

Ghana

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BRITISH DOCUMENTS ON THE END OF EMPIRE

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

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Series B Volume 1

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# Ghana

Editor  
RICHARD RATHBONE

Part II  
1952-1957

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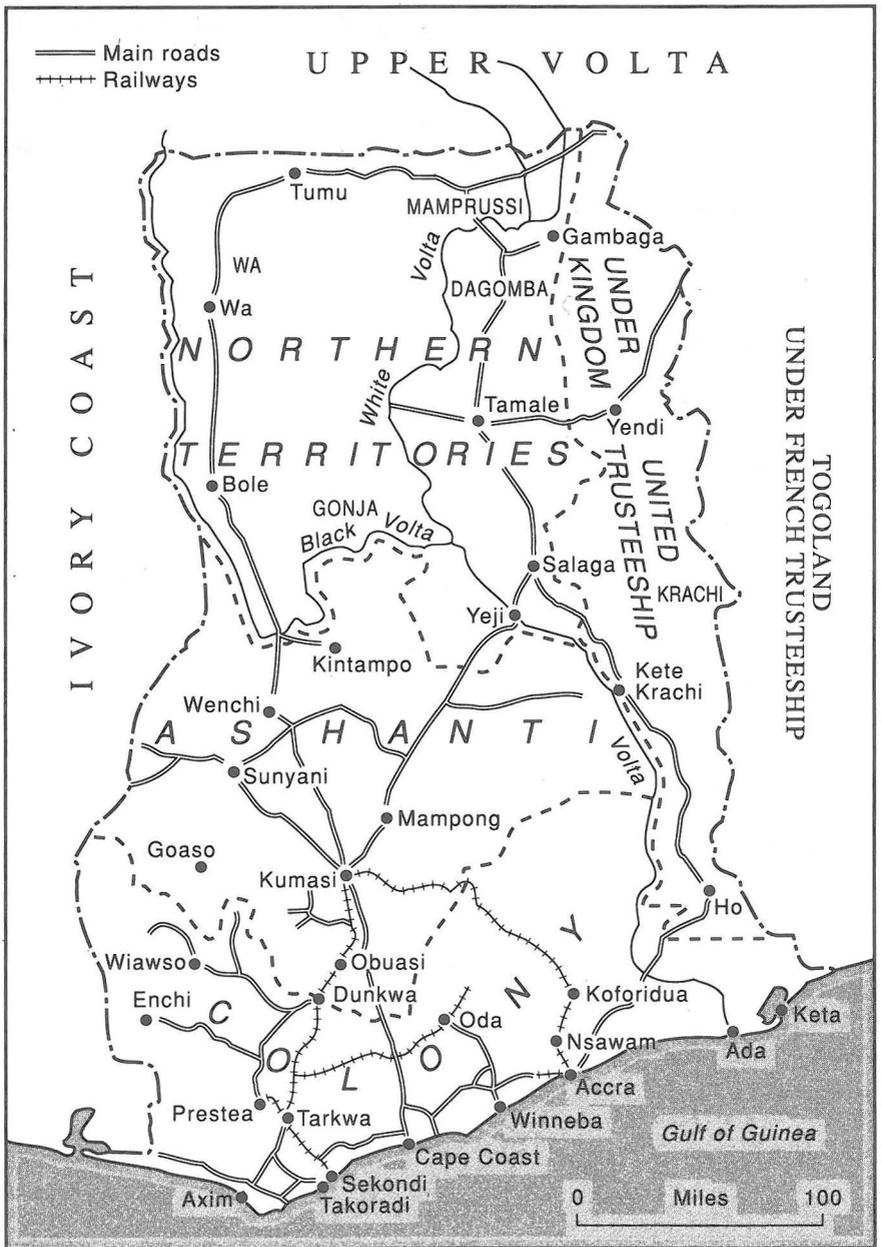
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## Ghana

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## Abbreviations: Part II

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AA	anti-aircraft
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BD	Bachelor of Divinity
BDEEP	British Documents on the End of Empire Project
CAS	Colonial Administrative Service
CCTA	Council for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara
CDC	Colonial Development Corporation
CDFC	Commonwealth Development Finance Company
CD(&)W	Colonial Development and Welfare (Act)
C-in-C	commander-in-chief
CMB	Cocoa Marketing Board
CO	Colonial Office
Col	Colonial
Con	Conservative (Party)
Constn	constitution
Corrupt gp	Corrupt group, undeciphered word or words in telegram
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CPC	Cocoa Purchasing Company/Colonial Policy Committee
CPP	Convention People's Party
CR and E	Commonwealth Relations and Economic
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
D/O	demi-official
DO	Dominions Office
DPhil	Doctor of Philosophy
Ex Co	Executive Council
FBI	Federation of British Industries

FO	Foreign Office
GAP	Ghana Action Party
GCARPS	Gold Coast Aboriginal Rights Protection Society
GCP	Ghana Congress Party
GCTUC	Gold Coast Trades Union Congress
GOC	general officer commanding
GOC-in-C	general officer commanding-in-chief
gov	governor
gov-gen	governor-general
govt	government
GNP	Ghana National Party
GTUC	Ghana Trades Union Congress
HE	His Excellency
HM	His/Her Majesty
HMG	His/Her Majesty's Government
HMOC	Her Majesty's Oversea Civil Service
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
H of C	House of Commons
<i>H of C Debs</i>	<i>House of Commons Debates</i> (Hansard)
IBRD	International Bank Research Division
ICFTU	International Council/Conference of Trades Unions
ICI	Imperial Chemical Industries
ICS	Indian Civil Service
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JPC	Joint Provincial Council
KBE	Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire
KCIE	Knight Commander of the Indian Empire
KCMG	Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George
KCSI	Knight Commander of the Star of India
KG	Knight of the Order of the Garter
Kt	Knight Bachelor
LA	Legislative Assembly

Lab	Labour (Party)
LIC	Local Intelligence Committee
LLB	Bachelor of Laws
LLD	Doctor of Laws
LSE	London School of Economics (and Political Science)
MA	Master of Arts
MAP	Muslim Association Party
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
MLA	member of Legislative Assembly
MP	member of parliament
MSc	Master of Science
MSEduc	Master of Science in Education
NCO	non-commissioned officer
NLM	National Liberation Movement
NPP	Northern People's Party
NT	Northern Territories
OAG	officer administering the government
OEEC	Overseas European Economic Co-operation
OXON	of Oxford
RNVR	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
RWAFF	Royal West African Frontier Force
SG	self-governing
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe
S of S	secretary of state
STB	<i>Sacrae Theologiae Bachelor</i> (Bachelor of Sacred Theology)
tel	telegram
TU	trade union
UK	United Kingdom
UKIO	United Kingdom Information Office (Gold Coast)
UKSLS	United Kingdom Services Liason Staff
UN(O)	United Nations (Organisation)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

US(A)	United States (of America)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VRP	Volta River project
WFTU	World Federation of Trades Unions
WO	War Office

# Principal Holders of Offices 1952–1957: Part II

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## UNITED KINGDOM

### 1. *Ministers in the Conservative governments to March 1957*

(a) *Prime minister* (Sir) Winston Churchill (KG 24 Apr 1953)  
(26 Oct 1951)  
Sir Anthony Eden (6 Apr 1955)  
Mr M H Macmillan (13 Jan 1957)

(b) *Colonial Office*

Secretary of state

Mr O Lyttelton (27 Oct 1951)  
Mr A T Lennox-Boyd (28 July 1954)

Minister of state

Mr H L D'A Hopkinson (7 May 1952)  
Mr J H Hare (20 Dec 1955)  
Mr J S Maclay (18 Oct 1956)  
Earl of Perth (17 Jan 1957)

Parliamentary under-secretary  
of state

Earl of Munster (5 Nov 1951)  
Lord Lloyd (18 Oct 1954)  
Mr J D Profumo (19 Jan 1957)

(c) *Commonwealth Relations Office*

Secretary of state

Marquess of Salisbury (12 Mar 1952)  
Viscount Swinton (24 Nov 1952)  
Earl of Home (7 Apr 1955)

Parliamentary under-secretary  
of state

Mr J G Foster (3 Nov 1951)  
Mr A D Dodds-Parker (18 Oct 1954)  
Mr A H P Noble (20 Dec 1955)  
Lord John Hope (9 Nov 1956)  
Mr C J M Alport (18 Jan 1957)

### 2. *Civil servants*

(a) *Secretary to the Cabinet*

Sir Norman Brook (1947–1962)

(b) *Colonial Office*

(i) Permanent under-secretary  
of state

Sir Thomas Lloyd (1947–1956)  
Sir John Macpherson (1956–1959)

(ii) Deputy under-secretary of state	Sir Charles Jeffries (1947–1956) Sir Hilton Poynton (1948–1959) Sir John Martin (1956–1965) } joint
(iii) Assistant under-secretary of state, responsible for the Africa Division and, from 1955, the West Africa Department <sup>1</sup>	W L Gorell Barnes (Africa, 1952–1954) C G Eastwood (West Africa, 1955–1961)
(iv) Assistant secretary, head of West Africa Department, West Africa Department 'B' from 1954	T B Williamson (West Africa, 1952–1953) R J Vile (West Africa 'B', 1954–1956) J S Bennett (West Africa 'B', 1956–1957)
(c) <i>Commonwealth Relations Office</i>	
(i) Permanent under-secretary of state	Sir Percivale Liesching (1949–1955) Sir Gilbert Laithwaite (1955–1959)
(ii) Deputy under-secretary of state	(Sir) Saville Garner, (KCMG 1954) (1953– 1956) (Sir) Henry Lintott (KCMG 1957) (1956– 1958)
(iii) Assistant under-secretary of state	R R Sedgwick (1949–1954) A F Morley (1954–1956) H A F Rumbold (1954–1958) I M R Maclennan (1955–1957) A W Snelling (1955–1959)

## GOLD COAST

1. <i>Governor</i>	Sir Charles Arden-Clarke
2. <i>Cabinet (from Sept 1952)</i>	
President	Sir Charles Arden-Clarke
Prime minister and minister of development	Dr K Nkrumah
Chief secretary and minister of defence and external affairs	(Sir) Reginald Saloway (KBE 1954) E Norton-Jones (from Dec 1953)
Minister of finance	R P Armitage K C Tours (from Feb 1954)
Minister of justice and attorney-general	P F Branigan

<sup>1</sup> See p. xxxii–xxxiii of the editor's introduction in part I of the volume for an explanation of departmental responsibilities at the levels of assistant under-secretary of state and assistant secretary.

Minister of education and social welfare	K Botsio
Minister of agriculture and natural resources	A Casely-Hayford
Minister of commerce, industry and mines	K A Gbedemah
Minister of communications and works	J A Braimah K Botsio (from Nov 1953)
Minister of health and labour	T Hutton Mills
Minister of health	T Hutton Mills (from Oct 1952)
Minister of labour	A E Inkumsah (from Oct 1952)
Minister of housing and local government	E O Asafu-Adjaye
Minister without portfolio	Dr Ansah Koi (resigned Oct 1952)

### 3. *Cabinet (from June 1954)*

Prime minister	Dr K Nkrumah
Minister of state	K Botsio Ako Adjei (from May 1956)
Minister of finance	K A Gbedemah
Minister of the interior	A Casely-Hayford Ako Adjei (from May 1956)
Minister of local government	E O Asafu-Adjaye A Ofori-Atta (from May 1956)
Minister of education	J H Allassani J B Erzuah (from June 1956)
Minister of agriculture	J E Jantuah B Yeboah-Afari (from June 1956)
Minister of works	N A Welbeck
Minister of communications	A Ofori-Atta A Casely-Hayford (from May 1956)
Minister of trade and labour	Ako Adjei E O Asafu-Adjaye (from May 1956)
Minister of health	Imoru Egala J Allassani (from June 1956)
Minister without portfolio	L R Abavana (from June 1956)

4. *Deputy governor and secretary for defence* (Sir) Gordon Hadow (1954-1957)

5. <i>Secretary to the prime minister and to the Cabinet</i>	D A Chapman (1954-1957)
6. <i>Economic adviser to the minister of finance</i>	K C Tours (1954-1957)
7. <i>Adviser to the governor on external affairs</i>	F E Cumming-Bruce (1955-1957)
8. <i>Secretary for external affairs</i>	A L Adu (1955-1957)
9. <i>Chief regional officers</i>	
Colony <sup>2</sup>	A J Loveridge (1950-1953)
Ashanti	W H Beeton (1952-1954) A J Loveridge (1954-1955) A C Russell (1955-1957)
Northern Territories	G N Burden (1952-1953) S Macdonald-Smith (1954-1957)
Trans-Volta Togoland	G E Sinclair (1953-1955) T A Mead (1955-1957)

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<sup>2</sup> In November 1953, the Colony was divided into an Eastern Region and a Western Region, each under a commissioner; the Accra Region was placed under a senior government agent.

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**119** CO 554/371, no 31

24 Sept 1952

**[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes reporting his discussions with Dr Nkrumah on future prospects**

I think it is time I gave you some account of the lines on which we have been thinking, and working, in the matter of further constitutional change since the Secretary of State's visit in June,<sup>1</sup> and a brief appreciation of the future prospects in this field.

You will remember that in my personal letter to Lloyd of the 21st December, 1951, I enclosed a draft despatch addressed to the Secretary of State explaining some of the principles which I thought should regulate constitutional reform in the Gold Coast. I discussed this despatch with you in London in January,<sup>2</sup> and understood that with one or two minor amendments it was acceptable to the Office. The despatch never went beyond the draft stage because it was felt that its publication would have an unfortunate effect on the course of constitutional reform in Nigeria. In so far as the draft dealt with the specific question of the creation of a Prime Minister it is now out of date, but certain views expressed in it, to which no amendments were suggested during our discussions in London, are in my opinion as valid to-day as they were last January, and I take this opportunity to reaffirm them as being the right background of the approach to further progress in the constitutional sphere. I enclose the relevant extract from the draft for ease of reference.<sup>3</sup>

The Secretary of State's visit in June undoubtedly afforded the occasion for the politicians to focus fresh interest on the constitutional issue. It was inevitable that this should be so, as we realised at the time, and you will remember that the statement on the Secretary of State's discussions with Ministers, which was authorised to be published, gave the politicians no more encouragement than was unavoidable in the circumstances. Shortly after the Secretary of State's departure I had a series of conversations with Nkrumah during which he appeared to take the point that he had nothing to gain by a collision with H.M.G., and that his interest lay in keeping down the pace and playing for time. Unfortunately the doctrine of enlightened self-interest does not gain any adherents in the ranks of the Convention People's Party, and it was not long before Nkrumah proposed to me in conversation the substitution of the three *ex-officio* Ministers by representative Ministers and the setting up of a Constituent Assembly, before the meeting of the Legislative Assembly which opens early in February. A Constituent Assembly is a favourite theme of Danquah's, and it is probable that Nkrumah was advised by his Party to put the proposition to me owing to an apprehension that if the Government did not sponsor the idea Danquah would do so, and thus outbid them. The disappearance of the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs appeared to Nkrumah to be perfectly feasible if defence subjects were dealt with by a Defence Committee, of which I was to be the Chairman and he the Deputy-Chairman.

It is probable that Nkrumah had the haziest idea of a Constituent Assembly. He clearly had no idea as to how a Defence Committee of the nature he had in mind

<sup>1</sup> See part I of this volume, 118.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, 112–114.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed.

would fit in with our administrative layout and channels of responsibility, and I cannot blame him for being at a loss on this point. I think I have succeeded in persuading him after further lengthy discussions that there is no point in pursuing either the abolition of the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs or the setting up of a Constituent Assembly, but there is no knowing whether, and if so when, he will return to these ideas; it may be taken for granted that the extremists in the Party have not abandoned them.

My immediate following conversations with Nkrumah centred on his idea that the Governor might cease to preside at the Cabinet. This is a point which is very likely to give us further trouble, because there is a strong feeling among the leaders of the Party that they will have scored a notable victory in the eyes of their supporters if they can achieve the withdrawal of the Governor from the Cabinet. The subject has been dropped for the time being, because I have told Nkrumah that there is no purpose in pressing it to the point at which H.M.G. is bound to say no; but it is still very much alive in the minds of the Party and I shall be surprised if this question does not figure prominently in debate in the Assembly.

The subsequent phase in our discussions was devoted to the question of Nkrumah's next open political move. The public release of the statement that H.M.G. would examine and discuss with the Gold Coast Government proposals for constitutional change, formulated after consultation with the Chiefs and people, is naturally interpreted as a challenge to this Government to initiate negotiations with H.M.G. It is politically inevitable that Nkrumah should make a statement at the next meeting of the Assembly which opens on the 30th September. He has accepted that it would be a tactical error to come out with a statement of the Government's attitude towards any specific features in the constitution at this early stage, and he has agreed that there is tactical virtue in confining himself to an objective statement of the issues on which the country should express an opinion.

I enclose a copy of the statement which, in his present frame of mind, he is prepared to make.<sup>4</sup> This statement has been accepted by him after prolonged "off the record" discussions with me. He has not shown it to his colleagues, and, though they are aware and approve of his intention to make a non-committal objective statement, they do not know what he proposes to include or omit. It will not, I think, be made until the end of the meeting, when it will be too late to give time for a debate. If he is subjected to pressure in the early stages of the meeting he should be able to deal with it by a promise that a statement will be made. The text of the statement will of course have to be considered by the Cabinet before it is made and it is by no means certain that the Cabinet will accept this draft, not on account of what it contains but because of the omissions. In particular you will notice that it makes no mention of the reserve powers or of the Governor's presidency in the Cabinet. If we do get this draft through the Cabinet we shall ultimately have to face debate in the Assembly on the omitted subjects. I am glad to say, however, that neither the Prime Minister nor his colleagues at present show any inclination to attack the safeguards for the Civil

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<sup>4</sup> Not printed. Nkrumah made the statement in the Legislative Assembly on 16 Oct 1952. The draft text appears to have been unaltered by the Cabinet meeting to which Arden-Clarke refers in this para. The statement invited views on the procedure for appointing the prime minister and ministers, the composition of the Legislative Assembly and whether there should be a second chamber, the powers of the governor in matters affecting chieftaincy and the position of the public service.

Service which are written into the Constitution. They would like to have a say in the composition of the Public Service Commission, but do not at present press this point. Their general problem throughout this "exercise" will be to avoid going to such lengths as to oblige H.M.G. to administer what they will regard as a rebuff, and at the same time to avoid an obvious criticism that, as a Government committed by their election promises, they do not go far enough. It is almost certain that the extremists, and political opportunists such as Danquah, will try to win popular favour and out-flank the Government by exploiting nationalist feeling and putting forward extravagant demands.

You will, of course, appreciate that the statement, in whatever form it issues and in so far as it commits anyone, commits only Nkrumah and the Representative Members, who form the majority of the Executive Council. I have made it clear to Nkrumah from the beginning that I have not sought and have not got any mandate from H.M.G. or the S. of S., to discuss any aspect of further constitutional changes with him and he himself has told me that he is consulting me as, to quote his words, his "friend and adviser and not as Governor". No official cognizance of this statement can appropriately be taken by the Colonial Office until it has been made in the Assembly.

The extent of the danger here will depend to some extent on whether we can induce the local press to accept counsels of moderation. This is a matter to which I and my advisers are giving considerable thought. We have not yet found a solution, and it may be that we shall ask you to suggest a line to the United Kingdom press. If *The Times* came out with the right sort of article at the right time, it might help. I am afraid that whatever the *Daily Telegraph* says will be regarded here as founded on prejudice against the "emancipation" of the Gold Coast. An approach to the United Kingdom press is only an idea in our minds at present, and will require further thought before it can be shaped into a definite proposal which we can make to you.

You will probably want to know what sort of picture we have of the programme after this coming meeting of the Assembly. You will see that the statement enclosed allows six months for the submission of the views of the Chiefs and people to the Government. That brings us to about mid-April, when the Budget meeting will be drawing to a close. The views expressed will then have to be collated and considered in the Cabinet, and the Government's proposals will have to be formulated for submission to the Assembly. The debate on the Government's proposals will probably take place at the end of June or in early July, 1953. We hope to avoid any submissions to H.M.G. at this stage, and that the outcome of the debate will be the setting up of a Committee to advise on electoral reform. I must emphasise that the avoidance of immediate submissions to H.M.G. after the debate will be an operation of considerable delicacy. It is at this stage that there is the greatest danger that Nkrumah will, with the profoundest expressions of regret to me in private, decide that he must, if he is to maintain his political leadership, abandon the moderate course and follow the extremists, whatever may be in store for him in London.

If we get over this hurdle successfully, the report of the Committee should be debated in the last Assembly meeting of the year, perhaps as late as November, and detailed proposals would be submitted to H.M.G. by the end of the year. Consideration of the proposals by H.M.G., and discussion with this Government might carry us through to June, 1954. When a final decision on the proposals is reached, arrangements could be made to hold a General Election in August, 1954 on

the basis of the revised Constitution. The full term of this Assembly actually expires in February, 1955.

In conclusion, I should perhaps remind you that the uncertainties which attend these plans are to a great extent attributable to the personality of Nkrumah. He is a highly volatile character, extremely susceptible to influence, and this of course holds good for influences beside my own. He is frightened of the slightest threat of opposition however shadowy it may be – this weakness is not peculiar to him, it is a common Gold Coast characteristic – and I cannot be sure that he will stick to the moderate course under pressure. Another factor which enhances the difficulty of assessing his intentions is a tendency to make proposals to me of an extreme nature simply because his advisers have told him to do so, and irrespective of whether he himself supports them. You are of course aware that the notion of the delegation of responsibility is foreign to the Gold Coast; a man in Nkrumah's position is regarded as under an obligation to act as the mouthpiece of his supporters. These characteristics are in abeyance during our private and informal talks but will become abundantly apparent as soon as public discussions start and political pressures develop.

I hope that this letter will be of some assistance and that you will let me have any views of which we should take account in handling this extremely tricky operation, which might suitably be dubbed "Cunctator".<sup>5</sup>

I am sending a copy of this letter to Beresford-Stooke, Benson and Waddell.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> A reference to the Roman general, Fabius Cunctator, whose military strategy favoured delaying tactics and gradualism.

<sup>6</sup> Sir G Beresford-Stooke, gov, Sierra Leone, 1948–1953; A Benson, chief secretary, Nigeria; A N A Waddell, colonial secretary, Gambia.

**120** CO 554/254, no 4

26 Jan 1953

[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes on local interpretations of self-government and the growing desire for an all-black Cabinet

In my Secret and Personal letter No. Ex.Co.28 of the 27th November, I said I would keep you informed of the local political situation as occasion arose, and I am writing now to let you know how matters stand in regard to the question of constitutional reform.

2. I would refer you to the Local Intelligence Committee's Notes No. 55 and 56, as containing the most up to date assessment we have of the attitude of the C.P.P. towards this question. I would add to these Notes the opinion that there is a real danger of a split in the higher ranks of the C.P.P. and the formation of an extremist splinter group under the auspices of Gbedemah. Some normally well informed sources go so far as to say that Nkrumah has lost all but three constituencies in Ashanti; I do not believe that Nkrumah has lost his grip to this extent in Ashanti or that his popularity with the electorate generally has diminished beyond what might reasonably be expected after nearly two years in office, but the dissension between himself and Gbedemah may develop into a party schism at any moment, with

Gbedemah leading the secessionist group. My only other comment on these Notes is that the remark in paragraph 12 of No. 56, that there is good reason to believe that no present or aspiring Representative Minister relishes the prospect of having control of the Police vested in one of his African colleagues, should be treated with reserve.

3. I have had talks with Busia of the G.C.P., with the Asantehene and with Loveridge, Chief Regional Officer, Colony, and the general result of these and other discussions with both officials and unofficials may be summarised in the conclusion that no political party and no Territorial Council, except the Northern Territories Council, is likely on present form to propose any modification or revision of the constitution which falls short of "self government" since each body is afraid of being outbidden by the others. As will be seen below, and from the Local Intelligence Committee's Notes, it is by no means clear what "self-government" means, and what are the practical steps which the various leaders of public opinion consider should be taken to achieve it; it is clear, however, that it means something which – in my estimation at least – Her Majesty's Government would not be willing to concede at this stage. I should add that there is a prospect of a split in the G.C.P., which is likely to manifest itself in the expulsion of Danquah and Kwesi Lamptey<sup>1</sup> who represent the opportunist faction in the party. The most moderate proposals likely to emanate from a political party will be sponsored by the Busia element in the G.C.P.; you may be interested to read the enclosed speech by him which has received some publicity in the local press (he was good enough to send me an advance copy).<sup>2</sup> The Northern Territories Council will probably produce reasonable proposals, but they are unlikely, unless reinforced from some other quarter, to influence the J.P.C. and the Asanteman Council which, for the present at least, feel that they can talk in no other terms than "self-government".

4. It is obvious that an attempt must be made to get some sense into the proposals which the advocates of "self-government" will put forward. The establishment of a constitutional committee on the lines of the Coussey Committee, or the convening of a formal conference which would have to hold some at least of its sessions in public, should be avoided, as, with few exceptions, local politicians and chiefs will not dare to suggest any compromise or put forward realistic proposals for fear of being pilloried as "imperialist stooges". I have, however, been considering whether an informal meeting, which would no doubt develop into a series of meetings, could not be arranged at the invitation and under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister between representatives of the political parties and territorial councils in order to try to reach agreement on some reasonable suggestions for adoption by the Government and by the Assembly and for submission to Her Majesty's Government as a basis of discussion between the two Governments. It would be essential to the success of such a meeting that it should be held in camera and that those attending it should undertake not to disclose any of its proceedings except in the form of an agreed press communiqué. I have reason to believe that invitations to such a meeting would be accepted. If it is decided to hold such a

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<sup>1</sup> Kwesi Lamptey, acting deputy chairman of the CPP during Nkrumah's detention between 1950 and 1951. Lamptey resigned from the CPP in 1951 because of his differences with the CPP's gradualism and compromises with the British.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

meeting, I should hope to arrange for it to take place between the end of the Budget Meeting (early April) and the beginning of the second meeting of the Assembly (early July) and not before my return from leave on the 18th April. It would have to be understood that the conclusions of such a meeting did not bind the Government and it would be necessary to guard against a "build up" of the meeting which would prove embarrassing if it came to the wrong conclusions or broke up without reaching any agreement, as it very well might. I believe, however, that the corporate discussions of such a meeting could be so conducted by the Prime Minister, who would be in frequent consultation with me, as to produce results which would be comparatively free of the influence of the auctioneering spirit which at present dominates the situation. When I have discussions in the Colonial Office in February I hope to be able to say whether we definitely intend to promote the idea of such a meeting.

5. I hope to discuss at the Colonial Office certain possible lines of attack on the present constitution and how they should be dealt with. The desire for an all black Cabinet is growing; if this were conceded, the withdrawal of the Governor from the Cabinet would be involved, although his right to summon the Cabinet and preside on occasion could no doubt be preserved. It would involve the disappearance of the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs, and this would raise a number of questions. Should the Governor have a special responsibility for Defence and External Affairs; if so, how would it be discharged in practice? In particular how could an over-riding control of the Police be secured to the Governor? Who should act as Officer Administering the Government in the Governor's absence? Who should deal with Civil Service matters in the Assembly? Who should be responsible for the Information Services which are at present the concern of the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs? On the other hand, if the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs were left in the Cabinet as the sole survivor of the three non-Africans, how effective would he be? Moreover, if he remained in the Cabinet, we would have to prepare for an assault on the lines that it is anomalous that he, a junior colleague of the Prime Minister, should be elevated from time to time to the position of Officer Administering the Government; Ministers and others both within and outside the C.P.P. feel strongly that the appointment of a Minister to be the Officer Administering the Government is an objectionable feature of the present constitution.

6. At the present time there is no concerted desire for the curtailment or removal of the Governor's reserve powers or for the subjection of the Civil Service to political control. I do not expect any serious developments as regards the reserve powers, but the politicians will continue to nibble at the Civil Service. The latest suggestion in Ministerial circles is that there should be an opportunity for the direct entry of Africans outside the Civil Service to key posts in the Service, e.g., the appointments of Permanent Secretary and Head of Department. In particular there is a feeling among some C.P.P. members with pretensions to legal knowledge – a feeling not shared by the Prime Minister at present – that the Attorney-General should be a political appointment.

7. There is as yet no firm assessment of public opinion on the question whether there should be a second Chamber, but I would expect the weight of opinion to come down in favour of it. My present view is that it would be fatal to the future of the Chiefs for them to sit in either Chamber.

8. It is not the purpose of this letter to suggest what should or should not be

conceded. I am merely drawing attention to those features of the constitution on which interest is focussing, on which the Colonial Office will perhaps wish to formulate at least a preliminary view fairly soon, and which I should be glad to discuss next month.

9. I am sending a copy of this letter to Macpherson, Beresford-Stooke, Wyn Harris<sup>3</sup> and Galsworthy.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Sir P Wyn-Harris, gov of Gambia, 1949–1958.

<sup>4</sup> For Galsworthy, see 261, note 2.

## 121 CO 554/254, no 18

18 Feb 1953

### 'Future constitutional development in the Gold Coast': CO note of a meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke

*Sir T. Lloyd* invited *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* to describe how the constitutional position in the Gold Coast had developed since his letter of the 26th January to Mr. Gorell Barnes.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* produced a note (copy attached)<sup>2</sup> of Dr. Nkrumah's latest views on the content and timetable of further constitutional reform. He said that in the light of his discussions with Dr. Nkrumah and other Representative Ministers he was hopeful that he could withstand local pressure to speed up this timetable. The Gold Coast Government's proposals for submission to H.M.G. were due to be debated in the Assembly in June. After this debate a Committee on Electoral Reform would probably be established, including no doubt representatives of the legislature, the chiefs and the judiciary, and perhaps also a Constitutional Committee. Dr. Nkrumah wanted the whole country divided into about 100 constituencies with universal direct elections by adult suffrage. The Assembly would then, perhaps in November, have to approve the detailed proposals as they emerged from these Committees, so that it would be very late in 1953 before H.M.G. received the proposals for examination. This examination, discussions with the Gold Coast Government, and the necessary drafting of instruments, would mean that any new constitution could scarcely come into effect before about June, 1954, so that the first elections under it might be held in July or August, 1954, only a few months earlier than would be the case under the four-year term of the Assembly provided in the present constitution.

3. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that as the minimum Gold Coast proposals would include the assumption of the portfolios of Finance and Justice by Representative Ministers, the *ex-officio* Minister of Defence and External Affairs would be left isolated in the Cabinet. His position there would be very difficult, and would be made more so by the fact that the Representative Ministers disliked the present arrangement whereby one of their *ex-officio* colleagues during the Governor's absence took precedence over them as Officer Administering the Government. He therefore suggested that the subjects of defence and external affairs should be specifically assigned to the Governor rather than be left with a Minister, and that the

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<sup>1</sup> See 120.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

Governor should be assisted by a Secretary of Defence and External Affairs who would also be the Governor's Deputy. The Representative Ministers were set on achieving an all-African Cabinet; the Governor's right to call and preside at Cabinet meetings could be preserved, but in practice he would normally leave the Prime Minister to preside. Defence and external affairs could be dealt with through a Cabinet Committee of which the Governor would be chairman, and the Prime Minister and two other African Ministers, of whom one would be the Minister of the Interior (if this title were adopted), members. The Prime Minister would answer in the Assembly on these subjects.

4. On police arrangements, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that it would probably be necessary for a Representative Minister, say the Minister of the Interior, to be made primarily responsible. But his authority should be exercised only in consultation with the Secretary for Defence and External Affairs, who would be free to appeal against the Minister's decision to the Governor, whose reserve powers would allow him to take over the police for defence and internal security purposes without proclaiming an emergency.

5. *Sir T. Lloyd* asked whether an alternative method of handling the police problem suggested by *Sir C. Jeffries* would not be workable. This would provide for administrative control of the police by a Representative Minister but operational control by the Governor. *Mr. Williamson* suggested that it would be highly embarrassing if the Special Branch were put in a position where they might be asked to disclose all their activities to a Representative Minister responsible for the police.

6. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* pointed out that already, as recommended by Col. Young,<sup>3</sup> there was a Police Council, presided over by the Minister of Defence and External Affairs, interposed between him and the direct control of the police, and in practice, as in the recent Anloga riots, the question of police reinforcements was settled between the Minister and the Commissioner of Police without reference to him. It might therefore meet the case if responsibility were shared between a Representative Minister and the Secretary for Defence, with a right of appeal to him. Any solution must preserve his reserve powers.

7. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that this forecast of the Gold Coast proposals and of how they might be met was only half the story. Dr. Nkrumah was anxious that the new legislature should be a body fully representative of the whole country so that he could not again be told that the Chiefs must be consulted before firm constitutional proposals could be considered by H.M.G. It was likely that when the new legislature met it would forthwith, confident in its representative character, table a demand for full self-government and for full "Dominion Status". The Gold Coast Government would then look to H.M.G. to sponsor the Gold Coast for entry into full membership of the Commonwealth and if membership were refused the Gold Coast might be prepared to leave the Commonwealth completely. In his talks on these questions with Dr. Nkrumah, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* had pointed out that H.M.G. might want to know for how long the Gold Coast would be willing to work the new constitution before a further advance was expected and might ask for a guarantee that this would be three or four years. Dr. Nkrumah had replied that he could not publicly admit that the country was not fit for full membership of the Commonwealth so that no

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<sup>3</sup> A E Young, *A Report upon the Gold Coast Police, November 1951* (Accra, 1952).

guarantee could be given; but in practice it would take some time to work out the final constitution for complete self-government, to arrange for Gold Coast assumption of separate responsibility for defence and external affairs, and to replace at least some of the overseas civil servants in key posts by Africans.

8. *Mr. Williamson* pointed out that India, Pakistan and Ceylon would be likely to support full Gold Coast membership of the Commonwealth, and asked whether the Gold Coast would be likely to leave the Commonwealth solely because South Africa opposed its membership. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he felt that so long as South Africa was in the Commonwealth the motives of the U.K. Government in Africa would be suspect; but Dr. Nkrumah had made it clear that he was anxious that the Queen should remain the Head of the Gold Coast, and he could not be sure that solitary South African opposition to Gold Coast membership would lead the Gold Coast to leave the Commonwealth.

9. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that most C.R.O. services could be given even without South African agreement. It might perhaps be possible to have an independent Gold Coast of which the Queen was sovereign which was not a full member of the Commonwealth. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* considered that as a possible curb on Gold Coast moves towards complete independence some play might be made with the protectorate status of the Northern Territories and the Trusteeship status of Togoland. The northern part of Togoland was united in wanting integration with the Gold Coast: the centre also wanted integration; in the south many of the Ewes were still pro-unificationist but the successful establishment of the new Trans-Volta/Southern Togoland Region was likely to draw them into the Gold Coast orbit.

10. *Sir H. Poynton* pointed out that substantial changes in the Gold Coast constitution would create a new situation which would entitle Aluminium Ltd. to reconsider its willingness to participate in the Volta River Project. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the changes would presumably take place before the Master Agreement was signed so that Aluminium Ltd. would in the normal course of events have every opportunity to consider its course of action. In any event the company must have realised that constitutional changes were inevitable and well within the terms of the agreement.

11. In reply to questions by *Sir T. Lloyd*, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the constitutional proposals he had described for the period up to full self-government would not affect the safeguards for the Public Service. He had made it clear to Dr. Nkrumah that if the present safeguards were touched compensation for loss of career as well as abolition of office terms would have to be granted. He would not hesitate to use his reserve powers to bring into effect satisfactory legislation on these points. It would however be helpful if a proper compensation scheme could be worked out in secret, to be kept in reserve until it was required.

12. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that although a section of the Convention People's Party considered that the Attorney-General, as well as the Minister of Justice, should be a political appointment, he had told Dr. Nkrumah that he was determined that the Attorney-General post should remain a Civil Service appointment.

13. On individual posts, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the C.P.P., which had so far made a number of unsuccessful attempts to infiltrate into the Civil Service, might in due course want Daniel Chapman<sup>4</sup> as the first African Secretary to an all-African

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<sup>4</sup> Dr Daniel Chapman, first general secretary, All-Ewe Conference; subsequently area specialist, UN Dept of Trusteeship and Information for Non-Self-Governing Territories; head of Gold Coast Civil Service and secretary to Gold Coast Cabinet, 1954-1957.

Cabinet. He himself would like to keep Mr. Hadow as Secretary of Defence and External Affairs and Governor's Deputy. The functions of the overseas officers in the senior administrative posts would ultimately become advisory rather than executive, and the jobs of the present *ex-officio* Ministers would disappear.

14. In reply to *Mr. Williamson*, who pointed out that constitutional changes in the Gold Coast would obviously have repercussions in Nigeria (and elsewhere) but that, in his view, the repercussions from trouble in the Gold Coast which arose from a failure to reach agreement would probably be more serious than repercussions from concessions, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he had kept Sir J. Macpherson informed of the progress of constitutional discussions in the Gold Coast. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that, subject to the [approval of the] Secretary of State, whom Sir C. Arden-Clarke was seeing later in the day, the next step should be to consult Sir J. Macpherson semi-officially on the programme that had been outlined, clearing the letter in draft with Sir C. Arden-Clarke.

**122** CO 554/254, no 17

18 Feb 1953

**'Future constitutional development in the Gold Coast': CO note of a meeting between Mr Lyttelton and Sir C Arden-Clarke**

*The Secretary of State*, in welcoming Sir C. Arden-Clarke, said that he hoped the process of further constitutional change in the Gold Coast would not involve the appointment of a constitutional commission from outside the territory.

2. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that there was no question of asking for such a commission and handed to the Secretary of State and Minister of State<sup>1</sup> a note (copy attached)<sup>2</sup> of Dr. Nkrumah's latest views on the content and timetable of constitutional reform. He said that the Gold Coast proposals, which would probably take final shape for submission to Her Majesty's Government in about November, 1953, were likely to be for a wide measure of electoral reform, including universal direct elections with adult suffrage, the abolition of the posts in the Cabinet of the three *ex-officio* Ministers and the vesting in the Governor in person of responsibility for defence and external affairs. This would give the All-African Cabinet which the Representative Ministers were most anxious to achieve and although the Governor should have the right to call and preside at Cabinet meetings, it would be preferable if in practice the Prime Minister were normally left to preside. Proposals might also be made for the establishment of a second chamber, and possibly of a Privy Council of Chiefs to deal with their own constitutional and ceremonial matters. He hoped to be able to resist pressure to speed up the timetable for considering these changes set out in Dr. Nkrumah's note. The Representative Ministers, assuming the Gold Coast proposals were with Her Majesty's Government in November, 1953, had wanted the proposals considered and instruments drafted in time for fresh elections in February, 1954, and he had told them that this was out of the question.

3. The next stage in constitutional development was however only half the picture. Dr. Nkrumah had said to him that it was likely that, once an Assembly was in being which could hold itself to be fully representative of Gold Coast opinion without

<sup>1</sup> Mr Hopkinson

<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

further need to consult the Chiefs, it would forthwith register a demand for full self-government and full membership of the Commonwealth. He had pointed out to Dr. Nkrumah that as a minimum Her Majesty's Government would expect to see the new constitution working successfully for a period of perhaps four years before more radical changes were made. Dr. Nkrumah in reply had said that politically speaking he could not ask for less than immediate full self-government within the Commonwealth, and that he felt that it was essential for the maintenance of harmonious relations with the United Kingdom that the Gold Coast should be offered a formula giving the prospect of full membership of the Commonwealth; but that as time would be needed to evolve a constitution for the exercise of self-government Her Majesty's Government could be assured of a period of preparation of perhaps two years during which the new constitution now under discussion would be in force. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* had concluded from this that some understanding on a further period of delay before full self-government was attained could be reached.

4. *The Secretary of State* pointed out that full membership of the Commonwealth was not in the gift of H.M. Government, and it could not be assumed that H.M. Government would, when the time came, think it right to sponsor a Gold Coast application for full membership. A Gold Coast which was far from able to staff its own Public Service might be unable for a long time to conduct its external affairs with propriety, and might well be a liability rather than an asset for the rest of the Commonwealth from the point of view of defence. It was not clear that all the 'white' Commonwealth countries other than South Africa would welcome Gold Coast membership. But as an all-African community without racial troubles it might well be right to leave the Gold Coast free in due course to choose full self-government outside the Commonwealth.

5. *Sir T. Lloyd* referred to the precedent of admitting Ceylon, with U.K. sponsorship, to full Commonwealth membership, and said that H.M. Government might find it embarrassing if, in default of U.K. sponsorship, the Gold Coast was sponsored by the 'Asiatic' members of the Commonwealth. He asked *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* whether the Gold Coast might as a further intermediate stage be content for some time with a Governor-General without reserve powers – so that internal self-government would be absolute – in direct relationship not with the Commonwealth but with the U.K., which would preserve responsibility for defence and would perhaps represent the Gold Coast overseas.

6. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the general feeling in the Gold Coast was that no status involving inferiority was acceptable but in view of the burden of defence there was perhaps a chance that some sort of special relationship with the U.K. alone might for the time being be accepted. He asked whether H.M. Government would be prepared to sponsor Gold Coast membership of the United Nations.

7. *The Secretary of State* said that this question was somewhat academic as the Russian veto would presumably block Gold Coast membership of the U.N. In considering the advantages and disadvantages of full independence the Gold Coast would have to bear in mind not only the defence burden it would be assuming, but the fact that H.M. Government would be far more reluctant to become involved in financing the Volta River Scheme.

8. On the immediate constitutional proposals outlined by *Sir C. Arden-Clarke*, *Sir T. Lloyd* said that the points on which the Secretary of State had expressed particular concern seemed adequately covered: the Governor's reserve powers and

the present safeguards of the Public Service would be untouched, and external affairs and defence would be the direct responsibility of the Governor, although the arrangements for control of the police might require further consideration.

9. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that a single European *ex-officio* Minister handling defence and external affairs would find his position in the Cabinet impossible. But if these subjects were vested in the Governor, he could appoint a Secretary for Defence and External Affairs who would also be the Governor's Deputy. The subjects would then be dealt with by a Cabinet Committee over which the Governor would preside, and whose membership would include the Prime Minister and probably two other African Ministers. This Committee would not have access to secret defence documents. The Prime Minister would answer in the Assembly on Defence and External Affairs. As the police impinged so much on the daily life of the people it would be difficult to deny some form of responsibility for the police to a Representative Minister. Already, as recommended in the Young Report, there was a Police Service Commission performing for the police the work of the Public Service Commission, and a Police Council advisory to and presided over by the Minister of Defence and External Affairs of which the Commissioner and a representative of the Ministry of Local Government were members. He suggested therefore that a Representative Minister should have general administrative control of the police with a Police Council continuing in being, and that this control should be exercised in consultation with the Secretary of Defence, who would have a right of appeal to the Governor. The Governor should have reserve powers covering the police. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the alternative solution put to him of administrative control vested in a Representative Minister and operational control vested in the Governor was unlikely to be acceptable locally, and would in fact achieve no more than his own solution

10. *The Secretary of State* said that the arrangements finally made must not enable a single political party to gain control of the police. *The Minister of State* pointed out that under the Sudan Agreement the Governor-General was Commander-in-Chief of the Sudan Defence Force.

11. In reply to questions from *the Secretary of State* and *the Minister of State*, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he favoured the idea of a second chamber with perhaps a six months' delaying power. Six months was the maximum period to be hoped for. The chiefs should not themselves sit in it, for they would be unlikely to survive save as 'constitutional monarchs', but it would include representatives of the traditional elements chosen by the Territorial Councils, as well perhaps as the present special Assembly Representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and Mines. The concept of a Privy Council of Chiefs would probably not be pursued. A section of the Convention People's Party was seeking to make the post of Attorney-General, as well as that of Minister of Justice, a political appointment, but he had told Dr. Nkrumah that he was determined that the Attorney-General post should remain a Public Service appointment.

12. *The Secretary of State* said that the proposals as outlined for this immediately next stage would probably be acceptable to H.M. Government including those on electoral reform and a second chamber. If a Council of Chiefs were established he would, despite its use in other Colonies, prefer the title 'Privy Council' not to be used. So long as the Governor was given direct responsibility for defence and external

affairs it could perhaps be agreed that the Prime Minister should normally be allowed to preside at Cabinet meetings. A formula must be worked out to keep ultimate control of the police in the hands of the Governor.

As a first step while Sir C. Arden-Clarke was still on leave a letter should be sent to Sir J. Macpherson asking for his comments on the effect in Nigeria of the implementation in the Gold Coast of these proposals.

**123** CO 554/254, no 10

5 Mar 1953

[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir J Macpherson (Nigeria) requesting an assessment of the likely effect in Nigeria of the reforms contemplated for the Gold Coast

You know that in his speech to the Legislative Assembly on the 16th October, 1952, Nkrumah initiated discussion in the Gold Coast about changes in the present constitution, and you have received from Arden-Clarke a copy of his letter to Gorell Barnes of the 26th January describing the development of this discussion.<sup>1</sup> Arden-Clarke has now had preliminary talks here with the Secretary of State, Minister of State and officials, and I am writing to let you know their outcome.<sup>2</sup>

Arden-Clarke is hopeful that, despite the recommendations of the various political parties in the Gold Coast that the Gold Coast Government should ask Her Majesty's Government for immediate self-government, he can spin out the next stage of constitutional change over a period of perhaps 18 months, as explained below.

Under the present time-table it is open to the chiefs and parties to submit their recommendations to the Gold Coast Government by the end of March, 1953. The Government will consider them and then embody their own proposals in a White Paper which will be debated in the Assembly during its June Session. The proposals are almost certain to include a substantial measure of electoral reform so that a local committee to work out in detail the programme for reform will then have to sit. The time required for the work of this committee and for the final drafting of the Gold Coast proposals should mean that the proposals will not be submitted to Her Majesty's Government much before the end of 1953. Negotiations over the proposals and then the drafting of new instruments might well take up to about June, 1954. There would then be a dissolution of the Assembly and new elections in July or August, 1954 – not many months earlier than would have been the case without constitutional changes, as the life of the present Assembly expires in February, 1955.

Arden-Clarke believes that, broadly speaking, the proposals ultimately submitted to Her Majesty's Government are likely (though he made it clear he could give no guarantees) to take the following form:

- (a) The posts of all three *ex-officio* Ministers should be abolished, Representative Ministers should hold the portfolios of Justice and Finance, and Defence and External Affairs should be the direct responsibility of the Governor.

<sup>1</sup> See 120.

<sup>2</sup> See 121 and 122.

(b) There should be a second Chamber including representatives of chiefs chosen by their territorial councils and perhaps the European special representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and Mines. This Chamber might have delaying powers, but they would be more limited than those of the House of Lords in the United Kingdom.

(c) There should, as indicated above, be a wide measure of electoral reform, including direct elections throughout the country based on universal adult suffrage and an increase in the membership of the Assembly (to provide for perhaps a hundred representatives).

(d) There may also be a proposal for a central council of chiefs to deal with their own constitutional matters and customary law; but this idea may not be pursued.

With certain reservations, proposals of this kind would, the Secretary of State thinks, probably be accepted by Her Majesty's Government. They would mean the creation of a directly representative all African Assembly and an all African Cabinet and should go a long way to meet Gold Coast aspirations. You probably know of the importance which Gold Coast political parties attach to an all African Cabinet, and I would refer in this connection to paragraph 5 of Arden-Clarke's letter of the 26th January. But the Governor's reserved powers would be unaffected. Defence and External Affairs would remain in his hands, and the position and general safeguards of the Public Service as enshrined in the existing constitution would be untouched. We have not tried at this stage to delve too deeply into the mechanics of achieving these results. Arden-Clarke's proposals are that the Prime Minister should normally be left to preside at Cabinet meetings but that the Governor should be empowered, whenever he saw fit, to call and preside at a Cabinet meeting. He also proposed that he should have a Secretary for Defence and External Affairs who would be Deputy Governor and Officer Administering the Government when the Governor was on leave, and that the Governor should be advised on defence matters by a Defence Committee under his (the Governor's) chairmanship on which the Secretary for Defence, the Prime Minister and probably two other African Ministers, of whom one would be Minister of the Interior (or of Local Government according to whichever title was decided upon), would sit. This would provide for liaison with the African Ministers on the aspects of Defence, including internal security, which concern them, but would ensure that classified defence information was kept from them. The Prime Minister would answer in the Assembly on Defence and External Affairs. In place of the *ex-officio* Minister of Finance there would probably be an overseas Economic Advisor to the Government. As a counter-weight to an African Minister of Justice, the post of Attorney-General would be preserved as a Public Service appointment. Arden-Clarke is going to be very firm against any pressure to make the Attorney-General a political appointment.

In such a set-up satisfactory arrangements for handling Police matters would not be easy to make. It is clear that the Governor must be enabled to exercise ultimate control over the Police in his discretion. But their day-to-day handling, their establishment and their supply are obviously matters of legitimate local concern. We here had in mind an arrangement whereby a Representative Minister assisted by a Police Council might be made *administratively* responsible for the Police to the Legislature, but the Commissioner would be *operationally* responsible to the Governor. Arden-Clarke has pointed out that there is already interposed between him and the Commissioner the Chief Secretary as Minister of Defence and an Advisory

Police Council recently set up in pursuance of the recommendations of the Young Report and consisting of the Chief Secretary, the Commissioner and representatives of the Ministry of Defence and local authorities. He has suggested that the existence of the Police Council would itself be a safeguard against the arbitrary use of the Police by an African Minister, and that responsibility for the Police might be put generally in the hands of an African Minister but to be exercised only after consultation with the Secretary of Defence. If there were disagreement between them on any important issue, the matter would go to the Governor, who would also be empowered to assume direct control of the police at any time when he considered the interests of internal security or public order required him to do so but without necessarily proclaiming a state of emergency. We shall give further thought to this question.

It will be apparent to you that the timetable and proposals outlined above are at this stage wholly tentative. They probably represent the best we can hope for if we are to avoid a head-on clash; and if nothing more extreme is demanded at this stage it will be because Arden-Clarke has succeeded in "continuing his miracle", to borrow a phrase you first used to me a year ago. As I have said earlier, the Secretary of State thinks that if and when (and that will probably be at the end of this year) such proposals do reach us, Her Majesty's Government will, after due delay, accept them. But that is only the first half of the story.

Arden-Clarke has pointed out that, assuming this programme is broadly carried out, the all African Assembly that would meet in the second half of 1954 would, as a body fully representative of Gold Coast opinion, regard itself as entitled without further delay to put forward a demand for complete self-government and would almost certainly do so, and this might well take the form of a request that Her Majesty's Government should forthwith sponsor the Gold Coast for admission as a full and independent member of the Commonwealth, in other words for being granted full "Dominion status", to use a now rather out-of-date term. It has, of course, been made abundantly clear to Gold Coast Ministers that full membership of the Commonwealth (which in practice means the right to attend Commonwealth Prime Ministers' conferences on terms of full equality) is not in the gift of the United Kingdom Government. Nkrumah understands this, but has suggested that the United Kingdom Government ought to undertake, as part of the settlement to be reached by mid-1954, to sponsor the Gold Coast for full membership of the Commonwealth whenever the application is made; and we cannot overlook the fact that if the United Kingdom Government refused to sponsor, the Indian Government would in all possibility seize the opportunity to do so. The Secretary of State's view is, however, that the United Kingdom Government could give no advance undertaking about sponsorship of the kind Nkrumah wants, or even the slightest encouragement to him to think that it would sponsor the application when made. Clearly a request of this nature, if and when it arrived, could be considered only in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time. Moreover – and this is important – formal application for membership could not even be made until the Gold Coast were *fully* self-governing; and a considerable period of time (it might be as long as three or four years from mid-1954, bearing in mind the attitude likely to be adopted by the Northern Territories) would be required to evolve a new constitution, under which the Governor and his reserved powers etc. would disappear, and to enable the Gold Coast to make arrangements for a separate defence establishment, for some form of

representation in a few leading overseas capitals, and for at least some of the key administrative posts in the Public Service to be taken over by Africans. What would happen if, at the end of that period, the Gold Coast's application for full membership of the Commonwealth failed is a matter for speculation. Some form of association of a fully self-governing Gold Coast with the Commonwealth, short of "Dominion status", might be evolved; or the Gold Coast might decide to go the way of Burma – or should I say Liberia? – but not without their being made fully aware of the drawbacks that such a course would involve for them.

Arden-Clarke is returning to Accra in mid-April and we hope to complete his "briefing" for the next stage at least in the constitutional discussions before he goes. As this will involve reference to the Cabinet here before the Easter Recess which starts about 2nd April we hope that you will be able to let us have your reactions to it soon – if possible, not later than mid-March. What we would like to have is the best assessment you can give of what is likely to be the effect in Nigeria of the changes now contemplated for the Gold Coast over the next 18 months or so, i.e. up to the period when a new Cabinet and Assembly are formed in the late summer of 1954.

We fully recognise that your already Herculean task will be rendered all the more difficult by the way things look like shaping in the Gold Coast (not to mention, incidentally the Sudan!); but you would, I am sure, agree that a major collision with the Gold Coast, which would almost certainly involve sooner or later the employment of sanctions against her, would have even graver repercussions on our position in Nigeria than acquiescence (though it would not be tame acquiescence) in what we all of course recognise to be, theoretically, over-hasty political advance.

I am copying this letter to Saloway as a record of the discussions with Arden-Clarke, and also to Wyn-Harris, Macdonald<sup>3</sup> and Galsworthy.

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<sup>3</sup> A R Macdonald, colonial secretary, Sierra Leone.

**124** CO 554/254, no 29

25 Mar 1953

[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir J Macpherson on Macpherson's response to the reforms contemplated for the Gold Coast

[Macpherson responded to Lloyd's letter of 5 Mar (see 123) with a tel dated 16 Mar. In it he described political advance in the Gold Coast as a 'persistent canker' which had encouraged the southern political parties of Nigeria in their belief that it was a 'national disgrace' that Nigeria should be constitutionally more backward than the Gold Coast. He predicted the disintegration of Nigeria if the Gold Coast demands were conceded. Southern politicians would demand sweeping constitutional changes and the North, fearful of being 'stampeded' by the South, would demand separation. In the East there would be an 'irresistible demand' for complete separation of the Cameroons from Nigeria and within the Eastern and Western regions 'splits would almost certainly occur on ethnic lines'. Macpherson urged a 'firm stand', including the sanction of force if necessary, against the Gold Coast demands, and offered to fly to London for discussion (CO 554/254, no 20).]

You will have seen from our secret and personal telegram No. 33 that the Secretary of State welcomed your proposal to come home for talks about the constitutional

changes suggested for the Gold Coast and that it should be possible to make them joint talks with Arden-Clarke.

Your telegram seems to contemplate as the only possible courses of action in the Gold Coast full acceptance of the proposals set out in my letter to you of the 5th March (with all the consequences you believe that would involve for Nigeria) or the application of force. But in a situation in which ultimate self-government for Colonial territories is the declared policy of H.M.G. and the Gold Coast has already gone far towards it, Ministers (to whom this letter is not being referred) may feel that it would be difficult, if not impossible for H.M.G. to justify to Parliament and before world opinion the use of force over a disagreement which would mainly be about the timetable for the remaining steps. But there may be other courses open and the Secretary of State indicated one of them when, in discussion with Nkrumah in the Gold Coast last June, he warned Nkrumah that he should not ask for too much too quickly since the United Kingdom might not be prepared to remain in the Gold Coast except under conditions under which a good job could be done. I am not saying that evacuation of British civil servants or some variation of it is necessarily the answer for the Gold Coast in present circumstances but that, in any given set of circumstances, the choice of alternatives may be wider than you have suggested.

The present proposals for the Gold Coast go further but not so much further than the suggestions for consideration made in Nkrumah's Statement in the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly on the 16th October. These Benson commented on in his letter to Gorell Barnes of the 2nd October and the immediate Nigerian reactions to the Statement were given in savingram No. 4665 of the 6th December. We gathered from these comments that although the next stage of constitutional advance in the Gold Coast would be bound to create difficulties for you, it was recognised as inevitable.

We do indeed, as my letter made clear, recognise that the changes proposed for the Gold Coast would leave their repercussions in Nigeria; and we recognise in particular your special problem of the Regions. But it may be that part of the solution to this will eventually have to be found along the line of giving, in due time, the southern regions a greater degree of autonomy than the north. This was a suggestion which I understand Gorell Barnes suggested that you might have in mind when you were here last autumn, and I should like you to give further consideration to it between now and the 15th April. We intend to do so too. One problem would of course be what to do at the Centre.

Many thanks for your telegram No. 383 just received. Would you please send us a telegram nearer the time saying what reasons you will be giving to the Press in Nigeria as to the purpose of your visit so that we may answer any enquiries we may get here on similar lines.

**125** CO 554/254, no 33

26 Mar 1953

'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast with particular reference to repercussions in Nigeria': minute by T B Williamson

Since the present Gold Coast constitution came into force early in 1951, the Governor's aim has been to get Nkrumah and other Representative Ministers to accept a policy of proceeding towards self-government step by step rather than by "positive action".

2. In this he has succeeded so far. The first step was the creation of the office of Prime Minister in March, 1952. This had been virtually agreed in principle by Mr. Griffiths in June, 1951, in direct discussion with Nkrumah and the Governor.

3. Sir J. Macpherson had not been informed of this possible development. When he learned of it in January 1952 he was greatly disturbed, and flew home specially to represent the dangerous repercussions there might be in Nigeria.<sup>1</sup> But the Secretary of State felt that he had no alternative but to make the change.

4. The following June (1952) the Secretary of State visited the Gold Coast and, after discussion with the Ministers, who made clear their wish for self-government within the Commonwealth, he agreed that when proposals had been formulated by the Gold Coast Government, after consultation with the Chiefs and people, they would be examined and discussed between H.M.G. and the Government of the Gold Coast. A public statement to this effect was put out on the Secretary of State's authority on the 7th June.<sup>2</sup>

5. The next move was Nkrumah's statement of the 16th October to the Legislative Assembly. This was a moderate and responsible utterance, and represented the result of many weeks patient coaching by the Governor.

6. Sir C. Arden-Clarke sent copies of this statement in draft, some weeks before it was made, both to the Secretary of State and the other three West African Governors. It aroused little press comment in Nigeria but the Acting Governor reported: "As you are aware all party political utterances, even the Northern Peoples Congress, are now talking about self-government in 1956, and I have the impression that this has been accentuated since the statement was made. I may be wrong; but the fact remains that I cannot conceive Nigerian political leaders who would be content to carry on under our present constitutional arrangements if the changes contemplated in Nkrumah's statement were brought into effect."

7. Nkrumah's statement of 16th October evoked demands from both the leading political parties in the Gold Coast for immediate independence. As a result of discussions between the Governor and Nkrumah, Sir C. Arden-Clarke reported to the Secretary of State in February what he felt would be the minimum changes which would satisfy the more responsible Gold Coast leaders.<sup>3</sup> These are set out in Sir T. Lloyd's letter of the 5th March to the Governor of Nigeria.<sup>4</sup> These proposals go beyond what might have been expected as a result of Nkrumah's statement in that they involve an all African Cabinet presided over (normally) by the Prime Minister. But it must be remembered that negotiations leading to the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement on the Sudan had been proceeding apace in the meantime, and the Governor had given warning as long ago as January, 1952, that developments in the Sudan were being closely watched in the Gold Coast.<sup>5</sup> (The Secretary of State did not fail to make this point to the Cabinet when he advised them in February, 1952, to agree to the office of Prime Minister.)<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For Macpherson's 'disturbed' reaction, see his letter to Lloyd, 8 Jan 1952, CO 967/173. For the agreement with Nkrumah, see part I of this volume, 103, 104, 115.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, 118.

<sup>3</sup> See 121 and 122.

<sup>4</sup> See 123.

<sup>5</sup> See part I of this volume, 114, para 5. The Anglo-Egyptian agreement concerning self-government and self-determination for the Sudan, which was signed on 12 Feb 1953, *inter alia*, set a target date for Sudanese independence.

<sup>6</sup> See part I of this volume, 115.

8. It appears that the position can now be held in the Gold Coast until the Governor returns on the 20th April, although there have been at least two scares. But as a result of quick intervention from here the position has been restored. See Mr. Saloway's telegram No. 44 at (25) on WAF 63/2/03 and also his telegram No. 42 at (28) on WAF 39/2/04. Nkrumah's clear intention to avoid a clash with H.M.G. is clearly brought out in the latter telegram; but in spite of the former we know that pressure for rapid Africanisation of the Public Service will continue. The only statement from an official body counselling moderation that has been received in reply to Nkrumah's statement of 16th October is that from the Northern Territories Council. This is short and worth reading. The two main points are that the Northern Territories want to keep the three *ex-officio* Ministers in the Cabinet and they demand a quarter of the seats. The aim in the Gold Coast must obviously be for agreement to be reached between the Northern Territories and the rest of the country. The special protectorate status of the Northern Territories is being studied and a further short note will be prepared before the 15th April.

9. The Governor of Nigeria's reaction to Sir T. Lloyd's letter is at (20). In brief he says that the Gold Coast proposals should be resisted, if necessary by force, now; if they are not, force will have to be used in Nigeria later if Nigeria is not to disintegrate into many fragments. His difficulty of course is that Southern Nigeria wants to go ahead faster than the North, and there is acute tension within Southern Nigeria between the East and West. Pending the discussions here in mid-April an interim reply has been sent to him.<sup>7</sup>

10. As Ministers here know, there has been almost constant pressure for changes of one kind or another in the Nigeria constitution since June of last year. The Governor held the position until a few weeks ago when he himself recommended that the conciliar system in Nigeria should be abandoned and his Ministers given individual responsibility for Departments and powers similar to those possessed by Ministers in the Gold Coast. This has been accepted in principle. The Secretary of State has also agreed to amend the Nigeria constitution so as to provide for separate elections in the individual Regions. It is intended to prepare a further note about other possible changes in Nigeria for discussion with Sir J. Macpherson.

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<sup>7</sup> See 124.

## 126 CO 554/400, nos 1 & 2

Mar 1953

'The Africanisation policy of the West African governments': memorandum by M G Smith.<sup>1</sup> *Minute* by Sir C Jeffries [nd]

Africanisation has been the policy of the Governments of the Gold Coast and Nigeria for many years – in the case of the Gold Coast it was first enunciated in 1925 during the Governorship of Sir Gordon Guggisberg.<sup>2</sup> But lip service to this policy has not

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<sup>1</sup> CO principal, West Africa Dept.

<sup>2</sup> Gov, 1919–1927

involved, except in very recent years, any pressure to implement it and in the Gold Coast, for instance, although it is now 28 years since the policy saw the light of day there is still no African head of any Department. The inaction, if not the policy, of H.M.G. is therefore partly to blame for the present difficulties which the pressure for accelerated Africanisation in West Africa is bringing. There is, however, another major reason for these difficulties in that technical and social advances since the war have so increased the demand for a larger Public Service performing tasks of much greater variety that whether or not Africanisation had been pressed before the war it would still have been necessary to bring in many more overseas officers in the technical fields.

2. It is common ground that the maintenance of the efficiency and self-confidence of the Public Services in the West African territories is a *sine qua non* of the success of H.M.G.'s constitutional experiments there, as the territories contain no substantial uncorrupt middle-class and no other reservoir of talent and experience to protect the common people from exploitation by the very inexperienced and not necessarily high-minded politicians they have voted into power. The political struggle in West Africa is largely over and only the question of the timing of further political advance remains. But the question of the preservation of the standards and integrity of the Public Service is not yet resolved and should perhaps now become the major concern of our policy.

3. On the political front, H.M.G. early recognised that self-government as the expression of the new nationalist feeling was fast becoming the African goal and that to win African goodwill we must make strides towards granting this big enough to involve an element of risk for us and big enough to convince the Africans that we were handing over power out of conscious goodwill and not grudgingly because of internal pressure in the territories. On the political front in West Africa this policy has been largely successful and as a result all the talk there now is of retaining the Commonwealth link when independence is gained. But if we cannot protect the position of the Public Services these new countries may either enter the Commonwealth – or be rejected by it – not as self-respecting nations but as African slums.

4. If we are to tackle this question effectively we must start as we did on the political issue with frank and not reluctant recognition that rapid Africanisation is now a pressing, perhaps the most pressing, local objective, and we must therefore seek to further it and to make it clear that we do further it by positive acts of policy and not merely stand by in passive acquiescence while Africanisation of an unbalanced sort is brought about by purely local devices. Only thus can we hope (if at all) to win enough African goodwill over our attitude to Africanisation to give us a chance of being allowed to guide its progress.

5. It seems to me that to achieve this we may have, through the Governors, to argue out again in both Nigeria and the Gold Coast the basis and objectives of Africanisation and to try to get Ministers to accept a series of propositions on the following lines:-

- (a) It is fully recognised by both H.M.G. and the local governments that ultimate complete Africanisation of the Public Service is a proper and inevitable corollary of the constitutional changes that are taking place.
- (b) At present political advance, which as a deliberate transfer of power can

be achieved quickly, has outstripped the rate of Africanisation of the Public Service which depends on the attainment by many individuals of knowledge and experience which can be gained only over a comparatively long period of time; and urgent steps must be taken to bring the two into line.

(c) The rate of Africanisation and the rate of political advance can be brought into line by one of three methods:-

- (i) political advance can be retarded.
- (ii) standards of service can be so lowered that the efficiency and integrity of the Government machine is seriously impaired.
- (iii) some lowering of the efficiency of the Service may be accepted while all available steps are taken to speed up recruitment to this lower standard.

The difference between (ii) and (iii) above is one of timing – in (iii) you agree to take longer over the job. But (i) is presumably unacceptable locally and (ii) we should strongly urge to be indefensible on every ground. We must therefore get (iii) to be the agreed objective so that further discussion is on how far standards can safely be lowered and on the timing of the programme.

(d) any lowering of standards would come at a most inconvenient time. Because of recent great technological advances, because of the pressure of local demand for increased education and other social services and for economic development, and because political advance itself increases the complexity of, and the strains on, the Government machine, the current need is for a larger and more efficient Public Service. The public which elected the new West African Governments is therefore entitled to have put squarely to it what insistence on over-hasty Africanisation would mean: far from consolidating political advance it would at best seriously retard the promising economic and social progress made since the war, and discourage needed further investment of overseas capital, and at worst it might lead to a voluntary mass exodus of existing overseas officers which would largely paralyse the machinery of Government. A Minister without a Ministry is decorative rather than useful.

(e) In urging therefore that Africanisation should not be pressed at a rate and in a manner seriously prejudicial to the interests of serving overseas officers, H.M.G. is not concerned merely to protect the interests of these officers – that perhaps could be achieved through an adequate compensation scheme – but with guarding against a mass exodus that would stultify H.M.G.'s own policy of promoting the orderly development of self-governing institutions in West Africa.

(f) There is a further consideration. Public Service standards can be lowered by a stroke of the pen. They can be raised only with great difficulty over a long period, for public servants of poor quality, accepted when standards are lowered, cannot be ejected when it is sought to raise the standards. But the West African Governments have not merely internal but external aims: they are looking to the day when self-government shall have reached the point of international recognition and they can seek their own place among the nations and perhaps as full members of the Commonwealth family. They will find great difficulty in achieving these aims, and in particular in being accepted as equal partners in the Commonwealth, if the efficiency of their governmental machinery is sufficiently impaired to make them potentially economic and defence liabilities and generally below the standards expected of members. A low standard of government would

also do little good to the general cause of African nationalism. The ultimate independence of the Gold Coast and Nigeria is not in question. What is in question in the eyes of the world is the social, political and economic levels at which these territories are capable of sustaining their independence.

(g) The West African Governments should also appreciate another implication of drastic Africanisation. Part of the emotional demand for Africanisation is based on a natural desire to prove Africans to be at least as efficient and responsible as Europeans. But this claim, as it is often pressed, goes much further than a claim of equality and approaches a point of absurdity. No European would claim that an inexperienced European junior officer, however distinguished his academic career, could in a year or two accumulate the experience and judgment required of the holder of a very senior post in the Public Service. Yet it is on the belief in the fitness of Africans for promotion as rapid as this that part at least of the case for accelerated Africanisation rests.

(h) With so much at stake H.M.G. do not therefore consider it unreasonable to counsel a certain restraint in pressing Africanisation programmes to a point that may cause chaos in the Public Service, and suggest that if the issues involved are fairly put to the public this counsel will be accepted. But H.M.G. are anxious to do all they can actively to promote rapid Africanisation and point out that their *bona fides* in this respect cannot be questioned as they have already taken the major steps necessary to ensure ultimate Africanisation by promoting the great projects for University and Technical Colleges as well as by awarding many scholarships to the major seats of learning in the U.K.

(i) H.M.G. are therefore prepared to co-operate to the full in any measures that will speed up Africanisation while substantially protecting the standards of the Service. It is recognised that some lowering of standards is called for just as some political risks had to be taken to launch the new constitution. This might involve the following measures:-

(i) H.M.G. attach the highest importance to the practical training of the Africans in the Service and are prepared to assist this both with money and with experienced personnel from the U.K.

(ii) H.M.G. are considering means of creating a U.K. fund for the payment of pensions into which Colonial Governments could make annual payments that would rid them of further pension liability in respect of officers for whom the payments were made.

(iii) H.M.G. are prepared to discuss means of funding the present pension liabilities of the West African Governments.

(iv) H.M.G. are prepared to discuss suitable compensation terms for officers whose services can be dispensed with as suitable African replacements become available. (This might reassure serving officers that their interests will be protected when the time comes and reassure local governments that they can dispense with serving officers without a major row with H.M.G.)

(v) Further pensionable recruitment should be undertaken *only* in exceptional circumstances or where, as perhaps in the case of Northern Nigeria, it continues to be the expressed wish of the territory or region concerned.

(vi) H.M.G. undertake wherever possible to offer transfers to other Colonial territories to officers whose services are no longer required in West Africa. (The

possibilities of these transfers must vary greatly from time to time and between one Service and another.)

(vii) H.M.G. suggest that to avoid friction on both sides and to provide for the careful and efficient management of the Africanisation programme, a permanent body at working level should be set up in each of the territories concerned within the present machinery of Public Service Commission and Establishment Section. There should be both African and European members on this body and the Public Service unions should either be represented on it or have easy and direct access to it. This body should initially review and then keep under review the state of and prospects for the Africanisation of each Department of Government. These reviews might bring to light a variety of circumstances:-

(a) It might appear that the prospects of complete Africanisation of a particular Department within say five years were firm enough for it to be possible to ask the Secretary of State if he could seek within that period to transfer all remaining European officers in the Department.

(b) On the other hand, the prospects of Africanisation might appear so remote that an assurance, couched in suitably guarded terms, might be given to the overseas officers concerned that their services would be required for the foreseeable future.

(c) There might appear a positive reluctance of Africans to enter particular vocations which, in the interests of Africanisation, would have to be overcome by some special inducement or form of direction.

6. The preceding suggestions for tackling the present difficulties over Africanisation are obviously extremely tentative; some of them would involve H.M.G. in considerable expenditure; others of them are by no means new or are already, to some extent, being implemented. But the essence of the matter cannot I think be challenged: the Africanisation issue has now become so important that we can no longer stand aside and leave it to be tackled by piecemeal local arrangements nor can we hope to avoid or defer its unpleasant implications without facing it in detail with the African Ministers. For example, the argument previously used that to discuss compensation terms openly would encourage African Ministers to dispense earlier than they would otherwise have done with overseas officers no longer has validity as they are already considering, with more enthusiasm than judgment, how to do this. Our only chance to achieve a rational settlement of these important issues is that, possessing as we do in both Nigeria and the Gold Coast very distinguished Governors who still command great personal influence and prestige in their territories, we should arm them with every argument we can think of and every proof of H.M.G.'s goodwill that we can muster to enable them to discuss the issues with their Ministers with complete frankness and with a view to reaching understandings that will take account both of West African aspirations and H.M.G.'s own objectives, and that can be put for approval before public opinion in West Africa.

#### Minute with 126

In the Gold Coast and probably soon elsewhere, we are coming to a stage in which a Colonial Government will be allowed effective self-government in internal affairs, only defence and external affairs being reserved to Her Majesty's Government.

2. Undoubtedly self-government in internal affairs must in principle be held to cover all matters relating to the civil service. Any attempt to reserve control of the civil service to an outside authority must seriously weaken confidence in the genuineness of the transfer of power; it must set up a continual source of friction; it must place the civil service in a very difficult position in relation to Ministers, Parliament and public; and it must encourage an irresponsible attitude on the part of Ministers towards civil service questions.

3. It is certainly arguable that if a Colony is given independence in internal affairs it should be left free to staff its own public service as it thinks best, even at some considerable sacrifice of efficiency. We may feel that for the sake of good government it ought to keep European officers, but if it decides otherwise that is its affair. We may also think it desirable that European officers should be retained in order to preserve the British connection; but that connection might be impaired rather than strengthened if the presence of the officers was resented as a vestige of Imperial control. We may also wish to see Europeans retained because of the possibility that the grant of self-government may have at some time to be withdrawn and a reversion to "Crown Colony" government effected, as has in fact happened e.g. in Malta. But this is hardly a consideration which can be expected to appeal to Colonial political leaders.

4. In consequence of the decision, finally taken during the war, not to embark on a policy of real unification of the Colonial Service, we have necessarily taken the line of seeking to integrate the "expatriate" and local elements in each territorial service. To some extent this has been successful, but it cannot be wholly or permanently successful because it is an artificial and not a natural arrangement. The European officers cannot, as a rule, really identify themselves with the Colonial community, and the Colonial community will not, as a rule, accept them as part of itself. It is an unpalatable but inescapable fact that a territory like the Gold Coast will at best regard the European civil servant as a necessary evil, to be eliminated at the earliest possible opportunity, and in the meantime not to be allowed to stand in the way of the advancement of local aspirants to high office.

5. It is clear that we must try to devise a plan which will accept this fact and make the best of it. We shall do more harm than good by seeking to entrench the European civil servants as a privileged class, protected not only in their conditions of service but in their prospects of promotion. On the other hand, we must not give the impression that the Colonial Service no longer offers a career or that the inducements held out to recruits by the Secretary of State are illusory.

6. In this paper I do not propose to consider the terms of future recruitment, but the present state of the Service, since the essential point is not how recruits can be attracted for the future but what is to be done about the existing staffs. The two objectives to be aimed at are:

- (i) That in the general interest as many European officers as possible should be retained on conditions which are acceptable both to them and to the Colonial Government;
- (ii) That those who cannot be or are unwilling to be so retained or suitably employed elsewhere should receive compensation terms which are unquestionably fair and adequate.

7. The second of these aims will no doubt be agreed in principle without dispute. The arrangements for compensation will have to be negotiated, but need not be

discussed here. It is the former aim which is the more important and difficult. I do not believe that it will be attainable except on the basis of a clean cut and a fresh start.

8. It will, I think, be essential that on some appointed day the existing service of *all* European officers shall be deemed to be terminated. Those whom, as a result of previously conducted negotiations it has been arranged to retain, should be reappointed immediately to their offices on new conditions. These conditions again will have been previously negotiated and agreed upon as acceptable to both the government and the staff concerned. They may include some or all of various devices, e.g.

- (a) straightforward continuation of old conditions;
- (b) retirement on pension and re-engagement on contract (with the pension put into cold storage and some provision made for gratuity or additional pension to be paid on expiry of contract);
- (c) transfer to the Colonial Superannuation Scheme; etc.

9. Since Her Majesty's Government has (for reasons mentioned above) an interest from several points of view in seeing that as many European officers as possible are in fact kept on, it will clearly pay to make it as easy as possible for them to be kept on, and even to offer inducements to keep them on. The problem would be greatly simplified if the "British Oversea Service" were in being, since some at least of the officers concerned could be transferred to that Service and employed in the Gold Coast on secondment.<sup>3</sup> In the absence of such a Service, parts of the problem may be capable of solution by other devices. The staff which the Governor will require for dealing with defence and external affairs might be taken over entirely by Her Majesty's Government, either by transfer to the home service or under an arrangement by which Her Majesty's Government would repay the Gold Coast Government the whole or a substantial part of their salaries and a contribution towards their prospective pensions.

10. There are obvious objections to any *general* arrangement by which Her Majesty's Government would subsidise the Gold Coast (which can well afford to pay) in connection with the salaries or pensions of European officers who are doing ordinary jobs as servants of the Gold Coast Government. But there is room for examining the possibility of covering some of the ground by a sort of "technical assistance" formula, by which as a contribution to development and welfare the United Kingdom should pay (perhaps actually out of Colonial Development and Welfare funds, if necessary under a new Act) something representing the extra expense to which the Colony is put by having to employ persons from outside to do work for which local people with the necessary qualifications are not yet available. It should be practicable to make a survey of the present staff and to mark out certain posts and officers as suitable for this kind of treatment.

11. These tentative suggestions would need a good deal of working out, but I think that it would be better to approach the problem in the sort of ways indicated in this paper than to try to make the local politicians see sense by using threats of "evacuation", etc.

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<sup>3</sup> On the British Oversea Service, see BDEEP series A, D Goldsworthy, ed, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951-1957*, part II, chapter 4.

**127** CO 554/254

31 Mar 1953

**'Constitutional problems in the Gold Coast and Nigeria': note by T B Williamson on points for discussion with Sir C Arden-Clarke (on Africanisation, the Northern Territories and Togoland) and Sir J Macpherson** [Extract]

In minutes submitted last week on WAF 39/2/04 and WAF 39/3/03 I said that I hoped to put forward some ideas which might be of help in the discussions which we shall be having with the Governors of the Gold Coast and Nigeria in mid-April.

2. Although these discussions originate from proposed changes in the Gold Coast I shall begin this note with, and devote much of it to, Nigeria because I think we have got to start by offering Sir J. Macpherson something positive and constructive in place of the negative reaction which we have had from him so far to the proposals for changes in the Gold Coast. If we succeed in that, we should then be able to proceed with plans for the Gold Coast roughly at the point where they were left early in March; though there are one or two matters which we now need to discuss further with Sir C. Arden-Clarke.

*[paras 3-11 on Nigeria: omitted]*

*Gold Coast*

12. I now revert to the Gold Coast. Since Sir T. Lloyd wrote his letter of the 5th March to Sir J Macpherson,<sup>1</sup> there have been certain developments which will need to be discussed with Sir C. Arden-Clarke before the Secretary of State can formulate his proposals for submission to the Cabinet. The first relates to *Africanisation* of the Gold Coast Public Service. Briefly, the position on this is as follows.

13. Africanisation of the Public Service, although accepted policy for many years, has proceeded much more slowly in the higher posts than has the process of transferring political responsibility and power to Africans. There is no African Permanent Secretary to any Ministry, nor even an African Director of Department, although the first African Director is likely soon to be appointed, namely the Commissioner of Prisons.

14. In view of the expected further constitutional advance, the striking contrast between African political responsibility but continuing European 'authority' in the Public Service is again being emphasized by all the political parties. Pressure for accelerated Africanisation even at the cost of efficiency is increasing; and there have been renewed attacks in the Legislative Assembly on overseas officers. The Government recently appointed a Standing Committee on Africanisation (mainly composed of members of the Assembly) to consider the problem, and an Official Working Party (of two Africans and one European) recently made an Interim Report on the subject which was discussed by the Cabinet and passed on to the Civil Service Associations. This report suggested that development might have to be cut to avoid a further influx of overseas officers, and that the normal factors governing promotion, namely merit and seniority, might have to be ignored in order to get Africans quickly into the highest posts. This latter suggestion would involve amending the present

<sup>1</sup> See 123.

constitutional safeguards of the Public Service; but the Governor has expressed his confidence that these safeguards can be preserved in the next set of constitutional instruments which, on the present timetable, would be made about the middle of 1954.

15. The pressure for more rapid Africanisation has come to stay; and means must be devised of ensuring not only that any overseas officers affected receive proper compensation for loss of career, but that every practical step is taken to preserve the standards of the Public Service while Africanisation proceeds. These two problems are being studied. Meanwhile there is an important point which has not, I think, so far been taken, and which should be clarified with Sir C. Arden-Clarke on the 15th/16th April. Although he has good hope of preserving the existing safeguards for the Public Service in the next set of constitutional amendments, he expects that during the period between that change and the grant of full self-government, say between mid-1954, and 1957/8, arrangements will have to be made for some anyway of the top posts in the Service to be taken over by Africans. But unless these appointments were made on merit (which is unlikely) they could not be made without, I think, an amendment of the constitution because they would involve an alteration in the existing practice governing the promotion of public officers. Even if it were not strictly necessary to amend the constitution, the existing safeguards would have gone and this would have to be publicly admitted; and H.M.G.'s agreement to their abandonment would have to be made conditional on the Gold Coast's making adequate provision to compensate officers in the Service for loss of career.

16. The next point concerns the *Northern Territories*. In view of the response from the Northern Territories' Council to Nkrumah's statement of the 16th October (in which they counsel moderation, wish the three *ex-officio* Ministers to be retained in the Cabinet, and demand a quarter of the seats), it is necessary to consider the special position of the Northern Territories as a Protectorate. The following paragraphs have been prepared by Mr M G Smith and agreed by Mr Peck.<sup>2</sup>

17. "In 1897 the Northern Territories were constituted a separate Protectorate with a Commissioner-in-Charge, and the boundaries were delimited by agreements between Great Britain and France, and Great Britain and Germany, in 1898 and 1899. The Northern Territories Order in Council of 1901 recited that His Majesty had, by treaty, grant, usage, sufferance and other lawful means power and jurisdiction in the Northern Territories, which were under His protection, described the boundaries by reference to the agreements with France and Germany and the 8th parallel of north latitude, and brought the Territories under the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Gold Coast. These actions followed a series of treaties made in 1897 with the various chiefs and tribes of the Northern Territories. Hertslet<sup>3</sup> states (Vol. I, page 78), that by these treaties of Friendship and Protection, the Chiefs engaged not to conclude treaties with any other Power or to cede territory or accept Protectorates without the consent of Her Majesty. The actual texts of the treaties (which are in the Public Record Office) are being examined to confirm that they contain no other

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<sup>2</sup> J A Peck, CO principal assistant legal adviser.

<sup>3</sup> Sir E Hertslet, *The map of Africa by treaty* 2 vols (London, 1894).

provisions of importance in the present context. The successive Orders in Council constituting the Northern Territories and providing for their administration have all assumed a jurisdiction unfettered by treaty obligation. Thus in the Order in Council of 1901 the Governor, who is empowered to legislate generally by ordinance, has that power fettered, not by reference to any treaties, but only to the extent that the ordinances "shall respect any native laws by which the civil relations of any native chiefs, tribes or populations under H. M. protection are now regulated, except so far as the same may be incompatible with the due exercise of H.M. power and jurisdiction, or clearly injurious to the welfare of the said natives".

18. The Northern Territories are listed as a Protectorate under the British Protectorates etc. Order in Council, 1949, made under the British Nationality Act, 1948, and their peoples have the status of "British protected persons".

19. The position therefore seems clearly to be that the Northern Territories are a legal entity separate from the Colony and Ashanti, constituted by separate instrument. H.M.G. has no obligation either to the Colony, Ashanti, or to the Northern Territories to treat the latter in exactly the same way as the Colony and Ashanti; and if the Northern Territories wish not to be so treated, H.M.G. is entitled to decide their future separately from the Colony and Ashanti by further separate instruments. But we must surely avoid this if we possibly can, and the Governor's aim will doubtless be to get proposals put forward to H.M.G. which will satisfy the reasonable claims of both the Northern Territories and the rest of the country. The Northern Territories Council's memorandum and the status of the Territories themselves will however be a powerful bargaining counter in his hand.

20. Finally we must bear in mind the position of *Togoland* under U.K. trusteeship. The paragraphs which follow have been agreed with International Relations Department.

21. "The key article in the Trusteeship Agreement for British Togoland is 5(a), which provides that the Administering Authority (i.e. the U.K. Government) "shall have full powers of legislation, administration and jurisdiction in the Territory, and shall administer it in accordance with its own laws as an integral part of its territory . . .".

22. In the U.N. debates on the Agreement it was stated on behalf of the U.K. Government that "its territory" meant the Gold Coast. The U.K. is therefore bound to administer British Togoland as a part of the Gold Coast, so that, *inter alia*, Togoland must participate in the political development of the Gold Coast. The U.K. has relied on this Article to defend itself before the U.N. against charges of annexing Togoland to the Gold Coast. It cannot therefore be said that the Trusteeship Agreement either requires or entitles the U.K. Government to provide for the political development of Togoland apart from the Gold Coast.

23. Some play might be made with the first clause of Article 5(a) – the Administering Authority "shall have full powers of legislation . . . in the Territory". If the Gold Coast were to have an all African Cabinet and practically full internal self-government it could be argued that H.M.G. would no longer have "full powers of legislation" etc. But as Article 5(a) also makes it obligatory to administer Togoland with the Gold Coast the answer to this cannot be to administer Togoland separately, but instead to seek the termination of the Agreement as no longer workable.

24. It would appear therefore that we cannot use the status of Togoland as a Trust Territory to put the brake on the Gold Coast. The position rather is that

developments in the Gold Coast would in due course make it necessary for us to get the Trusteeship Agreement terminated. Meanwhile it should be pointed out that if the Northern Territories press their demand (included in their reply to Nkrumah's statement of 16th October) for early integration of Northern British Togoland with the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, that demand could only be met without offence to the Trusteeship Agreement if the Northern Territories continued as an integral part of the Gold Coast.

**128** CO 554/254, no 2

15 Apr 1953

'Constitutional problems in Nigeria and the Gold Coast': CO note of a meeting between Mr Lyttelton and Sir C Arden-Clarke and Sir J Macpherson [Extract]

[Arden-Clarke and Macpherson had two meetings at the CO on 15 Apr. Both meetings covered the same ground and the record of the first, which was chaired by Lloyd and attended by CO officials as well as the two governors, is not reproduced in this collection. Both meetings began with a review of the political situation in Nigeria in which Macpherson explained that discord between the three regions of Nigeria had been brought to the surface by recent events, in particular the debate on 31 Mar 1953 in the House of Representatives on a private member's motion about the attainment of self-government in 1956. The discussion of the Nigerian situation has been omitted from the note of the meeting reproduced here.]

...

### *The Gold Coast*

9. In response to the *Secretary of State's* invitation, *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* outlined the major problems that might arise in the constitutional review that was proceeding in the Gold Coast. Mr. Nkrumah would press strongly for an all-black Cabinet, and this might be conceded if the portfolio of external affairs and defence were abolished, and these subjects were made the direct responsibility of the Governor. A Deputy Governor could be appointed who, as Secretary for Defence, would handle external affairs and defence on the Governor's behalf. It would be necessary to keep in touch with African Ministers on these subjects, and this could be done through a Defence Committee presided over by the Governor and comprising three African Ministers, including the Prime Minister, and the Secretary for Defence. The Prime Minister would answer on external affairs and defence in the Legislative Assembly.

10. *Sir J. Macpherson* said that from the standpoint of Nigeria he would have preferred the retention by an *ex-officio* Minister of the portfolio of defence and external affairs.

11. *The Secretary of State* said that the objections he saw to the arrangements described by Sir C. Arden-Clarke were that they would leave the Governor open to personal criticism for his handling of the subjects assigned directly to him, and force the Prime Minister to answer in the legislature on matters not under his control. But the creation of an "all-black" Cabinet might achieve a psychological success that would take much of the sting out of the nationalist attack, while a single white Minister of Defence and External Affairs would be in an intolerable position in both the Cabinet and the legislature. On balance therefore he thought it better that the Governor should assume direct responsibility for these subjects.

12. In reply to the *Minister of State, Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the Northern Territories Council, in their recent Memorandum on Constitutional Reform, had recommended that the posts of the three *ex-officio* Ministers should be retained but had asked that the Northern Territories should hold a quarter of the seats in the Cabinet. But the demand from the rest of the country for the abolition of the *ex-officio* posts was so widespread that the Northern Territories would probably have to accept a compromise solution. He thought they would be reasonably content to compromise provided the Governor retained responsibility for defence and external affairs and they secured a quarter of the seats in the Cabinet of which there would probably be twelve. Before the Gold Coast Government drafted its promised White Paper for debate in the Assembly in July, Mr. Nkrumah would probably invite representatives of all parties which had advanced constitutional proposals, including the Northern Territories Council, to discuss *in camera* the various recommendations made so that so far as possible agreed proposals could be drafted. The Assembly debate on the White Paper would give the Northern Territories' representatives a further chance to state their views. If in due course the present constitutional proposals took effect and after fresh elections a fully representative Assembly met and discussed a demand for full membership of the Commonwealth or complete independence, the Northern Territories' representatives would have yet another, perhaps final, opportunity to state their views and to decide whether or not to continue in association with the southern regions of the Gold Coast.

13. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he had always made it clear to Mr. Nkrumah that responsibility for the police, as the major internal security force, could not be separated from defence. The new constitutional instruments should therefore vest overriding control of the police in the Governor. But, as in defence matters, an African Minister would have to be associated with police affairs so that he could answer in the Assembly, and also so that some experience by an African Minister of responsibility for the police and some decent practice and precedents for dealing with police questions might be developed before full self-government was attained and responsibility for the police passed entirely into African hands. In accordance with the Young Report new organs for dealing with the police were being formed into which an African Minister of the Interior could be fitted. A Police Council had been set up, and a Police Service Commission would shortly be set up. The Governor would normally use as his agent on police matters the Secretary for Defence, who would act in consultation with the Minister of the Interior. For operational purposes the Commissioner would in practice continue to direct the Force on his own authority, and in cases of difficulty would have the right of direct access to the Governor.

14. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that these proposals for the police would bring the Gold Coast roughly into line with the arrangements recently agreed for Barbados, where detailed procedures had been spelt out with care in a document of the 16th January, 1953, which *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* might find helpful. The essential point to preserve was that the Commissioner should have the right of direct access to the Governor at any time about any police matter without the Minister objecting.

15. *Sir J. Macpherson* said that the introduction in the Gold Coast of the proposed changes in handling the police might make it difficult for him to resist a demand which had already been made by the Western Region Government that the Nigeria police should be regionalised. *Sir T. Lloyd* considered that responsibility for

the police in Nigeria might be kept at the centre as an aspect of the central subject of defence. *Mr. Williamson* suggested as a possible alternative, and *Sir T. Lloyd* agreed, that even if the police were regionalised this need not be regarded as necessarily a danger to good government provided the Lieutenant-Governors retained powers over regional forces similar to those which it was intended that the Governor of the Gold Coast should retain over the Gold Coast police.

16. *The Secretary of State* said that arrangements for the Gold Coast police as now outlined would probably be acceptable to Her Majesty's Government. If the Western Region of Nigeria insisted on emulating the Gold Coast they would then merely be demanding that the Lieutenant-Governor should have overriding control of the police.

17. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that the effect on the Gold Coast Public Service of the constitutional changes proposed, and the pressure that was being exerted for accelerated Africanisation of the Public Service, was being discussed separately with the Governor.<sup>1</sup> The position of the Public Service was at present safeguarded by the provisions of the Order in Council, and if these provisions were to be altered the Gold Coast Government must be required at the same time to make available an adequate and continuing compensation scheme for officers, mainly from overseas, whose posts were abolished or whose careers were prejudiced. The Governor had reasonable hope that in the next stage of constitutional advance the existing safeguards might be preserved intact. A compensation scheme was, however, being drafted for discussion when necessary with the Gold Coast Government. Meanwhile it would reassure the Public Service if, at a time recommended as suitable by the Governor, the Secretary of State issued a statement, agreed with the Gold Coast Government, that the existing safeguards would not be altered in anyway unless a proper compensation scheme was provided by the Gold Coast; and that when the safeguards were removed offers of transfer would be made to overseas officers whenever suitable vacancies occurred in other territories. *The Secretary of State* agreed that such a statement should be made.

18. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he had told Mr. Nkrumah that, whatever happened to the post of Minister of Justice, the post of Attorney-General must remain a non-political appointment in the Public Service. It was not certain that the Gold Coast would insist on having an African Minister of Justice as a member of the Cabinet.

19. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that in any future constitutional developments in the Gold Coast the trusteeship status of Togoland must not be overlooked. So long as the Trusteeship Agreement was in force it would be necessary to ensure that Her Majesty's Government retained a sufficient measure of control over Togoland affairs to discharge its obligations to the United Nations. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that he had warned his Ministers that Togoland was, and at least for the duration of the Trusteeship Agreement would remain, a United Kingdom responsibility.

20. *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* asked what, if anything, he could at this stage safely say to Gold Coast Ministers about the attitude of Her Majesty's Government to further

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<sup>1</sup> At the meeting between the two governors and CO officials on 15 Apr, Macpherson said that in the matter of the public service there was a difference between Nigeria and the Gold Coast: 'In Nigeria, the British officer was the only 'cement' uniting the country, and if he left the country would disintegrate.'

constitutional changes in the Gold Coast. They would be expecting him to say something on his return from the U.K.

21. *The Secretary of State* replied that it should be made clear that the sticking points would be the retention by Her Majesty's Government of responsibility through the Governor for external affairs and defence including the police, and retention of the post of Attorney-General as a non-political appointment in the Public Service. The rest was open for manoeuvre, but the Gold Coast Government should be warned that fears of financial instability highly detrimental to Gold Coast credit might easily be aroused among overseas investors by the entry into office of an African Minister of Finance, unless it was apparent that he was receiving and was receptive to sound and impartial advice, and that the country's finances continued to be properly managed.

22. *The Minister of State* suggested that the adoption of machinery analogous to that of a "caisse de la dette" might help to preserve Gold Coast credit. It was agreed that this question should be further examined. *Mr. Gorell Barnes* added that currency questions might also arise in connection with future constitutional changes.

23. In reply to enquiries by *Sir C. Arden-Clarke* and *Sir J. Macpherson* the *Secretary of State* confirmed that he would shortly acquaint his Cabinet colleagues with likely developments in the Gold Coast and would mention possible repercussions in Nigeria.

**129** T 220/389, ff 143–151

5 May 1953

'West African Forces Conference': memorandum by W Russell-Edmonds (Treasury) on the Lagos Conference, 20-25 Apr 1953

[The West African Forces Conference was opened by Macpherson and chaired by Hopkinson. Nigeria was represented by Mr E Njoku (minister of mines and power) and Mr Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (minister of works and transport). The Gold Coast was represented by Mr Braimah and Mr Casely-Hayford. Sierra Leone was represented by Mr Siaka Stevens (unofficial member of the Executive Council) and Gambia by A N A Waddell (colonial secretary). The UK delegation consisted of representatives from the CO, the Treasury, the War Office and West Africa Command. The agenda was based on four main headings: (1) the scale of military forces, (2) the cost of maintaining the forces and how that cost should be met, (3) works services, (4) other questions.]

1. In a separate memorandum, I have reported on the Conference in detail. In this memorandum, I summarise the outstanding points of the Conference and its outcome.

2. The Conference followed the pattern expected, but did not yield as good a financial result as the War Office and Colonial Office were firmly convinced, beforehand, would be achieved. Mr. Gardner,<sup>1</sup> War Office representative, had visited the West African territories in January, 1953, to prepare the way for the conference. He had discussions with African Ministers and officials in the territories and he formed the opinion that the territories would be generous in the matter of their

<sup>1</sup> W H Gardner, WO assistant under-secretary of state.

contributions provided they obtained certain political objectives at the Conference. From his discussions, he was fully seized of the objectives the territories sought and he had fully discussed these in the War Office. The War Office were prepared to concede the objectives of the territories with certain provisos. In the main, as long as the War Office retained operational and administrative control of the West African Forces, they were prepared to go a long way to meet the territories.

