auspices of the United Nations Britain and other Western nations can make some of their most effective contributions to Africa.

On the political issues troubling independent Africa, notably the obstacles to national unity in all the states and the difficulties of regional unity, the United Nations might over time give effective and durable aid. It is difficult even for an analyst sympathetic to the United Nations to be enthusiastic about operations in the Congo. The imperfections are too obvious, though the simple yet fundamental gain of keeping the naked cold war away from Central Africa may be seen to dwarf all defects when the events of 1960–64 are reviewed in perspective. In neighbouring Rwanda and Burundi the political aspects of the United Nations appear to have supervened over the administrative, in that the trusteeship organization proved largely helpless when it became necessary to safeguard the lives and property of tens of thousands of Africans. Fears of charges of “neo-colonialism” prevented Belgium and other Western helpers from intervening to assist with the maintenance of law and order and the administration of justice by trained officers.

The events in the three Belgian successor states highlight in extreme form some of the political problems which might persist for generations in independent Africa. In the case of ex-British Africa we have suggested that a continuing close, though not exclusive, co-operation with Britain and other non-African Commonwealth countries might be specially helpful in contributing towards the eventual resolution of constitutional and minority problems. The many and varied Commonwealth countries offer a peculiarly rich record of experience ranging in time from the uniting of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to the contemporary difficulties of Cyprus, Malaysia and Ceylon. Knowledge of such experience could be brought also to the United Nations and there fused with other national and international experience of success and failure. But only through the deliberate shedding of prejudices, stereotypes or set positions will members of the United Nations be able to contribute constructively towards moral and practical
solutions of the problems of disunity which afflict Africa and much of the world.

In the cases of the Congo and Rwanda and Burundi many of the worst impulses were brought into play by the states who were most directly involved, including several of the newly independent African states. Ghana’s insistence on a Lumumbist-type centralism was unhelpful, Belgo-Rhodesian support for an independent Katanga under Tshombe equally so. The concomitant polarization of positions among and within other nations, not least Britain, over Congo and Rwanda and Burundi issues served to extend the damage. In addition to the distressing fact that tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children suffered death, famine and other disaster, the fundamental problems of the afflicted countries and peoples were hopelessly obscured by emotion and dogmatism. Only the acceptance of facts, whether inconvenient or not, and their rational appraisal are likely to assist the African states to cope with their minority and other problems. Studies such as Maquet’s The Premise of Inequality, an analysis of the Tutsi in Rwanda and their traditional relations with the Hutu, must be read with academic objectivity, not swept impatiently aside, and so also must works like Congo Tribes and Parties by Mary Douglas and David Biebuyck, which revealed the strength of tribal feeling in the Congo and showed its effect on voting behaviour.

No single policy conclusion can emerge from the study of such books, any more than from the important writings of Colin Legum on The Congo Disaster, and Patrice Lumumba, which also merit the closest attention. But a priori positions, national or personal, must be abandoned if ways towards unity are to be found by the African states. A readiness to consider awkward issues such as the position of minorities in the Ethiopian empire or the Sudan must be expressed in a detached, analytical manner if the United Nations is to serve its long-term purpose. Many subject or minority peoples on the eve of independence in Africa protested that local imperialism was as abhorrent, sometimes more hateful, than imperial rule from overseas. Their voices were inconvenient in the world-context of anti-colonialism and decolonization, but their continued pleadings must be given serious hearing in a largely decolonized world if the United Nations is to fulfil an important political role in the African continent. Britons who have fought fearlessly and consistently for the freedom of colonial peoples are best placed morally to give a lead to the United Nations in this direction.
Michael Scott, defender of the subject Indian minority in South Africa, critic of independent India’s treatment of the Naga, is an outstanding example. The issues are too important to allow false posturing: side by side with emphatic condemnations of apartheid in South Africa must go criticisms of oppression, discrimination and compulsory separation elsewhere. As with the Commonwealth of Nations so with the United Nations; though Britain must be prepared for a long era of double standards, she must at the same time be prepared always to point the way towards that ultimate single standard which alone can reflect the full and equal dignity of all mankind.

In conclusion we repeat that it is in partnership with other nations that Britain must work if she is to fulfil the tasks in Africa begun during the imperial past. This necessity is being driven home poignantly by immediately contemporary events. The death of Pandit Nehru has followed closely on the triumphant visit of Mr. Khrushchev to President Nasser’s Egypt in order to open the great Russian High Dam project on the Nile, a river whose hydrology and rational use has derived most from British research and the British presence during the past three generations. The Soviet Union has now made powerful entry into a zone from which it was ever a first principle of British diplomacy to keep Russia away. Mr. Nehru’s death, and the attendance at his funeral of Lord Mountbatten, last Viceroy of undivided India, first Governor-General of the Dominion of India, has evoked memories of the recent past, when the Indian army was at Britain’s call throughout the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The homage to Mr. Nehru on British television, radio and in the Press has referred frequently to Mahatma Gandhi, and such references have recalled the South Africa of Smuts, with whom Nehru as well as Gandhi had so many encounters and exchanges. Only a few hours before the announcement of Mr. Nehru’s death the television, radio and newspapers were focused on Sir Roy Welensky, visiting London in an aura of pathos on the occasion of the publication of his book denouncing Mr. Macmillan and the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Reports of Sir Milton Margai’s death in Sierra Leone seemed also in their way to mark the end of an epoch of Britain in West Africa.