3. The major aims of the territories as disclosed beforehand, and at the Conference, were:-

- (i) They wanted their own national armies.
- (ii) They wanted as much control of their Forces as they could get and, in particular, wanted some say in the appointment of the G.O.C.-in-C. West Africa Command and in the functions he would discharge.
- (iii) Africanisation of the Forces to the full, and as soon as possible.
- (iv) African officers' pay and pensions on a scale which gave a measure of equality with the British officers in the Forces.

4. The War Office representative was a leading member of the U.K. Delegation. The War Office, by virtue of their operational and administrative control of the Forces, were the Department which handled all questions of costs of the Forces, their strength and organisation, all matters affecting the day to day running of the Forces and general policy. Mr. Gardner, the War Office representative, was not disturbed, as I was, with the way the Conference ran for the first three days. The territories were out to secure their political objectives before getting down to the financial contributions they would make. He (Mr. Gardner) was firmly of the opinion from his visit in January and the talks he had prior to the opening of the Conference – he was in West Africa for about ten days before the Conference opened – that the territories would be very forthcoming on financial contributions if their political objectives were secured. Having conceded most of the points the territories wanted, the War Office representative was very disappointed with the financial outcome. He showed his disappointment at the meeting on the fourth and fifth day in no uncertain manner (almost to the point of petulance primarily due, I think, to his state of health which had been far from good during the Conference). He had ably presented and argued the United Kingdom case and he was obviously very much *persona grata* with the African Ministers.

5. The contributions finally offered by the territories were:

	£	£
<i>Nigeria</i>	1,380,000	
<i>less</i> sum earmarked for training African Officers	10,000	1,370,000
<i>Gold Coast</i>	1,000,000	
<i>less</i> sum earmarked for training African Officers	10,000	990,000
<i>Sierra Leone</i> (includes works services)		100,000
<i>Gambia</i> (includes works services)		16,500
		<u>2,476,500</u>
<i>United Kingdom</i>		3,023,500
<i>Cost of the Forces</i>		<u>£5,500,000</u>

Of the £3,023,500 shown as United Kingdom contribution, the War Office offered to bear £885,000. The course of the negotiations resulted in a gap of £200,000 remaining unclosed by either the territories or H.M.G. which arose from a manoeuvre to try and get the territories to increase their contributions. The Minister of State, who Chairmanned the Conference, decided that this gap would be met by H.M.G., leaving it to be settled in London as to the share of this £200,000 which would be borne by the War Office Vote and the Colonial Services Vote (I have dealt more fully with the tactics employed which brought about this gap in the other memorandum). The War Office representative admitted to the Minister of State that the Army Council were prepared to go to £1 million as a charge to War Office Votes; but he did not consider that the War Office were justified, on the way the Conference had gone, to take any more on Army Votes. If the £200,000 is shared equally between War Office Votes and Colonial Services Vote, the saving to the Colonial Services Vote in 1954/55, as compared with the provision made for 1953/4, would be of the order of £500,000.

6. The concessions which were made at the Conference were:—

- (i) It was made clear in the report that its military Forces are the national Forces of its territory.
- (ii) An Army Advisory Council for West Africa recommended to be set up.
- (iii) The G.O.C.-in-C. West Africa would be appointed at the invitation of the four West African Governments with functions to be agreed by all the Governments concerned in terms that such functions should be those which can be discharged centrally with the greatest convenience and economy.
- (iv) That the pensions for African other ranks should be the responsibility of the West African Governments who would frame their own pensions code.

7. On the credit side, following joint efforts by the War Office representative and myself on the last day to secure some points which could be turned to advantage in the near future:—

- (i) The Nigerian and Gold Coast Governments are on record in the report “. . . and noting the statements made by the Nigerian and Gold Coast Delegations that it is the desire of their respective Governments to increase their contributions to the cost of maintenance of their Forces as soon as possible to the point when they will be able to assume the full burden”.
- (ii) The contributions, as above, are for the financial year 1954/55.
- (iii) The War Office have agreed to provide a forecast of costs each year and this will enable the question to be raised as to the order of the contributions of the respective Governments for the ensuing twelve months, bearing (i) particularly in mind.

8. The question of African officers' pay and pensions was shelved. Mr. Gardner, the War Office representative, stayed on after the Conference closed to have further discussions with representatives of the Nigerian and Gold Coast Governments to see whether a set of principles could be worked out upon which a detailed scheme could be framed and considered by the War Office.

9. It now remains to be seen how the War Office view the results of the Conference. If they consider that a marked change has taken place which affects the value of the West African Forces to H.M.G., then the question must be answered as to

whether some £3 million of the United Kingdom taxpayers' money is justified on these West African Forces. If the present order of things is to continue, pressure should be brought to bear on the Nigeria and Gold Coast Governments to take on an increasing share of the cost of their Forces as they have declared to be their aim.

**130** DO 35/6168

8 – 12 May 1953

[Constitutional reform]: CRO minutes by A F Morley, R R Sedgwick and J J S Garner on the proposed reforms

[The paper to which Morley refers at the beginning of the first minute reproduced here is an extract from a West African intelligence summary, no 54, dated 28 Apr 1953. The summary reported CPP demands as being: (a) the removal of the *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council, (b) the introduction of universal adult suffrage and an increase in the number of constituencies, (c) the retention of a single assembly and the continued existence of territorial councils as deliberative bodies, (d) the passing of an act of independence by the UK parliament and the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly declaring the Gold Coast to be, under the name of Ghana, a sovereign and independent state within the Commonwealth (DO 35/6168, no 2A).]

*Mr. Sedgwick*

This paper is not intended by the Colonial Office for discussion in Cabinet. It deals in the main, if I may continue Sir P. Liesching's metaphor, with the shape and size of the final article to be thrown to the wolves before they overtake the political sledge carrying full self-Government, if not full Commonwealth status. The Governor who was recently here for consultation has already been authorised to begin, and has begun, negotiations with his Government along the lines indicated in paragraph 5 about the proposals which the Gold Coast Government, after the debate in the Legislature in July, will formally submit to the United Kingdom Government. *If* the Governor is able to keep these proposals within the limits authorised the approval of the final proposals would seem inevitably to follow, though there would be a great deal of detail for consideration at that stage. It seems arguable that we are already past the moment when the matter might have been brought to Cabinet for discussion, but there is no reason for the C.R.O. to make an issue of that.

If all goes as at present planned, the new Constitution would come into force about mid-1954 and we shall then enter the stage for determining what is meant by full self-government within the Commonwealth, though the Colonial Office anticipate that that stage may take three or four years before it is complete. I understand that the Colonial Office envisage that, before the Gold Coast actually becomes self-governing, the Trusteeship Agreement in respect of British Togoland would be given up and that territory fully integrated with the Gold Coast.

The significant consideration about the instructions given to Sir Arden Clarke is that he is to go for a Constitution which would be much more dyarchic than previously envisaged. Defence (including the Police) and external affairs would be the direct responsibility of the Governor and not that of an official member of the Cabinet. This proposal may turn out to have in the long run considerable advantage. If our present thinking on the general problem of the position of self-governing Commonwealth countries which are not full Members of the Commonwealth proves fruitful, we shall be aiming at a situation in which responsibility for the defence and

foreign affairs of territories such as the Gold Coast will be retained by, or re-entrusted to, the United Kingdom Government. It would very much ease the transition to such a situation if these subjects had previously been a direct responsibility of the Governor.

In general the proposed Constitution appears to bear a remarkably close resemblance to that which we had in Burma between 1937 and the Japanese invasion, and which may, viewed against all that has happened since, perhaps be said to have worked reasonably well (though we did not always think so at the time).<sup>1</sup> The Colonial Office will, however, have to do a good deal of thinking about the places where the reserved subjects impinge on ministerial subjects, and it will be interesting to see whether they can manage without so elaborate a Constitution as that contained in the Government of Burma Act, 1935. The treatment of responsibility for the Police and perhaps of safeguards for overseas officers will be crucial in this regard. There is room for doubt about a system under which an elected minister answers in the Legislature for the Governor's handling of defence and external affairs. This might be unsatisfactory, particularly where the reserved subjects impinge on the ministerial subjects (e.g. an increase of expenditure on police involving an increase of taxation). These are, however, hardly matters for the C.R.O. to consider in detail.

We shall have to consider carefully at what stage to inform Commonwealth Governments of what is afoot. I am inclined to think that we should discuss with the Colonial Office whether anything can usefully be said prior to the debate in the Gold Coast Legislature in July, when many wild things will certainly be said which may create unnecessary alarm and despondency in Pretoria and elsewhere. I would propose therefore to have the file brought up about 20th June. Meanwhile I attach a brief draft letter to Sir P. Liesching to send to Sir T. Lloyd & have asked the CO to let me see any major telegrams from the Governor.

A.F.M.  
8.5.53

*Mr. Garner*

The most significant features of these proposals from our point of view are:-

- (a) that the next stage of constitutional advance should be restricted to internal affairs, which would be the responsibility of Gold Coast Ministers; the Governor retaining direct responsibility for external affairs and defence. As Mr. Morley says, this might make it easier when the time comes to put across the idea of a "mezzanine status" for new Members – a sort of "independence minus" to adapt Mr. Fraser's<sup>2</sup> expression;
- (b) that as soon as the new stage is brought into force, i.e. in a year's time, we may be faced with a demand for complete self-government for the Gold Coast, as a Member of the Commonwealth. In that event, however, the Governor hopes that the position could be held for as long as three or four years.

<sup>1</sup> Morley entered the India Office in 1930 and served as an assistant secretary at the Burma Office between 1945 and 1947. He was on loan to the Treasury, 1947–1950, and deputy UK high commissioner in New Zealand, 1950–1953. He became an assistant under-secretary of state at the CRO in 1954.

<sup>2</sup> P Fraser, prime minister of New Zealand, 1940–1949.

2. You asked for a brief on West Africa for the Prime Ministers' Meeting. It is suggested that the annexed paper might serve as this brief.

3. Draft herewith to Sir Thomas Lloyd and bring up, as Mr. Morley proposes, on the 20th June for consideration of communication to other Commonwealth Governments about these developments.

R.R.S  
8.5.53

*Sir P. Liesching*

The draft Cabinet Paper<sup>3</sup> is most interesting – if disturbing. The pace of “advance” in the Gold Coast seems headlong but, once having embarked on this course, it is obviously extremely difficult to apply the brakes.

2. I like the provision for the Governor's maintaining control of foreign affairs and defence – this fits in very well with our own ideas and I hope it will be manageable in the Colony.<sup>4</sup>

3. Even so, it should be noted that even if all the Governor's hopes are fulfilled, the best apparently that we can hope for is that the real crisis can only be staved off until 1958.

J.J.S.G.  
12.5.53

<sup>3</sup> See 131 for the paper as submitted.

<sup>4</sup> Sir P Liesching noted in the margin: 'I should not expect it to last long.'

**131** PREM 11/1367, C(53)154

13 May 1953

**'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast and Nigeria': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lyttleton**

*The Gold Coast*

On 12th February, 1952, the Cabinet approved a number of constitutional changes, including the use of the title of Prime Minister, in the Gold Coast (C.C. (52) 16th Conclusions, Minute 6). These changes, proposed in C.(52) 28, took effect in March 1952.<sup>1</sup>

2. During my visit to the Gold Coast in June, 1952,<sup>2</sup> the African Ministers, against a background of some carefully prepared “spontaneous” demonstrations, were at pains to impress upon me that they and the country wanted something which they variously described as “freedom,” “self-government now” and “Dominion status.” After a series of discussions, during which I was able to bring home to them, or at any rate to the Prime Minister (Dr. Nkrumah), a certain number of home truths, I authorised the issue of the following communiqué:-

<sup>1</sup> See part I of this volume, 115–116.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, 118.

“During his visit to the Gold Coast the Secretary of State had meetings with the Ministers. The Prime Minister and other representative Ministers made clear their wish for self-government within the Commonwealth.

“There was discussion on the meaning of this term and of what constitutional changes were involved. It was agreed by the Secretary of State that when proposals for constitutional change had been formulated by the Gold Coast Government after consultation with the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast they would be examined and discussed between Her Majesty’s Government and the Government of the Gold Coast.”

3. In October last Dr. Nkrumah spoke in the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly about those features of the constitution which might be considered suitable for amendment and asked that political parties and other representative bodies should submit recommendations to him by the end of March 1953. The Gold Coast Government would then consider those recommendations and embody its own proposals in a White Paper for debate in the Legislature in July next.

4. Most of the views thus sought have now been published. The Northern Territories Council, which represents the poorest and most backward region of the territory, wants few changes apart from special help for its development and increased representation in the Cabinet. All the other groups advance a demand, expressed in different forms, for full self-government forthwith. The Gold Coast Government will be bound to take account of this broadly-based demand in formulating its own proposals; it will also be influenced by recent constitutional developments elsewhere such as the Sudan Agreement: I drew attention at the time to the implications for the African Colonies. It may be assumed therefore that if the Government of the Gold Coast is to continue to be by consent constitutional changes are inescapable. The alternative to an early grant of full self-government is agreement on changes which, though substantial enough to earn acceptance, may enable the grant of full self-government to be delayed for a further preparatory period.

5. I have discussed the situation fully with the Governor. Although he can give no guarantees, he is reasonably confident that by patient negotiation he will be able to keep the proposals finally submitted to Her Majesty’s Government within the following limits:-

- (a) The posts of the three *ex-officio* Ministers to be abolished. Representative Ministers would take over the portfolios of Finance and perhaps also of Justice. (The Minister of Finance would be assisted by a European Economic and Financial Adviser, or by some other machinery like a *caisse de la dette*, and the post of Attorney-General would become a non-political appointment in the Civil Service.) Defence (including the police) and External Affairs would become the direct responsibility of the Governor.
- (b) The membership of the Legislative Assembly to be increased and to consist only of persons chosen by direct elections throughout the territory by universal adult suffrage. If a second Chamber, probably with delaying powers, is proposed it would include representatives of the Chiefs chosen by their Territorial Councils and perhaps European representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and Mines.
- (c) The Governor’s present reserved powers to be retained.

The Governor expects that after the debate in the Legislature in July the Gold Coast Government would appoint a Committee to work out detailed recommendations on electoral reform so that their full proposals could be submitted to Her Majesty's Government by about November. The Gold Coast Government would hope that agreement could be reached in time for fresh constitutional instruments to be made and new elections held by about July 1954 – six months earlier than they would be under the present constitution.

6. If the Governor's hopes are realised the next stage of constitutional advance would be restricted to internal affairs. Her Majesty's Government would retain responsibility for external affairs and defence, including the police as the principle [sic] force charged with internal security. The Governor has recommended, and I agree, that these subjects should be removed from the Gold Coast Cabinet and made his direct responsibility exercised through a Deputy Governor acting as Secretary for Defence. In so far as it was necessary selected Representative Ministers would be appointed to a small Defence Committee over which the Governor would preside: the Prime Minister would answer questions, and handle other business (*e.g.*, supply), in the Legislature on defence and external affairs; another Minister would similarly handle police matters in the Legislature but the constitution would reserve overriding control of the Police to the Governor.

The objection to the alternative course of seeking to preserve in the Cabinet the present *ex-officio* post of Minister of Defence and External Affairs is that its holder would then be the only European Cabinet Minister: and he could hardly fail to be a target for constant fire.

7. There would be thus created an all-African Cabinet, with wide responsibility for internal affairs, over which the Prime Minister would normally preside and we might thereby gain a psychological advantage that would draw much of the sting from the nationalist attack. A practical advantage is that the Deputy Governor and Secretary for Defence who would, when necessary, act as Governor, would escape the embarrassment, to which the person who now has so to act is subject, of being normally a Minister junior to the Prime Minister.

8. Although these arrangements will not satisfy the wish of the Northern Territories Council for the retention of *ex-officio* posts in the Cabinet, their representatives would take part in the party consultations and in the debate in the Legislature which will precede the final framing of the constitutional proposals of the Gold Coast Government, and the Governor has advised me that they are likely to be reasonably satisfied by a compromise which gives them a quarter of the seats in the Cabinet and leaves control of defence and external affairs to the Governor.

9. British Togoland is administered under Trusteeship Agreement as part of the Gold Coast and so long as that Agreement is in force Her Majesty's Government, as part of its general responsibility for the external affairs of the Gold Coast, must retain through the Governor a sufficient measure of control to discharge its obligations to the United Nations.

10. I have informed the Governor, who has now returned to the Gold Coast, that there are certain matters on which Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to negotiate. Her Majesty's Government will insist on retaining responsibility for external affairs and defence including the police, and the post of Attorney-General must remain a non-political appointment in the Public Service: the rest is open for manoeuvre.

11. The position of officers from the United Kingdom, who still hold most of the senior appointments in the Gold Coast Service, is safeguarded by the present constitutional instruments under which the Governor can protect their conditions of service and prospects of a career. Political advance has outstripped the pace at which Africans are being trained to occupy responsible posts in the Gold Coast Service and there is now increasing pressure to hasten the process of Africanisation of that Service by expedients which would lower its standards and prejudice the normal prospects of overseas officers. The Governor has advised me that, notwithstanding that pressure, there is good hope that the existing safeguards of overseas officers can be retained at the next stage of constitutional advance. If, however, existing safeguards had to be modified I should feel obliged to insist that the Gold Coast Government should forthwith introduce a scheme giving, as an addition to normal pension, adequate compensation for loss of career. To reassure the Public Service I propose to issue a statement to this effect as soon as the Governor advises me that this would be opportune; the statement would also include my undertaking to offer transfers to overseas officers in the Gold Coast whenever suitable vacancies occurred in other Colonial territories.

12. The situation is fluid and we are dealing in the Gold Coast with volatile human material. It is therefore impossible to forecast events very far ahead. But if agreement on constitutional changes were reached and a new Legislative Assembly, elected by universal adult suffrage, met about mid-1954, its first act might well be to demand complete self-government as a member of the Commonwealth. In that event the Governor hopes that the position could be held for a period which might last as long as three or four years while the country was prepared for greater responsibility and consideration was given to its form of association with the Commonwealth.

### *Nigeria*

13. I have taken into account the possible repercussions of these developments on West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, and have consulted the Governor of Nigeria about them. At one time he was apprehensive lest they should quicken still further the demand for political advance in the Southern Regions and thus lead to divisions, and strife, between the South and the conservative North. But as my colleagues will be aware, the latent discord between the three Regions has already been brought to the surface by recent events in Nigeria and in particular by the debate on 31st March in the House of Representatives on a private member's motion about the attainment of self-government in 1956.

14. As I informed the House of Commons on 22nd April, the situation in Nigeria is complicated and will require further patient and careful study. But I am clear that the present cumbersome constitution will have to be radically revised and that the best hope of preserving the unity of the territory will lie in seeking to reach agreement on some modified and looser form of association at the Centre. The Governor agrees that this would probably have to be coupled with some measure of political advance – for example, the widening of the responsibilities and functions of Ministers – but that the arrangements at the Centre would have to be such as to satisfy the North that their interests were effectively safeguarded.

15. A further constitutional advance in the Gold Coast will not make a difficult situation in Nigeria any easier. But by and large Nigeria's future will, I think, be settled by events in Nigeria; and in any case I see no alternative but to proceed in the

Gold Coast on the lines I have described which, as the Governor has advised me, represent the minimum concessions if we are to secure peaceful and ordered progress by successive stages.

### *Conclusion*

16. My colleagues will wish to take note of the position now reached in both territories. When the final proposals of the Gold Coast Government are received later this year I will consult them again. I may need to consult them before long about Nigeria.

## **132** PREM 11/1367

27 May 1953

**'Gold Coast and Nigeria: constitutional developments': minute by Sir N Brook (Cabinet secretary) to Sir W Churchill on the Gold Coast arrangements for defence and external affairs proposed in C(53)154<sup>1</sup>**

The Cabinet are not asked to take any decisions on this paper. The Colonial Secretary merely wishes them to be aware of the probable course of constitutional developments in these two Colonies.

2. The Cabinet's attention might, however, be drawn to paragraph 6 of the paper. It is intended that, in the next stage of constitutional development in the Gold Coast, the United Kingdom Government should retain responsibility for external affairs, defence and internal security (i.e. the police). For these matters the Gold Coast Cabinet would not be responsible. It is, however, suggested that the Prime Minister should answer questions in the legislature about external affairs and defence, and that another Minister should similarly answer questions about the police. On the face of it this latter suggestion seems to be a constitutional anomaly. If the Gold Coast Cabinet and its Ministers are to have no responsibility for these reserved subjects, they cannot be answerable for them to the local legislature – a Minister who is not responsible for a subject cannot properly be accountable to a Parliament which has no jurisdiction over it. In the Northern Ireland Parliament it would be out of order to attempt to discuss matters "reserved" to the United Kingdom Government: those matters can only be discussed in the Parliament at Westminster.

3. I understand that the reason for this arrangement is that the Gold Coast Cabinet and legislature are to have responsibility for some aspects of external affairs, defence and police. For example, they will be concerned with the strength of the police force and its rates of pay – though its operational use will be controlled by the Governor. They will have to vote the funds required for the Colony's defence contribution. And they may be allowed to handle such external affairs as commercial treaties with neighbouring States.

4. On this basis, what seems to be required is a clear understanding about the matters, within these three subjects, for which local Ministers are responsible to the local legislature and the matters which are reserved to the Governor. It may be unwise to try to define these in the constitution itself. It may have to be left to the

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<sup>1</sup> See 131.

Governor to build up a constitutional practice, step by step, as the new constitution gets into its stride. But I should have thought that the Governor would need some clear guidance about this. And one thing which ought to be avoided is putting the Prime Minister into the position of appearing to be responsible to the local legislature for matters of policy which are not in fact within his jurisdiction.

**133** CO 554/255, no 65

12 June 1953

[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes on the Gold Coast White Paper on constitutional reform.

*Enclosure: draft of White Paper*

I am now in a position to give you an idea of the proposals for constitutional change which the Government is likely to put before the Legislative Assembly at the meeting which opens on the 2nd July. The enclosed draft will be discussed in the Cabinet on the 15th June, and I shall let you know if there are any significant amendments. It is hoped to publish the White Paper on the 20th June, so that the Assembly and the public may have time to study it before the debate, which we expect to begin about the 10th July. Owing to the speed with which it had to be prepared, the participation of the Prime Minister, and possibly Botsio, in the drafting, and the need to take local susceptibilities into account in the presentation, this does not carry much Civil Service polish.

It is probable that in the final version reference to the actual salaries proposed for the Chief Justice and Puisne Judges will be omitted. In my strictly confidential letter No.G/2392 of the 9th June I gave you these particulars; the Chief Justice has not yet sent me his representations, so there will be no time for you to consider them before the White Paper is published.

You will see that it is not proposed to touch the reserved powers, that certain subjects are reserved to the Governor (paragraph 20), that the Attorney-General will continue to be a Civil Servant and that the Governor will have a special responsibility for the Police. The relationship between the Governor and of the Minister of the Interior and Justice with the Police is not stated with any great precision; this is deliberate because the inclusion of a more precise formula might well lead to a strong movement in the Assembly for the abandonment of the proposed interim stage preparatory to the grant of full independence – a movement which the Prime Minister might be unable to control – and an outright demand for “self-government now” without any intermediate amendment of the constitution. Indeed, this danger is the predominant influence in the minds of the Prime Minister and of his more perspicacious colleagues, and is very largely responsible for the general tenor of the draft. The Prime Minister is fully aware that this question of the Police will have to be tied up tightly in the text of the Constitution.

I should perhaps mention that I have not gone into battle over the concluding proposal that Gold Coast affairs should be dealt with by the Commonwealth Relations Office. This is a very recent suggestion, but one which strongly commends itself to Ministers at present. Support for it may die down later, but in any case I have felt that it could most appropriately be dealt with in the negotiation stage.

I shall let you know if the Cabinet on the 15th produces any interesting reactions.

In the meantime I am sending a copy of this letter and of the enclosure (excluding the appendices of which there are at present no spare copies) to Macpherson, Hall,<sup>1</sup> Wyn Harris and Galsworthy.

Enclosure to 133

### I. Introduction

As a result of discussions between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and Gold Coast Ministers on constitutional reform the Secretary of State undertook that, when proposals had been formulated by the Gold Coast Government after consultation with the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast, they would be examined and discussed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Gold Coast.

2. The first step in that consultation was the Statement made by the Prime Minister in the Legislative Assembly on the 16th October, 1952 (*vide* Appendix "A"). In that statement, the Joint Provincial Council, the Asanteman Council, the Northern Territories Traditional Authorities and Council, the Trans-Volta Southern Togoland Traditional Authorities and Council, and every political party or group were invited to submit their views in writing both on the specific questions which it was considered should be reviewed and on any other matters which they might wish to raise. Copies of the Statement were widely distributed throughout the country, the Information Services Department issuing a total of 255,280 copies. It was stated that such representations would be collated and published. It was also stated that, after they had been considered, the Government would formulate its views and embody them in a White Paper for debate in the Assembly.

3. The second stage was reached at the beginning of April, by which time all views on the Prime Minister's Statement were to be received. Representations were in fact forthcoming from 131 Councils, political parties and groups (*vide* Appendix "B").

4. It should here be mentioned that the Territorial Councils, the two leading Opposition parties and the Gold Coast Trades Union Congress have disagreed with the proposed method of consultation and requested the setting up of a closer form of consultation. With the exception of the Northern Territories Council which asked for a meeting with the Governor and the Prime Minister, these bodies were in favour of the establishment of a representative committee whose task it would be to collate, examine, and report on the representations which the Government received.

5. This attitude appears to have been due to the fear that the Government would so rigidly have formulated its views by the time of the debate on the constitutional proposals that the spokesmen of these bodies would be unable to influence the final form of the proposals to be made to the Secretary of State. To meet this possible objection the Government made arrangements for further consultation, and meetings have been held as follows:—

May 27th His Excellency the Governor and the Prime Minister met the Northern Territories Council and Traditional Rulers and Northern Territories Members of the Legislative Assembly at Tamale.

<sup>1</sup> Sir R Hall, gov, Sierra Leone, 1953–1956.

- May 28th The Prime Minister met the Executive Committee of the Asanteman Council at Kumasi.
- May 29th The Prime Minister met the Standing Committee of the Joint Provincial Council at Cape Coast.
- June 1st The Prime Minister met severally the Committee of the Ghana Nationalist Party, the Steering Committee of the Ghana Congress Party and representatives of the General Council of the Gold Coast Trades Union Congress, at Accra.

It is regretted that no consultations could be held with the Trans-Volta Togoland Council, as this Council has not yet been established. The views expressed by Trans-Volta Togoland Traditional Authorities have, however, been fully taken into account.

6. It was made clear in the October Statement that no policy would be formulated by the Gold Coast Government until there had been the fullest opportunity for consultation on the various points at issue. Not only has the Government entered into consultations with the principal Councils and parties which requested them, but it has given the fullest consideration to the Memoranda submitted. It has now formulated its proposals and publishes this White Paper in order that there may be a debate on the proposals contained in it in the Legislative Assembly. It should be understood that only after the Legislative Assembly debate will the proposals of this Government take their final shape and be communicated to the United Kingdom Government.

## II. *The government proposals*

7. It should be made clear at the outset that the proposals in this White Paper are in respect of the limited transitional period which is necessary in order that the requisite constitutional and administrative arrangements for independence can be made.

### *The ex-officio ministers*

8. The overwhelming weight of public opinion is in favour of the Government requesting the Secretary of State to agree to a revision of the Constitution in such a way as to ensure that all Ministers shall be Representative Ministers. The principal grounds for this demand are that further constitutional advance must be accompanied by the full assumption of responsibility by the chosen representatives of the Gold Coast people and that, while *Ex-officio* Ministers have made a valuable and conscientious contribution to the progress of the country, they cannot by virtue of their status represent the wishes of the people as can African Representative Ministers, nor are they answerable to the electorate for their actions.

9. Only the Northern Territories Council has objected to this line of action and it was primarily concerned lest the subjects of Defence and External Affairs should be assigned to a Representative Minister. The Government has therefore given special consideration to these subjects in the light of Northern Territories' objections and of other factors, which include the responsibility of the United Kingdom Government with regard to the defence and foreign affairs of the Commonwealth, and its special responsibility for Togoland under the terms of the United Kingdom Trusteeship Agreement. Thus a solution has been found which specifically safeguards the disposal

of these subjects (*vide* paragraphs 18–21 below) without affecting the general principle regarding the removal of *Ex-officio* Ministers.

10. It is accepted by the Government that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be asked to agree to such revisions of the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council as will ensure that all Ministers who are members of the Cabinet should be Representative Ministers, and that there should be no provision for *Ex-officio* Ministers.

*The representative minister of finance*

11. With one principal exception the country appears to agree with the views which were set out by the Prime Minister in paragraph 7 of his October Statement (Appendix "A"). The Northern Territories Council expressed the view that the proposal to appoint an expert adviser to assist the Representative Minister of Finance might indicate that a representative Minister was not able to carry out the full duties of the office, and that the time had not yet come for the *Ex-officio* Minister to be replaced. The Government does not consider that this view takes sufficient account of the fact that all Ministers must rely to a greater or lesser extent upon their civil service advisers, technical or administrative, but that even so Ministers must bear the full responsibility for their policies.

12. It is therefore the Government's intention that the Representative Minister of Finance should receive financial advice from the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Finance. There should also be an Economic Adviser to the Government who would be responsible to the Cabinet through the Prime Minister. He would attend Cabinet meetings when required to do so, but would not be a member of the Cabinet. He should be a person with wide practical experience in dealing with general economic problems. The advice of specialists would be sought *ad hoc* on any specific economic problems which require highly specialised examination.

13. It is agreed that provision should be included in the Constitution for the appointment of an Auditor-General. He should be appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Prime Minister. He should hold office during good behaviour subject to a power of removal by the Governor on the recommendation of a two-thirds majority of the Legislative Assembly. These provisions also should be included in the Constitution.

14. The salary of the Auditor-General should be a charge on the revenue of the Gold Coast under the Constitution, and should not be subject to an annual vote of the Legislature on the Estimates.

*The representative minister of the interior and justice*

15. Opinions regarding this Ministry appeared to differ on the questions:—

- (a) whether a Ministry of Justice was necessary,
- (b) whether the posts of Minister and Attorney-General should be held by one person,
- (c) whether the Minister should be a political appointment and the Attorney-General an official (and a legal adviser),
- (d) whether, in order to obtain the services of a distinguished barrister, the Minister should not be recruited from an Upper House.

The Government holds the view that the offices of Minister of Justice and

Attorney-General should not be held by the same person, thereby ensuring that there will be no political control of criminal prosecutions.

16. It is agreed that there should be a Representative Minister of the Interior and Justice, whose duties would include the following:—

- (i) Duties in the Cabinet and in the Assembly, and in Committees thereof, in relation to subjects for which he is responsible.
- (ii) Responsibility for the administration of the Registrar-General's Department, the Stool Lands Boundaries Commission and such other Departments as might be brought under the Minister (*vide* paragraphs 19–21 below).
- (iii) Responsibility for the administration, as distinct from the professional supervision, of the Law Officers' Department and of the Magistracy.
- (iv) The financial arrangements – primarily the Estimates – for the Departments mentioned above.
- (v) The political responsibility for, and formulation of policy with regard to, the various matters (other than legal professional matters) dealt with by the Departments referred to above.

17. The Attorney-General should be a civil servant who would attend the Cabinet to give legal advice when required to do so. He would be a member neither of the Cabinet nor of the Assembly. The Attorney-General would be responsible to the Government through the Minister of the Interior and Justice for the administration of his Department.

*The disposal of subjects in the portfolio of defence and external affairs*

18. It is accepted that, with the important exception of the Northern Territories Council, public opinion has expressed itself clearly in favour of removing all *Ex-officio* Ministers. As is stated at paragraph 10 above, the Government also accepts that view. But in order that the detailed implications of this problem may be examined, the Government considers it necessary to define exactly what are the subjects involved.

19. The Government has decided that the following subjects should be redistributed among Representative Ministers or Ministries:— the Public Service (*vide* paragraphs 47–53 below), Constitutional Matters, Regional Organisations, Aliens, Annual Report, Extradition and Fugitive Offenders, Gold Coast Commissioners (in whatever country), Immigration, Emigration and Repatriation, Tourist Traffic, Ceremonial and Liquor Licensing; also the Police, except insofar as the Governor will have a special responsibility in matters affecting defence, external and internal security, and the maintenance of public order; Information Services; and Printing.

20. In regard to the following subjects:— Consular Matters, External Affairs and the United Nations Organisation, Naval, Military and Air Forces, Defence and Internal Security and the maintenance of public order, it is intended that the proposal should be put forward that the Governor will be responsible and will be assisted in regard to the discharge of his responsibilities for these subjects by an Advisory Committee of which the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior and Justice and one other Minister should be members. The Governor would exercise his responsibility through a Secretary for Defence and External Affairs, who, as is explained at paragraph 33 below, will also be the Governor's Deputy.

21. It is proposed that the Prime Minister should deal in the Legislative Assembly

with all those subjects mentioned in paragraph 20 above except the Police, and this subject would be dealt with by the Minister of the Interior and Justice.

22. The Government proposes to extend the representation of Gold Coast interests to countries other than the United Kingdom by the appointment of Gold Coast Commissioners. The Gold Coast representatives would not necessarily be Trade Commissioners and their status would be such that they would be responsible to the Prime Minister.

### *Togoland*

23. The Government takes this opportunity of defining its attitude to the Togoland problem. The Northern Territories Council has expressed grave concern regarding the future of the Northern Section of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship; four of the most important Northern Territories States extend into Togoland, and the Paramount Chiefs and people are not prepared to see them dismembered by an international boundary. They therefore insist that a decision on the future of the Northern Section of Togoland should be taken before any further major advance is made towards self-government. The Prime Minister has assured the Northern Territories Council that, while the time has not come for formal proposals to be presented to the United Nations for the amendment of the Trusteeship Agreement, the Government of the Gold Coast is confident that, when the time comes, the United Nations Organisation will not fail to give satisfaction to the frequently reiterated and unanimous demand of the people of the Northern Section for their area to become part of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Indeed for the United Nations Organisation to do otherwise would, it is considered, be contrary to the basic objectives set out in the United Nations Charter. The Chiefs and people concerned have made it abundantly clear that they have no intention of allowing an international boundary to divide the people living in the Northern Section of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship from the Northern Territories.

24. There is a growing opinion in Southern Togoland in favour of integration with the Gold Coast and it is hoped that, when the advantages of joining a self-governing Gold Coast are fully appreciated by the people of that area, they will be in a position to make clear their wishes for their future status.

### *Procedure for appointing the prime minister and ministers*

25. There was a unanimous desire to dispense with the provisions of the present Order in Council relating to the appointment of the Prime Minister and Ministers.

26. The Government proposes that the Prime Minister should be appointed by the Governor from the Legislative Assembly, where he would normally be the leader of the majority party.

27. The other Ministers and the Ministerial Secretaries should be appointed by the Governor acting on the advice of the Prime Minister. Ministers and Ministerial Secretaries would hold office during the Governor's pleasure, and would only be removed from office upon the advice of the Prime Minister. They would be able to resign by addressing the Prime Minister in writing, and the Prime Minister would immediately inform the Governor of any such resignation.

28. A special request was made by the Northern Territories Council for provision to be made in the Constitution for the Northern Territories to be represented in the Cabinet and among Ministerial Secretaries in proportion to their population.

29. The Government admits the principle that the Northern Territories should be represented both in the Assembly and the Cabinet in proportion to their population, but does not consider that it would be in the true interests of the North or of the Gold Coast to make provision in the Constitution with regard to the special representation of any Region in the Cabinet.

#### *Assignment of portfolios*

30. There is unanimous agreement that the provisions of the Order in Council, by which the assignment of portfolios is made by the Governor after consultation with the Prime Minister, should be revised in such a way as to enable the Prime Minister to have a sole responsibility for allocating portfolios to Ministers and for assigning Ministerial Secretaries to assist them. The Government will make proposals accordingly.

#### *Cabinet procedure*

31. This is not a matter on which representations were received to any great extent. The Northern Territories Council stated that it desired no change in the present arrangements.

32. The Government considers, however, that the functions of the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast should correspond with those of Prime Ministers in other countries. Accordingly, proposals will be made to the effect that the Constitution should be amended to provide that the Prime Minister will preside at Cabinet meetings, but that the Governor will retain the right to summon a special meeting of the Cabinet when he sees fit, and that at such a meeting he will preside.

33. It is proposed that when occasion should arise for the appointment of a Governor's Deputy, or an Officer Administering the Government, the Secretary for Defence and External Affairs would fill these offices, and his title would therefore be "Governor's Deputy and Secretary for Defence and External Affairs".

34. It is proposed that the duties of the Secretary to the Governor and of the Secretary to the Executive Council should be separated, and provision for the former office should be removed from the constitution. There should be a post of Secretary to the Cabinet who would also be the Prime Minister's Secretary.

35. It is proposed that the Cabinet Office should be situated in the same premises as the Prime Minister's Office and in the same premises as the room in which the Cabinet would normally meet.

36. It is proposed that the expression "The Executive Council" should be replaced by "The Cabinet". This would mean that the use of the expression "Governor in Council" would be discontinued.<sup>2</sup>

#### *The legislature*

37. It is an interesting fact, which cannot be overlooked, that of all the hundred or so councils, parties and groups which have expressed opinions on whether a unicameral or a bicameral legislature should be adopted, only the Convention People's Party and six other bodies are in favour of continuing with a single House. A number of reasons are given in support of two houses, the following being the main points:—

- (a) A second Chamber would serve as a check on hasty legislation.
- (b) It would enable persons of eminence who would not be disposed to stand for

<sup>2</sup> The Executive Council had effectively been known as the Cabinet since Mar 1952.

ordinary election to make a valuable contribution to the government of the country.

(c) It would abolish the present uneasy relationship between traditional rulers and representative members in the single Chamber, and enable the Chiefs to conduct their business in an atmosphere of greater dignity.

(d) It would be in conformity with the system in most other democratic countries.

38. Arguments against a second Chamber were based on the additional expense which would be involved and on the fact that in the existing Assembly the Territorial Councils were adequately represented. Due account was perhaps not taken of the country's wish (which will be referred to at paragraph 44 below) that all elections to the Assembly should be direct elections and that electoral colleges should be abolished.

39. In a wholly elected House of Assembly there would thus be no provision for the special representation of traditional authorities and unless there were a second Chamber, Territorial Councils would become purely deliberative or consultative bodies since they would have no effective voice in the Legislature. It has been necessary to consider whether it would be wise to exclude the special representation of the Territorial Councils.

40. On the other hand, it has been observed that the establishment of a second House might be a cause of friction between the Chiefs and the people, particularly if important legislation were delayed by the conservatism of Traditional Members in the Upper House. The interests of the Chiefs and of their people should be the same, and accordingly it is open to question whether there should be separate representation of the traditional authorities. The personal appearance of Chiefs in the Legislature is a comparative innovation, and is not sanctioned by custom. The representation of Territorial Councils in a Senate may well curtail their influence, and it has been suggested that the Traditional Authorities may prefer to forego a second Chamber in order to preserve these Councils through which they may express their views on their own ground and more effectively than would be possible through the medium of special representation in a central legislative body.

41. The Government has reason to believe, after hearing the views of the Executive Committee of the Asanteman Council, the Standing Committee of the Joint Provincial Council, the Committee of the Ghana Nationalist Party, the Steering Committee of the Ghana Congress Party and representatives of the Trades Union Congress, that public opinion has changed since the representations on the form of the Legislature were written. In particular it has become apparent to most of those concerned that there is an inherent danger in having two Houses, in that there would be no practical alternative to the Upper House being composed of two-thirds Chiefs, elected by the Territorial Councils, and one-third Government appointments, and that any action taken by this House to delay or drastically to amend a measure passed in the Lower House might bring it into conflict with the other. That conflict, it is thought, could take the form of a conflict over the place of chiefs in the Constitution. All are agreed that this is to be avoided.

42. Accordingly, the Government will not recommend to the United Kingdom Government any revision of the Order in Council to provide for a bicameral legislature. If, however, there should be a renewed interest in the establishment of a

second Chamber, it will be open to the newly elected Legislative Assembly to appoint a Select Committee to examine the question again.

43. Some few memoranda were received regarding the formal recognition by the Government of an official parliamentary Opposition. The Government intends to recognise as the official Opposition that party, outside the Government, which is represented in the Legislative Assembly by the largest number of members, and will accordingly make provision in future Estimates for a remuneration of £1,500 per annum for the Leader of the official Opposition. This remuneration will be in substitution for his allowance as a Member.

#### *Representational and electoral reform*

44. The Government has assumed (*vide* paragraph 13 of the October Statement at Appendix "A") that "there must be a Commission of Enquiry into representational and electoral reform". In response to the enquiry made by the Prime Minister as to the composition and terms of reference of the Commission, it has been represented generally that a Commission of Enquiry should be set up under the provisions of the appropriate Ordinance and that it should number between five and eight. Similarly it appears to be generally agreed that representation in the Gold Coast should be proportionate to the population, and that the elections throughout the country should be direct. It would follow from this that elections by Territorial Councils acting as electoral colleges, and by electoral colleges in rural constituencies, would cease. There also was a general demand for an increase in the size of the Legislative Assembly. The task of a Commission of Enquiry should be primarily to delimit the new constituencies on that basis. It was considered by a number of bodies that the case for Special Members should be examined.

45. The Government has examined the representations with care, and is in general agreement with them. It is intended to put forward proposals to the Secretary of State for a unicameral legislature. Proposals will contain provision for two Special Members: one for Commerce and one for Mines.

46. The Government therefore will make proposals as follows:—

- (1) The Legislative Assembly should be composed entirely of directly elected members. Representation in the Assembly should be proportionate to population.
- (2) Each constituency should return one Member.
- (3) There should be municipal representation as follows:—

Accra	— 3 constituencies.
Kumasi	— 2 constituencies.
Sekondi/Takoradi	— 1 constituency.
Cape Coast	— 1 constituency.

(4) There should be no change in the present provisions regarding the qualifications and election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker should be required to obtain the Governor's permission to be absent from the Gold Coast.

(5) There should be a Commission of Enquiry into representational and electoral reform. The terms of reference of the Commission of Enquiry should be "to examine and make early recommendations on the following matters:—

- (i) The qualifications and disqualifications of electors and candidates for election, and the disqualification and tenure of office of members.

- (ii) The registration of electors.
- (iii) The ascertainment of the qualifications of electors and of candidates for election.
- (iv) The division of the Gold Coast into electoral districts on the basis of ninety-six rural constituencies.
- (v) The holding of elections.
- (vi) The determination of all questions which may arise as to the right of any person to be or to remain an elected member of the Assembly."

(6) The Commission of Enquiry should be composed as follows:—

- Chairman: A Judge of the Supreme Court.
- Four Members: One to be appointed on the recommendation of each Territorial Council.
- Four Members: To be appointed by the Governor in Council.

#### *The public service*

47. The Government is in agreement with the general principle contained in the majority of the representations on the Public Service, that is, that the Public Service should be free from political control and interference. It is also agreed that the Public Service must be a loyal and efficient instrument of whatever Government is in power. A large number of the representations made contained recommendations regarding the ultimate responsibility for the Public Service and the manner of appointment of members of the Public Service Commission. In many cases the effect of these proposals would have been to place the Public Service under political control.

48. Until full self-government is achieved the Government is of the opinion that the responsibility for the appointment, promotion, transfer, dismissal, and disciplinary control must remain vested in the Governor advised by the Public Service Commission; but it is proposed that with regard to the filling of certain of the higher posts in the Civil Service the Governor would consult the Prime Minister before making his decision.

49. The members of the Public Service Commission should be appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Prime Minister.

50. The Establishment Secretary should be responsible for the administration of the Public Service and he should be attached to the office of the Prime Minister, who will deal with Civil Service matters in the Legislative Assembly.

51. The Government is aware that these proposals may be regarded as seriously affecting the existing safeguards in respect of the Public Service. It considers, however, that nothing less will satisfy the general demand of the Gold Coast people.

52. It is essential that the Gold Coast should have an efficient Civil Service and be able to continue to function as an efficient modern state. To this end it is necessary to accelerate the Africanisation of the Service as fast as is compatible with efficiency. The Government is fully aware of the need for the services of experienced overseas officers. Any accelerated Africanisation programme must, therefore, take this fact into account.

53. This aspect of the problem is under urgent consideration both by the Government and by the Secretary of State, and it is hoped that an agreed Statement will be made during the next meeting of the Legislative Assembly.

*The judiciary*

54. There has been a general desire to ensure that the Judiciary be kept independent of the Executive. The Government is equally of this opinion.

55. The Government proposes to make the following recommendations:-

(1) Judges of the Supreme Court should hold office during good behaviour and should not be removable except by the Governor on an address by a two-thirds majority of the Legislative Assembly.

(2) The salaries of Judges of the Supreme Court should not be subject to an annual vote of the Legislature, but should be permanently charged on the revenues of the Gold Coast.

(3) The future appointment of Judges should be made on the recommendation of a Judicial Service Commission by the Governor after consultation with the Prime Minister. The Commission should consist of the Chief Justice as Chairman, the Attorney-General, the Chairman and the Senior African Member of the Public Service Commission and the Senior Puisne Judge.

(4) The Prime Minister should answer in the Assembly in matters concerning the Judiciary.

56. Another problem remains which has given rise to considerable public interest, namely, the question of adequate remuneration of the Judges, and it should here be stated that the Government attaches great importance to the attraction of local barristers to the Supreme Court Bench. For some years to come the field of recruitment for high judicial office will be from among suitable candidates in private practice, or in the Law Officers' Department, or on the Magistrates' Bench. Because the present remuneration of Judges is fixed in relation to a Civil Service career with pension rights there has been insufficient attraction to the Supreme Court Bench to local practising barristers of the necessary standing and qualities. It is accepted that such barristers when appointed will normally be of mature age and would be little interested in pensionable terms. It is considered desirable in such circumstances to offer an option of pensionable terms or non-pensionable terms (i.e. with an addition of 25% to the pensionable remuneration and with a gratuity of £150 for each completed year of service). Having regard to the local standards of remuneration it is thought that a non-pensionable salary of £3,000 per annum would be suitable, and that the equivalent pensionable salary should be £2,400 per annum. The salary attached to the office of Chief Justice would be at the rate of £3,200 per annum pensionable.

*Local constitutional matters*

57. There was considerable diversity of view on the question whether there should be any change in the provisions of that part of the Order in Council relating to bills or motions for the determination otherwise than by the Governor of questions relating to local constitutional matters. The Northern Territories Council insisted that there should be no change in the present provisions and that safeguards for chieftaincy should remain. Other bodies generally considered that the discretionary powers at present vested in the Governor should be revised in such a way as to enable local constitutional matters to be resolved with the advice of qualified persons

acceptable to the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast as guardians of their interests and of their customary traditions.

58. The Government holds the view that the determination of these matters should be kept outside the realm of politics. In order to meet a general demand for a permanent committee of appeal in constitutional matters, the Government proposes to recommend that, before the introduction of the new Constitution, legislation should be enacted to provide for the determination of local constitutional matters otherwise than by the Governor acting in his discretion. The Joint Provincial Council and the Asanteman Council, whose Standing and Executive Committees respectively were consulted, would favour the establishment of a "Judicial Committee" of the Territorial Councils, consisting of the Presidents of the four Councils, the Prime Minister and a Judge of the Supreme Court to be appointed by the Chief Justice. This Committee would act as an appellate tribunal. The Government proposes that this Committee should consist of the Presidents of the four Councils, or their representatives, a Minister and a Judge, and that it should take the place of the Governor as the final authority for determining local constitutional matters. It would have powers, similar to those now exercised by the Governor under the State Councils Ordinances, to appoint Appeal Commissioners and Assessors and Committees of Enquiry, who would report to the Judicial Committee.

59. It is proposed that the provisions of Section 57 (4) of the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council should not be repeated in the new Constitution.

#### *The governor's reserved powers*

60. Reference to the Governor's Reserved Powers enshrined in Section 58 of the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council was made by a few bodies. On the one hand the Northern Territories Council stated categorically that the powers should be retained. On the other, suggestions were made that they should be exercised only with the advice and consent of the Cabinet, that they should be reviewed, and that they should be abolished. Apart from the Northern Territories Council, however, this question was referred to by none of the more important bodies submitting representations, and it is clear that this is not a major subject of controversy. As is well known, the Reserved Powers have not been used under the present constitution.

61. A study of the relevant Section of the Order in Council will satisfy the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast that even if, in an extremity, the powers were used, there would be an opportunity at many stages for the views of all parties to be made known and for the Secretary of State to take action accordingly. It is the view of the Government that the circumstances to which these provisions refer are largely hypothetical and would not appear to present any danger of affecting the wide measure of self-government which is envisaged under the modifications now being sought in regard to the present Order in Council. The Government considers that it should be a measure of the country's satisfaction at the extent of the advances which are being set out in this White Paper, that no request should be put forward for the removal of the Reserved Powers. It will also be a proof to the United Kingdom Government of the determination of the Gold Coast to move forward to complete self-government without conflict and in an atmosphere of cordiality.

*Ghana*

62. A large number of the representations have included reference to the Gold Coast by the name of *Ghana* and have requested that this name should be the common and official usage.

63. It is clear that the name of Ghana serves the purpose of providing the people of the Gold Coast with a symbol of their national unity and a link with past history. The Government, however, does not propose at this stage to do more than to indicate that when the Gold Coast obtains independence it would be for the Legislature to decide what the future name of the country should be.

*Dominion status*

64. There is almost complete agreement that the Gold Coast should seek Dominion Status, although the desire is expressed in a number of different ways. The expressions most commonly used are as follows:—

- (a) full Dominion Status;
- (b) Dominion within the Commonwealth;
- (c) Sovereign State within the British Commonwealth;
- (d) complete independence within the Commonwealth;
- (e) sovereign and independent State within the Commonwealth;
- (f) full self-government within the Commonwealth;
- (g) self-governing and independent sovereign State with the Queen at the Head;
- (h) complete autonomy within the Commonwealth.

The point was made in one instance that the Gold Coast should be free to participate in all Commonwealth affairs on a level of equality with the Dominions. The Convention People's Party demanded: "That the Government of the Gold Coast make representations to the Queen-in-Council through the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast demand immediate self-government and that an Act of Independence be simultaneously passed by the United Kingdom Parliament, and the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly declaring the Gold Coast to be, under the new name of *Ghana*, a sovereign and independent state within the Commonwealth".

65. On the other hand, the Northern Territories Council sounded a note of caution. It appreciated that the desire of all is for self-government, but stated that constitutional advance must be based on a sound economy and that proper preparations must be made before full political responsibility was assumed.

66. Only four groups, when demanding complete self-government or independence, did not state that they would wish the country to remain within the Commonwealth, and not one made any mention of secession. The Government, therefore, is justified in assuming that the general demand of the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast is for self-government within the Commonwealth. It appears that this demand can be met by an Act of Independence passed by Parliament; an Act of the Imperial Parliament was passed for Ceylon in 1947. The Government therefore proposes that the United Kingdom Government should be informed of the general demand and be requested to make a declaration recognising the existence of this demand and expressing Her Majesty's Government's readiness to introduce an Act of Independence into Parliament. This recommendation will be

incorporated in the Motion under which the Legislative Assembly will debate the White Paper.

67. It is the Government's intention to enter into the period of constitution-making by requesting Her Majesty's Government to make a declaration regarding the grant of Independent Status within the Commonwealth, and, without prejudice to that question and as a matter of urgency, to consider the amendment of the present Order in Council. The main objects of the amendment will be to provide for a Legislative Assembly in which the Members are directly elected by secret ballot and for a Cabinet the members of which should be members of the Assembly and directly responsible to it. Other modifications to the Order in Council on the lines of suggestions made by the Gold Coast Chiefs and people, in reply to the invitation of the Government, will also be put forward and are described in detail in the preceding pages.

68. It should be mentioned that in these pages, except in the Summary of Representations, the Governor continues to be referred to by that name. Until an Act of Independence has been passed and has become effective, there would be no change of title for the Governor. The position of the Governor-General of the Sudan is quite different. The Sudan has been administered as a Condominium, and the channel of communication which its Government maintains with the United Kingdom Government is through the Foreign Office and not the Colonial Office.

69. The Government proposes, meanwhile, to request the Secretary of State for the Colonies to lay before the United Kingdom Government a request that the affairs of the Gold Coast may be dealt with by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, following the precedent of Southern Rhodesia. This would, in the Government's view, be more in consonance with the altered constitutional status of the Gold Coast envisaged in these proposals.

**134** CO 1025/5A

22 June 1953

'The currency system in West Africa': memorandum by Sir H Poynton. *Minute* by Mr Lyttelton

*Secretary of State*

1. It has been felt for some time that, as they rushed towards independence, the Gold Coast and/or Nigeria were bound sooner or later to demand locally administered and probably also separate currencies. Accordingly, in a letter dated 21st November, 1952, Mr. Melville<sup>1</sup> raised with the four West African Governors the whole question of the future of the currency in British West Africa. His letter spoke in terms of separate note issues administered by (mainly, at any rate), European Commissioners in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, and possibly a joint currency for Sierra Leone and the Gambia, but not of more fundamental changes at this stage.

2. As might be expected, the responses of the four Governors were very different.

<sup>1</sup> E Melville, CO assistant under-secretary of state, with departmental responsibility for economic general, finance, statistics, and supplies.

The Governors of Sierra Leone and the Gambia were against any change of any kind. The Acting Governor of Nigeria was unable to express an opinion before receiving the report of a member of the Bank of England who had been engaged to conduct an enquiry into the desirability of establishing a Nigerian Central Bank. (Mr. Fisher has since recommended as an interim step the transfer of the West African Currency Board to West Africa. This would prepare the way for the eventual creation of a bank of issue, while providing Africans with some experience in currency matters. However, no comment has yet been received from Nigeria). The Gold Coast took longer to reply, but at one stage urged the need for urgent unilateral action by the Gold Coast which would involve conferring by local legislation powers upon the recently established Bank of the Gold Coast to issue, administer and "manage" a local Gold Coast currency under the control, such as it might be, of the Gold Coast Government.

3. A later letter from Sir Charles Arden-Clarke has removed the immediate sense of urgency but an interim reply had been sent him expressing doubt on two points. The first was whether separate arrangements could be made for the Gold Coast without previous consultation between H.M.G. and all the West African Governments. The second was whether the Secretary of State of the day could surrender his ultimate control over currency matters, before the Gold Coast becomes fully independent, to the extent which people out there seem to have been contemplating. Sir Charles was told that the matter would have to be put up to you on the principles involved.

4. Attached to this memorandum is a brief note<sup>2</sup> on control by the Secretary of State of Colonial currencies showing the present position and possible future modifications of it, particularly for the four West African territories. Against this background, it seems necessary to obtain your agreement to the following general propositions;

- (i) that ultimate control over currency matters by the Secretary of State cannot be abandoned until the Gold Coast attains full independence;
- (ii) that as self-government is introduced in the West African territories changes in the present arrangements for administering the Secretary of State's control over currency matters will become necessary, subject of course to (i) above, and
- (iii) that these changes should be agreed upon in consultation between H.M.G. and the four West African territories and not unilaterally with any one of them.

5. Subject to your instructions it will then be possible to consider in more detail the future of the West African currency. At an earlier stage it was in mind to pursue the subject in conference with representatives of the four West African territories, and indeed such a conference, convened in West Africa, may in due course be desirable. However, in view of the present situation in Nigeria, it is perhaps as well that pressure from the Gold Coast for urgent action has relaxed. When the possibility of convening a conference occurs, a brief will be prepared for ministerial approval covering instructions for the U.K. representative. Meanwhile it is proposed to set up

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

a small interdepartmental Working Party of officials to carry discussion of future changes a step further.

Minute on 132

*Sir H. Poynton*

Yes I can swallow (i) (ii) and (iii) above. I have already formed the impression that the Gold Coast is on the way to make the Volta scheme impossible by frightening Miss Muffit way.

But if they want a local currency locally managed, that by itself would be the [?] "crumble". On the other hand we might use these applications by getting a measure of European management into a Central Bank and thus into the Treasury? All this will emerge later.

O.L.  
[nd]

**135** CO 554/371, no 64

26 June 1953

[Communism in the Gold Coast]: letter from W L Gorell Barnes to Sir C Arden-Clarke on intelligence reports of communist infiltration of the trades union movement

During discussions here in September 1951 Saloway told us that you proposed taking a suitable opportunity of inviting the Cabinet to place on public record its opposition to Russian imperialism in the guise of international Communism, so that on the basis of such an announcement detailed steps to deal with Communist infiltration could be taken. Since then we understand that the Cabinet last July confirmed the retention in force of orders prohibiting the immigration of certain well-known Communists, and last August endorsed the recommendations of its sub-committee that the importation into the Gold Coast of all W.F.T.U. publications should be prohibited. We understand that an address on West African strategy by the G.O.C.-in-C. West Africa command was also well received by the Cabinet. Very recently we have been glad to learn from your secret and personal telegram No. 69 of the 11th June that there has been a pronounced trend of opinion in the Cabinet against people from the Gold Coast being allowed to attend Communist-sponsored conferences, which has resulted in the request that the Nigerian procedure for dealing with applications for passport facilities to include Iron Curtain countries should be applied to the Gold Coast. We also see from the first of your new series of Weekly Intelligence Notes that three Gold Coast women have been refused passports to attend the Women's International Democratic Federation Conference in Copenhagen.

2. But despite these valuable piecemeal arrangements we believe you have not yet found it possible to secure more general agreement to collaborate with the West, and meanwhile reports reaching us, including the L.I.C. Notes, which give the

impression that Communist activity in the Gold Coast had earlier seemed slight is increasing in amount and in effectiveness.

3. Ever since the C.P.P. took office some senior members of the Party have maintained old Communist contacts or have flirted with Communism. Nkrumah has regularly turned to the Trotskyite Padmore<sup>1</sup> for advice, Baako and Welbeck<sup>2</sup> have attended Communist conferences in Vienna, and Anthony Woode<sup>3</sup> and others have kept in touch with the W.F.T.U. and attended W.F.T.U. meetings. But our general experience is that the lack of initiative of many Africans with whom the Communists succeed in making contact often defeats the Communist attempt to use them as tools, so that since the importation of W.F.T.U. literature was prohibited we felt, as we believe you did, that Communism was unlikely to become a dangerous force in the Gold Coast.

4. But it seems from your L.I.C. Notes of recent months that the Communist element in the C.P.P. is becoming increasingly powerful. The failure of the Gold Coast T.U.C. to establish itself as the effective representative of Gold Coast labour appears to have given the Communist-led Ghana T.U.C. a chance to increase its influence. The I.C.F.T.U. move to strengthen the reliable but mediocre Gold Coast T.U.C. by establishing its own office in Accra seems to have decided Nkrumah to back the Ghana T.U.C. against the official body lest the latter should become a political power in the land independent of him. The moves of Anthony Woode, an old ally of Nkrumah and a C.P.P. Assemblyman, to establish a secret Congress of Social Militants to infiltrate into the regular trade union movement, and the methods employed to foment some recent industrial grievances, bear a strong resemblance to standard Communist techniques. The increasing flow despite the ban on W.F.T.U. literature, the attempts to organise Youth Associations on militant Communist lines, the apparent affiliation of the Ghana T.U.C. to the W.F.T.U., and the willingness of Nkrumah to allow the C.P.P. Press organs, the "Accra Evening News" and the "Ashanti Sentinel", to be used as vehicles of Ghana T.U.C. propaganda and to reproduce rabid anti-Colonial matter from Communist sources, illustrate the same tendency.

5. In our talks here with you in April we recognised that, assuming things went well and apart from uncertainties of timetable, the Gold Coast was close to full internal self-government and perhaps only two stages away from some form of complete self-government. We have hitherto assumed that an independent or semi-independent Gold Coast would be at least benevolently neutral in the East/West conflict. But unless you consider the picture of recent developments drawn above to be substantially inaccurate, we feel that there is now cause for concern. Nkrumah may to some extent be allowing himself and his Party organisation to be associated with Communist intrigues as a purely temporary measure while he tries to rally all

<sup>1</sup> George Padmore, the veteran West Indian anti-colonialist. Padmore had broken with Moscow in the 1930s and worked with Nkrumah on the 1945 Pan-African Congress in Manchester. By the early 1950s it was well known that Nkrumah found Padmore's advice about party organisation helpful.

<sup>2</sup> Kofi Baako and Nathan Welbeck were by this time important figures in the CPP organisation. Both became government ministers, Baako as minister of information and broadcasting in post-independence Ghana.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Woode was a veteran member of the TUC in the Gold Coast and by this time its president. He was an important figure in the Sekondi branch of the CPP. A left-wing critic of the CPP, he was suspended from the party in Oct 1953.

possible support for his constitutional proposals, but so far as we know he has never taken any positive steps against Communists which were not at your instance, and he is now, with the imminent prospect of a further relaxation of U.K. control, allowing them to become fairly well-organised on the labour front with the help of his own Party machinery. If the Communist-supported Ghana T.U.C. were to capture the Gold Coast trade union movement, counter measures to eradicate Communist influence would have to be thorough and prolonged. It seems very doubtful to us whether, even if Nkrumah were in a position to propose strong counter-measures, he would on his record be willing to suffer the unpopularity and loss of old friends and supporters that such measures would bring. There is therefore a possibility that, as further power is transferred to Gold Coast hands, the Communists may follow their established tactics and seize the opportunity which under the present régime has been denied them, of establishing themselves in force in the Gold Coast. It would be a great disaster if the first British African territory to approach self-government fell increasingly under Communist domination. It seems to us desirable that before Ministers here are asked to consider in their final form the Gold Coast proposals for constitutional advance, the position of the Gold Coast Government with regard to Communism should be cleared up. We suggest therefore that, unless we have seriously overstated the case, you might at a suitable time draw the Cabinet's attention to the fact that the Gold Coast is wide open to Communist penetration through the Public Service (I am writing separately to Saloway about this), through the connection between the Ghana T.U.C. and the W.F.T.U., and indeed, owing to the lack of any general control of Communist moves, through any other channels that the Cominform may devise; that unless this penetration is quickly checked a serious threat to industrial peace and the general security of the Gold Coast may arise; and that it will greatly add to the difficulties of H.M.G. in considering the Gold Coast proposals for constitutional advance if it appears likely that a determined Communist minority is, as has happened elsewhere, preparing to exploit constitutional advance for its own ends.

**136** PREM 11/1367, C(53)218

28 July 1953

'Departmental responsibility for Malta and Gold Coast': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lyttelton

[Extract]

On 8th July, Mr. Wyatt<sup>1</sup> asked the Prime Minister in the House of Commons whether he would arrange for responsibility for Malta and the Gold Coast to be transferred from the Colonial Office to the Commonwealth Relations Office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied that this proposal had very recently been put forward by the Prime Minister of Malta; and might be submitted later in the year by the Gold Coast Government. He was not prepared to make any statement at present.

2. Although neither request has yet been made with full formality there is sufficient authority in each for me to submit to my colleagues proposals for a response.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Woodrow L Wyatt, MP (Lab), Aston Division of Birmingham, 1945-1955.

[paras 3-9 on Malta: omitted]

### *Gold Coast*

10. In my memorandum C.(53) 154<sup>2</sup> I informed my colleagues of the likely developments regarding the next stage of constitutional advance in the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast Government published its proposals in a White Paper<sup>3</sup> on 20th June and they have recently been debated in the Colonial Legislature, where they were endorsed. We may therefore expect that these proposals will in due course be submitted formally to Her Majesty's Government for approval and I shall then consult my colleagues about the reply to be made to the Gold Coast Government.

11. The proposals debated in the Gold Coast follow fairly closely those which I anticipated in C.(53)154, but it appears probable from the White Paper that two additional requests will be made to Her Majesty's Government.

12. The first of these is that Her Majesty's Government should make a declaration recognising the existence of a general demand in the Gold Coast for self-government within the Commonwealth, and expressing readiness to introduce an Act of Independence into the United Kingdom Parliament "as soon as the necessary constitutional and administrative arrangements for independence" in the Gold Coast have been made. I do not propose to deal with this issue in this paper.

13. The second additional request is that the affairs of the Gold Coast during the final transition stage before independence may be dealt with by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, following the precedent of Southern Rhodesia. Such a change would, in the view of the Gold Coast Government, be more in consonance with the altered constitutional status of the Gold Coast envisaged in the proposals in the White Paper. The precedent of Southern Rhodesia is not one which need, or indeed could be, followed. We must continue to regard the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations for Southern Rhodesia and consequently for the Central African Federation as an anomaly. As in the case of Malta, the Gold Coast's request for a transfer is made largely for reasons of prestige and, although it was put forward by Gold Coast Ministers at a very late stage, its importance should not be under-estimated. One real difference between Malta and the Gold Coast is that, whereas the former is unlikely ever to qualify for a state of independence within the Commonwealth which would make it properly the responsibility of the Commonwealth Secretary, the Gold Coast is entitled to look forward before very long to complete self-government. Nevertheless it would be wrong to anticipate the achievement of this complete self-government by a premature transfer of responsibility to the Commonwealth Relations Office, and if and when the request is formally made I would propose to refuse it.

14. The Gold Coast Government may, I hope, be persuaded that their immediate interests will be better served if they remain under the Colonial Office until they in fact obtain complete self-government. It could also be explained to them that the Commonwealth Relations Office is not equipped to provide the services, such as recruitment of staff and skilled advice in many fields of economic and social development, which the country will still look to Her Majesty's Government to help to provide in the final transitional stage.

<sup>2</sup> See 131.

<sup>3</sup> See 133.

15. I do not consider that a refusal to agree to the transfer at this stage to the Commonwealth Relations Office, if the substantial reasons are skilfully explained, is likely to prejudice the successful negotiation of the other constitutional issues between the Gold Coast and United Kingdom Governments, or to prevent good relations being maintained during the next stage of the Gold Coast's constitutional progress. I have already warned the Governor that the request, if made, is likely to be refused.

#### *Recommendations*

16. My recommendations are that:—

- (a) It should be decided in principle now that the request of both Governments for the transfer of their affairs to the Commonwealth Relations Office be refused.
- (b) As regards the Gold Coast, the tactics for conveying this decision should be reviewed when the Gold Coast Government have formally presented all their requests for constitutional change. . . .

**137** CO 554/255, no 17

28 July 1953

[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes on the representation of commercial and mining interests in the new Legislative Assembly and the procedure for considering the White Paper

As I informed you in my telegram No. 502 of the 15th July, the Government motion on Constitutional Reform was passed by the Assembly without a division. The next step, on which the Cabinet is now engaged, is to set up a Commission of Enquiry into representational and electoral reform<sup>1</sup> in accordance with sub-paras (4) and (5) of para 46 of the White Paper incorporating the Government's proposals on Constitutional Reform. This Commission is to be asked to submit its report by the 30th September and the Government's proposals based on this report will be debated at the meeting of the Assembly which is due to open on the 3rd November.

The question of the inclusion of Special Members (your letter WAF. 49/2/01 of the 3rd June refers) was raised by several members during the course of the debate in the Assembly. After prolonged discussion in the Cabinet, it has been decided not to include this question in the terms of reference of the Commission. Nkrumah and his colleagues are convinced that even if the Commission reported in favour of the inclusion of Special Members in the new Assembly, the opposition to this proposal among the back-benchers of the C. P. P. is so strong and indeed violent that, even if backed by Government, it would be rejected by the Assembly. Consideration is now being given to the question whether other effective means can be devised whereby the views of the commercial and mining interests can be brought to the notice of Government for consideration, as occasion requires.

The Cabinet's next step will be to consider whether the proposals for constitutional reform set out in the White Paper require any modification or revision in the light

<sup>1</sup> The Commission was chaired by Mr Justice W B Van Lare and its report was published in Accra in 1953.

of the Assembly debate. It is unlikely that any modifications of substance will be made.

I shall then be invited to bring formally to the notice of the Secretary of State the proposals for constitutional reform and the terms of the Government motion. This I propose to do in a short despatch in which I shall indicate that it is appreciated that these proposals are for the most part described in outline only and that further detailed information will have to be sent to you before these proposals can form a basis for discussion between the two Governments and for the amendment of existing constitutional instruments. I shall promise a further despatch in which detailed particulars in support of the Government's proposals will be set out and ask whether, in the meantime, on points of broad principle the Secretary of State sees any objection to the proposals as outlined. There will then follow an exchange of views by D/O letters dealing in detail with various proposals. When we have got things tied up as far as possible by this exchange of letters, I will send the further despatch containing the supporting detail, which will be complementary to the White Paper.

The question of whether and when Nkrumah and or some of his colleagues should come to London to conclude the negotiations has not yet been considered here.

The earliest date on which it is thought that it will be possible to hold a General Election under the new Constitution is May 1954. It is proposed to hold a Budget Meeting of the Assembly in February 1954: this will be the last meeting of the present Assembly, after which the House will be dissolved.

I hope this time-table and the procedure proposed for dealing with the proposals for constitutional reform are agreeable to you.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Hall, Wyn-Harris, Benson and Foggon.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> G Foggon, secretary, West African Inter-Territorial Conference, Gold Coast, 1951-1953.

**138** PREM 11/1367, CC 47(53)3

30 July 1953

**'Gold Coast': Cabinet conclusions on departmental responsibility for the Gold Coast**

*The Colonial Secretary* said that, when proposals for constitutional reform had recently been debated in the Colonial Legislature of the Gold Coast, the suggestion had been made that responsibility for the affairs of the Gold Coast should also be transferred to the Commonwealth Relations Office in the final transition stage before independence was reached. He believed that it would be a mistake to make this transfer of responsibility before the Gold Coast had reached the stage of complete self-government. He considered that in the interim stage responsibility for the further constitutional development of the Colony should continue to rest with the Colonial Office.

In discussion there was full support for the view expressed by the Colonial Secretary on this point.

The Cabinet:—

Agreed in principle that responsibility for the affairs of the Gold Coast should continue to rest with the Colonial Secretary during the interim stage before

the Colony achieved complete self-government; and invited the Colonial Secretary to consider how this decision could best be conveyed to the Gold Coast Government when they formally presented their proposals for further constitutional change.

**139** CO 554/255, no 122

1 Aug 1953

**[Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lyttelton on the question of a declaration by HMG regarding self-government for the Gold Coast**

Thank you for your secret and personal telegram No. 73 of the 29th July about the question of a declaration by Her Majesty's Government regarding independence for the Gold Coast. I have thought it advisable to reply by letter, so that my views can be set out in greater detail than would be possible in a telegram.

I should first explain that the point you made in your discussions here last year that Dominion status is not in the gift of Her Majesty's Government but is a matter on which the Commonwealth countries must be consulted has been fully understood by Ministers. It was because this point has been grasped, and because the Government did not wish to raise an issue which it thought might be embarrassing to Her Majesty's Government, that no mention of Dominion status appears in the Government motion on the White Paper on Constitutional Reform, and so far as this Government is concerned a declaration concerning the future independence of the Gold Coast could well be satisfactory even if it contained no reference to Dominion status or admission to full and independent membership of the Commonwealth. You may like to refer to the Prime Minister's reply to the debate in the enclosed Official Report of the 15th July, in particular Column 485, which reflects the Government's attitude towards this question.

On the other hand I appreciate that express reference to the pre-conditions of admission to full and independent membership may be necessary from the point of view of Parliament and the Commonwealth countries. If this reservation is expressed in terms so worded as to avoid any suggestion either that the admission of the Gold Coast to full and independent membership of the Commonwealth is unlikely to be welcomed by the United Kingdom and by the Commonwealth countries, or that the test of eligibility for admission will probably be such that the Gold Coast will not qualify, I believe that this country can be persuaded that the reservation does not give any occasion for suspicion that the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth as a whole are unsympathetic towards the aspirations of the Gold Coast. I need hardly say that if good relations are to be maintained suspicion must not be allowed to arise from the terms of the declaration.

In my secret and personal letter to Gorell Barnes No. C.9(v) of the 28th July,<sup>1</sup> which unfortunately crossed your telegram, I outlined a time-table and suggested a procedure for handling this Government's proposals on the Constitution. I do not expect that proposals for constitutional reform supported by detailed particulars will

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<sup>1</sup> See 137.

be formally conveyed to you until December. The sooner I know that Her Majesty's Government is prepared to make a declaration, and the approximate terms of it, the more satisfactorily can the situation here be handled during the next few months; you will I am sure appreciate that if I know what to expect from Her Majesty's Government I have a better chance of keeping the situation in hand, especially when Ministers come under the fire of impatient extremists in the press, on public platforms and in the Legislative Assembly. If Her Majesty's Government is likely to decide not to make a declaration even on the comparatively modest lines suggested in my secret and personal telegram No. 80 of the 20th July, it is of first importance from my point of view that the decision should be taken very soon and communicated to me immediately, as it will be necessary to prepare for a rapid deterioration in the situation here, and for consequences which I am afraid are bound to be exceedingly grave.

As regards the timing of the declaration, I should like to see it made very soon after discussions with Her Majesty's Government have been concluded, and approximately at the time when a revised Constitution is published. The Budget meeting of the Assembly in February next year should be governed by the present Constitution; the revised Constitution will I hope come into effect in time for a general election to be held in May under the new electoral provisions. I have yet to discuss the timing of a declaration with Ministers, and would naturally prefer not to do so until I am in private possession of the knowledge that a declaration will in fact be made. When I do discuss the matter with them I shall hope to convince them that it is only logical that the declaration should follow, not precede or accompany the discussion of this Government's proposals with Her Majesty's Government.

**140** CO 554/255, no 126

14 Aug 1953

[Constitutional reform]: letter from W L Gorell Barnes to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the arguments against the transfer of Gold Coast affairs to the CRO and the procedure for considering the White Paper

This is to follow up our promise in our secret and personal telegram No. 73 of the 29th July to give you information and arguments which you could use, as you think fit, about the difficulties of transfer of Gold Coast affairs to the Commonwealth Relations Office.

2. For your personal information, the Secretary of State has put this to the Cabinet who have agreed that in principle the proposal, if made, should be refused.<sup>1</sup> We hope therefore that Nkrumah can be persuaded not to make it. But we realise that it may be politically impossible for him to withdraw it because the transfer, if it were made at the next stage, would appear a fine political gesture, whereas the arguments against premature transfer are perhaps less capable of public presentation.

3. The question can be looked at from the point of view of Her Majesty's Government or from the point of view of the Gold Coast; and I think it is probably as

<sup>1</sup> See 136 and 138.

important for you to have arguments with which to convince Nkrumah that the point of view of Her Majesty's Government is reasonable as it is to have arguments to convince him that, from the point of view of the Gold Coast, there is no merit in the proposal that Gold Coast affairs should be transferred to the Commonwealth Relations Office.

4. Her Majesty's Government look at the matter like this. With two exceptions, the territories with which the Commonwealth Relations Office deals are territories which have attained full independence within the Commonwealth. Both the exceptions – Southern Rhodesia (and consequently the new Central African Federation so far as federal matters are concerned) and the High Commission Territories – are of very long standing and go back to a time when it was expected that they would both be incorporated in the Union of South Africa; in fact express provision for this was made in the South Africa Act. Moreover in the case of the High Commission Territories there are the very particular reasons of geography and of the fact that the United Kingdom High Commissioner in South Africa administers them. They naturally tend to be quoted as precedents. But this would be no argument for adding to them even if circumstances were completely analogous. Indeed it makes it more important than ever, if constant arguments with territories emerging towards self-government are to be avoided, that Her Majesty's Government should firmly refuse to handle from the Commonwealth Relations Office the affairs of any more Commonwealth territories which have not attained full independence. The precedent of Ceylon is therefore, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, the correct precedent to follow. When in 1946 Ceylon was given a constitution essentially resembling that which we expect the Gold Coast to have in the next phase, the responsibility for Ceylon of the Secretary of State for the Colonies remained unchanged. Not until Ceylon attained complete self-government in 1948 did the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations take over responsibility.

5. From the point of view of the Gold Coast there are I think three main arguments:-

(a) Whilst it is possible that transfer to the Commonwealth Relations Office at the present stage might create a false appearance of an even bigger step towards complete independence than is being taken at this stage, the inevitable corollary would be that the final step to full independence would, when it came, appear – again falsely – to be less significant than it will be.

(b) Being an essentially diplomatic Department, the Commonwealth Relations Office is not equipped to provide the various executive and advisory services which the Colonial Office is equipped to provide, and which even advanced Colonial Governments find it extremely useful, if not essential, to have available. I refer to such things as the services of the Colonial Service Department for the recruitment of staff and the advice and assistance rendered by the various subject departments and advisory staff of the Colonial Office. It must, of course, be admitted that, so far as the High Commission Territories are concerned, we get over this by special arrangements. But these special arrangements inevitably involve some delay and loss of efficiency, and we on our side could hardly be expected to extend them further.

(c) Similarly, although the High Commission Territories get Colonial Development and Welfare assistance, it is at least questionable whether Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to give such assistance to any other territory whose affairs were handled by the Commonwealth Relations Office.

6. These are the arguments which persuaded the Secretary of State that a premature transfer to the Commonwealth Relations Office would be constitutionally and administratively wrong. If, nevertheless, the proposal is made to Her Majesty's Government the Secretary of State will wish to have your advice about the best way in which Her Majesty's Government can turn it down and the best tactics to employ so as to do the least harm to the maintenance of good relations between the Gold Coast and ourselves.

7. You will recall that in the House of Commons in early July, Mr. Woodrow Wyatt asked whether the Prime Minister would arrange for responsibility for Malta and the Gold Coast to be transferred from the Colonial Office to the Commonwealth Relations Office. For your strictly personal information the Malta proposal has also been discussed by the Cabinet and I can say that you will not be embarrassed by the prospect of Malta going to the Commonwealth Relations Office. It may go to the Home Office.

8. Since this letter was drafted we have received your secret and personal letter of the 28th July.<sup>2</sup> We are disappointed that the African Ministers are not prepared to sponsor the retention of the Special Members of the Assembly even to the extent of referring the question for discussion to the Commission of Enquiry. We hope that some solution satisfactory to the interests concerned can be devised so that the Secretary of State will not have to take this question up when the constitutional proposals are officially submitted to him. No doubt you will let us know of any tentative solution we could usefully discuss informally with the London Representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and Mines.

9. The various stages for consideration of the constitutional proposals set out in your letter seem pretty satisfactory. Your Ministers will understand that when the Secretary of State receives the short despatch mentioned in your fourth paragraph he will require to consult his colleagues before any general indication of the attitude of Her Majesty's Government can be given, so that the despatch could not be answered forthwith. We are not quite clear from your letter whether you would wish to receive a formal reply by despatch to this short despatch before your own further despatch with supporting detail is sent. It may be that you would. We would prefer however that the Secretary of State should reply formally only to the second despatch and that this second despatch and his reply should be the documents which presumably will ultimately be published. Could we have your views on this? Our difficulty will be to play the process along slowly enough to fit in with your timetable while trying to avoid the appearance, both here and in the Gold Coast, of dragging our feet. Fenner Brockway<sup>3</sup> continues to ask questions as to progress!

10. For an election to be held in about May, 1954, the new constitutional instruments should presumably issue about February, 1954. The constitutional drafting itself may well prove difficult and take some time after agreement on the proposals themselves is reached. We have not yet considered whether a new Order would be preferable to a further Amending Order. Your draftsman in the normal course of preparing the first draft will no doubt consider this. We hope that once

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<sup>2</sup> See 137.

<sup>3</sup> Mr Fenner (later Lord) Brockway, the veteran anti-colonial and libertarian Labour MP for Eton and Slough, 1950–1964.

agreement is reached, the Gold Coast Cabinet will not expect the drafting to be rushed and so perhaps be done somewhat raggedly. The Cabinet will no doubt wish to study the draft itself with care and you should know that we think that as there will be no *ex-officio* Members of the Assembly to move a motion, Section 58 of the Order in Council will require amendment if the Governor's reserved powers are to be retained effectively. Would this amendment be accepted with good grace?

11. There are one or two other outstanding points I might perhaps mention here. We were rather unprepared for the proposal in paragraph 23 of the White Paper<sup>4</sup> that Gold Coast representatives responsible to the Prime Minister and not necessarily Trade Commissioners should be appointed to countries other than the United Kingdom. This arrangement might conflict with the primary responsibility of the Governor for external affairs as clearly laid down in paragraph 20 of the White Paper. There might also be Foreign Office objections to it, and in view of the present international status of the Gold Coast, difficulties of protocol might arise over securing the establishment in foreign countries of such posts. At the same time we recognise that the Gold Coast Government will be looking to a later period of full self-government when it will wish to have its own overseas representatives and so will be anxious that some should be trained now. We would obviously be willing to see how far the United Kingdom could help in this respect. But we should welcome any comments you may have on this point at this stage.

12. Your secret letter of the 12th June referred to the comparative vagueness of the reference in paragraph 19 of the White Paper to responsibility for the police. We hope that before the proposals are submitted to Her Majesty's Government you will be able to steer the ideas on this subject of African Ministers closer to those set out in paragraphs 13–14 of the Minutes of your meeting of the 15th April with the Secretary of State.<sup>5</sup>

13. Nkrumah's statement of the 8th July on the Public Service recognised that the arrangements finally reached should be confirmed as part of the general constitutional settlement. We shall naturally wish to keep in touch with you about these arrangements so as to ensure that they are effectively tied up.

14. Since the foregoing was drafted the Secretary of State has received and shown to us your secret and personal letter (G.9(V)) of the 1st August about the question of a declaration by Her Majesty's Government on independence for the Gold Coast.<sup>6</sup> He has decided to put this matter to his colleagues but, in view of the Parliamentary Recess, that may not be possible before the middle of September. We shall of course at once let you know the outcome.

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<sup>4</sup> See 133.

<sup>5</sup> See 128. For CO concerns about policing arrangements generally throughout the colonial territories, especially, as Jeffries put it in a minute dated 25 Apr 1952, the question 'whether or not we intend to see the Colonies develop into policed states or police states' (CO 537/6960), see BDEEP series A, D Goldsworthy, ed, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951–1957*, part II, chapter 4.

<sup>6</sup> See 139.

**141** PREM 11/1367, C(53)244

4 Sept 1953

**'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lyttelton on the White Paper and a declaration by HMG regarding self-government for the Gold Coast**

The proposals of the Gold Coast Government for constitutional change, which I anticipated in my memorandum C.(53) 154 of 13th May,<sup>1</sup> have now been formally submitted by the Governor in a short despatch enclosing the White Paper published by the Gold Coast Government in June.<sup>2</sup> Some of these proposals must be discussed with the Gold Coast over the next few months but meanwhile I have been asked whether they are acceptable in broad principle to Her Majesty's Government.

2. With the exceptions mentioned below, the proposals are substantially as expected. Acceptance would mean that, short of the exercise of the Governor's reserved powers, responsibility for internal affairs would be almost wholly in Gold Coast hands, while Her Majesty's Government would retain, through the Governor, responsibility for external affairs and defence.

3. The White Paper differs from my forecast of May last in these four ways:—

(a) It proposes the assignment to an African Minister of responsibility for the police "except insofar as the Governor will have a special responsibility in matters affecting internal security and the maintenance of public order". The Governor states that the ambiguity of this proposal at the time of publication last June was intentional and that his Prime Minister is fully aware that the position of the police will have to be stated with precision in the new constitutional instruments. As I told my colleagues I shall not agree to any arrangement that does not reserve to the Governor overriding control of the police.

(b) It proposes the establishment in other countries (such as the U.S.A. and Canada) of offices similar to the one which the Gold Coast maintains in London (as do also several other Colonial Governments) to deal with minor day-to-day business and to promote interest in and trade with the territory. This proposal, which might conflict with the Governor's primary responsibility for external affairs and raise difficulties of protocol, will have to be discussed with the other Departments concerned in the United Kingdom before a settlement is reached.

(c) It makes the proposal, to the rejection of which my colleagues agreed in principle (C.C.(53) 47th Conclusions, Minute 3)<sup>3</sup> that, before the Gold Coast attained full self-government, responsibility for its affairs should be assigned to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

(d) It lays great stress on a request, which I reported to the Cabinet in paragraph 12 of C.(53) 218, that Her Majesty's Government should make a declaration expressing readiness, as soon as the necessary constitutional and administrative arrangements for independence have been made, to grant the Gold Coast self-government within the Commonwealth. This request was embodied in the motion for approval of the White Paper moved in the legislature by Dr. Nkrumah. The actual wording of the motion was that Her Majesty's Government should

<sup>1</sup> See 131.

<sup>2</sup> See 133.

<sup>3</sup> See 138.

introduce an Act of Independence into the United Kingdom Parliament declaring the Gold Coast a sovereign and independent State within the Commonwealth. It will be noted however that the proposal does not raise the issue of the Gold Coast's becoming a full and independent member of the Commonwealth. Gold Coast Ministers know that this is not a matter for the United Kingdom Government alone.

4. Despite certain obvious objections to making any such declaration of future intention, I endorse the Governor's advice that, to reject the proposal now that it has been made public, would bring about a rapid deterioration of the situation and would in fact hasten a demand for the immediate grant of independence. Sinister designs for perpetuating the Colonial "bondage" of the Gold Coast would be attributed to Her Majesty's Government both by West Africans and by others from whom the rapid but comparatively smooth advance of the Gold Coast towards self-government has gained much goodwill for our policy.

5. The substance of such a declaration would not be repugnant to our general policy. It has been the expressed intention of successive United Kingdom Governments to help the Colonies to attain self-government within the Commonwealth. The timing and method of attaining this objective must vary from one territory to another; but the Gold Coast, with no racial problem, considerable natural wealth and a popular African Government steadily gaining in experience and prestige, is offering – at least superficially – enough evidence of ability to manage its own affairs to deprive Her Majesty's Government of any justification for refusing this request. No timetable is attached to it.

6. I propose therefore if my colleagues agree to authorise the Governor to inform the Gold Coast Cabinet, when he sees fit, that the Secretary of State on behalf of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be prepared, subject to a general agreement on constitutional changes, to make a declaration on the following lines:–

"When these changes (i.e. those agreed as the result of discussions on the proposals in the White Paper) have been made the powers retained by Her Majesty's Government will be the minimum which they must retain so long as they have any responsibility for the Gold Coast. These changes must therefore be regarded as the last stage before full self-government. The grant of full self-government within the Commonwealth is a matter for the United Kingdom Government and Parliament and I can say that, at the appropriate time, Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be prepared to take such steps as may be necessary for that purpose. Admission to full and independent membership of the Commonwealth is of course a different question on which all existing members would be consulted."

A declaration on these lines would probably be made public early in 1954 when the constitutional changes are introduced. But the precise timing would be fixed later as tactics required

7. The arrangements to be made by the Gold Coast Government for achieving full self-government must include the establishment of a separate and largely Africanised public service, and the provision of suitable compensation for any oversea officers whose careers may be adversely affected by the changes. The first steps have already been taken to establish this separate service and my colleagues will recall that I

informed Parliament on 9th July of the proposals for compensating Colonial Service officers which Dr. Nkrumah, with my general approval, had made known in the Gold Coast Assembly.

8. Assuming a satisfactory settlement of the outstanding issues, I propose to submit new constitutional instruments to the Privy Council early in 1954. This would enable a fresh General Election to be held in about May, 1954, so that a new Government would take office in the middle of the year. The Government would consist of an all-African Cabinet over which the Prime Minister would normally preside, and which would be advised by a European Economic and Financial Adviser and a European Attorney-General; the single-chamber legislature would probably consist only of persons chosen by direct elections throughout the territory by universal adult suffrage; the Governor's present reserved powers would be retained and, through a Deputy Governor acting as Secretary for Defence, he would exercise responsibility for foreign affairs and defence, including overriding responsibility for the police; and selected African Ministers would be associated as necessary with these reserved subjects through a small Defence Committee under the Chairmanship of the Governor.

9. Much preparatory work must be done in the Gold Coast before fresh elections with an extended franchise can be held. I therefore propose to submit for approval, probably in late October, without prejudice to the detailed discussions which may then still be proceeding, a brief Order-in-Council to enable the Gold Coast Legislature to pass a new Electoral Ordinance.

10. The Gold Coast proposals, far reaching as they are, have been prepared with care by a moderate African Government anxious to avoid any break in relations with the United Kingdom. They were approved by the Legislature without a division, and they undoubtedly command widespread support throughout the territory. Their rejection would bring to an end settled government by consent, and forfeit the goodwill towards the United Kingdom and the desire to retain the British connection which are common to all parties in the Gold Coast. I invite my colleagues' agreement that I should approve them now in broad principle, and thereafter over the next few months work out a detailed agreement on the lines which I have described.

**142** CO 554/256, no 138

Sept 1953

[Constitutional reform]: draft CO brief on C(53)244<sup>1</sup> for use by Mr Lyttelton in Cabinet

The publication in June of the Gold Coast White Paper and its acceptance without a division by the local legislature represents the successful conclusion of the first stage of the constitutional exercise described in C(53)154.<sup>2</sup> The Gold Coast Ministers were bound to feel that their management of affairs under the present constitution justified proposals for further constitutional advance and indeed they would have been driven from office had they taken a different attitude. The Governor has broadly succeeded in keeping the proposals within the bounds of increased internal responsibility which should not be unacceptable to H.M. Government. There can be no grounds of principle for trying to call a halt, which would need to be backed by force, to these mainly internal developments.

<sup>1</sup> See 141.

<sup>2</sup> See 131.

2. But several proposals must be resisted or require amendment, notably those concerned with responsibility within the United Kingdom Government for the handling of Gold Coast affairs before full independence is attained and the position of the police. These unacceptable proposals relate to or can be related to affairs external to the Gold Coast which are to continue reserved to H.M. Government.

3. The unforeseen proposal of substance that H.M. Government should declare its readiness when proper arrangements have been made to grant the Gold Coast full self-government within the Commonwealth was the key to local acceptance of what seemed a modest White Paper and its refusal would be taken as conveying a decision by H.M. Government to shut the door on the Gold Coast advance to self-government. To reinforce this point the Secretary of State may care to quote from the attached original Secret and Personal letter of the 1st August to him from the Governor.<sup>3</sup> The proposed declaration would only look forward to granting the Gold Coast at an unspecified future date an independence which, as West African Ministers well know, is already becoming a fact in the Sudan. The expression in the proposed declaration "full self government within the Commonwealth" may be questioned. It is meant to recognize the Gold Coast request which is for full sovereignty under The Queen. It seems indisputable that this is within the gift of H.M. Govt. in the U.K. Once this stage was reached the question of *membership* of the Commonwealth would no doubt be raised & the form of Gold Coast membership, if any, would then be considered. The declaration does not prejudice that issue.

4. If pressed on other grounds the Secretary of State may wish to make the point of expediency that Gold Coast cocoa, gold, manganese and diamonds are regular and substantial dollar earners. Gold Coast Ministers have so far been willing to see these dollars swell the Sterling Area Reserves. Gold Coast co-operation in the trade and monetary policies of the Sterling Area would not survive the rejection of this proposal.

5. If the question of the Special Members (representing the Chambers of Commerce and Mines) is raised the Secretary of State may care to say that he will be taking this up with the Gold Coast but would not hold it to be of fundamental importance to a satisfactory settlement.

6. It has already been agreed at Ministerial level between the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office that the future of Togoland lies in union with the Gold Coast. The French would be likely to welcome this development as giving them the opportunity to retain French Togoland within the French union. The new constitutional arrangements will not in themselves require revision of the Trusteeship Agreement as external affairs will continue in United Kingdom hands through the direct medium of the Governor. Northern Togoland has repeatedly asked for union with the Gold Coast. The White Paper recognises that time will be needed to bring majority opinion in Southern Togoland to prefer union with the Gold Coast to the creation of a separate united Togoland or Ewe State; but the transitional period before Gold Coast self-government gives ample time for the views of Southern Togoland to be clarified.

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<sup>3</sup> See 139.

**143** PREM 11/1367, CC 52(53)3

16 Sept 1953

**'Gold Coast': Cabinet conclusions on C(53)244<sup>1</sup>**

The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Colonial Secretary (C.(53)244) seeking approval of proposals for a further measure of constitutional advance in the Gold Coast.

*The Colonial Secretary* said that the proposals of the Gold Coast Government for constitutional change which had now been formally submitted by the Governor were, broadly, in the form foreshadowed in his earlier memoranda, C.(53)154 and 218.<sup>2</sup> Acceptance of the proposals would mean that, short of the exercise of the Governor's reserved powers, responsibility for internal affairs would be almost wholly in Gold Coast hands, while Her Majesty's Government would retain, through the Governor, responsibility for external affairs and defence. Assuming a satisfactory settlement of the outstanding issues, he proposed to submit new constitutional instruments to the Privy Council early in 1954. This would enable a fresh General Election to be held in about May so that, if all went well, a new Government would have taken office by the middle of the year. The Gold Coast Government attached particular importance to their request that Her Majesty's Government should make a declaration expressing readiness, as soon as the necessary constitutional and administrative arrangements for independence had been made, to grant the Gold Coast full self-government within the Commonwealth. Despite possible objections to such a declaration of future intention, he was convinced that, on balance, Her Majesty's Government would be well advised to meet this request. He therefore sought the Cabinet's agreement to the Gold Coast Cabinet being informed that, subject to a general agreement on the constitutional changes now to be made, he would be prepared to make in due course, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, a declaration on the lines of the draft contained in paragraph 6 of his paper. The most likely time for such a declaration to be made would be early in 1954.

*The Commonwealth Secretary* said that he agreed in principle with the proposed declaration of Her Majesty's Government's future intentions but that he would welcome an opportunity to have its exact wording considered by the Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Membership.

The Cabinet:—

- (1) Approved in principle the proposals for constitutional advance in the Gold Coast outlined in C.(53) 244.
- (2) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to arrange for the Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Membership to consider the exact wording of the proposed declaration by Her Majesty's Government regarding the eventual grant to the Gold Coast of full self-government.

<sup>1</sup> See 141 (also 138 for previous reference).

<sup>2</sup> See 131 and 136.

**144** PREM 11/1367, CCM 2(53)

23 Sept 1953

**'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': minutes of Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Membership<sup>1</sup> on the wording of a self-government declaration. Annexes: A and B**

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Colonial Secretary (C.(53)244),<sup>2</sup> together with minutes by the chairman of the Official Committee on Commonwealth Membership<sup>3</sup> and by the Commonwealth Secretary, dated 9th and 11th September respectively, commenting on the draft of a proposed Declaration by Her Majesty's Government referring to the eventual grant to the Gold Coast of full self-government contained in paragraph 6 of the memorandum.

*The Commonwealth Secretary* recalled that the Cabinet at their meeting of 16th September (C.C.(53)52nd Conclusions, Minute 3)<sup>4</sup> had approved in principle the proposals for constitutional advance in the Gold Coast outlined in C.(53)244 but had invited him to arrange for the Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Membership to consider the exact wording of Her Majesty's Government's proposed Declaration. In the meanwhile he had given further thought to the matter and had prepared as a basis for discussion by the Committee a revised draft of the proposed Declaration (circulated at the meeting and annexed to these minutes as Annex A).

In discussion of the revised draft Declaration the following points were covered:—

(a) It was suggested that it was desirable to avoid as far as possible the use of qualifying phrases in conjunction with the term "self-government". *Lines [4-5]*<sup>5</sup> of the draft might therefore with advantage be amended to read as follows:—

"last stage before the Gold Coast assumes full responsibility for its own affairs. The grant of such responsibility"

This was agreed to.

(b) It was suggested that the inclusion of the words "within the Commonwealth" in *line [6]* would tend to commit the United Kingdom Government to sponsor in due course any application by the Gold Coast for admission to full Membership of the Commonwealth. In support of this view it was argued that it was at least doubtful whether it would be possible to sustain the distinction between, on the one hand, the position of a country within the Commonwealth fully responsible for its own affairs but not a full Member of the Commonwealth and, on the other hand, a full Member of the Commonwealth.

<sup>1</sup> The Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Membership sat between May 1953 and Sept 1954. Its members were Swinton (chairman), Lord Salisbury (lord president of the Council), Lyttelton, Mr Selwyn Lloyd (minister of state, FO), Sir W Monckton (minister of labour and national service), Mr J G Foster (parliamentary under-secretary of state for Commonwealth relations) and Sir N Brook (Cabinet secretary). R M J Harris (Cabinet Office) and A F Morely (CRO) acted as secretaries. Mr H Crookshank (lord privy seal) was present at the meeting on 23 Sept 1953.

<sup>2</sup> See 141.

<sup>3</sup> The Official Committee on Commonwealth Membership sat between May 1953 and Jan 1954. Its members were Brook (chairman), Lloyd (CO), Liesching (CRO) and Sir P Dixon (FO deputy under-secretary of state). Morley acted as secretary.

<sup>4</sup> See 143.

<sup>5</sup> Entries in square brackets indicate lines of draft in Annex A as printed here.

While the force of this view was recognised, it was pointed out that there were strong arguments for retaining the words in question in this proposed Declaration. First, the inclusion of these words was desired by Gold Coast opinion and it would be unfortunate to do anything to discourage the present desire in the territory to remain within the Commonwealth. Secondly, the words had been included in statements made both by the then Commonwealth Secretary in the House of Commons on 7th June, 1951 and by the present Prime Minister in the House of Commons on 16th June, 1952 and their omission on this occasion would give rise to undesirable speculation. Thirdly, the last sentence of the draft Declaration emphasised the special significance of full Membership of the Commonwealth and the fact that this was a matter not for the United Kingdom Government alone but for all existing Members. An eventual application by the Gold Coast to be admitted to full Membership would undoubtedly raise awkward problems but these could hardly be avoided by omitting the words "within the Commonwealth" from the present Declaration.

It was agreed that the words in question should be retained.

(c) It was agreed that *line [10]* should be amended to read "Full Membership".

(d) It was suggested that the wording of *line [13]* of the draft Declaration implied, in however small a degree, that Her Majesty's Government might be prepared to sponsor an eventual application by the Gold Coast for admission to full Membership of the Commonwealth and that this implication would be, if anything, rather greater if the wording were to follow that of the statement of the Prime Minister on 16th June, 1952, namely, "would be consulted". After discussion it was agreed that for the words "all existing Members would have to be consulted" there should be substituted the words "would be a matter for consultation between all existing Members of the Commonwealth". It was further agreed that as this wording did not follow exactly that of the statements of June 1951 and June 1952, *line [11]* of the draft Declaration should be amended to read "question which, as was made clear by the then".

The Committee:—

Approved the draft Declaration in the form contained in Annex B to these minutes.<sup>6</sup>

#### Annex A to 144: Revised draft declaration submitted by Lord Swinton

"When these changes (i.e. those agreed as the result of discussions on the proposals in the White Paper) have been made the powers retained by Her Majesty's Government will be the minimum which they must retain so long as they have any responsibility for the Gold Coast. These changes must therefore be regarded as the last stage before responsible self-government. But the grant of responsible self-government within the Commonwealth is a matter for the

<sup>6</sup> Mr Hopkinson made the declaration in Annex B in a statement to the House of Commons on 28 Apr 1954.

United Kingdom Government and Parliament, and I can say that at the appropriate time Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be prepared to take such steps as may be necessary for that purpose. Admission to full and independent Membership of the Commonwealth is of course a different question on which, *as was stated by the then Commonwealth Secretary on the 7th June, 1951, and by My Right Honourable Friend the Prime Minister on the 16th June, 1952*, all existing Members would *have to be consulted*."

#### Annex B to 144: Draft declaration approved by the Committee

"When these changes (i.e. those agreed as the result of discussions on the proposals in the White Paper) have been made the powers retained by Her Majesty's Government will be the minimum which they must retain so long as they have any responsibility for the Gold Coast. These changes must therefore be regarded as the last stage before the Gold Coast assumes full responsibility for its own affairs. The grant of such responsibility within the Commonwealth is a matter for the United Kingdom Government and Parliament and I can say that at the appropriate time Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be prepared to take such steps as may be necessary for that purpose. Full Membership of the Commonwealth is, of course, a different question which, as was made clear by the then Commonwealth Secretary on the 7th June, 1951, and by My Right Honourable Friend the Prime Minister on the 16th June, 1952, would be a matter for consultation between all existing Members of the Commonwealth."

**145** CO 554/371, no 67

24 Oct 1953

[Communism in the Gold Coast]: letter from W L Gorell Barnes to Sir C Arden-Clarke requesting an assessment of the extent of communist control within the trades union movement

When I wrote to you on the 20th June<sup>1</sup> about Communism in the Gold Coast it was apparent that the only substantial threat of Communist influence in the territory was on the labour front, and that this threat might become serious if the Communist-led Ghana T.U.C. secured control by one means or another of the trade union movement.

2. As we understand your Intelligence Reports of the last few months a serious situation has now arisen. At the instance of Nkrumah and Botsio a merger of the Gold Coast T.U.C. and the Ghana T.U.C. has taken place, and the new body has elected as office-bearers either nonentities from the old T.U.C. like Tachie-Menson, or Communists or fellow-travellers from the Ghana T.U.C. like Turkson Ocran and I. K. Kumah, and has disaffiliated itself from the I.C.F.T.U. by a resolution phrased in typical Communist terms.

3. We realise that in bringing about this merger Nkrumah has probably been

<sup>1</sup> The date of this letter should be 26 June, see 135.

seeking to break down the independence of the Gold Coast T.U.C., supported as it was by its external affiliation, and to make the whole labour movement subservient to the C.P.P. We note that to date the new T.U.C. has not tried to affiliate itself to the W.F.T.U., as the Ghana T.U.C. was affiliated. But we also note from your Special Intelligence Report of the 19th September that Woode, in reporting the merger to the W.F.T.U., seemed satisfied with the result, and that his own activities of securing the penetration of all trade unions by his own supporters continue unchecked. Paragraph 3 of the Special Intelligence Report of the 8th August suggested that Nkrumah would like to rid the C.P.P. of Woode but dare not.

4. It seems fair to sum up the position by saying that, whatever may have been Nkrumah's intentions in forcing through the merger, the result has been the establishment of a body which either is or is likely to become Communist dominated; and which has strong links with the W.F.T.U. If a settlement of the constitutional issues is reached, the Gold Coast will early in the New Year start preparing for a General Election in the Spring. Nkrumah would hardly wish at such a time to alienate the labour movement by taking strong measures against its leaders. But if such measures are not taken by the present Government there will be no new Government to take them until mid-1954, so that Woode and his associates will have the best part of a year in which to consolidate their position, and even then a new all-African Cabinet will presumably be at least as reluctant as the present one to take firm measures against an entrenched Communist position in the trade unions.

5. As you well know, satisfactory Parliamentary democracy can exist only where the major political parties are prepared to work it; and the grant of Colonial constitutions providing for a democratic form of government assumes that such political parties exist or can be encouraged to grow. This has so far been true of the political parties in the Gold Coast and the willingness of H.M.G. to agree to further constitutional reforms has been based on the assumptions that there was no real Communist threat in the Gold Coast and that democratic parties would be the main rivals for office. The possibility of the emergence of a united Communist-led trade union movement makes these assumptions questionable.

6. Ministers here must be able to consider the implications of this new situation before the White Paper changes are implemented. We realise that neither you nor Nkrumah can give any guarantees that Woode, Ocran, Addison, Kumah<sup>2</sup> and the rest can be finally disposed of in the near future. But we should like you to let us know fairly quickly for the information of Ministers whether, and if so when and how, your Government are likely to take effective steps to deal with the Communist problem. If for instance the T.U.C. link with the I.C.F.T.U. is to be completely broken, surely it is reasonable to urge that at least the unofficial links with the W.F.T.U. should be similarly and decisively broken. If there is anything that the British T.U.C., as distinct from the I.C.F.T.U., can do to help the more moderate elements of the Gold Coast T.U.C. to keep their heads above water, no doubt you will let us know.

P.S. Since this letter was drafted we have seen from a report in the "Times" that Nkrumah has announced the expulsion from the C.P.P. of Anthony Woode and Turkson Ocran. We assume that this is a first step in a plan by Nkrumah to deal with the situation which has been worrying us. But we should still like to have your assessment of the situation and of the way in which it is likely to develop.

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<sup>2</sup> All prominent left-wing trades unionists.

**146** CO 254/371, no 72

4 Dec 1953

[Communism in the Gold Coast]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes on communist influence within the trades union movement

Please refer to your letter No. WAF.62/2/01, Secret and Personal, of the 26th November, 1953, and previous correspondence about Communism in the Gold Coast.<sup>1</sup> I have been keeping a close watch on Communist trends here and I do not consider that the situation is developing along unsatisfactory lines. The merger of the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress and the Ghana Trade Union Congress in August was designed by Nkrumah to produce a united Trade Union Congress under C.P.P. control.<sup>2</sup> It is clear that he overestimated his party's discipline and the willingness of the members to accept unquestionably his own dictation, and as a result he has not been entirely successful in establishing his authority over organised labour. But it cannot be said that a serious situation has arisen or that the result of the merger is the establishment of a body which will necessarily become Communist dominated. Within the Trade Union Congress at present, there appear to be developing three groups. One, led by the President, Tachie-Menson, stands by its loyalty to the C.P.P. and adheres to the principle of non-affiliation to any outside Trade Union body. One, the old G.C.T.U.C. group, led by the former President, Larbi Odam, still hankers after a return to affiliation with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions; and the third, the old G.T.U.C. group, led by Turkson Ocran, leans to the left, but will not, at least at present, openly advocate affiliation with the World Federation of Trade Unions, partly because that would definitely lead to a breach with the C.P.P., and partly because, although it is respectable to be a "Marxist" or a "Socialist", it is not considered so to be a "Communist", and W.F.T.U.'s communist connections are too well known.

For the last few months, Tachie-Menson's star has been in the ascendant, and he recently achieved the suspension of Ocran. But this has not yet been ratified by the General Council and it is quite likely that Ocran will win his way back into the fold. Nevertheless, it is not correct to say that the present T.U.C. is likely to become Communist dominated. The two largest and best organised Trade Unions, the Mines Employees Union and the Railway Workers Union, have both expressed dissatisfaction with the entry of the G.T.U.C. elements into the T.U.C., and there is reason to believe that both would have broken away from the T.U.C. shortly after the merger if they had not then been about to enter into negotiations with their employers about terms and conditions of service. The interest of these Unions is centred more on the conditions of employment of their members than on political ideologies, but the T.U.C. would be unlikely to accomplish much without their support. If the T.U.C. decided to kick over the traces and openly woo communist associations, it would certainly not be any stronger than it was before the merger, and probably considerably less strong.

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<sup>1</sup> For previous correspondence in this collection, see 135 and 145.

<sup>2</sup> The GTUC and the GCTUC were opposed factions of the old TUC which collapsed after the 'Positive Action' attempt at a general strike in 1950. The GTUC was supported and sponsored by the CPP. The GCTUC was supported and sponsored by the United Africa Company Employees Union. They amalgamated in 1953 but split on CPP-NLM lines in 1955.

Nkrumah and other Ministers are becoming increasingly, if gradually, aware of the dangers attendant on communist infiltration and of the importance of building up confidence in the Gold Coast in the non-Communist world. The lesson of British Guiana is being learnt. You may like to see the full text of Nkrumah's recent address to the students at the University College which I enclose. There are indications that Ocran's suspension from the C.P.P. may be revoked – he is a clever and plausible character – but it is certainly Nkrumah's intention at present to expel Woode. Whether he will actually do so, and whether, having done so, he will stand by his decision it is difficult to predict.

I do not wish to give the impression that the Communist threat is being underrated. But any consideration of Communism in the Gold Coast must take account of the West African character. The sophisticated African's first loyalty is towards himself and his prestige. Loyalty towards an abstract ideology is an extremely rare thing, and I do not think that Communism can be regarded at present as a significant political factor. There is always the danger of Communist contacts exercising a disruptive influence on organised labour, but Woode and his associates have at present little influence on labour as a whole. A heavy fall in the price of cocoa or a world slump leading to unemployment might, of course, lead to a rapid change in the situation. But, in general, things are moving slowly in the right direction. Public opinion in non-Communist countries, allied with events in British Guiana, is making itself felt and is likely to have a more lasting effect than more direct methods of approach.

**147** CO 554/371, no 73

4 Jan 1954

[Communism in the Gold Coast]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the measures needed to prevent the expansion of communist influence

I have shown to the Secretary of State your letter to Gorell Barnes of the 4th December about Communism in the Gold Coast.<sup>1</sup> As you already know he is deeply concerned about the dangers to democratic progress which the intensified Communist drive in the Gold Coast has brought and will continue to bring. That these dangers are partly realised by Ministers is clear from the steps already taken against Communists and from Nkrumah's speech to the students at the University College. But the Secretary of State is not completely satisfied that Ministers have yet fully understood the nature of the Communist threat, or the necessity for measures to deal with it, and he would welcome your further views on how Ministers could be persuaded to take certain specific actions which he would regard as indicative of a real and enduring desire to prevent the expansion of Communist influence in the Gold Coast.

2. As the Communists have lost ground in Western Europe they have increasingly turned their attention to the Colonies. The recent W.F.T.U. Congress in Vienna made it plain that there is to be an intensified effort to capture Colonial trade union movements, and through them to stimulate the forces of "national liberation". That

<sup>1</sup> See 146.

is one reason why, as current reports indicate, the Communists are making more funds and more literature available for their campaigns in West Africa. They will undoubtedly see in the increasing measure of self-government enjoyed by the Gold Coast a greater opportunity for their propaganda and organisation. The Secretary of State's circular despatch No.498/53 of the 30th May set out the main lines of Communist strategy – for example, that their immediate aim is to penetrate and strengthen nationalist movements, and that penetration of the trade union movement is a useful step towards building up and gaining control of nationalist movements as such. In pursuing this aim the last thing Communists rely on is a general measure of public support for Communism as such. As revolutionary conspirators they are concerned solely with capturing the key positions of power. They will naturally go in for widespread propaganda to show how reasonable their policies are and how beneficial their regime would be. Events in British Guiana<sup>2</sup> have shown that their tactics may take the form of building up and practising Communism while denying that they are Communists, not only to the world at large but also to their own followers. A small minority of determined Communists will do everything to exercise the greatest possible influence and they will use that influence solely for the purposes of disruption. This is not a remote danger, but a very near one.

3. The Secretary of State is bound to weigh all these considerations with great care before he commits himself finally to making the proposed declaration in Parliament and to approving the new constitutional instruments for submission to the Privy Council. On the basis of the general assessment of the situation contained in your letter of the 4th of December he does not feel entirely convinced that your Ministers understand the importance of specific measures to protect the Gold Coast democracy against Communist penetration, or the threat which such penetration in fact constitutes to themselves, as shown by the fate of "nationalist" leaders in states which have fallen to Communism. He fully understands the confidence which Ministers have in their ability to guide the political life of the Gold Coast on sound democratic lines, and their natural reluctance to reach decisions about Communism which are well in advance of general opinion on the subject. He does, however, feel very strongly that Ministers should look to the future and should be asked to consider very seriously indeed the ways in which they can discharge their responsibility for the protection of the Gold Coast against subversion. It may well be politically easier to wait a year or so, or even longer, before taking positive steps, but from the Secretary of State's point of view this is hardly likely to give him the assurance he requires that Ministers not only understand the dangers but are prepared to act. The longer a decision is put off the more difficult it will be to achieve the objective of keeping Communism within bounds while preserving democratic freedoms.

4. In his letter of the 26th June<sup>3</sup> Gorell Barnes suggested that the attention of the Gold Coast Cabinet might be drawn to those dangers. You are understandably

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<sup>2</sup> Elections in British Guiana under the new constitution of Apr 1953 brought Cheddi Jagan and his People's Progressive Party into office. When it was felt that their activities threatened not only the orderly conduct of government business but the political neutrality of the police and civil service, Lyttelton suspended the constitution in Oct 1953 and resorted to rule by the governor.

<sup>3</sup> See 135.

reluctant to do so in view of the success you have already had in bringing Ministers step by step towards that understanding of the dangers of Communism which is so necessary. On the other hand there is no doubt that if it were possible to take Ministers the whole way in the very near future the Secretary of State could with much greater confidence confirm on behalf of H.M.G. the new constitutional arrangements. He would therefore be grateful if you could look at the problem yet once again in the light of his views and let me know what further steps you think can be taken. What he would like to do, subject to your views, is to send, within the next month, either an official communication to the Gold Coast Government, or a semi-official one for you to communicate to the Cabinet on behalf of the Secretary of State. In this we would say that there is clear evidence that the Communists are stepping up the cold war against the Gold Coast and that recent events in Colonial territories, notably British Guiana, have increased the concern and the determination of H.M.G. to protect Colonial peoples from Communist subversion which can only retard seriously their political advance; that the Secretary of State is glad to recognise that the Gold Coast Government have already given signs that they will not allow their country to be used as a pawn in the game of international Communism; but that, however remote the Communist threat may seem, Communist interest in the Gold Coast keeps on increasing and the Communists feel that their opportunities for infiltration will be much greater as the Gold Coast approaches self-government; that in these circumstances H.M.G. feel that they must seek further reassurances before finally agreeing to the constitutional proposals. The Secretary of State would therefore invite the Gold Coast Government to take certain immediate steps which are open to them. Firstly, agreement to the establishment of a vetting procedure for overseas officers recruited for the Gold Coast from all sources; including those recruited by the Gold Coast Commission; secondly, the extension of the ban on Communist literature to all Communist publications; and thirdly the institution of a close control over the visits of Gold Coast people to Communist conferences in Europe. We would, of course, clear the draft of such a communication with you in advance.

5. We shall be writing to you separately about the question of vetting procedure in connection with Mercer's appointment. Perhaps the most awkward of the points we have mentioned is that of the control of movement through passport procedure. We would be the first to admit that this control cannot be completely effective, but that is no argument against exercising it as thoroughly as may be possible. There is no sense in letting all go free because it is possible only to stop nine out of ten. The increasing number of people going from the Gold Coast to Vienna and Bucharest seems to us to show quite clearly that action to prevent this movement is bound to have considerable value.

6. There is not much time left if we are to bring these matters to a head, and I know you will let me have a very quick reply to this letter.

**148** CO 554/1177, no 1

13 Jan 1954

[Communism in the Gold Coast]: letter (reply) from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd

You asked for a very quick reply to your letter of the 4th January<sup>1</sup> about Communism in the Gold Coast. Fortunately, before the receipt of your letter, the ground was being prepared and a Cabinet paper was being drafted (a) to extend the ban on communist literature to all Communist publications, and (b) to establish a vetting procedure for overseas officers recruited from all sources for service in the Gold Coast. We instituted some time ago a system of close control over the issue of passports and visas to Gold Coast people who are suspected of desiring to pay visits behind the Iron Curtain, and we will now have this system examined to see if it can be made more rigorous. Nkrumah has informed me of his intention to expel from the C.P.P. Anthony Woode and five other party members who are known to have Communist affiliations: he is doubtful about the timing of this move which will have political repercussions, but proposes to make it as soon as he sees his way clear. I have also suggested to him the advisability of making a statement during the course of the Budget Meeting of the Assembly on the lines of the statement made by Mr. Attlee, the then Prime Minister, in the House of Commons on the 15th March, 1948, regarding the employment of communists in the Civil Service.

2. I cannot promise that all these steps will have been taken by the time I come on leave, but I hope to be in a position to give the Secretary of State adequate reassurances regarding the attitude of Gold Coast Ministers towards Communism.

3. I think you should know that a story is being sedulously spread that there is an "imperialist plot" to sabotage any further constitutional advance in the Gold Coast. Our local Commission of Enquiry<sup>2</sup> into bribery and corruption is alleged to be an attempt to discredit the C.P.P. to this end and recent events in Kenya, British Guiana and Uganda are quoted as examples of the imperialist government's determination to keep the colonies in subjection. However nonsensical this may seem, it is not without its effect and Nkrumah and his colleagues are under considerable pressure from their extremists to abandon their present methods and make an immediate demand for independence. I have no reason to think that they will not stand firm, but there is no doubt that some of the weaker brethren are getting jittery and that this is not an opportune moment for H.M.G. formally to demand further reassurances as a condition of further constitutional advance.

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<sup>1</sup> See 147.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the commission of inquiry (chairman, Mr Justice K A Korsah) into the bribery scandal which led to the resignation of the then minister of communications and works, Mr Braimah, in Nov 1953. The report of the Korsah Commission was published in Accra in 1954. The scandal is analysed in D Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960* (London, 1964) pp 164-166.

**149** PREM 11/1367, C(54)62

18 Feb 1954

**'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lyttelton on the measures taken by the Gold Coast Cabinet to deal with communism and the resignation of Mr Braimah**

[The adoption of these apparently draconian measures by the CPP dominated government was only partly intended to reassure the Conservative government in London. As importantly, these prohibitions provided the CPP with useful weapons in its struggle with independently minded left-wingers within the party. This was especially intense in Western Province where party branches were in some cases dominated by trades unions, some of whose leadership was avowedly Marxist and some of whom were to be suspended from the party.<sup>1</sup>]

No action is required on this paper, but I would like to inform my colleagues of recent developments.

2. The proposals for constitutional change in the Gold Coast described in my memorandum C.(53)244<sup>2</sup> have been discussed with the Gold Coast Government. Subject to some further examination of detail, satisfactory agreement has been reached on all points. The Governor's reserve powers are fully safeguarded and Defence (including the police) and External Affairs are firmly in his hands.

3. I had been concerned about two matters which might prejudice acceptance of the proposals. The Gold Coast Cabinet have hitherto been slow to take any steps to deal with the danger of Communist penetration. They have now, however, taken three decisions which have removed any doubts I previously had. They have decided:-

- (1) to ban the entry of all Communist literature into the Gold Coast (previously only some publications had been banned);
- (2) to exclude any European with Communist sympathies from the public service and to exclude any African with Communist sympathies from a certain number of Departments like the Administration, the police and the Department of Education;
- (3) to confiscate the passports of the few Gold Coast Communists who wish to travel behind the Iron Curtain.

4. I have also been concerned about the possible extent of corruption in the Gold Coast. I am now told by the Governor that the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the Gold Coast Cabinet into the resignation of Mr. Braimah, the Minister of Works, is likely to finish its work very soon and to present its report within a month. Two Ministerial Secretaries have been prosecuted and sent to prison for two years for accepting a bribe of £150. But the Governor tells me that no evidence of corruption among Ministers has been, or is likely to be, discovered.<sup>3</sup>

5. I propose to submit the new constitutional instruments to the Privy Council in April. A General Election will be held in the Gold Coast in June and a new

<sup>1</sup> This relationship is examined in D Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960* (London, 1964) pp 170-171.

<sup>2</sup> See 141.

<sup>3</sup> See 148, note 2.

government will take office shortly thereafter. I am advised by the Governor that Dr. Nkrumah is likely to win the election without difficulty.

6. The new Constitution will mark the last step before independence. It is unlikely that the position can be held longer than 1956, and well before then we shall have to consider the complicated matter of the Commonwealth for an independent Gold Coast. This general question is, of course, under consideration at present by a Ministerial Committee.

## 150 PREM 11/1367, C(54)169

19 May 1954

### 'Togoland under United Kingdom trusteeship': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lyttelton

Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship is a narrow landlocked strip of territory on the eastern border of the Gold Coast with a population of about 400,000. Since it came under British control in 1914 it has been administered as an integral part of the Gold Coast; this arrangement now rests on Article 5 of the Trusteeship Agreement which reaffirms the provision in the earlier League of Nations Mandate that the Administering Authority shall administer the territory in accordance with his own laws as an integral part of his territory. By virtue of this arrangement the Trust Territory has fully shared the constitutional and political progress of the Gold Coast.

2. On 28th April the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs informed Parliament of the constitutional changes in the Gold Coast approved by the Cabinet on 16th September, 1953 (C.C.(53) 52nd Conclusions, Minute 3)<sup>1</sup> and made the declaration about the grant to the Gold Coast at the appropriate time of self-government within the Commonwealth agreed by the Committee on Commonwealth Membership on 23rd September, 1953.<sup>2</sup>

3. The new Gold Coast constitution formally preserves the responsibility of the United Kingdom Government as the Administering Authority for Togoland. It makes the Governor responsible in his discretion for Togoland and provides that any functions relating to Togoland exercised by Gold Coast Ministers shall be subject to the Governor's directions.

4. When self-government is granted to the Gold Coast it will become impossible for the United Kingdom Government to discharge their responsibilities under the present Trusteeship Agreement for Togoland. To do so, they would need to take special measures to exercise in Togoland an authority separate from that of the Gold Coast Government. After 40 years of common administration Gold Coast and Togoland affairs are so closely mingled that the separate administration of this inland territory would be against both the interests and, almost certainly, also the wishes of its peoples. It would create an administration which could not effectively administer the territory and would therefore destroy the hope of any further progress in realising the aims of the Trusteeship System.

5. Since the Gold Coast constitution of 1951 the United Nations have drawn

<sup>1</sup> See 143.

<sup>2</sup> See 144.

increasing attention to the sharp difference between theory and practice in responsibility for the administration of Togoland. When the time comes to fulfil the promise of self-government for the Gold Coast, it will be necessary either to revise or to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement for Togoland. As the Gold Coast is likely to look for self-government within the next two to four years, and as the United Nations will probably require about two years to reach a final conclusion on the future of Togoland, we must start considering now what the future should be.

6. Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship cannot stand alone. It is too small and poor and it has close economic and ethnic ties west and east with neighbouring territories. Its Northern Section is peopled by the same tribes as the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast with which it is wholly assimilated. The only possible future for the Northern Section is integration with a self-governing Gold Coast.

7. The position of the Southern Section is more complicated. Out of a population of over 220,000 nearly 150,000 belong to the Ewe tribe. About 400,000 Ewes live in the south-eastern corner of the Gold Coast Colony and a slightly larger number in the southern part of Togoland under French Trusteeship. The Ewes have no close tribal system and during the inter-war years there was easy communication between the two mandates. The economic difficulties of the war and the boundary restrictions imposed when French Togoland came under Vichy France awoke a political demand for Ewe unity which has been a persistent embarrassment to the French and ourselves in the United Nations. The demand has sometimes been for the unification of British and French Togolands and sometimes for the creation of an Ewe State including the Ewe speaking part of the Gold Coast.

8. Unification of the two Togolands would solve nothing. The tribes of the Northern Section of British Togoland would be artificially cut off from their kinsmen in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast: the Ewes in the Southern Section would be united with those in French Togoland, but cut off from those in the Gold Coast. The creation of an Ewe State might meet the emotional demand for Ewe unity but it would be unacceptable both to France and to the Gold Coast, which would lose a large slice of Gold Coast territory. It would also rule out the Volta River Hydro-Electric Scheme.

9. We have had no sure means of gauging the strength of the demand for Ewe unity in the Southern Section of British Togoland, which probably has substantial minority support, but the rapid advance of the Gold Coast towards self-government has won much Ewe sympathy and Ewe spokesmen have frequently declared their aim to be Ewe unity [sic] within, or as a partner with, a self-governing Gold Coast. The French well know that Ewe sentiment is directed against them rather than against us and we have often had to go to great lengths to reassure them that the United Kingdom is not encouraging Ewe intransigence as a means of obtaining authority over French Togoland.

10. After the long association of British Togoland with the Gold Coast the Gold Coast Government look for its integration with the Gold Coast when the Trusteeship Agreement is terminated. United Kingdom support for this Gold Coast attitude was pledged in June, 1951 in a private talk in London between the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. T. Cook, and Dr. Nkrumah. Gold Coast Ministers realise that there must be clear majority support in Togoland for integration before the United Nations will agree to it. They have therefore made it

a major issue in the General Election to be held under the new constitution on 15th June, which will be the first real trial of strength between the Government party and the all-Ewe movement.

11. Article 76(b) of the United Nations Charter says that a basic objective of the Trusteeship system is to promote "the progressive development (of the Trust Territories) towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned". Integration with the Gold Coast is the only satisfactory objective for British Togoland in its particular circumstances. It would continue undisturbed the administrative arrangements of the last 40 years, it would, I believe, meet the wishes of a majority, probably a substantial majority, of the whole population, it would fulfill the reasonable expectation of the Gold Coast Government and it would be welcomed by the French. It would not prevent a future self-governing Gold Coast from seeking to draw the Ewes of French Togoland into its orbit but it would help France to deal direct with the Gold Coast over this issue without the intervention of the United Nations on behalf of British Togoland. Clearly the inhabitants must be consulted before a decision is reached between the United Nations and the Administering Authority, but with the north solid for integration and sentiment in the south increasingly tending that way, majority opinion is not in serious doubt. Our tactics will however depend to some extent on the results of the General Election.

12. I therefore propose that the United Kingdom Government should:—

- (a) inform the United Nations that, as, under the Trusteeship Agreement, British Togoland has been administered as an integral part of the Gold Coast, other arrangements for its administration must be made when the Gold Coast becomes self-governing;
- (b) inform the United Nations that British Togoland, owing to its situation and resources, could not be administered as a separate Trust Territory without great hardship to its inhabitants, or with any prospect of realising the aims of the Trusteeship system, so that it would not then be possible for the United Kingdom Government to continue responsible for its administration;
- (c) inform the United Nations of the view of the United Kingdom Government that when the Gold Coast becomes self-governing the basic objectives of the Charter in respect of British Togoland would best be fulfilled by its integration with the Gold Coast, which would involve termination of its trusteeship status;
- (d) invite the United Nations to consider future arrangements for British Togoland, and before reaching conclusions, to ascertain the wishes of its inhabitants by whatever method seems most satisfactory, including if necessary the holding of a plebiscite.

13. Before they were communicated to the United Nations the United Kingdom proposals would first be discussed with the French as part of the routine Anglo-French exchanges on Colonial questions of mutual concern. Some Member States, while in favour of integration, may wish to press for a plebiscite to bring French Togoland also into the Gold Coast or may wish to defer integration until the future of French Togoland is also to be decided. To achieve this they may propose either Gold Coast trusteeship or joint United Kingdom/Gold Coast trusteeship of British Togoland for a further limited period. If this occurs we must reaffirm our intention

to terminate the trusteeship when the Gold Coast becomes self-governing and persuade the Gold Coast to reply to any United Nations enquiries that they similarly expect a decision on integration forthwith. We must discuss these various possibilities with the French.

14. Finally certain Commonwealth Governments, other Administering Authorities (including the United States) and some other friendly Member States would be informed of the United Kingdom proposals shortly before these were sent to the United Nations and a statement would be made in Parliament.

15. It may be that the United Nations, while agreeing to the integration of British Togoland with the Gold Coast, will propose that, because of the inexperience of the Gold Coast Government, that Government should continue to report to the United Nations on Togoland for a limited period. If this is proposed, the United Kingdom Delegation would work for its rejection.

16. I invite my colleagues to approve the action proposed in paragraphs 12 to 15. I am confident that our proposals will be acceptable to the United Nations and will ultimately result in the integration of British Togoland with the Gold Coast. But should unforeseen obstacles to integration arise, I will consult my colleagues again.

17. The Minister of State has seen this paper and agrees with it.

## 151 CO 554/803, no 21

5 July 1954

'Defence problems which will arise when the Gold Coast becomes independent': notes for discussion by J S Bennett

### A. *General*

An independent Gold Coast must be demonstrably capable of maintaining its independence. This does not mean that the Gold Coast must be capable of undertaking *alone* its defence against any possible external aggression (who can?). It *does* mean that the Gold Coast Government must own and operate sufficient armed forces:—

- (a) to support the civil power for internal security;
- (b) to make a show at the immediate local defence of the territory in an emergency;
- (c) also, if the Gold Coast is in the Commonwealth and wishes its voice to be heard, to co-operate in Commonwealth defence planning and to provide a nucleus for expansion and possible operation overseas in the event of war.

It is convenient to take the subject in two halves, local forces and defence co-operation with the U.K. and Commonwealth, although these two overlap to some extent.

### B. *Local forces*

#### 1. *Scale*

RWAF units raised in the Gold Coast at present comprise three infantry battalions, one battery of artillery, one signals squadron and one engineer squadron. This is a reasonably well-balanced force (but what about AA and perhaps eventually armoured cars, like Malaya and Kenya?). Scale is probably about as big as an

independent Gold Coast will initially need or be able to afford. It is a good deal better than Ceylon in 1947.

What about token naval and air forces?

## 2. *Practical limitations*

For some time after independence the Gold Coast will be dependent on external aid for:—

- (a) a number of officers, including at first all senior officers;
- (b) training of Gold Coast officers;
- (c) much of the administrative tail;
- (d) all arms, ammunition and equipment.

For both practical and political reasons, these needs should continue to be met from the U.K.

## 3. *Finance*

From this year the Gold Coast have agreed to contribute £1 m. annually towards the cost of maintenance of the existing forces. The U.K. will then still be carrying just over £3 m. per annum of the maintenance costs of the RWAFF as a whole, of which, at a guess, up to another £1 m. might be attributable to the Gold Coast.

The Gold Coast have also said they will try to find £½ m. a year for Works Services.

Allowing for extras and administrative overheads, total cost of an independent Gold Coast army might therefore be up to £3 m. a year.

## 4. *Possible set-up consistent with political requirements*

- (a) Must be a national force under its own Commander-in-Chief, with Gold Coast Government accepting full financial and administrative responsibility.
- (b) C. in C. must owe sole allegiance to Gold Coast Government, but could be British to start with as in Pakistan 1947. Other British officers seconded on similar basis. (This means long-term volunteers, not short-term postings as now);
- (c) Sandhurst to continue taking Gold Coast cadets, at an increasing rate (precedents for this with independent countries);
- (d) British Military Mission to provide technical advice and assistance and channel military purchases. Compare Egypt 1936. By modern Commonwealth practice should probably be called U.K.S.L.S.

## 5. *Relations with rest of West Africa*

- (a) A national army must contract out of the RWAFF.
- (b) No reason why Gold Coast Government should not place some or all of its forces, under their own Commander, under the higher command of a British GOC West Africa; but this would become an "international" arrangement applicable to external defence only, like allocation of U.K. forces to SHAPE (compare also Commonwealth Division in Korea). GOC West Africa must have no powers or responsibilities relating to use of forces for internal security in Gold Coast.
- (c) In so far as technical services are centralised for West Africa, and Gold Coast cannot immediately fill the gap on its own, these services might be disguised in Gold Coast as part of the British Military Mission.

### 6. *Transitional measures*

(i) Essential that as many as possible of the necessary changes should be made in good time *before* independence, so that:—

- (a) lengthy negotiations do not delay independence and make control of the armed forces a political issue;
- (b) there is a national administrative machine and command structure in being and with some practical experience before the strain comes on;
- (c) suitable British officers are already dug in on a career basis, willing to stay and likely to be asked to do so.

(ii) This is urgent. If independence is only two or three years off, we shall need every month and must start now.

(iii) First step is earliest possible legislation by Gold Coast Government consolidating its troops into a single national organisation, as recommended by the Lagos Conference 1953.<sup>1</sup>

(iv) Lagos recommendations about GOC West Africa and West African Army Advisory Council can also proceed, but will be brief interim stage as far as concerns Gold Coast.

(v) Gold Coast Government should then urgently reconsider, in light of new Constitution, how soon they can take over full financial responsibility for (a) maintenance costs (b) works services (they accepted latter principle at Lagos but said they could not yet face it).

(vi) Given Gold Coast willingness to pay, C.O. can then open negotiations with War Office for administrative transfer, including new arrangements for British officers. Target should be transfer of full administrative (and financial) responsibility from the War Office to the Gold Coast within 12 months, so as to allow a minimum of one year before independence. This transfer need not affect operational command during the remaining pre-independence period (it doesn't in Malaya, where the forces are already "national").

(vii) A "Blank Office" to be set up soon under the Minister of State in the new Cabinet, and associated with the negotiations with the War Office.

### C. *Defence co-operation with the U.K. and Commonwealth*

1. A Defence Agreement was concluded with Ceylon in 1947 (Appendix I to Cmd. 7257 attached)<sup>2</sup> before the Ceylon Independence Bill was introduced into Parliament.

2. Although comparable Agreements were negotiated with Iraq, Egypt and Jordan on their emerging from British mandate to independence, this is the first (and so far the only) case between Commonwealth countries. In particular, there were no written Agreements with India and Pakistan.

3. The need for a written Agreement with Ceylon was perhaps felt to be necessary for three reasons in particular:—

- (a) for U.K. political reasons, Ceylon being the first Colony (strictly so called) to reach independence;

<sup>1</sup> See 129.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

- (b) the existence of major U.K. bases in Ceylon which it was desired to preserve;
- (c) the almost complete absence of any Ceylonese armed forces.

4. Of these, (a) is perhaps no longer so important, as the passage of time shows that co-operation within the Commonwealth depends more on political realities than on formal Agreements. Neither (b) nor (c) apply to the Gold Coast. If provisions covering them are removed, there is nothing left in the Ceylon Defence Agreement except generalities about mutual assistance which it is unnecessary and probably undesirable to reduce to writing. Moreover, it was demonstrated in 1939 that even the old Commonwealth countries attach importance to not automatically and simultaneously following a declaration of war by the U.K.

5. However well drafted, written agreements get out of date and become a source of political friction in the junior partner.

6. The Ceylon Defence Agreement was the peg on which the U.S.S.R. hung its veto on Ceylon's admission to the United Nations. As well as the usual line about "imperialist war bases", they were able to allege, with some appearance of justification, that Ceylon was not really independent.

7. For all these reasons it would be better to avoid a Defence Agreement with the Gold Coast and to rely on political co-operation fortified by a strong professional link with the Gold Coast armed forces.

8. We should have to square the Chiefs of Staff about this, but it is more than half a matter of political judgment and would perhaps be better taken straight to the Defence Committee. It is not so urgent as the transitional arrangements about local forces and could be taken separately and later if desired.

#### D. *Immediate action*

A letter to the Governor getting his advice on our preliminary views, followed by:—

- (a) a paper for the Defence Committee on local forces (with a brief reference to future Commonwealth co-operation) to get their general blessing on lines of negotiation with War Office and Gold Coast Ministers.
- (b) to save time, Governor simultaneously to start prodding his Ministers about legislation and financial responsibility.

**152** CO 554/1162, no 2

16 July 1954

'Elections in the Gold Coast – June 1954': letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd on the election results and the new Cabinet

[This letter was written in response to a CO circular letter dated 24 June 1954 in which Lloyd asked colonial governors to consider writing periodic despatches 'in a colloquial style' for circulation among ministers outside the CO and, in certain cases, among ambassadors and high commissioners. Lloyd explained that the increasing complexity of colonial problems, with a corresponding increase in the number of colonial questions being referred to Cabinet, and the manner in which the colonies were attracting greater interest both in the UK and abroad, made it necessary to increase the amount of informed knowledge on colonial affairs at ministerial and high official level. A UK minister or an ambassador should, he wrote, 'be as well posted in the major problems of, let us say, the Gold Coast as he is in those of the European Defence Community'. Mild complaints had been received from a number of FO ministers and other departments about the lack of regular information concerning developments in colonial territories. Given the

limitations of space, governors were not asked to attempt a survey of the entire political or economic field at any one time. Instead, Lloyd suggested that they should submit appreciations of a particular situation of current interest at the time. They might consider 'the state of affairs after a general election, with brief portraits of the political leaders; the state of a trade union movement; the implications of a new industrial undertaking; the position of the primary producer, with special reference to any current marketing difficulties; the nature and strength of any important local separatist movement; the activities of a foreign (or other Commonwealth) power in the territory; and so forth. In view of the number of territories, Lloyd asked that such appreciations should be submitted 'not oftener than one every three months or more seldom than one every six months' (CO 554/1162, no 1). Arden-Clarke was the first governor to respond with this personal letter of 16 July 1954. The first para, which referred to Lloyd's request, is omitted. In view of the fact that his reports were to be circulated to outside ministers, Arden-Clarke was subsequently asked to submit them in the form of despatches rather than personal letters.]

...  
It is generally known that the elections last month were conducted in an orderly manner throughout the country. This was in great measure due to the efficiency with which the polling arrangements were planned and executed by the Civil Service, to the known and visible preparedness of the police to deal with possible hooliganism and to the fact that a majority result in favour of the Convention People's Party was never seriously in doubt; but it should not be forgotten that a peaceful and orderly election would not have been possible but for the good sense and good humour of the people. Candidates and the electorate in general co-operated with polling authorities in a most praiseworthy manner. Speeches by candidates and their supporters were at times wild and uninhibited, but there was no serious attempt to inflame the crowds, and the parties generally conducted themselves in a manner which promises well for the future. I am told that several election petitions have been filed; in a country where the right to "petition" is widely understood as an opportunity to prolong an entertainment, it will not be surprising to find that a number of the allegations made are purely speculative. I enclose some figures relating to the general election which may be of interest; also a detailed note of the results in Togoland. Nkrumah proposes to post a full-time party organiser in the Southern Section of Togoland from now onwards to combat Antor's<sup>1</sup> unification propaganda.

The excellent spirit which prevailed during the election has since given place to a period of jubilation on the part of the Government's supporters which some of their opponents find it difficult to stomach. It is customary here to celebrate a victory of any kind with processions and other displays of enthusiasm coupled with derogatory remarks to the defeated, but there are indications, in Accra and Kumasi at least, that the Convention People's Party has over-stepped the conventional limits in its attitude to the Moslem Association.<sup>2</sup> There has been provocation on both sides, and both accuse the police of bias. The Convention People's Party is highly suspicious

<sup>1</sup> S G Antor, secretary, Togoland Congress. The Congress was formed in 1951 by the Ewe leaders, Antor and Kojo Ayeke. It demanded, as an interim measure, a separate legislature for the Trust Territory, and, as its ultimate goal, integration with the neighbouring Trust Territory.

<sup>2</sup> The Muslim Association Party (MAP) was formed by a majority (but not all) of the Muslim communities which numbered approximately 6.5 per cent of the population. The greater number of Muslims were in the north, but their political strength lay principally in the 'Zongos' or 'strangers' quarters' of the municipalities. The MAP began to enter politics during 1953-1954. It merged with other groups to form the United Party in post-independence Ghana in Nov 1957.

and somewhat fearful of the influence of "Islam" and likes to exaggerate any opposition on the part of the Moslem Association, which includes immigrants from French territory, but is not supported by a majority of Gold Coast Moslems, as a threat of widespread disorder and violence. The actual breaches of the peace which have occurred have so far been minor affairs; it is possible that the situation will deteriorate, if mutual provocation continues, but I do not expect a situation to arise which the police will find difficult to control.

Nkrumah did not experience any great difficulty in forming a Government. The most serious problems which he had to face were the dropping of two members of the former Cabinet – Hutton-Mills and Inkumsah – and the allocation of two seats in the Cabinet to members from the Northern Territories. Hutton-Mills and Inkumsah have shown themselves to be below the minimum standard of efficiency, and are widely suspected of having abused their position in the former Government for their private advantage. None the less both have considerable political support, especially Hutton-Mills, who belongs to a respected and influential Accra family, and Nkrumah's party political advisers probably strongly urged him to retain them. It was a wise political move to include two Northern Territories members in the Cabinet, but again not popular with the party. It is significant that Nkrumah had no serious difficulty in getting his way in both these cases although he has had to compromise to the extent of including Inkumsah in the Government as a Ministerial Secretary, and offering Hutton-Mills the political appointment of Deputy Commissioner in the Gold Coast Office in London at a specially enhanced salary. A sharp English winter and two or three prolonged alcoholic bouts may end Hutton-Mills's career. I enclose a list of Ministers<sup>3</sup> and the short titles of their portfolios for ease of reference; there was little reaction of any sort when this list was published.

The Cabinet is now meeting weekly to deal with business on a formal agenda; Ministers also meet weekly for an informal discussion at which views are aired, but no major decisions are taken. The opportunity of discussion at informal meetings is a useful device which enables Nkrumah to steer his colleagues away from introducing matters without notice into the Cabinet and from the consequent risk of snap decisions being taken on inadequate information. The agenda and minutes, also the record of the informal discussions, are sent to me as the Constitution prescribes; so far, Nkrumah seems to be managing the meeting well. There are four old hands in the Cabinet, apart from Nkrumah – Botsio, Gbedemah, Casely-Hayford and Asafu Adjaye – on whom the new Ministers will, at first at least, have to rely for advice. Jantuah, Welbeck, Ako Adjei and Ofori Atta have no experience of public administration, and may show an early disposition to disregard official advice and kick over the traces generally; but the Prime Minister has grown in stature, and I am confident that through him they can be made to toe the line. There is evidence that he is already at work on them, especially on Ako Adjei. Allassani was a Ministerial Secretary in the former Cabinet and has shown some grasp of administrative problems which should ease his path in the initial stages. Imoru Egala, who is probably more acceptable in the Northern Territories as a whole than is Allassani, left a promising career in the Education Department to take up politics. I have good hopes of him.

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed.

It is of some interest that Botsio has been made "Minister of State". He would more properly be called "Minister without Portfolio", but this has been avoided as being reminiscent of the days when Ansah Koi held that post, a period which everyone associated with him would wish to forget. Nkrumah's object in giving Botsio this post is to build him up into a Deputy Prime Minister, and this is undoubtedly recognised by Gbedemah, the third member of the triumvirate, who is ambitious and likely to develop a resentment against the other two. Gbedemah is one of the vainest and most determined Gold Coast Africans I have met, which is saying a good deal; this is one of the reasons why he is on the Advisory Committee to which I refer below. He certainly regards himself as God's gift to finance, and this thought may keep him happy for a time. Incidentally, we shall probably have some novel financial doctrines from him, but this is where the Economic Adviser\* will be useful.

As foreshadowed in paragraph 7 of the published Gold Coast Despatch No 209 of 9th April (Colonial No 302), the Advisory Committee† has been set up to assist me in the charge of my responsibilities for defence and external affairs. The Committee consists of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of State, of Finance and of the Interior. As the Committee exists for the purpose of receiving advice from me as much as for giving me advice, the selection of its members has been made with this consideration in mind. The Committee will meet at frequent intervals and has already met once.

It is by no means clear how members of the Assembly, who are not supporters of the Government, will align themselves in the House. The Northern People's Party is primarily concerned to protect the interests of the Northern Territories‡, and it is hoped that this party will normally co-operate with the Government, except where the interests of the Northern Territories require that they should oppose. I am most anxious to avoid the formal alignment of the Northern Territories against the Government. The Assembly will be opened on the 29th July, and the first meeting is expected to be short. It is unlikely that the Assembly will settle down, and the pattern of the Opposition become clear, until the second meeting, which will probably be held in October. As Nkrumah said sometime ago, an Opposition with an effective policy is unlikely to be formed this side of independence; until that time there is only one real platform, namely "Self Government Now", and he occupies it.

In conclusion, the Government is settling down in an atmosphere of confidence. If it can handle the Convention People's Party *versus* the Moslem problem in a statesmanlike manner, it will acquire great merit in the eyes of responsible opinion. Whether pressure for the immediate grant of independence will be applied as soon as

\* The Gold Coast Government were aware of the need of expert financial and economic advice and proposed the appointment of an Economic Adviser who would attend Cabinet meetings when required to do so. The Minister of Finance (an expatriate officer) in the last Government has been appointed to the post.

† Under the 1954 constitution, the Governor, acting in his discretion, is responsible for all matters relating to defence, internal security (including the organisation and discipline of the Police), external affairs and matters affecting Togoland under the United Kingdom Trusteeship. The meetings of the Advisory Committee should educate Ministers gradually in these matters and should ensure regular contact with them on all matters of Government business.

‡ The peoples of the Northern Territories, the Protectorate, form about a quarter of the population of the Gold Coast and occupy about half its territory. The North is backward, compared with the South, educationally, economically and socially.

the Assembly meets cannot be foreseen with certainty; the most likely quarter from which to expect it is, as formerly, the Convention People's Party back benches.

The work of the Preparatory Commission on the Volta River project continues to make good progress. It is expected that the Commission's report on the resources of man-power and materials required will be available by December, and that other reports will follow during 1955.

#### Enclosure 1 to 152: General election

Total number of seats . . . . .	104
Number of seats uncontested . . . . .	3
Breakdown between parties:-	
Convention People's Party . . . . .	72
Independents . . . . .	15
Northern People's Party . . . . .	12
Togoland Congress . . . . .	2
Ghana Congress Party . . . . .	1
Muslim Association . . . . .	1
Anlo Youth Association . . . . .	<u>1</u>
Total . . . . .	104
Convention People's Party majority . . . . .	40
Total number of registered electors . . . . .	1,196,513
Total number of votes polled . . . . .	717,292
Proportion of electorate which voted . . . . .	59 per cent
Total number of votes polled for the Convention People's Party . . . . .	399,612
Total number of votes polled for other parties and independents . . . . .	317,680

#### Enclosure 2 to 152: Elections in the southern section of Togoland

Togoland, or to be more exact the Southern Section of Togoland, presented a problem with special characteristics, for here the Convention People's Party was opposed by the Togoland Congress, a party which supports the unification of British and French Togoland. This party, under its leader S. G. Antor, probably provided better organisation than any other opposition group outside the Northern Territories: in particular, its organisation had got off to a better start than that of the Convention People's Party in this area and had been very successful at the time of registration in getting the names of most of its supporters on to the electoral roll.

Southern Togoland contains six constituencies of which roughly half of one, and one ward of another, are outside Trust Territory. The northernmost two (Akan/Krachi and Buem) are wholly in Trust Territory and predominantly non-Ewe, though containing large Ewe minority groups in some areas. The remaining four constituencies were almost exclusively Ewe.

The campaigns by both sides were vigorous, and after some roughness at the start they became very orderly. A heavy poll was recorded in most areas. The result was a resounding victory for the Convention People's Party in the two non-Ewe constituencies, while the Convention People's Party won only one of the four Ewe

constituencies. The Convention People's Party victory was in the constituency divided almost equally between Trust and non-Trust Territory, but a count by wards shows that the Convention People's Party had a majority in Trust Territory as well as in the whole constituency. In two constituencies the Togoland Congress had comfortable majorities, Antor himself receiving 8,221 votes. In Ho East there was a straight fight between the Convention People's Party candidate and a local clergyman who stood as an independent but who has unificationist sympathies and who had been publicly listed by the Togoland Congress as one of their candidates. In this fight the Convention People's Party candidate lost, largely it is thought as a result of his personal unpopularity, but the successful candidate has still to answer charges that he and three chiefs allowed a fetish to bring improper influence to bear on his behalf.

Votes cast in Southern Togoland (*i.e.*, for the six constituencies, but excluding the wards outside Trust Territory) were:-

Votes cast for six Convention People's Party candidates . . . . .	24,789
Votes cast for five Togoland Congress candidates . . . . .	21,394
Votes cast for the successful independent candidate. . . . .	4,110
Votes cast for unsuccessful independents . . . . .	1,244

In Northern Togoland both the main parties were opposed to the unification of the two Togolands, while none of the unsuccessful independents in Gonja East are known to have openly advocated it.

**153** CO 554/805, no 1

2 Sept 1954

[Future constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes on the date to aim at for the grant of independence

Since the introduction of the new Constitution in June this year, a step which has been recognised as being in intention the last before the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth, I have been giving thought to the problem of how best to handle the next stage. Experience has shown that we would be well advised to prepare ourselves for future constitutional reform in advance of the development of political pressure, and that we should have clearly in mind a programme of the sequence of events. The preparation of such a programme is a matter of some complexity, as future constitutional reform cannot be considered in isolation from the Volta River Project and the future of Togoland.

2. I begin from the assumption that the objectives are to ensure that there is the smoothest possible transition from the present constitutional position to the status of independence, and to retain the Gold Coast within the Commonwealth after independence has been achieved. One of the most important pre-requisites of the attainment of these objectives seems to me to be the preservation and development of good will between the United Kingdom and the Gold Coast. There is at present, and there has been for some time past, considerable good will between the two

countries; but as the goal of independence is approached it would be in keeping with the Gold Coast character if doubts arose, however unreasonably, as to whether there will not be some sudden twist of events which will postpone the attainment of full independence within the Commonwealth. I do not wish to make too much of a point which I know you fully appreciate, but the avoidance as far as possible of any occasion which may give rise to suspicion of the intentions of the United Kingdom Government towards the Gold Coast, however groundless such suspicions may in fact be, can greatly simplify our task. At the present time, there is no doubt in Gold Coast minds of the sincerity of these intentions as expressed in the Queen's message to the Legislative Assembly in July. That message has been of great assistance to us.

3. The rapid and reasonably successful transition from orthodox Crown Colony status to the present position, the conviction of Gold Coast Africans that they can now manage their own affairs whenever they are given a chance to do so, and the pace of events in the Sudan and Nigeria, have combined to create a state of mind among political leaders which looks to the attainment of full independence about the middle of 1956 as a reasonable proposition. That date is acceptable to them because they realise that the necessary administrative and constitutional arrangements could not be made more rapidly, the Gold Coast will still be in the van of African countries achieving independence, and those in office would (privately) be glad of two years in which to extend their experience before further responsibilities descend on the Government. Any later date would be difficult to justify in the eyes of the electorate. It might be possible to spin out the process and delay independence until at latest the middle of 1957, but not without recourse to shifts which would seriously diminish good will. The benefits which would accrue from a single further year under the present constitution would in no way compensate for the restiveness and the questioning attitude towards British motives which would inevitably develop. The risk to good will would not be worth taking. I would therefore regard August 1956 as the date to aim at for the grant of independence.<sup>1</sup> Incidentally, the Bank of the Gold Coast expects to be in a position to issue Gold Coast (or Ghana) currency notes in 1956, and I am advised that August is the most propitious month for a new issue because the movement of currency is then at the minimum.

4. If this date is provisionally accepted as a target, it is necessary to consider the implications for the Volta River Project. The progress of the Preparatory Commission has so far been satisfactory, and its work is so planned that if, after consideration of the reports of the Preparatory Commission, it is decided to proceed with the project, it should be possible for agreements to be initialled in June 1956. After an interval for publicity in the Gold Coast, there could be a debate on the project in the Legislative Assembly in September or October 1956, to be followed by the formal execution of the agreements, subject to the satisfactory determination of the future of Togoland. From the point of view of the other parties to these agreements I see considerable advantage in the debate on the Volta River Project taking place in an independent

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<sup>1</sup> Arden-Clarke subsequently recommended Dec 1956 on advice from the CO to the effect that the earliest possible date on which an independence bill could be presented to parliament would be immediately after the consent of the UN General Assembly had been secured to the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement for Togoland (CO 554/805, no 5, Lloyd to Arden-Clarke, letter, 1 October 1954).

Legislative Assembly, and in the agreements being signed on behalf of an independent Gold Coast.

5. I now turn to the question of Togoland. You will see from the third paragraph of this letter that, in the light of more recent experience, I have to some extent revised my estimate of what the constitutional time-table should be since the fourth paragraph of my secret and personal letter No. 571/7 of the 26th May was written. I have had no reason, however, to regret the suggestion contained in Her Majesty's Government's memorandum on the future of Togoland that the test of public opinion in Togoland should be held in 1956. I suggest that we should aim at March 1956 as the date for that test. Presumably the results of it would be considered by the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn of that year, and a final decision on the future of Togoland could then be taken. According to my suggested programme for constitutional reform this would mean that the grant of independence and the termination or revision of the Trusteeship Agreement would not precisely synchronise. It would mean that arrangements would have to be made for the administration of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship for a few months after the grant of independence to the Gold Coast, possibly by vesting the Governor's powers and responsibilities in respect of Togoland in the Governor-General. This expedient is perhaps administratively untidy, but its duration could be definitely limited before its adoption, and it would not, I should hope, detract from the force of Her Majesty's Government's memorandum.

6. Finally, it is necessary to consider the grant of independence in terms of the constitution. I would propose by August 1955 to bring into effect the Third Schedule to the Order in Council. This would allow approximately one year for members of the Public Service to experience the working of a Public Service Commission entrusted with executive responsibilities, before independence is granted. I would strongly advocate that the grant of independence thereafter should be effected by such amendments to the present constitution as would not necessitate an immediate general election, and I should be grateful if early consideration might be given to this proposal.

7. I shall be writing to you separately regarding the action taken in the Gold Coast, and intended to be taken, on the recommendations of the West African Forces Conference held at Lagos in 1953,<sup>2</sup> and I shall ask for guidance as to what, if any, defence agreements between the United Kingdom and the Gold Coast you have in mind as an objective towards which we should work.

8. I shall be glad to have your reactions to the suggestions in this letter as soon as may be. The earlier I can make arrangements here in accordance with a provisional programme agreed with you, the more likely we are to have a smooth passage.

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<sup>2</sup> See 129; also 151.

**154** PREM 11/1367, C(54)306

4 Oct 1954

**'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lennox-Boyd<sup>1</sup>**

No action is required on this paper but I would like to inform my colleagues of the likely timing of future developments.

2. The proposals for constitutional change in the Gold Coast mentioned in C. (54) 62 of 18th February<sup>2</sup> were given effect from the 18th June, by the Gold Coast (Constitution) Order in Council, 1954. Dr Nkrumah's party won the election with a comfortable majority.

3. As my predecessor told the House of Commons the introduction of the new Constitution was the last step before the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth (a Ministerial Committee will soon report to the Cabinet on the question, which will arise when the Gold Coast approaches independence, of adding to the membership of the Commonwealth), and we should be well advised to prepare ourselves for future constitutional reform in advance of the development of political pressure.

4. So far the Gold Coast Ministers, assisted by the Governor, have done well in many fields. I have every hope that they will do as well in the future; there have recently been some signs that they may have to face the kind of inter-regional and inter-tribal difficulties which have bedevilled Nigerian politics during recent years. They certainly need more experience and if they are to attain independence it will be necessary for them to continue to demonstrate their ability to govern and to preserve the basic freedoms of democracy. They will also continue to need a substantial cadre of European officers to keep the machinery of Government at that level of efficiency which will guarantee the effective implementation of the Volta River Project and other plans for development.

5. The timing of the grant of independence must therefore depend on a number of factors. An essential pre-requisite is the consent of the General Assembly of the United Nations to the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. (This question was discussed in C. (54) 169).<sup>3</sup> This cannot be obtained until the 1956 meeting, so that the earliest possible date for the grant of independence to the Gold Coast would be about December 1956.

6. The Governor has suggested that December 1956 should be taken as the date to aim at, for if we delay unnecessarily we may forfeit the great goodwill which now exists there and drive the Gold Coast out of the Commonwealth. He has been informed that, while I cannot enter into any commitment now, I shall be ready to consider the matter further at the end of 1955, and that I consider it wise that the necessary preparations for independence which are now in their initial stages should be based on the assumption that they *might* have to be implemented by the end of 1956 or very shortly thereafter.

<sup>1</sup> Lennox-Boyd replaced Lyttelton as S of S for the colonies on 28 July 1954.

<sup>2</sup> See 149.

<sup>3</sup> See 150.

**155** CO 554/804, no 13

17 Nov 1954

[Ashanti]: outward telegram no 83 from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke requesting an appreciation of regional movements in Ashanti and elsewhere<sup>1</sup>

Personal from Secretary of State.

I have been following with interest recent developments in Ashanti and should be grateful to have your personal appreciation of present situation in the Gold Coast with special reference to the regional movements in Ashanti and elsewhere. I hope you can let me have this quickly as I am anxious to ensure that the Minister of State, who is to attend the Fourth Committee<sup>2</sup> for the Togoland items, is fully aware of the political background in the Gold Coast. I trust that despite recent events you will be able to assure me that Her Majesty's Government can continue to count on your Ministers to maintain full liberty of thought, expression of opinion and organisation and to treat minorities fairly.

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<sup>1</sup> This tel was despatched: 'Reply urgently required'.

<sup>2</sup> Of the UN Trusteeship Council.

**156** CO 554/804, no 14

18 Nov 1954

[Ashanti]: inward telegram no 35 (reply) from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd

Your secret telegram Personal No. 83.<sup>1</sup>

I have, today, signed a despatch to you, which will leave on tomorrow's plane conveying my comments on resolution by Asanteman Council, praying for a Royal Commission. Part of paragraph 4 of my despatch reads "A desire to concentrate power at the centre, and an apprehensive 'tribalism' may disrupt unity of the Gold Coast (?and omitted) have inhibited the Government from consulting regional and local interests in adequate measure."<sup>2</sup>

2. Am satisfied that there is no real desire for federalism in its true sense but there is undoubtedly desire for some devolution such as advocated in Phillipson Report on Regional Administration.<sup>3</sup> This view is particularly noticeable in Ashanti and the Northern Territories, and amongst leading intellectuals in the Colony. I believe the fear over centralisation is the basic cause of N.L.M. and that discontent over fixed price for cocoa (directed as much at the lack of prior consultation and method of its imposition as at the actual price) was exploited to gain adherents to the movement. Farmers are selling their cocoa freely and there are no signs of holdup.

3. I have talked to the Prime Minister and, at his request, to the whole Cabinet on the need to govern by persuasion and consent, and not by coercion and force. There are indications that this lesson is being learnt and the Government is considering some measure of devolution of authority to Regional Committees or Councils. I can give you assurance requested at the end of your telegram.

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<sup>1</sup> See 155.

<sup>2</sup> See 157, para 4, for the correct reading of this sentence.

<sup>3</sup> See part I of this volume, 98.

**157** CO 554/804, no 15

18 Nov 1954

[Ashanti]: despatch no 931 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the Asanteman Council's resolution in favour of a federal constitution

I have the honour to refer to my telegram No. 645 of the 26th October foreshadowing the transmission to you of a resolution of the Asanteman Council praying for a federal constitution for the Gold Coast. I have informed the Prime Minister that I shall be glad to receive any comments on the resolution which the Government wishes to make, and also to learn whether it is proposed to take any action in regard to the matters with which it deals. The Cabinet has now considered the resolution, a copy of which I enclose,<sup>1</sup> and has informed me that, for the following reasons, the Government does not consider that the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry as requested by the Asanteman Council is justified.

2. The Cabinet observes that the present Constitution, which has been in operation for less than six months, was drawn up in accordance with the wishes of the Chiefs and people; it is the fruit of exhaustive examination of the expressed views of representatives of all parts of the Gold Coast and Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship, and of consultations with the Territorial Councils and political parties; and its principles received the unanimous support of the Legislative Assembly. At no time in the course of these consultations was there mention of a federal form of Government. Nor, up to date, has the proposal received any support in the present freely elected Legislative Assembly. On the contrary, it is understood that of the 21 representatives of Ashanti in the Assembly, 20 have appended their names to a telegram to the Secretary of State protesting against the Asanteman Council's demand for a federal system of Government. To these observations the Cabinet adds that the Government has for some time been considering the advisability of setting up Committees in all Regions for the purpose of closer consultation between the Government and representatives of local bodies on development matters.

3. My views on federalism for the Gold Coast are concisely expressed by Sir Sydney Phillipson in his Report on Regional Administrations, published in the Gold Coast in 1951, in which he says (paragraph 16) ". . . federalism, even in its mildest forms can have little practical interest for the Gold Coast . . . there is nothing to be said for its application to a country such as the Gold Coast which alike in size and the general homogeneity of its inhabitants is clearly suitable for unitary administration". Further, I agree with Sir Sydney Phillipson's comment in the same passage "That is not, however, the same thing as saying that there should be no recognition of regionalism; the conclusion is only that such recognition as there may be should fall short of federalism and should not contain within it the seeds of federalism".

4. A desire to concentrate power at the centre and an apprehension that "tribalism" may disrupt the unity of the Gold Coast have inhibited the Government from consulting regional and local interests in adequate measure, and I have on several occasions warned the Government of the consequences of disregard of regional and local interests. The Asanteman Council's resolution is a sign, but no

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<sup>1</sup> Enclosures to this despatch not printed.

more than a sign, that the country will not accept unqualified dictation from the centre and, as such, it is a healthy manifestation of the feelings of a considerable proportion of the population. The resolution is, however, misguided in that it urges a solution which is not practicable. While, therefore, I shall continue to work for the recognition of regional interests by the Government and for freer consultation between the Government and regional bodies, I cannot support the resolution.

5. I recommend that I be authorised to reply to the signatories of the resolution to the effect that you do not consider it appropriate that advice should be tendered to Her Majesty that a Commission should be set up to enquire into the question of the establishment of a federal constitution for the Gold Coast: that the lines on which the Gold Coast has been proceeding towards independence are indicated in the Constitutions of 1950 and 1954 and the success with which the Gold Coast has operated these non-federal Constitutions has enabled Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to agree that the Gold Coast has now reached the last stage before independence: that when the time comes for the grant of independence Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom intend that the constitutional changes then introduced should involve no major departure from the line of constitutional advance which has so far been successfully followed: that if, after achieving independent status, the people of the Gold Coast consider that there is a case for adopting the federal expedient, it would, of course, be open to them to commit this question to a constituent assembly or other appropriate body, such as was suggested in the Prime Minister's reply in the Legislative Assembly on the 9th November to a question relating to the establishment of a second chamber. (I enclose a copy of the Official Report for ease of reference – Column 491 is relevant). It would be helpful if the reply could conclude with an expression of your confidence that the Gold Coast Government and all political parties and movements will be able to resolve the present and any future differences that arise between them in a statesmanlike manner and will not by their conduct retard their progress towards the assumption of full responsibility within the Commonwealth for their own affairs.

**158** CO 554/804, no 18

1 Dec 1954

[Ashanti]: outward telegram no 88 from W L Gorell Barnes to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the proposed reply to the federal resolution of the Asanteman Council

Your telegram No. 703 and related correspondence.

Resolution of Asanteman Council.

Secretary of State is naturally disturbed to have your confirmation that serious breaches of the peace may be provoked in Ashanti. He is determined to give you all possible assistance but he has doubts about some parts of the reply which you propose in paragraph 5 of your confidential despatch No. 931.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of State agrees that no case has as yet been made out for a Royal Commission but he is not convinced that it is desirable to say that Her Majesty's Government cannot

<sup>1</sup> See 157.

contemplate any major changes in the constitution. In his view the prime essential is that the constitution should be freely accepted by the people and it would be contrary to Her Majesty's Government's policy to say that any particular form of constitution was out of the question until independence, even if there were substantial support for it. There is perhaps also the danger that any statement which implied that any further discussion of what is clearly a burning problem could achieve nothing would lead the advocates of federalism to conclude that only violence could force the issue.

2. The Secretary of State shares your views on federalism and entirely supports your efforts to bring about the recognition of regional interests by the Gold Coast Government and intimate consultation between that Government and regional bodies. In advising Her Majesty that a Royal Commission is not necessary he feels that he must also be able to assure the Queen that effective steps (eg the creation of other Regional Councils on the lines of the Trans-Volta-Togoland Council) will be taken to meet what you and he both consider to be a proper demand for the recognition of regional interests. He considers that an early announcement by your Ministers stating their intention to meet this demand and giving some indication of the way in which they will do so, would enable him to give Her Majesty this assurance.

3. If a satisfactory announcement on these lines were made, Secretary of State would be ready, subject to any further observations you may wish to offer, to reply to the resolution of the Asanteman Council on the following lines. He has noted the views of the Council on the form of Government which it would like to see established in the Gold Coast. He is confident that the discussion of these matters can proceed peacefully, but he has noted with concern that there has been an increasing tendency to resort to violence and he feels it his duty to point out that any failure to resolve harmoniously the differences of opinion which have arisen is bound to retard the progress of the Gold Coast towards the assumption of full responsibility within the Commonwealth for her own affairs. There are many peaceful and constitutional ways in which the people of the Gold Coast can express their views on these matters and the use of an outside body like a Royal Commission to weigh the various points of view could only be taken to mean that the people of the Gold Coast were unable to settle their own affairs. In these circumstances he has been bound to take the view that it was not appropriate that advice should be tendered to Her Majesty that a Royal Commission should be set up to enquire into the establishment of a federal constitution for the Gold Coast.

4. You will wish to consult Ministers without delay and you are at liberty to communicate to them the contents of this telegram so far as you consider that desirable. In speaking to them the Secretary of State would like you to say that he is aware of the fact that you have already spoken to them on the need to govern by persuasion and consent, that he fully supports your view, and that he regards it as very important for the future of the Gold Coast that present dissensions [sic] should cease. He must therefore look to Gold Coast Ministers to play their full part in restoring a settled condition of affairs and he would like to assure them that his sole aim is to ensure that peace and good government are preserved and strengthened.

**159** PREM 11/1367, CC 83(54)5

7 Dec 1954

**'Commonwealth relations': Cabinet conclusions on the report of the Official Committee on Commonwealth Membership**

The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Commonwealth Secretary (C.(54) 307)<sup>1</sup> submitting the conclusions of the Cabinet Committee which had been appointed in April, 1953, to consider what status should be accorded in future to Colonial territories which, on attaining full independence, desired to remain within the Commonwealth.

*The Commonwealth Secretary* said that the Committee had spent more than a year on this task and had reached unanimous conclusions. They had started with a bias in favour of a two-tier system of Commonwealth membership, under which the upper tier would be restricted to those countries which were in full control of their external relations and were capable of making a significant contribution towards their own defence. They had, however, been forced to the conclusion that such a system would not be practicable, for the reasons summarised in paragraphs 10–11 of the report annexed to C.(54) 307. There was no doubt that most countries which were candidates for Commonwealth membership would not be content with an inferior status and would choose to secede from the Commonwealth, on attaining full independence, rather than accept second-class membership. Even if some were willing to remain in the Commonwealth for a time in an inferior position, their discontent would be exploited by influences hostile to Commonwealth solidarity. The Committee had therefore felt obliged to recommend that no change should be made in what had generally been assumed and expected to be the normal course of Commonwealth development, namely that Colonial territories desiring to remain within the Commonwealth on attaining full independence would be regarded as eligible for full Commonwealth membership. But, though all members of the Commonwealth would continue in form to be equal in status, it would not follow that in fact all would have equal weight and influence in Commonwealth councils. Between the existing members of the Commonwealth a measure of discrimination was already applied in practice. The Asiatic members of the Commonwealth did not at present receive from the United Kingdom Government as much information as was made available, e.g. on defence questions, to the other members. If the membership of the Commonwealth were further increased, we should clearly have to develop still further the existing practice of treating each particular country on its individual merits, and it would doubtless prove convenient to extend the practice of holding Commonwealth meetings confined to groups of countries on a regional or functional basis.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that he was not asking that any executive decision should be taken at the present time. The need for such a decision would not arise until the Gold Coast attained full independence in 1956 or 1957. If she should

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<sup>1</sup> Dated 11 Oct 1954 and entitled 'Commonwealth relations'. Appended to Swinton's memo was a report, dated 21 Jan 1954, by the Official Committee on Commonwealth Membership (see 144, note 3) entitled 'The future of Commonwealth membership'. The memo and the report are reproduced in BDEEP series A, D Goldsworthy, ed, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951–1957*, Part II, chapter 3.

then apply for full membership of the Commonwealth, this would be a matter for consideration, not by the United Kingdom Government alone, but by the Governments of all members of the Commonwealth. It was not too soon for United Kingdom Ministers to consider the general course of policy which they would be disposed to follow in that event and to take informal steps to ascertain the provisional views of some of the other Commonwealth Prime Ministers. If, therefore, the Cabinet found themselves in broad agreement with the policy outlined in C.(54) 307, he hoped that private conversations on this question would be held with the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand while they were in London for the forthcoming Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. During his recent visit to Ottawa he had already discussed the matter privately with the Prime Minister of Canada, who was in general agreement with the line of approach suggested in C.(54) 307.

In discussion several Ministers said that they greatly regretted the course of Commonwealth development which was envisaged in C.(54) 307. The admission of three Asiatic countries to Commonwealth membership had altered the character of the Commonwealth, and there was great danger that the Commonwealth relationship would be further diluted if full membership had to be conceded to the Gold Coast and other countries in a comparable stage of development. It was difficult to believe that it would be possible to extend to this wider circle the close and intimate co-operation which had been maintained between the older Commonwealth countries. It was unfortunate that the policy of assisting dependent peoples to attain self-government had been carried forward so fast and so far. At the same time there was general agreement with the conclusion of the Cabinet Committee that it would be impracticable to develop a two-tier system of Commonwealth membership. It would be unrealistic to suppose that Colonial territories, on attaining independence, would be content to accept a status within the Commonwealth which would be formally inferior to that of other members. In these circumstances it seemed best to follow the course recommended in the report and, while conceding formal equality of status, to develop practical methods of consultation which would permit free and close co-operation between those members which actually exercised an effective influence in world affairs. Commonwealth discussions on defence questions were already confined in practice to those countries which were willing to accept military commitments for mutual defence; and there was no reason why this test for full participation in discussion of policy and plans should not be applied more strictly, as time went on, and perhaps extended to other fields. By these means some members of the Commonwealth might develop a closer common association, even though there were no constitutional differences of status between them and the other members.

In further discussion the following particular points were made:—

(a) It had been proposed in C.(54) 307 that this question should be discussed informally with the Prime Minister of South Africa, as well as with the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Since this proposal was made, however, Mr. Strijdom had succeeded Dr. Malan as Prime Minister of South Africa,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> D F Malan, prime minister of South Africa, 1948–1954; J G Strijdom, prime minister of South Africa, 1954–1958.

and it would be preferable that this question should not be broached with him until it became more clear what policy he intended to follow in respect of South Africa's relations with the Commonwealth. In any event it was unlikely that he would himself attend the forthcoming Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, and it would be inappropriate to discuss this question with any other member of his Cabinet attending on his behalf.

It was possible, though not perhaps likely, that a critical stage in South Africa's relations with other members of the Commonwealth might be reached before the need arose for a Commonwealth decision on an application by the Gold Coast for Commonwealth membership. But, before that need arose, we should have been obliged to disclose our intention to grant full independence to the Gold Coast in connection with the application which we should have to make to the United Nations for amendment of the Trusteeship Agreement in respect of Togoland.

(b) If the Gold Coast were admitted to full Commonwealth membership, it would be necessary to regularise the position of the Prime Minister of the Central African Federation who (as Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia) had for years attended Meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers as an observer than [sic] not as of right. It would become necessary to admit him to these Meetings as of right, and possibly to make other changes which would accord to the Federation, within the limits set by its constitution, the practical substance of full Commonwealth membership. These changes should not, however, override the relations with the Crown which were highly prized by the two Colonies included within the Federation.

(c) It was pointed out that the right of direct access to the Sovereign could not now be said to be, as implied in paragraph 2 of C.(54) 307, an essential mark of Commonwealth membership. Though all the independent members of the Commonwealth continued to recognise the Sovereign as Head of the Commonwealth and as the symbol of the free association of its peoples, the Commonwealth already included one Republic (India) whose people had no personal allegiance to the Sovereign and whose Government had not the right of direct access to the Queen in the sense in which that was enjoyed by other Commonwealth Governments.

(d) Strong efforts should be made to prevent any further encroachment on the position of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as the final arbiter of law throughout the Commonwealth. The existence of the Judicial Committee as a final court of appeal could be developed into a strong practical and constitutional link between Commonwealth peoples. It was worth considering whether, as a practical demonstration that this was a Commonwealth institution, arrangements could not be made for sittings of the Committee to be held on occasion in Commonwealth capitals other than London.

(e) The Commonwealth contained a number of countries in varying stages of development ranging from complete dependence to full nationhood. Some of the difficulties discussed in C.(54) 307 arose from the fact that so sharp a distinction was made between the few fully independent countries on the one hand and, on the other, all those which had not yet attained independence. This tended to give undue prominence to the attainment of full independence, though it was in fact only the last stage in a long process of constitutional development. It would be preferable that more emphasis should be laid on the gradual nature of this constitutional evolution to independence. From this point of view it would be advantageous if at some stage the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office could be combined

into a single Department of Commonwealth Affairs which would be concerned with all Commonwealth countries whatever the stage they had reached in their constitutional development.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, while responsibility continued to be divided between the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office, it was agreed that the Commonwealth Relations Office should not undertake responsibility for relations with any Commonwealth territories before they had reached the stage of full independence.

(f) Ministers agreed in principle with the proposals outlined in paragraph 9 of C.(54)307 for training Gold Coast officials in the handling of international business.<sup>4</sup>

(g) It was desirable that the policy of the United Kingdom Government in respect of future Commonwealth development should, so far as practicable, be continuous whatever political Party was in office. For this reason it would be advantageous if, at the appropriate stage, confidential consultations could be held with the Opposition on the general outline of the policy which the Government were proposing to pursue in this matter.

*The Prime Minister*, summing up the discussion, said that there was no need for the Cabinet to take any executive decision at the present time on the points raised in the report of the Cabinet Committee which the Commonwealth Secretary had presented in C.(54)307. It would be most unwise to take precipitate decisions on a matter which had such far-reaching consequences. Certainly there was no need to anticipate events. The precise nature of the executive decision to be taken, when the time came, might well be influenced by contemporary circumstances which could not at present be foreseen. At the same time, it was right that Ministers should look ahead and shape the general course which, subject to contingencies, they thought it best to follow. And, as this was not a matter for decision by the United Kingdom alone, it would be prudent to ascertain the provisional views of Prime Ministers of some of the other Commonwealth countries. No formal consultations should be held at this stage, but the forthcoming Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers would afford a convenient opportunity for informal talks on this question with the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It would be convenient for this purpose if a version of the Cabinet Committee's report could be prepared in a form in which it could be handed to those Prime Ministers.

The Cabinet:—

(1) Took note of the Commonwealth Secretary's memorandum (C.(54)307) and of the accompanying report on the future of Commonwealth membership.

(2) Approved in principle the specific proposals put forward in sub-paragraphs (i), (ii) and (iv) of paragraph 11 of C.(54)307.

(3) Agreed that, at the forthcoming meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, the opportunity should be taken to hold private conversations with the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand on the future course of Commonwealth development and to ascertain how far their provisional views were in accord with those expressed in C.(54)307.

<sup>3</sup> The CO and CRO were eventually merged to form the Commonwealth Office in Aug 1966.

<sup>4</sup> Para 9 of C(54)307 explained that an officer from the CRO would soon be attached to the staff of the governor and that arrangements were being examined for the attachment of Gold Coast officers to certain UK High Commissioners' Offices (and possibly FO posts) for training purposes.

**160** CO 554/1162, no 9

22 Dec 1954

'Gold Coast review of events: July–Dec 1954': despatch no 20 from  
Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd

I have the honour to refer to your request for a despatch from time to time giving you a periodic appreciation and a brief assessment of the major political and economic events, and I hope that the following information concerning the events that have occurred in the Gold Coast since July will be of interest.

2. Since July there have been two meetings of the Legislative Assembly, and we have had six months' interesting experience under the new constitution. At the inaugural meeting of the Assembly in July there was little of interest except a contretemps over the position of the Opposition. Dr. Nkrumah had captured a great majority (72) of the 104 seats; in Ashanti he had only one opponent and in the Colony only half a dozen (three of whom were rebel C.P.P., *i.e.*, members who really supported the C.P.P. though not recognised as the official candidate). Consequently the only solid opposition came from the north where 12 of the 26 members belong to the Northern Peoples' Party. Dr. Nkrumah held that this was a tribal and not a national opposition, and that its leader did not merit the title of "Leader of the Opposition". The Speaker, however, did not agree, and one of the northerners is thus now recognised as Leader of the Opposition and receives emoluments accordingly.

3. At the second meeting of the Assembly (in November) it was difficult to make the work spin out for its allotted ten days. The only items of work not cleared were the Questions, only about 200 out of 600 questions asked being answered orally. One of the questions referred to the desirability of the present Unicameral system of the Legislature being Bicameral. Prior to the introduction of the present constitution (in May) Dr. Nkrumah had (in March) promised an enquiry into this question if he was returned to power. Dr. Nkrumah, himself, is opposed to the establishment of a second House: and in this view he probably has the support of the majority of the rank and file in the country though not, as might be expected, of the chiefs. Dr. Nkrumah's answer was that while he would naturally honour his undertaking he was not prepared to do any act that would postpone independence and he proposed, therefore, to initiate enquiries into the desirability of a Second Chamber after independence had been achieved. Whether this will satisfy the country remains to be seen – the Joint Provincial Council (*i.e.*, the Council of Chiefs for the Colony) have already protested and other protests may be expected.

4. Some stir was caused about a month ago when, making a speech before a large crowd in the town, Dr. Nkrumah announced that the date for independence had been fixed. When queried about this, however, he said that he was only thinking of the target date as far as the C.P.P. were concerned. We are not proposing to ask in the near future for a definite date to be fixed, but we are using for planning purposes December 1956, and it has been made quite clear to all concerned that this is solely for planning purposes. With this in view Dr. Nkrumah has established a Working Party to consider the celebrations when independence is achieved. One of the first snags the Working Party brought to light was that Accra has no hotel suitable for the accommodation of overseas visitors. Since then Mr. Botsio (Minister without Portfolio) has visited one or two of the better hotels in French West Africa, and plans are proceeding apace for the construction of a £1½-million hotel in Accra to be ready by December 1956.

5. Other major works planned to be started and completed before independence include the construction of an official residence for the Prime Minister, a marine drive east of Accra and substantial alterations to the Town Hall (where the Legislative Assembly meets) to enable more visitors to view the official notification of independence when it comes.

6. The main event in the Gold Coast during the last few months has been the rise of the National Liberation Movement in Ashanti. This movement is aimed primarily against the C.P.P. Government. It was inspired partly by the fixing of the price of cocoa at the same price as last year, a matter to which I shall refer again, but is directed against the over-centralisation of the Government in Accra and its control by the party bosses. The movement took as its platform "Federation"; although its leaders have not yet admitted it, I think they are unaware what federation means, and they may well be satisfied with some form of devolution of power on a regional basis. Dr. Nkrumah is prepared to accept the establishment of regional councils as deliberative and consultative bodies. Invitations were issued by Dr. Nkrumah, early this month, to the N.L.M. and to the Asanteman Council (the Council of Chiefs in Ashanti) to send representatives to Accra to meet members of the Government in order to discuss "federation" and other differences of opinion between the N.L.M. and the Government. I have now heard that these invitations are being declined. The next step promises great interest and may prove to have a bearing on the date when the Gold Coast will earn its independence.

7. In the Northern Territories no overt support has appeared for the N.L.M., but a working agreement between Ashanti and the Northern Territories is not improbable as both of them have the same fears concerning centralised government in Accra.

8. I have mentioned the cocoa price. The action of the Government in fixing the price this year the same as last year was a courageous act. Not only has it kept down inflation, but it will provide the government with large and much needed funds for the ambitious development programme in view. For example, the University still require some £6 million before they can move from Achimota to their new site at Legon, and the Education Department are asking (with small chance of being satisfied) for £20 million for buildings in the next five years. Some £80 million will have been spent on development in the quinquennium 1951-56 and Mr. Gbedemah (Minister of Finance) is contemplating the expenditure of a further £75 million on development in the next quinquennium (1956-61) in addition to the construction of the port of Tema and any commitments with the Volta River Project. However, the world price of cocoa, which rose last January from under £300 a ton to £400 (and even touched £550 in July) has now been at £400 for some time, and it is easy for the Opposition to make capital out of this, and say that the farmers should at least have been granted a few extra shillings when Government was going to make such a huge profit out of the increased price. None the less, in spite of these complaints, sales have been normal; the crop looks like being 220,000 tons - the original estimate was 225,000 and last year's crop (a small one) was 206,000 tons. The cutting out campaign against swollen shoot continues satisfactorily.

9. Apart from the criticism of Dr. Nkrumah over the cocoa price, he incurred the wrath of Ashanti when it was known that he proposed to call the new central hospital in Kumasi after himself, a proposal that gave great offence and has since been dropped.

10. Another matter in which the Government appeared to be almost trying to incur unpopularity was in their handling of the Mamprusi District Council in the Northern Territories. Mamprusi, the largest State in the Northern Territories, with a population of nearly 400,000 persons, is administered by one District Council. The Government decided to split it into three District Councils – there are 15 Local Councils in the area – but they made their decision without consulting the local people at all. This stirred up the Nayiri [sic], the Chief of the Mamprussis, as well as the Northern Peoples' Party (8 out of the 9 members for that area are members of the Northern Peoples' Party). After many petitions had been received from the Northern Peoples' Party, the District Council itself and the Northern Territories Council, the Government have now agreed to hold the customary enquiry to ascertain the views of those concerned regarding the proposal to establish three District Councils.

11. In the case of Togoland the main event has been the United Nations Fourth Committee's debates on the future of the Trust Territory and the attachment of a Gold Coast Minister to the United Kingdom Delegation. In spite of the fact that those who advocated the union of British Togoland with French Togoland rather than with the Gold Coast had in the past secured a large number of sympathisers at the United Nations and worked hard this year both in the Fourth Committee and the lobbies to rally supporters to their cause, the United Kingdom proposals were substantially achieved in a resolution which asks the Trusteeship Council not only to consider the form of test of public opinion which should be held in the Trust Territory but also to send a special Visiting Mission to the two Togolands to look into the matter in 1955. It is earnestly hoped that this Mission will prove to be in substitution of, and not in addition to, the routine Visiting Mission already expected next year. The findings of the Special Mission and the recommendations of the Trusteeship Council would then come before the United Nations General Assembly in the Autumn of 1955. If, as is expected, a plebiscite is required, this could be held in March 1956 and the results ratified and given effect by the United Nations General Assembly in the Autumn of that year. This time-table, if it can be adhered to, would certainly tie in well with plans for Gold Coast independence towards the end of 1956. Apart from this excursion in New York, there is little to report from Togoland. Efforts were made by \*Antor's group, in association with his colleagues in French Togoland, to draft a constitution for an independent Togoland, but this did not get very far; efforts made by various bodies to market their own cocoa in opposition to the Gold Coast marketing controlled by the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board have so far proved abortive.

12. Under our present constitution I am, as you are aware, charged with the responsibility for defence (which includes the control of the Gold Coast Police) and for external affairs. To assist me I have an Advisory Committee consisting of the Prime Minister and his three most senior Ministers. This Committee has been of considerable use during the last six months. We have met on an average once a month. Plans are being set on foot to select and train the essential cadre for a Ministry of External Affairs and to staff offices of High Commissioners and Embassies

\* S G Antor, Secretary General, Togoland Congress, is the dominant personality behind the movement for the unification of British Togoland and French Togoland. He is Member of the Legislative Assembly for a Togoland division.

in London, Paris, Washington and New Delhi on the achievement of independence. We have arranged for the sum of £17,000 to be inserted in next year's Estimates so that an early start can be made with the selection of personnel and their training.

13. The Advisory Committee were also agreeable to the Gold Coast being totally responsible for the cost of its military forces within as short a time as possible, and the Minister of Finance has been requested to see if it will be possible to step up the military expenditure during the next two years from the present figure of £1 million to the total of £2-2½ million which it is thought will be the annual cost of the necessary Gold Coast army. With your permission I made an Order disbanding the various West African units, and re-establishing them as part of the Gold Coast Regiment with Gold Coast titles. There is thus no longer in the Gold Coast a "West African Pay Corps," but a "Gold Coast Military Pay Service, R.W.A.F.F".

14. But while this is a step towards the establishment of a Gold Coast army taken as the result of the West African Forces Conference, Lagos, April 1953<sup>1</sup> (H.M.S.O., Colonial No. 304), the Cabinet have passed a resolution to preserve after the achievement of independence as many West African inter-territorial bodies as possible. The Government directed the Cocoa Marketing Board to contribute to the West African Cocoa Research Institute the sum of £1.3 million which would endow it for research for the next 20 years, Nigeria having agreed to grant some £600,000 for the same purpose; and the Government have also passed a resolution that, after Nigeria have established their Federal Supreme Court and removed themselves from the West African Court of Appeal, the Gold Coast would wish still to be associated with Sierra Leone and the Gambia in a West African Court of Appeal, both now and after the achievement of independence. It is not yet known what the reactions of Sierra Leone and the Gambia will be, but a demi-official approach has been made to them through the West African Inter-Territorial Secretariat.

15. During the last six months there have been no major labour troubles in the Gold Coast. There was a minor strike at Sekondi/Takoradi amongst the municipal bus drivers and conductors, but a skeleton service was organised. The strike was extremely unpopular with the local populace who had to walk to work, and after three weeks most of the strikers returned to work. There is a small threat of trouble amongst the (Government) hospital workers in the Sekondi/Takoradi area. Six Civil Servants were eventually dismissed, and others reprimanded, but the situation is still uneasy. The most serious threat of trouble in the future is at the mines, where the Gold Coast Mines Employees' Union threatened a general strike at all mines for December 23rd. Fortunately, the Commissioner of Labour managed to persuade the parties to agree to meet on December 28th to discuss the situation, so the miners may now look forward to celebrating Christmas in their customary manner.

16. As regards communism, the Government have behaved in an exemplary manner. They agreed to the cancellation of the passports of several persons who had recently gone behind the Iron Curtain, and latterly, when they were informed that there was a Communist Youth Gathering in Vienna in December, the Cabinet agreed that the passport of any person suspected of going thither could be withheld. This had an amusing sequel as the Prime Minister shortly thereafter was invited to Vienna to attend the Assembly of the World Veterans' Federation to receive the 1954 Peace

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<sup>1</sup> See 129; also 151.

Prize. Had it not been for the troubles in Ashanti I think Dr. Nkrumah would have liked to attend in person to receive this prize, but, as it would have been embarrassing for him to proceed to one part of Vienna while he had banned travelling to the other part, it was perhaps as well that he did not go.

17. The Government are still pursuing their proposals to establish a diamond market in Accra. We have had many applications from unscrupulous gentlemen who wish to muscle in on what they must have considered to be a wonderful opportunity for illicit diamond buying. The government have already issued one licence and have decided to give licences to two more of the less unscrupulous applicants (though they have made the Managing Director of one of the successful firms a Prohibited Immigrant). The Government are, however, committed to this policy. They feel that the African diamond worker, who has his petty concessions distinct from the larger areas owned by the European companies, is in need of protection, and for some strange reason they think that they will get better terms from a diamond merchant resident in Accra than through dealing with the banks as agents and selling on the London market. They are at present discussing with the banks the possibility of requiring all African-won diamonds to be sold in the Accra market: this will affect about a million carats, *i.e.*, half the Gold Coast production.

18. Perhaps I might end this despatch with a few short items that may be, however, of some interest. The Gold Coast was represented at a meeting of U.N.E.S.C.O. in Montevideo in November, and was accepted into associate membership. The contract for the new harbour at Tema, some £7½ million, was awarded to a British firm, and for the £½-million bridge over the River Volta the contract has been awarded to another English firm (one is tempted to draw comparison between the manner in which these contracts were correctly handled and the manner in which only two years ago Ministers themselves, without the aid of the Civil Service, attempted to sign contracts with foreign firms, each of which ended in fiasco).<sup>2</sup> Recruitment of administrative officers on pensionable terms ceased two years ago, but contract administrative officers are still permissible, and the Cabinet agreed a few weeks ago that another dozen such officers should be appointed. The Volta River Project continues to make steady progress. Numerous preliminary reports are expected to be published during 1955, culminating in a final report by the Preparatory Commission at the end of that year.

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<sup>2</sup> A reference to a minor scandal involving public housing corporations.

**161** CO 554/805, no 22

22 March 1955

'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': memorandum by  
R J Vile on his visit to the Gold Coast (Mar 1955)

This note follows the form of the one prepared on the 23rd September, 1954 and registered at (4) on these papers. It is intended to bring that note up to date in the light of the information gained during my recent visit.

*The present constitution*

2. After six months of working it is not yet possible to say whether the present

Cabinet system has sufficiently shaken down or not. Normally the Cabinet meets twice a week, and each meeting takes all afternoon and most of the evening. Ministers find that their colleagues subject their papers and memoranda to the most searching criticism and it is not uncommon for Permanent Secretaries to find that after devoting a considerable time to persuading their Ministers of the rightness of a certain policy the Cabinet has nevertheless decided to adopt a different course.

3. One effect of frequent Cabinet meetings of this kind is that there is no system of Ministerial and official Committees to deal with particular kinds of business other than the Standing Development Committee, which is presided over by the Prime Minister. There is not much in the way of a tradition of Committee work among permanent officials in the Ministries, and I suspect that the successful implementation of Cabinet decisions has on occasion been hindered by the lack of practice among Departments in working together.

4. The relations between Ministers and their Permanent Secretaries are not always good; indeed the Secretary to the Cabinet remarked to me that one of the reasons why Ministers wished for independence was to get away from their present Permanent Secretaries. There are, of course, outstanding exceptions, but from my short time in Accra I would say that well over half the Permanent Secretaries are not properly equipped or trained for their job, and lack the necessary intellectual ability to benefit by training.

5. The Gold Coast Legislative Assembly is not a very impressive body, but it is developing its own standards of behaviour, and its ability to distinguish between the mountebank, the bore and the chap with something to say is growing. C.P.P. Ministers, because they have such a substantial majority, can afford to ignore the Assembly in many ways because even if they have only a weak defence to attacks from the Opposition they can count on the automatic support of their own followers. In addition the quality of the Opposition is not very high and it contains no member who can really make the Government defend itself and change its policy when it is shown to be a bad one.

#### *The public service*

6. About 150 European officers will leave on the 31st July. We do not yet know how many more will go after that date. The Administrative Service will not at first be seriously affected, but a number of Departments will be seriously depleted of senior staff. This includes the Police Force, where a number of middle seniority officers are going. At the same time the Gold Coast Government has to assume responsibility for defence in 1956, and has to prepare to assume responsibility for external affairs. This means the creation of two additional Ministries.

7. It is going to be extremely difficult to find very many more competent Africans to come into Government service at the higher levels. Gold Coast Ministers have therefore to consider two problems; the first is how to secure additional European recruitment, and the second is to establish an order of priority in the manning of Departments, as they are not likely to have sufficient staff to man with full effectiveness all Departments of Government. Ministers bear no resentment against the people who have decided to retire. They are considering how to attract additional Europeans, and they may well ask for assistance from H.M.O.C.S. It will be very important to give all possible assistance with the minimum of delay. The establishment of an order of priority in the manning of Departments is bound to be a matter

of very great difficulty for Gold Coast Ministers, and they may well find themselves collectively unable to reach any agreed order of priority. They rely so much on effective economic and social development that they are bound to resist with great vigour any reduction in the existing level of Government services.

### *Gold Coast politics*

8. The major problem is whether the form of an independent constitution for the Gold Coast should be settled before or after independence. Gold Coast Ministers originally wished to achieve independence with the minimum of constitutional discussion but it is now clear that opinion in the Northern Territories and Ashanti is firmly opposed to this. In addition many members of the C.P.P. in close touch with local feeling feel strongly that the main constitutional problems must be settled before independence. No-one has the slightest doubt that independence will come, but many are afraid that it may come too quickly and not allow sufficient time for the discussion of constitutional issues, both within and without the C.P.P.

9. The most obvious constitutional dispute is that between the Asantehene, backed by the N.L.M., and the Prime Minister, supported by the C.P.P. At my first meeting with him the Prime Minister said that Ashanti only understood the use of force, and I gathered that he had repeated this assertion to some journalists on the same day. When I later saw the Asantehene he clearly knew that the Prime Minister had uttered sentiments of this kind. His view was that Dr. Nkrumah was a madman and that once he had secured power in an independent Gold Coast a number of his more eminent opponents in Ashanti would have their throats cut. I asked the Asantehene how he proposed to deal with the "madman", pointing out that one could either restrain a madman by force or attempt to talk him into a more reasonable frame of mind. The Asantehene gave a sardonic laugh and said that his policy was entirely one of persuasion. I then asked him what constitutional changes he would wish to see, but I could get very little sense out of him on this point as he was only concerned to emphasise again and again that he had no trust in the C.P.P. I formed the very strong impression that the fundamental aim of the N.L.M. is to destroy the C.P.P. Government. The exact methods to be used and the degree of destruction which would satisfy them can only be matters of speculation.