The poignancy of such reflections should stimulate realistic appraisal by people in Britain of relations with Africa, but none of these recent events warrants pessimism or despair. Mr. Nehru’s
preservation of national unity and democracy in India for seventeen years is a constructive achievement which must be supported and everything done to strengthen British–Indian ties. Africa will benefit from such a development, not least through an increase in African–Indian trade, scholarships and other aid. We need not itemize the type of continuing co-operation and help which might best be supplied by Britain to West, Southern and Eastern Africa. Strong British bridgeheads exist in each zone and can be developed with mutual African–British benefit. And even in Egypt there is no need for defeatist pessimism. Apart from important if unpublicized facts such as the employment of the fleet of extra-powerful Rolls-Royce trucks which alone made it possible for the time schedule of the High Dam to be adhered to, the contribution of the Soviet Union to large-scale aid projects is to be welcomed in terms of a more equitable sharing of the burden of material assistance to underdeveloped countries. The Soviet leader's pronouncement in Egypt that “Arabism is not enough” might also have its long-term beneficial effects in reducing the sharpness of nationalism throughout the continent, even though it offers an urgent challenge to the West to intensify efforts to substitute for communism its own more valid universalist ethic.

That universal ethic, fundamental to the life and peace of Africa, has been threatened and tested in the upsurge of African, Afrikaner and Arab nationalism since 1945. New men, bent on sweeping away the past, have come to replace the older leaders. Yet there was good as well as evil in the past and it is important for Africa and the world that the good is preserved. It is to the newer generation of leaders, who will succeed the present ethnocentric nationalists and nostalgic imperialists, that we must look to achieve the necessary syntheses of the best of African and other thought and tradition so that the urgent tasks of social and economic development can be completed. John F. Kennedy's assassination tragically removed from the world a younger leader who more than any other bridged the generations and, as a child of the idealism of the 1939–45 war, including its powerful non-racist idealism, offered a new and more hopeful prospect to the world.

During President Kennedy's leadership it seemed that Britain was to be relieved finally by the United States of the role of moral top-weight in the handicap steeplechase of ceaseless international competition. To many in Britain who believed that their country had been asked for too long, like the gallant horse Mill
House, to make extravagant concessions to all fellow-runners the prospect of relief was not unwelcome. But President Kennedy's sudden death, like that of Hugh Gaitskell, drove home in tragic fashion the democratic truth of the danger of over-reliance on one leader, even one nation, in the conduct of world affairs and in the fulfilment of international responsibilities. Partnership, with its shared risks and rewards, supplies the essence of democracy, partnership between nations as well as between groups of individuals within each nation. Every possible person must be involved in some conscious way in the processes of partnership if the harsh and forbidding inequalities of the modern world are to be removed and international peace and security are to be assured.

It was John Stuart Mill once more who observed that “the worth of a State in the long run is the worth of the individuals composing it”. In the context of British-African relationships there are daily reminders of the accuracy of this truism. In Britain there are individuals on every hand who possess an affection and respect for the African men and women whom they have come to know through the numerous contacts which the opportunities of their lifetimes, both long and short, have afforded them.* Up and down Britain there are those who, whether or not they have lived in Africa, welcome to their homes, common-rooms, laboratories and workshops African friends and colleagues. A meal and musical recital in a simple and gracious North Oxford home count as much as a Guildhall banquet. In their voluntary associations British men and women from all backgrounds devote long hours of hard work to vital unofficial aid to Africa.

Africans bring much of value to Britain—music, poetry and art, and not least a zest and optimism and a deep sense of the vital rhythm and warmth of human relations. The mutual trust and confidence between individuals on which international relations ultimately rest makes it essential to keep in view the African contribution to Britain. Yet from the standpoint of England it is fitting to end by recalling the rich variety of the individuals who continue to serve in Africa now that the proconsuls have withdrawn. There are talented ambassadors and able directors of British

* Colleagues in African studies in West Germany have directed attention to the importance of such contacts. There are, significantly, still a few older German-speaking Africans from the former German colonies who visit Germany, but the interruption of relations between 1918 and 1948 has left it to the West German Federal Republic to develop links anew.
Council agencies and an impressive array of university teachers and international civil servants performing important work in the capitals of Africa. But alone in a remote government hospital in poverty-stricken Northern Ghana will be found a nursing sister from County Durham serving with skilled matter-of-fact compassion African children stricken with diseases of malnutrition. Matron, theatre-sister, sister-tutor and friend, she performs tasks more demanding and varied in scope than were ever conceived in her large training hospital at home. She, and a young Englishman running single-handed a refugee camp in Uganda, are other less obvious representatives of the United Kingdom. As Pandit Nehru said, of the Commonwealth, it is such relationships in the aggregate which bring to an embittered world “their touch of healing”.