10. At my second interview with the Prime Minister he took a much more reasonable line. He fully understood that it was only too easy to provoke violence in Ashanti and that it was his clear duty to act peacefully and diplomatically. He proposes to give Regional Councils (the one in Ashanti will probably be called "Regional Committee") sufficient funds with which to plan effective local development. He also had it in mind to invite the Legislative Assembly to set up a Select Committee to consider the constitutional changes necessary upon independence, and he hoped that the N.L.M. would be willing to give evidence to such a Committee and to allow its sympathisers in the Assembly to serve as members of it.

11. These tactics may go a long way towards meeting the feelings of the more moderate members of the N.L.M. They may even meet almost entirely the wishes of the Northern People's Party. There does appear to be, however, a core of very determined people in the N.L.M. whose main object will remain the destruction of the C.P.P. Government. So little is known about the internal politics of the N.L.M. that it is very difficult to know the importance of this core of determined people, or

the kind of control exercised by the Asantehene over them. It is, however, clear that they have a fair amount of dynamite at their disposal and presumably can easily obtain fresh supplies by theft from the mines. They contain a number of thugs who are prepared to use knives and arms of precision. Reports were current in Kumasi a fortnight ago that the N.L.M. had been smuggling in rifles and machine-guns, and there were other reports that small bands of people were being trained with the object of sending them to Accra to attack, and possibly murder, Gold Coast Ministers. Another report was to the effect that at the beginning of the next cocoa season Ashanti farmers would load lorries with cocoa and send those lorries in convoy to the French frontier. It was also believed in many quarters that neither the Police nor the Army would fire on such a peaceful demonstration. Meanwhile the situation in Kumasi requires the presence of a large body of police. If they were withdrawn there would undoubtedly be a considerable number of violent affrays between the rival political parties.

12. It is possible that Dr Nkrumah's peaceful approach may lead to the resolution of the differences between the N.L.M. and the C.P.P. on constitutional matters. The biggest difficulty is that this can only be achieved by bringing the N.L.M. to recognise both their lack of any positive policy and the fact that any solution must fall far short of their hopes as they have expressed them in the past. It follows that there is an ever-present danger of violence in Ashanti, and that, paradoxically, the greater the success of Dr. Nkrumah's peaceful approach, the greater the danger of insensate violence. It is quite possible that the core of determined young men would take to the forest and engage in guerrilla warfare from there if all other methods fail. (This possibility is, incidentally, a very worrying one for the military authorities.)

13. As long as the troubles likely to be experienced are confined to street battles the present organisation of the Gold Coast Police Force is adequate. If, however, trouble takes different forms the Gold Coast Police Force may be as severely taxed as the Sierra Leone Police Force was last month. It has so far proved impossible to get any Special Branch officer near the inner circles of the N.L.M., and no informers have been found willing to sell any information for money. I gathered that the Governor, like the Army authorities, took the view that the kind of trouble that might come would not be confined to street battles, and I have no doubt that he will ensure that the Police as far as possible revise their plans accordingly. (My impression was that they needed to.)

14. Although the major constitutional question to date has been that of "federalism" there are three others which have attracted considerable attention. The first is the position of Chiefs. At the moment this is a matter entirely governed by local legislation, and many people have been suggesting that the position of Chiefs should be safeguarded in the Constitution itself. The second concerns an Upper House, where the Chiefs could be represented and which might reflect Regional opinion and possibly include business interests. The third question concerns the control of the Public Service and the Police Force. I formed the very strong impression that Ministers were unhappy about the lack of control they had over staff serving in their Ministries. They know the U.K. position and practice and I would expect them to press themselves for some greater measure of Ministerial responsibility over the staff of individual Departments. The control of the Police Force is a much more delicate matter, to which very little thought has been given. The Commissioner of Police has suggested a Police Commission presided over by the

Speaker of the Assembly and containing three Ministers and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

*Gold Coast trade unions*

15. It is possible that the dangers to internal security from industrial strikes may be greater than that from political troubles. The Labour Department take the view that the majority of workers in the Gold Coast, including government servants, are underpaid and under-nourished, and that a general upward revision of wages is inevitable. Gold Coast Ministers are reluctant to accept this. It would drive some of the gold mines out of business, it would increase the price of labour on cocoa farms and make an upward revision of the cocoa price inevitable, and it would increase Government's recurrent expenditure. The Gold Coast Government therefore has not got, and in the nature of things probably cannot have, a coherent or consistent labour policy. In addition there is no unified trade union movement, and there is the ever-present danger that the Communist trade union leaders may organise successful large-scale stoppages. Nobody expects strikes of this nature to be free of violence, or to be unaccompanied by some attempt at sabotage.

*Our policy*

16. We have stated clearly that the Gold Coast is now in the last stage before independence. We have accepted December, 1956 as the earliest date on which that independence could be achieved. We have told the Governor in general terms what we think the Gold Coast Government has to do in order to merit both independence and full Membership of the Commonwealth.

17. The expected decline in the efficiency of the machinery of government in the Gold Coast and the possibilities of serious and sustained disorder in Ashanti and in the industrial field make it impossible to say at the moment how and when the Gold Coast will achieve independence and full Membership of the Commonwealth. In conversation with Dr. Nkrumah I stressed that his destiny lay in his own hands, that we would do everything possible to help him, and that he must expect us to have doubts, qualms and hesitations. In conversation with the Governor subsequently he (the Governor) made it clear that his policy was solely directed towards the objective of gaining time, but that it must be for Gold Coast Ministers to seek any delay in the achievement of independence. It was fundamental that we should not forfeit the very great goodwill we now enjoyed. The Governor thought it likely that Dr. Nkrumah might decide to have a General Election in 1956 in order to test the feeling of the country, assuming that he had a generally agreed programme of constitutional reform on which to appeal to the electorate. This would give another year and a quarter in which to work out a constitutional settlement that was generally acceptable, and I know of no reason to believe that the process can be completed very much more quickly. This might well mean that the actual date on which independence was achieved was in the middle or even the latter half of 1957. As long as this delay was clearly due to no fault of ours it would probably be accepted with relief by everybody in the Gold Coast.

18. I am sure the Governor is right in thinking that we must continue to assume that there is a good chance of achieving independence for the Gold Coast, even though the picture at the moment looks blacker than it has ever looked before, and that we must continue to give Gold Coast Ministers every help we can. I do not think

we can yet say unequivocally that Gold Coast independence cannot work, and that therefore we should no longer attempt to achieve it.

19. The Governor is anxious to know what requirements H.M.G. wish to see met before independence can be granted. I told him that it was difficult to express them in any but the most general terms, i.e. reasonably efficient administration, the safeguarding of the fundamental freedoms of democracy, the acceptance of constitutional arrangements by the majority of the people, the conclusion of satisfactory defence arrangements and continued resistance to Communist infiltration. The Governor wishes to discuss these matters further when he is home on leave at the end of next month. I do not think we can go much beyond a general statement of requirements, but this is now being examined.

20. We have little choice of policy at the moment. We can only delay independence by agreement as long as the Gold Coast Government has any wide measure of public support and is capable of keeping law and order in the territory. There seems a good chance that we may gain more time, but there is almost as good a chance that Gold Coast Ministers may fail to keep law and order. If this happens we may find ourselves with additional responsibilities and without the European staff to discharge them. We therefore have every reason to ensure that European recruitment is as large as possible, including transfers from other territories. We also have every reason to ensure that we can reinforce the Gold Coast in an emergency (the consideration of this problem is already under way).

21. Apart from this it is very important to maintain personal contact with Gold Coast Ministers and other leading people. Dr. Nkrumah fully understands the importance of carrying public opinion in the U.K. with him and I am sure he would welcome more frequent contact with U.K. Ministers. For obvious reasons he himself cannot leave the Gold Coast. The Governor still holds the view that it would be a mistake for the Secretary of State to visit the Gold Coast but I would be reluctant to accept this advice without demur. There is clearly no need to reach any decisions yet, but I suggest we might bear in mind the possibility that a Minister should visit the Gold Coast either at the end of this year or early next. Apart from this Dr. Nkrumah suggested that the U.K. Branch of the C.P.A. might consider sending a goodwill delegation to the Gold Coast sometime in 1956. If the situation at that time would permit such a visit I think it could do nothing but good. Indeed, if there were any chance of such a delegation going towards the end of this year I think it might well prove most useful. Gold Coast Ministers seemed to me to be very much in need of independent advice, and I am afraid that if we do not do our best to ensure that this comes from responsible circles in the U.K. they may lean more heavily on the Indian Commissioner and Mr. Francis King from the Daily Mirror Group newspapers.

22. To sum up, there is a substantial body of sensible opinion in the Gold Coast which wants to see its constitution properly settled before independence. Gold Coast Ministers have been persuaded to accept such a policy. A small and determined minority may succeed in putting the clock back, and the run-down in European staff may seriously affect the efficiency of Government. On balance it is still reasonable to assume that the Gold Coast experiment will succeed, and future plans can only proceed on that basis. We are likely to gain time without losing goodwill, but we are not likely to be able to defer beyond 1956 the decision whether or not to grant independence to the Gold Coast.

**162** DO 35/6170, no 6

1 Apr 1955

[Gold Coast currency]: inward telegram no 169 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on Mr Gbedemah's proposed statement to the Legislative Assembly

Gold Coast Currency.

Minister of Finance proposes to make a statement in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday 5th April. Grateful for your comments on the following draft which will be considered by the Cabinet today.

*Begins.* "When I made my budget speech I promised to make a statement before the House rose on the issue by this country of its own currency.

As the Honourable Members will be aware, the currency notes and coins we use at present are common to all four West African territories and are issued by the West African Currency Board in exchange for sterling. The system of free exchange between our currency and sterling has many tangible advantages. It costs very little to run; it is quite automatic, so that the supply of currency increases in accordance with need; it gives local firms and (corrupt gp.) direct access to the London money market and provides a currency in which traders and investors both in this country and elsewhere can have complete confidence.

Although this system has proved very satisfactory up to the present, the Government considers that when we attain self-government we ought to issue our own currency, as do all other independent nations. The Government is very conscious of the dependence of this country on oversea trade, both in imports and in exports, and it will see to it that the new currency retains the dependability and usefulness of the present currency. The unit of new currency will be maintained at a value equivalent to that of the pound sterling, for the government is firmly convinced that for many years to come the interests of this country will best be served by a close link with sterling.

It has always been contemplated that the bank of the Gold Coast should ultimately become a bank of issue, and with that object in view, steps which I have already explained to the House, are being taken to expand the bank's (corrupt gp. ?organisation). Until it does become a full bank of issue, the bank of the Gold Coast, for the time being, will act as a Government agent in making preliminary arrangements for issue of new currency, the production and control of which will remain the government's sole responsibility.

The printing of currency notes takes a long time, and it will be desirable to place an order for them at an early date.

The Government has been in touch with three leading firms of security printers in the U.K., and will be asking the firm which submitted the lowest tender to enter into further negotiations with a view to awarding a contract for printing.

At the same time, discussions are taking place with the West African Currency Board to agree on the way in which the new currency can be submitted for old with the least inconvenience and disturbance to our economy. During my last visit to the U.K., I discussed with S. of S.'s advisers the question of the Gold Coast's own currency, and agreement was reached that the Gold Coast should issue its own currency on attainment of independence, and also on principle by which this change would be made. Mr Speaker, the issue by this country of its own currency will

be one of [the] more significant marks of its attainment of full nationhood. I wish there to be no doubt that in taking this momentous step the Government will ensure that new currency will provide a sure basis for future development of this country and will be a medium of exchange on which everyone will be able to rely with complete confidence". *Ends.*

**163** CO 554/888, no 1

16 Apr 1955

[Independence bill]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the preparation of the bill for Gold Coast independence

We have been giving some thought to the procedure that will have to be followed in order to present to Parliament a Bill for the independence of the Gold Coast.

The essentials of the procedure can be very briefly expressed. It is our responsibility to give very clear and complete Instructions to Parliamentary Counsel so that they may then proceed to draft the Bill. In order to prepare those Instructions we in turn will need to have draft Instructions from you, and drafts of the accompanying Constitutional Instruments.

Simple though this appears when put so shortly, the process of carrying it out is likely to be far from simple. Before your Law Officers can prepare the first drafts of Instructions to Parliamentary Counsel and the Constitutional Instruments (other than the Bill) it will be necessary for H.M.G. and the Gold Coast Government to have reached agreement about the form of the constitution under which independence is to be granted, and this, in its turn, must imply the reaching of a wide measure of agreement in the Gold Coast on that subject. We have no doubt that there is much your Law Officers can do in advance of full agreement on these matters, but they could not hope to complete their first drafts until after that agreement had been reached. I know you will fully understand the need for your Law Officers to do the initial work. They alone have that first-hand experience of the working of the present constitution and that intimate knowledge of local legislation which is necessary if we are to avoid serious embarrassment. They will also, of course, be able to ensure that their drafts fully implement the wishes of your Ministers. In drafting the last Gold Coast constitution we attempted to save time by dealing with its various Parts separately. It was not a satisfactory method, and we only agreed to adopt it because we know that it was always possible to amend the constitution and we have, of course, since found that it will be necessary to do this. In the case of a constitution granting independence, however, we shall have to make quite sure that we have got everything right. There will be no possibility of subsequent amendment here, and the experience of Pakistan and India since 1948 shows how desirable it is to do everything that may be possible to hand over with a constitution that should not need important change for some time at least. We would not therefore be able to save any time by considering the first drafts of your Law Officers in separate pieces, and we would on this occasion prefer not to have those drafts in that form but to wait until they are complete at your end.

Once we have the complete drafts here the procedure we contemplate would be that as a first step we should prepare a commentary, and (if necessary) a redraft which would then be sent back to you. When you and your Ministers had considered

the commentary (and redraft, if any), it would then be well worth while for you to send one or two of your Law Officers home to agree any further amendments which might be necessary. Our view is that it might take us as much as three months to deal with the first drafts from your Law Officers, and that another three months at least would be required for working out the questions we had raised on the first drafts. Once we were satisfied that the Instructions and the accompanying constitutional Instruments were in a form suitable to be presented to Parliamentary Counsel we would then go to them. From our experience of dealing with them we think it safe to say that another four to five months would be needed for their consideration of the Instructions, their preparation of the Bill and securing agreement at your end to it. In short, we are advised that it is bound to take at least twelve months from the receipt of the first drafts from your Law Officers to the presentation of the Bill to Parliament.

This is of course a longer period than was taken in the case of Ceylon, where a period of six months elapsed between the announcement by H.M.G. in June, 1947 that independence was to be granted and the enactment of the Ceylon Independence Act and related Instruments in December of that year. There are two main reasons why the Gold Coast must take longer. Ceylon was constitutionally a single unit, but the Gold Coast contains four separate constitutional forms, the Colony, Ashanti, and Northern Territories Protectorate and the Trust Territory of Togoland. Complicated constitutional questions are therefore likely to arise; and moreover there will be more Instruments to consider. Secondly there were no major changes in the Ceylon constitution on independence, apart from those necessarily involved in the granting of independence; but in the Gold Coast we know that consideration is being given to a number of major changes such as an Upper House, any of which is bound to require the most careful consideration by the legal draftsmen. In these circumstances it would be wrong of us to ask for a period of less than twelve months in which to get the work completed.

We have naturally considered very carefully indeed whether we could not shorten this period by one administrative device or another. I have already discussed the possibility that the first drafts might be sent home in separate Parts, and I have explained the reasons why we do not feel that this would be advisable, and indeed why we have some reason to fear that this might make the task of considering the constitution as a whole rather more difficult. We have also considered the possibility of sending out one of our Legal staff to assist your Law Officers, but despite our anxiety to help as much as we can I regret to have to say that it will not be possible for us to lend you one of our people because we simply have not got sufficient legal staff here. We have also considered whether we might not get Parliamentary Counsel into the business before the Instructions reach their final form, but we are advised that Parliamentary Counsel do not normally work in this way.

I know you will wish to discuss with your Ministers the implications of the time which the procedure for preparation of the Bill for Gold Coast independence must take. I should be grateful if in due course you could let me know whether the procedure described in this letter is acceptable to you and if you would be able to spare your Law Officers for the length of time which will no doubt be required.

**164** CO 554/805, no 29

4 May 1955

**[Policy issues]: CO note of a meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke on staffing problems, defence, citizenship and constitutional instruments***Staff*

*Sir C. Jeffries*, referring to the staffing problems of the Gold Coast resulting from the retirement of 142 pensionable officers at the 31st July under the compensation scheme, said that the C.O. were prepared to meet the Gold Coast wish that there should be a moratorium on a transfer of staff (except on promotion) until the crisis had been surmounted. This however would have a little effect on the major problem, which was to ensure that there would be sufficient staff to keep the administrative machine running. It was his view that the Gold Coast Government, having paid generous compensation to officers opting to leave the service, would have to increase salaries to attract new staff and to retain present staff.

*Sir C. Arden-Clarke* asked that if it was the considered view that an increase in the salaries of expatriates was necessary to attract and retain staff, the C.O. should give some estimate of the magnitude of the increases which were considered necessary. Any increase would probably have to apply generally to African and expatriates, and a non-pensionable addition would undoubtedly be less objectionable politically than a pensionable increase. He could not stress too greatly the gravity of the situation which required immediate action if there was not to be a breakdown in certain departments. A despatch should shortly reach the C.O. setting out the staff position in detail and listing certain posts the filling of which was essential.

The Governor added that there was a general feeling among those remaining – and among those going out – that those opting out were ‘letting the side down’. It was important for the morale of those remaining that those going were not immediately offered appointment plums elsewhere – particularly re-employment on pensionable terms. It was politically impossible to accept administrative officers on transfer from other territories and that the problem was most serious in the technical branches. Fortunately the number of senior police officers retiring was small.

There was some discussion whether it would be feasible to permit officers who had opted to retire with compensation to reconsider their decision. It was agreed that this could not be done under the existing provisions of the Order in Council. In any event, reconsideration of options would cause considerable confusion and would have only a marginal effect on the problem.

*Sir C. Jeffries* said there were two schools of thought on the recruitment of staff for the Gold Coast. One considered that the Gold Coast should be told that they must assume responsibility for all recruitment to their local service; the other thought that the Colonial Office should retain responsibility for the recruitment of certain classes of officer. A further suggestion was that the recruitment for oversea posts (not only in the Gold Coast) should be handled by a ‘neutral’ Oversea Service Commission which would nominally not be tied to the C.O. Yet a further suggestion, which had been made in relation to Eastern Nigeria where there was likely to be a serious exodus of expatriate staff later this year and, unlike the Gold Coast, the Government was likely to be unwilling as well as unable to recommend increases in expatriate pay, was that H.M.G. should contribute to the extra cost of overseas officers by meeting the cost of expatriation pay in whole or in part.

*Sir C. Arden-Clarke* expressed the opinion that the Gold Coast Government should be told that they were expected to assume responsibility for the recruitment of their staff but that the C.O. would be willing to assist when required. The C.O. would be involved in accepting staff for H.M.O.C.S. and in arranging transfers to other territories etc. Sir Charles emphasised that H.M.G. could effectively help only if the African Ministers accepted help; any attempt to 'push' assistance against the wishes of representative Ministers could only produce stiffened resistance. He was attracted by the suggestion of a 'neutral' Oversea Service Commission with no overt connection with the C.O. After independence the Gold Coast would undoubtedly avoid assistance from the Colonial Office but might well accept it from a neutral agency. He could not support the suggestion that H.M.G. might meet part of the cost of employing expatriates. He was of the opinion that expatriates would be employed only if Ministers appreciated the need for them and asked for them. He realised that before Ministers accepted the need for expatriate officers there might be a serious risk of breakdown in administration but he thought that only by bringing Ministers face to face with the consequences of a breakdown would they be made to face the facts of life.

#### *Defence*

*Sir C. Arden-Clarke* said that the Gold Coast had agreed to assume financial responsibility for Gold Coast forces from 1.4.56. on the basis that the Gold Coast would assume control of these forces on 1.7.56. This would give a little time for the running in of the new organisation before independence was achieved. There would have to be a considerable reorganisation and a decision taken as to the future of West African Command. It was becoming a matter of urgency that he should be authorised to discuss with Gold Coast Ministers the many questions involved in the reorganisation and in particular the question of co-operation for exterior defence with other West African forces. Time was running short and it was important that a decision should be taken quickly.

It was stated that policy decisions (a) that the administration and control of Gold Coast forces should be transferred from the War Office to the Gold Coast Governor on 1.7.56 and (b) that the Governor should be authorised to discuss defence co-operation with Gold Coast Ministers, had not yet been taken. It was pointed out however that the Executive Committee of the Army Council had endorsed General Herbert's<sup>1</sup> proposals for the splitting up of West Africa Command H.Q. It was agreed that the Secretary of State should be asked to seek an early decision, if possible, before the onset of the General Election.<sup>2</sup> It was further agreed that a copy of the Bill revising the Army Act should be sent to the Secretary to the Governor and that he should be asked to keep the C.O. informed on matters negotiated direct between the Gold Coast Government and the War Office.

#### *Gold Coast citizenship*

*Sir C. Arden-Clarke* stated that the people of the Northern territories had expressed concern that on the achievement of independence they would lose their status of protected persons and would become citizens of the Gold Coast. He asked

<sup>1</sup> GOC-in-C, West Africa Command, 1953-1956.

<sup>2</sup> In the UK.

whether local legislation could be enacted making protected persons of the Northern territories citizens of the Gold Coast. Sir Charles was informed that the question of Gold Coast citizenship after independence was being explored with both the Home Office and C.R.O. and that a draft, setting out H.M.G.'s views, was in preparation. It was thought that the process in respect of protected persons would be for Gold Coast legislation to define them as a Gold Coast citizen and for U.K. legislation to accept Gold Coast citizens as British subjects. *Sir K. Roberts-Wray*<sup>3</sup> enquired whether in view of the report of the Conference on British Nationality held in 1947, the Home Office has raised any objection to British protected persons being given citizenship and becoming British subjects. It was said that it had been assumed in recent discussions that people of the Protectorate would become Gold Coast citizens and thence British subjects and that no question about this had been raised by the Home Office.

#### *Constitutional instruments*

*Sir Kenneth Roberts-Wray* said he would like to make it clear that while he would hope it would be possible to draft the necessary British legislation and the Order-in-Council required for transfer of power in a period of nine months after receiving the draft Order-in-Council from the Gold Coast, he could not guarantee to do so. The point was taken and the Governor stated that the Gold Coast legal officers should endeavour to submit a draft in December. In this connection he gladly agreed to a suggestion that *Sir Kenneth Roberts-Wray* might visit Accra and discuss the Constitution after the proposed Judicial Advisory Conference in October in Nigeria, if it takes place.

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<sup>3</sup> CO/CRO legal adviser.

**165** DO 35/6187, no 7

7 May 1955

'Defence implications of political developments in the Gold Coast':  
letter from *Sir T Lloyd* to *Sir G Laithwaite*. *Enclosure*: CO  
memorandum

I enclose a copy of a memorandum prepared in this Office on the defence implications of political developments in the Gold Coast. The memorandum is the result of inter-departmental consultation between the Colonial Office, the War Office and the Treasury, and of correspondence with the civil and military authorities in West Africa, over a number of months.

My Secretary of State has not seen this memorandum but he fully supports the conclusions reached in paragraph 10 of it and he had intended to table a document leading up to those conclusions at a meeting of the Committee of Ministers on Colonial Security. But as that Committee will not meet again before the General Election and in view of the importance of making progress in this matter, for which the Governor is pressing, I hope that the Commonwealth Relations Office will find it possible to accept these proposals without troubling your Secretary of State if he is not readily available.

General Templer<sup>1</sup> has, of course, examined this question among the others coming within his terms of reference and has indicated his support of the line taken in the memorandum and his agreement that action should proceed independently of his investigations.

As you will see from the memorandum (in particular from paragraph 9) the political time-table in the Gold Coast makes it very desirable to take early decisions, so that we may keep the initiative and make the best use of the short time still left to us, and not leave defence arrangements to be improvised in a hurry at the last minute. You will note that the date proposed for the transfer of the local forces to the Gold Coast Government (that is to say, until independence, to the Governor acting in his discretion) is the 1st July, 1956. This does not allow much time for the Gold Coast administration to gain experience of this matter before independence,<sup>2</sup> and my Secretary of State considers it imperative that a very early start should be made with carrying out the proposals in the memorandum.

These proposals do not, of course, exhaustively cover the whole field of defence matters on which new arrangements and decisions will be called for when the Gold Coast acquires complete self-government. We shall be making further proposals on other and less immediate matters (for example, whether or not we should aim at concluding an eventual Defence Agreement) when consultations with the Governor are further advanced. . . .

#### Enclosure to 165

The object of this paper (which is foreshadowed in paragraph 14 of the Colonial Office memorandum on the future of Colonial Forces prepared for the Cabinet Committee on Security in the Colonies) is to draw the urgent attention of Ministers to certain of the implications in the field of defence of the early achievement of self-government by the Gold Coast, and to seek approval of a change in the administration of the Gold Coast military forces consequent upon this political change. The matter has been the subject of consultation with the Governor, and the proposals in this paper are supported by the War Office.

2. The Gold Coast military forces consist of three infantry battalions, one field battery and certain supporting units. They are at present administered by the War Office through the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, West Africa Command, whose headquarters are in Accra.

3. The present Gold Coast Ministers intend to assume full control of their military forces when full self-government is achieved. The earliest possible date for self-government is December 1956.

4. To this end, the Gold Coast Government are likely to increase their financial contributions towards the cost of their forces in relief of United Kingdom Votes by such sums as will enable them to shoulder the whole burden at the start of the financial year 1956/57; they also propose from the same date to assume full responsibility for works services.

<sup>1</sup> Chief of the imperial general staff.

<sup>2</sup> Laithwaite noted in the margin: 'Six months!'

5. The Gold Coast forces will of course continue for some considerable time after 1956 to need European officers and N.C.O.'s, since the African officers are still few and junior. On the analogy of India and Pakistan since 1947, there seems no over-riding political objection to the forces of an independent Gold Coast employing British officers or to their Commander being a British officer owing allegiance to the Gold Coast Government. Such an arrangement would clearly foster defence co-operation with the Gold Coast as an independent member of the Commonwealth, and it is thought that the present Gold Coast Ministers would welcome it. For similar practical reasons, the Gold Coast forces would continue to be dependent on U.K. supplies for arms and equipment, the exact arrangements for supply being a matter for subsequent decision.

6. The Governor of the Gold Coast considers that there would be much advantage if the transfer of administration and control of the local forces to the Gold Coast Government was carried out a little while before the achievement of self-government, in order that there may be a running-in period during which local experience could be built up while final responsibility would still rest not with Gold Coast Ministers but with the Governor, acting in his discretion under the terms of the Constitution. This seems far preferable to a sudden break coinciding with the grant of independence, especially since as from that date the Gold Coast Government will be assuming sole responsibility for internal security. The date on which the Governor suggests that transfer of administration and control should be effected is the 1st July, 1956.

7. The functions of H.Q. West Africa Command, and also of the War Office in relation to personnel, will have to pass to a strengthened H.Q. Gold Coast Military Forces (District H.Q.). The Governor hopes that British personnel with experience of West Africa will agree to join the Gold Coast staff: a build up of this staff should start towards the end of 1955. It is understood from the Governor that detailed recommendations on the military establishment and organisation of the Gold Coast forces after self-government are being prepared by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief.

8. The final achievement of self-government by the Gold Coast will affect the West African forces as a whole. Internal security in the Gold Coast will become the responsibility of the Gold Coast forces under a Commander responsible directly to the Gold Coast Government. The Gold Coast forces will no longer be available to reinforce other territories, nor will the other West African forces be available to reinforce the Gold Coast. The extent to which co-operation between the Gold Coast and other West African territories can be arranged for purposes of exterior defence will be a matter for negotiation with an independent Gold Coast Government. It is important to ascertain the views of Ministers on this aspect of defence, as it has important repercussions on the shape of the military command set-up and other military forces in West Africa. In particular, if, as seems inevitable, H.Q. West Africa Command will no longer be suitable for the task, it will be imperative to ascertain rapidly what co-ordinating and advisory staff, as opposed to command and executive staff, would be acceptable to the Gold Coast Government, and whether the numbers agreed as acceptable could be stationed in the Gold Coast.

9. The proposals outlined above have not yet been discussed with Gold Coast Ministers: it is thought desirable to obtain the agreement of Her Majesty's Government to them before doing so. There is thus much consultation to be done in

the Gold Coast, and a great deal to be achieved in a short time if the governor's timetable is to be observed.

10. Ministers are accordingly invited to agree:—

(a) that the administration and control of the Gold Coast forces should be transferred from the War Office to the Gold Coast Government on the 1st July, 1956;

(b) that the governor of the Gold Coast be authorised to explore with the Gold Coast Ministers means whereby those forces could after independence, be used for exterior defence in conjunction with other West African forces.

**166** PREM 11/1367

8 June 1955

[South Africa and the Gold Coast]: letter from Sir P Liesching<sup>1</sup>  
(South Africa) to Sir S Garner on the National Party government and its attitude towards Commonwealth membership for the Gold Coast

Thank you for your letter of the 24th May about the admission of new Members of the Commonwealth. I need hardly tell you that I agree with everything you say about the crucial difficulties we shall meet in handling this problem with the Union Government. For a number of reasons, which will be obvious to you from our reports on the political situation here, it will be even more difficult to handle with Mr. Strijdom's government than it would have been if Dr. Malan had been in power. Moreover, the transfer of responsibility for External Affairs from the Prime Minister to Mr. Louw<sup>2</sup> increases the difficulties in several ways. As this is Prime Minister's business, the first approach, if and when I am authorised to undertake it, would be to Mr Strijdom, with whom Forsyth,<sup>3</sup> our best friend and only confidant on this subject, has now no contact or influence. Mr Louw, temperamental, impetuous and fundamentally obsessed by anti-British bias, is not only grossly overburdened with his two portfolios but is, more than any of his colleagues, excited and embittered by the attacks of the anti-colonialists upon South Africa. (See for example his recent outburst recorded in paragraph 2 of my telegram No. 185 about the U.N.O. Conference for a revision of the Charter). It is Mr. Louw who, as soon as Mr. Strijdom consults his colleagues on the question, will be the first to be called in and will have a very big say in the matter in hand.

It was with thoughts such as these in mind that I saw Forsyth yesterday for a private conversation, which can be guaranteed to be completely off the record. I put my first thoughts to him and he fully confirmed everything I have said in the preceding paragraph, but added a number of helpful comments on the timing of an approach which, as he recognised, must inevitably be made before long.

Forsyth has for some time been working on Mr. Louw and has, in fact, had some

<sup>1</sup> Liesching was UK high commissioner in South Africa between 1955 and 1958.

<sup>2</sup> E H Louw, South African minister of economic affairs, 1948–1954; minister of foreign affairs, 1955–1963; minister of finance, 1955–1956.

<sup>3</sup> D D Forsyth, permanent under-secretary for external affairs in South Africa, 1941–1956. Forsyth was one of the few anglophile foreign ministry officials of the Smuts period who retained his post when Malan came to power. He was replaced in 1956 by G P Jooste, an Afrikaner nationalist.

limited success in moving him towards better policies in relation to the Union's African neighbours to the North. Forsyth now has a powerful committee on African affairs under his chairmanship comprising the heads of practically all the government departments, and has succeeded recently in getting from Mr. Louw approval of a unanimous report, recommending the offer of bursaries to the Council for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara (C.C.T.A.) to be held by Africans from outside the Union for study at some of the Universities, Medical Institutions, the C.S.I.R. and similar bodies in the Union. The recommendations included the setting up of one – Forsyth had hoped for more – hotel or hostel on a kind of extra-territorial basis with special provisions so that apartheid should not apply to it.

Apart from this limited progress on the general front, Forsyth already intends to advance on Mr. Louw after the Session ends with proposals more directly connected with the Gold Coast itself. He told me that Africans from the Gold Coast in contact with the representative of the Union at C.C.T.A. meetings (both that held in Lourenço Marques and the one on housing held in the Gold Coast) had made friendly and informal approaches to the S. African delegates, with whom they got on well, urging that S. Africa should set up some form of permanent representation in the Gold Coast where, they said, the educated African was faced with somewhat similar problems to those which arose in the Union in dealing with backward and uneducated Africans. (The latter part of the foregoing sentence seems to me rather far-fetched, but I record what was said to me). Forsyth was planning, after the tumult and the shouting of the present session has subsided, to work on Mr. Louw in favour of the appointment of a South African Commissioner to the Gold Coast. At this point I mentioned in confidence to Forsyth the initial steps which we had already taken in the appointment of Cumming-Bruce.<sup>4</sup> It is clear that Forsyth hopes, though he knows the difficulties, to persuade Mr. Louw to the view that, instead of trying to ignore or affront the Gold Coast in its advance to full self-government, he should deal with it in a practical way. Forsyth, I should add, is himself convinced that, in spite of the immense difficulties for South Africa, the right policy is to keep the Gold Coast within the Commonwealth circle, and he realises, moreover, that if South Africa opposes this policy she is likely to find herself in a minority of one.

This does not mean that he is not greatly anxious and far from optimistic about the prospects of getting Mr. Louw into a frame of mind where he will advise that the membership pill should be swallowed. Mr. Louw's violent fretfulness about the anti-Colonial attacks on South Africa, and his intense bitterness against Mr. Nehru's<sup>5</sup> attitude and utterances will all, no doubt, be heard, and will be supported by re-assertions that the dangerous non-cooperation movement, which was started here among the non-Europeans but was firmly suppressed, was fomented by Indians and inspired from Delhi. We discussed whether it would be wise or unwise to try to take advantage of Mr. Louw's forthcoming absences from the Union to get the Prime Minister's ear and attune it to this subject. (Mr. Louw will be away on his expedition to San Francisco from the 10th June until about the end of July. He will be away

<sup>4</sup> F E Cumming-Bruce was appointed as adviser on external affairs to the governor of the Gold Coast in Feb 1955.

<sup>5</sup> Prime minister of India, 1947–1964.

again for the International Monetary Fund Meeting at Istanbul during a good deal of September). We agreed that it would be most unwise to do so. Mr Strijdom would probably by nature react pretty fiercely against a proposal to admit the Gold Coast to full membership and it might be difficult afterwards to get him to modify or retract his opposition.

My conclusion is that we should hold our hands for the next four months or so and thus give Forsyth – on whom my conversation will have impressed a sense of urgency – an opportunity to see whether he can get Mr Louw into a better frame of mind on future policy towards the Gold Coast in the context of the suggestion that a South African Commissioner should be appointed to Accra. Forsyth may be able to start on this during August and he could continue the process after the Minister's return from Istanbul. I would maintain close contact with him to discover what he had been able to do, and in the light of this, could send the Secretary of State further advice which might lead to a decision that our approach to Mr. Strijdom should be made, say, during November. This, I think is the best advice that I can offer at the present time. There are as you say, going to be initial tantrums to be got over, but we must try and ensure that they are not too severe and if possible that the issue is not treated by the present Government as one which can be exploited for political ends.

There is one further point of some delicacy on which I will touch now, although it does not arise at present. When the time comes and the approach is made it will be a tragedy if the present government should stampede the opposition into wholly uninformed reactions which might play into their hands. You may remember that when I was sent out in 1949 to broach the question of Indian membership with Dr. Malan, I had a long and completely secret talk with General Smuts,<sup>6</sup> who was then leading the Opposition, and was himself in favour of a two-tier solution. This is dangerous ground and I do not wish to anticipate the course of events. But it seems to me that when the time comes there may well be an occasion when I find myself in conversation with Mr. Strauss<sup>7</sup> and when the conversation turns to Colonial affairs, and that things could then be said to him in strict confidence to throw sufficient light on the subject to enable him to avoid taking up a mis-guided attitude through ignorance of some of the weighty considerations in favour of accepting new candidates within the Commonwealth fold.

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<sup>6</sup> Prime minister of South Africa, 1939–1948.

<sup>7</sup> J G N Strauss, Smuts's successor as leader of the United Party in South Africa.

**167** DO 35/6170, no 3 21 June 1955  
 [Constitutional timetable]: letter from G Hadow to Sir T Lloyd on the constitutional timetable leading to independence. *Annexures: I–III*

I see from Vile's secret and personal letter No. WAF 16/2/05 of the 10th May to me, that your secret letter of the 16th April<sup>1</sup> concerning the preparation of Constitutional Instruments and the Bill necessary for the grant of independence to the Gold Coast was briefly discussed with the Governor when he visited the Colonial Office early in

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<sup>1</sup> See 163.

May. I have now had an opportunity of discussing the suggested procedure and timetable with the Governor's Advisory Committee on defence and external affairs.

I enclose as Annexure I to this letter a timetable which was placed before the Advisory Committee, based on the periods indicated in your letter. It will be seen that this enclosure distinguishes between the time which would be taken if the draftsmen have to provide for a bi-cameral legislature and the time which would be taken if such major changes were not introduced. The Attorney-General, for his part, has raised no objection to this timetable, but Ministers consider that the report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on a federal form of Government and a Second Chamber should, in any event, be debated in the Assembly in August this year, and hope that an act of independence can be passed before the end of 1956. The Prime Minister accordingly prepared a revised timetable for the Advisory Committee which I enclose as Annexure II. The Attorney-General has misgivings about this second timetable which he has expressed in terms of Annexure III to this letter, and which have been brought to the notice of the Advisory Committee; but the members of the Committee nonetheless consider that it is a possible programme, and wish to see it carried through. The Prime Minister and his colleagues undoubtedly do not envisage provision in the new Constitution for a bi-cameral legislature. I am informed that the Select Committee is making good progress, and Ministers confidently expect that its report will be ready for laying on the table at the end of July. The Legislative Assembly is due to meet on the 26th of that month.

As regards the question whether we could spare legal staff to assist in consultation in the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister and the Attorney General are both agreeable to the suggestion, although it is realised this must temporarily reduce the amount of work which can be undertaken by the Attorney-General's Office in the Gold Coast; but, to offset this prospect, the Attorney-General has been authorised to endeavour to obtain additional staff for his office should he consider this desirable.

While I appreciate the anxiety of Ministers that nothing should stand in the way of the grant of independence by the end of 1956, I consider that the timetable which they favour is very tightly drawn and leaves no margin for dealing with obstacles which they do not expect to arise. In particular, it is possible that the National Liberation Movement in Ashanti, which is not willing (even if it were ready) to submit any views to the Select Committee, will after the Select Committee has reported, present the Government with a fairly precise statement of its views on the devolution or some degree of authority to Regions, with a request that these views should be taken into account in any discussions on the future constitution which may take place between Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Gold Coast government. If the National Liberation Movement adopts this course, it may well request that the constitutional instruments should contain specific mention of the nature and extent of the devolution which it wishes to see established at the grant of independence but which it has not, admittedly, formulated with any precision as yet. Again, if I am correctly informed that the General Assembly of the United Nations could not take a final decision on Togoland earlier than December 1956, this is another factor which may prevent the fulfilment of the Prime Minister's timetable. As we see the situation here, it seems unlikely that independence could be granted before some time in the first quarter of 1957.

As you may wish to discuss the timetable further with the Governor before his return to the Gold Coast, I am sending him a copy of this letter and enclosures.

## Annexure I to 167: Timetable for independence

1955	Oct	[Bill] tabled in Legislative Assembly	
	Nov	Debate in Legislative Assembly	
	Dec	Discussion in Cabinet: instructions to Law Officers	
1956	Jan	{ Law Officers }	{ Law Officers }
	Feb	{ draft simple }	{ draft major }
	Mar	{ amendments }	{ amendments }
	Apr	Drafts to S/S	{ eg Second }
	May		{ Chamber }
	June		Drafts to S/S
	July	S/S comments on the drafts	
	Aug		
	Sept	G.C. replies to comments	S/S comments on the drafts
	Oct	S/S instructs Parliamentary Counsel	
	Nov	{ Parliamentary }	G.C. replies to comments
	Dec	{ Counsel }	S/S instructs Parliamentary
		{ draft }	Counsel
1957	Jan	{ Bill of }	{ Parliamentary }
	Feb	{ Independence }	{ Counsel }
	Mar		{ draft Bill of }
	Apr	Bill passed by Parliament	{ Independence }
	May		
	June		Bill passed by Parliament

N.B. Programme might be shortened by 3 months if the Select Committee's Report can be tabled in July

## Annexure II to 167: Timetable for independence

In a letter from Sir Thomas Lloyd to His Excellency it is stated: '... it is bound to take at least twelve months from the receipt of the first drafts from your Law Officers to the presentation of the Bill to Parliament'.<sup>2</sup>

According to the timetable set out below this will take from December 1955 to November 1956 or from January 1956 to December 1956 in case the Gold Coast wants a bi-cameral Legislature.

1955

July	Select Committee's Report tabled in Legislative Assembly
Aug	Debate in Legislative Assembly
	Discussion in Cabinet: instructions to Law Officers

<sup>2</sup> See 163.

<i>For Uni-cameral Legislature</i>		<i>For Bi-cameral Legislature</i>		
Sept	{ Law Officers draft simple amendments }		{ Law Officers draft major amendments }	
Oct				
Nov				
Dec	Drafts to S/S			
 <i>1956</i>				
Jan			Drafts to S/S	
Feb				
Mar	S/S comments on the drafts			
Apr	Gold Coast replies to comments			
May	S/S instructs Parliamentary Counsel	S/S comments on the drafts		
June	{ Parliamentary Counsel draft Bill of Independence }	Gold Coast replies to comments		
July		S/S instructs Parliamentary Counsel		
Aug		{ Parliamentary Counsel draft Bill of Independence }		
Sept				
Oct				
Nov	Bill passed by Parliament			
Dec			Bill passed by Parliament	

Annexure III to 167: Letter from G M Patterson<sup>3</sup> to A C Russell<sup>4</sup>, 26 May 1955 [Extract]

...

(a) The timetable allows 5 months for the drafting by the Law Officers of the amendments required in the event of the decision being in favour of a bi-cameral legislature. . . . This estimate may well prove inadequate, since provision for a bi-cameral legislature will involve the re-writing of a substantial portion of the constitution.

(b) The timetable allows only one month for the Gold Coast to reply to comments of the Secretary of State, both in the case of proposals for a uni-cameral and of a bi-cameral legislature. This is almost certain to prove inadequate.

(c) The Secretary of State has indicated that the period between receipt of first drafts from the Gold Coast and presentation of a Bill in Parliament will be a minimum of a year. The timetable allows a bare 11 months. It is clear that if extensive drafting is involved or questions of difficulty arise, the time required may extend beyond the minimum of one year which is specified.

2. I consider these comments should be brought to the notice of the Advisory Committee as I feel the timetable in its present form is not realistic. The timetable in fact provides only for the minimum length of time in which it can be hoped to accomplish the necessary steps. It should be appreciated that if any matter of difficulty arises or if the negotiations with Her Majesty's Government (para. 3 of Sir Thomas Lloyd's letter of 16th April<sup>2</sup> – the timetable makes no express provision for negotiations) should be protracted, the period of one year may prove quite insufficient.

<sup>3</sup> Attorney-general, Gold Coast.

<sup>4</sup> Secretary to the governor.

**168** CO 554/888, no 5

30 June 1955

[Gold Coast independence]: CO note of a meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke on matters connected with the achievement of independence

*Visit of Professor Busia*<sup>1</sup>

1. *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke* urged that the Secretary of State should impress upon Professor Busia the need for the National Liberation Movement to put forward concrete proposals on federalism and to be prepared to discuss their proposals with those who hold opposing views. He thought it desirable that the Professor should also be told that the Secretary of State would consider anything put forward by the N.L.M. only if it were submitted through the proper channels.

*Visit of a constitutional expert or mediator*

2. The Governor said that he had heard from Mr. Hadow that the N.L.M. might be prepared to discuss their ideas on federalism with an outside expert. He thought that the idea of a visit by an expert or mediator should not be mentioned to Professor Busia, that he might first explore the reaction of Dr. Nkrumah to it, and that the idea should not be pursued until after the debate on the report of the Select Committee on Federalism and a Second Chamber had taken place. As regards the type of expert required, there was general agreement that a practical administrator who had a gift of listening and could act as an arbiter was required rather than a theorist. It was felt that any mediator should preferably come from outside the Colonial field – perhaps someone with Indian or Ceylon experience. The Governor felt that a visit by a Minister would in all probability be used primarily as an occasion for demonstrations and he could not recommend such a visit.

3. It was agreed that further consideration of a visit should be deferred since there were indications that the N.L.M. might be prepared to put forward concrete proposals on federation and to discuss with government.

*Message from secretary of state*

4. The Governor said he had in mind, not a message from the Secretary of State to the peoples of the Gold Coast, but authority to convey a message to the leaders of the N.L.M. and others to the effect that Her Majesty's Government viewed with concern the negative tactics of the N.L.M., their failure to put forward constructive proposals and their apparent unwillingness to discuss their differences with those who held other views, and that before H.M.G. could agree to the transfer of power, H.M.G. must be assured that it was the wish of the people of the Gold Coast to achieve independence and that any proposed constitution for the Gold Coast when it became independent was of a form acceptable to the large majority of Gold Coasters. *Sir T. Lloyd* said that with Ministerial approval a letter conveying such a message would be sent to the Governor.

<sup>1</sup> Busia visited London at the beginning of July 1955. His discussions with Lennox-Boyd were substantially along the lines of those recommended by Arden-Clarke in para 1 above. See also 170.

*Timetable*

5. It was generally agreed that the time table<sup>2</sup> prepared by Gold Coast Ministers was unrealistic. It was unlikely that instructions could be given to Gold Coast Law Officers by the end of August and there were three difficulties likely to prevent a Bill of Independence being passed by Parliament in November, 1956.

6. First, the question of the future of Togoland could not be disposed of before the General Assembly met late in 1956. While it was appreciated that independence of the Gold Coast ought not to be tied to any decision of the United Nations in respect of Togoland, it was felt that if Gold Coast Ministers wanted Togoland united with the Gold Coast and this could be achieved in late 1956, the Gold Coast Ministers ought to be prepared to see independence deferred a few months for this. It was noted that there would be difficulties created in implementing the Volta River project if Togoland were not integrated with the Gold Coast.

7. The second difficulty arose from the Parliamentary arrangements that had been made for the first Session to extend until October, 1956. It was unlikely that an Independence Bill would be introduced at the end of a long Session and it would probably have to wait until the beginning of the new Session.

8. Finally, there was the possibility that a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference would be held towards the end of 1956 and in this event it was likely that an Independence Bill would be postponed until after the Conference.

9. *The Governor* asked that all these arguments should be set out in reply to Mr. Hadow's letter of the 21st June<sup>3</sup> for use as ammunition in persuading Gold Coast Ministers that they must expect some slight delay.

*Cocoa Purchasing Company*

10. *Sir T. Lloyd* referred to recent questions in the House of Commons concerning the Gold Coast and said that the Secretary of State had asked him to mention to the Governor that while it was appreciated in the House that the affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company and the Cocoa Marketing Board were the concern of the Gold Coast Government, there was a wide-spread feeling that these affairs would not stand up to investigation and that it was desirable that they should be put in order without delay.

At this stage Sir Gilbert Laithwaite and Mr. Morley joined the Meeting.

*Information on Gold Coast*

11. *Sir G. Laithwaite* said that in the fullness of time the Commonwealth Relations Office would assume responsibility for an independent Gold Coast and it was both desirable and necessary for the C.R.O. to build up their knowledge of the territory and moreover to keep their High Commissioners and Commonwealth Governments informed about it. (South Africa, of course, had to be treated as a special case.) The C.R.O. would therefore welcome information and Sir G. Laithwaite asked that copies of any reports of an informative nature from the Gold Coast should be sent to the C.R.O. It was agreed that monthly intelligence notes from the Gold Coast and all informative savingrams and telegrams, save in exceptional cases, should be copied to the C.R.O.

<sup>2</sup> See 167, annexure II.

<sup>3</sup> See 167.

12. Sir G. Laithwaite was told of the estimated timetable for independence in the Gold Coast which led to the conclusion that independence was unlikely to be achieved before the Spring of 1957 (vide paragraphs 5–9).

*Sir Percivale E. Liesching's letter of the 8th June*<sup>4</sup>

13. The view was generally held that nothing in the U.N. and nothing in relation to the C.C.T.A. was likely to provoke the South Africans on the subject of the Gold Coast before November next. There was likely to be a build-up of publicity about Togoland with the Visiting Mission but this should not occur until towards November. In the Governor's view the only risk was an outbreak of widespread disorder but this was diminishing as it seemed that tension in the Gold Coast was subsiding.

*Appointment of South African commissioner*

14. It was generally accepted that the appointment of a South African Commissioner could not be unhelpful although the Governor was not prepared at this stage to say whether the Gold Coast Government would welcome such an appointment.

*Accommodation for future high commissioner*

15. *Sir G. Laithwaite* referred to the arrangements which were being made for temporary office accommodation for the first High Commissioner and for the building of the High Commissioner's residence. He explained that it would be necessary to rent housing accommodation for the High Commissioner in the first instance and for his subordinate staff and asked the Governor whether the Gold Coast Government would be able to help. The Governor assured *Sir G. Laithwaite* that his Government would do its best and asked that the requirements should be set out in detail. *Mr. Cumming-Bruce* in Accra might well be able to help in finding suitable accommodation.

*Appointment of first high commissioner*

16. *The Governor* expressed the view that when the first High Commissioner was appointed on the achievement of independence, *Mr. Cumming-Bruce*, who was building up valuable experience of Gold Coast affairs, should, if possible, be retained for up to a year to assist the High Commissioner. *Sir G. Laithwaite* said he welcomed the Governor's advice on this matter and on such matters as the optimum length of tour and on the need for a principal to be appointed to assist *Mr. Cumming-Bruce*. The Governor said he would write to *Sir Gilbert Laithwaite* giving his views.

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<sup>4</sup> See 166.

**169** DO 35/6170, no 16

4 July 1955

**[Gold Coast military forces]: despatch no 953 from Mr Lennox-Boyd to G Hadow on the administration of the Gold Coast military forces**

I have the honour to address you on the subject of the control and administration of the Gold Coast military forces.

2. The pace of constitutional development, which has brought the Gold Coast to the last stage before the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth, requires that consideration should now be given to an early change in the existing arrangements whereby the Gold Coast military forces are controlled and administered by the War Office through the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, West Africa Command, and are financed in part by Her Majesty's Government and in part by the Government of the Gold Coast. On the attainment of full self-government, responsibility for the Gold Coast forces will of course rest solely with the Gold Coast Government of the day, and it is my earnest desire to ensure that the change in control and responsibility is effected in a manner likely to cause the minimum disturbance and loss of efficiency to the forces. To this end it would seem desirable that control of and full responsibility for these forces should revert to the Governor as soon as practicable, in order that as much experience as possible may be gained locally in their administration before the last constitutional change takes place.

3. I am advised that the earliest practicable date by which the planning and consequential action for the transfer of responsibility could be carried through is the 1st July, 1956. Her Majesty's Government accordingly propose that this should be the effective date on which you would revoke your predecessor's Order No. 49 of 1941 placing the Gold Coast forces under the orders and directions of the Army Council. In proposing this date Her Majesty's Government are aware that, as notified in your confidential despatch No. 111 dated the 9th February, 1955, the Gold Coast Government intend to make provision in their draft estimates for the financial year 1956/57 for the full cost of maintaining these forces from the 1st April 1956. I should be grateful if you would confirm that the 1st July, 1956 would be an acceptable date to you for the transfer of responsibility.

4. The transfer of responsibility for the forces will necessitate new arrangements for a number of important consequential matters such as the arrangements and conditions of service under which British officers and other ranks may be seconded to serve with the Gold Coast forces after the transfer, as will no doubt be the wish of your Government; the terms on which the Gold Coast Government would take over existing military equipment, accommodation and stores required for the Gold Coast forces; the channels of procurement of military stores for the Gold Coast forces in the future; and the financial arrangements for meeting the cost of the Gold Coast forces between the 1st April and the 1st July, 1956. The matters are greatly dependent on local conditions and requirements, and I should be grateful if you would now consider them, in consultation with your advisers and with the local military authorities in West Africa, and submit through me proposals for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

5. The transfer of responsibility for the Gold Coast forces will necessitate reconsideration of the command structure in West Africa and of the arrangements

recently agreed on in regard to the appointment of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, West Africa Command, (*vide* your despatch No. 35 of the 15th January and correspondence ending with my savingram No. 404 of the 22nd March). As this is a matter which affects all the West African territories, I shall in due course address you, the Governor General, Federation of Nigeria, and the Governors of Sierra Leone and the Gambia separately on it.

6. Copies of this despatch have been sent for information to the Governor General, Federation of Nigeria, the Governor of Sierra Leone, the Acting Governor of the Gambia and the Chief Secretary, West African Inter-Territorial Secretariat.

**170** CO 554/888

15–17 July 1955

[Ashanti]: minutes by Sir T Lloyd and Mr Lennox-Boyd on a proposed message from the secretary of state to the leaders of the NLM

[These two minutes concern the first draft of an open letter which Lloyd sent to Arden-Clarke on 21 July 1955 (see 172). Lennox-Boyd took exception to a section in the first draft which read: 'It is hard to understand why those who advocate a federal constitution for the Gold Coast do not put forward concrete proposals and show willingness to discuss their views with those holding opposing opinions. Inevitably public opinion in the United Kingdom and no doubt throughout the world assumes that unwillingness to participate in discussions and unwillingness to give evidence before the Select Committee appointed by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly are due to the absence of, or inability to formulate, a policy.' (CO 554/888, no 11). This section of the first draft may be compared with paras 5 and 6 of the letter as sent (see 172). The revised letter did not, as Lennox-Boyd suggested, include a reference to a mediator since the letter was intended to be shown to Nkrumah and Arden-Clarke believed that he should first personally explore Nkrumah's reactions to that particular form of intervention (CO 554/888, minute by Lloyd, 19 July 1955).]

### *Secretary of State*

The two drafts on this file result from talks which I had with Sir Charles Arden-Clarke and others, including for part of the time Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, about a fortnight ago.<sup>1</sup> They have been held up while we were trying to get some precise information about the likely date of the prorogation of Parliament next year, but we understand that nothing has yet been settled. The drafts are, I think, quite straightforward and, if you are pressed for time, I suggest that you need read only the passage . . . in the top draft which is a message from you urging leaders of the National Liberation Movement (as you urged Professor Busia last week) to put forward proposals of their own and to discuss them with the Government.

T.I.K.L.  
15.7.55

I am not at all happy about the wording at X on the last page of the first draft.

Judging by parliamentary reactions here 'public opinion' in the UK is more inclined to attribute the present unsatisfactory situation to Nkrumah's dictatorial

<sup>1</sup> See 168.

methods rather than to 'absence of or inability to form a policy' by the NLM etc. This *may*<sup>2</sup> be unfair but the recent by-election in Ashanti<sup>3</sup> won't help to convince 'public opinion' the other way.

I am coming more & more round to the view that the ideal solution would be to get a third party . . . to go out and make a report on the pros and cons of federation or some compromise scheme. Of course if he could be asked for by both sides so much the better. Is it really beyond the power of the governor to get such an invitation issued?

The H of C (or those who follow these things) does not blame the NLM but does *blame* Nkrumah & though I know on paper he has gone through all the proper motions of approach I am disposed to share the feelings of my colleagues.

A.L.B.  
17.7.55

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<sup>2</sup> Emphasis throughout in original.

<sup>3</sup> Held in the Atwima-Nwabiagya constituency on 14 July 1955 and caused by the death in a road accident of the sitting CPP member. The election was won by the NLM candidate; see 176, para 5.

## 171 CO 554/888, no 10

21 July 1955

[Independence bill]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the timing of the bill and Mr Lennox-Boyd's message to the NLM leaders

With this mail, I am sending an open letter<sup>1</sup> on the timing of the presentation to Parliament of a Bill of Independence for the Gold Coast. In addition to the difficulties which will arise in putting forward a Bill at the end of a long first Session, immediately after the summer recess and just before prorogation, and the difficulties which will arise if the future status of Togoland has not been settled satisfactorily by the time the Bill is prepared, there is another practical difficulty which I mentioned at our talk in my room on the 30th June.<sup>2</sup> It is the possibility that a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference will be held in the late autumn of 1956. If this Conference takes place then, Ministers will undoubtedly wish to defer the presentation of any Bill of Independence until after the Conference has been held.

For these reasons alone we agree with the view expressed by Hadow in his secret letter No.C.10 of the 21st June<sup>3</sup> that the timetable prepared by Nkrumah which envisages a Bill of Independence being passed by Parliament in November, 1956 if provision has to be made only for a uni-cameral legislature and in December, 1956 if provision has to be made for a bi-cameral legislature, is unrealistic. We also feel that the timetable is everywhere too tightly drawn and leaves inadequate provision for contingencies. Moreover, the timetable provides for the giving of instructions to your Law Officers in August next, that is next month, following the tabling of the Select Committee's report of their inquiry into the questions of a federal constitution

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<sup>1</sup> See 172.

<sup>2</sup> See 168.

<sup>3</sup> See 167.

and a Second Chamber. This seems to presuppose that in the course of the next six weeks there will have been established in the Gold Coast a wide measure of agreement on the form of constitution that is desired for the Gold Coast when it becomes independent. This, to say the least, seems to us optimistic, in view of the negative and unco-operative attitude of those who support federalism.

It is with the intention of helping you to break down the negative attitude of the Ashanti leaders that, as you suggested at our last meeting, my open letter contains a message authorised by the Secretary of State stressing the need for them to formulate a policy and definite proposals and to be prepared to discuss them with Government.

In approving this message the Secretary of State has drawn attention to the Parliamentary reactions to recent Gold Coast events, including Busia's visit and the result of the recent by-election.<sup>4</sup> He says that many of his colleagues in the House are more inclined to attribute the present unsatisfactory situation to Nkrumah's dictatorial methods than to the absence of or inability to form a policy by the N.L.M. He appreciates all that Nkrumah has done to resolve the dispute with the N.L.M. but he strongly inclines to the view that a visit by a mediator of the kind we had in mind is becoming increasingly urgent and necessary. He therefore particularly welcomes your proposal to explore Nkrumah's reactions to the idea and he hopes that you will be able to do this without waiting for the Select Committee Report as there would seem every advantage in persuading Nkrumah to propose a visit by a mediator in the Assembly debate on the Report rather than to wait until a later date.

I enclose a copy of a note of our discussion in my room on the 30th June.

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<sup>4</sup> See 170.

## **172** CO 554/888, no 10

21 July 1955

**[Independence bill]: open letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the timing of the bill and Mr Lennox-Boyd's message to the NLM leaders**

Following our discussions<sup>1</sup> during your recent leave on the drafting and presentation to Parliament of a Bill for the independence of the Gold Coast, we have been giving further consideration to the time table of the procedure set out in my secret letter of the 16th April.<sup>2</sup>

[2] In particular we have been considering the timing of the presentation of the Bill, which has of course to fit in with other Parliamentary commitments. The present Parliamentary arrangements (which may of course be subject to change which we cannot foresee) provide for a long first Session extending until approximately October, 1956, and, following normal practice, it is likely that after the summer recess, Parliament will only meet for a few weeks in the autumn before being prorogued. These weeks after the summer recess are usually occupied in tidying up operations preparatory to prorogation, and it is very unlikely that a Bill so

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<sup>1</sup> See 168.

<sup>2</sup> See 163.

important as one providing for the independence of the Gold Coast would be introduced in the closing weeks of the Session. It is therefore probable that the introduction of an Independence Bill would have to wait until the beginning of the new Session some time in November 1956.

[3] There is moreover the question of the future of Togoland under United Kingdom administration. As you know it is hoped that the General Assembly of the United Nations, following the holding of a successful test of public opinion in Togoland in the spring of next year, will determine the trusteeship of the territory at its 11th Session which begins in the autumn of 1956. While we would endeavour to have the question placed as high as possible on the agenda of the Fourth Committee, we should not be able to guarantee that it would be taken early in the Session. That is a matter which the United Nations decides itself. It is more than likely, consequently, that a decision will not be reached before December, 1956. It is of course arguable, and we appreciate the force of the argument, that the question of the independence of the Gold Coast should not be tied to the question of the future status of Togoland. Nevertheless, to attempt to bring about the attainment of independence by the Gold Coast before the future of Togoland had been resolved would give rise to serious difficulties. These difficulties will have to be faced if the outcome of the test of public opinion is unfavourable. If, however, as we all hope, the peoples of Togoland indicate their desire to be unified with an independent Gold Coast, and if the United Nations' decision to terminate the trusteeship agreement in favour of unification of British Togoland with an independent Gold Coast can be achieved in late 1956, the path of wisdom would in our view be to accept a delay of a few months in the date of independence in order to attain with the minimum of friction the other goal of the integration of Togoland.

[4] As I said in my earlier letter, before your Law Officers can prepare the first drafts of instructions to Parliamentary Counsel and of the constitutional instruments (other than the Bill), it will be necessary for H.M.G. and the Gold Coast Government to have reached agreement about the form of constitution under which independence is to be granted. H.M.G. for their part will wish to be satisfied that the form of constitution proposed has behind it a wide measure of agreement in the Gold Coast. Until this had been demonstrated, the whole procedure for the presentation to Parliament of a Bill for the independence of the Gold Coast must be held up. It does not appear that there is such a wide measure of agreement on the form of the constitution at the moment. The Secretary of State is much concerned about this and is anxious that you should impress on all parties the importance of doing all they can to bring about agreement if independence is not to be delayed.

[5] In his message to the Asanteman Council, conveyed in his telegram No.756 of the 31st December, the Secretary of State informed them that failure on the part of the Gold Coast peoples to resolve harmoniously their differences of opinion must inevitably retard their progress towards self-government. Despite this, little progress has been made in settling these differences. This message, you will recall, was sent when you were asked to convey to the Assanteman [sic] Council the rejection of their petition to Her Majesty for the setting up of a Royal Commission to inquire into a federal form of constitution for the Gold Coast. It is hard to understand why those who advocate a federal constitution for the Gold Coast do not put forward concrete proposals and show willingness to discuss their views with those who hold opposing opinions.

[6] Their unwillingness to do that, coupled with their refusal to give evidence before the Select Committee appointed by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, must inevitably create the impression in many quarters, that they have no practical proposals to put forward. On the other hand those in this country who sympathise with many of the general aims of the N.L.M. feel that those aims should be fully and publicly put forward so that they may receive careful examination. The Secretary of State has asked me to let you know that you have his full authority, if you get the opportunity, to inform the leaders of the N.L.M. and the other bodies allied to them of the importance he attaches to the early submission by them of concrete proposals and their discussion with the Gold Coast Government.

[7] I should add that the Secretary of State, while anxious to assist in resolving the difficulties which at present exist in the Gold Coast in any way he can, wishes it to be clearly understood that he is not prepared to consider representations by any party except through the normal channels.

**173** CO 554/805, no 45

27 July 1955

[Ashanti situation]: minute by R J Vile on a meeting at the CO chaired by Mr Lennox Boyd

On the 22nd July the Secretary of State held a meeting to discuss the Gold Coast situation which was attended by the Minister of State, Lord Lloyd, Sir T. Lloyd, Mr. P. Smithers, M.P.,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Douglas Williams<sup>2</sup> and myself.

2. The Secretary of State first of all described a recent meeting he had had with Lady Cripps<sup>3</sup> and her suggestion that she might visit the Gold Coast later this year and do what she could in the way of unofficial mediation. The Secretary of State thought that this was a valuable suggestion and that if necessary we should pursue it with Lady Cripps. (I have written separately to Mr. Hadow on these points.)

3. The Secretary of State then explained the doubts and hesitations he now felt about the present Gold Coast situation. He referred to the dictatorial tendencies which were visible from time to time among Gold Coast Ministers and in particular to their complete failure to understand the importance of the Ashanti situation when it first developed, and their continued failure to bring about any relaxation of tension. He was concerned lest we should find ourselves in the position of advocating to the United Nations the integration of Togoland into a territory whose

<sup>1</sup> Conservative MP for Winchester Division of Hampshire, 1950–1964; parliamentary private secretary to minister of state for colonies, 1952–1956, and to S of S for the colonies, 1956–1959.

<sup>2</sup> CO principal, private secretary to minister of state for colonies (Mr Hopkinson), 1955.

<sup>3</sup> The widow of Sir Stafford Cripps (died 1952), formerly chancellor of the Exchequer (1947–1950) in the Labour government, Lady Cripps's interest in the Gold Coast owed everything to the marriage of her daughter to a young Ghanaian named Joe Appiah. They had met while Appiah was studying law in London where he was a CPP enthusiast. Appiah returned to the Gold Coast as a qualified lawyer in 1954. A proud Asante, he switched his allegiance to the NLM in 1955. Lady Cripps visited her daughter and son-in-law and offered to act as an *interlocuteur valable* between the CPP and the NLM as the impasse developed. She was a frequent visitor to the CO and a direct propagandist with both, officials and the secretary of state. However, the CO recognised that her clear bias, as well as her lack of any *locus standi*, made her an unlikely candidate for that position. Accordingly, she was always courteously listened to but ultimately she was not taken very seriously in Whitehall.

administration we could not consider as properly fit to take on the burdens of independence.

4. The meeting then discussed the report which had been received from General Herbert and which asked for special military measures to be taken in the U.K. in case of trouble in Ashanti in September. (Subsequent research and a meeting with General Herbert held by the Minister of State have shown that this report was exaggerated.) The Secretary of State referred to the fact that the beginning of September had been regarded as a possible time of danger and said that he was very anxious to ensure that a full report on the situation was obtained from the Governor. He could not accept a situation in which the first news of impending trouble reached London through military channels.

5. The Secretary of State then emphasised the importance he attached to personal contact and his regret that the Governor advised against a Ministerial visit to the Gold Coast. (The Minister of State has told me subsequently that he has authority from the Secretary of State to visit the Gold Coast if necessary within the next six weeks.) The Secretary of State said he was perfectly willing to send a personal message to Dr. Nkrumah, and indeed that he would like to see him in London when he got back from the Far East. It was agreed that a telegram should be sent following the secret and personal letter already sent to Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, saying that the Secretary of State wished to send a personal message to Dr. Nkrumah and that he had it in mind to invite him to London if for one reason or another he might not accept the suggestion that he should propose the appointment of a mediator during the Assembly Debate on the Select Committee Report. The telegram would also contain a request for information in the light of General Herbert's activities.<sup>4</sup> (Following the meeting with General Herbert the request for information has been retained but any reference to his activities has been deleted.)

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<sup>4</sup> The War Office had agreed to Herbert's request that a brigade should be put in a state of readiness in case of trouble in the Gold Coast. The troops had been inoculated for service in West Africa but no other preparations had been made in the UK. Herbert thought the odds were 3 to 1 against serious trouble in Ashanti but he had taken a number of local precautions in order to have forces readily available. He knew that the opening of the cocoa season was a likely time of trouble but he had no particular reason to apprehend serious disturbances during the 1955 season. He was rather more concerned that there might be problems in Sierra Leone (CO 554/805, minute by Vile, 27 July 1955).

**174** CO 554/805, no 44 27 July 1955  
**[Ashanti]: outward telegram no 42 from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on a proposal to appoint a mediator**

My secret and personal letter of the 21st July.<sup>1</sup>

Ashanti Situation.

After I sent my letter under reference I had a further discussion with the Secretary of State about Gold Coast affairs.<sup>2</sup> As you know from your own conversations with him he is most anxious to ensure that he does everything in his power to assist in the

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<sup>1</sup> See 171.

<sup>2</sup> See 173.

resolution of the present difficulties. He is convinced that nothing but good could come from the proposal that during the debate on the Select Committee Report Nkrumah should propose a visit by a mediator and he has been wondering whether a personal message from him to Nkrumah would be of any value in securing this. He is very willing to send such a message if you think it would be useful. After a suitable compliment on the considerable achievements Nkrumah has already to his credit the message would mention the Secretary of State's concern that the present differences with the Ashanti leaders should have raised so many doubts about the fitness of the Gold Coast to achieve independence peacefully. The message might go on to say that the Secretary of State has noted Nkrumah's own concern about the need to keep the peace and discuss these matters reasonably and that the Secretary of State feels it his duty to urge upon Nkrumah the very great value for this purpose which a visit by a mediator might bring. You will no doubt let me know as soon as possible whether you would like to have authority to pass such a message on to Nkrumah.

2. The Secretary of State attaches a great deal of importance to personal contact and feels that it might well be very useful for him to have a talk with Nkrumah. He will be back from the Far East at the end of August and could see Nkrumah in London sometime in September. The Secretary of State would want to press Nkrumah to come and see him if he does not accept the idea of a mediator or if the present *impasse* is not overcome in some other way in the next few weeks. We leave it to you whether or not to say anything about this to Nkrumah now but you will no doubt impress on him the desire of the Secretary of State to do everything he can to help in the present situation, emphasising the point that his acceptance of a mediator would do a very great deal to resolve doubts in London, and if necessary advising him to consider very carefully what the repercussions are likely to be if he should choose not to make the proposal for a mediator.

3. The Secretary of State has studied with great interest recent reports on the situation in Ashanti. He has noted that in the past there have been references to the beginning of the cocoa season as a time when serious trouble might occur and before he left for the Far East he said that he would very much like you to send us as soon as possible your appreciation of the general political situation and your views on the likelihood of trouble in Ashanti over the next few months.

**175** CO 554/805, no 51

28 July 1955

[Constitutional adviser]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd reporting Dr Nkrumah's readiness to receive a constitutional adviser

I am very grateful for your secret and personal letter of the 21st July<sup>1</sup> enclosing the record of our meeting of the 30th June,<sup>2</sup> also for your secret letter<sup>3</sup> of the same date about the timetable for the grant of independence. In recent discussions with the

<sup>1</sup> See 171.

<sup>2</sup> See 168.

<sup>3</sup> See 172.

Prime Minister, and separately with the Asantehene and Baffuor Akoto,<sup>4</sup> I was obliged to anticipate these letters to some extent without committing the Secretary of State to any point of view. I have given it as my opinion to the Prime Minister that Her Majesty's Government will require a wide measure of agreement in the Gold Coast on the nature of the constitution at the time of independence before the transfer of power can take place and that present conditions do not provide the assurance of agreement which Her Majesty's Government is likely to expect. I have explained that the results of the recent by-election in Ashanti are likely to be interpreted as evidence of an appreciable swing of opinion against the Government and that the National Liberation Movement can no longer be regarded by the Government here as an irresponsible group backed by a few reactionary chiefs. I think this point has been taken.

The Prime Minister seems to be persuaded that a constitutional expert possessing the qualities described in the note of our meeting will have to be invited to visit the Gold Coast, and that the Government should take the initiative in proposing this. The Prime Minister has also agreed to do what he can to ensure that there is a reasonable debate on the Report of the Select Committee on Federalism and a Second Chamber. I have also done my best to persuade the National Liberation Movement to formulate its proposals for constitutional reform and not to stage a walk-out from the Assembly. They seemed to accept my advice that the Opposition should take part in the debate and are likely to brief B. F. Kusi, the successful "Independent" candidate in the recent bye-election, to present the case of the National Liberation Movement. For the time being therefore I shall hold the Secretary of State's views in reserve, but I shall shortly be warning the Prime Minister that any timetable based on the grant of independence in 1956 is unrealistic.

As it seems probable that the services of a constitutional expert of the character which we discussed on the 30th June will be required, I shall be grateful if preliminary steps may be taken to select one. You will appreciate that as I have personally advocated this course it is very desirable that there should be no avoidable delay in securing his services.

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<sup>4</sup> After a western education and a career in motor mechanics, Bafuor Osei Akoto was appointed as one of the Asantehene's six senior *Akyeame* or linguists after the restoration of the Asante Confederacy in the mid-1930s. His close links with the Asantehene and his popularity both in the palace, *Ahenfie*, and more widely in the Kumasi area led the rebel Asante members of the Asante Youth Association to seek his help when they split from the CPP after the 1954 elections. As an extensive cocoa farmer, the protest against the low cocoa price was an additional incentive for him to participate and he was to serve as the first chairman of the NLM. He was widely credited with persuading the Asantehene to swing his vital support behind the NLM.

**176** CO 554/1162, no 13 29 July 1955  
 'Gold Coast: the National Liberation Movement': despatch no 12 from  
 Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd

In my last Secret and Personal despatch dated the 22nd December, 1954,<sup>1</sup> I referred briefly to the rise of the National Liberation Movement in Ashanti, and it is to the

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<sup>1</sup> See 160.

development of this Movement and its impact on the Government that I propose to devote the greater part of this report.

2. The Prime Minister has twice issued written invitations to the National Liberation Movement, and to the Asanteman Council which is associated with it, suggesting a discussion between Ministers and representatives of those bodies; on the first occasion the invitation was to discuss "the issues that are involved" in the proposal that a federal form of government should be established; on the second occasion the offer was to discuss "the problems of federal/regional systems of government". Both invitations were refused, the National Liberation Movement and the Asanteman Council making it clear in their replies that they would discuss federation or nothing, that only federation could provide adequate constitutional safeguards against the dictatorial tendencies of the present Government, that they wished a "Constituent Assembly" to be established to draw up a federal constitution for the Gold Coast and that the composition of the present Legislative Assembly was such as to render this body quite unsuitable for the task. It should perhaps here be explained that the National Liberation Movement has seen nothing illogical in maintaining, from four months after the General Election onwards, that the Ashanti members then returned to the Assembly, of whom 17 out of 19 were the official candidates of the Convention People's Party and who are with few exceptions of a pretty worthless type, do not represent Ashanti. If an explanation of this is sought, it is stated that these elections are "new things" and their consequences are only now beginning to be understood.

3. The Prime Minister's overtures were statesmanlike efforts and, taken by themselves, deserved better success. Unfortunately, as the National Liberation Movement was not slow to notice, and indeed to point out in a reply to the Prime Minister, "the tone and content of his (the Prime Minister's) and his colleagues' speeches at Convention People's Party rallies are at complete variance with his repeated statements to us in his series of invitations". It remains regrettably true that not only do Ministers appear unable or unwilling to control the behaviour and public utterances of their principal supporters, but they themselves continue to speak with two voices: the voices and indeed the menaces which are heard at party rallies are not reconcilable with the promises of reasonable negotiation which come from ministerial offices or with the set pieces spoken on occasion in the Legislative Assembly. As was indicated in the recent debate in the House of Lords on the Colonial Territories, it is not encouraging to the growth of proper parliamentary relationships when a Minister threatens Opposition leaders with execution or expulsion after the transfer of power. These wild statements, against which Ministers have been repeatedly cautioned, do incalculable harm to the credit of a Government which has in other respects a very promising record, and are perhaps the principal cause of the mistrust of the Government which has been developing in Ashanti and elsewhere in the past few months.

4. Invitations to a discussion having failed in their object, a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly was appointed on a motion by the Prime Minister, "That this Assembly approve the appointment of a Select Committee to examine the question of a Federal System of Government for the Gold Coast and the question of a Second Chamber which have been raised in certain quarters and, after consultation with responsible bodies or individuals, to make recommendations for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly." This was a further praiseworthy but unsuccessful

endeavour to bring about consultation with Opposition interests. After the motion had been seconded, the Leader of the Opposition, S. D. Dombo,<sup>2</sup> who had previously agreed on behalf of the Opposition to take part in the work of the Select Committee, described it as "an insidious attempt by the Government under the guise of a democratic procedure to arrogate to itself power to force a constitution of its own liking and making on the people of this country". He added: "This House . . . is not fully representative of all the national interests and estates and many of its members have, by events since the last General Elections, been rendered unrepresentative of their constituencies. To pass such a motion under these circumstances would be a clear abuse of responsibility. We feel it our duty in the highest interest of the country to refrain from participating in the farcical drama about to be enacted. We support the general demand for the setting up of a Constituent Assembly to consider and determine the Constitution for an independent Gold Coast. For this reason we cannot remain in the Assembly for this debate." Members of the Opposition then walked out of the Chamber. This demonstration is believed to have been engineered by Dr. Danquah. The following day the Select Committee was appointed with twelve members under the chairmanship of the Deputy Speaker. Of these, four are Independents who normally vote in support of the Government, and the remainder, including the Chairman, are members of the Convention People's Party. It had been intended to include in the membership the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Antor, Mr. Apaloo,<sup>3</sup> Mr. J. A. Braimah and Professor Busia, but since they, with other members of the Opposition, had made it clear that they would not co-operate in the work of the Select Committee, they were not appointed.

5. Against this background the National Liberation Movement, inspired by a fear that excessive power would be concentrated in the Central Government after the grant of independence, by a desire to preserve the traditions of Ashanti from political interference and by a determination to control what it loosely describes as its own domestic affairs, has extended its influence to a point where the Government can no longer regard it as a negligible force. On the 14th July a by-election was held in the Atwima-Nwabiagya constituency, a predominantly rural area close to Kumasi. The voting at the 1954 General Election in this constituency was 3,023 Convention People's Party and 1,369 Independent: at the by-election it was 3,998 Independent (the previously defeated candidate) to 1,758 Convention People's Party. This result surprised the Government. The defeated candidate had been selected by the local branch of the Convention People's Party and is the Chairman of the Local Council of the area; he was believed to be a personally popular candidate who was likely to attract floating votes and he was supported in the election campaign by the speeches of two Ministers, Botsio and Welbeck. The Prime Minister had foreseen the possibility of defeat, but not such a substantial swing of opinion against the Government. Ministers who have in general consistently under-rated the influence of the National Liberation Movement are somewhat disconcerted by the outcome since,

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<sup>2</sup> Simon Diedong Dombo was a Northern Territories chief, the Duori-Na. In 1950 he was appointed to the Legislative Council for the debates on the Coussey Committee's proposals as one of the three extraordinary members for the Northern Territories which remained directly administered until after the election in 1951. He was a founder of the NPP in 1954 and then became its chairman. He was leader of the opposition in the Assembly following the elections of 1954.

<sup>3</sup> M K Apaloo of the Anlo Youth Organisation.

although the winning candidate stood as an Independent, he must be regarded as in fact representing the National Liberation Movement. The Movement continues to preserve the fiction that it is not a political party; it therefore sponsored the candidate but did not give him a party label. A half-hearted attempt has been made by Welbeck, formerly Propaganda Secretary of the Convention People's Party and now a Minister, to explain the party's failure by alleging that the voting boxes were tampered with. In fact the election was very closely supervised by Government officials and by police, and no evidence has been adduced in support of these allegations.

6. The result of this by-election has naturally encouraged the hopes of the National Liberation Movement and of such out-liers as Danquah and Obetsebi [sic] Lamptey<sup>4</sup> of the moribund United Gold Coast Convention. The Movement is now disposed to adopt constitutional methods as being more effective than violence as a means of bringing its dissatisfaction with the Government to public notice, and there is a fair prospect that the leaders of the Movement will publish in concrete terms what they mean by a federal form of government and will participate in the forthcoming Assembly debate on the Report of the Select Committee on Federalism and a Second Chamber. The Movement is not well equipped to present a constitutional case and relies heavily on the advice of Busia whenever he can spare time from his academic pursuits. There is reason to think that the Movement would be willing to make use of the assistance of a constitutional expert in negotiation and may very well press for this expedient. In the meantime, it will do well to watch Danquah closely, for past experience suggests that it will not be long before the advice he gives to the leaders of the Movement will give rise to internal friction.

7. The Prime Minister is at present giving thought to the terms in which the Government motion on the Report of the Select Committee should be drafted. After a talk with me he has agreed that he is in all probability faced with two alternatives: either to propose the introduction of a constitutional expert in the course of his opening speech in the debate, or to allow the suggestion to come from the Opposition in the first place and then concede the point in reply. It is probable that he will favour the first alternative. He agrees with me that the expert in question should be more noted for his practical experience of the working of constitutions rather than for his knowledge of the theory, that he should be a good listener and that he should be capable of inspiring such confidence as will establish him as a focus round which the Government and Opposition alike can meet.

8. While these manœuvres unfold, the United Nations Visiting Mission will be endeavouring during the month of August to discover how the wishes of the people of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship can best be ascertained. The Gold Coast Government would wish to see a straight plebiscite on two alternative questions, namely: "Do you wish British Togoland to be united with an independent Gold Coast, or do you wish British Togoland to be separated from the Gold Coast?" But the task laid on the Mission is of such a nature as almost to invite a report in favour of a multiplicity of questions being placed before an elected college for discussion and for an expression of its views. Our resident Indian Commissioner who may, in this case, be reflecting the opinion of his Government, has stated privately

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<sup>4</sup> See part I of this volume, no 42, note 8.

that in his view the two questions which the Gold Coast Government advocates would present an unfairly restricted choice to the voters. With the Kashmir question doubtless in mind, he would like to see an elected college rather than a plebiscite as the means employed for determining the future of British Togoland, and would welcome the establishment of a federal tie between an independent Gold Coast and British Togoland which would leave the door open for the ultimate joinder of the two Togolands. The Indian Commissioner's popularity in Gold Coast ministerial circles is likely to wane when they become aware of his trends of thought; meanwhile Ministers appear confident of a majority vote in favour of integration with the Gold Coast.

9. In parallel with these activities, the Volta River Project Preparatory Commission continues to work on its assessment of the feasibility of the Project. The investigations into the technical and physical features of the Project have now been virtually completed with the exception of routine hydrological and meteorological measurements, further study of the problem of evaporation and further consideration of the problems associated with the temporary housing at the dam site. The Commission's first four draft reports on resources of man-power and materials, "human factors," problems of health and sanitation, and agriculture and fisheries have been found generally acceptable both by the Gold Coast Government and by the Aluminium Companies, and three further draft reports have been prepared on communications and logistics, effects of the Project on the riparian communities downstream from the dam and effects of the Project in the area subject to inundation. If all goes well, the economic and financial report of the Commission should be circulated to Gold Coast Ministers by the middle of November and the Commission's final report by the end of the year. It is expected that the United Nations Visiting Mission will interest itself in the timing of these investigations and the negotiations which may be expected to follow. Care is being taken to ensure that it is clearly understood that the Gold Coast Government does not contemplate entering into any agreement on the Volta River Project until the future of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship is settled.

10. It is now just over a year since the Gold Coast was authoritatively described as having reached the last stage before independence and Ministers have recently been reviewing *their* timetable for the transfer of power. Until the impact of the Ashanti by-election had been felt there was a marked tendency to regard independence by December 1956 as "in the bag," subject to the necessary "co-operation" on the part of the United Nations in expediting the solution of the Togoland question and on the part of Her Majesty's Government in passing an Act of Independence. I have now been able to bring it home to the Prime Minister and some of his colleagues that it is not just a matter of mechanics; that Her Majesty's Government will require an assurance that there is a wide measure of agreement in the Gold Coast on the form of the constitution at the time when independence is granted; that the conditions at present prevailing do not provide that assurance and that there may in due course have to be a General Election before Her Majesty's Government can be satisfied. As regards the immediate future, I have advised the Prime Minister against railroading the Select Committee's Report through the Assembly by the sheer weight of his majority, and have impressed on him the importance of doing everything possible to facilitate a debate on this Report.

**177** CO 554/805, no 53

5 Aug 1955

[Ashanti]: outward telegram no 46 from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke conveying a message from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Dr Nkrumah on the appointment of a constitutional adviser

My secret and personal telegram No. 43.

Ashanti Situation.

Secretary of State is very pleased to hear of developments reported in your secret and personal telegram No. 40 and has authorized you to convey following message to Prime Minister if you think it will help:—

*Begins.* “Since I became Secretary of State I have had many opportunities to watch closely the steady progress of the Gold Coast under your leadership towards independence. I have been impressed by the way in which the Gold Coast and United Kingdom Governments have been able to work in harmony and friendship. So much has indeed already been achieved that the deep differences of opinion about the form of the constitution which have come to the fore in the last twelve months have caused me great concern because they have raised so many doubts whether the Gold Coast will be able to achieve independence peacefully. I know how much you are concerned about the need to keep the peace, and to ensure that these constitutional matters are discussed reasonably and constructively. I regard it as a very great pity that the people who demand some kind of a federal constitution should so far have refused to meet and discuss their views with you and those who think as you do. The fact that all previous efforts that both of us have made to this end should so far have failed does not however seem to me to be a reason for not making yet another attempt. I therefore very much hope that you will consider favourably the suggestion that in the forthcoming Assembly Debate on the Select Committee Report you should propose the appointment of an eminent person versed in constitutional affairs to visit the Gold Coast to advise all parties in the present dispute. I shall be most happy to give you all possible assistance in selecting a suitable person. I am confident that in this way it should be possible to resolve the present differences of opinion and to demonstrate to the world the ability of the peoples of the Gold Coast to settle their own affairs peacefully and sensibly.” *Ends.*

2. Your secret and personal despatch of 29th July<sup>1</sup> was received here after Eastwood sent you secret and personal telegram No. 44 (reply to which is now awaited). It appears from your despatch unlikely that Prime Minister intends to suggest Fenner Brockway as principal mediator, but delivery of Secretary of State’s message in preceding paragraph may afford you additional opportunity for stressing need for constitutional expert without awkward political affiliations who would be acceptable to all concerned in the Gold Coast.

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<sup>1</sup> See 176.

**178** DO 35/6170, no 60

[Aug 1955]

**'Proposals for a federal constitution for an independent Gold Coast and Togoland': draft constitution issued by the NLM and its allies***Preamble*

The territories and peoples now comprised in the Gold Coast and Togoland were brought together without any regard for ethnic, social, historical or other affinities by the forces and events generally referred to as the Scramble for Africa.

The legal status of the territories for a long time remained in each case different. The so-called "Colony" proper was a Crown Colony with a Legislative Council in 1946. In 1901 Ashanti was annexed, and up to 1946 was ruled by the British Governor of the Gold Coast without a Legislative Council. The Northern Territories right up to 1951 remained what has been termed a "Colonial Protectorate" for which the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony legislated by himself. The Trust Territory of Togoland (the old Mandated Togoland) is an international creation which, entrusted to the United Kingdom after the 1st World War as a Mandated Territory is, for the convenience of the Administering Authority, governed together with the Gold Coast.

The first time the elected representatives of the four territories met together in a law-making body was only four years ago. Thus for a long time each of these territories, governed separately though by the same Governor, pursued a different course of development emphasized in many cases by different laws, and in all cases by the different degrees of participation in their own government by the peoples of the territories. For example, the Territories had each a different Native Authority Ordinance, and separate Territorial Councils, of which only the Asanteman Council can claim to have an indigenous origin.

The peoples of these territories, belonging as they do to different tribes, have different structures of society, and are at different stages of adaptation and adoption of western culture. In Ashanti the allegiance is to the Occupant of the Golden Stool; in the other territories there are a large collection of states and allegiances.

There is not enough consciousness of national identity to make possible easy and at the same time democratic unitary government. In the absence of this consciousness the safest course is to ensure that not all the powers of government are concentrated at the centre, but that a substantial part of them is retained in the component territories where people have learnt the habits and attitudes of living together for some time.

The accompanying Draft Proposals for a Federal form of Government for the Gold Coast and Togoland allow for the making of domestic laws by the peoples of the four territories best suited to their environment and stage of development and thus for the necessary diversity in unity.

In our opinion it is not possible to secure in a unitary form of government such a division of powers that a despotic group of men cannot prevent the constitution and destroy the liberties of the people. Experience in other parts of the world makes it clear that little protection can be expected from so-called "entranced clauses" in a unitary constitution.

The present demand for a federal form of government already widespread grows stronger every day, and it is political wisdom in our opinion to provide avenues for the satisfaction of that demand.

The Movements and Parties who have subscribed their names to these Draft

Proposals have the firm conviction that a Constitution for a self-governing Gold Coast and Togoland can best be considered only in a Constituent Assembly charged with the duty of drawing up such a Constitution.

We the undersigned representatives, therefore, after due and mature consideration, have come to the decision to submit to the country, to the Government and to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, the appended Draft Proposals for a Constitution upon the basis of which (and of others submitted by other bodies) a Constituent Assembly representing all sections of the Community and all shades of opinion, shall be called into being and entrusted with responsibility of deciding upon and approving of the form of government suited to the needs of our four territories joined into an independent Federal Union under the Queen.

### *The constitution of the Union*

#### *Component regions and head of union and regions*

1. The component Regions of the indissoluble Federal Union of the Gold Coast shall be the Colony, Ashanti, Northern Territories and Togoland with such changes in the boundaries as may be determined later.

2. The Head of the Federal Union shall be the Queen who shall be represented by a Governor-General appointed by Her Majesty on the advice of the Federal Ministers. He shall have and may exercise during the Queen's pleasure, but not exceeding a period of five years except upon re-appointment, such powers and functions as are assigned to him in the Constitution.

3. The Head of the Region shall be the Traditional Head of that Region (the Asantehene, for instance, as in Ashanti), and where there is no traditional Head the Governor-General shall appoint a Governor upon the advice of the Council of State, who shall hold office for five years.

#### *Constitution of the federal government*

4. The Legislative power of the Federal Union shall be vested in a Federal Parliament, which shall consist of the Queen, an Upper House and a Lower House. The Lower House shall be elected by direct vote at a General Election on a population basis and the Upper House shall be on parity basis a proportion of which shall be elected and a proportion appointed. A Speaker shall preside over the Lower House and a President over the Upper House elected by the House concerned.

5. The Upper House shall be composed of 48 (Forty-Eight) Members, ten from each Region elected by the Territorial Council of the Region, one from each Region appointed by the Federal Government and one from each Region appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Council of State.

6. The Executive functions of the Federal Government shall be vested in a Council of Ministers (the Cabinet) appointed by the Governor-General in consultation with the Leader who commands a working majority of the seats in the Lower House and headed by the said Leader who shall be the Prime Minister of the Union. The Council shall be collectively responsible to the Lower House.

7. There shall be a Council of State, composed of the Governor-General, Heads of the Regions, the Prime Minister of the Union, the Prime Ministers of the Regions, the Federal Minister of Defence and External Affairs, the Federal Minister of Interior and the Federal Minister of Justice, to exercise the functions assigned to it in the Constitution. The Chairman shall be the Governor-General.

8. The Council of State shall advise the Governor-General in the exercise of all the functions assigned to him in the Constitution.

9. The Life of the Lower House shall be four years and that of the Upper House shall be six years.

#### *Constitution of regional government*

10. The Legislative power of the Region shall be vested in the Regional Legislature, consisting of the Head of the Region, Regional Upper House and the Regional Lower House.

11. The Territorial Council which shall be the Regional Upper House shall be composed of all Chiefs of the Region not subordinate to any other Chief in the administration of their State and ten other Members who shall hold office as hereunder specified. Six of the ten Members shall be appointed by the Head of the Region on the advice of the Territorial Council and the remaining four shall be appointed by the Regional Government:—

(a) The six Members appointed by the Head of the Region (to be known as the Regional Members) shall normally hold office for four years.

(b) The four Members appointed by the Government (to be known as Government Members) shall hold office during the life of the Government which appointed them.

12. The Lower House shall be elected by universal adult suffrage, and shall be called the Regional Legislative Assembly. It shall have a life of four years.

13. The Executive functions of the Regional Government shall be vested in a Council of Ministers appointed by the Head of the Region in consultation with the Leader who commands a working majority of the seats in the Legislative Assembly and headed by the said Leader who shall be the Prime Minister of the Region. The Council of Regional Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly.

#### *Functions of the federal government*

14. The Federal Government shall exercise only such functions as are reserved to it in the Constitution.

15. The Governor-General shall:—

(a) With the consent of the Council of State, exercise prerogative powers: that is, pardon or reprieve offenders, sign treaties or pacts of trade and of friendship and peace with foreign powers, declare war and preserve and maintain the general peace, order and good government of the Union.

(b) Ceremonially open sessions of the Federal Parliament and read the address from the Throne.

(c) Give his assent to all Bills passed by the Federal Parliament.

(d) Preside over meetings of the Council of State.

(e) Appoint Ministers of the Federal Government, and, in consultation with the Council of State, appoint Judges, Members of the Federal Public Service Commission and Members of other Federal Commissions and Boards.

(f) Exercise such other functions as are assigned to him in the Constitution.

16. The Federal Legislature shall, subject to the Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Union with respect to:—

- (i) Armed Service.
- (ii) Commonwealth and Foreign Relations.
- (iii) Naturalization, Aliens and Immigration.
- (iv) Posts and Telecommunications.
- (v) Federal Government Treasury and Auditing of Public Accounts.
- (vi) Regulation of Foreign Trade and Commerce.
- (vii) Banking, Currency and Coinage.
- (viii) International and Inter-Regional lines of Transport and Communication.
- (ix) Customs and Excise.
- (x) Co-ordination of Regional Husbandry (Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Health).
- (xi) Federal University and Higher Technological Education.
- (xii) Federal Research Institutes and Federal Museum.
- (xiii) Federal Development Projects.
- (xiv) Federal Civil Service.
- (xv) Federal Broadcasting.
- (xvi) Federal Health Service.
- (xvii) General Administration of Prisons.
- (xviii) Mines.
- (xix) Federal Copyrights, Patent of Inventions and designs and Trade Marks.
- (xx) Federal Police.
- (xxi) The Federal Supreme Court.

17. A Regional Legislature shall have power to legislate on all matters not specifically assigned to the Federal Legislature in the Constitution.

18. The Head of a Region shall:—

- (i) Ceremonially open sessions of the Regional Legislature.
- (ii) Give his Assent to all Bills passed by the Regional Legislature.
- (iii) Appoint Ministers of the Regional Government and members of Regional Commissions and Boards.
- (iv) Exercise such other functions as shall be assigned to him from time to time by the Regional Legislature.

#### *Financial provisions*

19. There shall be a Federal Exchequer for the Union raised and administered by the Federal Parliament. It shall have power to levy taxes and collect dues from the following sources:—

- (i) Customs and Excise.
- (ii) Posts and Telecommunications.
- (iii) Federal Investments, Interests and Loan Repayments.
- (iv) Unclaimed monies.
- (v) Special Receives, such as grants from the Mutual Security Agencies.
- (vi) Shares of Profits from the West African Currency Boards and the Overseas (formerly Crown Agents) Net Receipts.
- (vii) External Loans.

20. The funds of the Federal Exchequer shall be used in providing and maintaining services reserved to the Federal Government and for general

development schemes as well as for grants-in-aid to Regional Governments for Special Projects.

*Interim provisions with regard to division of revenue*

21. With regard to Division of Revenue the following considerations shall apply:—

1. *Independent Revenue*: the system whereby the Regions collect certain taxes, dues or fees which they retain.
2. *Derivation*: the principle under which a Region receives a share in proportion to its contribution.
3. *Needs or "Even Progress"*: the principle under which a Region receives a share in proportion to its needs.
4. *Population*: the principle of allocating funds in accordance with the population of the Regions; that is to say, per capita allocation of funds.
5. *National Expenditure*: the system of making Federal Government funds available to a Region or Regions for carrying out functions considered to be of National importance.
6. *Block grants*: the system for making block allocation of funds to a Region or Regions for under equipment.

22. Applying, for example, the principles of derivation and population in the division of Revenue from Cocoa only the Colony shall be entitled to 35%, Ashanti and the Northern Territories 27½% each and Togoland 10% of such Revenue.

23. Each Region shall have and control its own Exchequer from funds raised through taxes and dues not reserved to the Federal Government.

24. The Constituent Assembly provided for hereunder shall appoint a Finance Commission which shall study and report to the Constituent Assembly on:—

- (i) Sources of Revenue available to each Region.
- (ii) The allocation of Federal Revenue to the Regions based on:—
  - (a) The Principle of needs and/or population.
  - (b) The principle of derivation.
  - (c) The principle of Federal Interest or Equalization.
  - (d) The present financial position and reserves of existing Statutory Boards.
- (iii) What block allocation of funds from the existing reserves shall be made to the Northern Territories on the basis of its present development.
- (iv) Income tax.

*Provisions for courts of law and judges*

25. The Judicial power of the Union shall be vested in the Federal Supreme Court. There shall be established in the Regions High Courts of Justice. Appeals from the Regional High Courts shall lie to the Federal Supreme Court and subsequent appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of the United Kingdom.

26. The Federal Supreme Court shall be a Court of first instance as well as of Appeal. As a Court of first instance, it shall be composed of the Federal Chief Justice and the Regional Chief Justices and shall hear Constitutional cases only. As a Court of Appeal, it shall be composed of the Federal Chief Justice and as many

Federal Judges as Parliament shall prescribe, but not less than five, any three of whom shall sit at a time.

27. The Federal Chief Justice shall be appointed by the Queen upon the recommendation of the Governor-General in consultation with the Council of State and he shall be the Head of the Union's Judicial Administration and shall preside over the Federal Supreme Court. The Head of a Regional Judiciary shall be the Regional Chief Justice appointed by the Queen upon the recommendation of the Governor-General in consultation with the Council of State.

28. Judges of both the Federal Supreme Court and the High Courts shall be recruited from barristers with not less than ten years' experience in practice and shall be appointed by the Queen upon the recommendation of the Governor-General in consultation with the Council of State. A Judge of the Federal Supreme Court shall "ex-officio" be a Judge of the Regional High Courts. A Regional Chief Justice shall "ex-officio" be a Judge of the Federal Supreme Court.

29. No Judge shall be removed except by the Governor-General in Council of State on an address from both Houses of Parliament voting in the same session by  $\frac{2}{3}$ th majority decision, praying for such removal on ground of proved misbehaviour, incapacity or infirmity of body or mind.

30. The salaries of Judges shall be fixed by the Federal Parliament and shall apply equally throughout the Union. Those of the Judges of the Federal Supreme Court shall be chargeable on the Federal Government and those of the High Courts on the respective Regional Governments. The salaries of the Judges shall not be reduced during their continuance in office.

31. There shall be Regional Courts of inferior jurisdiction to be called Magistrates' Courts. Magistrates' Courts shall be under the control and supervision of the Regional High Courts.

32. There shall be established a Judicial Service Commission to be composed of the Federal Chief Justice, the Regional Chief Justices and a Member appointed by the Bar Association. The Governor-General shall appoint Magistrates upon the advice and recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission.

33. A Magistrate before his appointment shall have had at least three years' experience in practice as a barrister.

34. There shall be a Federal Law Office headed by an Attorney-General. Each Region shall have its own Law Office headed by a Regional Attorney.

All Law Officers, both regional and Federal shall be Civil Servants.

35. Until otherwise provided for in the Constitution, Gold Coast Ordinances, English Common Law and doctrines of Equity, English Statutes of general application, Native Customary Law and Mohammadan Law as applied by the Supreme Court of the Gold Coast on the day immediately preceding the Declaration of Independence, shall apply in the Federal and Regional Courts of the Union.

36. Each Regional Territorial Council shall have the power to determine for itself the hierarchy of Tribunals to deal with its own local constitutional matters. The procedure so decided shall form part of the Constitution.

#### *Public service commissions*

37. Appointments, promotions, conditions of service and other matters concerning the Union's Public Service shall be entrusted to a Federal Public Service Commission the members of which shall be appointed by the Governor-General in

consultation with the Council of State. Each Region shall also have its own independent Public Service Commission the members of which shall be appointed by the Head of the Region in consultation with the Council of State. There shall be a Common Training Centre for both Federal and Regional Civil Servants, the maintenance of which shall be chargeable on the Federal Government. It is expected that Federal and Regional Public Service Commissions shall work in the closest collaboration and adopt similar standards of efficiency and integrity.

*Bills: conflict between the two houses*

38. Any Bill, except the annual Appropriation Bill, may be presented for the Governor or Governor-General's Assent without concurrence of the Upper House if the Upper House refuse in two successive sessions to pass such a Bill and if one year has elapsed between the date when it was read a second time in the Lower House in the first session and the date when it was read the third time in Lower House in the second session. Annual Appropriation Bill shall become law three months after it has been passed through all three stages of the Lower House.

*Interpretation of constitution*

39. Questions as to the meaning, interpretation or application of any part of the Constitution shall be settled by the Federal Supreme Court sitting for this purpose with the Federal Chief Justice as President of the Court and the Regional Chief Justices as Members.

In case of a division of opinion among the Judges, the opinion of the majority shall prevail. An Appeal from their decision shall lie to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of the United Kingdom.

*Alteration of the constitution*

40. The Constitution shall not be altered except in the following manner:—

The proposed law for the alteration thereof must be passed by an absolute majority of each House of Parliament, and not less than two nor more than six months after its passage through both Houses the proposed law shall be submitted in each Region to the electors qualified to vote for the election of members of the Lower House. But if either House passes any such proposed law by an absolute majority, and the other House rejects or fails to pass it or passes it with any amendment to which the first-mentioned House will not agree, and if after an interval of three months the first-mentioned House in the same or the next session again passes the proposed law by an absolute majority with or without any amendment which has been made or agreed to by the other House, and such other House rejects or fails to pass it or passes it with any amendment to which the first-mentioned House will not agree, the Governor-General may submit the proposed law as last proposed by the first-mentioned House, and either with or without any amendment subsequently agreed to by both Houses, to the electors in each Region qualified to vote for the election of the Lower House.

When a proposed law is submitted to the electors the vote shall be taken in such manner as the Parliament prescribes. And if in a majority of the Regions a majority of the electors voting approve the proposed law, and if a majority of all the electors voting also approve the proposed law it shall be presented to the Governor-General for the Queen's Assent.

*Public corporations, government boards and commissions*

41. Both the Federal and Regional Governments may establish Public Corporations, Boards and Commissions to deal with certain matters which cannot be properly handled by Ministers or Civil Servants alone, such as the Cocoa Marketing Board. Corporations and Boards set up by the Federal Government shall have a parity representation of Regions and the representatives shall be nominated by the Regional Governments or the interests to be represented. Any modifications of this principle shall be with the consent of the Regional Governments or interests affected. All Federal and Inter-Regional Committees set-up by the various Federal Ministers shall, as far as possible, be similarly constituted; that is, they shall have equal representatives of the Regions and/or interests, apart from experts appointed by the Federal or Regional Governments.

*Electoral provisions*

42. Elections to the Federal Lower House on the one hand and the Regional Legislative Assemblies on the other shall be held in different years with at least one year elapsing between the two elections. Both the Federal Lower House of the Federal Parliament and the Regional Legislative Assemblies shall have a life of not more than four years. An ad hoc Electoral Commission shall be appointed from time to time by the Governor-General in consultation with the Council of State to consider and advise the Federal and Regional Governments on all laws and Regulations appertaining to the elections and the revision of Federal and Regional Constituency boundaries. The Commission shall consist of equal representatives of the Federal Government and each of the Regional Governments.

*Interim provisions: constituent assembly*

43. A Constituent Assembly shall be set up forthwith to draw up a suitable Constitution on the above lines for an Independent Gold Coast.

The Constituent Assembly shall be composed of elected representatives, representatives of Territorial Councils, and such other bodies, e.g., The Trade Union Congress, the Ex-Servicemen's Organisation, the Farmers' Organisation, as a Preliminary Conference of all Political Parties and Movements called by the present Government of the Gold Coast shall determine.

44. The Federal Constitution shall guarantee fundamental human rights to all minority groups including equality of status, opportunity, and of social, economic and political justice; freedom of thought, expression, association, belief, faith and worship, subject to law and morality and good conscience.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations shall also apply.

(signed) Bafuor Osei Akoto

S D Dombo, Duori Na

W E G Sekyi<sup>1</sup>

J B Danquah

S G Antor<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> President of the GEARPS.

<sup>2</sup> The report was also signed by: *Colony*: Dr Ansah Koi (GAP), K S Obu (GARP). Dr E Kurankyi-Taylor (Ghana Youth Federation), M K Apaloo (Anlo Youth Association), B E A Tamakloe (MAP), K Y Attoh (GCP),

Oheneba Kwow Richardson (GCP), Kofi Amponsah-Dadzie (GCP), A R Dennis (organising secretary, NLM, Colony), E O Obetsibi Lamptey (GNP); *Ashanti*: Cobina Kessie (NLM), Joe E Appiah (NLM), B D Addai (NLM), Kusi Ampofu (NLM), Victor Owusu (NLM), Alidu Kramor (MAP), Alhaji Ali Osei (MAP), Raimi Alawa (MAP), George Kwasi Adai (Asante Youth Association), Joseph K Prempeh (Asante Youth Association), Anthony S Y Andoh (Asante Youth Association), Dr F A Kufuor (Asante Youth Association), R R Amponsah (general secretary, NLM); *Northern Territories*: Z A Eddy-Cockra (NPP), I B Salifu (NPP), B W D K Gandah (NPP), Clement K Tadam (NPP), Bawumia Mumuni (NPP), J A Braimah (NPP); *Togoland*: Rev F R Ametowobla (member of Legislative Assembly, Ho-East), Kodzo Ayeke (Togoland Congress).

## 179 CO 554/805, no 69

17 Aug 1955

'Constitutional expert': outward telegram no 49 from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke proposing Sir K Hancock

Your letter of 28th July.<sup>1</sup>

Constitutional expert.

After much thought and a good many enquiries we have not been able to find an experienced administrator with all the qualities required for this job and have all come to the conclusion that Sir Keith Hancock<sup>2</sup> is the right man. I know you did not want an academic man but he was extremely successful in Uganda where as in Ashanti there was problem of finding place for local patriotism of one large tribe in the pattern of Government for the whole country. In the light of our experience of his work in Uganda we feel he would bring just what is needed here, namely much patience and great ability to effect reconciliation.

2. We have not yet approached him but have discovered that he plans a holiday in Italy from September 6th to the 21st.

3. We must presumably await official request following Government motion on report of Select Committee. In the meanwhile do you agree that we should approach him tentatively? If so what ideas have you about the date of visit, length of time required and remuneration?

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<sup>1</sup> See 175.

<sup>2</sup> Director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and professor of British Commonwealth affairs in the University of London, 1949-1956.

## 180 DO 35/6170, no 46

19 Aug 1955

[Constitutional crisis]: CO note of a meeting between Lord Lloyd and Mr Botsio on the NLM opposition and the appointment of a constitutional adviser

*Lord Lloyd* welcomed Mr. Botsio to the United Kingdom. *Mr. Botsio* expressed his pleasure at meeting Lord Lloyd, saying that he had come to the Colonial Office to pay his respects to the Secretary of State who was, of course, in the Far East. He was very grateful to Lord Lloyd for coming up from the country in order to receive him.

2. *Lord Lloyd* asked Mr. Botsio what his impressions had been of the Bandoeng Conference. *Mr. Botsio* said that he had found it very useful and that it had been

particularly interesting for him to visit not only Indonesia but the other countries *en route*. He had found the exchange of views extremely interesting. He had not had any worthwhile contact with the Chinese Delegation.

3. *Lord Lloyd* then invited Mr. Botsio to give his views on the present Gold Coast situation. *Mr. Botsio* said that he thought tension had materially subsided. The tactics of the Opposition in walking out of the debate on the Select Committee Report seemed to him both incomprehensible and stupid. The Prime Minister had considered that the proposal to appoint a Constitutional Adviser would be one which the Opposition and the N.L.M. could accept, and in preliminary discussions this had been understood between the parties. It was a bitter disappointment to the Prime Minister that in the event the Opposition should have rejected his proposal, which was closely like that previously made by Professor Busia. The Prime Minister was naturally growing more doubtful about the wisdom or value of making concessions to the N.L.M. as it seemed to be impossible to persuade them to meet and talk things over. It was very much hoped that the Constitutional Adviser would be able to bring the Opposition to talk with the Government. *Mr. Botsio* said that he had thought Professor Hancock would be a very suitable person as a Constitutional Adviser, but that if possible somebody with administrative experience should be selected. *Lord Lloyd* said that it was always difficult to find the right man but he had no doubt that someone with sufficient wisdom and experience would be found.

4. The question was then discussed of the way in which constitutional changes might be discussed and implemented. *Mr. Botsio* took the view that a Constituent Assembly must be ruled out of court because if it were an elected body it could only compete with the Legislature, and if it were not an elected body it could not claim to represent the people more than the already elected Legislature. If a General Election were held the point was made that it would be unfortunate to set a precedent for General Elections on constitutional issues as this would mean that the party which won any Election would in all cases in the future feel itself free to amend the Constitution in the manner which pleased it. This was a considerable danger which must be avoided. At the same time it was important that any constitutional changes should have the support of the majority of the people. If a General Election went against the N.L.M. and they were not prepared to accept such a result then there would not have been much point in holding a General Election. It was *Mr. Botsio's* view that at the moment the N.L.M. would not accept the result of a General Election which went against them and that there was not much to be said at this stage for holding a General Election. He thought that the best way of proceeding would be for the Constitutional Adviser to get the parties together. If agreement could then be reached then it would be for the Prime Minister to present that agreement to the Legislature for its support and endorsement. *Mr. Botsio* was concerned about the size of any conference called by the Constitutional Adviser. He said there were a number of very small organisations within the Opposition and if they all wished to be represented the conference might well become unwieldy. *Lord Lloyd* referred to the procedure which had been used for considering reform in the House of Lords and said that in his experience a small body of people must be aimed at if any worthwhile results were to be achieved.

5. *Lord Lloyd* referred to the considerable disquiet in Parliament about the many allegations of corruption and maladministration made by Professor Busia and others, and said that he had been pressed very strongly on the need for an enquiry into the

affairs of the Cocoa Marketing Board and the Cocoa Purchasing Company. *Mr. Botsio* said that the Gold Coast Government were at all times ready to have investigated any complaint, and if such complaint were shown to be serious enough an inquiry would be undertaken. The Police had a special squad which dealt with such cases and had experience of investigating them.

## 181 PREM 11/1367

19 Aug 1955

[The future of the Gold Coast]: letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to Sir G Laithwaite. *Enclosure*: memorandum by Cumming-Bruce, 'Notes on the future of the Gold Coast with special reference to external relations after independence'

[Cumming-Bruce's appointment as adviser to the governor on external affairs in Feb 1955 was a logical corollary of the Gold Coast's achievement of internal self-government. But the binary structure established in Whitehall – with the CRO assuming the responsibility for establishing the Gold Coast's external relations, leaving the CO responsible for internal affairs – created tensions in which the CO was optimistic and the CRO pessimistic about the future of the Gold Coast. Home minuted Eden<sup>1</sup> on Cumming-Bruce's memo: 'I confess that I do not find it all all encouraging but it is useful to have a frank statement of the position as seen by someone outside.' Home added a handwritten comment: 'This isn't my concern yet but it looks like being so fairly soon & I shall feel happier if you know the true position in good time. Some reports have certainly been unduly optimistic' (PREM 11/1367, minute, 30 Aug 1955). Further reactions to Cumming-Bruce's memo are recorded in 184, 185 and 188.]

I have now been six months in the Gold Coast. I recorded my first impressions of the prospect of future relations with an independent Gold Coast after I spent a week in Accra a year ago, and I have so far refrained from attempting to cover more ground about the kind of country with which we are likely to be dealing because it is far from easy for a newcomer to Africa to form a judgement on the essential features of a scene so unfamiliar and in such a rapid state of change. West Africa has greater points of difference from the newly-independent members of the Commonwealth than of similarity to them, and the future is obscured by the political uncertainties arising from the very recent emergence of strong opposition to the Government.

2. It is, indeed, extremely difficult to form a judgement about the shape of things to come. There is a wide divergence of view on the part of those who have been out here for many years. Some believe that conditions will remain much the same: others confidently predict a rapid decline to the conditions of graft, nepotism and complete incompetence of Liberia. But even though any guesses made now are bound to require qualification later, I think that the C.R.O. would like to have a rough and ready assessment. I, therefore, have drawn up the enclosed memorandum in which I give as briefly as possible an estimate of the main features of the future scene.

3. I have shown the memorandum to the Governor who has stated that he regards it as an accurate presentation, though in his view slightly pessimistic.

<sup>1</sup> Eden replaced Churchill as prime minister and Home replaced Swinton as Commonwealth secretary in Apr 1955.

4. I propose to expand this bird's-eye view by sending a series of notes on particular aspects. I imagine that such notes would be of more use to the C.R.O. than regular "affairs" reports on the course of events. You are aware of the main trends from the Governor's half-yearly reviews, and I understand that the C.R.O. now receive copies of correspondence with the Gold Coast on matters of general interest. But reports to the Colonial Office are written for readers who know the background and this the C.R.O. lacks. It seems to me, therefore, that the most useful type of reporting in which I can engage for the C.R.O. is to provide background information on the present state of the country.

5. The assessment of the enclosed note suggests certain directions in which action might usefully be considered. The main points seem to be, first, the possibility of reducing the risk of administrative failure in the Gold Coast after independence: secondly, possible means of preparing the Government to fit smoothly into the Commonwealth framework: thirdly, action which we ought to consider in order to facilitate relations with the Gold Coast after independence. I deal with each of these in the following paragraphs.

6. First, the dangers of administrative failure now seem to be sufficiently serious to make it necessary for H.M.G. to face the problem and consider whether there is any way in which the risks can be reduced. The C.R.O. would be presented with novel and awkward problems if the administration of a new Commonwealth country virtually broke down.

7. We need not set our sights high. Positive success on the part of an independent Gold Coast in administering its own affairs would, I imagine, be a substantial help to our colonial policy elsewhere, but it would be unrealistic to make it an object of policy. On the other hand it seems of real importance that the Gold Coast should *not fail*. Administrative collapse and general corruption in a Commonwealth member would present difficult problems. The effects in other dependencies might be unfortunate; and our large commercial interests in the Gold Coast would be prejudiced.

8. Hitherto the basis of planning has been that an adequate number of good British members of the Services will stay on. But the date when officers had to declare their option either to go or to join the Local Service with a continuing right to retire has gone by without bringing any reassurance and the prospect is most disquieting. The number of officers who have decided to go at once, though large, does not impose too severe a strain: but there is clearly going to be a very much greater exodus in the next three years: and there are notably few who have made up their minds to stay on after independence. The prospects are perhaps worst in the professional and technical fields. It has been possible to defer judgement until the "appointed day" revealed the immediate prospect, but it is now necessary to take stock. The outlook, though dark, is admittedly uncertain: it is conceivable, though unlikely, that the Gold Coast will scramble through without any action by H.M.G. to increase the facilities for future employment of British personnel. But the stake is too high to justify a gamble. I suggest, therefore, that the C.R.O. might interest itself in the question whether some means cannot be devised to improve the prospect of employment by the Gold Coast Government after independence of pensionable staff of H. M. Oversea Civil Service. Any arrangements would have to be such as to limit the commitments of the Gold Coast Government to relatively short periods. The only previous official proposals to meet the needs of which I am aware, are those made by

the Colonial Office, and discussed with the C.R.O. and Foreign Office, in 1953, under which a Service supplementary to the then Colonial Service would have been established on which Commonwealth and other governments could draw for staff for limited terms of appointment. The C.R.O. at that time indicated its readiness to co-operate in some such scheme, even though the scale on which existing Commonwealth countries would be likely to employ U.K. staff was so small. But in the case of the independent Gold Coast, the demand might be strong, and the scheme might make all the difference. I think, therefore, that from the point of view of forward planning the C.R.O. has a strong interest in the question. There are perhaps other ways of attaining similar objects, and the C.R.O. might like to take stock of the position with the C.O. If a framework can be established before independence that will induce the Gold Coast to continue to draw on the resources of the Oversea Civil Service, we might save a great deal of trouble and expense that might otherwise have to be incurred in working out a salvage operation later on, e.g. in the form of a Technical Assistance Scheme.

9. Secondly, it would be very valuable if the Gold Coast Government could be represented at Commonwealth Ministerial meetings before independence, e.g. as an observer. This would help to widen the narrow horizon of Gold Coast Ministers, in particular the Prime Minister, encourage them to take a reasonable attitude in external relations, tend to head them off from some of the more extravagant demonstrations in the international field by which they may at present be attracted, e.g. in regard to West African Federation, and counter the potent influence of the Bandung group. Some consideration has, no doubt, been given to this possibility in the past: and the advantages have to be subordinated to considerations of tactics in relation to future Commonwealth membership. If, however, there are no major objections, perhaps the possibilities might be further pursued.

10. Thirdly, the relative weakness of the future administration here, and the extent to which Ministers may be susceptible to advice from United Kingdom sources, if it is carefully tendered in the right way, make it desirable that there should be strong United Kingdom representation as soon as the country becomes independent. I do not think that we could achieve this without establishing an effective working office in the period preceding independence. This raises various problems, about which I am writing separately.

11. There is also a need for healthy external influence here in addition to our own to counter the political influence of India. Canada seems to be in a good position to exercise such influence. I understand that Mr Pearson<sup>2</sup> is taking a personal and sympathetic interest in the Gold Coast, and I suggest that we should raise the question of possible appointment of a Canadian Commissioner. I am setting out the position as seen at this end in a separate letter.

12. I have sent a copy of this letter and the enclosed memorandum to Sir T Lloyd, to Sir P Liesching in Pretoria, to Sir A Nye<sup>3</sup> in Ottawa and to Metcalf<sup>4</sup> in Salisbury.

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<sup>2</sup> L B Pearson, Canadian S of S for external affairs.

<sup>3</sup> UK high commissioner, Canada.

<sup>4</sup> M R Metcalf, UK high commissioner, Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

## Enclosure to 181

A. *Long term prospects**Future internal progress*

The Gold Coast is so immature, and the unification of the country so recent, that it will be difficult after independence to maintain reasonably efficient government and cohesion. But the long-term trends are likely to be in the right direction provided the first ten years after independence do not see a breakdown.

2. In the first few years after independence her course is likely to be unsteady, progress is likely to be slow, and relapse in some fields inevitable, e.g. in the integrity of public service. Developments during this period are likely to determine her future for a disproportionate subsequent length of time. If the position can be held for 15 years our postwar Africanisation policy will have then yielded an adequate number of Africans for senior Government posts.

*Political stability*

3. Politically the country faces a period of instability. It will be within the power of Government to keep the situation under control, if the party in power proves capable of exercising restraint towards its opponents and learns how to handle law and order, and if administration is maintained at a reasonable standard. There is a fair chance that these conditions will be fulfilled, if a means should be found to facilitate future employment by the Gold Coast of good British personnel. If not, the Government's grip on the country may progressively relax.

4. The good record of African Ministers is largely due to the personal influence of the Governor, the unprecedented amount of money in the Government's hands from the cocoa boom, and the absence of serious problems. Ministers have learned much, but there is not likely to be much statesmanship in Government policy after independence.

*Cohesion of the country*

5. Difficulties in the control of the police and military forces may eventually reduce the cohesion of the country, but these do not seem likely to arise in a serious form in the first few years after independence. The Government may be reluctant to rely for a long period on British officers for the higher officer ranks in the army and police, and precipitate steps of Africanisation would be seriously prejudicial to discipline and efficiency, and be liable to undermine the Central Government's control of the country.

*Limitations to progress*

6. The enervating climate, which saps energy and initiative, and the high prevalence of disease, are likely to impose a strict limit on the capacity of the Gold Coast to make progress.

B. *Domestic prospects in the transitional period**Decay of administration*

7. The central problem of the transition is how to prevent administrative failure

in the few years after independence. Political advance having run far ahead of Africanisation of the services, the requisite degree of efficiency and integrity cannot be supplied by Africans, so far as can be seen ahead. The prospects of enough efficient British officers staying on for more than another two or three years seem to be very poor. The main African Ministers have an inadequate idea of the extent to which they are dependent on British officers and are liable to pursue policies that will discourage men from staying. Employment of overseas officers on short-term contracts seems unlikely to fill the gap, though it will slow up the pace of run-down. There is, therefore, a serious risk of progressive administrative decline.

#### *Economic prospect*

8. So long as order is maintained, the effects of weak government need not be disastrous on account of the buoyancy of primary production. The basic economy of the country should remain sound, with continuation of production of foodstuffs and export of cocoa, gold and diamonds at present levels: and the Volta River Project would result in a great addition to resources.

#### *Form of government*

9. While the forms of parliamentary democracy are likely to be preserved, the country is too immature for the Government to be responsible to the electorate in any real sense. The C.P.P. seems likely to rely mainly on Tammany methods and the strong arm, and the present Opposition on appeals to tradition and to tribal and regional sentiment.

#### *Characteristics of political leaders*

10. The leadership in Government is not likely to be of high quality. The C.P.P. leaders have nationalistic fervour, and a certain amount of determination. They have a sense of humour, which redeems their vanity, and personally they are likeable and respond to a friendly approach. But their political ideas and methods are crude; and they lack a sense of realities. Their knowledge is shallow; and they are mercurial and wanting in solidity of character and integrity. The opposition includes among its main figures some men who are more balanced and better informed, and who have greater integrity, but they are relatively ineffective.

#### *Timing of independence*

11. Delay of independence would bring great advantages in the field of future domestic administration. But unless delay was clearly the result of internal factors, postponement would have great dangers for future external relations, and these dangers outweigh domestic administrative considerations.

#### *Party political prospect*

12. A change of Government before independence at present seems to be unlikely. A non-C.P.P. Government would probably be better informed and have a more responsible approach to external relations; but it would not necessarily handle administration any better than the C.P.P.; and it remains to be seen whether the opponents of the C.P.P. could ever muster and retain enough solidarity to work together as a Government.

### C. *External relations after independence*

#### *Commonwealth membership*

13. Commonwealth relations are so elastic that the Gold Coast ought to be able to be fitted fairly smoothly within the Commonwealth framework, unless administration breaks down: and the Gold Coast would be likely to derive substantial benefits from the Commonwealth connection. But she will constitute a new class of member on account of her inability to administer her affairs competently without heavy dependence on overseas officers.

#### *Sentiment towards the Commonwealth*

14. To the main C.P.P. Ministers the Commonwealth is a bodiless abstraction devoid of sentimental appeal. If it could be given concrete meaning before independence, the effect on Gold Coast policy after independence would probably be far-reaching. The only really effective means would be Gold Coast attendance at Commonwealth meetings.

#### *United Kingdom relations with the Gold Coast*

15. Conduct of United Kingdom relations during the first few years of independence will not be easy on account of the immaturity of C.P.P. Ministers. But if administration remains on an even keel, and if we are patient, our relations with the Gold Coast ought to be reasonably good. Relations with a Government drawn from the present Opposition might be easier.

#### *United Kingdom assistance*

16. If the United Kingdom Government contributes capital to the Volta River Project according to present plans, there seems to be no reason to expect requests for financial assistance in other major forms.

#### *Anti-colonialism and neutralism*

17. The Nkrumah Government, if in power after independence, will be inclined to assert its independence of British apron-strings in various ways, some of which may be embarrassing. It seems likely to indulge in active steps of anti-colonialism in West Africa and perhaps further afield, and with Indian guidance these might be prejudicial to healthy political progress in other dependencies. On the broader international issues, India will have a magnetic attraction for the C.P.P. But the Gold Coast will presumably be over-shadowed in West Africa by Nigeria when the latter attains independence and her policies influenced by Nigerian policies. To the extent, therefore, that Nigerian policy is different, the Gold Coast attitude may be adapted.

#### *Commercial policy*

18. In commercial policy there is likely for a time to be some encouragement of domestic enterprise at the expense of overseas interests and some prejudice in favour of foreign countries at our expense. But if we are patient and accommodating, our strong position ought not to be seriously undermined.

#### *Defence co-operation*

19. In seeking from a C.P.P. Government any positive contribution in Commonwealth defence we should be swimming against the neutralist stream. But the Gold

Coast Government seems likely to be prepared to co-operate over defence facilities if carefully handled.

#### D. *General conclusion*

20. The Gold Coast is likely to settle down eventually at a comparatively low level of efficiency. The conditions for reasonable commercial relations with the U.K. seem likely to be satisfied. The first ten years after independence will be of disproportionate importance for the future and there is a serious danger that during this period the country will lose overseas personnel to an extent that may undermine the administration beyond repair.

**182** CO 554/805, no 72

20 Aug 1955

**'Constitutional expert': inward telegram no 44 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd explaining why Sir K Hancock is not acceptable to the Gold Coast government**

Your secret and personal telegram  
Personal No. 40. (??49 intended).

Constitutional Expert.

I have discussed possibility that Hancock might be sounded as to his willingness to undertake this task with the Prime Minister, who has consulted his colleagues in confidence. They have now represented to me that, because of his Uganda background, person named might be disposed in favour of applying his solution for the Baganda problem to Ashanti.<sup>1</sup> Any solution on such lines would be embarrassing to the Government. Ministers would prefer someone with an administrative rather than an academic background who has not been recently concerned with solution of a constitutional problem in Africa. Previous experience in India/Pakistan would be acceptable.

2. In view of strong Ministerial objections I do not consider it advisable to attempt to press for acceptance of Hancock and ask that urgent consideration be given to an alternative with qualifications desired by Ministers.

3. It is accepted that this reaction may cause some delay but it would be appreciated if expert selected could come at the end of September. It is thought that he would require at least one month and no more than three months to complete his task.

4. Government is prepared

- (a) to meet all travelling expenses to, from and within the Gold Coast
- (b) to supply free accommodation, and
- (c) to leave question of fee required to obtain his services in your hands.

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<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Baganda enjoyed a privileged position within the Uganda Protectorate under the terms of a special treaty concluded in 1900. However, in Nov 1953 relations had deteriorated to such an extent that the gov (Sir A Cohen) deported the Kabaka of Buganda from Uganda. This crisis was only resolved after Hancock was appointed special commissioner and persuaded the two sides to re-establish the earlier pre-eminence of the Buganda Kingdom, albeit within what was now a colonial territory advancing towards self-government.

5. Official request to obtain the services of suitable adviser is being sent by air mail on Sunday.

**183** DO 35/6170, no 49A

23 Aug 1955

[Constitutional adviser]: letter from Sir G Laithwaite to Sir T Lloyd suggesting the names of Sir F Mudie and Sir F Bourne

I have been looking through the list of retired Indian people who would be likely to have the qualifications needed for this Gold Coast "mediation". The field is thinning rapidly, for it is now eight years since the Services were wound up and most people are either a bit on the old side or actively engaged in business or the like.

Two names suggest themselves to me:—

- (a) Sir Frank Mudie (who you remember chaired the Malayan Rubber Enquiry),<sup>1</sup>
- (b) Sir Frederick Bourne.<sup>2</sup>

You will see details of both of them in Who's Who. Of the two, if Bourne is prepared to take on the job, he is the least committed (save in respect of Directorships). He is a first-class administrator with much experience in that capacity both as a Chief Secretary in the un-divided Punjab and as a Governor. On the political side he has had experience, as you will see from his record both before and after partition as a Governor in far from easy circumstances and I should have thought that he had the good background that was likely to be useful for your present purpose.

But I cannot, of course, say whether he (or for that matter, Mudie) would be prepared to play, and naturally I would not take any soundings unless you wished me to do so, in which event we should, I suppose, have to have some more precise knowledge about period, terms etc. Will you tell me what you would like done, if anything — or we might have a word about it by telephone.

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<sup>1</sup> ICS from 1914; gov of Sind, 1946–1947; gov of West Punjab (Pakistan), 1947–1949.

<sup>2</sup> ICS from 1920, gov of Central Provinces and Berar, 1946–1947; gov of East Bengal (Pakistan), 1947–1950. Bourne was chosen to be constitutional adviser to the Gold Coast.

**184** DO 35/6170

30 Aug 1955

[The future of the Gold Coast]: minutes by Sir G Laithwaite and Lord Home on the report by F E Cumming-Bruce<sup>1</sup>

*Secretary of State*

I have just had the interesting, if depressing, report attached from Mr. Cumming-Bruce in the Gold Coast.

2. I confess that one's first feeling is one of some uncertainty as to whether we shall be able to feel too confident about the suitability, or rather the ripeness, of the Gold Coast for full Commonwealth membership, but we shall in practice be forced to

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<sup>1</sup> See 181.

take certain risks over that. I will consider further with the Colonial Office the points raised by Mr. Cumming Bruce. But (putting aside the fundamental question of the real stability of the country) the following points strike me:-

(a) A collapse of the administration of the Gold Coast because they are not prepared to retain, or are not prepared to offer terms sufficiently good to attract the necessary minimum of British personnel would undoubtedly be a serious business. But (as the not altogether dissimilar case of the Sudan shows) the extent to which we can, in such circumstances, intervene, except at the request of the Commonwealth Government, is exceedingly limited. We cannot force them (any more than we could in Burma or in the Sudan) to retain or to re-engage British officers and the slur upon their own capacity which the necessity for doing so would represent would be a serious one politically for them. We can, of course, prior to the attainment of Commonwealth status, use all our persuasions through the Governor to bring home to the Gold Coast Authorities the risks that they may be running. There is not much more that we can do than that.

(b) The so-called "Overseas Service" is not, in my judgement, ever likely to come to much. There are unending practical difficulties and even if those practical difficulties had been surmounted, one still has to persuade the overseas country concerned to ask for, to use properly and to retain the staff. There is not the slightest prospect in my judgement in any event of this scheme (which has gone very much into the background) attaining dimensions that matter before the Gold Coast is likely to become independent.

(c) I quite see the possible importance of having Gold Coast representatives at Commonwealth Ministerial meetings before independence. But you know how touchy this whole business of the Gold Coast is in terms of South African reactions; the next Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting (unless it takes place in January) may well have to face the Gold Coast issue itself; and however great the force of the argument for having Gold Coast observers, we should inevitably be faced with corresponding demands from Malaya, the West Indies and possibly Nigeria. I do not regard this as a practical proposition.

(d) As regards representation after independence I fully agree and so does the Governor. We shall have to send a good High Commissioner to the Gold Coast and I am already, as you know, planning to expand Mr. Cumming Bruce's office next Spring and to give him at any rate another Principal to work there.

I would only add in this connection that if matters could so turn that the present Governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, who has been a very great success, could be the first Governor-General, he might be able, if the Gold Coast was willing to have him and he was willing to serve, to make a real contribution to keeping the Gold Coast on the right lines on what are, quite clearly, going to be these very difficult early years.

(e) As regards Paragraph II, I do not think we want to get the other Commonwealth countries in too early into this business of the Gold Coast. There were signs when I was in Canada of a disposition to suggest that they should be actively consulted at each stage which I said I did not think was practical politics. But there is a lot to be said for a Canadian Commissioner, and as you will remember, there has been some talk of having an African Commissioner also.

I am glad that Mr. Cumming Bruce has started a series of letters (I had some talk with the Governor about this before he returned to the Gold Coast) and the supplementary reports which he promises should be very useful to us.

J.G.L.  
30.8.55

The more I see of this the less I like it & it would be a horrible affair after Commonwealth status had been given if there was a complete administrative collapse. I am glad you are keeping in very close touch & I will look forward to your latest appreciation when I get back. There will not be much time to decide our line even if the P.M.'s Conference is not until summer or autumn.

H.  
30.8.55.

**185** DO 35/6170, no 57

3 Sept 1955

[The future of the Gold Coast]: letter from Sir G Laithwaite to F E Cumming-Bruce

I have sent you a separate formal reply, which deals with future procedure, to your letter of 19th August.<sup>1</sup> I have not yet been able (as I am just off on leave) to talk over the balance of your letter with Lloyd and the Colonial Office. But meanwhile the following points suggest themselves to us here on a preliminary reading and I pass them on to you for what they are worth.

2. In the first place, there is, of course, the fundamental question of the real stability of the country, and we fully agree as to the great importance of that issue, more particularly in terms of the assessments that might have to be given to other Commonwealth countries when the time for the Gold Coast to be considered for admission as a Commonwealth country arrives. I do not propose, however, to enter into that matter at this stage. We may well have to take certain risks though I do not think that anyone can question that a sober and reliable appraisal will be an essential preliminary to discussion of the claims of the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership.

3. The risks which you hint at of the collapse of the administration because the Gold Coast may not be prepared to retain or are not prepared to offer terms sufficiently good to attract the necessary minimum of British personnel need no emphasis. But it would, of course, be a most grave matter were there to be a collapse after the Gold Coast had become a Commonwealth country and that is a possibility to which the fullest weight will have to be given. But the extent to which in such circumstances, except at the request of the Commonwealth Government concerned, we could, in fact, actively intervene over personnel is exceedingly limited. We could not force a Commonwealth country which had attained that status to retain or to re-engage British officers. We are bound to recognise too that the reflection upon their own capacity which the necessity for doing so would represent would politically be a

<sup>1</sup> See 181.

very serious matter for them locally. We can, of course, on the other hand, prior to the attainment of Commonwealth status use all our persuasions through the Governor to warn the authorities of the risks that they may be running and do everything possible to keep them on the right lines and bring home to them how dependent, without this being in any way a reflection upon them, they are likely to be for long enough to come, particularly in the technical field, on assistance from outside and the importance of so playing their hand as not to damage themselves.

4. I doubt very much, but here I am speaking personally, if we can pin any great reliance on assistance from the "Overseas Service". There are no lack of practical difficulties about the development of such a Service, but in any event, we are up against the point of principle which I have discussed in my last paragraph, which is that the country concerned would have to be persuaded to ask for, to make proper use of and afford sufficiently attractive prospects to staff drawn from outside. On the sort of time-table we are working to at present I very much question – again speaking personally – whether this scheme will have reached a point at which it could usefully be applied before the Gold Coast is likely to attain Commonwealth status.

5. We quite agree about the psychological value of Gold Coast representation at Commonwealth Ministerial meetings before independence. But you know the importance we have to attach to South African reaction over the Gold Coast and its admission to the Commonwealth fold and it goes without saying too that however cogent the arguments for the reasons you give for having Gold Coast observers, their attachment would inevitably produce corresponding demands from Malaya, the West Indies, possibly Nigeria, possibly even Malta. Nor has it ever been the practice to associate observers with the Prime Ministers' meetings, though it might be a little less difficult (again I speak personally) at e.g. meetings of Finance Ministers.

6. We fully agree as to the importance of adequate and suitable representation of the C.R.O. once Commonwealth status is achieved and I had the advantage of some talk with the Governor about this when he was here in June. I have already been thinking (and I mentioned this both to the Governor and to Lloyd when we had a meeting just before the Governor returned to the Gold Coast) about finding an extra Principal to work under you some time in the Spring of next year.<sup>2</sup> I note that you promise a separate report about the expansion of your office and I shall look forward to that.

7. This note is all very general in character and you may think too, somewhat unhelpful. That does not mean that we have not greatly valued your appreciation and that we shall not look forward to further appreciations on the same lines and in the same series. What does, however, seem to emerge is that while, on the one hand, there are obvious weak points and some of them of much gravity in the situation, that we shall have to consider, as the Gold Coast moves on towards asking to be admitted to full Commonwealth status, the extent to which, in practice, we may be able, once she has attained that status, to intervene to prevent internal collapses, may well be very limited indeed. The only conclusion that does emerge is the enormous importance of continuing to try, as the Governor is trying, to bring home to the authorities in the Gold Coast the dangers to their country and the discredit which might result to them – indeed, the general setback that might result – if, with

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<sup>2</sup> See 168.

the very best intentions, people move too precipitately and if they deprive themselves prematurely of help that, if they are prepared to pay and to treat it properly will, I am sure, be forthcoming from outside in terms of personnel. One realises fully the difficulty of the political issues that face political leaders in countries such as the Gold Coast and the risk that delay or anything that looks like the retention of indirect controls or influence may give rise to very serious problems locally. And as other parts of the world know, the shortage of experienced personnel whether administrative or technical can place a country at a very great disadvantage in the period between the attaining of independence and the producing of sufficient indigenous material with the requisite qualifications to handle administration etc. While it is not for me to say, all this does at the same time seem to underline the importance of pressing on with Africanisation, as is I think, already being done, as quickly as possible. In India and Pakistan the success that has attended self-Government since 1947 has derived in a very large measure indeed from the fact that the Services had been completely Indianised up to a very high level and that to deal with more than four hundred million people we only had about one thousand Europeans in the whole country while Indians (including, of course, Pakistanis) were holding posts and had held posts for many years up to the highest levels. Things are overtaking us rather more rapidly in the case of these Colonial Territories which are now moving forward towards Commonwealth status. But all the experience that we in this office have does underline the immense importance of having, at the time of handover, as large a proportion, even if they are not all very highly trained, of natives of the country competent to take on responsibility as can by any means be secured.

8. I am sending a copy of this letter to Lloyd at the Colonial Office.

**186** DO 35/6170, no 59

10 Sept 1955

**'Gold Coast': outward circular intelligence telegram no 164 from FO to HM diplomatic posts on the constitutional crisis**

Within the last twelve months there have been considerable changes in the political situation in the Gold Coast. In a General Election held in June, 1954 Dr. Nkrumah and his Party (the Convention People's Party) won 72 seats out of 104. The second largest Party in the Legislature is the Northern People's Party, drawn only from the Northern Territories, with 12 members. The rest of the Legislature is made up of 15 Independents and representatives of minor parties. Shortly after this Election there was formed in Ashanti the National Liberation Movement. The immediate cause of its formation was dissatisfaction with the producer price of cocoa, which Dr. Nkrumah's Government had announced as being fixed for a period of four years. As support for the Movement grew (it has, incidentally, claimed not to be a political party) it became clear that its policies derived from a deep distrust of Dr. Nkrumah and his Party and a wish to preserve some kind of regional independence. The growth of the Movement was fiercely resisted by the Convention People's Party, and there were many violent incidents, involving three deaths, and it has been necessary to station greatly increased police forces and, for a time, increased military forces, in Ashanti.

2. In July a candidate supported by the National Liberation Movement won a by-election in Ashanti thanks to a great swing of votes from the Convention People's

Party. The by-election was conducted in the most orderly fashion and since then violence has almost completely disappeared as a political weapon. It is now possible that if another General Election were held Dr. Nkrumah's Party might fail to gain a clear majority in the Legislature over all other parties.

3. The National Liberation Movement has attacked Dr. Nkrumah on the grounds that:—

- (a) he wields too much power;
- (b) he and his Government have condoned corrupt practices.

4. The attack on Dr. Nkrumah's powers as Prime Minister derives partly from the deep distrust of him felt in the National Liberation Movement and in part from the fear that a strong Central Government in the Gold Coast must inevitably continue to take away from chiefs (among whom the Asantehene is pre-eminent) and other traditional authorities most of their dignity and power. In many ways the actions of the Gold Coast Government in attempting to guide their country towards political independence and a higher standard of living have inevitably shown that they are determined to exercise power and to disregard or do away with traditional authorities which impede the policies which the Government wish to see put into effect. The National Liberation Movement produced in August complicated proposals for a federal system of government which are clearly designed to reduce the powers of the Central Government.<sup>1</sup> They propose that residual powers should be with the Regional Governments, and that the major responsibilities of the Central Government should be exercised in consultation with a Council of State comprising regional representatives. Their proposals are in many ways impracticable, not least because sufficient trained staff does not exist to run the multiplicity of Governments which they propose.

5. The National Liberation Movement have also called for an enquiry into corrupt practices and have claimed to possess comprehensive evidence which they would be willing to put before an impartial Commission of Enquiry. There is little doubt that there has been a fair amount of corruption, particularly in the Cocoa Marketing Board's subsidiary, the Cocoa Purchasing Company. The Gold Coast Government recently appointed a new chairman of the Board and it is expected that he will make a determined attempt to put things right both in the Board and in the Company.

6. In the first few months of the existence of the National Liberation Movement Gold Coast Ministers were disposed to take it lightly. Subsequently, and perhaps belatedly, the Prime Minister sent written invitations to the National Liberation Movement suggesting discussions on the constitutional questions which the Movement has raised. The Movement has throughout refused to enter into any such discussions and has demanded a Constituent Assembly to draw up a federal constitution. In explanation of their refusal to talk with Dr. Nkrumah and his colleagues the National Liberation Movement have drawn attention to the violent threats made against them by Gold Coast Ministers; some of the statements made by Ministers at political rallies have been irresponsible and have caused considerable mistrust of their intentions and strengthened the National Liberation Movement.

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<sup>1</sup> See 178.

7. The Prime Minister then proposed the appointment of a Select Committee of the Legislature to examine the question of the federal system and that of a Second Chamber. The Opposition party refused to participate and walked out of the Chamber. The Select Committee reported in July that a federal system of Government was impracticable and that the question of a Second Chamber should be left for some years. The Prime Minister in August proposed a motion in the Legislature adopting the Select Committee's Report, calling upon the Government to consider the setting up of Regional Consultative Committees and approving the Government's proposal to seek the services of an expert in constitutional matters chosen by the Secretary of State to advise the Government. The Opposition again rejected the Prime Minister's proposals and walked out of the Legislature.

8. It is expected that a Constitutional Adviser will be appointed in the very near future. Although his terms of reference are to advise the Government and all parties on the problems involved in setting up Regional Councils there is no doubt that he will need to take into account the views of all parties on the major constitutional questions, and that if his proposals are to have any chance of success he must first of all establish some measure of common agreement in the Gold Coast.

9. The situation in the Gold Coast is confused and it is not easy to foresee future developments. Nothing that has happened has yet made any difference to the fact that the Gold Coast is in the last stage before independence. It is however clear that the peoples of the Gold Coast must settle the major constitutional problems which have arisen before they can achieve independence. This is fully understood both by the Gold Coast Government and by the Opposition parties, and there has been no loss of goodwill towards the United Kingdom in the course of the recent constitutional dispute.

10. The above is for background information but you may make use of it at your discretion if the occasion demands.

**187** DO 35/6170, no 65

12 Sept 1955

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd suggesting that Mr Lennox-Boyd should speak to Dr Nkrumah about the attitude and conduct of the Gold Coast government on the independence question

Would you please refer to paragraph 2 of your Secret and Personal telegram No. 42 of the 27th July,<sup>1</sup> in which you made the point that the Secretary of State attached great importance to personal contacts and felt that it might well be very useful for him to have a talk with Nkrumah.

I think that the time has come when this talk should take place. This is not because Nkrumah has rejected the idea of a mediator. As you know he has asked for a constitutional adviser, and although the terms in which this request was made include no reference to the federal proposals of the Opposition, there is no reason to think that he will attempt to stand in the way of any discussion of those proposals

<sup>1</sup> See 174.

between the adviser and members of the Opposition. It is rather the general question of the attitude and conduct of the Government in relation to the conditions in which independence could be granted which is causing me serious concern at the present time, and it is in this context that I am now responding to the suggestion that the Secretary of State might see Nkrumah.

During the last few weeks the Government has felt an increasing uneasiness at the evident growth of an Opposition, and apparently intends to suppress this development, first by striking at the Asanteman Council and, in a lesser degree, at the influence of the traditional authorities in Akim Abuakwa, and second by launching a publicity campaign asserting that the C.P.P. will achieve independence in 1956, no matter what obstacles may be encountered. The first of these tactics has not yet been translated into overt action and I need not trouble you here with details of the various provocations, both legislative and administrative, which Ministers and the Party have been contemplating; I have, I hope, already succeeded in dissuading the Government from some of the grosser mistakes, such as the proposed administrative division of Ashanti into two completely separate Regions and the abolition of the post of Chief Regional Officer in Ashanti on the retirement of the present holder in the near future. I have mentioned this tendency to hit out at the Opposition with the full force of the Government's armament because it strongly suggests that Ministers have no true appreciation of the likelihood that such a policy will lead to the postponement of the grant of independence, and that they believe, mistakenly as it seems to me, that such a show of determination to break down resistance will dismay the Opposition groups and bring about their collapse.

Despite my assurance to the Prime Minister and his more influential colleagues that independence in 1956 is not a practical proposition (your secret letter of the 21st July),<sup>2</sup> Ministers and Government back-benchers have for some days been declaring in their public speeches and through the press that the C.P.P. will inevitably achieve independence in that year. This publicity campaign has been launched because Ministers and other Party leaders feel that the C.P.P. is losing ground and that something must be done to arouse popular enthusiasm for the Party and for the present Government. It is, however, a dangerous line to take, not only because the ultimate disappointment to adherents of the C.P.P. may result in a threat to public order on their part, cause a loss of Party confidence in Ministers and engender doubts about the good faith of the U.K. Government, but also because the Opposition groups may, as this propaganda is daily reiterated, begin to feel that there is some truth in it, and in consequence they may have recourse to violent demonstrations as a reminder of their determination that their federal proposals shall be considered before independence is reached. In the absence of Nkrumah, Botsio has on my advice called off the press campaign but the politicians remain unmuzzled.

These reactions of Ministers and of the Party are not a sign that a possible alternative Government is in sight, but they are indicative of the characteristic nervousness of the local politician when faced with any appreciable measure of unpopularity or opposition, and of a failure to realise that the use of the sledge hammer is likely to delay the grant of independence and to intensify, rather than subdue, resistance to the C.P.P.

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<sup>2</sup> See 171.

In these circumstances I feel that a direct though informal contact between the Gold Coast Government and the United Kingdom Government would be helpful. It could be a reminder to all concerned here that wild talk, either about the date of independence or about the iniquities of one's political opponents, will not bring independence any nearer, and that independence can only be granted as a result of the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations between Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Gold Coast Government. It would afford an opportunity for the Secretary of State to give Nkrumah a clear indication of the conditions which Her Majesty's Government will expect to see fulfilled before independence can be granted, and of the fact that the present situation does not satisfy those conditions. Such a conversation could be complementary to the efforts of the constitutional adviser in his role of mediator. It would have to be preceded and followed by a press communiqué, and I suggest that the first might simply say that the Prime Minister was visiting London at the invitation of the Secretary of State to discuss informally the further steps to be taken by the two Governments to achieve independence for the Gold Coast (or some other mutually acceptable formula).

I shall be glad to know whether the Secretary of State favours this idea and, if so, whether he could see Nkrumah during the first half of October. If he agrees, I would sound Nkrumah immediately on his return from his visit to Douala about the 22nd of this month. If he does go to London for conversations with the Secretary of State, I am inclined to think that he should be accompanied by Botsio, since this would not only improve Nkrumah's exposition of the situation in the Gold Coast but would also strengthen his hand *vis-à-vis* his colleagues on his return. Perhaps you would let me know whether the Secretary of State would see them both together.

**188** PREM 11/1367

13 Sept 1955

'Gold Coast': minute by Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir A Eden on the report by F E Cumming-Bruce.<sup>1</sup> *Annex*: CO note, 'Political developments in the Gold Coast'

I have read with interest the report by Mr. Cumming-Bruce which the Commonwealth Secretary sent to you on the 30th August.

2. The present political situation in the Gold Coast is confused and I attach a note prepared in my Department, which sets out briefly its main features. Some of them are encouraging but some as the note shows, are disquieting.

3. Many criticisms can be made against Dr. Nkrumah and his Party, but they have behind them a solid record of good administration. Their willingness to learn and to apply the lessons learnt give good grounds for hoping that they will continue to rise to the responsibilities of their position even when the wisdom of the present Governor is no longer available to them and they have to face their more extreme supporters on their own. The emergence of a strong Opposition should help them to control those supporters more closely. I have been disturbed for some time by the

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<sup>1</sup> See 181. A copy of Home's minute, dated 30 Aug 1955, to Eden on Cumming-Bruce's memo (see note with 181) was sent to the CO. Lennox-Boyd's minute to Eden reproduced here in 188 was a response, not only to Cumming-Bruce's memo but also to Home's minute to the prime minister.

occasional use of violence in Gold Coast politics and by the failure of all parties to meet together to discuss constructively their ideas for the future and I have brought pressure to bear on Dr. Nkrumah in these matters with some success. Already recourse to violence has almost completely ceased and while the constitutional dispute has still to be resolved it is hoped that the Constitutional Adviser shortly to be sent to the Gold Coast (see paragraph 8 of the note enclosed) will be able to mediate successfully.

4. Mr. Cumming-Bruce also discussed a number of questions of policy which are being considered by Departments, such as the arrangements for the supply of expatriate staff and the ways in which Gold Coast Ministers might be brought into closer contact with the Commonwealth as a whole. I have these problems very much in mind. That of expatriate staff (which does not affect the Gold Coast alone) is the subject of the second note which I enclose.<sup>2</sup> As far as relations with Gold Coast Ministers are concerned much has already been done and I would be the first to welcome any further steps that it was found possible to take.

#### Annex to 188

The internal affairs of the Gold Coast are administered by an African Cabinet, headed by a Prime Minister, responsible to an entirely elected Legislature. Ministers are drawn from the Convention People's Party, which has 71 seats out of 104 in the Legislature. The Party has been in power since 1951. Until a year ago it enjoyed overwhelming popular support in all parts of the territory, and the only other major party was the Northern People's Party, drawn from the Northern Territories, with 12 members in the Legislature. In the last twelve months considerable opposition has grown up headed by a new organisation, the National Liberation Movement, formed in Ashanti. This Movement has been able to work with the Northern People's Party and a number of small political groups in opposition to the Government, and it recently won a resounding victory in a by-election over the Convention People's Party.

2. There is no doubt that the National Liberation Movement is very strong in Ashanti and might well, if another election were held, win most of the seats for that region. The extent of opposition to the Convention People's Party in other parts of the Gold Coast cannot be assessed with the same degree of accuracy. There is no effective organised opposition in the Colony. In the Northern Territories it is reasonable to assume that the Northern People's Party would gain seats from the Convention People's Party if (as is understood to be the Prime Minister's intention) another General Election were held in the near future. That Election might leave the Convention People's Party in the Legislature without a majority over all other parties in which case the whole question of the next stage of constitutional development in the Gold Coast would have to be reviewed.

3. There are many differences of opinion between all the parties, both major and minor, in the Gold Coast. The Opposition parties have chosen as the main ground of their dispute with the Convention People's Party the form of government which the

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

Gold Coast should enjoy after independence. The Gold Coast Government consider that the country should retain a unitary form of government with a considerable measure of regional devolution, particularly in the field of expenditure on development. Such a system has already been successfully worked in one region, where there appears to be little or no dissatisfaction with it. The Opposition parties demand a federal form of government in which the residual powers would remain with the regions, and in which the Prime Minister of the Federation would be restricted in the exercise of many of his powers by a Council of State composed predominantly of regional representatives. (It is open to serious doubt whether these proposals could be made to work.)

4. When the present constitution began last year a message from the Queen delivered at the first meeting of the Legislature referred to the fact that the Gold Coast was now in the last stage before complete self-government. Dr. Nkrumah, the Prime Minister, had hoped that independence could be achieved by December, 1956. In discussions with the Gold Coast Government it has become clear that they accept the view that there must be agreement on the form of government for the Gold Coast before independence can be achieved. Within the last month or so Gold Coast Ministers have realised that as long as the present constitutional dispute continues independence cannot be attained. (There is also another major possible obstacle to independence, namely the future of Togoland under United Kingdom trusteeship, but it now looks as if that problem will not be the determining factor.)

5. No date for independence has ever been fixed, but it has been expected that the Gold Coast would become independent sometime within the next two to three years. The present constitutional arrangements were designed expressly to last for a limited period. They cannot be made to work without considerable goodwill on both sides, or without a common understanding that they are not intended to be permanent. An essential part of these arrangements has been the surrender of control by the Secretary of State over the Gold Coast Public Service. This is now in effect administered by a Public Service Commission, and is the responsibility of the Gold Coast Government. A further note attached describes the present state of European staff in the Gold Coast and the progress of European recruitment.

6. The inevitable withdrawal of European staff is bound to cause some decline in administrative efficiency. There is as yet no reason to suppose that the decline in efficiency will, by itself, make it impossible to govern the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast Government recruit through their own Office in London, with a fair degree of success, quite a considerable number of technical people and some administrative people (for special contract posts) from the United Kingdom. Most of the highly qualified technical officers they need are in great demand all over the world and it would seem to make little difference to their recruitment whether or not the Gold Coast is independent, or likely to become so. The measures taken by Gold Coast Ministers to recruit staff are generally satisfactory and have the support of the Governor.

7. It is very much open to doubt how far the present Gold Coast Government has sufficient popular support. Without that support the decline in administrative efficiency could have quite serious consequences; with popular support the foreseeable decline should not, on present evidence, make it impossible to govern the country under a unitary system or to grant independence. A federal system (as favoured by the opponents of the present Government) would certainly entail a larger experienced staff than that now available.

8. It is not easy to be sure about the fundamental causes of the present constitutional dispute. One important cause is undoubtedly the deep distrust felt for Dr. Nkrumah, but it is far from clear whether this distrust attaches to him, or to the powers which as Prime Minister he now enjoys and the increased powers which he might enjoy as Prime Minister in an independent country. To date the Opposition groups have refused to treat with him on the grounds that they do not trust him. One way out of this deadlock may be through mediation by a Constitutional Adviser for whose services the Gold Coast Government recently asked. If the Adviser is successful he may be able to bring together the opposing points of view and establish some measure of common agreement. It is hoped to secure a senior former member of the I.C.S.<sup>3</sup> for the post and he should reach the Gold Coast by the end of this month.

9. Relations between Gold Coast Ministers and United Kingdom Ministers have been good. There is frequent contact and Gold Coast Ministers have shown themselves ready to understand the United Kingdom point of view and to act upon it. Agreement has occasionally not been reached, but the general picture is one of a determined effort to work with the United Kingdom.

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<sup>3</sup> A reference to Sir F Bourne, see 183.

**189** CO 554/805, no 101 16 Sept 1955  
**[Gbedemah at the CO]: CO note of a meeting between Mr Hopkinson and Mr Gbedemah on Togoland, the constitutional dispute, Gold Coast currency and bank, and the Volta River project**

*The Minister of State* apologised for the absence of the Secretary of State through indisposition. *Mr. Gbedemah* said that he would very much like to see the Secretary of State if it were possible before he went to Montreal on the 23rd September. *The Minister of State* said that he was sure the Secretary of State would wish to see Mr. Gbedemah and that a time would be fixed for the meeting. (A meeting was subsequently arranged for 3 p.m. on the 22nd September.)

*The Togoland question*

*Mr. Gbedemah* gave a reassuring picture of the present situation in Togoland. He said the Visiting Mission had spent a lot of time seeing the people and getting their views, but he was confident that there would be a majority in favour of integration in the territory and he warmly supported the view that the plebiscite should be conducted with two questions. *Mr. Gbedemah* hoped to go to New York in November for the debate in the Fourth Committee on the Togoland Question.

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that some thought had been given in the Gold Coast to possible ways of speeding up the resolution of the Togoland issue. It was, for example, *Mr. Chapman's* view that there was a case for asking for a special Session of the General Assembly. *Mr. Gbedemah* thought that if the plebiscite were held in March, 1956 and showed a majority in favour of integration with the Gold Coast there might be a case for asking the General Assembly to meet rather earlier than

September in order to consider the Togoland Question. He indeed wondered whether it would be necessary for the General Assembly to meet again in 1956 to consider the question, but the Minister of State thought that the General Assembly would not lightly surrender its responsibility and would in fact insist on meeting to decide so important a question as the termination of Trusteeship. He did however agree that it was important to attempt to get the Togoland Question put first on the Agenda of the 1956 Session of the General Assembly.

*The constitutional dispute in the Gold Coast*

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that it was now becoming increasingly difficult to accept any delay in the achievement of Gold Coast independence. The supporters of the Government were beginning to wonder when they would carry out the promise they made two and a half years ago to achieve self-government "now". He thought it very important that independence should be achieved in 1956 for this reason.

*Mr. Gbedemah* characterised the Opposition in the Gold Coast as a group led by disgruntled politicians who had been greatly helped by the prestige of the Asantehene. They had made childish accusations about the Gold Coast Government, which had shown itself most accommodating and had offered to discuss the questions at issue without success. The Government were prepared to have a General Election on the constitutional issue if necessary. A General Election was in fact the only way to reach a final decision on this issue, whether it was held before or soon after independence had been achieved. *Mr. Gbedemah* suggested strongly that there was not sufficient time to work out a generally acceptable constitution before independence and that it was important that independence should not be delayed because of less important matters like Togoland and the drafting of necessary Instruments. He said that there already existed a list of amendments to the present constitution which had been agreed with the Governor. *The Minister of State* said that he did not think it would be possible or desirable to attempt to enact legislation before the United Nations had settled the Togoland Question. It would be particularly unfortunate if the United Nations were offended and refused on that account to reach a decision on Togoland in 1956. The point was also made that the Gold Coast must have a constitution when it achieved independence.

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that the Gold Coast Government's views on the National Liberation Movement proposals would probably be ready in October or November after the Cabinet rises. *The Minister of State* said he hoped that these views would be forthcoming at the earliest possible moment. He asked *Mr. Gbedemah* if the proposals for Regional Councils already made would in fact work satisfactorily or whether it might not be necessary to adopt a system rather on the lines of that practised in South Africa, where Provinces had their own Assemblies, together with certain powers, but the country was a Union and not a Federation. *Mr. Gbedemah* said that Dr. Nkrumah firmly believed that a middle way must be found, and he pointed out that the Regional Council already in existence in Trans-Volta/Togoland had been a most successful body. *The Minister of State* then told *Mr. Gbedemah* about the appointment of Sir F. Bourne as Constitutional Adviser. *Mr. Gbedemah* said he was delighted to see that so experienced a man had been obtained.

*The Minister of State* asked *Mr. Gbedemah* what he thought would be the result of a General Election in Ashanti at the present time. *Mr. Gbedemah* said he thought the C.P.P. would have a reduced majority in Ashanti, gaining fourteen or so seats out of

the twenty one. In the Assembly as a whole he thought the C.P.P. would have about sixty out of the one hundred and four seats. He emphasised again his point that the political pattern would take longer to settle than the time available before independence should be achieved. He was afraid that the supporters of the C.P.P. Government would be badly disturbed if independence were delayed until 1957, and he made the point that if the present C.P.P. Ministers had to give up office because they had lost the confidence of their followers there was no other body of men fit to take over the reins of power.

*The Minister of State* observed that what Mr. Gbedemah had said all tended to lead to the conclusion that a General Election was necessary, but *Mr. Gbedemah* said that it would not be possible to hold such an election before April/May 1956, and that if it were fought on the constitutional issue and the C.P.P. were successful a delay in attaining independence would not then matter so much.

#### *Gold Coast currency and bank*

(The Minister of State was called away for this part of the meeting.)<sup>1</sup>

It was explained to Mr. Gbedemah that some doubts had recently arisen in the City generally, and in Banking circles in particular, following the announcement that a contract for Gold Coast currency was to be concluded with a firm of security printers. The point had been made that there was no legislative authority for this and many people were beginning to wonder what kind of currency the Gold Coast proposed to have. The Colonial Office had given the Gold Coast Government pretty comprehensive advice on the subject but so far had not received any reply to that advice and had therefore been embarrassed in dealing with the queries which had been put to it. *Mr. Gbedemah* said that he would take the opportunity at the lunch following the signing of the Currency Contract to stress that legislation was under preparation and that it would be fully scrutinised in London.

As the Bank of the Gold Coast must become a Bank of Issue and would clearly at a later stage become a Central Bank, the Bank of England had naturally been concerned to keep in touch with recent developments. *Mr. Gbedemah* therefore agreed that he could usefully see the Bank authorities and said that he was free on Tuesday for this purpose. *The Minister of State* said that it was impossible to exaggerate the importance of keeping confidence in Gold Coast currency and that he would see that the Bank were told that Mr. Gbedemah would like to see them and would arrange for the Bank to invite Mr. Gbedemah to come along. . . .

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that he had accepted the advice given to him to use the Crown Agents in all matters connected with currency and he thought this should go a long way towards keeping confidence in the new currency for the Gold Coast. *The Minister of State* warmly agreed.

#### *The Volta River project*

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that the five reports so far received were satisfactory. They had been received by the National Committee in what he described as "a critical spirit of goodwill". Most of the views expressed by the National Committee had been accepted

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<sup>1</sup> During which time the discussion was continued by Eastwood and Vile who were also present.

by the Gold Coast Government. Commander Jackson<sup>2</sup> had done very good work and there had been no hitch in any of the arrangements made. The report on the financial aspects of the Project was now awaited.

Mr. Gbedemah said that he was anxious that the final agreement on the Volta River Project should not be concluded until after independence. He agreed however that if there were a General Election the Governor [Government] would then return to power and would have a clear mandate to conclude the agreement. The suggestion was made that in order to set any doubts that might arise in the future completely to rest the Gold Coast Government before independence might conclude a provisional agreement about the Volta and after independence conclude a final agreement in exactly the same terms. Mr. Gbedemah thought that there was a great deal to be said for this suggestion, which would of course need further consideration.

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<sup>2</sup> Commander (Sir) Robert Jackson (Kt 1956), chairman of Preparatory Commission for the Volta River project, 1953–1956.

**190** CO 554/805, no 104

23 Sept 1955

**[Constitutional crisis]: letter from C G Eastwood to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the proposal that Mr Lennox-Boyd should meet Dr Nkrumah and the terms of a statement to be issued after the meeting**

Lloyd is away so it falls to me to deal with your letter to him of the 12th September in which you suggested that Nkrumah should come over for a talk with the Secretary of State.<sup>1</sup>

You will now have personal telegram No. 55 in which I told you that the Secretary of State would be very glad to see him. As you know he attaches great importance to personal contacts and he welcomes the chance of having a talk to Nkrumah and Botsio. He saw Gbedemah on the 22nd September and impressed on him the fact that there must be general agreement on the constitutional issue before independence can be achieved. Gbedemah took this affably.

The fact that you made this request for Nkrumah to come over just after the Constitutional Adviser was likely to arrive in the Gold Coast impressed on us that you must feel the situation to be really one of difficulty and urgency. We entirely agree with you in thinking that your Ministers must be brought to a true appreciation of the likelihood that any policy of going all out for independence in 1956 by suppressing the opposition will only lead to its postponement. The Secretary of State therefore readily accepted your request for his help.

You will, I am sure, send us as soon as you conveniently can your advice on what you would like the Secretary of State to say to Nkrumah and your appreciation of the situation as it has developed since your letter was written. We should also find it helpful to have your ideas on the kind of Press communiqué to be issued after the meeting. It seems to us that it would be useful to have a statement, accepted by Nkrumah, on the following lines:

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<sup>1</sup> See 187.

(i) The U.K. and Gold Coast Governments recognise that the grant of independence to the Gold Coast can only be made when both Governments are satisfied that it is desired by a substantial majority of the people. (We have been inclined to assume in the past that everybody wants it as soon as possible but we have recently been led to believe that a good many people are really afraid of it and do not want it.)

(ii) The U.K. and Gold Coast Governments must also be satisfied before the grant of independence that the constitution under which the Gold Coast will start its independent existence is acceptable to a substantial majority. (This has of course been said before.)

(iii) Once these conditions have been met, both Governments will ensure that there is no unnecessary delay in completing the arrangements for the independence of the Gold Coast.

(iv) Both Governments re-affirm their belief that the present constitutional differences in the Gold Coast can be solved peacefully and democratically and their confidence in the ability of the peoples of the Gold Coast to do so freely and successfully.

We shall of course be giving further thought to this. The suggested statement does not refer at all to the date of independence. It would be possible to add at the end of (iii) "but until the conditions are met no date can be fixed for it". Would you consider this wise?

The Secretary of State will naturally impress on Nkrumah privately that H.M.G. will not be satisfied that their two conditions are met by the bullyragging of the Opposition into silence, and you will no doubt let us know if you recommend any other homilies on such things as corruption and threatening speeches by Ministers.

**191** CO 554/806, no 112

30 Sept 1955

**[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the questions of his visit to London for talks and the fixing of a date for independence**

Thank you very much for the invitation which you have extended to me through Sir Charles Arden-Clarke to visit you in London in order that we may discuss together the affairs of the Gold Coast, with special reference to the time-table for the granting of independence to this country.

[2] I deeply appreciate your invitation as it will afford us both as individuals, as well as representatives of our respective governments, an opportunity for working out a mutually agreed programme for the transfer of power from the United Kingdom Government to the Government and people of the Gold Coast.

[3] The last time we met was in 1951 when you very kindly arranged a party for me in your house. It was a very happy occasion and I look forward to the prospect of renewing our acquaintance, for this can mean a great deal to us both.

[4] As things are at present, however, I cannot visit you without attracting world-wide attention and speculation, and at the conclusion of my visit with you, the world would expect a statement on our conversations. On my return home too, I would be expected to make a public statement on the results of our meeting.

[5] You will appreciate that with the general clamour for independence in the Gold Coast and the world-wide expectation of our independence in the near future, any statement made after our meeting should be firm, unequivocal and in line with the undertakings of my Party during the last General Elections on the basis of which the present Government of the Gold Coast came into being. In view of this, it is essential that we have a general agreement on all fundamental matters and also have a definite plan in view before I proceed to London for discussions with you.

[6] I give below some of the considerations uppermost in my mind in connection with the question of fixing a date for our independence. Some of the facts I will give you are already known to you, but I repeat them here in order to let you view them within the context of the present situation in the Gold Coast. For I am convinced that we have carried out most of the interim administrative and political tasks set for the transitional period preceding independence, and that although a transitional period is a good thing, nevertheless if this period is prolonged unnecessarily it becomes harmful and is in our case beginning to lose its value.

[7] As you know, the present Government of the Gold Coast came into power on the platform of "self-government now" for the Gold Coast and, in accordance with the provisions of our Constitution, it has a term of office for the period 1954–1958. It is, of course, within my discretion as Prime Minister to decide on any day during that period for new general elections to take place.

[8] I am pleased to be able to say that since we were returned to power last year, we have made satisfactory progress in implementing the promises we made to the country during the election campaign, and in the matter of the demand for self-government and independence, I still have the whole country, including the Legislative Assembly and its Ashanti members, firmly behind me and the present Government.

[9] Both myself and the members of my Party have often spoken from public platforms on the question of fixing a date for our independence, and the year 1956 is widely considered and taken for granted in many quarters as the year of our independence. Very weighty reasons will, therefore, have to be adduced to support any move which may disappoint the hopes of millions of our people regarding that date.

[10] We speak of 1956 advisedly and after the most serious consideration of the public welfare and the maintenance of good relations between the United Kingdom Government and ourselves.

[11] Many significant steps have already been taken to pave the way for independence; there are problems and difficulties inherent in the transitional period through which we are passing, and which must not be allowed to mount to dangerous proportions through an unnecessary continuance or extension of the transitional period. Any delay in the final transfer of power will therefore have harmful effects.

[12] You will allow me to mention some of the vital steps which have been taken so far towards our goal of independence: the compensation scheme for overseas officers which involves much present and future public expenditure, is in operation and the public are already demanding concrete results to show that this expenditure will not be in vain. There has been a change in the status of the Public Service Commission and of the public service generally befitting that of a free country; the machinery of local government has been established and is in operation and new

regional development committees are also being set up in areas where Regional Councils do not as yet exist; the beginnings of our first overseas Mission have been made by the establishment of the Gold Coast Commissioner's Office in London and its increasing assumption of functions formerly performed for this country by the Colonial Office, the Crown Agents and other voluntary organisations; plans have also been laid for the expansion and more adequate staffing of the London office; our first batch of cadets to be trained for our future External Affairs Service has begun training, both here in the Gold Coast and in the United Kingdom, with prospects of attachment for further training of some of the cadets to United Kingdom Embassies and High Commissioners's Offices abroad; plans are also well advanced for our taking over the military works services in the Gold Coast to be followed by our assumption of responsibility for our own army in July next year; finally, in the matter of the maintenance of individual freedom and personal liberty, the present Government of the Gold Coast is second to none. Thus nearly all of the necessary administrative innovations planned for the interim period have been completed.

[13] You are also aware of the satisfactory working of our democratic legislative and Cabinet government and the healthy state of our public finance.

[14] Most important of all, due notice must be taken of the energy and determination of our people to achieve independence and the vigorous reaction that will result if our people feel that final independence for our country is being delayed.

[15] The length of the present transitional period to independence has already given rise to difficulties as I have stated above. Divided authority at the highest level within a country is never a good thing. Today, those who think that the present Government has more authority than it actually has, blame it for not doing what it cannot do. Those who imagine that the Government has less authority than it has, are tempted to flout decisions made by the Government. There are also those who wilfully act as if the United Kingdom Government's relationship with the Gold Coast had not changed from what it was a quarter of a century ago. Again some people imagine that the Government has no power at all and so it can be ignored, and as a result these people indulge in acts which are not in the best interests of the people of this country or of themselves.

[16] In the Civil Service, too, the inevitable results of a long transitional period are seen in divided loyalties.

[17] Trade, commerce and industry flourish best when the political future is assured. Those engaged in these pursuits cannot consider their future assured under the present conditions. Foreign investment on any increasing scale in particular, is held back by the prevailing uncertainty, and this is working to the detriment of our economic development and prosperity.

[18] The Volta River Project discussions cannot reach their vital stage or be approached with full confidence until a date has been fixed for the final transfer of power from the United Kingdom Government to the Gold Coast Government. And yet, for various reasons, the 'Rubicon' discussions should not be too long delayed.

[19] There is also the question of the future of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship. Owing to the uncertainty regarding the date of our independence, many United Nations members, including both those who are well disposed towards the Colonial Powers and those who are generally in opposition to them, are hesitant to support our demand for union of the trust territory with the Gold Coast. Some of these nations have expressed their fears that the United Kingdom Government might

be merely using us in order to annex the trust territory. They also fear that for some reason or other, unless the position is made abundantly clear, the Gold Coast might get a new Constitution with limitations on its sovereignty that might in the long run impair the future set before the trust territory and enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

[20] Within the next few months, a decision will be taken by the United Nations General Assembly as to the date on which a plebiscite should be held in Togoland under British administration, in order to ascertain the views of the inhabitants of the territory as to their future. Most probably the date chosen will not be later than the first or second quarter of 1956. I am convinced that the announcement before the plebiscite of the final date for independence for the Gold Coast will have a most favourable effect on increasing the number of those who will vote for union of British Togoland with an independent Gold Coast.

[21] In the political sphere too, the uncertainty regarding the future of independence is leading the Opposition politicians to adopt a less responsible attitude in national matters. The unwillingness of the National Liberation Movement and the other Opposition parties to come to a conference with me to discuss our present constitutional differences, is a case in point. If a date for independence had been fixed, there is little doubt that the leaders of these Opposition parties would have adopted a more responsible and co-operative attitude.

[22] I have noticed in various communications from the Colonial Office and from reports of discussions between my Ministers and Colonial Office personnel, that emphasis is being placed by the Colonial Office on what it terms "agreement" between the various political parties in the country as though it were in effect a condition for the granting of independence. I would like to make it clear that the protagonists of both a federal and a unitary form of government are agreed on self-government for this country. However, my Government and my Party have now decided in favour of regional devolution although those who advocate federalism still talk of federation or nothing at all. Under such circumstances agreement is almost impossible and it is therefore for the people to decide. It is hoped, however, that the Constitutional Adviser will be able to get an agreement between both sides on some practicable proposition. But no such disagreement should hinder or delay the fixing of a date for independence.

[23] It will, of course, be unrealistic to expect complete agreement between all parties in national questions, and the operation of the normal processes of democracy manifested in the strong criticism of the Government by the Opposition and also in the disagreement of the Opposition with the policies of the Government in power should not be misconstrued into an excuse for delaying independence for the Gold Coast.

[24] In this connection it must be mentioned that it was only as late as 1951 that a general election was held in this country and this was followed by another general election in 1954. Local government elections were also held in 1952 covering the whole country and we are at present in the process of holding another such election. This is hardly the time to contemplate plunging the country into new general elections.

[25] The present Government has thus only been in power for just over a year since the last general election and is now in the process of carrying out its election mandate. As the Government still has nearly three more years to run its normal

course in accordance with the Constitution, the Gold Coast public is not likely to welcome so soon another general election with their interruption of the normal life of the country and the heavy election expenses involved, as you are no doubt well aware.

[26] Even if it were considered desirable to hold another general election at the present time, or in the near future, how will it be justified to the public? The interpretation of the results may become a matter of long controversy having as its background the conflict of views as to the policy to be followed in the matter of regional devolution. The Party victorious at the polls in general may win different percentages of the votes in the various regions and this may be interpreted by separationists to mean that the Government elected to govern the country has different degrees of competence and mandate in respect of the various regions to carry on the administration of the country.

[27] In view of what I have said above regarding the dangers inherent in not announcing the final date of our independence in good time, I should like you to know that I am particularly anxious about the following:—

- (a) the present Government of the Gold Coast should be free to employ the period of office given it to fulfil its mandate of bringing independence to the country without delay;
- (b) I wish to avoid all possibility of misunderstanding and conflict arising between the United Kingdom Government on the one hand and the Government and people of the Gold Coast on the other;
- (c) the increase in recent years of trust and confidence between your country and mine should be maintained;
- (d) the appointment of a Constitutional Adviser should not be allowed to complicate our affairs. For, as you are aware, we here have already agreed in the Governor's Advisory Committee to a time-table for the negotiations and the drafting of the necessary instruments leading to the granting of independence to this country. There should, therefore, be no misunderstanding of the role of the Constitutional Adviser whom you have appointed to come over here at our own request. He is expected to be in this country for a period of up to three months, and we wish it to be clearly understood by all parties concerned that his appointment and work should not affect the time-table for independence agreed by us in the Advisory Committee.

[28] Although the present Government has a mandate to administer this country until 1958, that is a period of four years from 1954, I will nevertheless be prepared to consider calling for a general election within one year after independence is achieved.

[29] I hope I have made clear my reasons for asking that a date for our independence be fixed without delay, for I have undertaken to lead my people to "self-government now" and they have been anxiously looking forward to this for over four years. If I cannot very soon announce to them the final date for our independence, they will lose faith in me and I, in my turn, will lose faith in the United Kingdom Government. In fact, the National Liberation Movement and other Opposition parties have even gone so far as to say that I have entered into an understanding with you to delay the transfer of power! I and my Party have defended our position in this matter by stating that 1956 will be the year of our independence,

as that is what we want, although no such agreement has yet been made between us and the United Kingdom Government. You will therefore appreciate that the sooner this date can be agreed upon the better it will be for all of us.

[30] The view of most people here, both European and African, in the Public Service, in business and commerce, is that the present indefinite stage in the Gold Coast should be ended, and that the uncertainty about independence should be removed. The delay and the absence of the declaration of a fixed date for independence is fraught with many dangers.

[31] Finally, I am obliged to repeat again that after preliminary discussions between us in London, it will be imperative that I return with something positive to tell my people regarding the date of the final transfer of power; that is why I have taken the liberty to apprise you at length of the above points before such talks take place. If no such agreement or understanding can be arrived at, then any meeting between us in London will do nothing but create confusion, bitterness and ill-will in this country.

**192** CO 554/806, no 119

2 Oct 1955

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to C G Eastwood on Dr Nkrumah's letter to Mr Lennox-Boyd and the terms of a suggested reply<sup>1</sup>

In my Secret and Personal letter No. C.10.S.F.7. of yesterday's date forwarding the Prime Minister's letter to the Secretary of State<sup>2</sup> I said I would discuss his letter with Nkrumah and let you have my observations.

I have had a forthright and very friendly talk with Nkrumah. I pointed out to him that his letter read like an ultimatum that he would not come to London unless the Secretary of State would first agree to announce at an early date that independence would be granted to the Gold Coast in 1956. I referred to the messages sent by Her Majesty and the Secretary of State at the opening of the first session of the Legislative Assembly under the 1954 Constitution in which it was made clear that the Gold Coast was in the last stage before independence, with the implication that independence would be granted at the appropriate time. There was no deep laid plot on the part of the United Kingdom Government, as his letter seemed to imply, to cause any unnecessary delay in the grant of independence. He had pointed out forcefully the dangers and disadvantages of too long a transitional period under the present Constitution. I expressed agreement with much that he had written on this point and added that I, as Governor, was very well aware of the difficulties and dangers inherent in a Constitution under which the Governor was responsible for the maintenance of internal security, and the Ministers were free to take action or make speeches, without prior consultation with the Governor, which were liable to create a serious threat to internal security, and of the very severe strain this imposed on the relations between the Governor on the one hand and the Prime Minister and his Cabinet on

<sup>1</sup> This letter was in fact drafted by Arden-Clarke but signed by Hadow in the governor's absence.

<sup>2</sup> See 191.

the other. I was quite sure that the Secretary of State fully understood the position and was no more anxious than we were to prolong unnecessarily the period of transition.

I pointed out that, in pursuance of the joint policy of the two Governments to achieve independence for the Gold Coast as soon as practicable, it had been agreed that for planning purposes the earliest practicable date should be regarded as December 1956; a tentative programme for the preparation of the necessary constitutional instruments had been drawn up by the Gold Coast Government (a programme which was already in arrears); and all necessary administrative measures had been set in train for the transfer of the reserved subjects of Defence and External Affairs to an independent Gold Coast by the date agreed.

The purpose of the informal talks with the Secretary of State, to which Nkrumah had been invited, was to discuss the further steps to be taken by the two Governments, Gold Coast and United Kingdom, before the independence of the Gold Coast could be achieved.

All our talks about independence, since the new Government came into power in 1954, had been based on the assumption, though this had not yet been specifically confirmed in writing by the United Kingdom Government, that two conditions would have to be met before independence could be granted, *viz*:-

- (a) that a substantial majority of the people desired immediate independence,
- (b) that the Constitution under which the Gold Coast would enter upon independence was workable and acceptable to a substantial majority of the people.

I pointed out that until these conditions were fulfilled it seemed to me extremely doubtful that a definite date for independence could be fixed but that once these conditions had been met it would not be in the interests of either Government to cause any unnecessary delay. The question to be resolved seemed to be how soon and in what manner these conditions could be fulfilled.

As regards (a) I agreed that the desire for independence was general but that there were many who did not desire it in 1956 or until provisions were inserted in the Constitution which would allay their fears and suspicions of domination from Accra and which would provide a reasonable degree of regional autonomy, principally in local government and local constitutional matters. In the Northern Territories the idea of eventual independence was accepted but from the beginning the Northern Territories Council and the Chiefs had urged that it should not be granted until the Northern Territories had overcome their backwardness and were capable of taking their part as equal partners with Ashanti and the Colony. In Ashanti the N.L.M. had been established in opposition to the Government and there had been a rapid accession of strength to it: in the minds of some of the N.L.M. leaders there was such a bitter feeling of hostility to the C.P.P. that they might be irreconcilable and the best way to deal with them would be to isolate them politically and give them no grounds on which they could appeal to Ashanti national feeling and rally the people to their cause. In the Colony, the Western Region appeared generally to support Nkrumah and the C.P.P. but in the Eastern Region the N.L.M. were making considerable headway in the largest state, Akim Abuakwa, and were infiltrating into some of the neighbouring states. In the Trans-Volta/Togoland Region the Togoland Congress party was a force to be reckoned with in the Ewe area and was in opposition to the

C.P.P. and its policy of integration in the Gold Coast. This picture did not tally with that drawn by Nkrumah in his letter.

As regards (b) the form of constitution under which the Gold Coast would enter upon independence, Nkrumah had pointed out (in paragraph 22 of his letter) that under existing circumstances "agreement is almost impossible and it is therefore for the people to decide". I pointed out that it was for the Gold Coast Government to formulate its proposals for a constitution which it thinks will be generally acceptable: it had called in an impartial Constitutional Adviser to assist and he was now engaged on the task. If his task were not made too difficult by actions on the part of the Gold Coast Government which would magnify the fears and mistrust of the Opposition and intensify their intransigence, there were good prospects that constitutional proposals would emerge that would be generally acceptable to a substantial majority of the people when put before them to decide.

In the light of these considerations, therefore, it appeared to me that the deciding factor regarding the date of independence was the speed with which the Gold Coast Government could formulate its constitutional proposals and satisfy the United Kingdom Government that they were workable and generally acceptable to a substantial majority of the people. Determined opposition on a really large scale could make the constitution unworkable and endanger the continuance of stable and effective government, and both the United Kingdom and Gold Coast Governments would have to take account of this.

Nkrumah did not express any major disagreement with the views set out above. Finally he summarised his views as follows:—

He attached prime importance to the work of the Constitutional Adviser. If the Adviser managed to achieve general agreement between the principal political parties on the form of the constitution, Nkrumah would then come to the United Kingdom Government with that constitution and ask them to fix a date for independence under it. If, on the other hand, as seemed more likely, disagreement persisted between the political parties, then he would take his constitutional proposals to the country and leave the people to decide whether they wanted independence under that form of Constitution. If he was returned with a majority he would then go to the United Kingdom Government and ask them to fix a date for independence. If for practical reasons constitutional instruments could not be prepared and the Act of Independence passed before the first or second quarter of 1957, he would have no objection provided that as a result of his negotiations with the United Kingdom Government and his visit to London he could announce a definite date for independence.

This, I think, is a more accurate description of his present line of thought than that contained in his letter.

I have not attempted to canvass the statements made in Nkrumah's letter paragraph by paragraph as I do not think that this would serve any useful purpose.

I suggest that the Secretary of State's reply to Nkrumah might include the conditions which the United Kingdom Government would expect to be fulfilled before independence is achieved: it might suggest that the first step would be for the Gold Coast to formulate its constitutional proposals and, if manifest agreement to them between the parties cannot be obtained round the table, leave, to quote

Nkrumah, "the people to decide": an essential preliminary to the formulation of these proposals is for the Constitutional Adviser to complete his task: in view of Nkrumah's strongly expressed views regarding the need to fix a date for independence as a result of any visit he may pay to London it would seem best to defer this visit until the result of the Constitutional Adviser's mission is known: an assurance might also be given that the United Kingdom Government has no intention of imposing any unnecessary delay in the grant of independence.

**193** T 220/433

2 Oct 1955

'Togoland': outward telegram no 63 from C G Eastwood to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the discussions in London with the UN Visiting Mission about the form of the proposed plebiscite

[Extract]

[Three UN Visiting Missions conducted surveys of public opinion in British and French Togoland during their visits in 1949, 1952 and 1955. The first two Missions were directed to study and report on all relevant aspects of the Ewe and Togoland problems, including the state of popular sentiment in the two Trust Territories. By contrast, the third Mission was specifically requested to consider and make recommendations regarding the arrangements necessary to ascertain the wishes of the inhabitants. A majority of the 1955 Mission recommended that a plebiscite should be held in British Togoland without delay. The Mission discussed their draft report in London with Lennox-Boyd after the visit.]

Your telegrams No. 521 and Personal No. 52.

Togoland.

Your telegrams were most helpful to Secretary of State in his talk with Visiting Mission. Mission read out their draft Report which confirmed summary in your telegram No. 521. Discussion was very cordial, and Secretary of State congratulated Mission on the way they had conducted their task.

2. Mission's report is to be tabled on 1st November and debated in Trusteeship Council within ten days of that date. We thus have only a month in which to brief our Delegation in New York, after discussion with the French. Grateful, therefore, for your very urgent comments on following paragraphs in order that we may submit firm proposals to Secretary of State. We leave it to you how far you wish to consult your Ministers at this stage.

3. Form of plebiscite is clearly the most important question. On this point Mission made it clear that their minds were made up, and the only thing for us to consider is therefore our attitude when their proposal comes before United Nations. We appreciate tactical reasons in paragraph 2 of your Personal telegram No. 52 against agreeing to contemplate continuance of U.K. Trusteeship for whole or part of British Togoland in any circumstances. On the other hand we must recognise the following strong arguments in the opposite direction:—

(a) Mission argued persuasively in discussion with Secretary of State that questions as recommended in our memorandum (integration with or separation from Gold Coast) would give voters no real alternative to integration and would be regarded both by voters and by United Nations as a device for exerting pressure in favour of integration. They even predicted that plebiscite in this form would be boycotted by Togoland Congress supporters in Southern Togoland. Secretary of State was impressed with these arguments.

(b) What will immediate effect be in United Nations if we flatly refuse to play? We cannot (repeat cannot) expect to get away with form of plebiscite which would propose immediate unification with French Togoland as alternative to integration with Gold Coast. Mission said that they would regard this as most unfair alternative of all, and United Nations will undoubtedly think the same. Moreover the French have told the Mission that they propose to hold referendum in French Togoland before long. This clearly suggests some form of interim arrangement for part or whole of British Togoland as alternative to integration with Gold Coast. If U.K. does not step into the breach, period of direct United Nations Trusteeship is almost certain to be proposed, and we do not see how we could resist.

4. We therefore feel that on purely tactical as well as other grounds we must very seriously consider offering continuation of U.K. Trusteeship for a limited (repeat limited) period as alternative to integration with Gold Coast. We note the view expressed in paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 521 that continued Trusteeship would not be entirely impracticable given co-operation of Gold Coast Government. It could theoretically be arranged in any of the following three ways.

(a) Continued administration as integral part of the Gold Coast, with Gold Coast Government acting as agents of H.M.G. but with ultimate powers in respect of Trust Territory vested in Governor-General or U.K. High Commissioner. With the best will in the world this would at first sight land H.M.G. in a most invidious position of responsibility without power, since ultimate powers would at best be extremely hard to exercise. By definition the Trust Territory would continue to be governed by same legislation and administrative arrangements as Gold Coast proper, and U.K. High Commissioner could not intervene in one without intervening in the other. Moreover we should be faced with anomaly of representative from U.K. Trust Territory in legislature of independent Gold Coast. Finally, United Nations might well regard the whole arrangement as a device to make impossible any other ultimate solution than complete and final integration with Gold Coast.

(b) Complete severance from Gold Coast and establishment of separate administration for Trust Territory. This would avoid difficulties under (a) above but would create others perhaps equally serious. Trust Territory might well be unable to pay its way without annual grant-in-aid from U.K. Treasury, whom we have not yet consulted; but apart from inconvenience and cost of establishing separate administration, disruption of present economic and other links with Gold Coast might cause serious setback to prosperity and standards of living.

(c) Compromise between (a) and (b) above, involving creation of separate administrative (and legislative) framework but maintenance of certain common services somewhat on lines of East Africa High Commission. This might be most practicable course but might on the other hand give us worst of both worlds. Maintenance of common services with independent Gold Coast would entail at least some of difficulties under (b) above.

5. Particularly grateful for your urgent comments on these three possible methods. . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See 248, para 5, for the questions asked in the plebiscite.

**194** T 220/433

7 Oct 1955

**'South Togoland': memorandum by S D Light (Treasury) to A K Rawlinson (Treasury) on Treasury opposition to a separate grant-aided South Togoland administration<sup>1</sup>**

1. The possibility that we might have to grant-aid a separate South Togoland administration is naturally repugnant to us. We should like to see integration with the Gold Coast. Equally we should like to see the Gold Coast financially responsible for any alternative choice to be offered to the Togolanders.

2. If neither the U.K. nor the Gold Coast is to pay, then direct U.N. trusteeship of S. Togoland is the only answer. This possibility is inherent in the Governor's proposal that we should withdraw when the Gold Coast attains independence. The Colonial Office clearly view this possibility as a major political disaster. But as I see the Colonial Office's own proposal for a limited period of U.K. trusteeship, the possibility of this evil happening is only postponed. We must be careful, therefore, that we do not let ourselves get embroiled in an undesirable long term commitment which begins only as a short term expedient. If integration with the Gold Coast is not now possible, it is clearly desirable for Togoland to retain as many links with the Gold Coast as possible, so that integration might be facilitated at a later date. French Togoland might elect not to join with Southern Togoland.

3. We have no means of estimating the likely pattern of a South Togoland budget. The wealth of the Gold Coast lies primarily in cocoa, and Togoland is not one of the major cocoa producing areas. If the Jasikan district (which produces 75% of Togoland's cocoa) were not included in the south, it seems inevitable that Togoland would need to be grant-aided; even with Jasikan, assistance might be needed. As you will see from the foregoing map, Southern Togoland would be a very small territory, and would have to carry a top heavy administration.

4. The importance of cocoa to the Gold Coast is shown by the following table of the territory's revenue:

	<i>1954/55</i>	<i>1955/56</i>
	<i>Revised Estimates</i>	<i>Estimates</i>
	£m	£m
Total Revenue	77	65
Cocoa Export Duties	45.6	35.2
Import Duties	11.9	12.5
Income Tax	6.0	5.5

South Togoland would have no access to the sea, and unless it were given a standing percentage of the Gold Coast's import duties, smuggling might virtually defeat any attempt to collect import duty. Revenue from income tax might be expected to be very small. It is therefore fairly safe to assume that South Togoland, certainly without the cocoa revenue from Jasikan, would need H.M.G. assistance. Without a local enquiry, I fear it might be impossible to attempt to assess what part of the Gold

<sup>1</sup> Light was a higher executive officer; Rawlinson an assistant principal.

Coast's annual expenditure of £65/70 million could be attributed to South Togoland.<sup>2</sup> The combined population of North and South Togoland account for over 400,000 of the Gold Coast 4.4 million population.

5. Although not truly analogous, the present question has some common features with the not dissimilar problem which arose last year in connection with the South Cameroons, our other West African Trust Territory. The issue then was whether the South Cameroons should be split off from the Eastern Region, and if so whether we should grant-aid them. Compared with South Togoland, there was the essential difference that it was accepted that a separate South Cameroons would remain part of the Federation of Nigeria, and in the event Nigeria agreed that the Federal Government should assume financial responsibility for the Cameroons. But some of the thoughts which then guided us are not irrelevant in this present case. We were then concerned not to make arrangements which might prejudice our long-term position.

6. It is all very well for the Colonial Office to talk about continuation of U.K. trusteeship for only a limited period. At the end of that period, these are some of the possibilities:

- (i) Integration with the Gold Coast. This will be made more difficult if the financial ties with a non-viable territory are now broken.
- (ii) An independent South Togoland. This would still need financial assistance. But we are opposed to financial aid without financial control, and we could not control a self-governing state. The alternative would be for the United Nations to grant-aid Togoland. If this were to be the likely final outcome, the United Nations might just as well start paying now as in, say, five years' time. Would direct U.N. trusteeship at this present time really be such a major political disaster; the Governor is apparently prepared to face this risk. The political objections remain to be stated.
- (iii) Union with French Togoland. French Togoland is, I understand, rather comparable with British Togoland, and so the same problems of financial assistance might arise, as in the event of a separate autonomous state of South Togoland.

The danger is that once we allow the financial link with the Gold Coast to be broken, there is the risk that we shall be saddled with a continuing financial commitment, from which the United Nations will afford the only escape.

7. Whether the Gold Coast would be prepared to retain any links with a territory which did not wish to be integrated is, of course, another matter. But from our point of view, I should have thought that the solutions in paragraphs 4(a) and (c) of the Colonial Office telegram of 2nd October were to be preferred to the one in paragraph 4(b).<sup>3</sup> They mitigate the danger of our being saddled with a long term liability, although there is the danger of responsibility without power. But under the limited U.K. trusteeship idea, we should really be saddled with financial responsibility without effective financial control. Even before an insolvent South Togoland was pushed to autonomy by the United Nations, we should virtually be helpless in trying

<sup>2</sup> Rawlinson commented (8 Oct) in the margin: 'And expenditure would be higher anyway if there were a separate Togoland administration.'

<sup>3</sup> See 193.

to control the level of revenue in South Togoland. Cocoa duties would be determined by the level of the Gold Coast duties, for if we tried to charge higher duties in such a small territory, the cocoa would just be smuggled over the border. Any hope of collecting revenue from the other main source, i.e. import duties, is fraught with every conceivable risk.

8. We must now await the Governor's reactions, but I would hope that he can produce some satisfactory alternative to the Colonial Office's solution in paragraph 4(b). Of the alternatives now before us, I rather suspect the Colonial Office are overplaying the dangers inherent in administration (with financial responsibility) by the Gold Coast as agents of H.M.G. What reason have the Colonial Office for thinking that the Gold Coast would adopt vindictive policies towards South Togoland? They have made special development grants already, and I should have thought that we might be entitled to assume that they would continue to try to win over the territory, until experience showed otherwise. That might then be the time for either the U.K. or the United Nations to step in.

**195** T 220/433

26 Oct 1955

'Togoland': outward telegram no 75 from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the report of the UN Visiting Mission

Advance copies of Visiting Mission's Report have now been received here. On question of voting by areas, Mission have modified their proposals. I will communicate separately about this. In other respects, including form of plebiscite, Report confirms forecast given by Visiting Mission in London. Minority view of Tarazi<sup>1</sup> is included (repeat included).

2. I am very sorry to hear that any change of attitude by H.M.G. would be regarded by Gold Coast Government as breach of faith. I hope your Ministers can be brought to appreciate that my only aim in this whole question is to find out what to do for the best in light of new (repeat new) situation created by contents of Visiting Mission's Report. We cannot (repeat cannot) ignore United Nations aspect of this matter, however much we may dislike it. Consequences of conflict with United Nations, or of United Nations refusal to agree to a plebiscite at all at this stage, would in my view be gravely detrimental to Gold Coast interests. I am sure, therefore, that we must all strive together for a solution which is fair, which will be acceptable to United Nations, and which will offer best prospect of integration of whole of British Togoland with Gold Coast. These considerations are not (repeat not) easy to reconcile.

3. We had hoped to secure form of plebiscite which would leave alternative to integration with Gold Coast as an open question. Visiting Mission say this would give no real choice and would be widely regarded by voters in Southern Togoland as means of forcing integration. They have predicted boycott if plebiscite is conducted on these terms. They therefore reject formula which we proposed to them ("Do you wish to be integrated with Gold Coast or separated from Gold Coast?") and recommend offer of specific (repeat specific) alternative to integration. We must

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<sup>1</sup> Syrian representative on the UN Visiting Mission.

expect United Nations, though always unpredictable, to accept Visiting Mission's view on this point.

4. That is the new situation we have to face. I am confident that Gold Coast Ministers will be ready to examine its implications in the light of considerations set out in paragraph 1 above. At present they appear to think situation can be met by simply refusing to continue U.K. Trusteeship (over whole or part of British Togoland) and leaving the rest to chance. I regard this view as shortsighted, since it implies abandonment of U.K. influence over future course of events. We cannot (repeat cannot) be at all sure that events if thus left to themselves would turn out to the benefit of the Gold Coast. Nor do I think Gold Coast Ministers are being realistic if they consider that they can force the issue in favour of integration by threatening to refuse co-operation or actually refusing co-operation with whatever regime is decided upon (whether or not it be continuance of U.K. Trusteeship) for any areas deciding not to integrate. Surely this would be the best means of permanently embittering important elements in Southern Togoland against Gold Coast and creating a source of lasting friction which could only embarrass Gold Coast itself. Moreover it would antagonise United Nations, which would in my view be a grave tactical error. Capacity of Southern Togoland for making trouble with United Nations backing must not be under-estimated.

5. Above does not necessarily mean that we must announce definite U.K. views at beginning of forthcoming debates in Trusteeship Council and Fourth Committee. On the contrary, it may be prudent for us to hold our hand until we see how things develop. If independence for whole or any part of British Togoland as a separate unit is ruled out on grounds of its obvious absurdity, only alternative to integration is Trusteeship in one form or another. Possible variants are Trusteeship under U.K. administration, administration by some other Member State or (conceivably) Gold Coast administration. We might express the view, at least in the opening stages, that alternative to integration with Gold Coast should be continued Trusteeship without (repeat without) specifying Administering Authority. Alternative proposed by Visiting Mission in fact merely specified continuance under Trusteeship, though it is made clear in text of Report that U.K. Trusteeship is intended. We could urge on the following grounds that no (repeat no) specific Administering Authority should be designated at the present stage:-

(a) We appreciate Visiting Mission's reason for contending that if choice is to be real voters must be given some indication of future which would await them in the event of their deciding not to integrate with Gold Coast.

(b) On the other hand any attempt here and now to devise exactly what arrangements should be adopted if voters rejected integration might result in premature and wrong decisions which would adversely affect well-being of inhabitants. Complex nature of questions which would arise in the event of plebiscite going against integration in part or whole of Togoland must be evident from U.K. memorandum submitted to the United Nations last year.

(c) As regards possibility of continued U.K. administration, we could point not only to practical difficulties inherent in any form of Trusteeship for this small area but to delicate position of United Kingdom in view of its past and present association with Gold Coast. We could ask Visiting Mission to explain how they envisage continued U.K. Trusteeship as compatible with independent status of

Gold Coast. Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, who has just returned from New York, understands from Bannerjee that continued administration as integral part of Gold Coast is in fact envisaged, but Report itself is silent on the question.

6. There are valid arguments, and it is possible that they would stick. On the other hand we must face possibility that they will not (repeat not) be accepted. Visiting Mission are likely to press strongly for more definite alternative to integration. U.K. Delegation in New York have warned us that in the event of our maintaining refusal to co-operate, United Nations may not be prepared to give us a plebiscite at all at this Assembly. It is also possible that strong pressure would arise (it may arise in any case) for acceptance of minority recommendation by Tarazi that separate legislative and administrative arrangements for British Togoland should be established before plebiscite takes place. We have discussed in previous telegrams the further possibility that United Nations Trusteeship might be urged. I cannot believe that this would be anything but a cause of continued difficulty. Present complacency of Gold Coast Ministers on this score seems to be based on assumption, which I have deprecated in paragraph 3 above, that they could render U.N. Trusteeship ineffective by non-cooperation. Nor can it be assumed that United Nations themselves would be prepared to undertake the task. They might wish to entrust it to a single Member State such as India. (They are not (repeat not) likely in our view to wish to entrust it to the French).

7. It is of course impossible to say in advance what proposals would emerge or what steps could be taken to counteract them. Moreover I appreciate force of your tactical arguments against offering continuance of U.K. Trusteeship as alternative to integration, and I do not underestimate difficulty and delicacy of task which U.K. would have to undertake if U.K. Trusteeship in fact had to be continued for part or whole of British Togoland. Matter has not (repeat not) yet been finally considered here, and your views will be fully taken into account. On the other hand I personally remain convinced that unless we are prepared in the last resort to offer temporary continuance of U.K. Trusteeship as alternative to integration we may be powerless to prevent worse things from happening. I consider that this solution, besides being fair, might well prove to be the best calculated to achieve our common objective of ultimate if not immediate integration of whole of British Togoland with Gold Coast.

8. Grateful for further statement of your views in the light of the above, so that matter can be finally considered here and discussed with the French. You will appreciate that if this course is adopted, our Delegation in New York will be faced with very difficult problem of timing and tactics in Fourth Committee and that success cannot (repeat cannot) be guaranteed. In spite of its advantages, proposal that we should not declare our hand at the outset inevitably involves risk that unacceptable proposals may gather momentum in the U.N. before we are able to stop them. We shall, however, have invaluable assistance of Gbedemah who will be fully associated with all action taken in Fourth Committee.

9. We have now provisionally fixed Trusteeship Council meeting for 21st (repeat 21st) November. This, however, is the very last date which would allow sufficient time for subsequent discussion in Fourth Committee, and it may be tactically extremely desirable to advance date by a few days. Matter is therefore still extremely urgent.

**196** CO 554/806, no 125

1 Nov 1955

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the exchange of letters between Dr Nkrumah and Mr Lennox-Boyd.  
*Enclosure*: letter (reply) from Lennox-Boyd to Nkrumah (31 Oct)

We were very grateful to have Hadow's letter of the 2nd October<sup>1</sup> in which he gave us your observations on the letter from Nkrumah<sup>2</sup> that you had forwarded with your letter of the 1st October. The Secretary of State has asked me to let you know how much he appreciates all that you have done to clarify the issues in Nkrumah's mind and to help him towards a better understanding of the fundamental realities of the situation.

2. The Secretary of State has accepted your advice on the lines of the reply which he should return to Nkrumah's letter and I enclose his reply, which he would be grateful if you would hand to the Prime Minister. I also enclose a copy for your records.

3. We are particularly glad to know that Nkrumah attaches prime importance to the work of the constitutional adviser. Indeed until we can have some idea of the degree of success which Bourne is likely to have it is difficult for us to make any plans for the future, not only in connection with the procedure for getting the necessary constitutional instruments prepared but also in connection with the procedure for securing the consent of the existing full members of the Commonwealth to the admission of the Gold Coast. It is therefore particularly important, as I am sure you will agree, that we should be kept closely in touch with Bourne's progress and I hope you will be able to let us have from now on regular reports on what he is doing and what his chances of success seem to be.

4. It seems likely that we may be faced with delicate questions of timing over the announcement of H.M.G.'s decision to grant independence to the Gold Coast and the submitting to Commonwealth Governments of the question of the Gold Coast becoming a full member of the Commonwealth.

5. Nkrumah no doubt wants a firm and final decision on independence to be announced as soon as possible and he has said that he would like it before the Togoland plebiscite which we are assuming may be about March. No decision is possible of course until it can be said that H.M.G.'s two conditions for independence are met – i.e. the conditions set out in the Secretary of State's letter to Nkrumah. If, as may be the case, this stage were reached fairly early in the New Year, then, looking at it solely from an internal Gold Coast point of view, an early announcement might be practicable. But it is not now possible to treat the question of independence as unrelated to that of Commonwealth membership. The Commonwealth Relations Office advise us that their task in getting the other Commonwealth countries, and particularly South Africa, to agree to admit the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership – and preferably on the same day as the Gold Coast becomes independent – would be made more difficult if final decisions about the date of independence had already been announced.

6. The question of Commonwealth membership can only be settled at a meeting

<sup>1</sup> See 192.

<sup>2</sup> See 191.

of Commonwealth Prime Ministers and, as you know, the next meeting has now been fixed for the end of June. Certain Commonwealth Governments have in the past made it clear that they would not wish questions of this sort to be settled only in correspondence. All the Commonwealth Governments will, however, have to be warned some time beforehand if this question is to be on the agenda at the meeting. The only Government from which serious difficulties are at all likely, provided that the timing of any announcement is carefully handled, is South Africa and Liesching will have to broach the matter with them well before the meeting. He may indeed feel it expedient that he should be instructed to make the first approach fairly soon. The Commonwealth Relations Office are expecting to hear from him on this in two or three weeks' time.

7. From the point of view of getting admission to Commonwealth membership through the other Commonwealth Governments it would really be best if nothing definite were said about independence until after the meeting of Prime Ministers. But we quite realize that it may not be possible to hold the position in the Gold Coast for so long. If that proves to be the case we should have to consider what could safely be said before the meeting. While we need not try to draft the exact words now it might perhaps be something on the following lines:—

Her Majesty's Government are now satisfied that the majority of the people of the Gold Coast desire immediate independence and will be content with the constitution which is proposed. The drafting of the Constitutional Instruments which will be necessary for the grant of independence, including the bill for submission to the United Kingdom Parliament, can therefore now be started and at the appropriate time Her Majesty's Government will take up with other Commonwealth Governments the question of the admission of the Gold Coast to full membership of the Commonwealth.

Something on these lines should give Nkrumah most of what he wants and the final announcement could then be made after the Prime Ministers' meeting.

8. Delay in making the final announcement would not necessarily put back the actual date of independence at all because the lawyers would have been getting on with their work from the moment the nature of the new constitution was settled. It does however now look as if it is going to be more than ever difficult to keep to Nkrumah's "Timetable for Independence" which formed annexure 2 to Hadow's letter to me C.10/Secret of the 21st June.<sup>3</sup>

9. As I have said the Commonwealth Relations Office are expecting a report from Liesching in a few weeks' time. We should very much appreciate a letter from you in the next fortnight or so giving your reactions to what I have written.

#### Enclosure to 196

It was very good of you to write to me so fully on the 3rd [sic] September<sup>4</sup> about the suggestion I had made that you might come to London to discuss with me the affairs of the Gold Coast and its progress towards independence. I have been looking

<sup>3</sup> See 167.

<sup>4</sup> The date of Nkrumah's letter was 30 Sept.

forward to renewing our acquaintance and I also firmly believe that the time is long overdue for you to be received with due ceremony in London and to make the acquaintance of leading figures in this country. Although we have successfully disposed of many problems in correspondence over the last years I felt too that renewed personal contact could not but help us in the future. I still therefore hope very much that we can meet ere long, but I do appreciate that it might be embarrassing for you to come to England just at present and that we had better therefore leave open the question of a visit until we know what the result has been of Sir Frederick Bourne's mission. Like you I attach very great importance indeed to the work which he is doing.

I think you already know how exercised I have been in my mind about the obstacles which have arisen in the past year or so to the attainment by the Gold Coast of independence. The display of violence by political parties and the development of a deep-rooted division of opinion on the subject of the Gold Coast constitution have caused many people in the U.K. to wonder whether there exists in the Gold Coast that measure of general agreement on the fundamentals of democratic life to make it possible for the Gold Coast to achieve independence. I know that you have shared many of these doubts and that you have been particularly concerned to point out to your own people the importance of preserving peace and settling your disputes calmly and reasonably. At the same time I have been very conscious of the need to press on with the administrative arrangements necessary to allow the Gold Coast to attain independence as soon as possible and with your ever-ready and willing cooperation we have made good progress, particularly in the fields of defence and external affairs. I can assure you that I shall continue to do everything in my power to see that the United Kingdom Government plays its full part in completing those arrangements without delay. Like you I have been conscious of the many difficulties which are bound to arise in the last stage before self-government and I feel I must let you know of my admiration for the way in which you have, together with the Governor, surmounted those difficulties with good will and commonsense.

There are now in my view two things which are necessary before H.M.G. can consider the grant of independence and it is my hope that both these things can be achieved without much delay. In the first place it is necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to show that they desire independence in the very near future. In the second place it is equally necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to agree upon a constitution which not only meets their needs but is also workable. It is my hope, as I know it is yours, that as a result of the work done by Sir Frederick Bourne it will be possible for the Gold Coast Government to put forward its proposals for the form of the constitution after independence in the knowledge that those proposals are generally acceptable in the country. If by any mischance it should be impossible for Sir Frederick to recommend proposals which are generally acceptable, then, as you yourself I know recognise, there would seem to be no choice but to seek the views of the people on this question by means of a General Election in the hope that this would produce a really decisive result.

**197** CO 554/806, no 133

10 Nov 1955

**[Bourne Mission]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir T Lloyd on the progress of Sir F Bourne's Mission and legislation to amend the State Councils Ordinances of the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories**

In your Secret and Personal letter of the 1st November<sup>1</sup> you asked me to let you have an account of Bourne's progress with his mission.

Bourne has now completed his preliminary enquiries, and has visited all the Regions in the Gold Coast. He has had talks with Regional Officers and Administrative Officers, and with as many important Africans as are prepared to talk things over with him. He has also met a number of the Opposition politicians more or less socially.

As I think you know, the Opposition formally demanded the publication of his terms of reference, and this demand was met, generally to their satisfaction, by the recent Gazette publication of which I enclose a copy.<sup>2</sup> They have also, it seems, been satisfied with the undertaking published by the Government to arrange for a round-table conference. The press is rather less vociferous than it was, and Bourne has told me that a recent meeting he had with a representative delegation of the N.L.M. and their allies gave him the impression that they were anxious to come out into the open and discuss things with him, provided that some face-saving formula could be worked out. At present, in Ashanti particularly, great exception is being taken to the Bills introduced at the present meeting of the Assembly to amend the State Councils Ordinances in a way unfavourable to the functions and privileges of the important Chiefs.<sup>3</sup> I will return to this point shortly.

Bourne found the Northern Territories Council, of which he met the Standing Committee, quite prepared to co-operate. They are in fact preparing a paper on the subject of constitutional reform for discussion at the full Council at the end of this month, and Bourne hopes to have an opportunity of discussing this paper with the Drafting Committee and the Standing Committee before it goes before the full Council. Bourne says that he thinks the Northern Territories as a whole would accept a reasonable compromise, but he feels that at their stage of development they will need special safeguards of one kind or another.

The difficulties in the other four Regions are very much less. Arrangements in the Trans-Volta/Togoland Region will have to wait until the Trusteeship question is settled. The Western Region seems to be perfectly happy to accept whatever the Government asks them to accept. In the Eastern Region there is a head-on clash between the Government and the Paramount Chief of the Akim Abuakwa State, and

<sup>1</sup> See 196.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

<sup>3</sup> The Ashanti bill was designed to erode the authority of the Asanteman Council (the State Council of the Asante Confederacy, a stronghold of the NLM) over those Brong states and their rulers who supported the NLM. At this time the CPP was publicly pledging itself to split Ashanti by creating a further region, Brong-Ahafo. Some Brong states had a long-standing complaint about being placed under Asante authority when the confederacy was 'restored' in the 1930s. When enacted in Dec 1955, the State Council (Ashanti) Amendment Ordinance was received as a partisan and hostile piece of legislation by the NLM. See also, 209, paras 4-6.

to a lesser extent with the Paramount Chief of Manya Krobo, but the situation, though difficult in these two States, is not beyond hope in the Region as a whole. The Accra Region is solidly behind the Government, as far as I can see.

Until the Opposition parties, and particularly the Ashanti N.L.M., can be brought to agree to hold discussions with him, Bourne proposes during the next fortnight to talk over possible solutions with the Prime Minister (and perhaps the Cabinet), and to continue consulting various "elder statesmen". If, and it is still a big "if", the Opposition (in Ashanti in particular) were prepared to be consulted within the next fortnight or so, Bourne thinks he would be able to have a more or less concrete scheme ready for discussion at a round-table conference early in December, and to send Government his final report by Christmas.

As you see, the main stumbling block is constituted by the Bills to amend the State Councils Ordinances. I am transmitting separately the latest versions of these Bills. There have been several versions already and there may well be more before the question is finally resolved. The provisions in these Bills to which the greatest exception is taken are that:-

- (a) appeals in local constitutional matters throughout the country should lie to the Governor-in-Council and not as at present to the Governor "in his discretion", thus bringing the determination of local constitutional matters within the realm of party politics;
- (b) in the case of Ashanti appeals on all local constitutional matters from States within the orbit of the Asanteman Council should no longer be determined by the Asanteman Council as at present but should "by-pass" that Council and be dealt with by the Governor-in-Council. The proposal to circumvent the Asanteman Council is widely regarded as an affront to the Asantehene personally as well as to the Asanteman Council and it is of course a calculated withdrawal of chiefly power and privilege.

These provisions are in conflict with the proposals in paragraph 10 of Sir Reginald Saloway's despatch No. 299 of the 9th April 1954, that the determination of local constitutional matters should be kept outside the realm of politics and that a Local Constitutional Commission should be established by statute, on the strength of which the 1954 Constitutional Instruments were made. In my view this constituted a breach of public faith and the Government have now agreed to amend these Bills to provide that appeals should continue to lie to the Governor "in his discretion" and to give an assurance in the Assembly, when the bills are introduced, that legislation to establish the Local Constitutional Commission will be introduced at the next meeting.

It is not now improbable that this stumbling block may be, if not removed, at least diminished to a size which will not impede Bourne's progress. Though the present outlook is still far from encouraging, I am not without hope that I may be able to send you a more cheerful report in two or three weeks' time.

**198** CO 554/806, no 130

14 Nov 1955

[State Councils Ordinances]: outward telegram no 689 from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on NLM petitions against the proposed State Council (Ashanti) Amendment Ordinance

[Lennox-Boyd minuted (13 Nov) on this tel: 'I agree to this telegram which if anything is not drawn stiffly enough. I have long been *sure* that we are in for real trouble here and I must frankly confess to a growing doubt whether the Governor is (as a neighbour said) "whistling to keep his spirits up" or so influenced by the personal trust the CPP places in him as not to realise the extent of the forces on the other side. It is surely criminally inept to introduce a Bill like this at such a time. (Incidentally to talk seriously of the possibility of giving the UNO mandate for Togoland to people who act in this way seems to be madness). I will *NOT* sanction this Bill. Should not the Cabinet know of this deteriorating position – and how much are the Chiefs of Staff in the picture? Would it not be wise to ask Sir Fred. Bourne to *adjourn* his enquiry – (he can easily find some excuse) – and come back and report?' (CO 554/806, no 131, emphasis in original).]

Your telegram No. 604 and your savingram No. 977.

Petitions against Bill to amend State Councils Ordinance.

I hope you can send me very soon comments of your Ministers on these petitions. I have been much concerned to learn from a Reuter message that the National Liberation Movement has decided not to meet the Constitutional Adviser until the Bill is withdrawn. I fully appreciate the importance of ensuring that no outside body should attempt to determine what business is transacted in the Gold Coast Legislature but I am nevertheless seriously disturbed lest the timing of this particular measure and the absence of any consultation with the interests affected may not have grave repercussions. I fear it may cause the good faith of Government to be widely doubted and threaten the maintenance of public order. I thought that your Ministers share, as I know you do, my view that the work of the Constitutional Adviser is of paramount importance; if they do I find it hard to understand why they regard the merits of the Bill as outweighing the efforts of the Constitutional Adviser to bring about reconciliation.

2. Although the objects and reasons given for the Bill include the statement that these measures are necessary in the interest of good government I note the declaration by the Chairman of the National Liberation Movement that civil strife is likely to occur if the Bill is not withdrawn. I have repeatedly drawn attention to the dangers of provoking violence in the present stage of Gold Coast constitutional development and I would find it difficult, if not impossible, to defend or even to acquiesce in this measure if it is in fact likely to lead directly to violent action.

**199** CO 554/1311, no 7

18 Nov 1955

[Cocoa Purchasing Company]: outward telegram no 85 from C G Eastwood to Sir C Arden-Clarke on allegations of irregularities in the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company; proposed statement by Mr Lennox-Boyd in the House of Commons

[On the question of a commission of inquiry and a proposed parliamentary statement, Arden-Clarke replied to Eastwood in inward tel no 63 dated 21 Nov: 'I have consulted the

Prime Minister. Gold Coast Government has decided that an independent investigation will be conducted into the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company and has no objection to the Secretary of State announcing this in his answer to Parliamentary Questions. In the circumstances I assume that the Secretary of State will not (repeat not) wish me to convey his message officially to Nkrumah and that no reference to such a message will be made in his statement to the House of Commons' (CO 554/1311, no 9).]

Your secret and personal letter dated 25th October.

Petition for Commission of Enquiry: Cocoa Purchasing Company.

Secretary of State proposes to ask you to convey to the petitioners the reply recommended in your savingram No.945. He feels strongly, however, that he should use this opportunity to make known to your Ministers the widespread feeling that exists here about the Cocoa Purchasing Company.

2. Subject to your advice, he would propose to ask you to convey a message to Nkrumah on the following lines:-

*Begins.* I feel that it is only right that I should tell you that the widespread allegations of irregularities in the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company have caused much anxiety to those in the United Kingdom who follow developments in the Gold Coast and have the welfare of the country at heart. This anxiety is demonstrated by Parliamentary Questions from both sides of the House of Commons, where I am under pressure to use my influence to bring about the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry. That, as I have made clear, is a question for the Gold Coast Government but I hope that you and your fellow Ministers will consider carefully the wisdom of refuting these allegations by an independent investigation. *Ends.*

3. The Secretary of State wishes to make a statement before the 22nd of November on the petition in answer to two outstanding Parliamentary Questions. If you agree that a message on the lines indicated should be passed to Nkrumah, we propose that statement should be:-

*Begins.* The affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company are within the competence of the Gold Coast Government. I am advised that the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance is the appropriate Gold Coast Statute under which a Commission of Enquiry may be appointed and given powers; that in the exercise of his functions under this Ordinance, the Governor is normally bound by the advice of the Gold Coast Cabinet, and that it is for those interests which desire a Commission of Enquiry to be appointed to use such legitimate means as are open to then to convince the Government of the advisability of such a Commission. I have asked the Governor to convey a personal message from me to his Ministers bringing to their notice the anxiety which has been caused to those in this country who follow Gold Coast affairs and have the welfare of that country at heart by widespread allegations of irregularities in the affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company. I am confident that the Gold Coast Ministers will give due weight to this message. *Ends.*

4. Grateful for your comments by 10.00 hours Monday, 21st November.

**200** CO 554/806, no 140

21 Nov 1955

**[Constitutional crisis]: letter (reply) from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the adjustment 'from age old feudalism to twentieth century democracy'**

I was very pleased indeed to receive your letter of the 31st October<sup>1</sup> and I greatly appreciate your understanding of the many points I raised in my letter of the 30th September.<sup>2</sup>

I realise how concerned you must have been over the odd spots of bother we have experienced during the past year. I do not, however, share the doubts of the people in the United Kingdom to whom you have referred. The misgivings of some people in the United Kingdom are no doubt due to lack of sufficient and accurate information about this country. You know what strenuous efforts many countries, including the United Kingdom, are making to spread abroad accurate information about themselves. In this respect we are only at a beginning. This Government has recently decided to establish an information unit in the Gold Coast Commissioner's Office in London forthwith, and I trust that those who wish us well will also do their best to counter false and misleading reports about this country and help educate public opinion in the United Kingdom on our affairs.

The past year has not been an easy time for any of us but at the same time I do appreciate that when we travel at the speed we have done over the last four or five years, it is difficult to expect everyone to be able to adjust his mind and customs with equal rapidity. This is especially so when the adjustment entails a jump from age old feudalism to twentieth century democracy. I feel confident, however, that, given a little time and patience in order that facts may be more fully digested, even the most cautious among us will begin to view things in a brighter light. And here I hope that Sir Frederick Bourne can do much to help.

I fully concur with the hope expressed in the final paragraph of your letter that as a result of the work done by Sir Frederick Bourne it will be possible for the Gold Coast Government to put forward its proposals for the form of the constitution after independence confident of the support of the majority of the people of the country.

In conclusion I should like to emphasise that nothing must be done to weaken the cause of democracy by reducing the status of our freely-elected Legislative Assembly through giving greater weight to the words of a minority as opposed to the decisions of the Assembly. I am ready to go to a General Election when circumstances demand one.

I am looking forward to the day – which I hope will not be too far distant – when I shall be able to come to London to meet you again in person.

<sup>1</sup> See 196, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> See 191.

**201** DO 35/6170, no 14

22 Nov 1955

[Constitutional crisis]: despatch from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the response of the Gold Coast government to the NLM proposals for a federal constitution. *Annexures: A and B*

I have the honour to refer to my despatch No. 744 of the 1st September and your despatch No. 1348 of the 9th September concerning proposals for a federal constitution for the Gold Coast. I now transmit the Government's views on these proposals (Annexure 'A') and the Government's own proposals on regional devolution (Annexure 'B'). These documents are in Sir Frederick Bourne's possession.

2. I recommend that the Government be informed that its views and proposals have been received and that you await with interest the results of discussions with Sir Frederick Bourne on the subjects with which they are concerned.

3. I also recommend that the signatories of the proposals transmitted under cover of my despatch of the 1st September should be similarly informed in respect of their representations and the comments of the Government.

4. I shall be glad to receive an early reply by telegram.

#### Annexure A to 201: The government's views on proposals for a federal constitution

The document received from the National Liberation Movement and the Opposition is entitled "Proposals for a Federal Constitution for an Independent Gold Coast and Togoland."<sup>1</sup> The preamble taken in conjunction with clause 43 of the proposals makes it clear, however, that the proposals are to be regarded as draft proposals and that the procedure envisaged for their consideration is:—

- (1) a preliminary conference of all political parties and movements to be called by the present Government to determine the composition of a Constituent Assembly;
- (2) a Constituent Assembly to be set up forthwith, to consider these draft proposals and, presumably, to compare them with the Government's proposals.

It is observed that, whereas the Akim Abuakwa State Council memorandum adheres to the National Liberation Movement proposals, the Asanteman Council proposals differ to the extent that they contain no reference to the holding of a preliminary conference. The Asanteman Council proposals do not indicate how a Constituent Assembly will be called into being.

2. The Government notes that none of the proposals takes account of the timing of the steps proposed. It is presumed, though it is by no means clear, that the proposals do not state whether a conclusion is to be reached before independence or not. If a conclusion is to be reached before independence then there would be delay in the attainment of independence. It is doubtful whether a Constituent Assembly established before independence, operating as or in parallel to the Legislative Assembly and reporting after independence would in any sense meet the Opposition's

<sup>1</sup> See 178.

requirements. One is tempted to ask the question: would the National Liberation Movement and the Opposition parties accept the result of the deliberations of a Constituent Assembly if it were to report against a federal form of government?

3. As indicated above, the purpose of this procedure is not stated in regard to the timing of independence. It is set out in the preamble to the proposals, as follows:—

“There is not enough consciousness of national identity to make possible easy, and at the same time, democratic unitary government. In the absence of this consciousness the safest course is to ensure that not all the powers of government are concentrated at the centre, but that a substantial part of them is retained in the component territories where people have learnt the habits and attitudes of living together for some time.”

It is further argued that a federal form of government can secure

“in a unitary form of government such a division of powers that a despotic group of men cannot prevent the constitution and destroy the liberties of the people.”

Finally, it is stated as follows:—

“The Movements and Parties who have subscribed their names to these Draft Proposals have the firm conviction that a Constitution for a self-governing Gold Coast and Togoland can best be considered only in a Constituent Assembly charged with duty of drawing up such a Constitution.”

4. The National Liberation Movement case is therefore founded on the assumption that the Gold Coast is not sufficiently united to advance constitutionally without a federal system of government; that federation would prevent an abuse of power by a despotic government; and that the best way of considering the draft proposals is in a Constituent Assembly. The Government can accept none of these arguments.

5. The political development of the Gold Coast from the Coussey Committee onwards runs in a contrary direction to that described in paragraph 3. The Coussey Report refers in 1949 to:—

“the inescapable fact that all power delegated to them (Regional Administrations) must emanate from the Central Government, which must be able to ensure that its policies are adequately carried out” (paragraph 289 of the Report).

Similarly, Sir Sydney Phillipson in 1951 states that in his opinion

“federalism, even in its mildest forms, can have little practical interest for the Gold Coast . . . which alike in size and the general homogeneity of its inhabitants is clearly suitable for unitary administration” (Phillipson Report paragraph 16).

The constitutional procedure which has been followed includes:—

- (1) the Coussey Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949;
- (2) the administration of the Gold Coast by an Executive Council responsible to a Legislative Assembly representing the whole country, and containing representatives of the Traditional Authorities, 1950–54;
- (3) the consideration and adoption by that Assembly of a Government White

Paper, the product of consultation with the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast, 1953;

(4) the administration of the Gold Coast by a Cabinet responsible to a Legislative Assembly, representing the whole country and entirely elected, 1954.

(5) the consideration and adoption by the latter Assembly of a Report from the Select Committee on Federal System of Government and Second Chamber for the Gold Coast, 1955.

It is worthy of note that at none of these stages, including the general elections in 1951 and 1954, were any representative views on the subject of federation submitted.

6. The Government does not accept the theory that federation would prevent an abuse of power by a despotic government, for the reasons set out in paragraph 39 of the Select Committee Report.

7. The Government considers that the demand relating to the composition of the Constituent Assembly is put forward because it is the Opposition view that only by a very considerable modification of the basis of representation in regard to universal adult suffrage can they hope to achieve their principal object. This is equivalent to a contention that universal adult suffrage is not a suitable basis for Gold Coast elections. It is the Government's view that there is no body more suitably equipped than the Legislative Assembly

- (1) to administer the Gold Coast,
- (2) to obtain independence for the Gold Coast and,
- (3) given a mandate for that purpose, to recommend as to the form of the Constitution for an independent Gold Coast.

It has already been noted that the Asanteman Council is not prepared to go so far as to discuss a preliminary conference. For the Government to agree to call a preliminary conference of all political parties and movements "to determine the composition of a Constituent Assembly" is out of the question. It would commit the Government publicly to the consideration of the details of a proposition to which, on the facts available, it is fundamentally opposed. The Prime Minister has in the past always been prepared to meet and discuss constitutional proposals with the Opposition leaders. In this instance he is not prepared, however, to meet the Opposition leaders around a table, even if the purpose of the meeting was "to consider the desirability of establishing a Constituent Assembly", because he does not consider that he should be acting in the interest of the Gold Coast. He has no objection to such a meeting being held between the Constitutional Adviser and the leaders of the political parties and movements. The Secretary to the Constitutional Adviser would be responsible for the preparation of an Agenda and for keeping a record. The record of the meeting might be kept as a confidential document, but a Government statement upon the agreed joint-statement of the conference could be and should be debated in the Legislative Assembly on a Government motion before any action was taken.

8. The proposals have been examined generally against the background described above. The following observations are made on some other matters of major significance:-

- (1) *Finance*. The fact that it is proposed that the Constituent Assembly should set up a special Commission to recommend on this question is an indication of the

complexity of the problem of allocating the revenue to federal regions. The formulae which are applied in Nigeria would no doubt enable a system to be devised, but they are not yet a proved success and it is undoubtedly a laborious procedure. The more empirical methods of the Gold Coast have considerably greater practical advantages.

The question whether any central Government in the Gold Coast would be able or willing to agree to its cocoa revenues being divided up among the Regions without even a share to be administered by the central government is not worth considering. The proposal shows an utter disregard for practical administration and for the duty of a government towards its citizens.

(2) *Bi-cameral legislatures.* Not only is it proposed that there should be two federal houses; it is also envisaged that each Region should have two houses and that in each the "Territorial Council" should (with some additions) form the Upper House. The definition of "Territorial" is ambiguous because what was formerly called by this name included both Traditional and Regional Councils. The more recent tendency is to separate these categories, in which case there would be a choice between the traditional or the elected body acting as the Upper House. If it were the former (which is clearly what the Opposition would prefer) this would mean in practice an Upper House which was predominantly traditional and would lead to the type of conflict which exists so unfortunately at the level of State Councils and District or Local Councils.

(3) *Interpretation of the constitution.* The Government is bound to draw attention to the contents of clause 39 of the proposals in which it is stated that questions as to interpretation of the Constitution shall be settled by the Federal Supreme Court and that an appeal from the decision of the Judges "shall lie to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of the United Kingdom". Since the Government does not accept the federal form of constitution this question does not arise. In itself it is utterly unreasonable as a proposal for an independent country.

(4) *Heads of state.* The Government considers that no case has been made out for there to be a separate Head of State for each Region nor does it consider that a case has been made out for the creation of Heads of States. Government would not wish, however, to say that there might not be a person, other than the Chief Regional or Regional Officer, who has a changed role in the system of Government (*vide* the Government's views on the devolution of powers to regions) nominated by the Governor or Governor-General to carry out special duties of a formal and official nature, similar to those performed by a Lord Lieutenant of a county.

#### Annexure B to 201: The government's views on the devolution of powers to regions

The Government is of the opinion that the unitary character of the Gold Coast Constitution should be retained.

2. Regional Councils will virtually be new bodies. The Regions will continue to function with their present boundaries. Where Regional Councils exist already the present laws will be amended; where they do not exist they will be established by new bills. The overall responsibility of the central executive is vital.

3. In his Region the Chief Regional or Regional Officer will be the representative

and servant of the Gold Coast Government as much as if he were an official employed at headquarters.

4. The Chief Regional or Regional Officer will be the head of the official component of the regional executive organisation and will be charged with the duty of implementing the decisions of the Regional Council (and its Executive Committee) taken within the range of the functions devolved upon it by law. The staff of Regional Councils will be public officers in accordance with the Public Service Regulations, since they will be performing duties which largely arise out of the devolution of powers from the central government.

5. The membership of Regional Councils will be "elected up" from the local, urban district and municipal councils. Members of the Legislative Assembly will also wish to be represented. The Government considers that under the existing law there is nothing to prevent a subordinate Council from electing a representative who is not himself a member of that body. Moreover, a Council will be free to appoint its own representative/representatives from its own members, i.e. from among the traditional or elected members. The Government considers that while Members of the Assembly should not be specifically added to the membership of Regional Councils, since their duties in connection with the Regional Councils would eventually constitute too great a burden on their time as members of the central legislature, yet in the initial stages their services and experience should be available and they should in the first instance have a right to attend Council meetings.

6. It is considered that the life of each Regional Council should be three years. It would have an Executive Committee, and two consultative Committees, one on Social Services the other on Economic Services and Natural Resources.

7. Where a Regional Officer considers that a decision of the Council is likely to prove injurious to the public interest he should have power to refer the decision for review by the Government, whose decision shall have over-riding effect.

8. There would be no limit set to the right of the appropriate Ministers and of the Government to issue suggestions, advice and admonitions for consideration by the appropriate Regional bodies.

It is not considered that it will be necessary to provide in the Ordinances for the Ministers to have general powers of direction, as in the case of a statutory body or corporation. Powers will be exercised by the Regional Councils in the name of the Government (and of the Minister responsible to the Legislature).

9. The consultative and deliberative functions of Regional Councils will be:-

- (a) the consideration of Gold Coast estimates of development expenditure and of such items of recurrent and extraordinary expenditure as can be proved to affect the life of the region;
- (b) the consideration of the principles underlying proposed legislation or of the drafts of Bills which may be referred to them by Government, before they are introduced into the Assembly where the particular interests of the Regions are involved;
- (c) the initiation of policy, in respect of matters (including proposals for the principles of legislation) which directly affect the well-being of the people of the Region;
- (d) the consideration of any other matters referred to them by Government.

10. The stages of financial consultation are set out as follows:-

i. The formative stage (which cannot take place in respect of this current financial year): in September of the year preceeding the year of the draft estimates Regional representatives of certain specified departments will have informal discussions with Consultative Committees and the Regional Officer on the basis of estimates proposals. The Regional representative would report the result to the Head of Department. The Minister would be made aware of regional views. In regard to development estimates this stage would have been completed when the Plan was considered, and would not be necessary.

ii. The intermediate or regional stage:-

(a) Departmental Estimates provisionally approved by the Minister (and Minister of Finance) will be referred by order to Regional Councils for their views on the regional implications. This would take place by early *February* of the previous financial year.

(b) examination by a joint Committee of three Committees: the Executive and two Consultative Committees, under the chairmanship of the Regional Officer (with regional representatives of departments in attendance).

(c) debate in Regional Council: when the draft estimates would be returned to the Minister of Finance with the Council's resolutions.

At this stage there are considerable advantages to be gained from the participation of Members of the Legislative Assembly as co-opted members.

iii. Consideration by Government. The Minister of Finance in submitting his Budget to the Cabinet and to the Assembly should state how much he has been able to take account of regional wishes. This would take place in *April* of the preceding financial year.

iv. The stage of supplementary finance: important changes would not be made without consultation. One effect would be that virement in regard to development projects could not take place between regions without consultation with the Regional Council concerned. These virements have frequently led to misunderstanding in the past. Consideration by the Regional Council would probably be a matter which the Executive Committee could handle.

11. In order that Regional Councils should exercise a greater number of functions in regard to Local Government matters, a number of Ordinances may need to be amended (even if these do not include the Local Government Ordinance to any great extent). It is considered that the devolution of such powers should be permissive rather than mandatory, and that the phasing of the assumption of powers should depend on such matters as: the successful establishment of District Councils, the settlement of disputes regarding local council boundaries, the capacity of the Regional Organisation concerned to undertake the additional work, etc. Thus while the first task of the Regional Organisation must continue to be to build up and sustain the new structure of local government it is considered that progressively it may be possible to undertake the following functions:-

(a) the approval of bye-laws is already delegated to (Chief) Regional Officers and could be further assigned to Regional Councils. An amendment of the Local Government and the Municipal Councils Ordinances would be necessary.

(b) the approval of Local Government estimates: could be delegated to Regional

Councils by an amendment of the Ordinance, if experienced staff was available to assist the Council.

(c) approval of local development loans: this is at present a matter in which Loans Advisory Committees advise the central Government. It is considered that Regional Councils should take over this advisory function with a view ultimately to taking over the approval of loans also.

(d) functions relating to local government staff: these functions should be progressively devolved upon the Regional Councils or regional committees which should be advisory to a Central Local Government Service Commission. This will be an independent body, comparable to the Public Service Commission.

(e) the administration of regional grants-in-aid: whether this was for specific or general purposes it was desirable that it should be administered in progressive stages by the Regional Council. There was no reason why the Regional Council should not immediately be asked to advise on this matter and it was the intention that it should also coordinate and administer the various grants which found their way to the Regional Councils/Development Committees, and District, Urban and Local Councils. The Government, the Cocoa Marketing Board, and other statutory bodies, should be instructed to use this channel exclusively for the award of grants-in-aid.

(f) opening of primary and middle Schools: it is being considered whether, when district education authorities are well established, the approval of their recommendations should not be delegated to the Regional Council.

12. If it is decided to proceed with the development and/or establishment of Regional Councils on these lines, it would be proposed to instruct the Law Officers to draft legislation of an enabling character, which would permit an orderly progress towards a full assumption of the extended duties according to the wishes and capacities of the Regions concerned.

13. It would also be proposed to instruct the Law Officers to draft provisions in the Constitutional Instruments to provide for the existence of Councils in each of the Regions of the Gold Coast, having a consultative and advisory function and some functions of local government, and being empowered by Ordinance to carry out such functions of government.

**202** PREM 11/1367, CP(55)182

28 Nov 1955

**'Commonwealth membership': Cabinet memorandum by Lord Home recommending discussion with South Africa on the question of the admission of the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership**

On 7th December, 1954, the Cabinet agreed that Commonwealth membership should be discussed in private conversations with the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand during their visit to London at the beginning of 1955, but that it should not be broached for the time being with the South African Prime

Minister (C.C. (54) 83rd Conclusions, Minute 5).<sup>1</sup> Lord Swinton accordingly discussed it privately with Mr. St. Laurent, Mr. Menzies and Mr. Holland,<sup>2</sup> who all expressed agreement that the policy set out in C. (54) 307<sup>3</sup> represented the only practicable policy. Nothing whatever has yet been said on this subject to South African Ministers and the question now arises whether a start should not be made with them. While the course of events in the Gold Coast cannot at present be foreseen, it is possible, if not indeed probable, that the question of the admission of the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership will be ripe for discussion, if not indeed for decision, at the Meeting of Prime Ministers which opens on 27th June, 1956. All our experience suggests that a relatively long time must be allowed for domestic consideration if the Union Government are to be brought to accept or acquiesce in a proposition so inherently distasteful to them.

2. The United Kingdom High Commissioner in South Africa, Sir Percivale Liesching, who is thoroughly conversant with this question, has been carefully watching the situation and has now recommended that, even if only preliminary discussion should take place at the Prime Ministers' Meeting in June, it will be wise for him to have paved the way gradually in a series of talks with Mr. Strijdom on this subject.

3. In making this recommendation Sir Percivale Liesching assumes, as I think we must, that there is bound to be at least preliminary discussion of this question and that any risk that this might possibly lead Mr. Strijdom to shrink from attending the meeting personally because this difficult issue was likely to be raised has been removed by Mr. Strijdom's recent formal notification of his intention to attend. The High Commissioner considers that the general atmosphere for his initial approach on this difficult topic is calm and favourable, and demonstrably better than it was a few months ago. In particular Mr. Strijdom has recently made public reference to the necessity for South Africa to honour the right of existence and interests of non-European States or Governments in Africa, and this reference, which is being interpreted in some quarters as representing a definite softening in the Union Government's approach to the Gold Coast question, at any rate partially opens the door to an approach.

4. If my colleagues agree with me that the time has come to face this issue it remains to be considered whether Sir Percivale Liesching should be authorised to make a start before mid-December, when South African Ministers leave Pretoria for the holidays, or whether it should be left over until his return from London, which I have authorised him to visit, for consultations in the second half of January, or the beginning of February. The High Commissioner is inclined to think that he should make a start before mid-December and he recommends that he should be given latitude to make a generalised and provisional approach in which he would deploy some of the arguments most likely to secure a favourable response from the Afrikaaner mind and try to elicit enough reaction to enable us to judge when and how best to carry the matter further.

5. I recommend that the High Commissioner's proposal should be approved since:—

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<sup>1</sup> See 159.

<sup>2</sup> Prime ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand respectively.

<sup>3</sup> See 159, note 1.

- (a) there is very little time to lose;
- (b) it will be advantageous for him to be able truthfully to say that we do not yet know exactly when the Gold Coast issue will be ripe for discussion and decision; and
- (c) he would be in a position to offer to bring back from his London visit information and views on any points which Mr. Strijdom may raise. It would help us also to have from the High Commissioner personally his impressions of his first contacts with Mr. Strijdom on this question.

6. I would propose if my colleagues agree to seek the High Commissioner's view on his return whether there would be advantage in his taking some suitable opportunity to let the Leader of the South African Opposition know in strict confidence how matters are developing in order to prevent the latter taking up an attitude which might be embarrassing to us through ignorance of how things stand.

7. I invite my colleagues to agree that I should proceed on the lines I have suggested above.

## 203 PREM 11/1367, CP(55)183

28 Nov 1955

### 'Gold Coast: constitutional developments': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lennox-Boyd

This Paper describes political developments in the Gold Coast and provides a background to C.P. (55) 182<sup>1</sup> by the Commonwealth Secretary. It calls for no action itself.

2. The Convention People's Party (C.P.P.), led by Dr. Nkrumah, has provided the Government of the Gold Coast since 1951. At the last General Election in June 1954 it won 71 seats out of 104, and now has a strength of 78 in that Legislature as a number of Independents have subsequently joined the Party. The main Opposition Party is the Northern People's Party with 14 members, and some of the Independent members also oppose the Government. On a wide range of subjects Dr. Nkrumah's Government has shown itself to be responsible and efficient; its financial policies have been restrained and sensible and great attention has been given to measures to promote the cocoa industry, which is of course the mainstay of the country's economy. The Government has also co-operated fully in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Volta River Project. Perhaps the most difficult problem in the relations between Dr. Nkrumah's Government and Her Majesty's Government has been that of the future of the Trust Territory of British Togoland, and, despite manifold difficulties, agreement on the policies which should be followed has always been reached.

3. There is another side to this picture. The progressive reduction of senior European staff has not been matched by the supply of trained African replacements. What is more serious, Gold Coast Ministers have not in the past shown themselves at all times completely determined to stamp out corruption. In addition, their natural wish to promote economic and social development has led them to think in terms of

<sup>1</sup> See 202.

action by a strong central Government, and they have unfortunately provoked widespread resentment culminating in a serious dispute about the form of the Gold Coast constitution.

4. The main opposition to Dr. Nkrumah's Government is extra-Parliamentary. Shortly after the General Election last year the National Liberation Movement (N.L.M.) was started in Ashanti and was from its beginning strongly supported by the Ashanti Chiefs led by the Asantehene. The Movement also receives support from the Northern People's Party (Northern Territories), the Togoland Congress Party (Southern British Togoland) and numerous minor political groupings. The N.L.M. maintains the fiction that it is itself non-political: it is not represented in the Legislative Assembly but its line is followed by most of the members who do not support the Government.

5. The growth of the Movement derives from a deep distrust of Dr. Nkrumah and his Party, the wish to preserve the traditional independence and unity of Ashanti, and the fear of the Chiefs and traditional authorities that a strong central Government will take away from them most of their remaining importance and power. The N.L.M. has, for example, fiercely resisted recent legislation proposed by the Gold Coast Government which has taken away certain powers of major chiefs over subordinate ones. The Government removed some of the more offensive features of the legislation which may prove to be acceptable in its final form.

6. The Movement demands a federal form of constitution for the Gold Coast when it becomes independent. It wants a Constituent Assembly set up to review the constitution before the Gold Coast becomes independent. It has also campaigned vigorously against alleged corruption in the Cocoa Marketing Board and Cocoa Purchasing Company. (Dr. Nkrumah has just agreed to appoint a Commission of Enquiry into these allegations.)

7. The growth of the N.L.M. was fiercely resisted by the C.P.P. and at first there were numerous clashes and disturbances in Ashanti, particularly in Kumasi, which caused the Government considerably to reinforce the police and military forces there.

8. In July an Independent candidate supported by the N.L.M. won a by-election in an Ashanti constituency from the C.P.P. by a big swing of votes. Since this by-election the N.L.M. has gained confidence and so there has been a noticeable reduction in the number of incidents of violence in Ashanti. The Government has reduced both the police and military forces to their normal levels.

9. I cannot tell the exact strength of the N.L.M. and its associates in the Gold Coast. The best guess I can make is that if a general election were held soon the C.P.P. would retain power with a considerably reduced majority, possibly quite small. But the N.L.M. and its associates do not form at the moment a coherent political group and on many matters they follow different policies. The main strength of the N.L.M. lies in Ashanti, and it is because of the Movement's hold over that Region that it has acquired its importance, and not because of its association with other groups.

10. The N.L.M. has submitted to the Governor its proposals for the federal form of constitution it desires. They provide for four regional bi-cameral legislatures and a central bi-cameral legislature, roughly on the lines of the Nigerian set-up. These proposals are hardly practicable for a territory with a population of just over 4 millions: they would be expensive and there are certainly not enough able men to run five separate Governments.

11. In May last a Select Committee was appointed by the Legislative Assembly to consider a federal constitution and a Second Chamber. Their report rejected a federal form of constitution as inappropriate to the Gold Coast and recommended that consideration of the need for a Second Chamber should be deferred. Opposition members refused to take part in the work of the Select Committee, which was boycotted by the N.L.M. and the organisations supporting it. Opposition members also refused to take part in the debate on the Select Committee's report, which was accepted by the Government in their absence.

12. Subsequently I was asked by the Government of the Gold Coast to arrange for an adviser with experience of constitutional matters to visit the Gold Coast to assist all parties in reaching agreement on a constitution for the Gold Coast. I secured Sir Frederick Bourne, K.C.S.I., a former Governor of East Bengal, for this assignment; he has been working in the Gold Coast since the end of September.

13. It is too early to say whether he will succeed in bringing the opposing factions to agreement on the form of constitution best suited to the Gold Coast when it becomes independent. He has found that the Northern Territories representatives would accept a reasonable compromise in the constitutional dispute, but although he has had the impression from the N.L.M. that they were really anxious to discuss things with him that Movement has seized on every possible excuse to postpone doing so. At the moment they have run out of excuses and I have some hope that Sir Frederick may be able to realise his own hope of having a more or less concrete scheme ready for discussion at a round-table conference early in December, leading to a final report by Christmas.

14. In C. (54) 306, dated 1st October, 1954,<sup>2</sup> I said that the grant of independence *might* have to be made at the end of 1956 or very soon thereafter. This is now most unlikely. Until it has been demonstrated in the Gold Coast that the majority of the people are in favour of immediate independence and that a wide measure of agreement exists on the form of constitution for the Gold Coast when it becomes independent, there can be no question of the final and irrevocable step being taken. This has been plainly stated to Dr. Nkrumah. He has recently shown a greater willingness to accept constructive suggestions designed to reduce the tension in the Gold Coast and to allow the calm and ordered discussion of constitutional problems. He has however to keep his own Party convinced that he is not giving way unnecessarily to the Opposition or succumbing needlessly to pressure from the Governor or myself.

15. If Sir Frederick Bourne is unable to bring the opposing factions together on an agreed form of constitution, it will be necessary to resolve the issue at a General Election. For various reasons, this is unlikely to be held until after the rains, in late September or October.

16. If Sir Frederick Bourne can successfully complete his task by the end of the year, Gold Coast independence by December 1956 is still a faint possibility. If he takes rather longer, then it might be possible early in 1957. If he is unsuccessful and a General Election is held, independence is most unlikely before the middle of 1957.

17. I cannot, of course, say whether he will be successful but, whatever happens, there must be a final decision about the form of the Gold Coast constitution some

<sup>2</sup> See 154, where the date is recorded as 4 Oct 1954 (the date when the memo was printed for the Cabinet).

time in 1956, and therefore there must be at least some discussion of possible Gold Coast membership of the Commonwealth at the Prime Ministers' Meeting in June of next year. Accordingly I agree with the recommendations made by the Commonwealth Secretary in paragraph 5 of C.P. (55) 182.

18. I will of course continue to keep my colleagues informed of developments in the Gold Coast. The situation should be considerably clearer in a couple of months' time.

## 204 PREM 11/1367, CM 44(55)5

1 Dec 1955

### 'Commonwealth membership': Cabinet conclusions on the admission of the Gold Coast<sup>1</sup>

The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Commonwealth Secretary (C.P.(55) 182)<sup>2</sup> recommending that the United Kingdom High Commissioner in South Africa should be authorised to make a preliminary approach to the South African Prime Minister about the possibility of the Gold Coast being admitted to Commonwealth membership when that Colony achieved full self-government.

The Cabinet also had before them a memorandum by the Colonial Secretary (C.P.(55) 183)<sup>3</sup> which described the present constitutional position in the Gold Coast.

*The Commonwealth Secretary* said that, since it was possible that the question of admitting the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership might need to be considered at the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers which was due to begin on 27th June, 1956, he recommended that the way for such a discussion should be prepared gradually in a series of talks which the United Kingdom High Commissioner would have with the South African Prime Minister. There had been indications recently that the attitude of the South African Government to this question had become less rigid, and it would be best for the High Commissioner to make his approach without delay and before he visited London next January.

*The Colonial Secretary* said that the adviser on constitutional matters (Sir Frederick Bourne), whom he had appointed to the Gold Coast Government, hoped to have a scheme of constitutional development ready for discussion by a conference of all parties in that Colony during the present month. If an acceptable scheme could be worked out, there was some possibility that the Gold Coast might achieve full self-government by the end of 1956; but if, as was more likely, it took longer to work out an acceptable scheme, self-government would not have to be granted before the middle of 1957.

*The Prime Minister* said that it would be preferable if the question of admitting the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership did not have to be considered at the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers starting in June, 1956. It would therefore be not altogether disadvantageous if the discussions about constitutional development in the Gold Coast should take some further time.

In discussion, strong approval was expressed for a general ruling that, in the

<sup>1</sup> Previous reference: see 159.

<sup>2</sup> See 202.

<sup>3</sup> See 203.

context of Commonwealth membership, it was desirable to use the term “full self-government” and to avoid the word “independence”, since the latter term implied that the constitutional development of Colonial territories entailed the probability that they would secede from the Commonwealth and might give unnecessary encouragement to this idea.

The Cabinet:—

(1) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to arrange for the United Kingdom High Commissioner to make an approach before mid-December to the South African Prime Minister about the admission of the Gold Coast to Commonwealth membership.<sup>4</sup>

(2) Agreed that the general rule should be adopted of using the term “full self-government” in all references to the constitutional development of Colonial territories, and that the use of the term “independence” in this context should be discontinued.

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<sup>4</sup> Home sent an outward tel, no 493 dated 3 Dec 1955, to Liesching as follows: ‘Situation in Gold Coast fluctuates and it is still difficult to say whether it will be necessary for it to be discussed at the Prime Ministers’ Meeting in June. But we agree in the light of discussion here that you should make an initial approach to Mr Strijdom . . . before he leaves Pretoria for Christmas holidays. I leave to your discretion what arguments to deploy and how far to carry matter. As you point out it should be helpful to you to be able to say truthfully that we do not yet know exactly when Gold Coast issue will be ripe for discussion and decision. Moreover Mr Strijdom’s formal notification that he will be attending Prime Ministers’ Meeting should have removed any risk of his shrinking from attending. We can . . . discuss next move when you are here in January’ (PREM 11/1367).

## 205 DO 35/6195, no 19

5 Dec 1955

### ‘Togoland’: CRO memorandum for UK delegation at the UN General Assembly on the holding of a plebiscite

Our objective is to get the General Assembly to pass a resolution authorising the holding of a plebiscite in the spring of next year in British Togoland, so that the results of the plebiscite will be available at the Eleventh Session.

2. The recent United Nations Visiting Mission has unanimously recommended the holding of such a plebiscite, but although we have always assumed that this would take place next year, the Mission in its Report has not specified a date. One member of the Mission, (Dr. Tarazi of Syria), has recommended that *before* a plebiscite is held in British Togoland a separate legislature should be established in that Territory.

3. Since we require a positive vote of two-thirds for a resolution of our liking, and since the opposition of the Soviets, at least some Arabs, a few Latins and a few other oddments must be taken for granted, we are in great need of positive support – in particular from the majority of the Latins. Amongst the latter Venezuela, Chile and Ecuador are probably the most important. El Salvador and Uruguay are probably the only hopeless cases. India is firmly on our side and probably also Iraq, but help is still needed on Burma, Indonesia, Thailand, Pakistan and Philippines. It looks as though an abstention from Egypt would draw Saudi Arabia, and possibly

Lebanon, away from support of the Syrian position, so that Egypt is a valuable target.

4. The greatest danger which we have to avoid is that of postponement of the whole issue for a year; this appears more likely than the more or less indefinite postponement which would follow from the adoption of the Syrian minority recommendation.

5. The arguments to be used are the following:—

(i) The target date for independence of the Gold Coast is 31 December, 1956. If the future of British Togoland is not settled (by the plebiscite) before that date it will immeasurably complicate the transfer of power and might even lead to a postponement of the date of independence itself.

(ii) We declared last year that the people of British Togoland were ready for self-government. The United Nations cannot, and should not, delay even for one year giving the people of British Togoland their freedom, if they want it.

(iii) Once British Togoland has been given the chance to determine its future, the pressure on France to allow the people of French Togoland to do the same will be increased. Delay of our plebiscite cannot but delay a plebiscite in French Togoland.

(iv) The Visiting Mission's proposals for a plebiscite in British Togoland will, in any event, allow those parts of British Togoland which do *not* wish to join an independent Gold Coast to retain their present status for the time being.

## 206 PREM 11/1367

6 Dec 1955

[Gold Coast at the UN]: inward telegram no 126 from Mr Hopkinson<sup>1</sup> (UK delegation, New York) to Mr Lennox-Boyd on pressure in the UN General Assembly regarding the date of Gold Coast independence

Personal for Secretary of State from Mr. Hopkinson.

I am under great and increasing pressure to say what Her Majesty's Government's intentions are in regard to date of Gold Coast independence. I have had the straight question put to me twice and it was also mentioned by one other speaker. In his speech this morning Gbedemah said that it was the firm intention of the Gold Coast Government that they should attain independence by the end of 1956 or at the latest early in 1957. In reply to questioner who afterwards asked me to say whether this represented the views of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom I said that I proposed to deal with the point when speaking later in the debate, but that generally attitude of Her Majesty's Government did not differ from that of the Gold Coast Government although the issue was a complicated one involving legislation and other matters.

2. I fully understand considerations which you put to me on the telephone the other night, and would do my best to have regard to them in statement which I shall have to make. But our whole case for pressing Assembly to agree to plebiscite next year is based on assumption that Gold Coast independence will be achieved by the

<sup>1</sup> Hopkinson, minister of state at the CO, was a UK delegate at the UN General Assembly, 1952–1955.

end of next year or very soon thereafter. I fear I cannot guarantee acceptance of plebiscite next year unless I can give unequivocal confirmation that it is also Her Majesty's Government's intention to grant Gold Coast independence by the end of 1956 or at the very latest early in 1957. In addition to jeopardising the result we are seeking at this session, it is clear to me that if we fail to respond to request for statement of our intention we shall expose ourselves to charges of bad faith, since the Committee as a whole has undoubtedly assumed from our statement to the effect that independence is imminent that we mean a date in the very near future. Even had this question never been raised specifically there is no doubt that in the voting for plebiscite next year General Assembly would have assumed this to be the case. Indeed the whole support of Indian delegation and others on which we rely is based on this premise.

3. Would you agree to my saying something to the effect that in the last analysis a decision to grant independence to one of Her Majesty's territories can only be taken with the approval of the British Parliament? I would add that there was no reason to suppose that such consent would be withheld but that would involve legislation which would have to be fitted into the rest of the Government's legislative programme. Subject to this, however, it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government that the necessary action should be taken to bring about Gold Coast independence during the session of Parliament beginning in November, 1956. It would be the aim of Her Majesty's Government to secure the passage of such legislation at the earliest possible date during that session.

4. It would of course be better from my point of view if I could simply say that it is the aim of Her Majesty's Government to grant the independence of the Gold Coast by the end of next year, or shortly thereafter, subject of course to Parliamentary approval. You might possibly prefer this having regard to the considerations which we discussed the other day.

5. I am sure that nothing less than one of these formulae will do and that, failing that, our chances of getting a plebiscite out of the Assembly during this session will be jeopardised. We have no meeting tomorrow owing to lack of speakers and I do not expect to have to speak myself before Friday. The last thing I want to do is to put a pistol to your head but I would ask you to give me authority to speak as indicated above by 10.00 hours our time Friday 9th December.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Lennox-Boyd advised Hopkinson to be cautious in his statement to the UN General Assembly. He explained that the result of the Bourne Mission was not yet known and that until the form of constitution had been settled, the lawyers would not be able to begin drafting the constitutional instruments. He also explained that it would not be possible to settle the question of Commonwealth membership until the meeting of prime ministers in June 1956. He therefore suggested that no date should be specified but authorised Hopkinson to state that 'it is certainly the intention of H.M.G. that the Gold Coast should become independent as soon as there is general agreement in the Gold Coast on the nature of the independence constitution they are to have' (PREM 11/1367, outward tel no 104, Lennox-Boyd to Hopkinson, 8 Dec 1955).

**207** CO 554/806, no 170

19 Dec 1955

**[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to C G Eastwood proposing a general election in the Gold Coast**

It is becoming apparent that public references to the possibility that continued refusal on the part of the National Liberation Movement to co-operate with Sir Frederick Bourne may have the effect of delaying the achievement of independence, are being interpreted here as an encouragement to the Movement to persist in non-co-operation. I appreciate, of course, that in my confidential telegram to you No. 697 of the 13th December I raised no objection to this point being made, indeed I think it had to be said, but I believe that this line should now be avoided as far as possible in replies to parliamentary questions and on other public occasions. The fact is that the N.L.M. shows an inclination to take up a stand on the platform "no independence under a C.P.P. Government" and I think you will agree that we should, as far as possible, avoid any encouragement to an attitude which can arouse the most bitter political strife both before and after the grant of independence.

There is another point upon which I would welcome your assistance. I regard it as essential that there should be a General Election on the nature of a constitution before independence is granted, and I am gradually instilling this idea into the minds of Ministers. Neither Ministers nor the C.P.P. are anxious to have a General Election, and it is important that they should not find any excuse for rejecting the idea, but they are now becoming genuinely anxious lest a General Election resulting in an overall majority for the C.P.P., but an Opposition majority in Ashanti and possibly the Northern Territories, might give the U.K. Government grounds for postponing independence.

I appreciate that the U.K. Government cannot be expected to commit itself to any particular attitude towards independence on the basis of hypothetical election results, but I would be glad to be able to give Ministers some assurance that a fair assessment will be made of the general overall result of the suggested election and that an Opposition majority in Ashanti and possibly in the Northern Territories will not necessarily mean delay in the grant of independence. The line I have taken with Ministers as a purely personal view, is as follows:-

If Sir Frederick Bourne's recommendations are regarded by the United Kingdom Government as reasonable, and if the Government adheres to these recommendations in the proposals which it puts before the country in a General Election, then the United Kingdom Government would find it difficult to adopt the attitude that, despite the existence of an overall majority, an Opposition majority in Ashanti and possibly in the Northern Territories afforded justification for the postponing of independence. If, however, the Gold Coast Government departed materially from Bourne's recommendations, particularly in regard to the extent to which power should be devolved to the regions, then in the event of an election result such as is described above the United Kingdom Government might well find it difficult to grant independence forthwith.

I shall be glad to know whether I may give Ministers an assurance that this is a correct description of the attitude which the U.K. Government may confidently be

expected to adopt towards the result of a General Election in which the issue is the nature of the future constitution. Bourne's Report and recommendations will probably be in my hands tomorrow and will be transmitted to the Secretary of State immediately.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Eastwood minuted Vile, 23 Dec, on this letter: 'This needs a good deal of thinking about. I am not sure the S/S wd wish to go as far as the Gov suggests.'

**208** CO 554/806, no 167

19 Dec 1955

[Bourne Mission]: letter from Sir F Bourne to Sir C Arden-Clarke submitting an appreciation of the situation in the Gold Coast.

*Enclosure*: memorandum by Bourne

I have the honour to submit an appreciation of the situation in the Gold Coast as I have been able to assess it in the last few months. This is not intended for publication, though if Government desired to publish it, I should myself have no objection: it is merely a personal appreciation probably not of much general interest or value. In the circumstances I have only had copies taken for Your Excellency and for the Prime Minister and have kept one myself for presentation to the Secretary of State. This really forms an introduction to my actual recommendations which will follow. But the document conveying my recommendations is, I hope, self contained and less embarrassing to the various parties than perhaps this appreciation might be considered to be.

Enclosure to 208

*Introductory*

I am submitting this report having failed to obtain any significant cooperation from the National Liberation Movement and without having had an opportunity of discussing with them their own Federal proposals. How this failure came about I shall discuss shortly. It means that the conference of representatives of all political parties and movements which I hoped to be able to arrange towards the end of December, will not take place. Disappointing as this is I think I have still enough material to justify an attempt to suggest a workable scheme which, if implemented, should provide a new basis for breaking the present deadlock; for apart from Ashanti, I have had, generally speaking, a very high degree of cooperation and assistance. In particular I should like to thank the Prime Minister and his colleagues for giving me such a free hand; they were always ready to meet me to discuss problems as they arose, but at no time did the Prime Minister or any of his colleagues endeavour to influence my judgment or to limit my activities.

In the course of the last two months I have visited all the regions and met all the Regional Officers and a good number of their assistants. In the Eastern Region, I had preliminary talks with some of the Chiefs in the Akim Abuakwa and Manya Krobo States: later, in the Western Region, I met the Secretary of the Joint Provincial

Council of Chiefs in the Colony at Cape Coast: as a result of these meetings, I was invited to meet the Standing Committee of the Joint Provincial Council at Dodowa on November 11th. I met the Standing Committee of the Trans Volta/Togoland Council at Ho and the Standing Committee of the Northern Territories' Council at Tamale. I had also the advantage of interviewing two of the most important Paramount Chiefs in the Northern Territories. In the course of my visits to regions, it was arranged that I should visit in each region, a number of Local Councils, District Councils and other such bodies, their Chairmen, Clerks and sometimes Finance Committees. Moreover I took the opportunity both in Accra and in Regional Headquarters of getting what information I could from Government officials. I also met a number of Members of the Legislative Assembly and other influential members of political parties. Recently in Ashanti I met on the same morning representatives of the Brong Chiefs in Western Ashanti who are apparently seeking to be released from membership of the Asanteman Council, and also to be permitted to establish a separate administrative Region, and another deputation from Chiefs in the same area who do not wish to secede. I had previously attended the earlier part of a meeting of the Asanteman Council in Kumasi and had also interviewed the C.P.P. Executive for Ashanti. Moreover some of the leading members of the N.L.M. and its allies had called on me to explain why at that time they were not prepared to discuss Constitutional developments. My business in Ashanti is discussed in greater detail in the next paragraph. I think I should make it clear that at all these meetings with Opposition members I was treated with the greatest courtesy. Apart from the fact that they were not prepared to discuss what I had come to discuss, they were highly agreeable.

Finally I have been fortunate enough to have been provided with a secretary who has a very wide experience of the country as a whole, with particular reference to Local Government Institutions, in which he has always taken a special interest. In the matter of collecting information on relevant subjects, Mr. Alton has been of the greatest help to me.

I have run through this brief catalogue of my sources of information in order to suggest that, in spite of my failure to gain effective contact with the Opposition, I have had an opportunity of obtaining a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the problem.

#### *Ashanti and the N.L.M.*

I now come to deal more particularly with the origin and the reasons for the birth of the National Liberation Movement, which involves at the same time dealing more particularly with Ashanti. I understand that when this present Legislative Assembly entered on its duties, there was no national parliamentary opposition in the country, and the only party which could be styled "Opposition" in the Assembly, was that representing the Northern Territories and called the Northern People's Party. It was more a territorial group than an opposition proper and this was, and still is, a grave handicap to the realistic working of a Democratic system of Government. No party under that system can hope to do full justice to itself without the assistance of an intelligent and coherent opposition. In the absence, therefore, of constructive and valuable criticism at the centre, it was inevitable that there should be a certain loss of touch between Government in Accra and Ashanti. This loss of touch was not so pronounced as regards the Northern Territories in so far as the N.P.P. was able to

represent their local interests more or less effectively. I doubt whether the Government fully realised at this early stage the extent of the influence which the Asanteman Council could in certain circumstances exercise, and, secondly, how bitterly that Council would resent the exercise of power by an elected Assembly without consultation with the Council in matters of particular concern to Ashanti. The members of the Legislative Assembly elected by Ashanti, owing to the fact that there had been no effective opposition party in being, and owing to the competent electioneering methods of the C.P.P., were all but one in the C.P.P. interest. In the circumstances, Government and their supporters would have been superhuman if they had not, whether by accident or design, given offence in numerous quarters. In particular, some unguarded references by prominent members of the party to Chiefs caused, and still causes in retrospect, a great displeasure not only to the Chiefs but to an important section of the people of Ashanti. At this stage, only just fifty years since the last of the Ashanti wars, the Ashantis generally continue to regard themselves as a proud nation of warriors, and they still have at the back of their minds, if not more prominently displayed, a very great respect for the Golden Stool and the Asanteman Council.

Apart from the surprise and uneasiness caused by the sudden and unexpected exclusion of the Asanteman Council from the opportunity to offer advice direct to the Government with regard to policies affecting the region, there were other factors leading to dissatisfaction. With a practically one party administration, charges of favouritism against the party were inevitable. Numerous complaints can be heard of Ministers, – for instance in the matter of appointments to Boards and Committees – either not consulting the Regional Authorities at all or having consulted them, disregarding their advice. It is very rare in matters of legislation for a real effort to be made to ascertain public opinion in the regions before a measure is introduced, although a certain amount of consultation through the territorial councils had come to be understood and appreciated in the past. In England the theory that “Whitehall always knows best” is a red rag to John Bull; so here a feeling has spread that the party theorists in Accra are not interested in hearing any views contrary to their own ideas. Too much reliance was placed on the large majority obtained at the first really popular election, and it was presumed, with too much confidence, that the members returned in that election were really qualified to keep Government in touch with the genuine feeling of their constituencies.

So the founders of the N.L.M., choosing their time with considerable skill, set themselves to organise an opposition on a national basis; and as time went on, they managed to bring within their orbit the Asanteman Council, the N.P.P., the M.A.P., the Togoland Congress, some of the relics of the old parties in the Colony, some of the discontented Colony chiefs and some of the Elder Statesmen, who, having spent the best part of their lives working for Independence, now find themselves out in the cold. But as the opposition would have been ineffective without the support of the Asanteman Council, it was considered inadvisable to call themselves a Political Party (they were, in fact, a conservative party, but this term would, of course, not be acceptable for use in public) because it was widely recognised that Chiefs could not be party politicians but only fathers and spokesmen of their own people. So when the first bye-election in Ashanti falling due after this Movement had started took place, the candidate supported by the Movement, called himself an independent – a complete misnomer – but he gained the seat with a fairly comfortable majority, which naturally gave a very great fillip to the Movement generally.

In answer to invitations by Government to this Movement to send representatives to discuss their objects – invitations which were always refused – the Movement did, sometime in mid-1955, publish their proposals for a Federal Constitution for an independent Gold Coast and Togoland. It has always been my hope that I should be able to prevail upon the signatories to this Constitution to give me an opportunity to go through it with them, with a view to finding out how they meant to put their ideas practically into effect. As they have never agreed to do so, I do not think it would be fair for me now to criticise the document specifically. Hopes were expressed in the course of the last month or two that the Opposition leaders in Ashanti might be prepared to meet me to discuss this Federal proposal and also to hear what suggestions I might myself have formulated for a new type of regional administration. The State Councils (Ashanti) Ordinance Amendment Bill, which was brought forward in the last session of the Legislative Assembly, gave an opportunity for the creation of a great deal of alarm and despondency in Ashanti, and was made the reason for declining to cooperate with me in my efforts to obtain some sort of fruitful discussion. Up to November 27th it was still hoped that these difficulties might be surmounted; but under the guidance of the Asanteman Council, the N.L.M. leaders and the leaders of their associate parties, decided that Government, by their own action, had gravely prejudiced my work, were clearly “neither sincere nor serious” in their attitude to me, and that “the disregard of protests from J.P.C., the Asanteman Council, the Northern Territories’ Chiefs and other bodies throughout the country for the withdrawal of the Bill shows that the Government is not prepared to respect the views of the Territorial bodies and the public especially in this matter which strikes at the very foundation of our culture and tradition.”

A representative party from the N.L.M. and their allies, brought me a copy of a memorandum on the subject on November 28th, from which the above quotations are drawn and I had about an hour’s discussion with them. At the meeting it was stated that if there were an election and the N.L.M. achieved a majority in Ashanti, the Opposition view was that, even though the C.P.P. might have an overall majority in the country, the present situation would be the same and Ashanti would have to struggle to save its culture. They hoped that I would make it clear to the Secretary of State that they did not want independence until these matters had been settled and a Constitution with specific safeguards against over-centralisation had been guaranteed. As the end of the meeting, I asked them “Is it your desire that I should tell the Secretary of State that in view of an amendment to the State Councils Ordinance, which you regard as improper, you feel justified in declining all discussion as regards future Constitutional developments?” I thought this question would lead them to reconsider to some extent the extreme views they had expressed, but, in fact, they all said “yes” with conviction. I am satisfied that quite a large number of the delegates who attended the meeting of the N.L.M. and its allies on Sunday 27th November would have much preferred to have had discussions with me; but the Asanteman Council meeting on November 24th had set the tone. They know that without the Asanteman Council their party could not exist and they felt bound to follow the lead given. So as far as Ashanti is concerned, the Opposition has taken up an attitude of complete negation, on the grounds that they are engaged in a life and death struggle to preserve their Ashanti heritage and culture; this is clearly a grave handicap to me in my endeavour to find a suitable system of regional administration, more particularly for Ashanti.

It is impossible for me to estimate how the electorate in Ashanti would respond to a straight issue between the Asanteman Council and the C.P.P. I believe Government have underestimated the strength of the movement against them and that at the present moment not a very large proportion of the C.P.P. members of the Legislative Assembly in Ashanti would be successful at a General Election.

### *Colony*

I assume that the Accra Region will remain more or less as it is. It is not unusual for the centre of Government to be treated separately from other States or Provinces, and I believe there are local reasons why it has been convenient to group together the Accra Municipality and the adjacent Local Councils as a separate, small administrative Region. So I propose to exclude this Region from my scheme and I understand the Municipal Council agree.

The Eastern Region was the first region I visited. There are only two District Councils in the Eastern Region, neither of which appears to be working particularly well. There will be room for perhaps three others. The difficulty in the area where the two District Councils have been established is that local chiefs, more particularly the Omanhene of Akim Abuakwa and the Konor of Many Krobo, have for some reason or other got into the bad books of Government, and, perhaps as a result, there has been considerable friction between them and some of the local government bodies in their States. In the Western Region which I visited later, there are no District Councils, though a possible foundation for such Councils has now been laid, by the institution of District Development Committees and a Regional Development Committee. These Development Committees have very limited duties, but they seem to be organised on sound lines geographically, and the Regional Officer thinks they will afford a beginning for a District Council system in the region. Actually, I do not think the Colony area is particularly interested in Regional devolution at present. The Regional Headquarters are after all within easy reach of Accra, and the two Colony regions cannot complain of being neglected. In fact, they are better developed than any other part of the country. The Standing Committee of the J.P.C. when I met them at Dodowa on 11th November, included the following observations in the memorandum they presented to me:

“We have given earnest consideration to the fundamental issue of whether the Regional Councils are desirable or not or whether they would, in fact, merely impose an unnecessary “post office” between the local authorities and the Central Government, and we are confirmed in our conviction that Regional Councils are unpopular, redundant and unsuitable to the present stage of our development and quite unacceptable to the people and their Chiefs since they have a distinct Colonial outlook.”

They continued, however, to indicate that if a form of devolution were possible that would bring them themselves more into the picture they would welcome it. They did not develop this idea but left it for consideration at a round table conference for agreement by the Chiefs and the existing political bodies. On one point, however, the J.P.C. Standing Committee did seem quite united, namely that the possible formation of Regional Assemblies would be no justification for dividing the J.P.C. into separate Provincial Councils again. Both Regional Officers are agreed that the setting-up of Regional Assemblies or Councils is not a burning question at all in the

Colony, though it is probable that if such Assemblies were established elsewhere, efforts would be made to obtain the same institutions in the Colony regions later on.

### *Northern Territories*

I have paid two visits to the Northern Territories, and on both occasions had a talk with the Standing Committee of the Northern Territories' Council which is not a Council of Chiefs but has a considerable element of members representing local families of importance. They have no specific functions. They are merely empowered to meet "from time to time for the purpose of deliberating upon matters affecting the welfare and interest of persons in the Northern Territories". They have been preparing a paper giving their views on possible lines of Regional Devolution which I think will have considerable value as they have had direct experience of a rather elementary type of Regional Body, and I believe they have done quite useful work in supervising the work of local bodies, distributing development funds, and considering the most economic and practical way to carry on regional development.

I also visited two of the more important chiefs and the Nayiri [sic], who lives at Nalerigu, was very outspoken. He as much as said that his part of the Territories which is of some importance, was wholly unprepared to accept domination by people in the Colony; that the Northern Territories was under the protection of the British Government and should remain so for at least twenty-five years, at the end of which time they would be sufficiently developed to meet the other regions on equal terms. This, I think, is over-stating the case. But there is no doubt that the Northern Territories are backward relatively and that some means should be found to ensure, constitutionally, that their position is given proper consideration by Government. Moreover, in this region the Chiefs are not so numerous as in the Colony in proportion to the size of the territory, and they have rather different functions. They are not debarred in any way, I believe, from taking a full part in public life, except in so far as the more important among them find great difficulty when they meet to decide what their relations ought to be. None of these is prepared to give place to any other. But there have been a number of smaller chiefs who have been very useful on the administrative side in the Territories: and some consideration must be shown to Chiefs like the Nayiri who, in his own dominion, as he informed me, is properly speaking second only to God with no one else in the race. They were particularly incensed at the proposal to remove Chiefs from local benches and, as they fear, to bring in strangers legally qualified, but with no knowledge of local traditions to do their work instead. This, no doubt, can be got over, because I understand there can be no question of introducing the new system in the Northern Territories for many years. But the publication of the White Paper on the subject has certainly caused a great deal of needless uneasiness among the Chiefs of the Northern Territories. The paper which the Northern Territories' Council has been preparing is not yet in final form and is not therefore available for use in this report. But so far as I can judge from such conversations as I had, I believe that the proposals which I am now putting forward will not be unacceptable in this region.

### *Trans-Volta/Togoland*

Until the future of Togoland has been settled by the Plebiscite for which preparations are now being made, it is not possible to make specific proposals for legislative action relating to the Trans-Volta/Togoland region. But this region,

thanks to the drive and leadership displayed by the late Regional Officer, obtained for itself a Regional Council, the Trans-Volta/Togoland Council, in 1952. This Council's functions are "consultative and advisory"; but in fact its existence under Mr. Sinclair's direction was a most important factor in development work in the region (including the successful growth of Local and District Councils) and in the establishment of some degree of regional solidarity. What degree the Plebiscite will show.

I have received a paper from this Council, though I understand the Council as a whole has not considered it, on the matter of "Regional Devolution of Powers to Regional Councils". This paper shows an immature and unrealistic approach, stressing that the role of Government Agents is redundant ("their present duties should be transferred to the officials and staff of Local Government authorities") and "Regional Officers should act as a post-office through which Local Authority affairs pass to Central Government". In some other respects too the paper is out of touch with reality, but so far as anything practicable can be found in it, the author or authors seem unlikely to object to any workable scheme which would ensure that a region gets a fairly representative share in governing appointments, including Boards and Committees; that Regional recommendations in matters of development get a fair hearing; and that as much executive power is conferred on the Regional body as they can conveniently use. In one respect I found the views of this paper realistic, namely that the authors seemed to regard the functions of a future Regional body as in some ways comparable to a County Council in the English system of local government.

I got the impression that Local Government is well administered in this region and that should it fall to the Gold Coast to continue its administration, a Regional Assembly could be instituted without great difficulty and on sound lines.

### *Conclusion*

The Gold Coast as a whole presents a most encouraging picture of prosperity and general well-being. My own observations and the conversations I have had with responsible persons in the various districts I have visited support the view that the people have little to complain of and much to be thankful for. But so it was in England in the 17th Century before The Great Rebellion. The "small cloud" in the North which eventually enveloped the whole country was then situated over Scotland; here it is situated over Ashanti, and has already ceased to be small. If my proposals are to be of any service, they must be such as Ashanti can be reasonably expected to accept. Any endeavour to ride roughshod over the Asanteman Council would mean Civil War. The policy of subduing them by pin-pricks makes them progressively stronger.

From the time I first started to study the situation here I have been impressed with the value and importance of the Coussey report. Indeed the findings of this Committee are treated with deep respect in all quarters. There are many references to the Chiefs in the report. Here are two short quotations:

Section 36: "The whole institution of Chieftancy is so closely bound up with the life of our communities that its disappearance would spell disaster."

Section 136: "It is necessary to retain the good will of the traditional authorities."

I do not imagine that the last five years have invalidated these remarks. On general

grounds they seem to represent the common sense view. I suggest it is better to face the facts now with magnanimity and good grace, and to leave the future of the Chiefs to the passage of time and the gradual assimilation of the new system of Government.

I have endeavoured, therefore, in the proposals that follow to afford satisfaction to the Chiefs and to offer reasonable satisfaction to Ashanti. The proposals go somewhat beyond the views expressed by Government in their paper on the subject forwarded to the Secretary of State, but where this is the case, I have endeavoured to justify it in my discussion on the individual recommendations.

**209** CO 554/1162, no 15

28 Dec 1955

'Gold Coast: political situation': despatch no 24 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd

During the five months which have elapsed since the transmission of my Secret and Personal despatch of the 29th July,<sup>1</sup> the ball has remained at the feet of the National Liberation Movement. In spite, however, of some spectacular individual play, warmly applauded by its supporters, there has been no score. This is due to the Movement's uncertainty regarding the goal to aim at, and on occasion to a coy reluctance to have a goal at all, rather than to any soundness in the Government defence. The Government team has preferred to make a series of inflammatory gestures, to quarrel with the linesmen, and to execute manoeuvres which could only result in leaving the initiative more firmly than ever with the National Liberation Movement. It only remains for both sides to turn and attack the referee for the analogy to be complete. To that possibility I will return in a subsequent paragraph.

2. The Report of the Select Committee on Federalism and a Second Chamber was adopted *nem. con.* by the Assembly on the 9th August, and approval was given at the same time to the Prime Minister's proposal to invite "a person with the requisite knowledge and experience" to advise the Government on the establishment and functions of Regional Councils. The Leader of the Opposition, after asking for both a "mediator" and a constituent assembly, had led his supporters out of the House, and the Opposition groups had taken no further part in the debate. The circumstances, therefore, in which Sir Frederick Bourne was engaged to assist the Gold Coast Government as Constitutional Adviser were hardly auspicious.

3. Sir Frederick Bourne, formerly Governor of the Central Provinces and of East Bengal, arrived in the Gold Coast on the 26th September. The announcement of his appointment, a few days earlier, had prompted a threat from the National Liberation Movement that he would be boycotted unless his terms of reference were extended to assisting the Gold Coast "to resolve its present constitutional crisis". Your reply to this threat, to the effect that you would deeply regret any failure by the Movement to co-operate with Sir Frederick Bourne, was well received; and it soon became apparent that there was a substantial body of opinion in the N.L.M. in favour of so co-operating, provided that the *démarche* could be arranged without loss of face, and provided that the Government would refrain from treading on Ashanti corns. The

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<sup>1</sup> See 176.

first proviso could have been met without much difficulty. The second remained a stumbling-block to the end.

4. After issuing a personal statement emphasising that he was an entirely free agent, Sir Frederick Bourne set out to tour the country and to meet all shades of political opinion. His prestige as a former Governor, and patent sincerity as a man, soon led to profitable discussions, and I was hopeful, at the beginning of October, that his patient skill would succeed in overcoming the dwindling N.L.M. resistance to co-operation – and in drawing all parties round a table. I had reckoned, however, without my Government. On the 22nd October it published three Bills to amend the State Councils Ordinances of the Colony, of Ashanti and of the Northern Territories: the principal amendment proposed being one to vest in the Cabinet the powers, hitherto exercised by the Governor in his discretion, of determining questions regarding the position of Chiefs in customary law.<sup>2</sup> I had flattered myself at one stage that I had persuaded the Government not to publish these Bills. But I was subsequently told that an incipient revolt by C.P.P. back-benchers had only been averted by a hurried capitulation: in the Prime Minister's own words, he had to "publish or be damned". Not for the first time, the tail had wagged the dog. After further argument it was agreed to leave the determination of these chiefly matters in the Governor's discretion. This was a substantial concession; but it did not in fact mollify the Ashantis, who continued to regard the provision in the Ashanti Bill of an avenue of appeal which by-passed the Asanteman Council as an affront to their tribal dignity and pride.

5. Having stirred up a hornets' nest over the State Councils Bills, the Government might have been expected to examine with care the possible consequences of its other acts, lest the prevailing delicate political situation might be exacerbated by other tactless moves. The Government, however, chose this time to resuscitate its three-year-old White Paper on the Reform of Native Courts. The proposals for the construction of a new system of Courts, with a great increase in the number of stipendiaries, caused alarm in the Northern Territories where the Government's action was interpreted as another deliberate move to divest the Chiefs, of whom Native Courts in the Northern Territories are still largely composed, of such few powers as now remain to them. Here again, as with the State Councils Bills, it was not the content of the Government's measures which was objectionable, but the timing of their introduction. The State Councils Ordinances are a tangle of almost unenforceable provisions and urgently need radical amendment, though not necessarily on the lines at present contemplated by the Government. Similarly the Government's proposals for the reform of Native Courts are, in the main, sensible and realistic. In a calmer political atmosphere none of these measures would have necessarily caused misgiving.

6. The last move in this sorry tale of political ineptitude was the snap decision to suspend the revision of the voters' Registers in Ashanti, a revision which was overdue and greatly needed. It was represented that the security situation justified this measure in that hooligans (*i.e.*, N.L.M. members) were preventing peaceful citizens from exercising their civic right to put their names on the Register. The Chief Regional Officer had no difficulty in demonstrating that the revision of Registers

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<sup>2</sup> cf 197 and 198.

was proceeding smoothly throughout Ashanti and that no evidence whatsoever was available that intimidation was being practised. The Government, however, was not convinced.

7. Although other discriminatory legislation was dropped for the time being the damage was done and the National Liberation Movement refused throughout to co-operate with Sir Frederick Bourne. (This did not prevent their delegations on more than one occasion from discussing with him, amicably and at length, their reasons for their refusal to co-operate.) The attitude adopted by the Northern People's Party was more equivocal. The Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the N.P.P., Dombo, aligned himself closely with the N.L.M., but it was clear that in this line he had, at the most, reluctant support from his Party. The Party by itself made no pronouncements. On the other hand several members of the Party contributed to the preparation of a "Memorandum on Regional Autonomy" by the Standing Committee of the Northern Territories Council, an advance copy of which was sent to Sir Frederick Bourne before his departure. I should give a wrong impression, however, if I allowed the picture to be uniformly sombre: Sir Frederick toured extensively and had profitable discussions with the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs in the Colony, the Standing Committees of the Northern Territories Council and of the Trans-Volta/Togoland Council, local authorities, Members of the Legislative Assembly and many private persons of standing and political influence. Since he also met members of the N.L.M. and its allies as it were "in mufti", you will see that his mission was far from being a failure in so far as the sounding of public opinion was concerned.

8. Sir Frederick Bourne's Report was handed to me on the 20th December, and was published on Christmas Eve.<sup>3</sup> Territorial Councils and major political parties, it is hoped, will be invited to comment on the recommendations; and it is suggested that the proposal be put to them that, if there is a sufficient demand for it, the Government will be willing to arrange for Sir Frederick Bourne to return to the Gold Coast towards the end of January and to preside over a round-table conference, before his Report is debated at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly which is due to start on the 14th February.

9. Contrary to expectations the country as a whole has been remarkably peaceful during the past six months. The exception of course has been Ashanti, but even here the situation has never deteriorated to the extent that it might have done considering the provocation offered to and by rival parties. The reason for this is no doubt the feeling on the part of the National Liberation Movement that they are "on top". This is no doubt true, certainly in Kumasi, but to a lesser extent in the rural areas of Ashanti, and has resulted in a considerable rush by C.P.P. members over the past few weeks to climb on the N.L.M. band-waggon. There has been a lot of intimidation, and the rank and file of the C.P.P. in Ashanti have never been visibly the inheritors of their ancestors' martial virtues; although Dr. Nkrumah and his lieutenants view their defection with alarm, it is wholly probable that the lost sheep will rush back to the C.P.P. fold as soon as it looks profitable to return. The most disturbing feature of the situation, however, has been – as it still unfortunately remains – the sporadic hooliganism which takes the form of galigning houses, burning cars and

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<sup>3</sup> cf 208.

indiscriminate shooting. Evidence is peculiarly difficult to procure and witnesses have often been too frightened to speak the truth; with the result that the imposition of salutary sentences has been difficult to achieve.

10. Ministers of angelic disposition might be sorely tried by the turbulent futilities of the opposition groups and the hysterical unreason of their back-bench. But my Ministers are not even angels, and their recent utterances from political platforms, so far from being the tongues of angels, have audibly had an infernal provenance. There has been increasing desire to find scapegoats, and the most fruitful line has appeared to be to suggest that Her Majesty's Government is actively encouraging the N.L.M. in order to delay the grant of independence. A variation on this theme has been to draw attention to the British Conservative Party's "well-known" disposition to grind the faces of the colonial poor. In support of these propositions, and very little support is needed to convince the "suffering masses", is adduced the alleged failure of the Governor to suppress violence in Ashanti and the "partiality" of the police. There is also the question of the affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company which the Government has at long last, with the greatest reluctance, agreed should be investigated by an impartial body: this has been hailed by the N.L.M. as a victory, and the deduction is being encouraged that this is the first move in a plan concerted by Her Majesty's Government and the United Africa Company to destroy the Gold Coast's control of the marketing of its major crop. If Her Majesty's Government can be made the scapegoat for the current ills of the Gold Coast, it is felt, the former political unity will be restored. It is a promising line, and will no doubt be vigorously exploited if the time-table for independence drags.

11. While I have had to devote the greater part of this despatch to the political situation, I must put it in its proper perspective by referring to the other spheres of activity in which steady progress has been made. The decision of the United Nations that a plebiscite should be held in Togoland as early as possible in the new year is very satisfactory, and it is gratifying that British Togoland is not necessarily to be divided into the four voting areas proposed by the Visiting Mission earlier in the year and may be treated as a single unit for this purpose. Sir John Dring<sup>4</sup> has been appointed Plebiscite Administrator, responsible directly to me, and is now building up the considerable organisation required. Registration of those entitled to vote in the plebiscite will start on the 10th January, and if all goes well it will be possible to take the referendum in the first half of May. Taking Togoland as a whole, I have no doubt that the great majority will vote for union with an independent Gold Coast. The timing of this plebiscite, and of the final decision of the United Nations regarding the future of Togoland, is, of course, of major consequence to the Volta River Project. The Preparatory Commission has now finished its investigations, with the exception of certain routine continuing enquiries such as hydrological and meteorological measurements, and is drawing up its reports for submission to the two Governments and the Aluminium Companies. It is expected that these reports will be printed and published by May next year. Meanwhile arrangements are being made for the initial negotiations, which we refer to here as "Pre-Rubicon" talks, to start early in April.

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<sup>4</sup> ICS, 1927–1947; prime minister of Indian princely state of Bahawalpur, 1948–1952; adviser to the gov of the Gold Coast on the Togoland plebiscite, 1955–1956; adviser to the gov-gen of Nigeria and the gov of the Northern Region for the North and South Cameroons plebiscite, 1959.

12. The labour situation gave ground for anxiety in September–October, and it was at one time feared that labour unrest would be fomented for political ends by the National Liberation Movement and its allies. As it happened the labour front has grown progressively quieter as the year has drawn to its end. The strike called by the Gold Coast Mines Employees' Union is now in its fifth week, but there have been no serious incidents, and it is expected that there will be a return to work as soon as the promised Board of Inquiry has been appointed. Strikes by the Post Office Employees' Union and the National Union of Teachers (a minority organisation) are threatened for the new year, but there is at present no sign of widespread labour unrest. This is no doubt due, at least partly, to the announcement made by the Prime Minister in the Legislative Assembly on the 18th November to the effect that the Government "after a careful and serious review of the financial and economic position of the country" had come to the conclusion that it was necessary to accord some increase in wages and salaries. Proposals and a supplementary Appropriation Bill were promised for the meeting of the Assembly to be held in February next year. Somewhat surprisingly, the announcement was received with something less than enthusiasm, and this is perhaps indicative not only of the fact that our current labour problems are not mainly economic in character, but also of the awareness of the man in the street that the cost of living in the Gold Coast moves very swiftly to meet increases in wages.

13. Though the time-table for independence is by no means clear, the preparations to that end continue with an inexorable momentum of their own. Departments of Defence and of External Affairs have been established, but of course, are "shadow" ministries until I relinquish my responsibilities for these subjects. The nucleus of the Gold Coast Foreign Service has been recruited and our budding diplomats are now receiving training with various British Missions overseas. West Africa Command ceases to exist on the 1st July, 1956, and on the same date the Gold Coast Government will assume full financial responsibility for the Gold Coast Military Forces. The luxury Accra Hotel<sup>5</sup> is nearing completion, and a start has been made on the State House and the Prime Minister's official residence, all of which buildings will be fully occupied on Independence Day. When that day will be remains a matter for broad conjecture. On present performance it seems unlikely that the intransigence of the Ashantis will be modified to the extent of allowing them to sit round a table with the C.P.P. under the chairmanship of Sir Frederick Bourne. The possibility of a general election in the second half of 1956, as soon as the Togoland plebiscite has been held, is thus very real. Apart from an understandable reluctance to go to the polls so soon after their victory last year, the Government is genuinely fearful lest the result of elections in Ashanti and the Northern Territories would lead Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to withhold the granting of independence. Thus the Gold Coast enters its "year of destiny" with a certain timid cynicism, and in a constitution which is becoming increasingly tight round the shoulders.

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<sup>5</sup> Later known as the Star Hotel.

**210** CO 554/806, no 180

9 Jan 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter (reply) from C G Eastwood to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the attitude HMG would adopt towards the result of a general election

Thank you for your letter of the 19th December<sup>1</sup> in which you suggested that as far as possible we should eschew further public references to the possibility that continued refusal by the N.L.M. to co-operate with Sir Frederick Bourne might delay the achievement of independence, and sought an assurance about the attitude which H.M.G. would adopt towards the result of a General Election in which the issue was the nature of the future constitution.

We entirely agree with you on the first point.

We have considered your second point very carefully indeed. The policy of H.M.G. was clearly expressed, of course, in the last paragraph of the Secretary of State's letter of the 31st October to the Prime Minister.<sup>2</sup> In that letter the Secretary of State said that before H.M.G. could consider the grant of independence he considered it necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to show that they desired independence in the very near future, and to agree upon a constitution which not only met their needs but was also workable. You now suggest that such a substantial majority of opinion should be held to exist, even if the opposition party secured a majority at a General Election in Ashanti and possibly the Northern Territories. The adjective "substantial" was purposely a little vague and I must say that the Secretary of State would be very reluctant to be too precise at this stage about the size or regional distribution of the majority which the C.P.P. must gain if there should be a General Election. Your letter was written, I think, before Bourne had presented his report. The important thing now is to see how far agreement can be reached on the basis of his proposals. If as a result there was a very general measure of agreement no General Election might be necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> See 207.

<sup>2</sup> See 196, enclosure.

**211** CO 554/806, no 199

5 Feb 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to C G Eastwood on the question of holding a general election. *Enclosure*: brief on Dr Nkrumah's views

During my talks in the Colonial Office I am anxious to discuss with the Secretary of State and with the Office, the question of the necessity of holding a General Election in the near future in order to resolve our constitutional difficulties. I enclose a brief prepared in consultation with the Prime Minister, setting out his views on the subject.<sup>1</sup> You may wish to give preliminary consideration to the points raised before we talk.

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<sup>1</sup> During his subsequent discussions at the CO, Arden-Clarke informed Eastwood that he had written this brief because Nkrumah's version was not suitable for submission to HMG (Eastwood to Lloyd, minute, 14 Feb 1956, CO 554/806, no 203).

## Enclosure to 211

In his secret and personal letter of the 31st October, 1955, the Colonial Secretary wrote to the Prime Minister:-

"There are now in my view two things which are necessary before Her Majesty's Government can consider the grant of independence and it is my hope that both these things can be achieved without much delay. In the first place it is necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to show that they desire independence in the very near future. In the second place it is equally necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to agree upon a constitution which not only meets their needs but is also workable. It is my hope, as I know it is yours, that as a result of the work done by Sir Frederick Bourne it will be possible for the Gold Coast Government to put forward its proposals for the form of the constitution after independence in the knowledge that those proposals are generally acceptable in the country. If by any mischance it should be impossible for Sir Frederick to recommend proposals which are generally acceptable, then, as you yourself I know recognise, there would seem to be no choice but to seek the views of the people on this question by means of a General Election, in the hope that this would produce a really decisive result."<sup>2</sup>

2. In his reply to the Colonial Secretary, dated the 21st November 1955, the Prime Minister wrote:-

"I fully concur with the hope expressed in the final paragraph of your letter that as a result of the work done by Sir Frederick Bourne it will be possible for the Gold Coast Government to put forward its proposals for the form of the constitution after independence confident of the support of the majority of the people of the country.

In conclusion I should like to emphasise that nothing must be done to weaken the cause of democracy by reducing the status of our freely-elected Legislative Assembly through giving greater weight to the words of a minority as opposed to the decisions of the Assembly. I am ready to go to a General Election when circumstances demand one."<sup>3</sup>

3. In an endeavour to meet the two conditions laid down in the Colonial Secretary's letter, *viz.* that it is necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast

- (a) to show that they desire independence in the very near future;
- (b) to agree upon a constitution which not only meets their needs but is also workable,

the Prime Minister has convened a conference of all the principal representative bodies and organisations in the Gold Coast to meet under the chairmanship of Mr. Tachie-Menson on the 16th February to discuss not only Sir Frederick Bourne's

<sup>2</sup> See 196, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See 200.

Report but also any other matters affecting the form of the constitution. If general agreement on the form of the constitution is reached at this conference the Government will prepare a White Paper setting out its constitutional proposals based on that agreement and after time has been given for its consideration throughout the country, will introduce a resolution adopting these proposals at the budget meeting of the Assembly which starts on 15th May. If the resolution is adopted, the Prime Minister will then approach the United Kingdom Government to have the necessary legislative enactments made to give the Gold Coast its independence under the constitution adopted by the Assembly.

4. It is, however, regarded as improbable that the requisite degree of agreement on the form of the constitution will be achieved at the conference. In that event, the Prime Minister will prepare a White Paper setting out his constitutional proposals and have it debated at the Budget Meeting of the Assembly: then, if the circumstances seem to demand a General Election, he will go to the people for their verdict on the proposed constitution as it emerges from the Assembly.

5. The contention of the Convention People's Party Executive is that their party representatives were elected to administer the affairs of the Gold Coast for a period of four years with a mandate to achieve independence for the Gold Coast within the life of the present Assembly. The C.P.P. government has not been defeated on a vote of confidence and its majority in the Assembly remains unimpaired.

6. On the other hand, the Prime Minister recognises that a cleavage of opinion about the form of the constitution has occurred in the country since the General Election was held. This body of opinion, represented by the National Liberation Movement, is particularly strong in Ashanti and cannot be disregarded but it is not represented in the present Assembly. Although the Prime Minister feels that it is not incumbent upon him to go to a General Election, nevertheless in order to resolve any doubts there may be as to the views of the people on the constitutional issue, he may decide to do so. Before making any such decision, the Prime Minister desires clarification of what is meant by the phrases used in the Colonial Secretary's letter

“a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast”

“generally acceptable”

“a really decisive result”.

7. It is the Prime Minister's view that if he goes to a General Election to seek a mandate from the people that his constitutional proposals are acceptable and that the people desire to enter upon independence under that form of constitution immediately and he is returned to power with that mandate, though it be with the smallest of majorities, the British Government, in pursuance of a resolution duly passed by the new Assembly, should declare a firm date for independence and take immediate steps to enact the necessary legislation for the transfer of power to the Gold Coast Government

8. The Prime Minister assumes, of course, that there will be no departure from the constitutional convention whereby the Governor after the General Election sends for the Leader of the majority party in the new Assembly to form a Government and that the Governor and the Secretary of State will not be unmindful of their special responsibilities under the constitution for the maintenance of public order and security in the Gold Coast and that all possible steps will be taken by them to

suppress violence and intimidation, particularly in Ashanti, which might prevent the holding of a fair election.

9. If the Prime Minister is assured that the British Government will abide by the results of a General Election irrespective of the size of the majority gained and irrespective of the fact that the winning party may be in a minority in one or more of the regions of the Gold Coast, then he will be prepared to hold a General Election as soon after the conclusion of the budget meeting of the Assembly as may seem best.

10. A tentative time-table of events is attached. It is the earnest desire of the Prime Minister that if in any way practicable, the date of independence should be the 6th March 1957 – the anniversary of the 1844 Bond.

TENTATIVE PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

*1956*

February 16th	Round table conference on constitutional issue.
March 20th – April 10th	Assembly meets.
April	Government publishes White Paper on constitutional proposals. Talks on official level on V.R.P. in London (“Pre-Rubicon”).
May 9th	Togoland plebiscite.
May 10th – June 8th	Budget Meeting of the Assembly.
June 8th	Government White Paper on constitutional proposals debated. Government declares its intention to go to General Election. Assembly dissolved.
June 9th – July 16th	Electioneering.
July 17th	General Election.
July 24th	New National Assembly meets. Prime Minister gets mandate to ask for Independence under new constitution and asks U.K. Government to announce firm date for transfer of power.
August/September	Top-level talks on Volta River Project (“Rubicon”) and decision taken whether to proceed with project subject to approval of National Assembly.
October	National Assembly decides on V.R.P.
October/November	UNO decides future of Togoland in light of plebiscite.

*1957*

January	Royal visit.
March 6th	Anniversary of the Bond of 1844. Transfer of power and celebration of Independence.

**212** CO 554/806, no 200

10 Feb 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: note by R J Vile of his discussion with Sir C Arden-Clarke on a general election and the governor's relations with Dr Nkrumah

I met Sir Charles Arden-Clarke at London Airport on the 9th February and on the way to Liverpool Street Station had the opportunity of a private talk with him for about half an hour. He gave me the attached extract from the "Daily Graphic" which includes the reply made by the N.L.M. to the Prime Minister's invitation to the Round Table Conference.

2. The point to which Sir Charles attached major importance was the overwhelming necessity to have an early General Election. He very much hoped the Secretary of State would accept his advice and he made it pretty clear that in his view we would do well to go a long way towards meeting the Prime Minister's request for an elucidation of the phrases used in the earlier correspondence about the need for a substantial majority of the people to show they desired immediate independence.

3. He said that he had had some success in persuading the Prime Minister to take the view that an early General Election was necessary. The C.P.P. members of the Legislature were not enthusiastic because they felt that the heavy expense they had incurred in getting elected could only be offset by four years enjoyment of the perquisites of office. If, however, H.M.G. were lukewarm about the idea of a General Election and continued to be unwilling to give any assurances about their attitude towards the probable results of such an election Sir Charles thought it quite likely that Dr. Nkrumah would put to the Legislature a motion demanding immediate independence. This would be passed by the C.P.P. majority and in the view of Sir Charles would be the signal for widespread disturbances instigated by the N.L.M. If a General Election were held and H.M.G. then decided that independence should be granted Sir Charles thought that a lot of the present N.L.M. supporters would change back as rapidly to the C.P.P. as they had previously changed away from it as only by transferring back to the C.P.P. could they hope to enjoy any of the fruits of power.

4. Sir Charles admitted that his relations with the Prime Minister were more difficult. He was at pains to emphasise that their personal friendship was as deep as ever, but the difficulties imposed by the nature of the constitution, its reservation of responsibility for internal security to the Governor and the difficulties which Dr. Nkrumah was having both with his own Party and with the N.L.M., had made it very difficult for the Governor always to persuade Dr. Nkrumah not to commit gross acts of folly. Sir Charles said that the Prime Minister still consulted him on everything but that in a recent case, for example, he, the Governor, had persuaded the whole Cabinet not to take a certain course of action but they had nevertheless done so following pressure from back-bench members. Sir Charles said that from what he knew of the agreement on the Malayan constitution he wished very much that an arrangement on those lines for internal security had been thought of at the time the present Gold Coast constitution was brought into force.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Malaya became internally self-governing following the victory of the Malayan Alliance at the first federal elections in 1955. Constitutional talks were held in London in Jan-Feb 1956 to discuss the timetable and arrangements for the achievement of Malayan independence. Drawing on the Gold Coast experience, Lennox-Boyd persuaded the Cabinet in London to agree to the transfer of responsibility for internal security to a Malayan minister before the talks opened. On the issue of internal security in the Malayan context, see BDEEP series B, A J Stockwell, ed, *Malaya*.

5. We did not have time fully to discuss these matters but I was able to indicate some of the major points of difficulty which might be raised. Sir Charles left me in no doubt that he intended to press Ministers very hard indeed to support him in his advocacy of a General Election and to give him what he asked for in the way of assurances about H.M.G.'s attitude towards the probable result of such an election.

**213** CO 554/806, no 200A [Feb 1956]  
 [Constitutional crisis]: CO note for Mr Lennox-Boyd's talk with Sir C Arden-Clarke on the general election and the Northern Territories Treaties of Protection

The following matters were discussed by Sir Charles Arden-Clarke with Sir Thomas Lloyd and Mr. Eastwood:—

*General election*

If Dr. Nkrumah decides to go to a General Election, he intends to publish his constitutional proposals in a White Paper. If his Party is returned to power, there will be a formal motion in the new Legislative Assembly giving approval to his proposals. It seems likely that even if Dr. Nkrumah is returned with a bare majority, that majority will change to something more substantial in the Assembly since some independent members of the Legislature might want to support the C.P.P. when they saw that they had in fact gained a majority.

It was felt that the holding of an Election was a necessity if the present dispute is to be resolved. It was further felt that while H.M.G. could not be expected to commit itself at this stage to a more precise definition of the terms which had already been used — “a substantial majority . . .” — it might be possible to give Dr. Nkrumah an assurance that provided his constitutional proposals secured a reasonable majority of the votes cast in the Legislative Assembly (and the Governor promised to prevent Dr. Nkrumah from asking for a definition of “reasonable”) H.M.G. would be prepared to go ahead with the transfer of power.

Sir Charles Arden-Clarke was firmly of the opinion that unless Dr. Nkrumah was given some assurance of this nature, he (Dr. Nkrumah) would not be prepared to go to a General Election.<sup>1</sup>

*Northern Territories Treaties of Protection*

It had been assumed in the Gold Coast that the Treaties of Protection with certain chiefs of the Northern Territories had been superseded by subsequent acts of State. It had come as a shock that legal opinion here was of the opinion that those treaties were still in force. The chiefs had asked for a statement from the Governor on the position of these treaties and if they were simply told that they were still in force,

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<sup>1</sup> Eastwood had a separate talk with Arden-Clarke before this note was written and minuted Lloyd on 14 Feb: ‘Sir Charles said that unless Dr Nkrumah was given this assurance he would not go to a General Election and then there would be a continuing stale-mate in the country and things would go from bad to worse. Eventually we should have to send “another Mounbatten” to put independence through’ (CO 554/806, no 203).

they would undoubtedly not agree to their abrogation. It was felt that with the march of the Gold Coast towards self-government the original purpose of these treaties had been achieved and that in telling the chiefs of their position under the Treaties, the Governor should be authorized to say that in view of the changes in circumstances, when the Gold Coast achieves full self-government status, these treaties must come to an end. The alternative to this appeared to be that if the Northern Territories are to remain under U.K. protection, they must be separated from the rest of the country and remain a Protectorate when full self-government is achieved in the South.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In his same minute to Lloyd (see note 1 above), Eastwood also referred to his discussion with Arden-Clarke about the Northern Territories Treaties: '[H]is first reaction was that if the Northern Territories' Chiefs were once told that their Treaties remained in force and were invited to give them up they none of them would agree to do so. He seemed to think that, whatever the legal position might be, we should have to take unilateral action to abrogate the Treaties. We explained some of the difficulties of doing this and the possible implications elsewhere. I fear this is going to be a serious additional complication. Sir Charles has just heard from Sir Gordon Hadow that the Northern Territories Council, following the example of the N.L.M., have refused to take part in the [Achimota] conference starting this week.'

Eastwood also explained that Arden-Clarke had supplied a copy of Nkrumah's latest draft of an independence constitution which, according to the governor, seemed 'to give us all the safeguards that we ask for'. Eastwood commented: 'On a quick glance it looks to us very much on the right lines, though there are perhaps one or two omissions, e.g. on Police.'

## **214** CAB 134/1202, CA(56)9 2 March 1956

### **'Gold Coast: proposed general election': memorandum by Mr Lennox-Boyd for Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee**

In my memorandum to the Cabinet of the 28th November (C.P. (55)183)<sup>1</sup> about constitutional developments in the Gold Coast I said that if Sir Frederick Bourne was unable to bring the opposing factions together on an agreed form of constitution it would be necessary to resolve the issue at a General Election.

2. The leading opposition group, the National Liberation Movement, refused to meet Sir Frederick; he nevertheless submitted a report which the Governor considers fully meets the needs of Regional interests in the Gold Coast. Dr. Nkrumah made considerable and, in my view, statesmanlike efforts to persuade all parties to attend a Round Table Conference to discuss Sir Frederick's Report, but the principal opponents of the Government (the National Liberation Movement) and one or two other organisations managed to find flimsy excuses for not attending. The Conference is now meeting without them and it is just possible that it may still produce a useful result, but the Governor has advised me that there is now very little chance of resolving the constitutional dispute by negotiation. If as I expect the Conference does not succeed, then I see no choice but to have a General Election in the Gold Coast on the constitutional issue.

3. Dr. Nkrumah has proposed the following procedure for such a General Election. His Government will prepare a White Paper on their own constitutional

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<sup>1</sup> See 203.

proposals to be debated by the present Legislative Assembly in May or June (a draft of these proposals was brought home by the Governor; they seem in general to be wholly acceptable). Dr. Nkrumah would then hold a General Election in July on the issue of his proposed constitution. If his Party was returned to power, the new Legislative Assembly would then approve a formal motion demanding full self-government within the Commonwealth under the proposed constitution.

4. On the assumption that the present Conference produces no substantial result, I fully agree with Dr. Nkrumah's proposal that his Government should prepare constitutional proposals and submit them to the test of a General Election. The Governor advises me that Dr. Nkrumah's Party in the legislature are mostly opposed to the idea of an early General Election. It might therefore help Dr. Nkrumah if I were to make a public statement to the effect that H.M.G. would welcome an early election in the Gold Coast on the constitutional issue. I propose, if the present conference breaks down and if my colleagues agree, to ask him if he would like me to make such a statement.

5. Dr. Nkrumah has asked for an assurance that the British Government will abide by the results of a General Election "irrespective of the size of the majority gained and irrespective of the fact that the winning party may be in a minority in one or more of the regions of the Gold Coast." He feels that if his constitutional proposals are acceptable to H.M.G. and if H.M.G. shares his view that a unitary system is appropriate in the Gold Coast, then H.M.G. should be prepared to accept the overall verdict of the peoples of the Gold Coast irrespective of any geographical differences. This is the one point on which I do not feel able entirely to accept Dr. Nkrumah's wishes. It would, I am sure, be wrong to give him a pledge of this nature without considerable qualification as it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that he might secure a majority of just one or two and have clearly failed to carry the majority of opinion in the Gold Coast with him. I have therefore considered very carefully what other assurance I could give him which would meet his wishes without committing H.M.G. to an impossible undertaking.

6. After discussion with the Governor I have come to the conclusion that it would be reasonable to assure Dr. Nkrumah that if after a General Election he obtains a reasonable majority of the votes cast in the new Assembly on a motion seeking independence under his constitution, H.M.G. will be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth. (Dr. Nkrumah wishes this date to be the 6th March, 1957, which is the anniversary of the Bond concluded in 1844 between the then Governor and the Chiefs of the Colony). It is, I think, likely that, if his own party had gained even a bare majority at the election, a number of independent members would hasten to jump on the band-wagon and would therefore support such a motion in the new Assembly, and I think it of importance to encourage Dr. Nkrumah to look for support outside his own Party when attempting to obtain decisions on matters of such fundamental importance to his country. I do not propose to define what would constitute a reasonable majority and the Governor is hopeful that he can persuade Dr. Nkrumah to accept such an assurance without seeking any definition of it.

7. I have naturally asked the Governor whether the General Election would be orderly and free of intimidation. The Governor is confident that he can ensure an orderly election, but both he and Dr. Nkrumah would welcome the presence of a small number of members from both sides of the House in the Gold Coast on the day

of the poll. If my colleagues agree, I would propose to make arrangements to this end.

8. There is a related matter of some importance on which it is necessary for me to consult my colleagues. Treaties were made at the end of the last Century with certain Chiefs in the Northern Territories providing for United Kingdom protection. The Chiefs recently asked whether these treaties are still in force, and the Governor has agreed to meet them in April to let them know the position.

9. The Law Officers in the Gold Coast were of opinion that the treaties had been abrogated unilaterally by Order in Council but my Legal Advisers advise me that the Treaties are still in force. The Governor advises me that, if the Chiefs are simply told this, they will not willingly agree to their abrogation. When the Gold Coast achieves full self-government, H.M.G. will be quite unable to carry out its obligations under the Treaties. It would be virtually impracticable for H.M.G. to maintain the Northern Territories as a Protectorate separated from the rest of the Gold Coast, and it would be an impossible situation to defer the independence of the whole country because the Chiefs could not be persuaded to have their Treaties abrogated. I therefore propose, if my colleagues agree, to authorise the Governor to inform the Chiefs that H.M.G. will be unable to discharge its Treaty obligations when the Gold Coast achieves full self-government, that it will clearly be in the interests of the Northern Territories Chiefs and peoples to reach the best arrangement they can with the Gold Coast Government and that they would be well advised to do so with the assistance of the Governor while he still has his present powers. It is the Governor's view that he can persuade the Chiefs to accept this line. It may appear that this is rather high-handed but I am sure that it is the only practicable course. It is somewhat comparable to the line taken with the Princes in India and the Shan states in Burma. I do not think it would have awkward repercussions elsewhere.

10. I invite my colleagues to agree –

- (1) that if Dr. Nkrumah so wishes (as he may if the conference now taking place fails to produce results) I should make a statement that H.M.G. would welcome a General Election on the constitutional issue;
- (2) that I should tell Dr. Nkrumah that if he obtains a reasonable majority of the votes cast in a newly elected Legislative Assembly in favour of his constitutional proposals H.M.G. will be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth (this will probably be the 6th March, 1957);
- (3) that if the election takes place I should arrange for a small number of members from both sides of the House to be present for the poll in July in the Gold Coast;
- (4) that I should authorise the Governor to speak to the Northern Territories Chiefs on the lines described in paragraph 9 of this memorandum.

**215 CAB 134/1202, CA(56)10**

5 March 1956

**'Gold Coast': memorandum by Lord Home for Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee on the date for independence and discussions with Commonwealth governments**

In his memorandum C.A. (56)9<sup>1</sup> the Colonial Secretary asks authority to inform Dr. Nkrumah that, on certain conditions, H.M.G. will be prepared to declare a firm date for attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth (probably March 1957).

It has always been assumed that it would be appropriate that the enhancement of the Gold Coast's status to full membership of the Commonwealth should synchronize with her attainment of full self-government. Commonwealth membership is, of course, a matter for consultation with all existing Members.

If the above time-table is achieved, the Prime Ministers' Meeting summoned for next June is likely to be the last before the Gold Coast achieves full self-government. It has always been felt that weighty matters concerning membership of the Commonwealth should be discussed at Prime Ministers' Meetings and not left for correspondence and it may be undesirable to summon a special separate meeting to consider the Gold Coast alone.

We should therefore be prepared to have the question of the future of the Gold Coast raised at the June meeting. All we need seek is an opportunity to raise the matter formally with other Commonwealth Governments. In the light of that discussion, the decision could be ratified by correspondence at the appropriate time.

My colleagues may wish to be reminded of previous discussions which have taken place with other Commonwealth Governments on this subject:—

(i) Lord Swinton circulated a memorandum to the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand and discussed the matter with them at the time of the Prime Ministers' Meeting in January, 1955. These three Prime Ministers all indicated that their Governments would be willing to support the Gold Coast's application for full membership.

(ii) No simultaneous sounding was taken of the Union Government since Mr. Strijdom himself was not present at the 1955 Meeting. Our High Commissioner was, however, authorised to broach this question with Mr. Strijdom last December.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Strijdom's reaction was more forthcoming than one might have feared. But he stressed the importance which South African opinion would attach to the Gold Coast not being placed ahead of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and his final attitude cannot be taken for granted. The South African High Commissioner in London has re-emphasised this to me in the last few days.

(iii) No soundings have been taken of the Asian Commonwealth Governments, though they may all be assumed to be likely to welcome the inclusion of the Gold Coast as a full Commonwealth Member. In a preliminary message to Mr. Nehru about the forthcoming Prime Ministers' Meeting, the Prime Minister mentioned that the Gold Coast was one of the subjects likely to come up.

<sup>1</sup> See 214.

<sup>2</sup> See 204, note 4.

The only points I wish to emphasise at this stage on the assumption that the timetable in the Colonial Secretary's paper is adhered to, are:—

- (i) That we should give timely advice to other Commonwealth Governments of what our own policy towards the Gold Coast is.
- (ii) That, in due course, we should be ready to suggest the inclusion of the Gold Coast as an item on the agenda for the Prime Ministers' Meeting in June.
- (iii) That the handling of this item, particularly with the South Africans, will need very careful consideration. I should like to try and get a definite reaction from Mr. Strijdom immediately so that we can decide how best to handle this at the Prime Ministers' Meeting.

**216** CAB 134/1202, CA(56)11

8 Mar 1956

'Colonial constitutional development: terminology': note by Mr Lennox-Boyd for Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee. *Annex: CO circular*

With reference to Conclusion 2 in C.M.(55) 44th Conclusions of the 1st December I attach for the information of my colleagues a copy of a note that has been circulated for the guidance of my Department. Copies of the note have also been sent to Colonial Governors. Its terms were agreed in consultation with the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office.

Annex to 216

In references to the constitutional development of colonial territories the term "full self-government" should be used wherever possible in preference to "independence". The latter term could be taken as implying that the goal of constitutional development is secession from the Commonwealth, and its use could give encouragement to that idea. It is also better to refer to becoming a "full Member of the Commonwealth" rather than to achieving "independence within the Commonwealth" which might suggest that Commonwealth membership in some way limits independence.

It will not always be possible to use the phrase "self-government" or even "full self-government". In the United Nations both these terms are generally interpreted as implying no more than a high degree of local autonomy in relation to the internal affairs of the territory. They are not only distinguished from but contrasted with independence in the international sense. This distinction has also gained a certain currency outside the U.N. The term "independence" will therefore still have to be used on occasions if H.M.G. are not to be suspected of double-dealing, and this will particularly have to be borne in mind by the overseas information services.

These instructions, of course, apply only where it is proposed to hand over control of all matters including external affairs and defence. Wherever there is any likelihood of H.M.G. wishing, when the time comes, to retain control of these subjects, the phrase to be used is "self-government" or, better still, where it is politically possible, "internal self-government".

**217** CO 554/806, no 225

14 Mar 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Dr Nkrumah urging a general election to resolve the constitutional impasse

[This letter was sent in response to a message which Nkrumah sent through Hadow to Arden-Clarke in London. Nkrumah explained that he had 'never firmly believed in the need for going to a General Election before Independence'. Recent events, particularly the continued refusal of the NLM and its supporters to attend the Achimota conference on the Bourne Report and other constitutional matters, had confirmed his opinion. Nkrumah also expressed concern at 'the handling of offenders and suspects by those who are responsible for the maintenance of law and order in Ashanti' and believed that it was by no means certain that the NLM would not resort to 'violence and intimidation' during an election campaign. Doubting the NLM attitude would change, even after an election 'in which they know quite well they would never succeed', Nkrumah argued that independence should be granted on the terms already agreed. His message ended with a request to be informed as to the attitude of HMG if the Gold Coast government decided not to hold an election before independence (CO 554/806, no 218, Nkrumah to Hadow, letter, 24 Feb 1956).]

When Sir Charles Arden-Clarke came to see me on his return to this country on leave, he told me of the points you had raised on my Secret and Personal letter to you of the 31st October, 1955, in which I had said:

"In the first place it is necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to say that they desire independence in the very near future. In the second place it is equally necessary for a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast to agree upon a Constitution which not only meets their needs but is also workable."<sup>1</sup>

He also told me that you had had in mind, if the Constitutional Conference under the Chairmanship of Mr. Tachie-Menson did not achieve the desired degree of agreement on the form of Constitution, to have a White Paper prepared setting out your own constitutional proposals. This you would have debated at the Budget meeting of your Assembly and thereafter you would consider going to your people for their verdict on the proposed Constitution as it emerges from the Assembly.

Sir Charles added, however, that before deciding to have a General Election to seek a mandate on your constitutional proposals, you desired that Her Majesty's Government should give an assurance that [if] you were returned to power with that mandate, even if it were with the smallest of majorities and possibly with a minority in one or more of the regions of the Gold Coast, the British Government would declare a firm date for independence and take immediate steps to enact the necessary legislation for the transfer of power to the Gold Coast Government.

The Governor has since told me that on reflection you are inclined to doubt the desirability of going to a General Election on the Constitutional issue in view of the continued refusal of the National Liberation Movement and its allies to discuss the Bourne report and other constitutional matters, and your uncertainty that any General Election could be conducted in a satisfactory and orderly manner.

I am completely at one with you in wishing to see the earliest possible attainment by the Gold Coast of full self-government within the Commonwealth. I have watched

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<sup>1</sup> See 196, enclosure.

closely the way in which you have made one statesmanlike effort after another to compose the differences which divide your country and I fully understand the difficulties which you still have and the reasons which have caused you to consult me on the best method of achieving your policy. I am very anxious to do everything I can to help you and I can assure you that in those cases where I find myself unable to accept your suggestions, this is only because I consider that a better method can be found of achieving the result which we both so fervently desire.

As I said in my letter of the 31st October, 1955, Her Majesty's Government must be satisfied that a substantial majority of the people of the Gold Coast want independence in the very near future under a workable Constitution on which they are substantially in agreement. I had hoped, and I know that you had shared my hope, that the outcome of Sir Frederick Bourne's mission before Christmas would have been a report and recommendations which all parties concerned would have been willing to discuss and which would have provided the foundation for constitutional proposals on which there would have been the desired widespread agreement. If, as now seems likely this is not the outcome, it appears to me that there will be no alternative to the holding of a General Election if H.M.G. is to be in a position to proceed with the introduction into the United Kingdom of a bill providing for the transfer of power.

I can well understand your fear lest a General Election should be the occasion for riots and bloodshed. This is a point to which my own attention was directed and I have naturally questioned the Governor closely on the matter. He assures me that it should be possible to hold an election free of intimidation and disorder and I can assure you that he will have my full support in any arrangements he makes to that end. I could not allow myself to be deflected from a course which I thought was right by the fear that some persons might choose to oppose it with violence and I think we should both be false to the aim we have set ourselves if we allowed ourselves to be so deflected. In addition, I have it in mind to invite Members of Parliament from both sides of the House of Commons to be present in the Gold Coast on the day of the poll, as I think this will show all parties concerned in the Gold Coast that their election is a subject of considerable interest and that their behaviour will be under close scrutiny.

I must therefore put to you with great emphasis that I hope you will find it possible to follow the procedure for a General Election which I understand has been in your mind. For my part, I should be willing, if you would consider it helpful, to make a statement to the effect that H.M.G. would welcome an early Election in the Gold Coast on the Constitutional issue and I can assure you that, if such an Election were held and your party were returned to power, and if the new Government received a reasonable majority of the votes cast in the new Assembly on a formal motion calling for full self-government within the Commonwealth under a Constitution based on your White Paper proposals, H.M.G. in the United Kingdom would be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of that stage and to go right ahead with the enactment of the necessary legislation for the transfer of power to the Gold Coast Government.

**218** CO 554/807, no 242

22 Mar 1956

**[Constitutional proposals]: CO note of a meeting with Sir C Arden-Clarke on the judiciary, the armed forces and regional devolution**

The meeting considered the draft of the Gold Coast Government's constitutional proposals which the Governor had brought home with him and a draft Memorandum containing comments on those proposals which had been prepared in the Colonial Office.

2. The comments concerned three major topics, namely, the Judiciary, the Armed Forces and the recommendations on regional devolution made by Sir Frederick Bourne. It was agreed that it would be better to defer comments on the proposals for regional devolution until there had been an opportunity to study the report of the Round Table Conference. When the comments were ready they should be sent out to the Gold Coast in the form of a Memorandum. It was also agreed that it would be better to put the proposal for an Armed Forces Council by way of a letter to the Acting Governor. The draft of such a letter was approved and it was agreed that a Personal letter should also be sent, drawing the Deputy Governor's attention to the possible advantages of making provision in the Constitution for an Armed Forces Council rather than, as in the case of Malaya, leaving the constitution of such a Council to be the subject of a local Ordinance.

3. Detailed consideration was given to the passages in the draft Memorandum prepared in the Colonial Office concerned with the Judiciary. (A Note of the changes is attached.)<sup>1</sup> It was agreed that the United Kingdom's views about the Gold Coast Government's proposals for the Judiciary should be sent to the Deputy Governor as soon as possible in a letter.

4. The meeting then considered the present position of Judges in the Gold Coast. The Governor said that the Chief Justice had apparently misled other Judges about the decision of the Gold Coast Government to grant them compensation on independence. He also made the point that no approach had been made to him to secure the appointment as Judges of any existing Ministers. He did not think that there was any intention to appoint Mr. Casely-Hayford as a Judge but he thought that Mr. Asafu-Adjaye<sup>2</sup> might be so appointed after independence. He agreed that Gold Coast Ministers had made most unfortunate speeches containing threats of how they would deal with their opponents after independence. The Governor said that Ministers had found the Chief Justice<sup>3</sup> most unco-operative. He had a bee in his bonnet about compensation and he had so emphasised the point that Ministers had lost confidence in him and had grown exasperated with him.

5. The point was made that if the Gold Coast Government agreed to compensation now the Judges would presumably stay; if not, they would undoubtedly go. The Federation of Malaya had agreed to pay compensation to Judges before independence; it was expected that the Western Region of Nigeria would shortly

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed.

<sup>2</sup> Casely-Hayford and Asafu-Adjaye were both lawyers by profession.

<sup>3</sup> Sir K A Korsah (Kt 1955), barrister at law in the Gold Coast since 1920; member of Legislative Council, 1928-1940, and of Executive Council, 1942-1945; puisne judge, 1945; chief justice of the West African Court of Appeal, 1955.

agree to the similar proposal made for Nigeria. It was agreed that a letter should go to Sir Gordon Hadow before Easter drawing his attention to the decision in respect of the Federation of Malaya and giving an account of the latest position in Nigeria.

6. The Governor drew attention to the importance of salaries for Judges. He thought that from the Judges' point of view an increase in salary was probably as desirable as the award of compensation. He said that Gold Coast Judges' salaries were now seriously out of line with similar salaries elsewhere and that probably a salary of about £3,000 a year for Puisne Judges was now needed. The Gold Coast Cabinet had recently been considering an increase in salaries but their decision, reached about a fortnight ago, was that there should be a percentage addition on the first £300 of salary, followed by a Salaries Commission. The Governor thought that this would completely fail to satisfy the Judges and that the decision would probably mean the more rapid retirement of other European public officers.

**219** CO 554/807, no 243

22 Mar 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: CO note of a meeting between Mr Lennox-Boyd and Sir C Arden-Clarke on the possibility of disturbances in the Gold Coast and the possible need for military reinforcements

The meeting discussed the present political situation in the Gold Coast and the possibility of disturbances and the possible need for military reinforcements from the United Kingdom.

2. The Secretary of State enquired whether the removal of people like Krobo Edusei,<sup>1</sup> Welbeck<sup>2</sup> and Kofi Baako<sup>3</sup> might not enable Dr. Nkrumah to go and make his peace in Ashanti. The Governor said that in his view passions ran so deep that he doubted whether any step of this kind could materially ease the situation (he did not regard Kofi Baako as particularly important in this context). The Asantehene was about 62 but was still very active and might well have another twenty years of life in front of him. The Governor agreed that it was still not too late to reach a peaceful settlement, even though it was still on the cards that a civil war might be necessary in order to achieve the unity of the Gold Coast. The Governor thought that civil war could be prevented provided that H.M.G. pressed on quickly with its policy of requiring an early General Election. Sir Frederick Bourne on his return from Accra firmly thought that a General Election as soon as possible was the only catalyst which could bring about a peaceful settlement of the constitutional dispute. Various opinions have been expressed about the number of seats which the C.P.P. would win in a General Election. Dr Nkrumah thought they would probably win nine seats in

<sup>1</sup> A member of the Legislative Assembly, Edusei had been appointed the CPP's propaganda secretary, a party and not a Cabinet post, in Aug 1954. He held the Sekyere East seat. A founder member of the CPP, he had a well-established reputation of 'speaking his mind' and of tormenting the opposition.

<sup>2</sup> Welbeck was generally regarded as the most obviously anti-British of Nkrumah's ministers.

<sup>3</sup> A founder member of the CPP and member of the Legislative Assembly for the Saltpond constituency. He was not regarded as being either radical or aggressive, as Arden-Clarke indicated in para 2 of these minutes.

Ashanti, but other views have been expressed (by Mr. Cecil King)<sup>4</sup> that they might win a maximum of four or a minimum of two. There was general agreement that they could only achieve a minority of seats in the Northern Territories.

3. The forthcoming visit of Mr. Botsio was also discussed. It was agreed that there could be no objection to his seeing the Labour Party when he was in London. The Governor himself is seeing Mr. Griffiths in a few days' time.

4. The Acting Governor had been asked to assess the possibility of disturbances if the Prime Minister refused to accept H.M.G.'s proposals for an early General Election and chose instead to attempt to achieve independence unilaterally. The Governor considered that any steps to achieve independence unilaterally would be ineffective unless they were accompanied by a conspiracy to take over the police and the armed forces. He thought he could rely on his Special Branch to give him adequate warning of any such step, even though his Special Branch did require improvement (this is being done, but the training course for Special Branch officers does not begin until May). The Governor was sure that he could rely on the escort police and the Army to obey any orders. He thought the general police would probably be seriously affected in the event of an open breach with Dr. Nkrumah.<sup>5</sup> The Governor was sure that it would be wrong to seek reinforcements from Nigeria and if he did need reinforcements they would have to come from the United Kingdom.

5. There was no indication of the arguments which Mr. Botsio would use next week. He would probably ask to have a fuller explanation of what was meant by a "reasonable majority" for a motion for immediate independence, and would probably elaborate Dr. Nkrumah's case against an early General Election. If he refused to accept an early General Election it would be necessary for H.M.G. to announce its inability to consider the grant of full self-government without a General Election and to make the point that apart from this it saw no difficulty in accepting the Gold Coast Government's constitutional proposals. There was some discussion of the size of the majority that could be considered reasonable, but it was felt that it would be impossible to go beyond what had already been said. In certain circumstances a visit by the Secretary of State to the Gold Coast might be necessary but it was very difficult to see how he could fit such a visit in having regard to his other many commitments.

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<sup>4</sup> The proprietor of the *Dail Mail* which owned a number of the titles in the Gold Coast.

<sup>5</sup> The escort police were a gendarmarie, the general police were responsible for criminal investigation.

**220** PREM 11/1367

26 Mar 1956

'Gold Coast: proposed general election': CO supplementary note to CA(56)9<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Nkrumah has been informed that H.M.G. would welcome a general election and that, if he obtains a reasonable majority of the votes cast in the newly elected

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<sup>1</sup> See 214. This supplementary note, together with a biographical note on Arden-Clarke, was sent by J B Johnson, Lennox-Boyd's private secretary, to N F Cairncross, a private secretary to Eden, as a brief for a meeting between Eden and Arden-Clarke.

Legislative Assembly in favour of his Constitutional proposals, H.M.G. will be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of full self-government within the Commonwealth.

2. A difficulty has, however, arisen in that Dr. Nkrumah is now seeking to avoid holding an election on the grounds that there would be intimidation of voters and possible violence. The Governor, however, holds the view that the conducting of a general election at the present time on the Constitutional issue would not be substantially worse than that of previous elections in the Gold Coast.

3. Dr. Nkrumah has asked the Colonial Secretary to see his representative, Mr. Botsio, Minister of State, in order that his personal views on the holding of a general election may be expressed. Mr. Botsio is to see the Colonial Secretary on Tuesday next.

4. It is possible that Dr. Nkrumah may refuse to accept the need for a General Election. It would then be necessary for H.M.G. to announce its inability to consider the grant of full self-government without a General Election and to emphasise the point that it had no other reason for not accepting the constitutional proposals made by the Gold Coast Government. It is also possible that Dr. Nkrumah might adopt the suggestion made as public speeches<sup>2</sup> by two of his Ministers that the Gold Coast should unilaterally declare its independence even though he has publicly declared that this is not his policy. Such a declaration would be legally invalid and the Governor sees no difficulty in coping with the probable consequences of such an open breach with Dr. Nkrumah as he is confident that he can rely on the loyalty of the Armed Forces and the Police. The Governor has no reason to apprehend any organised conspiracy by Dr. Nkrumah and his associates to take over the control of the Armed Forces and the Police and is satisfied that he would receive early warning of any conspiracy. The Acting Governor has been asked to assess the probability of trouble and to say what reinforcements he might require and from where they should come. The Chiefs of Staff are aware of the possible need for United Kingdom reinforcements should the situation deteriorate. The Governor expects Dr. Nkrumah to continue to act in a constitutional manner.

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<sup>2</sup> The speeches, by Welbeck in Accra and by Gbedemah at Koforidua, were reported by the *Ashanti Times* and the *Daily Graphic* on 17 Feb 1956. It was not until 12 Mar that Nkrumah's office issued a statement saying that such sentiments were incorrect and that the CPP government would continue to pursue the achievement of independence by constitutional means. Nkrumah faced a Cabinet almost entirely hostile to a further election and the weeks between the failure of the Bourne mission and Nkrumah's statement on 12 Mar were clearly very tense.

**221** CO 554/807, no 248

27 Mar 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: CO note of a meeting between Mr Lennox-Boyd Sir C Arden-Clarke and Mr Botsio on the proposed general election

Mr. Botsio had come to the United Kingdom in order to discuss with the Secretary of State his Secret and Personal letter to Dr. Nkrumah of the 14th March<sup>1</sup> on the

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<sup>1</sup> See 217.

subject of the constitutional dispute in the Gold Coast and the steps which Her Majesty's Government considered should be taken in order to resolve that dispute and prepare the way for the independence within the Commonwealth of the Gold Coast. Mr. Botsio gave the Secretary of State a letter from Dr. Nkrumah which the Secretary of State, in agreement with Mr. Botsio, said he would study after the meeting.

2. *The Secretary of State* assured Mr. Botsio that H.M.G. were not looking for any excuse to delay the independence of the Gold Coast, and that the proposals he had made to Dr. Nkrumah were not meant in any way to be a rear-guard action fought to keep the Gold Coast in a state of dependence. He went on to say that H.M.G. saw very great harm in any delay in achieving Gold Coast independence, and he made the point that in this matter the Gold Coast Government could take it that a strong Conservative Government represented the views of the British people as a whole. It was most important for H.M.G. to carry their policy in the Gold Coast to its successful culmination in independence within the Commonwealth in order to demonstrate unequivocally to other British territories that the aim of Colonial policy could be and was realised.

3. *Mr. Botsio* said that the Gold Coast Government fully accepted the good faith of H.M.G. Dr. Nkrumah very much wanted to come himself to London but, as the Secretary of State knew, this would have been almost impossible for him. He had therefore sent Mr. Botsio, who was charged with the responsibility of describing his views. Mr. Botsio said that the Gold Coast Government were considerably disturbed at the prospect of being forced to hold a General Election. Neither Gold Coast Ministers nor the Convention Peoples Party were in favour of a General Election. Apart from this they did not know what H.M.G. meant when it talked about a "reasonable majority". The conclusions of the Achimota Conference furnished a general agreement on the form of an independent constitution which, in the opinion of the Gold Coast Government, met fully the needs of the Gold Coast. Because of various statements by the Secretary of State the National Liberation Movement considered that they could prevent independence merely by not agreeing with proposals made by the Gold Coast Government. Mr. Botsio urged the Secretary of State to consider very carefully whether it was necessary to run the risk of disturbances during a General Election and to cause the considerable political upheaval which any General Election necessarily entailed when there now existed constitutional proposals which fully met the needs of the Gold Coast. The people of the Gold Coast believed passionately in democracy and they would be quite unable to understand why a minority should be able to hold up what the mass of the people genuinely wanted.

4. *The Secretary of State* confirmed emphatically that the last thing he wanted was that a minority should hold up the implementation of the wishes of the majority of the people of the Gold Coast. If the situation had been that there was a minority throughout the country which disagreed with the majority then he thought very little difficulty would have been caused. As it was the minority was concentrated in one region, the population of which was greater, for example, than that of Cyprus or Malta. It was impossible for Ashanti to become a separate state but as long as Gold Coast Ministers were unable to visit Ashanti it did show to the world that there was serious and prolonged dissension in the Gold Coast. The Secretary of State appreciated to the full the many and considerable difficulties caused by the

intransigence of the N.L.M. He had at one time had some sympathy for the N.L.M. but he must make it clear that the course of subsequent events had impressed him with the strong desire of the Gold Coast Government to seek a sensible and statesmanlike solution of their country's difficulties, though he had, as Mr. Botsio well knew, considered the introduction of the State Councils (Ashanti) (Amendment) Bill as a very serious error.<sup>2</sup> He would do everything he could to help the Gold Coast Government and he was sure that they would in their turn help him to avoid the difficulties which he would undoubtedly have to face if the Gold Coast Government wished to achieve independence without a test of public opinion. He asked whether it was possible that the problem of election expenses so dominated the minds of C.P.P. members of the legislature that their opposition to a General Election might be overcome if the C.P.P. were to meet those expenses, but Mr. Botsio said that he did not think that the problem of election expenses by itself could be regarded as a major point to be made against the idea of a General Election.

5. *Mr. Botsio* then rehearsed the main arguments against a General Election in the Gold Coast this year. The present Assembly could last for four years, the Government had not been defeated on a vote of confidence, the number of their supporters had increased during the life of the present Assembly and there was no reason why the Government should choose to have a General Election because of any difficulties in the Assembly. There was also considerable doubt in the minds of the Gold Coast Government whether the situation in Ashanti would not prevent the holding of a free election in that region. Finally there was considerable doubt in the minds of the Gold Coast Government whether the N.L.M. and its supporters in Ashanti would accept the result of a General Election as determining the solution of the constitutional dispute.

6. *The Secretary of State* said that he had no doubt that if he were to use the argument that a General Election would not be free and fair in the Gold Coast the conclusion would then be drawn that the Gold Coast was not therefore fit to become independent within the Commonwealth. He urged upon Mr. Botsio the importance of working out a procedure that would give both Governments what they wanted, namely the independence of the Gold Coast, without causing dissension in the U.K. Parliament and without getting the Gold Coast off to a bad start. He took Mr. Botsio's point that the C.P.P. had promised the achievement of full self-government in the lifetime of the present Assembly. It was not for him to dilate on the sanctity of election mandates but he must make the point that in 1954 there was no constitutional issue at stake, there was no dissension in Ashanti, and all was then set fair to achieve independence as rapidly as possible. The Secretary of State said that it would be impossible for him to recommend to Parliament the independence of the Gold Coast without a General Election, but if the Gold Coast Government could suggest any other method of resolving the constitutional issue he would be very happy to consider it.

7. *Mr. Botsio* said that the C.P.P. firmly believed that the best time to settle the form of the Gold Coast Constitution was after self-government had been achieved. The Gold Coast Government were ready to accept the conclusions of the Achimota Conference and they considered that it would be satisfactory to go ahead on those

<sup>2</sup> See 197-198 and 209, paras 4-6.

lines. Mr. Botsio then went on to say that assuming a General Election were held, which of course he did not accept, and the C.P.P. got a majority of one vote, what would H.M.G. then do? The Secretary of State said he would give further thought before he saw Mr. Botsio again to the question of what in H.M.G.'s view would be a reasonable majority, but he felt very strongly that the best and most tidy way of settling the constitutional dispute was by a General Election. If the N.L.M. refused to accept the results of a General Election H.M.G. could not possibly pay them any attention. They could not be allowed to monkey about after a General Election.

8. *The Secretary of State* said he would have thought that the C.P.P. could have expected to win a pretty thumping victory in a General Election on their constitutional proposals in their present form. He had no intention of indulging in a microscopic scrutiny of the voting in a General Election but he understood Mr. Botsio's worry about the matter of definition in the phrase "reasonable majority". He was not thinking in terms of a two-thirds majority and, as he had promised, he would give further thought to the question before he saw Mr. Botsio again. He quite understood Dr. Nkrumah's wish that there should be no qualification of the majority in support of a motion for independence and he also took the point that abstention from voting in the Assembly should not by itself be allowed to wreck the proceedings on the motion for independence.

9. *The Secretary of State* then asked the Governor to give his views, by virtue of his responsibility for the Police, about the possibility of disturbances during a General Election. *The Governor* said that riots could only occur in certain areas and that in his view adequate precautions could be taken. A very small minority of constituencies would be affected and he was confident that law and order could be maintained. *The Secretary of State* wondered whether the Gold Coast Government would like to have a Commission from the U.K. which would investigate any election malpractices, but Mr. Botsio doubted whether such a step would be necessary. The Secretary of State said that he thought it was clear that there was no possibility of widespread riots which would invalidate the whole of the General Election, that if necessary the election could be held over two days to enable the transfer of Police from one area to another and that in his view there seemed to be no reason why a General Election should not be completely practicable.

10. *Mr. Botsio* said that there was still a very considerable fear that H.M.G. had it in mind to suspend the constitution and take over the Government of the Gold Coast. The Secretary of State said he could think of no better way of uniting the whole of the Gold Coast against H.M.G. and he repeated his assurance to Mr. Botsio that in his view both Governments had exactly the same aim in mind and the only problem was to find the best method of achieving it. If a General Election were held, as he wanted, the C.P.P. would undoubtedly win it and would have everyone on their side when they went in to independence. Otherwise they would be faced with a divided opinion about them in the world at large.

11. *Mr. Botsio* then raised the question of the affect of doubts about the attainment of independence on the Togoland plebiscite. He said that Dr. Nkrumah would very much like H.M.G. to fix a date for independence and to announce it before the plebiscite. The Secretary of State referred to his well-known doubts about the wisdom of fixing dates of this kind and said that in any case it would be impossible for H.M.G. to fix a date without a General Election. If, however, a General Election were to be held he saw no difficulty about H.M.G. announcing its support

for such an election and its views on the date of Gold Coast independence, if necessary before the Togoland plebiscite was held. There might be some difficulties about achieving any particular date for reasons beyond the control of H.M.G.

12. The Secretary of State and Mr. Botsio agreed to meet again on the 28th March.

**222** CO 554/807, no 250

28 Mar 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Mr Botsio on the achievement of Gold Coast independence. *Enclosure*: summary of the views of HMG

As you know, I have been most delighted to have the opportunity of discussing with you the way in which our two Governments might achieve the successful resolution of the constitutional dispute in the Gold Coast and the early achievement of independence within the Commonwealth by the Gold Coast.<sup>1</sup>

I enclose a summary of the views of H.M. Government on this subject which, as you know, I am confident my colleagues will approve. I propose to put it to them without any delay and I will write to your Prime Minister as soon as I can to confirm the views expressed in the summary.

As you will know from our talks independence within the Commonwealth does not of itself carry with it full Commonwealth membership. That is, of course, a matter for consultation between all existing members of the Commonwealth.

#### Enclosure to 222

1. Her Majesty's Government are ready to transfer power to the Gold Coast Government as soon as practicable once a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth under the Constitution proposed by the Gold Coast Government has been passed by a reasonable majority in a newly elected Gold Coast legislature. H.M.G. therefore wishes to see a General Election in the Gold Coast as soon as possible.

2. H.M.G. hope that it should be possible to secure a majority in the new legislature for such a motion of between ten and twenty, but they would not necessarily regard a majority of less than ten as insufficient: that would depend on the circumstances then existing.

3. The Gold Coast Government wish power to be transferred on or before the 6th March, 1957. H.M.G. believe that it should be possible to meet this wish, subject of course to the proviso in paragraph 1 above, and they will use all their efforts to this end.

4. H.M.G. are ready to announce publicly that they support and welcome the decision of the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast to hold a General Election as early as possible this year on the constitutional issue, that they will accede to a motion passed

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<sup>1</sup> See 221.

by a reasonable majority in a newly elected legislature calling for independence within the Commonwealth under that Constitution, and that they would then be ready to take all the necessary steps to ensure that the Gold Coast became independent within the Commonwealth on or before the 6th March, 1957.

5. H.M.G. are convinced beyond all doubt that the proposals in this summary of their views provide the most satisfactory method of achieving Gold Coast independence within the Commonwealth.

## **223** CO 554/807, no 252

28 Mar 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: inward telegram no 9 from Sir G Hadow to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the security position in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence by the Gold Coast government

Your secret and personal telegram No. 15.

Internal security situation.

Although Nkrumah's opposition to the idea of a general election before independence has hardened, I believe there is still a prospect that he can be persuaded to accept it, albeit reluctantly. So far there is no (repeat no) positive evidence of a probability that if he does not accept procedure you have proposed he will pursue a course of action likely to lead to serious disturbances. The possibility of his doing so in consequence of a public declaration by H.M.G., that a general election is a prerequisite of independence cannot, however, be ruled out. If he did so it is probable that military enforcements would be required in strength from one battalion up to a brigade. The G.O.C. in C., who is in Nigeria, is being consulted and this is a provisional appreciation subject to review on his return to the Gold Coast on 7th April. In particular he has asked to advise what reinforcements could be made available from elsewhere in West Africa Command. The Chief of Staff's appreciation is that if internal security situation in Nigeria is quiet, at least one battalion could immediately be made available from Nigeria, subject to the Governor General's agreement.

2. The amount of notice which could be given of requirements from the U.K. is difficult to estimate. There is no (repeat no) evidence that any preparations have been put in train for the creation of serious disturbances, and present assessment of the Commissioner of Police and myself is that three weeks' notice could be given in advance of date when reinforcements from the U.K. would be required to arrive in the Gold Coast.

3. I will telegraph further on receipt of G.O.C. in Chief's appreciation.

## **224** CO 554/807, no 253

4 Apr 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Dr Nkrumah explaining his views on the question of a general election

It was good of you to send Mr. Botsio home to see me to discuss my earlier letter to you of the 14th March.<sup>1</sup> I was very sorry indeed that you could not come yourself but

<sup>1</sup> See 217.

I perfectly understand the reasons for this. I only hope that circumstances may soon make it possible for us to meet so that I could tell you myself of my wish to see the independence within the Commonwealth of the Gold Coast achieved as soon as may be. I have spoken to Mr. Botsio at great length on this point and I have no doubt whatever that he will already have told you how firmly I believe that fundamentally the aims of both our Governments are identical, and that the only problem which confronts us is that of finding the best method of realising our common wish.

You will already have seen the summary of the views of Her Majesty's Government which emerged from my talks with Mr. Botsio and which I promised to confirm after consulting my colleagues as soon as I could.<sup>2</sup> I have now consulted them and I can confirm what was said in that summary. It was, however, but a bare recital of the main points in my mind and I am sure you will wish to have a much fuller account of my thoughts so that you may consider in somewhat greater detail the proposals to which I adhere.

I know that we both are faced with considerable difficulties in doing what seems to us to be right. I can well understand the reasons which influence your Ministers and your party in the view that a General Election is probably both unnecessary and undesirable. As I have told Mr. Botsio, I should be very willing to consider very seriously any alternative suggestions you might make which would meet my own difficulties. But for my own part I cannot see any other way out of the situation in which we now find ourselves except by putting your constitutional proposals to the test of a General Election. I know that you have some good reasons to put forward against such a course but I do very much hope that on reflection and after hearing what Mr. Botsio has had to say you will feel disposed to accept the proposals which I am making.

From my point of view I have to take into account the fact that there is at the moment a serious dispute in the Gold Coast about the nature of the Constitution which the country should have on independence. As I told Mr. Botsio, I do not have any sympathy for the persistent refusal of the N.L.M. to accept any of the many statesmanlike and sensible suggestions that you have put forward. I am convinced that the time has now come to secure the speedy resolution of this dispute. Mr. Botsio has argued both cogently and persuasively that all that is necessary is to accept your constitutional proposals which I understood from him are to be based both on the recommendations of Sir Frederick Bourne and the conclusions of the recent Achimota Round Table Conference. I would regard such constitutional proposals as workable and I expect that they would command considerable support in your country. I am, however, faced with the very considerable difficulty that the N.L.M. have made it clear in every possible way that they are not prepared to treat with the Gold Coast Government or to accept any proposals which originate either from your Government or from any conference with which you have been associated. It therefore seems inescapable that no matter how acceptable your proposals for constitutional reform may be when viewed dispassionately they are not likely to be accepted in that spirit and that you will continue to be faced with a determined and obstinate opposition attempting in every possible way to thwart the

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<sup>2</sup> See 222, enclosure.

plans which you and I wish to make for the independence of the Gold Coast. This places me in the difficulty that I do not possess evidence which I can represent as incontrovertible that a reasonable majority of the peoples of the Gold Coast wish to go into independence under the kind of Constitution you propose. Indeed, as long as you and some of your Ministers seem unable to visit Ashanti I am bound to take notice of this and of its implication that there exists a determined opposition in at least one part of the Gold Coast which is not prepared to accept Gold Coast independence under your leadership. I am sure it is best to speak quite frankly about these things as I do not wish that you should be under any misapprehension about the reasons for the attitude which I am bound to take. Mr. Botsio argued that a General Election would, for example, be impracticable because of the possibility of disturbances in Ashanti and I felt bound to point out to him that if a General Election could not be held in a free and fair manner I would inevitably be faced with the argument that this of itself implied that the Gold Coast was not at the moment fit for independence. If you have any cause to be worried about the possibility of an unfair election I can assure you that H.M.G. will support to the full the Governor in his attempts to secure a free and fair election. He has told me categorically that he sees no difficulty about ensuring a free and fair election throughout most of the country and I should, as you will appreciate, find it extremely difficult to ignore the advice he has given.

From my point of view the essential consideration which I must meet is the securing of the ready acceptance by public opinion in this country and elsewhere of the independence within the Commonwealth of the Gold Coast. You yourself, I think, consider that your party is likely to lose some seats in a General Election but, as you know only too well, this is the frequent lot of Governments in any democracy and I am sure you will agree with me in thinking that it would be quite impossible to refuse to hold a General Election merely on the ground that the Government party would lose seats. I was worried lest the holding of a General Election might cause members of the legislature to incur heavy election expenses and I questioned Mr. Botsio very closely on this subject in case there was something that could be done to overcome this difficulty, if in fact it were a serious problem. Mr. Botsio has assured me that this is not so. We are then, I suggest, free to consider the matter of a General Election without regard to minor considerations and to have solely in mind the major considerations of the peace and good government of the Gold Coast and the achievement by your country of an eminent and worthy position within the Commonwealth.

As I have told Mr. Botsio, it would be impossible for me to recommend to the United Kingdom Parliament measures to achieve the independence within the Commonwealth of the Gold Coast without some further test of public opinion in your country. Mr. Botsio has told me that you have not been entirely happy about my wish that any motion calling for Gold Coast independence within the Commonwealth passed by the newly elected legislature should be supported by a "reasonable majority". I must tell you quite frankly that I should find it impossible at this stage to give publicly a firm definition of this phrase. Indeed, there is bound to be a certain element of uncertainty in it because the expression "reasonable" can only mean reasonable in all the circumstances existing at the time the motion is passed, and neither you nor I can know in advance what those circumstances are likely to be. As I have told Mr. Botsio, I am certainly not thinking of a two-thirds majority. My advice

is that in a General Election your party are likely to gain a majority and that even assuming the whole of the opposition refused to support you, you stand a very good chance of achieving a majority of between ten and twenty for such a motion in a newly-elected legislature. This, in my view, should be completely satisfactory and you need have no fear that H.M.G. would have second thoughts if you achieved a majority of that order. If by any chance your majority was less than that I can assure you that we would not on that account alone refuse to accept the request in such a motion to take the necessary steps to ensure Gold Coast independence within the Commonwealth. I should, however, in those circumstances have to consider very carefully whether such a majority did in fact represent the overwhelming wish of the peoples of your country. I must, however, make it plain that it is my expectation at the moment that we shall not be faced with circumstances of this kind.

This is a frank and full expression of my views, as I am sure that it is only by complete frankness between ourselves that we can reach a satisfactory agreement on this matter. I know how difficult it is bound to be now to carry your party with you in the procedure which I consider necessary. I have therefore given very careful thought to the ways in which I could help you. I think I have already made it sufficiently plain that I regard a General Election as an absolute essential. Although I told Mr. Botsio that I should be very willing to consider any other suggestions you might have for resolving the constitutional dispute it would be quite wrong of me to lead you to suppose that I would expect to find any other solution acceptable. I have therefore given very careful thought to the way in which I might help you to secure willing acceptance of a General Election. If it is of any use to you I am ready to make a full statement in the House of Commons saying how much I welcome and support the decision (which I hope you will make) to have a General Election on the constitutional issue as early as possible this year, that I regard this as a generous and statesmanlike act which, although you are not compelled to take such a step, you clearly felt was the only way in which to demonstrate to the world at large the desire of the peoples of the Gold Coast for their early independence and to secure their free concurrence in the constitutional proposals which you were making. I am also ready to say that H.M.G. are fully prepared to accept a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth passed by a reasonable majority in a newly-elected legislature. I have already explained why I would not wish publicly to engage in any discussion about what was meant by a reasonable majority, but I should of course let it be known to those in my confidence on both sides of the House of Commons exactly what I had in mind, and I have no doubt that that would find a ready and complete acceptance in those quarters. Furthermore, I am ready to make an early public statement concerning the date of Gold Coast independence to the effect that H.M.G. will take the necessary steps to insure the independence within the Commonwealth of the Gold Coast on or before the 6th March, 1957. As I said in my letter to you of the 14th March, H.M.G. would be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of independence within the Commonwealth after the motion had been passed by a reasonable majority of the new Legislative Assembly.

In my letter to Mr. Botsio of the 28th March I made the point that H.M.G. cannot by itself secure Gold Coast membership of the Commonwealth. I have told Mr. Botsio what the present situation is on this subject. In preparation for the independence of the Gold Coast H.M.G. have been discussing with other Members of the Commonwealth the question of the admission of the Gold Coast and although the matter has

not been placed formally on any agenda at the June meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers it is likely then to be discussed further. I cannot, of course, predict what views in the event other Commonwealth Members may express, but I can assure you that H.M.G. in the U.K. will continue to use all their efforts to secure the admission of the Gold Coast. I am sure you will realise that what I have said about Commonwealth membership must be taken as being in the strictest possible confidence.

If I may sum up briefly, I would like to emphasise yet once again what seems to me to be our common aim. This can only be the early attainment of independence within the Commonwealth by the Gold Coast. We can fulfil this aim, it seems to me, in one way and one way alone, that is to demonstrate to the world that the peoples of the Gold Coast have had a full and free opportunity to consider their constitution and that they have unequivocally expressed their views in a General Election. I am convinced that without such an expression of the views of the people I cannot expect to carry public opinion in this country with me in sponsoring the independence of the Gold Coast, nor would I expect to be able to carry world opinion with me in accepting the Gold Coast freely as a Member of the World Community of Nations. I have no doubt whatever that the balance of advantage for both our Governments lies in pursuing the course which I propose. I know that you will give the most careful consideration to my views and I very much hope that you will see your way to accepting my proposals.

**225** CO 554/807, no 269A

20 Apr 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd consenting to a general election

I would like to thank you very much indeed for your letter of the 4th April<sup>1</sup> and for setting out so fully your thoughts and suggestions concerning the problems facing us at the present time. I have read the contents of your letter very carefully and have given the whole matter very deep thought and I know that the advice that you have given is offered sincerely and honestly and that you have the interests of my country very much at heart. I would like you to know how much I appreciate this.

I have considered the matter from many angles and it is clear that there are three possible steps which I can take. Firstly, to make a unilateral declaration of independence. I realise that this would be a revolutionary step, involving a breach with the British Government and creating a constitutional crisis of the first magnitude, and it is one which I would not willingly take unless I was forced, as a last resort. Secondly, to let the present constitution run its course and wait for the next regular general election in 1958. But this would only mean delaying independence and at the same time throwing the country into a state of confusion, distrust and discontentment. The third step, of course, is to hold a general election on the constitutional issue in the near future. Although I realise that nothing can force me to do this, I do agree, after reading your letter and after discussing with Mr. Botsio the talk he had with you and Sir Charles Arden-Clarke in London, that there is much to be said in favour of holding an early election.

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<sup>1</sup> See 224.

My main concern, as you are aware, was that such an election might give rise to more violence in Ashanti. The Governor assured me that he is prepared to take all possible measures to ensure that a general election is held in a free and fair manner and you have assured me in your letter that H.M.G. will fully support him in this. I accept these assurances and am willing to go to the country. In view of this, I propose to announce the date for a general election at the forthcoming session of the Legislative Assembly on the 15th May. This date will probably be towards the middle of July.

Simultaneously or immediately after this, I would like you to make a statement to the House of Commons, on the lines suggested in your letter, embodying the following points:—

- (1) that you welcome and support my decision to hold a general election on the constitutional issue,
- (2) that H.M.G. are fully prepared to accept a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth passed by a reasonable majority in a newly-elected legislature,
- (3) that H.M.G. will be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of independence within the Commonwealth immediately after the motion has been passed by a reasonable majority of the new Legislative Assembly and will take the necessary steps to grant independence within the Commonwealth to the Gold Coast on or before the 6th March, 1957. This particularly will be of immense help to me to secure willing acceptance of a general election.

After such a statement has been made, there will be no doubt in the minds of the people of the Gold Coast as to the reason for holding a general election, the significance of their votes in deciding the future of the country and the sincerity of the United Kingdom Government in their desire to grant the Gold Coast its independence.

On second thoughts I think that your suggestion in your letter of the 14th March<sup>2</sup> that Members of both sides of the House of Commons should be invited to be present in the Gold Coast on polling day is a good one, and I would be glad if such an invitation could be extended to them.

Mr. Botsio felt that the discussions that he had with you were of great value and I am most grateful to you for giving up so much of your time and for the help afforded to him during his visit.

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<sup>2</sup> See 217.

**226** CO 554/1177, no 16

23 Apr 1956

'Assessment of anti-communist propaganda': memorandum by the  
UK Information Office in the Gold Coast

1. *Communist operation and aims*

In any assessment of the situation concerning Communist propaganda in the Gold Coast two fundamental premises must be postulated:—

- (i) A surprising absence of cohesive or concentrated Communist infiltration or activity; and
- (ii) This hiatus is a temporary lull presaging a full-scale operation which is likely to be launched after the attainment of independence to exploit the deep schisms between the governing C.P.P. and the opposition N.L.M., such operation being controlled, partially at least, from behind the facade of the Soviet diplomatic mission scheduled to be established in Monrovia.

Such propaganda as exists at the present time has its genesis in three main centres: (a) the British Communist Party headquarters in King Street and its affiliates in Liverpool and other ports trading with West Africa. (This activity is concentrated upon Gold Coast students who are contacted upon arrival and indoctrinated through social contacts and upon disaffected seamen who bring funds and literature to West African ports.); (b) the W.F.T.U., which before moving from Vienna trained at least six of the present Gold Coast's Communist leaders; and (c) an unidentified Communist organisation in Budapest which is responsible for the printing and dissemination of Communist literature which evokes only mild interest in the Gold Coast because of its lack of regionalised appeal. This absence of any real localised theme in Communist propaganda in the Gold Coast is a surprising lacuna in the usually efficient Moscow technique which may be attributable to two causes, firstly, the fact that the imminent granting of self-government to the Gold Coast has robbed the Communists of the familiar "imperialist" argument, and secondly, a possible reorientation of Communist propaganda, to be launched coincidentally with independence, which would not foster subversion but the neutralist theme aimed at bringing the Gold Coast into the neutralist bloc, a consummation of double significance, in that it would strengthen the India-Indonesia-Ceylon line-up and constitute the first potentially Communist wedge in the African Continent.

The commonest form of Communist literature would appear to be that which emanates from Budapest, which usually takes the form of illustrated tracts, depicting idyllic scenes of workers at their tasks in Communist countries, building roads and bridges or working in factories. This has a visual appeal in a country where there is widespread illiteracy and almost any type of picture or illustration is likely to attract attention. (In this context, the value of films with suitable counter-propaganda themes cannot be overstressed.) But, it is questionable whether there is any real duration of impact owing to the absence of any message understandable to the African mentality. Another *modus operandi* is in the use of the post to address letters to students and school-children.

It is generally agreed that the main centre of Communist activity is at the port of Takoradi with its recurrent contacts with seamen and other emissaries and go-betweens bringing funds and literature from Europe. There are critics of the Extra-Mural Department of the Gold Coast University College who assert that the department affords a facade for the activities of intellectual fellow-travellers or "parlour pinks".

Insofar as Government or the Civil Service are concerned, overt Communist activity is non-existent due to the energetic action of the Prime Minister, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who announced in the Legislative Assembly on February 25th, 1954, that any person who had been proved to be an active Communist would be refused employment in the public service. The Prime Minister quoted a statement made by

Mr. Attlee (as he then was) in 1948 in which he said that experience, both in Britain and elsewhere, had shown that membership and other forms of continuing association with the Communist Party might involve acceptance of a loyalty which in certain circumstances could be inimical to the State. Dr. Nkrumah said this warning seemed to apply with even greater force to a young nation like the Gold Coast.

In his statement, the Prime Minister cited various aspects of Communist activity, declaring that certain persons were being given free air passages to attend conferences abroad, with all expenses paid, and scholarships were being offered to Gold Coast students to attend conferences and seminars organised by Communist organisations. The Prime Minister made a reference to the Gold Coast's "freeing itself from one imperialism", thereby implying that it did not propose to risk becoming subservient to a second imperialism, i.e. that of Soviet Communism.

This announcement was followed by expulsions of Communists from the Prime Minister's Convention People's Party, notably Mr. Anthony Woode and Mr. Turcson-Ocran [sic], General Secretary of the Gold Coast T.U.C.

On March 24th, the Gold Coast Government banned the entry of Communist or pro-Communist literature which was being despatched in bulk to trade union leaders and private individuals. Among the banned publications were those of the W.F.T.U., the World Federation of Democratic Youth, and other Communist-front organisations, as well as English-language publications emanating from Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia.

While the main motive which prompted the Prime Minister's action was his determination to curb Communism, he undoubtedly had his weather eye directed towards H.M.G. By banning Communism he disarmed in advance any potential argument against the granting of independence on the score of the danger of the Gold Coast's joining the Soviet fold after the attainment of independence.

Before proceeding to discuss counter-propaganda efforts by this office, another aspect illustrating the negative side of Communist infiltration may be mentioned. It might have been expected that the banning of the Communist Party and Communist literature would have stimulated the smuggling of such literature from the neighbouring French territories, themselves virulently contaminated by Communism or Communistic tendencies. It would seem, however, that either the problems facing the Party in French Occidental Africa are such that no new commitments can be undertaken or that directives and organisation are lacking to take advantage of the frangibility of the Gold Coast's thousand-mile border with the French Ivory Coast, the Upper Volta and Dahomey.

## *2. Counter-propaganda*

Given a situation where there is (a) no perceptible Communist trend amongst the people of the Gold Coast and (b) no virulent Communist propaganda drive to create such a trend, it will be appreciated that it would be both unwise and impolitic to sound the anti-Communist note too stridently.

A great deal of material is received by this office which, if used even to the extent of fifty per cent, could only have unfortunate results; we could find ourselves under the critical eye of C.P.P. newspapers like "The Ghana Evening News" [sic] and perhaps accused of parading a bogey of our own creation or, worse still, fostering an atmosphere inimical to the country's progress on the road to self-government.

Guided by such considerations, the tactics employed by this office in the

dissemination of our material have been governed by prudence on the one hand, and timeliness on the other, while a third important desideratum has been motif – that is to say we have sought to ensure that the subject touched upon was one of genuine concern or interest in this part of the world. That this policy of selectivity has been successful would seem to be evident from the considerable extent of publication secured on topics like: the repudiation of Stalin; the Eden-Eisenhower meeting provokes Moscow; who are the real friends of the “S.G.” nations, the Soviets or the Western Powers; views on Khrushchev’s speech to the Party’s twentieth Congress; the Bulganin-Khrushchev visit to India and Russia as the Colonial power of today. (Curiously enough, the Soviet leaders’ visit to the United Kingdom provoked not even mild interest and did not call for any special explanatory treatment.) Impact with such themes has been general in newspapers throughout the country, ranging from “The Daily Graphic” (circulation 63,000 per day) to “The Ashanti Pioneer” (circulation 6,000). Another useful vehicle for anti-Communist material, particularly with a trade union slant, is “The West African Worker”, which circulates once a month among 15,000 trade union members. Still another valuable medium which readily takes a judiciously chosen article with an anti-Communist theme is the weekly Catholic “Standard” which, published in Cape Coast, has increased its circulation from 2,000 to nearly 6,000 in the past year. (This newspaper has an influence whose extent is far in excess of that indicated by its circulation.)

The Gold Coast Broadcasting Services do occasionally take an anti-Communist item, although the policy of the News Editors is that followed by this office – not to sound the alarm when there is no apparent cause. We did succeed in getting usage over the wireless of excerpts from a “Times” leader which warned the emergent nations of West Africa to beware of possible Communist propaganda activity following upon the establishment of diplomatic relations between Moscow and Monrovia and speculated upon the form such propaganda might assume.

Other media in which counter-propaganda can make useful impact are books and pamphlets, posters and films, while the occasional lecture can be made the vehicle – particularly with students – of effective anti-Communist references.

We are gradually establishing a library and plan, in due course, to include works which deal with and explode the Communist myth. Pamphlets and similar literature can always be allowed to infiltrate amongst the general reading matter in our library, which, incidentally, is attracting more and more visitors, particularly school masters, teachers and students.

### 3. *General observations*

The material provided and the extent and effectiveness of our counter-propaganda efforts are, in general, adequate in the existing circumstances but there may well be modifications of such an assessment in the light of the country’s political evolution after independence.

The only perceptible weakness in our counter-propaganda armoury is in films. It should be borne in mind that visual appeal in a country where the great majority of the people are illiterate is popular and potent; films, consequently, are in vociferous demand. We in this office are gradually extending our film operation as and when equipment and suitable films are available; and we have had (as noted in our general progress report for the period January to April) quite signal success with nearly all our shows. The films screened are all of a popular character, with the background

theme projection of the U.K. and Commonwealth. In view of the heavy costs involved in making counter-propaganda films which, unless strongly angled locally, would have a limited appeal, it is not suggested or requested that any film project embracing the anti-Communist theme should be undertaken; such a project might be envisaged, however, if the situation underwent a change of such a radical nature as to provoke concern.

#### 4. *Conclusion*

(a) Possessing an agrarian economy, which is unlikely in the foreseeable future to be replaced by an industrial one, the Gold Coast is not at present receptive soil for Communism. Any infiltration has been confined, amongst the trade unions, to the seamen; the mine workers (despite a prolonged recent strike), the railwaymen and the lumbermen appear to be, in general, largely indifferent to the Communist appeal.

(b) Although it is asserted that the Communists, thwarted in the trade unions and in the C.P.P., are now attempting to infiltrate into the opposition N.L.M., there is no evidence of this in the Opposition propaganda or manoeuvres.

(c) The granting of self government to the Gold Coast has cut the ground from under the feet of the Communists. The Party line may now seek to exploit the neutralist theme, aimed at bringing the country into line with the Indians and the so-called *Bangung* [sic] nations. To generalise, it is thought likely that any new initiative may be in the formative stage and awaits directives from the World Federation of Free Trade Unions which, in addition to transferring itself behind the Iron Curtain, is now expected to take over the chain-of-command control from the disbanded Cominform.

(d) The present tempo, scope, orientation and impact of counter-propaganda through the U.K.I.O. appear to be adequate to meet the exigencies of the situation for the present.

**227** CO 554/807, no 281

2 May 1956

[General election]: inward telegram no 13 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on a recommendation by the Gold Coast Cabinet that a statement about the election should be made first by the secretary of state

Your Personal telegram No. 25.

Last night the Prime Minister informed the Central Executive of his Party and his Ministers of his decision to go to a general election, and a three hours discussion followed. The Cabinet, except Gbedemah and Allassani who are away, came to see me at their own request this morning. After two hours discussion it was agreed that a general election must be held on the Constitutional issue and that it should be held as soon as possible. It was also agreed by all Ministers that, having regard to local circumstances and the mentality of the people, it would assist the Prime Minister to get his decision accepted and gain general support throughout the country if you could make a statement in the House of Commons after the plebiscite<sup>1</sup> has been held

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the UN plebiscite in the Togoland Trust Territory.

and before the Assembly meets on the 15th, i.e., on the 10th or 11th May to the following effect:—

- (a) That the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast has been in communication with you regarding the achievement of your common aim which is early attainment of independence within the Commonwealth by the Gold Coast;
- (b) That in view of the differences of opinion that have arisen within the Gold Coast regarding the form of Constitution suitable for independent Gold Coast and the failure to resolve these differences by agreement, you have made it clear to the Prime Minister that this aim can be achieved in one way and one way alone; that is to demonstrate to the world that the peoples of the Gold Coast have had a full and free opportunity to consider their Constitution and that they have unequivocally expressed their views in a general election;
- (c) That if a general election is held Her Majesty's Government are fully prepared to accept a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth under the Constitution proposed and passed by a reasonable majority in the newly elected Legislature, and
- (d) That Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to declare a firm date for attainment of independence within the Commonwealth immediately after such a motion has been passed.

2. Despite the fact that the initiative for a general election will be seen to have come from the Secretary of State and not from this Government and loss of kudos involved thereby, Ministers are convinced that a prior statement by you is required if the need for a general election is to be made manifest to their supporters who are at present strongly opposed to such a course and is to be generally accepted throughout the country. With reluctance I recommend acceptance of this Constitution [sic].

3. I should be grateful for very early reply whether you are prepared to agree to this change of tactics and will make a statement on the lines suggested on the 10th or the 11th May.

4. I propose to hold Durbar in the Northern Territories on 29th May.

**228** CAB 134/1202, CM 32(56)8

3 May 1956

**'Commonwealth membership; Gold Coast': Cabinet conclusions on the proposed general election**

*The Colonial Secretary* said that the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast had now accepted his view that, in view of the differences which had developed in the Gold Coast on the constitutional issue, the further stages of constitutional advance should not be brought into operation until the peoples of the Gold Coast had demonstrated, in a general election, their support for the constitutional plan. Dr. Nkrumah had, however, suggested that an announcement to this effect should be made, not by him, but by a spokesman of the United Kingdom Government. The Colonial Secretary said that, from his point of view, this course was to be preferred. He therefore proposed to make such an announcement in the House of Commons on 10th or 11th May.<sup>1</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup> The announcement was made on 11 May; see 250, para 2.

this announcement he would go on to make it clear that, if Dr. Nkrumah won the election on the constitutional issue and if the constitutional proposals were accepted thereafter by a reasonable majority of the newly-elected legislative assembly, the United Kingdom Government would be prepared to declare a firm date by which the Gold Coast might expect to attain independence within the Commonwealth.

In reply to questions, the Colonial Secretary said that the General Election in the Gold Coast would not take place before the forthcoming Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers: it was likely to be held in July. The statement which he was proposing to make reflected a delay, rather than an acceleration, in the progress of the Gold Coast towards independence. This delay was due in part to the reluctance of the Ashanti tribe to accept a unitary form of constitution. British rule had, however, imposed an artificial unity on the Gold Coast for many years past and he did not think it would have been practicable at this stage to operate a federal system.

The Cabinet:—

Took note with approval of the announcement which the Colonial Secretary proposed to make in the House of Commons on constitutional development in the Gold Coast.

**229** PREM 11/1367, GEN 518/6/9(a) 13 June 1956  
 ‘Gold Coast candidature for Commonwealth membership’: CRO brief for Cabinet in preparation for the meeting of Commonwealth prime ministers

A general election on the constitutional issue will take place in the Gold Coast between the 12th and 17th July. If he is returned with a majority, Dr. Nkrumah will introduce a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth. In accordance with a statement by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Commons on the 11th May, the United Kingdom Government are committed to accepting and implementing the motion if it is passed by a “reasonable majority”. There has been no definition of “reasonable majority”, but Dr. Nkrumah has been told by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the United Kingdom Government would not have second thoughts if the majority were to be between ten and twenty, a result which it is expected that Dr. Nkrumah will be able to obtain. In that event, it is thought likely that Dr. Nkrumah will press strongly for March 6th, 1957, as “Independence Day” on account of local historical association.

2. Recognition of the Gold Coast as a Member of the Commonwealth should if possible synchronise with the attainment of full self-government. If the timetable described above is achieved, the forthcoming meeting<sup>1</sup> of Prime Ministers is likely to be the last before self-government is attained. Clearly, weighty matters concerning membership of the Commonwealth should if at all possible be discussed at Prime Ministers’ Meetings and not left for correspondence; yet it would be undesirable to summon a separate meeting of Prime Ministers to consider the special issue of the Gold Coast alone. Nor would it be politic to leave the question of membership in the

<sup>1</sup> The meeting was held in London between 27 June and 6 July 1956.

air after the attainment of full self-government for any considerable period – e.g. until the next Prime Ministers' Meeting is called in the normal course.

3. It has been made clear to other Commonwealth Governments that though the agenda for the forthcoming Meeting contains no item upon the Gold Coast we expect that this matter will inevitably come up in some form or other. The way has thus been prepared for its raising.

4. The General Election in the Gold Coast is not taking place until after the end of the forthcoming meeting; the pattern of its further constitutional progress therefore cannot yet be considered beyond doubt. Equally, Prime Ministers will not have before them any formal request from the Gold Coast for recognition as a fellow member, though it would seem permissible for Dr. Nkrumah's Government, if returned, to make such a request, to be effective from the date of full self-government, without awaiting the actual attainment of full self-government. In these circumstances, it would be premature to ask the Prime Ministers to arrive at, still less to record in public, any firm acceptance of the Gold Coast as a member.

5. It is therefore suggested that United Kingdom Ministers should raise the matter, if it is not indeed raised with [?]by them, with the Prime Ministers of other Commonwealth countries, separately or in small groups in the first place, and later, if the course of the preparatory discussions confirms that this would not be imprudent, at a plenary session, at which the Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland should not be present. The object of the discussion both before and at a full session might be to take the matter to the point at which a decision would be taken that if the constitutional programme in the Gold Coast goes according to plan and Dr. Nkrumah makes a request in suitable terms, the recognition of the Gold Coast as a member of the Commonwealth would be confirmed by an exchange of messages between all the Prime Ministers concerned; and then publicly announced. If unanimity can be secured it will be desirable that the decision should be recorded in the Minutes. It is for consideration whether the public communiqué should make any reference to the matter; at the most it could not say more than that Prime Ministers have taken note of the present position and have agreed to consult further as developments may require.

6. There is attached as an annex a summary<sup>2</sup> of the attitude so far as known of the Prime Ministers concerned, with particular reference to the possible difficulty with the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. Such indications as there are suggest that Mr. Strijdom may in fact be prepared not to obstruct the recognition of the Gold Coast's advancement, but if it appears that he is not prepared to give even a contingent blessing to an application from the Gold Coast tactics would have to be considered urgently in the light of the discussion.

7. If there should be a contingent decision by the Prime Ministers on the lines suggested in paragraph 5, we should also wish to seek their approval to admitting the Prime Minister of the Federation as of right to future Meetings of Prime Ministers.

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed.

**230** DO 35/6195, no 36

14 June 1956

**'British administered Togoland': outward circular telegram no 106 from the CRO to UK high commissioners on the result of the plebiscite and UK policy at the UN**

In spite of differing plebiscite results in Northern and Southern sections (my telegram W. No. 212 of 23rd May), it has now been decided that United Kingdom should take line in Trusteeship Council that plebiscite revealed clear majority vote (58%) in favour of integration with the Gold Coast when the latter becomes independent. Comparable majority in Newfoundland and Rhodesia plebiscites amounted to 52.34% and 62.95% respectively. Opposition is moreover mainly concentrated in two small districts of Ho and Kpandu in the south. We think that if our line is pursued sufficiently firmly other administering powers and India will support us, and that there is a good chance that the Trusteeship Council will recommend accordingly.

2. Question will next be taken in Fourth Committee in November. Assuming Trusteeship Council recommendation favourable to our view, we should expect to be able also to obtain Fourth Committee recommendation for integration.

3. We are of course most anxious that Australia, New Zealand and (especially) India in Trusteeship Council, and all other Commonwealth countries in General Assembly, should support us in line we propose to take. From our point of view ideal arrangement would be for Indians to sponsor a Resolution in Trusteeship Council which would lead to union of Trust Territory with Gold Coast when the latter becomes independent.

4. Please inform Commonwealth authorities in confidence of line we propose to take in Trusteeship Council and ultimately in Fourth Committee, inviting their comments on it and eliciting from them, if possible, their own probable attitude. High Commissioner in New Delhi should also take advantage of any suitable opening to suggest that Indians might sponsor Trusteeship Council Resolution on lines indicated in previous paragraph. He should know that Colonial Secretary mentioned this on 8th June to Krishna Menon,<sup>1</sup> who strongly agreed with our proposed line.

5. Trusteeship Council will debate question at present Session and will probably reach this item about 20th July. General election in Gold Coast is to be held on 12th and 17th July. As you know, United Kingdom Government have said publicly that they will accept a motion calling for independence within Commonwealth passed by a reasonable majority in a newly-elected Legislature, and will then declare a firm date for attainment of independence within Commonwealth.

6. If you are asked what will happen if:-

- (a) Nkrumah loses Gold Coast election; or
- (b) Vote in Gold Coast Legislature does not result in "reasonable" majority for independence within Commonwealth;

you should say that clearly a new situation would exist, but that you have not

<sup>1</sup> Indian high commissioner in the UK, 1947-1952; represented India annually at the UN general assembly, 1952-1961; minister without portfolio, 1956-1957, and minister for defence 1957-1962, in the Indian government.

slightest reason to doubt that United Kingdom Government would remain as anxious as before to see their aims for the Gold Coast realised.

7. It may also be suggested to you that Togoland should have a voice in deciding shape of Gold Coast constitution if British Togoland is to be united with independent Gold Coast (it still being open question what form of constitution, and in particular what degree of regional autonomy, an independent Gold Coast should have). You should reply that Togoland will have full opportunity to vote in forthcoming general election in the Gold Coast which will be fought mainly on the constitutional issue.

*(To all except New Delhi)*

8. Please report Commonwealth authorities' reactions.

*(To New Delhi only)*

Please report Indian reactions as soon as possible. Detailed tactics can then be discussed between the two delegations in New York. Matter is urgent, since Trusteeship Council is already in progress and Indian delegation are no doubt expecting to be approached.

**231** DO 35/6174, no 14

20 June 1956

[Gold Coast Civil Service]: letter from M F G Wentworth<sup>1</sup> to H A Harding<sup>2</sup> on recruitment and staff morale

[Eastwood sent a copy of this letter to MacLennan at the CRO on 18 July 1956 and commented: 'The situation about expatriate staff as disclosed in this letter is pretty gloomy. Our own view is that it is considerably too gloomy. Wentworth is clearly feeling a little "end of tourish" as well he might. Gordon Hadow, the Deputy Governor, when we talked to him about it a week or two ago was much less depressed and felt that the exodus of European officers during the past year had taken place at more or less the rate that might have been expected. He said that of course standards had deteriorated and that European field administrative officers had to regard themselves as general guides at District and Regional Headquarters rather than attempt to run the country themselves. But this was an inevitable part of the process of self-government (we endorse this from experience elsewhere in Africa) and that by and large things were not going too badly. The quality of local recruits is good, at least for the Administrative Service. Recruitment has been going on of expatriates from this country through the Gold Coast Commissioner's Office in London. These are nearly all contract jobs. Leach, the retired Gold Coast officer who up till recently has been in charge of this, has always seemed pretty well satisfied with the numbers and quality of those whom he has been recruiting' (DO 35/6174, no 14).]

Please refer to your letter No. BCD 137/13/02 of the 1st June, 1956. The Prime Minister has transferred Pensions and Compensation as subjects from his own portfolio to that of the Minister of Finance. That Ministry, however, is in a bad way as Hepburn-Smith, the Permanent Secretary, has put his papers in, the Principal Assistant Secretary is on leave and so is the Senior Assistant Secretary in charge of Pensions and Compensation, and the acting Senior Assistant Secretary goes on transfer in a couple of weeks to the West Pacific. I am therefore replying to you.

I attach a schedule showing, by Departments, those who have elected to leave with

<sup>1</sup> Gold Coast establishment officer.

<sup>2</sup> CO assistant secretary, Overseas Service Division, Dept 'A'.

compensation since the Operative Date, i.e., 31st July, 1955. You will see that it is very uneven in distribution, the Administration, the Police, the Railway and the Ministry of Health being hardest hit – and they were all heavy sufferers from the bulk exodus on the “Operative Date”. The process tends to involve, I think, a loss of confidence in a particular Department when a small group of officers happens to choose the same time to leave. The survivors become infected as they see competent colleagues depart and realise that the already heavy loan [? load] on themselves must be increased if the machine is to be kept going. They lose hope of being able to maintain satisfactory standards of work and decide not to be left behind to become involved in what may be a shambles, so they pack up as well. Something of the sort certainly occurred in the Forestry Department in which the grade of Assistant Conservator of Forests has practically ceased to exist as a result of retirements in and above that grade, with the result that Forestry has been forced back practically to a “care and maintenance” basis. I doubt whether it can be held even at this level.

So far as replacement is concerned, we have not had much success from the United Kingdom since we are hardly an attractive proposition. In a few key posts the Colonial Office has been able to help by transferring pensionable men on promotion from elsewhere, and we also receive a fair trickle of contract appointments, but reference to the statement attached to your Saving Telegram No.467 of the 21st April, 1956, will show you how difficult things are. They may improve somewhat if our forthcoming Salaries Commission is a success, but, as Eastwood pointed out in his demi-official letter No. WAF 97/2/01 of the 15th August, 1955, to Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, it is not primarily a matter of money: it is rather a matter of confidence. Better rates of pay would, however, enable us to keep some married serving officers who are in difficulty over educating their children in England and see in Compensation the wherewithal to provide for it. In this connection you might be interested to see my demi-official letter No. SCR. 1230/31 of the 3rd May, 1956, to Thomas.

So far as local recruitment to senior staff posts is concerned, we have laid hands on everything available and have not done at all badly. We have made just over 100 senior pensionable appointments since the Operative Date and hope to get another 30–40 from this year’s output of the University College of the Gold Coast. We also have a supply of youngsters returning from scholarship training overseas. The real trouble is not so much that local resources are still inadequate in numbers as that those appointed are all so lacking in maturity compared with the men they replace. We have kept the main framework of the Service in being so far and have maintained the level of qualifications, but man for man we have lost heavily in experience and responsibility. The work and the responsibility have been pushed upstairs so that the remnants of the Old Brigade are in danger of being first bogged down and then overwhelmed.

In certain sectors even the framework is now in danger. Forestry, as I have said above, has been badly mauled and although we have lads in training, will sink even further before we gain significantly in strength by local recruitment. It is a toss-up as to whether it survives in recognisable form. The Railway, the Acting General Manager says, is very close now to the level at which the trains will stop regular and safe running, and the Director of Posts and Telecommunications, with only 6 Engineers out of 14 left and only 3 out of 6 Wireless Engineers, has had to give notice that not only must planned development stop but maintenance of existing services must begin to fail. Here again we have lads in training but they will not be ready for

some years in any number. The solid pensionable core of the Medical Service has melted dangerously and I foresee difficulty in maintaining services at their present level over the next few critical years while local cadres are built up. We are receiving local reinforcements at a fair rate and have a steady supply going into training, but they will have to acquire experience on the job and will not supply us for a long time with Specialists and Medical Administrators.

Lastly, we come to the Administrative Service which can no longer carry its present commitments and must be conserved at all costs if the rest of the machine is to be nursed along. We have lost heavily in experienced men and cannot replace them even numerically with local cadets. Our graduates show a notable reluctance to choose the Administration as a career, probably because the Administrative Officer is always in the forefront of the battle and his long-term future seems uncertain. We send all new cadets to the field on appointment, and have made do at the centre with overseas Assistant Secretaries on contract, who are not eligible by the terms of their appointment for field service and would not be acceptable to local opinion in such a capacity. The Government has now closed this latter source of recruitment to us save in very special cases which require individual Cabinet approval. Our only salvation therefore lies in attracting all the local graduates we can, giving them District responsibility before their time and hoping for the best. Such a process at a time when the work of administration was never more difficult and exacting is, of course, a gamble; but we have no alternative and must take both the risks and the casualties. Numerically, we have reached a stage at which losses by retirement and transfer have outrun the recruitment to an extent which makes it inevitable that we start to close down Districts in the field and Schedules at the centre.

The arithmetic of Retirement with Compensation is as follows:—

(i)	Number of "Entitled Officers" at the Start.	...	770
(ii)	Number of "Entitled Officers" who left on the Operative Date.	...	142
(iii)	Balance of "Entitled Officers" after the Operative Date.	...	628
(iv)	Number of category (iii) above permitted to "freeze".	...	285
(v)	Number of "Entitled Officers" who have notified their intention to retire since the Operative Date.	...	116
(vi)	Number of category (v) above who were "frozen".	...	71
(vii)	Number of category (v) above who were not "frozen".	...	45
(viii)	Number of "Freezers" who have not notified their intention to retire.	...	214
(ix)	Number of "Non-Freezers" who have not notified their intention to retire.	...	298

From this you will see that "Freezing" has been a very present help in trouble. Had it not been for this device we should have lost another 285 at the Operative Date and would have faced immediate collapse, for it is in this group that the vast bulk of experience and seniority lies. It is, however, an imperfect device even as to its first intention which was to save the group for an interim four years of transition. "Freezers" are by the nature of things in middle life and they are tending to say to

themselves "I shall be out in 1959 in any case unless I am prepared to lose a lot of compensation, so I had better get out and into another job before I get much older". One factor is the necessity to go on earning money to bring up the children for a considerable time, and another is the fact that we all realise now, with the depreciation of Sterling, that we cannot hope to live on a pension geared to Gold Coast rates of pay. The question of what happens at the end of the Operative Period to the "Freezers" who then survive depends on the decision of the Government of the day. It can either lose the lot or extend the Operative Period. I have represented to the Prime Minister the desirability of making and publishing the decision now, but his reply has been "I cannot bind the Government of 1959 for I do not know what the circumstances will be – or even what the Government will be".

It is not possible to speculate in detail on what effect Independence will have on premature retirement; there are too many imponderables, the first of which is the outcome of the impending General Election and the second the performance of the Government and the atmosphere in the country after Independence. My own guess is that it must increase the tempo, for a number of old hands like myself will feel that they have done their stint and others will be apprehensive about the security of their compensation in a country which will be hard put to it to sustain a competent administration and to make financial ends meet with cocoa at £200 a ton.

I shall not be taking leave this year as I do not feel I can hand this thing over to any one else at the present stage.

**232** DO 35/6178, no 2

27 June 1956

[The future of the Gold Coast]: inward telegram no 325 from F E Cumming-Bruce to I M R MacLennan. *Minutes* by L B Walsh Atkins,<sup>1</sup> I M R MacLennan, Sir S Garner, Sir G Laithwaite and Lord Home (CRO)

[The letter by Snelling to which Cumming-Bruce refers in this tel was a covering letter sent by the CRO with selected briefs to CRO posts in connection with the meeting of Commonwealth prime ministers. Among the briefs was a paper prepared by the CO on 'Prospects for Gold Coast self-government'. Cumming-Bruce was a recipient of the briefs and he challenged some of the assumptions in the CO paper. As the minute sequence which accompanies this tel indicates, Cumming-Bruce's intervention (pursued further with his comments about the CO paper in his letter to MacLennan of 30 June, see 233) heightened CRO anxieties over the Gold Coast. Cumming-Bruce later wrote to Eastwood at the CO (19 July) explaining his reservations about the paper, particularly in relation to what he described as 'the manning of the Gold Coast administration' and 'co-operation in defence and external affairs'. His letter enclosed a copy of the CO paper with additions and qualifications which he thought necessary and which he had discussed with Hadow and S J E Southgate, chief secretary of the West African Inter-Territorial Council (DO 35/6178, no 1). Eastwood responded with a letter to MacLennan (25 July) which stated: 'I think our brief was a little on the optimistic side and I do not see anything in his [Cumming-Bruce's] amendments to which we would take very much exception. I think perhaps he is a little over-pessimistic on the defence side' (DO 35/6178, no 11).]

Snelling's letter of 22nd June.

In any assessment it would seem advisable to make due mention Gold Coast

<sup>1</sup> CRO assistant secretary.

Government's (corrupt group) and risk of instability, if only to avoid appearance of disingenuity. Good record has been due, to a greater extent than in other comparable cases, to factors that will cease to operate on independence, *viz*:— personal influence by the Governor and efforts of Ministers to conciliate United Kingdom opinion in the hope of encouraging transfer of power. There is likely to be considerably less wisdom and restraint in domestic administration after transfer and a certain amount of irresponsibility in external policies. Again substantial decline of efficiency is inevitable on account of the degree of dependence on expatriate officers, exodus of whom will gain momentum.

2. Gold Coast foreign policy is, of course, mainly a matter of speculation. But as seen from here Ministers are not (repeat not) likely to be particularly receptive to Western advice; and we cannot rely on positive co-operation except to the extent that direct Gold Coast interests recommend.

3. Risks would of course only be increased if Commonwealth membership was withheld.

#### Minutes on 232

##### *Mr. Maclennan*

I attach Mr. Cumming-Bruce's telegram No.325 of 27th June to you. This morning, before the telegram had reached you, Mr. Vile, Colonial Office, telephoned me about it, and enquired how it arose, e.g. could they be informed of the contents of Mr. Snelling's letter of 22nd June referred to. It seemed likely from my conversation with you . . . that the reference could only be to Mr. Snelling's letter of 19th June. . . . I telephoned Mr. Vile to explain that this appeared to be the answer, that the letter was in standard terms to all our Posts as well as to Mr. Cumming-Bruce, except that the list of briefs was adjusted to the requirements of the Post. I sought to represent this as a fairly routine affair, which I hadn't myself known of. Mr. Vile took all this well enough.

The Colonial Office's point — I do not think it is Mr. Vile's alone — is that

(a) It is to be presumed that, from the channel of the reply, if no other way, the briefs about the Gold Coast have become available to the Governor, or at least their presence known; whereas it is not in fact the practice of the Colonial Office to send briefs out to the Colonial Governors; and

(b) They themselves would not be able to admit Mr. Cumming-Bruce's observations as evidence: i.e. they are likely to resist any use being made of Mr. Cumming-Bruce's comment as throwing doubt upon the assessment circulated by the Colonial Office.

You invited me to record this so that you might consider what further action, if any, to take. As indicated above, we in the Department do not appear to have been aware that it was proposed to send these briefs to Mr. Cumming-Bruce; and it looks as if it would be worthwhile recording this incident for guidance in case a similar situation may arise another time.

So far as the Accra situation is concerned, it will be, in a sense, tidier as soon as Mr. Cumming-Bruce has his separate organisation in that he will be able, and indeed under an obligation, to report his views to us direct, and the Colonial Office's grounds for questioning his intervention will then be much weaker. On the other

hand, it is clearly going to be pretty tiresome if the Colonial Office are even then going to be arguing that Mr. Cumming-Bruce's assessments should be discounted.

L.B.W.A.

28.6.56

*Sir S. Garner*

Mr. Cumming-Bruce's message in Gold Coast telegram No.325 to the Colonial Office has aroused some excitement in the Colonial Office. Mr. Snelling's letter of the 22nd June to which Mr. Cumming-Bruce has referred was merely a covering letter sent with selected briefs prepared in connexion with the Prime Ministers' Meeting. Among the briefs sent to Mr. Cumming-Bruce, those about the Gold Coast were naturally included.

It would appear that it is anathema to the Colonial Office either to consult the Governor before preparing any assessment of the position in the Gold Coast or to show him the result afterwards. I gather however that they are not so much embarrassed at the possibility of the Governor having seen the brief, as anxious to make it clear that (to quote Mr. Walsh-Atkins' minute below) "they themselves would not be able to admit Mr. Cumming-Bruce's observations as evidence". To put it bluntly, what they are afraid of is that Mr. Cumming-Bruce's comments will spoil the picture they have painted of Gold Coast stability.

Since they feel as they do about it, there can presumably be no question of attempting to amend the Gold Coast brief, but this should not prevent us in the C.R.O. from giving heed to Mr. Cumming-Bruce's views, and I think that the Secretary of State would be interested to see them.

I.M.R.M.

29.6.56

I find this doubly depressing – (a) in relation to the Gold Coast (and there is no reason to doubt Cumming-Bruce's picture), and (b) as an indication of the Colonial Office attitude.

S.G.

30.6.56

*Secretary of State*

The Colonial Office are entitled to claim that they and H.M.G. must be advised by the Governor alone and that it would not be right that the views of an attached officer of not very high rank should, however capable he may be, be taken as constituting a formal assessment of the position in the Gold Coast.

We are, on the other hand, entitled, as the Minutes suggest, to take on their merits Mr. Cumming-Bruce's doubts as to the true stability of the Gold Coast. You will remember that those doubts were expressed in a separate communication a few days ago which you wished drawn to Mr. Hare's attention.

The Colonial Office quite rightly regard us as committed in principle to full self-government for the Gold Coast and we have made it clear that we are so committed

in the House of Commons. But it does not follow that if there were signs of a grave economic break-down in the Gold Coast we should necessarily still be able to work to our present time-table of independence next March. Commonwealth countries will expect an assessment from us of the economic as well as the political stability of a would-be new Commonwealth country and it w'd not be easy for us to accept liability for keeping such a country economically afloat while giving it a free hand as regards internal and external policy.

J.G.L.  
3.7.56

Cumming-Bruce's warnings seem to me to be based upon close observation & to be very necessary.

If you like I will write to Mr Hare & say that they must be taken seriously. After all if this mightily unattractive baby is going to be dumped in our laps the view of a high [sic] intelligent observer should be given due weight.

H.  
[nd]

**233** DO 35/6178, no 3

30 June 1956

'Assessment of Gold Coast stability': letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to I M R MacLennan. *Minute* by MacLennan

No doubt the assessment in Section III of Part A of the Colonial Office brief for Ministers on Gold Coast candidature was deliberately drafted in a way to furnish as clearly as possible a number of reassuring facts that might be adduced to dispel the doubts and answer the queries of visiting Ministers. But as seen from here the general effect of an enumeration of past achievements is positively misleading as a pointer for the future. I did not suppose that there was much likelihood of our Ministers' painting a picture in such rosy colours, but I thought nevertheless that I ought perhaps to make the points of Gold Coast telegram No. 325 of 26th<sup>1</sup> June. For it would tend to weaken the confidence of Commonwealth Governments in our assessments on future occasions if we were proved by events to have been uncritically complacent about the inevitable changes here after independence. And I suppose that the South African Government could, if they felt so inclined, make political use of it, by claiming later on that their agreement to Gold Coast membership had been obtained on incomplete or tendentious information.

2. I am sending for record purposes a note<sup>2</sup> of the amendments required to make the assessment appear reasonably objective. In some respects the effort to reassure has been pushed beyond the point of accuracy. For instance, the proposition that "present indications are that the Gold Coast Government will co-operate with the United Kingdom in defence matters and take United Kingdom advice on other international problems" goes much too far in suggesting an amenable satellite. The

<sup>1</sup> The date should be 27 June, see 232.

<sup>2</sup> The note was in fact this letter.

present Ministers will not relish advice from any quarter, and they are just as likely to heed the advice of India as the U.K. Again, the unqualified confidence expressed in the future wisdom of Gold Coast economic policies is frankly absurd; so is the starry-eyed statement about Ministers' attitude towards corruption, which is not nearly as strict as is suggested. But what is more surprising than the exaggeration of Ministerial virtues and competence is the complete absence of any mention of the serious uncertainties of the future. If, as is quite possible, the exodus of expatriates denudes the senior ranks of the administration in the next two years, it is anybody's guess what the effect on efficiency and stability will be: but we do know that at present the expatriates virtually carry the whole burden of administration. If the Ashanti problem is not solved by statesmanlike compromise and moderation, the stability and cohesion of the country may be undermined: and there has so far been no indication whatever among Ministers of a capacity for restraint in domestic politics. Since we are merely guessing, no one can assert that it is *impossible* that, as the brief implies, Gold Coast administration and external policy after independence will be as satisfactory as 1948–55 Ceylon. But it is quite possible that the position will deteriorate to a point more like the case of Burma.

3. After looking again at the assessment that I made myself last year (enclosure to my letter to Laithwaite of 19th May,<sup>3</sup> 1955), I think that it gives a fair forecast.

4. If the C.O. assessment was *not* deliberately drafted to present only the bright side of the picture, it seems to me to impugn the judgement of the West African side of the C.O. quite seriously, and to present a practical problem for the C.R.O. I am about to send an assessment of the dangers of Soviet penetration, which the Governor agrees with me are real and require counteraction. If the Colonial Office really believe that everything in the garden is lovely, there is, I take it, virtually no chance of their seeing the slightest need to take advance action to safeguard our interests. In that case I can only say that I hope that the C.R.O. will be accepted by the Treasury and Board of Trade as the responsible voice about future needs. The time has, indeed, passed when the Colonial Office are qualified to discharge such a function. They receive virtually no reports from the Governor on matters concerning future relations; he has neither the inclination to cover such ground nor the staff to do the work. Their position in respect of intelligence is, in fact, not dissimilar from that of the Dominions Office before the opening of offices in Dominion capitals.

5. I have marked this personal as I am not sending a copy to the C.O. . . .

### Minute on 233

#### *Sir G. Laithwaite*

. . . As regards Mr. Cumming-Bruce's paragraph 4, my guess would be that the Colonial Office had not intended to deceive, but that they are naturally over-optimistic about the Gold Coast, and this leads to wishful thinking accentuated no doubt by the inadequacy of the information which they now receive from the country.

I see that the Secretary of State has suggested writing to the Minister of State at

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<sup>3</sup> As MacLennan pointed out in a marginal note, the date of this letter should be 19 Aug; see 181.

the Colonial Office with reference to Gold Coast telegram No.325, possibly with reference also to the recent letter<sup>4</sup> from Mr. Cumming-Bruce (registered on Economic Division files) about the need for us to be prepared to compete with the Russians in supplying investment funds to the Gold Coast after self-government has come about. There is no reason why we should not write with reference to telegram No.325 and the Colonial Office reaction to it, but obviously we cannot say anything to the Colonial Office which might disclose to them the existence of the letter which Mr. Cumming-Bruce has now sent us; and I should have been inclined to think that it might be better for the Secretary of State at some convenient opportunity to have a talk with Mr. Hare or Mr. Lennox-Boyd.

Meanwhile, Mr. Cumming-Bruce's restrained pessimism seems much more convincing than the Colonial Office optimism.

I.M.R.M.  
5.7.56

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<sup>4</sup> See 238, enclosure.

**234** PREM 11/1367

5 July 1956

[South Africa and the Gold Coast]: letter from Mr Strijdom to Sir A Eden on the attitude of the South African government towards Commonwealth membership for the Gold Coast

[This letter, written from the South African High Commission in London during the Prime Ministers' Conference, was sent in response to a letter from Eden to all Commonwealth prime ministers on the question of Commonwealth membership for the Gold Coast. Eden was far from satisfied with the first draft of a reply to Strijdom's letter which was prepared by the CRO. He minuted: 'I think this reply is not strong enough. Mr Strijdom has sent me an offensive letter, even an insulting one. We require no lesson from him in how to treat black people. We must send a firmer reply. We shall not be respected by these bullies if we do not' (DO 35/6176, no 56, letter from F A Bishop, principal private secretary to the prime minister, to H Smedley, CRO, 7 July 1956). In the revised reply sent to Strijdom on 11 July, Eden commented: 'In the case of the Gold Coast the United Kingdom are committed to the grant of self-government and . . . once this stage has been reached, the question that will have to be faced is not whether the country is to remain in the Commonwealth (the Gold Coast is already in the Commonwealth as are all other United Kingdom dependencies) but whether it is to become a member of the Commonwealth. As regards the latter status, the United Kingdom Government, of course, agree that admittance to Membership of the Commonwealth is a matter in regard to which there must always be prior consultation with existing Member countries, and it is in accordance with this principle that I wrote to you on 3 July . . .'. Strijdom, by now back in South Africa, was still not satisfied. He wrote again to Eden on 8 Aug claiming that member states had been confronted with a 'fait accompli' and he repeated his position that in similar cases in the future, the UK government should, 'before committing themselves, consult with and obtain the consent of the Governments of the other member States'. The other Commonwealth prime ministers agreed that the Gold Coast should be admitted although Mr St Laurent, prime minister of Canada, emphasised the difficulty of giving commitments in advance (PREM 11/1367; also CO 554/808, no 372, letter from Eastwood to Arden-Clarke, 31 Aug 1956).]

In your letter of the 3rd July, 1956, you state:—

“If the present Prime Minister of the Gold Coast, Dr. Nkrumah, is returned,

we know that he will introduce a motion calling for full self-government within the Commonwealth. The United Kingdom Government are committed to give effect to such a motion if it is passed by a reasonable majority”.

In view of the above undertaking of your Government, it would appear that we are confronted with a fait accompli, and that refusal to agree at this stage would place the United Kingdom Government in a very embarrassing position.

If it were merely a matter of granting self-government or full independence to a colony or dependency of the United Kingdom, that would of course be a matter for the decision only of the United Kingdom, but where as in the case of the Gold Coast the granting of independence is coupled with an undertaking to admit such new State into the Commonwealth, then in my opinion it is a matter in regard to which prior consultation with Member States should take place before your Government commit themselves. In this case your High Commissioner in South Africa informed us that the Gold Coast would probably ask to be admitted to membership of the Commonwealth but the Union Government was not asked to express their views, with the resultant predicament in which we now find ourselves.

I would therefore very strongly urge that in future, and in the case of a similar request from any other dependency of the United Kingdom, prior agreement be arrived at between your Government and other Member States before your Government commit themselves.

Our fear, well-founded I think, is that the population of the Gold Coast, except for a small minority, is as yet so undeveloped and politically immature that the granting of full independence and concurrent admission to the Commonwealth would create a dangerous position for all concerned. In any case it creates an undesirable precedent. We are of the opinion that in the case of a political immature and largely undeveloped country like the Gold Coast, which has been granted independence with full power to manage its own affairs, there should first be a testing period, before the following step is taken of admitting it to membership of the Commonwealth.

In view of the fact, however, that your government are committed not only to grant full self-government, but also concurrent admission to the Commonwealth, and that refusal by us at this stage would place your Government in a very awkward position, the Union Government are prepared to give their consent, although we are convinced that the proposed action is for the reasons stated above, both premature and ill-advised.

In view of the importance of this matter I shall be glad if you would kindly bring the view of the Government of the Union of South Africa to the notice of the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Central African Federation respectively.

**235** CO 554/1210, no 43

5 July 1956

[Ministerial corruption]: letter from R J Vile to Sir G Hadow on allegations of ministerial corruption made by the Gold Coast trade commissioner in London, T M Kodwo Mercer

In my telegram Personal No. 42 of the 29th June I reported that Mercer was having a considerable number of photostat copies made of important documents

in his possession and I promised to let you have further information when I saw Mercer.

Mercer lunched with me on the 4th July and told me so much that I felt it better to write you this letter rather than telegraph as I had promised. He was in an expansive and confident mood and made no bones about describing to me with pretty complete frankness his aims and his hopes.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the first point I should make is that Mercer regards himself still as a very loyal member of the C.P.P. and his primary aim is the cleaning up of the C.P.P. He has no love for the N.L.M., making the point that a number of the N.L.M. leaders have been as guilty of violence and corruption as the leaders of the C.P.P., whom he cannot now stomach. He claimed that there were a considerable number of honest men in the C.P.P. who shared his view that the time had come to sweep away the bad elements in the Party. Prominent among these people are Joe Menu of Kumasi and Kumah of Takoradi.<sup>2</sup> Mercer said that he was confident the C.P.P. would win the election and that he was determined that the Party should be cleaned up, if not before the election then very quickly thereafter. He expected that he might be asked to return to the Gold Coast before the election if such a step became necessary in the opinion of his friends there. He was convinced that the business of cleaning up the C.P.P. could not be left any longer.

I naturally asked Mercer about his personal position as Commissioner. He was confident that Nkrumah would not dismiss him, and he had no intention of resigning. He said that he had so much documentary evidence that the leaders of the Party dare not take overt action against him. He had taken the precaution of having photostat copies of all his evidence deposited with various friends of his and had made arrangements which would ensure that if anything happened to him other people would carry on the campaign and would have all his material at their disposal.

He was completely frank about the kind of material he had. He said that it covered both the use of violence and the practice of corruption. He had evidence which showed that Nkrumah, through a small committee within the Central Committee of the C.P.P., had personally controlled the use of violence by the Party. Mercer said that he knew how frightened Botsio had been lest violence should be used against him, and I gathered that Botsio had been threatened with such violence and told that it would be made to look like the work of the N.L.M. Mercer said that his evidence supported the allegations already made that there existed a list of people who were to be disposed of once independence was achieved. He assured me that Nkrumah had deliberately engaged in a campaign of deceiving the Governor and H.M.G. and that there was in Mercer's possession documentary evidence showing that Nkrumah's sole aim was to achieve power without any regard for anything else.

In discussing corruption Mercer claimed that he had documentary evidence to show that Nkrumah was personally implicated in corrupt practices. He said that Gbedemah was also deeply implicated and that Botsio was involved in these matters, although not so intimately as the other two Ministers. He did not describe in any detail what the evidence was, but he did tell me that the report he rendered to Gbedemah about the C.P.P. was an abridged version of a much longer document

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<sup>1</sup> Mercer was dismissed from his post in the week following this interview (DO 35/6178, no 9, outward tel from Lennox-Boyd to Arden-Clarke, 19 July 1956).

<sup>2</sup> See 244, para 29; the reference is to Joe Manu.

which contained evidence implicating Nkrumah and Gbedemah in the corruption he had found. He had given Botsio a copy of the full version of the report.

This was for me a very serious story for Mercer to tell, and I told him that if all he alleged were true he was in fact saying that Nkrumah had deliberately and simply deceived the Governor over a long time. I went on to make the obvious point that if these allegations were true it was imperative that the C.P.P. should put its house in order without any further delay. I asked Mercer what were his particular aims in this regard. He said that he wished to ensure that the Life Chairman of the Party was no longer Prime Minister, and that the Cabinet should in fact be the Government of the country, and that the Central Committee of the C.P.P. should be responsible only for Party affairs and should be elected to represent the Party and the organisations affiliated to it. He realised that he could not expect to get rid of corruption overnight but he was convinced that corruption in positions of importance must be stamped out whenever it occurred.

I should also tell you that Mercer has been speaking in much the same strain to Colin Legum of "The Observer" and I have little doubt that he will shortly be speaking to David Williams of "West Africa" in much the same strain. What he has to say is therefore becoming very rapidly an open secret. Legum is certainly anxious to publish something on the subject pretty soon and may, indeed, go into print next Sunday. Mercer's view is that he does not want to break the C.P.P. and that if possible he should aim at changing the leadership of the Party without too much public fuss. If necessary, however, he and his supporters are clearly reconciled to the possibility of a complete break within the Party and the formation of a new Party. I pointed out to him that this might mean another General Election, to which he replied that that would be a good thing.

I cannot conceal from you the fact that what Mercer had to say is most disturbing to me and I have no doubt that the Secretary of State will find it equally disturbing. We cannot, of course, know what Mercer's documents show, or how far his interpretation of the evidence he has is swayed by his own dislike of the Party bosses who have pushed him around. From what he said it was clear that the secrecy of these violent and corrupt operations has been well kept and that you are not therefore likely to be able to confirm the truth of his allegations or to show that they are unfounded in any respect. We would, however, be most grateful if you could let us have as soon as possible some account of your views on the political effect of these developments, and your assessment of the probable value of the allegations which Mercer is now making.

**236** DO 35/6178, no 6

6 July 1956

[General election]: letter from Sir G Hadow to R J Vile predicting the outcome of the election

Will you please refer to your Secret and Personal letter WAF 103/120 /01 of the 26th June in which you asked for our views about the forthcoming General Election.

It would have been difficult to let you have any worthwhile opinion until we were in a position to study the state of the game after the 2nd July, which was the

last date on which nominations could be withdrawn. In the event 20 candidates withdrew their nominations and the position now is that 5 candidates (all C.P.P.) have been returned unopposed and 220 candidates will contest the remaining 99 seats.

There will be straight fights in 81 constituencies, three-cornered fights in 14 constituencies and four-cornered fights in four others. An examination of the list of candidates shows that 99 have been nominated by the Convention Peoples Party, 39 by the National Liberation Movement, 23 by the Northern Peoples Party, 3 by the Togoland Congress, 6 by the Federation of Youth Movement, 3 by the Muslim Association Party and 2 by the Wassaw Youth Association. In addition 45 candidates are standing as Independents.

There are, of course, widely divergent opinions about what the result of the election will be, but our Local Intelligence Committee, after giving careful thought to the matter, has expressed the view that the C.P.P., together with the successful Independent candidates who are likely to throw in their lot with the C.P.P. after they have been elected, will have a majority of at least 10 seats in the new Assembly and this majority might well be as large as 15 or even more.

There appears to be little doubt that the great majority of these seats will be obtained in the Colony, and we must expect a substantial anti-C.P.P. majority in Ashanti, while there will probably be slight anti-C.P.P. majorities in the Northern Territories and Togoland.

We feel that there is a good prospect that the elections will pass off without serious trouble. The number of violent incidents has considerably increased during the past month and will no doubt continue to increase until the elections are over. A disturbing feature of the events of the past weeks has been the number of locally planned and executed armed ambushes on roads in Ashanti; these activities, which are almost impossible to predict and offer good chances of complete surprise and evasion of the legal consequences, are likely to increase as election campaigning, and the number of party vehicles moving to and from meetings increases. Nevertheless, it is not considered that the situation will become so out of hand that a major disturbance will occur before the election. We are taking firm Police action in the areas where these ambushes have occurred.

It does not appear that the Commission of Enquiry into the affairs of the Cocoa Purchasing Company has had any notable effect upon the electorate. C.P.P. supporters appear to believe that many of the irregularities which have come to light have resulted from attempts to obtain funds to be used to enable the party to press on with its plans for the early achievement of self-government, and in their view, of course, such an end justifies the employment of almost any means. Elsewhere there are to be found many persons who regret that they personally were not in a position to benefit from the state of affairs which has been revealed. There is, of course, a hard core of decent people who have been quite genuinely shocked but in the majority of such cases all that has happened is that their worst suspicions have been confirmed. While the revelations before the Commission must have done the C.P.P. harm it seems likely that this harm will be negligible to [sic] far as the result of the election is concerned.

**237** DO 35/6178, no 6

11 July 1956

[Future of the Gold Coast]: letter from Lord Home to Mr Hare expressing his concern about the stability of the Gold Coast

Mr dear John,

You may have seen (and I know that your Office has seen) a personal message from Cumming-Bruce at Accra . . . about the position in the Gold Coast.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously Her Majesty's Government can be advised on the Gold Coast position only by the Governor himself and I have no doubt that you have been receiving reports from Arden-Clarke which would enable you to judge whether or not the position there, both politically and economically, is as stable as we suggested that it might be in the Brief that was prepared for Ministers in connection with the Prime Ministers' Meeting.

But I am frankly unhappy lest we should be taking too optimistic a view. Cumming-Bruce's doubts are disturbing, and Mr. Vile's letter to Sir G. Hadow of 5th July<sup>2</sup> of which I have seen a copy is still more so. I have a very direct concern in this to the extent that I shall be responsible for the Gold Coast if it does become a Commonwealth country and quite apart from that, we shall have to be prepared to say something specific to the other Commonwealth countries in respect of its economic and political set-up, and its stability, when we ask them to agree to its becoming a member.

If you have any recent reports from Arden-Clarke which would throw light on this I should be much interested if I could see them. But if by any chance there is nothing very recent would you and Alan<sup>3</sup> think it a good thing to call for a special report? The points I have in mind are economic stability, political stability and administrative stability. Can we really be as sure as we suggested in our Brief that, in fact, Gold Coast Ministers are going to look to us for advice? And how do we stand about violence, and corruption? I seem to have read (I think in *The Observer*) that the revelations of the Cocoa Inquiry may be upsetting and the information in the Colonial Office letter of 5th July to Sir G Hadow is most disquieting!

As Alan is so immersed in other things I do not want to bother him with this as I would normally have done, but if you think there is anything in what I say and it is worth following up, it would be, I confess, a relief to my mind to have something positive from Arden-Clarke.

Yours ever  
Alec

<sup>1</sup> See 232.

<sup>2</sup> See 235.

<sup>3</sup> Mr Lennox-Boyd.

**238** DO 35/6178, no 17A

14 July 1955

[Economic prospects for the Gold Coast]: despatch no 20 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the danger of Soviet economic penetration in the Gold Coast and the counter-action needed.

*Enclosure*: memorandum by F E Cumming-Bruce, 20 June 1956

The grant to the Gold Coast Government of full responsibility for the conduct of its external relations will expose both the Gold Coast and United Kingdom interests there to new risks. A main danger lies in the possibility of efforts by the Soviet Union to undermine internal stability and Western interests. Although West Africa is a far cry from the Middle East and the Sudan, it seems not only possible but probable that an attempt will be made to penetrate the Gold Coast by economic means.

2. I have, therefore, been taking stock of the dangers and considering what H.M.G. can do to reduce them: and I have the honour to forward a memorandum prepared by my Adviser on External Affairs in which the risks, as seen here, are set out, and suggestions are made for counter-action.

3. These include the suggestion that it may be necessary for economic aid for development purposes to be made available to the Gold Coast Government after independence. Conclusions on any such needs cannot be reached until Ministers have cleared their minds on their future development objectives and the extent to which the Government's resources are likely to be able to achieve their attainment, with due regard to the prospects of the Volta River Project. Unless I press them to tackle these issues as a matter of priority, it is likely to take Ministers a long time to reach conclusions: and it would be gratuitous, and possibly harmful, at this stage for me to ask them to expedite their consideration of the subject, unless there was a reasonable prospect that, should Gold Coast resources be unable to provide for reasonable development needs on a sound financial basis, some external assistance would be likely to be forthcoming. From the angle of safeguarding United Kingdom interests after independence, however, the sooner the needs of the situation are cleared up, the better. I should, therefore, be glad if you would inform me for my personal and confidential guidance whether there is a prospect that some external assistance for development would be forthcoming after independence, if in due course it should be shown to be required to meet reasonable Gold Coast needs.

4. If the United Kingdom is to maintain its commercial position here, everything possible must be done to increase the confidence of Ministers in United Kingdom commercial, transportation and other concerns. Good work has, as you know, been done by some British companies to adapt their methods and policies to meet African susceptibilities; but the process must be continued and extended, if we are to succeed in convincing Ministers that their legitimate aspirations are likely to be met from the West. I shall continue to use my influence with representatives of British firms stationed in, or visiting, the Gold Coast: but, where there has been a failure to move with the times, there is sometimes an inadequate understanding or a rigidity of policy on the part of principals in the United Kingdom. I should, therefore, welcome anything that can be done by the Board of Trade in suitable quarters in the U.K. to encourage British firms in their own long term interests to adopt a sympathetic and flexible attitude to nationalist aims. This is no less essential in the Gold Coast than has been the case in India and other recently emancipated countries of the East.

5. Much, and probably the main, action on the issues raised in the enclosed memorandum will fall to be taken after independence. My Adviser on External Affairs is, therefore, sending a copy to the Commonwealth Relations Office with supplementary comments.

6. I have sent a copy of this despatch to the O.A. the Government of Nigeria and the Governor of Sierra Leone.

#### Enclosure to 238: The danger of future Soviet penetration in the Gold Coast

##### *Introduction*

The Gold Coast is likely, after the transfer of power, to be added to the list of Soviet targets for economic penetration for political ends. While there is no need to take an alarmist view about the growth of communism after independence, Russian manoeuvres might be able to undermine future progress and prejudice the healthy relations with the West, on which progress depends. Part I of this paper discusses the nature of possible Soviet designs and the likely reaction of Gold Coast Ministers towards any future Soviet overtures. Part II considers how far the Gold Coast economy is vulnerable to possible penetration. In Part III suggestions are made for action to reduce the risks.

##### *Part I: Possible Soviet designs in the Gold Coast*

2. A foothold in West Africa would be valuable to the Soviet bloc as a means of undermining Western interests and influence, as a base for subversive operations and as an observation post. It would also be useful for anti-Colonialist ends both within and outside the region. A Communist agency established in the Gold Coast would not find it difficult in due course to influence Government policy and meddle in internal affairs. The prejudices of the Bandung outlook could be played upon: and as the level of integrity in public life after independence will be low, there would be plenty of scope for corruption. Even in the absence of any effective Communist agency here, there is little prospect of the present Gold Coast Ministers agreeing to any general alignment with the United Kingdom and other Western powers: but there is a fair chance that we shall be able to retain such military facilities as we require and that the Gold Coast will refrain from offensive forms of neutralism and from commitments that would restrict her freedom of action in the event of war. There will be much less chance of safe-guarding our interests if Soviet and satellite personnel are in a position to build up influence in the country and distribute favours.

3. Our commercial interests also are vulnerable. Responsible leaders of the British commercial community consider that there is a real danger that in times of financial stress Ministers may, without any communist prompting, be tempted in their immaturity to take steps that may have serious effects on commerce, and they are likely to receive some bad advice from non-official quarters. To take an extreme case, they might be so ill-advised as to impose levies on Commonwealth and foreign commerce such as might virtually dry up imports over a wide field. The consequent internal hardship would inevitably have embarrassing political repercussions. Again, they might draw unwisely on their currency reserves. We need not conjure up these

ugly phantoms in advance, provided that the Gold Coast thrives, with any necessary Western help for reasonable needs. But if the danger point should come, and if by then the Russians or their agents were established in a position of potential influence, they might have ample opportunity to encourage irresponsible policies aimed at the golden geese of Commonwealth and foreign commercial interests.

4. The recent Soviet overtures to Liberia suggest that Moscow is alive to the scope for mischief and the ground has, it seems, already been prepared for overtures to the Gold Coast in the three successive talks that the Russian representatives at the Monrovia celebrations last January, including no less a personage than Mr. Volkov (now Soviet Minister of State), had with the Gold Coast representatives. (What passed in these conversations has not been divulged by the Gold Coast participants.) As has been reported to the Colonial Office, Russia is likely to be invited to attend the Gold Coast Independence celebrations; some satellites may also be invited. It would not be difficult for the Communist bloc to follow up a visit to Accra by offers of economic assistance which might easily have specious attractions.

5. Gold Coast Ministers would not overlook that acceptance of Communist aid soon after independence would carry certain risks. Though fairly well disposed for the most part in their general outlook and shrewd on matters of material gain, they are inevitably naive and poorly informed on external matters, and they suffer from over-confidence. To a West African it is unnatural to refuse a gift whatever its origin, and whether or not the gift meets a real need. And if the Government was in awkward financial straits it would appear highly quixotic to Ministers to turn a good offer down. So far as political repercussions are concerned, general arguments against annoying the Western powers would not necessarily weigh very heavily; the Gold Coast is just as self-centred as other countries and East/West tensions are not regarded as of much practical relevance to West Africa. Practical relations with the Communist bloc would have a certain relish in demonstrating the Gold Coast's freedom of action, and there is not likely to be any particular reluctance to respond to agreeable Communist advances. Several influential members of the Government have shown fellow-travelling sympathies in the not distant past, and resentment of Western domination in Africa tends to produce an uncritical attitude towards the Eastern bloc. Indian influence and example is likely to encourage complacency. Moreover, the idea of playing the West off against the East would be a natural one for the shrewd West African; he would regard the role of young buck ogled by competing charms as entirely appropriate. Ministers would be inclined to take a sanguine view of the extent to which favours can safely be accepted from both sides.

6. There will, of course, be factors influencing the Gold Coast Government in the direction of caution. The Prime Minister views with distaste the position of small countries involved in the cold war: he fears that rivalry between the powers to meet economic needs may have the effect of stalemate, arresting rather than promoting the commencement of projects and reducing the supposed beneficiary to the role of a pawn. Again, the Government have recently been annoyed by the irresponsible tactics of Communists in Gold Coast labour relations, and Ministers will presumably wish to confine to the minimum the external contacts of disaffected trades unionists. Party politics might induce care, for relations with the Communist world might be used by the Opposition as a ground for criticism of the Government. Also West Africans are realists and Gold Coast Ministers will have no illusions about the fact that their interests require a continuation of close ties with the West; Ministers

would not wish to prejudice seriously their political relations with the United Kingdom and United States. There is little bitterness towards the British such as warps some Indian minds, and Ministers are a good-humoured lot, open to argument and prepared to reconsider bad decisions. But they easily forget or ignore anything that is not in sight. If there was a prospect of special financial facilities or economic aid from the West, this would help to emphasise and keep in the foreground the basic dependence of the Gold Coast economy on the free world. Moreover, fear that the negotiation of such aid would be endangered by acceptance of Communist assistance would probably be a powerful inducement to caution. The Gold Coast Government would be more likely to study Eastern bloc offers critically with due regard to security aspects if, apart from normal commercial relations, their main source of future help was demonstrably going to remain the West, and if new and hopeful forms of co-operation were being worked out.

7. A Russian offer of a loan for development would be very tempting, if the necessary capital for the Gold Coast's reasonable requirements was not forthcoming from other sources. But there are no doubt other less pretentious forms of possible Russian aid. Grants of tractors and equipment or offers on favourable terms might be attractive. The Eastern bloc could help to meet the pressing needs of technical assistance that will progressively show themselves as British members of the professional and specialist services retire. English-speaking German, Czech or Polish specialists could presumably be made available with the right skills, such as electrical and water engineering.

8. Apart from the public sector of development, the Gold Coast's desire for the establishment of new manufacturing industries will present opportunities for penetration. Manufacture in the Gold Coast is, in general, an unattractive commercial proposition for the West at present, as the F.B.I. Mission pointed out last year, but it may afford an opening of which the Eastern bloc might be prepared to take advantage, e.g. by East German, Czech or Hungarian agencies. An enterprise under questionable Czech management is understood to have been established in Nigeria. The Government has been encouraged by some economists to pitch rather high its estimate of the number of new manufacturers that could pay their way, and it has the usual strong desire of governments of under-developed countries to promote secondary industries. An economic consultant recommended some twenty-five industries for consideration in 1953: some have already been established and it can be taken for granted that the Gold Coast Government will see to it that more is done. If Western capital and skill is unobtainable to a reasonable extent, the desire for development will almost certainly outweigh security objections in Ministers' minds, and offers to set up manufacturing plants will be accepted from the Eastern bloc. The Trade Commissioner drew the attention of the Board of Trade to the prospect in a letter to C.R. and E. Division of 17th April, 1956.

9. Again, the Russians might seek an opportunity to establish a trade agency, for instance on the pretext of negotiating for Gold Coast products, in particular cocoa. If in times of low cocoa prices such as at present, Russia seemed likely to offer favourable terms, such a request might be tempting. The principal British and American cocoa buyers, who maintain very close relations and exercise a determining influence on prices, should attach more weight in future to the danger of Russian meddling with the market.

10. If the Gold Coast were enabled to participate in Western international

schemes of aid on a significant scale, Russian aid might become redundant. If, nevertheless, it was offered and accepted it would at any rate fall into place as a matter of secondary importance and be less easy to exploit politically.

11. It would be over-sanguine to suppose that the Eastern bloc will be prevented altogether and for all time from setting up establishments of some kind or another in the Gold Coast. But it is worth an effort to reduce the scale of penetration and postpone the day. The Gold Coast ought in the first few years of independence to be given a fair chance of consolidating the country and tackling its many administrative problems without undue financial handicaps or mischievous exploitations of its economic needs.

*Part II: Weaknesses in the Gold Coast economy*

12. The Gold Coast economy is fragile. But the country has enjoyed a strong financial position and could continue to remain in that position. If it still continued to bask in the prosperity that until a few months ago marked the period since responsibility was given to African Ministers, it could reasonably have been hoped that the scope for Soviet mischief in the guise of economic assistance would have been limited, at any rate if the Volta River Project was approved: and there would have been little need at this stage to consider possible counter action by the Western powers. But the Gold Coast Government has overreached itself during the recent boom years in launching more services than it can afford to maintain, and it will shortly be difficult for the Government to find funds for its essential requirements. It has already become a problem how to balance the budget; for ordinary expenditure is three times as high now as six years ago. It is, moreover, due to continue to increase rapidly. This trend derives largely from the cost of manning and maintaining the many non-revenue producing projects undertaken in the recently ended boom period. Not only is there likely to be little or no money for further development, much less new education or welfare services, but it seems inevitable that there will soon have to be retrenchment. A brief note on economic trends, as assessed by the Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister, is appended, (Appendix A) together with a copy of the forecast of general trends sent to the C.R.O. last year (Appendix B).<sup>1</sup>

13. This bleak prospect results partly from the fall of the price of cocoa, on which the Gold Coast economy mainly depends, but even if the cocoa price had not fallen to a figure somewhat below what may be regarded as normal, the day of reckoning would only have been postponed for a short time. It amounts to a transformation in the financial scene, for in the last five years of cocoa boom the Government have been able to find money for an unprecedented amount of projects. It is particularly unfortunate, and indeed disquieting, that the change should happen to coincide with the transfer of power. The country already, as is known, faces a prospect of grave administrative difficulties in the next year or two, from the prospective exodus of most of the remaining expatriate members of the Administrative Service and many of the members of the specialist services. The strain on the administration will, in turn, coincide with the new problem of maintaining the cohesion of the country when Ashanti is disaffected in large part and the Northern Territories are a suspicious and reluctant partner. It is a matter of guess-work as to whether the police and the army,

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix B is reproduced in this collection as the enclosure to 181.

manned largely by Northern tribesmen, who have little loyalty to their elected government, would be able to handle the law and order situation adequately if the Government were to pursue unwise policies: and the C.P.P. has a record of singular ineptitude in its past handling of Ashanti and the North. It would help the Government in facing the problems of stability and cohesion ahead, if it could at any rate plan to continue to undertake a reasonable amount of development work for the benefit of opposition areas as well as the main centres of its own support. Conversely it will be a serious handicap if the Government has to reconcile the opposition areas to the discontinuance of the development and welfare work to which they have become accustomed. The poverty-stricken Northern Territories, in particular, are conscious of the magnitude of their needs and will attach high value to further schemes for their welfare. Incidentally, if H.M.G. continued to contribute to such schemes, resentment at our termination of treaty obligations might be offset. If there were a change of Government after the election, the problems would be different, but not necessarily less difficult.

14. It will be difficult for Ministers to adjust themselves to the change of financial climate. So far they have, not unnaturally, averted their eyes and hoped that something will turn up. Having been sheltered from the more formidable class of financial problems, they will not readily accept the necessity to go slow on development and welfare services. It would be only natural for them to seek to raise money for development and to stave off the day of retrenchment by any available means, without due care about long-term consequences, and they might easily resort to unwise financial measures such as might prejudice not only future Gold Coast financial stability – they are just about to start managing a currency of their own – but also, as is suggested above, British commercial interests. There has already been some loose talk in ministerial circles behind the scenes about the possibility of a loan from Russia. If Russia offers aid, it would be difficult for the Gold Coast to refuse it.

15. The central issue of Gold Coast development is of course the Volta River Project, and it would be otiose to expatiate on the political aspects here; for the Project lies outside the field of normal development services. Some Ministers are hopefully entertaining the idea of Russia as an alternative source of capital and the cold war aspect is well appreciated in London. Whatever decisions are taken by Her Majesty's Government after the World Bank Mission has reported, the negotiations with Gold Coast Ministers must be so handled as to reduce to the minimum the prospect of turning Gold Coast hopes to Russia. Whether or not the Russians were seriously inclined to respond to any soundings – and this does not seem very likely, for they would probably prefer less costly methods of penetrating West Africa – there might be opportunities for establishing quite a strong position merely in a long drawn-out process of discussion.

16. If the Project is pursued fairly rapidly, all the Gold Coast capital resources, actual and potential, will have to be directed into it and there cannot possibly be any Government resources left for other new development or additional welfare services. But this does not mean that there would not be a need for some other new development expenditure. It would, indeed, probably be necessary for political stability. The Volta River Preparatory Commission for its part has recognised that a certain amount of such additional development work could reasonably be demanded by public opinion and would be likely to be within the capacity of the country's manpower resources.

17. If the Project had to be put into cold storage or reconsidered with a view to modification of the plans, some Gold Coast funds would theoretically be freed for development and welfare work. But they could not prudently be used unless and until the Project was killed stone dead. As long as it is on the horizon, the remaining disposable Gold Coast financial reserves must be held for the Government's share. Nor, if they could be made available for other development, would they last for long: the amount that would be released is about £15 million. The contingency does not, therefore, seem to justify postponement of consideration of the problem of how the Gold Coast is to continue a reasonable amount of other development in 1957-8. If the Project were suspended indefinitely, it would become of great political importance to have some other tangible form of practical co-operation between the Gold Coast and the West in the field of development. An offer of help in other forms of development might offset the worst effects of a withdrawal on the V.R.P.

18. At the Gold Coast end a main need seems to be to draw up new development plans of modest dimensions on a long-term basis. Such planning could be rendered difficult, apart from V.R.P. uncertainties, by the fluctuations of the price of cocoa, if the Gold Coast were to place too great a reliance on revenue to be derived from cocoa for balancing its budget. It is conceivable, though, I understand, hardly worth regarding as a practical contingency, that the cocoa price might again at some future date soar to a level that would again yield the Gold Coast Government a large windfall of capital for development: but a scheme of assistance could presumably be so devised as to give some assured floor to development funds, while reducing external contributions in the event of increased Gold Coast capacity to pay.

### *Part III: Suggested action*

19. If the Russian opportunities are to be reduced and the dangers confined within reasonable limits, it is desirable that:—

- (1) the Gold Coast Government should reach some views, however tentative, about its future needs for development in advance of independence;
- (2) if external assistance is required, Western Governments should have an opportunity to encourage the Gold Coast Government to hope for some Western assistance in meeting the needs before the Russians can take any initiative.

In the face of such encouragement Ministers would not be likely to respond in any precipitate way to Soviet baits.

20. There is a difficulty of timing. In the ordinary course Ministers seem likely for political reasons to be reluctant to address themselves in any systematic way to the problem of future development and the allocation of their capital resources. Even if they desired at this stage to draw up a competent plan for, say, the next five years, the Government lacks a suitable administrative organ for the purpose and has no reserves of competent staff on which to draw to create one. Hence a vicious circle: Western Governments cannot form clear views on the extent of the need for future aid until the Gold Coast has formulated its own financial plans: but the Gold Coast Government would not, without some external prompting and a reasonable hope of aid, be likely to see any necessity to tackle its plans effectively and comprehensively, nor, indeed would it be able to do so. There is no prospect of headway before independence and Russian offers might by then already have been dangled before them.

21. It therefore seems desirable that, as a transitional measure, the due procedure in the case of a territory at the Gold Coast stage of constitutional development should be short-circuited and that H.M.G. should themselves reach a provisional view as soon as possible, without waiting for action by Gold Coast Ministers, as to whether or not some assistance is likely to be required by the Gold Coast after independence. Ample information is available in the form of assessments drawn up in Accra at the official level.

22. If the provisional conclusion is that there will be a requirement of aid, it would be desirable to go on forthwith to consider tentatively the forms, possible sources and framework of assistance. It would be for consideration whether the Americans should be brought in at this stage. As soon as provisional agreement had been reached on the possibilities, suitable unobtrusive action could be taken to encourage Gold Coast Ministers to expedite their own consideration of future development problems. The main object would probably be achieved if Ministers had made some exploratory move, however tentative, before independence and had received a reply that was sympathetic and encouraging in tone, even if it was in general and non-committal terms.

23. It is important that the initiative should be regarded by Gold Coast Ministers as coming from themselves without any appearance of prompting, for we do not want to thrust aid down the Gold Coast's throat; and the first object is to expedite the Government's formulation in outline of Gold Coast needs. Ministers would require pressure from their advisers to agree to the need for a competent plan, to draw the correct deductions and to take soundings abroad. They will be disinclined to make any official moves towards the West just at the time that the Government is assuming full responsibility for the country's affairs. Also the administrative problem of drafting a plan would have to be solved (see paragraph 20 above). But it should be possible to find a way round these difficulties. The doubts and objections of Ministers might defer, as so often in the past, to confidence in the Governor and respect for his advice. So far as the work of preparation of an outline plan is concerned, Ministers' inhibitions will not be so strong towards international organisations, and a possible way of providing help in the production of a plan, without offending their susceptibilities, might be for them to enlist the aid of the International Bank, by asking the Bank to add to the terms of reference of the Mission, due to visit the Gold Coast in the autumn, the function of commenting on the Gold Coast's general development requirements. This would presumably involve some addition to the Bank's team, but, as seen from here, it would be well worth while.

24. The American attitude would presumably be decisive, so far as help in the supply of capital is concerned, but it seems likely to be sympathetic. The United States Government has in the past authorised a certain amount of economic assistance to the Gold Coast, e.g. about £500,000 in 1954-5, and Mr. George Allen, Assistant Under Secretary of State in the State Department in charge of Middle East and African Affairs, showed himself, when he recently visited Accra, to be distinctly sympathetic towards Gold Coast needs: he was alive to the importance of giving reasonable support to the young country in its early years, and he referred publicly to the United States' security interest in Africa. The possibility of U.S. assistance on a more substantial scale than in the past need not, it seems, be excluded.

25. The financial burden of a U.K. contribution, in technical assistance or otherwise, to the reasonable needs of the Gold Coast for development and welfare services ought not to be disproportionate to that of aid schemes elsewhere. It may be recalled that between now and independence, Her Majesty's Government will be relieved of financial assistance to the Gold Coast at the rate of over £2,000,000 per annum, *viz.* their share of the cost of financing the Gold Coast Military Forces and a grant under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts.

26. If a scheme of aid eventually materialises, it would possible help to commend it to the Gold Coast if other Commonwealth countries could in due course be associated with it. A Canadian contribution, however modest, would be politically useful. There might be political advantage in bringing in the Government of India: it would probably help to direct the active Indian interest in the country into responsible channels. India will certainly play a hand here, and any forum in which she can act as a partner with the U.K. in relations with the Gold Coast, and learn the real nature of African problems, will be valuable. She can ill afford to spare competent personnel, but for the form's sake she might perhaps make some sacrifice.

27. Action is needed also in the private sector to counter the risk of Soviet penetration by satellite participation in new manufacturing industries. The dangers can be effectively reduced only if Ministers decide to prevent penetration on security grounds. The chances of their taking such a decision seem to be poor, unless they are satisfied with the general attitude of overseas business interests here, as regards not only existing commercial and industrial activities, but also development of new manufacture.

28. The two aspects are separate. Established British firms must continue to adapt their outlook and methods to disarm the prejudices formed in the past. They must take a positive attitude in recognition of African aspirations. The United Africa Company has given an exemplary lead, but some major British interests are clumsy and rigid in their relations with African opinion. Thanks to the efforts of the Governor in recent years, progress is being made. The main official responsibility for continuing the work will devolve on future United Kingdom representation here, but C.R.O. and Board of Trade support will be required. The newly established commercial association founded behind the front of the West African Committee will, it is hoped, make a contribution. If it develops on constructive and not merely defensive lines, it can perform a useful function in impressing on the boards of the established commercial firms the importance of a positive attitude.

29. The problem of new enterprise in the field of manufacture is not an easy matter. The F.B.I. Mission last year concluded that the Gold Coast offered few attractive possibilities for secondary industry, in spite of the facilities offered by the Government to attract outside capital, and its assurances of fair treatment. It is tempting to take the line – a sound enough one on a short-term view – that British firms should go slow until the independent government has shown its mettle. But on a longer view we cannot afford to mark time. Even though the openings are few, it is important that as many as possible should be taken in the period immediately ahead; for this is the crucial time when Ministers, if dissatisfied, will be most likely to discount security considerations. The F.B.I. no doubt have means of influencing potential manufacturers, and it is suggested that the point of timing should be brought confidentially to the notice of the Federation. If there is anything that they

can do quickly to offset the discouraging effect last year of the published report of their Mission and to stimulate new enterprise, this would be helpful. Ventures need not necessarily be on a large scale: pilot plants and small-scale factories or assembly points will be appreciated by Ministers. The more exploratory visits can be encouraged the better: and visits of representatives of companies interested in a very wide range of products, such as I.C.I., might reveal possibilities not so far considered. When such firms are sending representatives to explore the larger field of Nigeria, perhaps they might be encouraged by the F.B.I. to visit the Gold Coast as well. Contact in London with the Commonwealth Development Finance Corporation might also be helpful. At the instance of the Governor, the Corporation is now showing an interest in the Gold Coast, and this should not be allowed to flag. It is to be hoped that the West African Committee will be a useful influence in this field also on the policies of established firms. The latter command ample capital and in defence of their own positions would be well advised, whether jointly or singly, to promote further manufacture, even though the prospective profits may not be particularly attractive. (Some concerted effort in this direction may, moreover, be well worth while *vis-à-vis* future American efforts to displace British interests here.) It would, incidentally, help to disarm local suspicions of the new Association, if it appears to be able to make a contribution in expansion of secondary industry.

30. Any provisional views will have to be reconsidered next month after the Gold Coast general election. If the present Government failed to obtain a reasonable majority, the time-table of Independence would be affected and the time factor might become less important. But on the basis of the present target date, there is no time to lose, and it would be helpful if an agreed view on the economic prospects, the risks of attempted Soviet penetration and proposals for suitable action could now be reached, on a provisional basis, on the hypothesis of the Government's return to office.

31. It will not, I hope, be thought necessary to hold up early consideration of the Gold Coast problem for reasons relating to Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Action here must have eventual repercussions elsewhere in West Africa, but the danger point is near and it would confuse the issue to treat the whole region comprehensively. Those territories for whose external relations metropolitan countries are likely to remain for some time responsible do not present a problem of comparable urgency. Moreover, Nigeria will perhaps continue for some time to receive substantial aid under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. The experience gained in tackling the problem in the relatively favourable conditions of the Gold Coast will, however, be useful to draw on when other African territories are exposed to the same risks.

32. If the West – and H.M.G. must remain responsible for some time for giving a lead to her Western partners – pursues sound policies, there is a good prospect that relations will develop on sound and healthy lines. In such circumstances the Russian virus could not cause lasting or dangerous disease. But it would be a delusion to suppose that we have a smooth passage ahead, which will cause for no exertion. We shall not only have to show friendliness, patience and self-restraint: we must also be prepared to give a helping hand, when required, to meet the country's essential needs; in the transitional stages to take the initiative behind the scenes in foreseeing her needs; and to make gestures of helpfulness to impress public opinion. The more disagreeable contingencies discussed above will become of practical weight only if the West fails: and there is a fair chance of avoiding failure, if we are ready to move quickly and respond promptly to any Gold Coast openings in the early days of

independence. The commendable record of Gold Coast Ministers during their six years of office in the economic field gives grounds for hope that carefully directed effort by the West will not be wasted.

*Summary of suggestions*

33. (1) The Gold Coast should be added to the list of countries requiring counteraction against Soviet penetration.
- (2) A provisional assessment should be made of the Gold Coast Government's capacity to undertake a reasonable amount of expenditure on "ordinary" development (i.e. other than the Volta River Project) after independence.
- (3) If external assistance appears to be required for the country's reasonable development needs, and if there is little prospect of the launching of the Volta River Project next year,
- (i) H.M.G. should be prepared in principle to consider a request from the Gold Coast Government for assistance for other development after independence, within a suitable international framework:
  - (ii) the Gold Coast authorities should be stimulated unobtrusively to draw up plans for future development on a scale of reasonable needs and to raise the question of possible external assistance if this is required for fulfilment of the plans:
  - (iii) steps should be taken behind the scenes to encourage the Gold Coast Government to seek some external assistance in the preparation of their future development plans, e.g. under the auspices of the International Bank.
- (4) The cold war aspects of the Volta River Project should be given considerable weight in determining the methods of handling of future negotiations with the Gold Coast Government.
- (5) British commercial interests should be encouraged to adapt their outlook and methods and to undertake additional manufacture in the Gold Coast.

APPENDIX A: TRENDS IN THE GOLD COAST ECONOMY

The Gold Coast economy is solidly based in the production for export of primary commodities likely to remain in strong demand for the foreseeable future. It is subject to wide fluctuations from the extreme variations in the price of cocoa, which represents over two-thirds of the value of exports in an average year. If the Volta River Project is approved, a foundation will be laid for a substantial eventual general expansion of the economy. If the Project is not approved, it is difficult to see how there can be any significant expansion, and there may be a decline in the long run.

2. For funds for development the country has been dependent mainly on revenue from export duty on cocoa, and in the years of cocoa boom, 1952-1955, very large sums became available for development. These were spent principally on non-revenue producing services, e.g. for health and education. This "development" expenditure has left behind it a heavy liability for recurrent expenditure on staff, maintenance, etc., and this now exhausts the available cocoa export duty revenue. As a result there is no longer any surplus of revenue for further development and welfare purposes, nor does any such surplus of revenue at present seem likely to recur. On the contrary, expenditure from past commitments is continuing to rise

and could outstrip revenue in 1956–7 unless the Government is prepared to take some remedial measures. It is an open question whether Ministers will be able to bring themselves to take the necessary steps at this particular political juncture. If retrenchment is not undertaken and a halt called to new commitments, the gap between revenue and expenditure will continue to widen for several years.

3. In the years of cocoa boom, 1952 – 1955, a large part of the revenue windfall accruing to the Gold Coast Government was prudently devoted to building up capital reserves. It has unfortunately already become necessary in 1955 – 1956 to draw fairly heavily on them to balance the budget. The remaining resources appear to stand at a very satisfactory level viz:

	<i>£ millions (approx)</i>
Government Reserves	70
Currency Reserves	41
Cocoa Marketing Board Reserve	63

But account has to be taken of very large commitments to complete projects in hand, and the funds that can be regarded for practical purposes as available for disposal for new development are of the order of only £15 million. If the Volta River Project is approved, all available reserves will be required for the Gold Coast contribution.

4. The trend can best be illustrated by comparing “net revenue”, i.e. revenue after deduction of the yield from cocoa duties, with “net expenditure”, i.e. expenditure other than for “development”:-

	<i>£ millions</i>			
	<i>1949–50</i>	<i>1952–53</i>	<i>1955–56</i>	<i>1956–57</i>
Net revenue	14.0	22.8	29.1	29.5
Net expenditure	<u>11.1</u>	<u>21.6</u>	<u>35.0</u>	<u>40.9</u>
Surplus or deficit	+ 2.9	+ 1.2	– 5.9	– 11.4

5. The Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister in an assessment of the 20th June, 1956, drew the Prime Minister’s attention to the fact that the position in regard to Gold Coast financial reserves had undergone a fundamental change in the last six months. He stated that he estimated that no money could in future be made available from Gold Coast resources for development, or for new education, health or welfare services, unless there was substantial retrenchment, and he doubted whether any loans from abroad for such purposes could be serviced or redeemed. He expressed the view that these general conclusions would apply even if, contrary to his expectation, the price of cocoa rose again substantially. There is in fact very little prospect of retrenchment on such a scale as to yield revenue for development purposes.

**239** DO 35/6178, no 8

18 July 1956

[Future of the Gold Coast]: letter (reply) from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Lord Home on the stability of the Gold Coast

My dear Alick [sic]

John Hare has shown me your letter of the 11th July<sup>1</sup> about the position in the Gold

<sup>1</sup> See 237.

Coast. I have seen Cumming-Bruce's personal message of the 27th June<sup>2</sup> and Vile's letter of the 5th July to Hadow.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear to all of us that there are disturbing features about political life in the Gold Coast – and many of these have naturally been accentuated as a result of the tension which has inevitably accompanied the present election. I agree that we shall need an assessment of the position as soon as the election is over – it takes place on the 17th July. The Governor is certain to report fully on this and he will also be replying to Vile's letter to Hadow of the 5th July, which I backed with a personal telegram from myself. We will of course see that you get copies of this reply and of any reports on the Elections and their results and if there are then any gaps in our knowledge we will ask the Governor to fill them up.

We have sent the Governor a copy of the article in the "Observer" to which you referred and have asked for his comments on it. We will send these on to you as well.<sup>4</sup>

Yours ever  
Alan

<sup>2</sup> See 232.

<sup>3</sup> See 235.

<sup>4</sup> A leading article about the Gold Coast in *The Observer* on 8 July, believed by Arden-Clarke to have been the outcome of the discussions (see 235) between Mercer and Colin Legum, *The Observer's* Africa correspondent, urged that steps should be taken 'to prevent this liberal experiment from being discredited'. The article suggested that public opinion in the Gold Coast would react strongly against the CPP government when the report of the Jibowu Commission on the Cocoa Purchasing Company was published. The article also suggested that the British government should insist on the creation of a 'widely representative Constituent Assembly' in the Gold Coast. In a tel to Lennox-Boyd, Arden-Clarke rejected both suggestions. On the first he argued that the CPP victory at the election (the result is recorded in 248, paras 8–9) made it improbable that the Commission's report when published would have 'any noticeably greater effect' on public opinion in the Gold Coast. On the second, he argued that insistence on a constituent assembly was 'unrealistic'; such a step 'would be regarded, not unreasonably, by Ministers and a large part of the population of the Gold Coast as a breach of faith'. Angered by the implicit doubts which had been expressed about his judgment, Arden-Clarke ended his tel with the comment: 'I shall of course persist in my endeavour "to prevent this liberal experiment from being discredited"' (DO 35/6178, no 10B, Arden-Clarke to Lennox-Boyd, inward tel no 32, 22 July 1956).

**240** DO 35/6178, no 17A

21 July 1956

[The future of the Gold Coast]: letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to Sir G Laithwaite on prospects following the general election. *Minutes* by Laithwaite and Lord Home

The general election has now confirmed the prospect of the transfer of power in a matter of months.<sup>1</sup> From the Commonwealth Relations Office point of view it is at any rate satisfactory to have a clear-cut result, in spite of the rather disappointing failure to produce an Opposition strong enough to frighten the Government. There remain plenty of problems here. The Ashanti and Northern leaders, though confronted with the unpalatable surprise of a very large body of support for the

<sup>1</sup> The CPP victory at the election is recorded in 248, paras 8–9.

C.P.P. in their own regions, must be considering whether or not now to resort to violence. Their dismay is enhanced by the failure of the combined Opposition to muster a third of the seats: for such safeguards as there are in the draft constitution could be removed after independence by a two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly. But the authorities are pretty confident of their capacity to keep disorder within bounds. On the C.P.P. side the party is confirmed in its previous impatience of opposition and likely to suffer badly from ὑβρις<sup>2</sup>: and this bodes ill for domestic administration. But there has never been much hope of tolerance in an independent Gold Coast. If Nkrumah and his main associates were now murdered a rather puzzling situation would be created, but the N.L.M. have shown little skill as conspirators, and the C.P.P. leaders will take no chances.

2. The Colonial Office have just woken up to the (locally) well-known fact that Nkrumah and his main lieutenants have misappropriated public funds<sup>3</sup> and have connived at, and possibly organised, the murder of opponents.<sup>4</sup> They are professing to be much concerned. This is rather absurd at this stage of proceedings. Admittedly Arden-Clarke keeps them starved of intelligence: and he is rather naturally unable to realise the extent to which Nkrumah is double faced and has shaped his behaviour deliberately to create a good impression: and as Governor he has had a duty to emphasise the hopeful side of the picture. But ministerial corruption has long been common knowledge and the West African experts in the C.O. make annual liaison visits here for a month or so. The comforting myth that the Gold Coast was likely to be a well-behaved child that would be a credit to its parent has always, as you know, seemed to me to bear little relation to facts. The Government is in the hands of knaves. As African rogues go, they are not very bad ones: they have their saving graces: and it would probably be impossible to muster a dozen honest men in politics to replace them. The practical question now is not whether they are good or bad, but whether we can maintain reasonable working relations with them.

3. On this fundamental question greater familiarity has, in the last six months, made me rather more hopeful about the future. At first the shock of the immaturity and questionable characters of the political leaders, and the absence of qualified African officials to take over from the retiring expatriates, made it difficult to see the reassuring features of the scene. The main asset is the good humoured and easy going outlook of the African: with time, careful handling and extreme patience, it should be possible to lead him to recognize where the country's interests lie: and these fortunately coincide with our own. But it will be uphill work over a long period, in which we shall have to take a lot of trouble and be prepared to go to some expense. We cannot rest on our colonial laurels and leave the young buck to go his own way. In India, Pakistan and Ceylon the administrations were in responsible hands and we could wait and see. Here the impulsiveness, venality and ignorance of Ministers make their actions highly unpredictable and add up to a large measure of irresponsibility, and we must, so far as possible, take steps to safeguard our position.

<sup>2</sup> Classical Greek, inserted in manuscript in the original by Cumming-Bruce, meaning 'hubris' – overweening pride.

<sup>3</sup> A reference to the misuse of Cocoa Purchasing Company funds by the CPP government which led to the establishment of the Jibowu Commission.

<sup>4</sup> There is no firm evidence which suggests that the CPP had either connived at or organised the murder of its opponents at this stage. The allegations are investigated in 244.

Unless we succeed in establishing our own influence more firmly, Ministers will be easy game for unscrupulous foreigners, playing up with flattery, gifts and promises, served in a congenial atmosphere of anti-Colonial hymn singing. The main question is how much time there will be for salutary Commonwealth influences to work before the Gold Coast has entrenched herself amongst disreputable friends elsewhere.

4. We have, therefore, a race ahead in the next two or three years. If we win, the Gold Coast may become a valuable help to us elsewhere in Africa. I am convinced that we cannot be sure of winning. And if we lose, the Gold Coast might be a major anti-Colonialist nuisance.

5. And the economic effects of failure to establish a sound relationship in the first few years would probably be worse than the political. The Gold Coast is a major asset to the sterling area from her exports of some £50 million worth of primary products to the hard currency world, and she retains large balances in London. Our export trade is also very large indeed. We need not at this stage conjure up the hideous spectre of a threat from the Gold Coast to leave the sterling area, but, if our relations go wrong, great difficulties could easily develop fast.

6. I have just sent off to you some suggestions for economic action to smooth the path of our relations, both political and economic, in the first year or two. I fear my letter is long and the enclosed memorandum even longer:<sup>5</sup> and the main proposal, for contingent approval of the principle of future aid for the Gold Coast, will obviously not be relished in the Treasury. The temptation to refrain from facing the questions at all until after decisions on the Volta River Project is strong: but if, as seems from here to be likely, a start on the Project is now receding, it will be extremely difficult for us to start the new relationship healthily, unless the West is seen on independence to have something new to offer in the way of solid material advantage. If we (with the United States) cannot hold out to the Gold Coast on independence a hope of material gain from good behaviour, we shall lose ground, perhaps faster than we can ever recapture. Nkrumah is already discounting the chances of the Volta River Project, and we must let him believe that there are other Western carrots worth chasing. The steadying factor in his policy so far has been the subordination of all inclinations to the single object of attaining independence. In the long run domestic difficulties may induce restraint both at home and abroad. But for the first few years we must in our own interests provide a new inducement to maintain good relations with us.

7. I fear that the attitude of the Treasury may be coloured by the misleading assessment of the Gold Coast, circulated by the C.O. as a brief for the Prime Ministers' Meeting, on which I have written to Ian MacLennan.<sup>6</sup> I very much hope, therefore, that you will feel able to obtain a due hearing on questions of future economic policy for the C.R.O. who, after all, have got to play the hand in a matter of months now. I do not suppose that there is anything that can be done *vis-à-vis* other Departments interested in future Gold Coast relations to counter any complacency on future trends that may have been engendered in high places by the brief: I recognise that this is a delicate matter! But the United Kingdom press has lately been

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<sup>5</sup> The memo is reproduced in this collection as the enclosure to 238. The letter, dated 18 July 1956, which was sent with it is not printed.

<sup>6</sup> See 233.

taking a less starry eyed view of the Gold Coast scene, and I don't suppose Ministers harbour many illusions.

8. I have, as you know, had doubts in the past about the value of keeping this C.R.O. post alive for so long, in the face of the uncertainty of timing of the transfer. The conditions at this end have not been easy, and in some ways they have been frustrating. Arden-Clarke, although he could not have been more friendly or done more to make life as pleasant as possible for us both, has, like the Colonial Office, never had any idea how far reaching the results of independence must be for H.M.G.: and he cannot comprehend that the conduct of our relations in the new era requires a different attitude of mind, a new set of tools, and a very much closer working relationship between Whitehall and United Kingdom representation than has been the practice in West African dependencies. The days when Governors on the Guinea Coast lived in slave castles, and did not correspond with the Colonial Office for six months at a time, seem very close here. This has frankly made the job an awkward one. If I had done as much as I should have liked in some directions, I should have had to ignore the Governor's views: and I determined at the outset to maintain harmonious relations with him at all costs; for in West Africa no matter remains withdrawn for long from public gossip, and it would have been damaging politically, apart from other considerations, for a confused story of alleged differences between the C.O. and C.R.O. to have got around. Inhibitions of this kind have limited the amount of work that could be done in certain respects.

9. But now that the transfer is likely to come quickly, I am quite clear that the C.R.O. effort has been well worthwhile. Indeed, now that I am fairly familiar with the very peculiar circumstances of this African society, I think that it would have been difficult for our Mission to have established itself effectively and avoided serious pit falls without a very lengthy warming up period: for it takes a long time to penetrate beneath the surface here. The Gold Coast boat will have no keel, so the High Commission will have to exercise individual judgment from the start to make rapid adjustments to unpredictable swerves. Unless the adjustments are done skilfully, the boat might easily be carried away on to the rocks in the first few years of independence. With two years' experience behind us, I think we will be able to play our part.

#### Minutes on 240

##### *Secretary of State*

I attach two letters from Mr. Cumming-Bruce dated 21st and 18th July about the Gold Coast situation.

2. The letter of 21st July is an amusing if depressing assessment of the position, written with great frankness. It is personal and has not been copied to the Colonial Office. You are already alive to the darker aspects of Gold Coast politics. (And in this connection we have obtained from the Colonial Office some further detail about the facts that are likely to come out of the Cocoa Inquiry).

3. The second letter develops the case for active financial interest by this country in the Gold Coast after independence with a view to countering possible Soviet intrusions there. This has been under discussion with the Colonial Office but no very great advance has so far resulted.

4. My comments are as follows.

5. So far as the somewhat 18th century make-up of Gold Coast politics is concerned I think we shall just have to make the best of it. There is a real risk of scandals and some consequent discrediting of Commonwealth membership and you have indicated your own uneasiness about that in the recent private letter to Mr. Hare to which the Colonial Secretary sent an answer.<sup>7</sup> But unless something goes badly wrong between now and next March I see nothing for it but to take our chance.

6. As regards Mr. Cumming-Bruce's letter of 18th July I entirely agree with respect that we ought in wisdom to continue to do what we can to tie in the independent Gold Coast with this country by being as generous as may be practicable over technical help and other financial assistance. I am not so much worried about a possible Soviet economic offensive. But the Gold Coast might well be a tempting place for an extension of the Russian endeavours that have caused us so much embarrassment in the Middle Eastern area. And any economic vacuum is going to be filled from outside. India, the next most likely candidate and perhaps the candidate most likely to appeal to the Gold Coast, will be so short of money and technical resources herself if she is to get on with her five-year plan that she is not likely to be an active competitor.

7. On the other hand, there are very definite limits to what we can make available. And since these letters were written the Suez Canal incident and the Indonesian repudiation of their debt to Holland seem to me likely not only to dry up the flow of private investment in under-developed countries which are not too stable politically but also to make the World Bank very much more cautious in committing itself to assistance unless it is completely assured of political stability and of the proper use of the funds which it may put up. It is not, therefore, going to be all that simple to act as Mr. Cumming-Bruce would wish.

8. Again, the future of the Volta Scheme is by no means assured (admittedly if the very large investment, both by the Bank, by this country and by private individuals, which would be necessary for the success of that Scheme were made that would be an ample answer. But we cannot be certain that it will).

9. Further Mr. Cumming-Bruce rightly points to the fact that the Gold Coast may in any event be running into a period of greater shortness of money (and it will always be to some extent at the mercy of the price of cocoa). Independence itself will make heavy demands on its resources – other Commonwealth countries have found the burden heavy of maintaining legations etc., overseas and of representation. And (I am investigating this with the Colonial Office) there may well have to be commitments by the Gold Coast designed to earmark or make available funds to service pensionary and other outstanding liabilities which the new Commonwealth country will take over which will have the effect of making supply distinctly tight for quite a long time to come.

10. I do not see why we should not give quite an amount of help on lines corresponding to the Colombo Plan (though it must be remembered that the Colombo Plan operates in respect only of Asian countries and that its extension to Africa as such might raise difficult questions which will take time to settle) and I

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<sup>7</sup> See 237 and 239.

would hope too that it would be possible for H.M.G. if the H.M.O.C.S. Scheme is extended to the Gold Coast (I think it will be almost essential to extend it both to the Gold Coast and to Malaya despite the Treasury doubts) to carry some of the liability in respect of staff loaned under the Scheme. But I feel a real doubt as to our prospects of making any large sums of money available whatever the political risks involved in not doing so.

J.G.L.  
13.8.56

A depressing prospect. I would like to consult with you as to the next move. The Treasury should, I think, be warned & they won't like it at all.

H.  
15.8.56

**241** CO 554/1311, no 12 27 July 1956  
[Cocoa Purchasing Company]: outward unnumbered telegram from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke pressing for a response from the Gold Coast government to the report of the Jibowu Commission

Cocoa Purchasing Company Commission Report.

I was on the point of telling you in reply to your secret telegram no. 375 that if the Independence Resolution is passed on the 3rd August by a reasonable majority it is reasonably certain that Her Majesty's Government will then be ready to agree that the Prime Minister should announce on the 20th August that the 6th March, 1957, is the target date to which we are working for the grant of independence. I still hope that no needless difficulty will arise in following this procedure but I am deeply concerned about the strictures on the conduct of the Gold Coast Government in the Commission's Report and I am very anxious to have your views on how best we can handle this situation.

2. As you well know, I have taken a firm stand on the issue of corruption and the mis-use of public funds in the Eastern Region of Nigeria. It would therefore be particularly difficult, if not impossible, for me to appear to ignore similar considerations in the Gold Coast. It seems to me that at the very least I must have the assurance of the Gold Coast Government that they accept the recommendation made in the Commission's Report that the Loans Section of the Cocoa Purchasing Company should be wound up and a new Statutory Board formed to take over its Produce activities. I do not suppose that it would be possible to ask that the Minister most directly responsible, Gbedemah, should be removed from office, as apart from any other consideration there seems to be little doubt that the Prime Minister was fully aware of what was going on.

3. I do not wish to suggest that there should be any delay in putting the motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth to the Assembly, and if you so wish I will send you a non-Personal telegram to this effect. I am however anxious that you should discuss the situation created by the Commission's Report with the Prime Minister as soon as possible and I should therefore be very grateful to have as soon as possible your views on the action which Gold Coast Government could be

persuaded to take on this Report. It goes without saying, of course, that I regard it as most important that the Report should be published without delay, together with a Government statement on it.

4. Until we have settled the question of the action to be taken on the Report there would clearly be little point in the Prime Minister coming home in August. Apart from this I shall unfortunately be away myself from the 5th to at least the 22nd August, and possibly again until the middle part of September. I think, therefore, it is inevitable that we must settle these matters by correspondence. Once they are settled I should be delighted to see Dr. Nkrumah towards the end of September. As you and he know I have been wanting to meet him again for a long time and a visit by him at the end of September might well be very valuable.

**242** C0554/1311, no 14 1 Aug 1956  
[Cocoa Purchasing Company]: inward telegram (reply) no 34 from  
Sir Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the report of Jibowu  
Commission

Your secret and personal telegram WAF 238/162/01.<sup>1</sup>

Cocoa Purchasing Company: Commission's Report.

I have discussed with Prime Minister. First reaction to the report was a determination to denounce the Commission as biased and to refuse to publish the report. I have strongly urged upon him the necessity of early publication and for the Government to accept recommendations in the report that Loans Section concession to the Purchasing Company should be wound up and a new statutory board formed to take over its produce activities. He seemed to accept my argument on this. As to actual composition of the new statutory board it may be that the suggestion in the report will not be acceptable and some other formula such as nomination by regional assemblies may commend itself.

2. The removal of office of Gbedemah would not be entertained but there is now a reasonable prospect that the report will be published together with a statement by the Government. This statement would be drawn up with legal advice and would take the form of a defence of the Government's actions in matters discussed in the report. The statement while accepting the Commission's recommendations will probably intimate that the Government is not abandoning its policy of relieving agricultural indebtedness and will propose some more satisfactory agency for the purpose than Loans Section concession to the Purchasing Company. The preparation of such a statement will take a little time and as a result publication of report will not be immediate. I hope, however, to persuade the Prime Minister to implement the recommendations in the report before the report is published.

3. I now learn that a motion calling for Independence will probably be debated on Friday the 3rd. I have explained to the Prime Minister that you will not be available for a meeting with him until towards the end of September.

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<sup>1</sup> See 241.

**243** CO 554/1264, no E1

4 Aug 1956

[Governor-generalship]: letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to Sir G Laithwaite on the question of Sir C Arden-Clarke staying on as the first governor-general

[In a letter simply dated Aug 1956, Nkrumah wrote to Arden-Clarke: 'My colleagues and I are anxious that you should be here as Her Majesty's representative at the time of our Independence Celebrations and for a short time thereafter before you retire as you expressed your wish to do. We should therefore wish to advise Her Majesty to appoint you as the first Governor-General of Ghana for a period of about three months. We would then wish to advise Her Majesty to appoint some suitable person with the requisite experience from the United Kingdom. We have no particular person in mind and would be very grateful if some names of those regarded as suitable and available could be suggested to us for consideration' (CO 554/1264, no E2).]

Arden-Clarke has told me that Ministers have recently been discussing among themselves the subject of the first appointment of the office of Governor General. Nkrumah had told him informally that he would like to have a non-African as Governor General, and Ministers had spoken in a way that made clear that they hoped and expected that he would himself be prepared to carry on for a time.

Arden-Clarke said that he had, since his last talk with me on the subject, become increasingly impressed by the embarrassment that might arise, both for Ministers and for himself, if he remained on the scene after the transfer of power. The new régime would be an easier one with a new face at the top. He had developed a particular personal relationship with Ministers that could not persist without substantial modification after the surrender of the Governor's powers, and this might create embarrassment. Also Ministers would feel inhibited by his presence in Accra from pursuing policies of which he would be known to disapprove. He himself on his side would have difficulty in refraining from trying to exercise too much influence. His conclusion was that it would be best for him not to stay on after independence, or at any rate not for more than a month or so, with an absolute limit of three months if so long a period was desired.

I said that it was precisely in order to impose inhibitions in the minds of Ministers that a longer period than this seemed to me to be desirable. Of course, if a longer period would have an adverse effect on the wish of Ministers for a successor from the United Kingdom, there would be no point in his staying against his own inclinations: but there seemed to be no evidence of this at present. I therefore expressed the strong personal hope that he would reconsider his views. It did not seem to me that three months was a long enough period to have the steadying effect desirable – though it would be much better than nothing – for Ministers could bottle up any particularly irresponsible inclinations for so short a time: and what was wanted was that his personal influence and counsel might be brought to bear when they began to give rein to their less responsible impulses. No new personality could be expected to be able to make his influence felt to a significant extent for some time: and the first year of independence might well set the tone for the future.

So far as the personal side was concerned, I said that I quite appreciated that the role of Governor General would be uncongenial to him: but I said that I did not think that it would be quite as difficult as he supposed for him to refrain from trying to exercise undue influence. (I recognise that Arden-Clarke would find it highly

unpalatable to watch bad mistakes being made, but if he embarked on the new relationship he would see that it did not break down.) I added that it would make the establishment of the United Kingdom High Commissioner in the desired relationship with Ministers very much easier if he remained for at least six months. Arden-Clarke's main comment was that he thoroughly disliked hearing views so contrary to his own inclinations!

I told him of the views I had ventured to communicate to you privately about the qualities and experience that it would be desirable for a Governor General to have if he was to be an effective influence, and Arden-Clarke said that he agreed with those views. He said that, while he appreciated the great value that relevant experience in another Commonwealth country would be, he had himself doubted whether anyone suitable and likely to be able to be spared could be found with such a background: in the circumstances he had wondered whether a retired Admiral of genial personality might not be a possibility (he had a particular man in mind) and I gather from Nkrumah's entourage that this idea has been sown in the Prime Minister's mind and received not unfavourably. Incidentally he thinks that previous experience in Africa would be a handicap rather than a help.

What the above amounts to is that the chances of persuading Arden-Clarke to stay on for more than a very short time have declined. But he still has a fairly open mind and is prepared to reconsider his attitude. I still consider that, if he could be prevailed upon to stay for a year, this would have more effect than anything else in stopping the Government from going off the rails in the first giddy consciousness of their ability to do as they like.

There have, indeed, been signs that Nkrumah himself realises that Arden-Clarke's presence here after independence would not be without its awkward side for the Government; for he visualises the office of Governor General almost entirely in terms of a ceremonial figurehead having little or no concern with policy; and he and his colleagues are looking forward ardently to having a free hand. But I do not think that any doubts on this score would be allowed to come to the surface if it was made clear to him that Arden-Clarke would be positively willing to stay for a specified term. Nkrumah's own mind is still more or less open on the subject and his personal regard for the Governor would be likely to outweigh other considerations if he thought that Arden-Clarke himself would like to continue. Hitherto Arden-Clarke has given Nkrumah to understand that he would prefer to go as soon as possible after independence, so the personal factor at present probably influences Nkrumah in the direction of a change immediately after the transfer rather than in the other direction: for he would suppose that this would be in accordance with the Governor's inclinations.

When the matter is broached with Nkrumah, – and I suppose that, if he visits London in the next couple of months, that would be a natural occasion – it would be preferable, if possible, to deal with the length of any stay by Arden-Clarke after independence and the arrangements for a successor as a single problem. For in the months between independence and the departure of Arden-Clarke, Nkrumah might change his mind and wish to ask for an African successor; if the arrangements for a successor were more or less settled, this danger would be eliminated.

I have sent a copy of this letter to Christopher Eastwood on a personal basis.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Arden-Clarke served as Ghana's first governor-general between Mar and May 1957. He was succeeded by Lord Listowel who served until 1960. Sir Ian MacLennan (KCMG 1957) of the CRO was the first UK high commissioner in Ghana between Mar 1957 and Sept 1959.

**244** DO 35/6178, no 4

[Aug 1956]

**[Ministerial corruption]: report of the Gold Coast Local Intelligence Committee on the allegations made by T M Kodwo Mercer**

His Excellency directed that the Acting Secretary to the Governor, The Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, the Security Liaison Officer and the Officer i/c Special Branch all of whom are members of the Local Intelligence Committee, should consider the contents of Mr. Vile's letter<sup>1</sup> and set out their assessment of the probable value of the allegations made by Mr. Mercer, and their views on the political effect of these developments. These are set out below.

*Use of violence*

(a) *That Nkrumah has personally controlled the use of violence by the C.P.P.*

2. Nkrumah is the undisputed leader of the party and he does not willingly permit any Party activity without his knowledge and concurrence. There is no doubt that the Party has used violent methods which have been organised from Headquarters in Accra and it is, therefore, reasonably certain that Nkrumah has been aware of a substantial part of what has been done and has concurred, although many violent acts must have been planned without his knowledge.

3. On the 9th October, 1954, E.Y. Baffoe, Chief Propaganda Secretary of the N.L.M., was stabbed to death by Twumasi Ankrah<sup>2</sup> in Kumasi. At the time there was a strong suspicion that the murder had been planned in Accra. Baffoe had provided the N.L.M. with the details of C.P.C. cheques issued to C.P.P. supporters in Ashanti, and it is possible that the C.P.P. leaders were afraid that he would make further damaging disclosures on the basis of the knowledge which he had gained as an official of the C.P.C. and a member of the C.M.B. It was known that Twumasi Ankrah and Asamoah, the owner of the house in which Baffoe was murdered, and one of Baffoe's personal friends, were in Accra during the first week of the month and saw Nkrumah, Botsio and Kofi Baako<sup>3</sup> privately at C.P.P. Headquarters on the day before the murder.

4. After Twumasi Ankrah had been convicted of this murder and sentenced to death every effort was made to prevent his execution and he was, in fact, only executed on the order of the O.A.G. made in the face of the unanimous advice of the members of the Capital Cases Committee (composed of Ministers) that the sentence should be commuted.

5. In December, 1955, an ordinary citizen, whose integrity was not doubted, reported that he happened to be in the Ministry of Local Government when he overheard a conversation between Krobo Edusei,<sup>4</sup> A.R. Boakyee,<sup>5</sup> Ministerial Secretary, and prominent members of the C.P.P. organisation in the course of which there was discussion of a proposal to assassinate the Asantehene, Baffour Akoto, Professor Busia, Joe Appiah and A.R. Dennis.<sup>6</sup> From the conversation he gained the impression that these proposals were being discussed as a result of a directive from Gbedemah that resistance in Ashanti was to be liquidated.

<sup>1</sup> See 235.

<sup>2</sup> CPP propaganda secretary in Kumasi.

<sup>3</sup> Member of the CPP Central Committee.

<sup>4</sup> CPP member of Legislative Assembly for Sekyere East.

<sup>5</sup> CPP member of the Legislative Assembly for Amansie East. <sup>6</sup> Organising NLM secretary in the Colony.

6. Much of the violence which has occurred since the emergence of the N.L.M. has arisen from the activities of so called Action Groupers and Action Troopers. On a number of occasions the Governor's Advisory Committee has been invited to consider whether legislation should not be made prohibiting such quasi military organisations and the wearing of uniforms for political purposes, but on each the Advisory Committee has declined to take any action. On the last occasion when this proposal for legislation was officially raised by the Ministry concerned, the Prime Minister personally, in his capacity then as Minister responsible, prohibited any further action.

7. The Police officers in Ashanti have on several occasions expressed their belief that the violence in which C.P.P. members in Ashanti have indulged has been controlled from Accra.

8. Towards the end of 1955 the Attorney General, during a long discussion with the Prime Minister arising out of a visit to Ashanti, in the course of which he advocated peaceful means of settling the differences between the C.P.P. and the N.L.M., was told by the P.M. that, but for the presence of the British, the Prime Minister would have no difficulty or compunction in settling the issue "in the African way". The Prime Minister went on to say that if he, the Prime Minister, at any time had to vacate his Office he would raise [sic] the country and would adopt "positive action" to a far greater degree than that organised by him in 1950.

(b) *That Botsio has been threatened and is frightened lest violence should be used against him*

9. We do not believe this story. It is most unlikely that Botsio would be threatened, and he has shown no signs of being afraid. Botsio himself, after the last elections, said in conversation that the C.P.P. had found it necessary for prestige purposes to include a few "intellectuals" amongst its membership in the Assembly, but that he himself liked his "corner boys" because he could trust them.

(c) *List of persons to be liquidated*

10. Over the past two or three years there have been constant rumours that such a list existed, but the police have never been able to obtain evidence that this is so. In view of the background of the C.P.P. leaders, however, it is considered to be by no means improbable that such a list has been prepared, but we are not in a position to say whether there has ever been any serious intention to assassinate the Party's political opponents. There have from time to time been threats on party platforms that the C.P.P. would deal effectively and finally with its enemies after the transfer of power.

### *Corruption*

(a) *That the prime minister has been personally implicated in corrupt practices*

11. It is probable that Mercer is referring to corruption in connection with the use of C.P.C. funds. In the course of the recent C.P.C. Enquiry Nkrumah admitted that he was aware of the allegations of corrupt practices, but attempted to avoid responsibility by saying that he had referred these allegations to the Minister responsible. There is, however, good reason to believe that Nkrumah has, personally, indulged in practices which would be regarded as unethical in more civilized

countries. But the balance of opinion is that such practices were designed not so much for personal gain as to further the interests of the Party in whose cause he, as Life Chairman, is prepared to be completely unscrupulous.

12. One thoroughly unethical practice has been to place Party officials on the C.P.C. pay roll; these officials have thus received a regular income but their energies have been directed solely towards Party activities. The relationship between this practice and the leaders of the C.P.P. is established by evidence adduced before the Commission enquiring into the C.P.C. that much of its activities were closely directed by the Party Central Executive, of which Nkrumah is the Chairman.

13. There is a strong suspicion that the C.P.P. has financed its current electioneering campaign to a large extent from funds obtained in connection with a recent transaction by which the Industrial Development Corporation has purchased from Barakat a number of cinemas. The original purchase price was to have been £225,000 but the police had prior information from a reliable source that the price was likely to be increased by £50,000. The purchase price was in fact increased to £275,000, and Botsio, the Chairman of the Standing Development Committee, explained this increase to the Secretary for Development by saying that a foreign buyer was interested. On the 17th April Barakat paid cheques totalling £175,000 from the Industrial Development Corporation into his account, and on the same day withdrew two sums totalling £63,000. It had been generally believed that the C.P.P. did not have at its disposal the funds with which to conduct a country-wide election campaign but it has now bought thirty-one vehicles which are estimated to have cost some £20,000, and it is known to be spending money very freely as part of its campaign.

(b) *That Gbedemah is also deeply implicated in corrupt practices*

14. Gbedemah is the Minister of Finance and one of the three leading members of the Party Executive. He was formerly responsible for the Ministry which dealt with the affairs of the Cocoa Marketing Board and its subsidiary the Cocoa Purchasing Company. At least a substantial part of such corruption as has taken place could not have been practised without his knowledge and concurrence.

15. When Nkrumah was in prison in 1950 it was alleged that Gbedemah had stolen party funds exceeding £1,000. There was no prosecution because party members refused to provide the necessary evidence.

16. There has always been a conflict between Gbedemah and Botsio, who have competed for the position of Nkrumah's closest confidant and Gbedemah has, at times, looked like losing this struggle. He is a keen business man and it would not be surprising if, in view of the uncertainty of his position, he had attempted to put something aside for a possible rainy day. It is our view that Gbedemah would be implicated at the very least to the same degree as Nkrumah, and it is probable that he will have been more calculating than Nkrumah.

(c) *That Botsio is also involved although not so intimately as the other two ministers*

17. Again Botsio from the prominent position which he holds in the Central Councils of the Party must have known what was going on. He is Chairman of the Standing Development Committee and must accept some responsibility for any irregularities which may have occurred in connection with the purchase of cinemas

by the Industrial Development Corporation, since the Government has provided the funds for this transaction.

18. Allegations are at present being investigated that he has been involved in two attempts to bribe candidates in the forthcoming elections to withdraw their candidature. His own opponent has alleged that he was offered a bribe of £60 to withdraw his candidature and two C.P.P officials have been arrested as a result of this allegation.

19. There can be no doubt that Botsio is implicated in corrupt practices, but Mercer may well be correct in saying that he is not so deeply implicated as Nkrumah and Gbedemah.

(d) *That Nkrumah's sole aim is to achieve power without regard for anything else*

20. As we have said in paragraph 11 above we consider that Nkrumah would be completely unscrupulous in furthering the aims of the organisation of which he is the head. His unguarded statement to the Attorney General, to which reference is made in paragraph 8 above, indicates that he would not be afraid to resort once again to the use of country-wide violence but it is considered that he would only use such methods if there was no other way of achieving his objective. It is our opinion that if at any time Nkrumah's personal position, or that of his Party, was in jeopardy, he would resort to any lengths to defend himself.

(e) *That Nkrumah has deliberately engaged in a campaign of deceiving the Governor and H.M.G.*

21. In connection with his proposals for a Pan African Conference . . . and in his failure to give the Governor any information concerning the exchanges which are known to have taken place between the Gold Coast and the Russian Delegations in Monrovia on the occasion of President Tubman's<sup>7</sup> re-installation, he has not always been completely frank with the Governor, but it would be wrong to say more than this.

22. At the same time it is known that, when his colleagues at Party Headquarters were united in their suspicion of H.M.G. and the Governor with regard to the early grant of independence, he stood alone and defended the Governor, saying that while he might agree with their suspicions regarding H.M.G.'s motives, he had complete confidence in the Governor's good faith and was satisfied that he would do everything possible to arrange for the Gold Coast to become independent at the earliest possible moment.

23. It is considered that Nkrumah would be prepared to deceive the Governor if no other course of action were possible, but it would be a serious over-statement to say that he has indulged in a deliberate campaign of deception.

#### *Views on the political effect of these developments*

24. It is known that the Prime Minister intends to advise the Governor to terminate Mr. Mercer's appointment as soon as this can possibly be done.<sup>8</sup> If Mercer's appointment is terminated he might publish the evidence which he claims to have,

<sup>7</sup> President of Liberia.

<sup>8</sup> Mercer had already been dismissed by this time; see 235, note 1.

or he might place it in the hands of the Attorney General with a view to a prosecution being instituted.

25. The public already has before it the evidence which has been presented before the Commission of Enquiry into the C.P.C. and by that time it might have before it the Commission's report. It is thought that such persons as are prepared to believe in the dishonesty of the C.P.P. leaders will already have formed the conclusion that they are in fact dishonest. The C.P.P. answer to this is that, in such a large organisation as the C.P.P., it is only to be expected that a number of rogues will be found, and that the organisation as a whole cannot be blamed for the activities of a few of its members. Mercer's attack would of course be directed against the triumvirate, but the opponents of the C.P.P. are already convinced of the dishonesty of its leaders and such evidence as Mercer may be able to produce is unlikely to have much effect.

26. From Mr. Vile's letter, however, it would appear that Mercer does not contemplate such a course of action, but that he intends to make his evidence known to members of the C.P.P. organisation and, as a result, to persuade them to throw out their corrupt leaders. In our opinion any such attempt would stand not the slightest chance of success.

27. If Mercer placed his evidence in the hands of the Attorney General, and the C.P.P. leaders were convicted and went to gaol, the Party could be expected to show signs of disintegration. In these circumstances, which are unlikely to arise, the break-away clique to which Mercer refers might stand some chance of success if Mercer could overcome the unpopularity which would inevitably follow.

28. Mercer has claimed that there are a considerable number of honest men in the C.P.P. who share his view that the time has come to sweep away the bad elements in the Party and names, as prominent amongst them, Joe Manu and Kumah. Neither of these persons are prominent in national politics and, if Mercer has sought to impress Mr Vile by naming them, the importance of the other honest men is a matter for conjecture.

29. Little is known about Manu except that he appears to be a man of ideals and is an ardent critic of any corrupt practice. Kumah has for some years been a staunch member of the C.P.P. and is Vice President of the Sekondi/Takoradi Municipal Council. Some months ago the Party decided that he should not stand for re-election to this post and, when he was in fact re-elected, ordered him to stand down. He contested this directive and eventually the Party leaders had to give way. He was a prominent member of the old Ghana T.U.C. but was eventually expelled at the instance of the C.P.P. Subsequently he played a prominent part in the Sekondi/Takoradi Congress of Free Trade Unions which was formed in opposition to the attempt by the C.P.P. to gain political control of the T.U.C. Unless Mercer has support for his plan amongst Members of the Assembly and in the Central Committee of the Party it seems that he would have no hope whatsoever of success.

30. Mercer himself is a pillar of the Methodist Church and appears to be a sincere Christian. The overt record of his activities in connection with the C.P.C. shows an inclination towards integrity and courage. So far as is known, his integrity has never been challenged. He must have known that he was taking a considerable risk in giving the evidence which he gave before the C.P.C. Enquiry, and that he did in fact realise this is borne out by his request for police protection, which was made before

his arrival in the Gold Coast to give evidence. He obviously realises that he needs to protect himself and, during his stay in the Gold Coast, he handed out amongst his friends in the C.P.P. copies of letters which purported to show that he was sincerely trying to do a good job in the Gold Coast Commissioner's Office and was receiving little support from the Gold Coast Government. Owing to a mistake in the address it has come to our notice that a package containing a considerable number of apparently unimportant official documents was sent to Mercer in the Gold Coast through an N.L.M. supporter, who is known to have been a regular channel of information for that organisation.

31. It is difficult to understand why Mercer should have made Mr Vile the subject of these confidences. It is thought that Mercer must have apprehensions regarding his personal safety, as was evidenced by his request for police protection, and that he hopes by these means to ensure that if he comes to any harm the Colonial Office will know who is responsible. The possibility that he hoped to protect his position as Gold Coast Commissioner by letting it be known that he had these documents in his possession has been considered, but is not accepted.

32. While Mercer was in the Gold Coast during his recent visit he cannot have been *persona grata* with the C.P.P. leaders, but he was frequently congratulated on his courage in giving his evidence. It is likely that the persons with whom he had most contact were those who hoped that C.P.P. leaders against whom corruption has been alleged would be removed, and that because of this he formed a very false assessment of the support which an attempt to do this would command. None of us have more than a nodding acquaintance with Mercer but it is understood that he has more than his fair share of conceit; if this is so, the possibility that he would form a totally wrong impression in such circumstances is increased.

33. In the recent past we have on a number of occasions been told by individuals and organisations that they possess incontrovertible evidence against their opponents, but it has frequently happened that such evidence, when it has been produced, has proved to be of little or no value. The possibility that Mercer's evidence is worth far less than he thinks should not be overlooked.

34. In conclusion, we would not be surprised if we heard nothing more of this matter or if the evidence, when it was produced, proved to be insufficient to provide the basis on which a prosecution could be instituted and that its publication would add little to what is already known or generally suspected. On the other hand, it would be foolish to overlook the possibility that Mercer, in the days when he was trusted by the Party leaders, did succeed in obtaining evidence which he could now produce to prove that they had indulged in corrupt practices and had directed violence.

**245** CO 554/807

9 – 13 Aug 1956

[Jibowu Report]: minutes by R J Vile, W L Gorell Barnes, T B Williamson and Sir H Poynton on the implications of the report for the announcement of the date of Gold Coast independence

*Mr. Gorell Barnes*

*Sir H. Poynton*

In his telegram<sup>1</sup> on part "A" of WAF 238/162/01 the Secretary of State told Sir C. Arden-Clarke of his minimum requirements in respect of the handling by the Gold Coast Government of the Jibowu report on the Cocoa Purchasing Company. This report in brief describes the woeful corruption and mal-administration of the Company, its close control by the Central Committee of the C.P.P. and the condoning by Dr. Nkrumah and Mr. Gbedemah of these mal-practices.

The Secretary of State's minute of the 5th August was written after I had had a telephone discussion with the Governor but before the Secretary of State had seen the telegram at "H" opposite.<sup>2</sup> I discussed this telegram with the Minister of State on the 7th August and the Minister's view was that the assurances given by the Governor were so qualified as still to leave serious doubts in our minds. The Minister of State therefore considered that we ought if possible to bring further pressure to bear on Dr. Nkrumah before we declared the firm date for independence.

We are of course publicly committed on the subject of declaring a firm date. There is loose opposite a copy of the Secretary of State's letter to Dr. Nkrumah of the 4th April<sup>3</sup> in which the Secretary of State says that H.M.G. will be prepared to declare a firm date for the attainment of independence within the Commonwealth after a motion to this effect had been passed by a reasonable majority of the new Legislative Assembly. Last week such a motion was passed by 72 votes out of 104. The Opposition Parties boycotted the debate. We have told Dr. Nkrumah that a majority of between 10 and 20 would in our view be reasonable and he has of course achieved a majority greater than this.

The question which we now have to consider seems therefore to be whether we now wish to introduce a further condition which has to be satisfied before we declare the firm date (this will be the 6th March 1957). When the Secretary of State wrote his letter in April we knew that the Cocoa Purchasing Company was riddled with corruption and mal-administration but at that time we had no reason to believe that Dr. Nkrumah and Mr. Gbedemah were directly implicated. In other words we had little doubt that they shut their eyes to a fair amount of corruption in the Company but we were unaware of the extent to which they deliberately aided and abetted corruption primarily for the needs of their Party but in part for their personal ends as well. It is to my mind most difficult to accept the argument that in present circumstances there is nothing we can or should do about the report into the Cocoa Purchasing Company. On the other hand I do not think we could justify the deferment of Gold Coast independence on this score. I think therefore we must bring all possible pressure to bear on Dr. Nkrumah short of denying him the fulfilment of

<sup>1</sup> See 241.

<sup>2</sup> See 242.

<sup>3</sup> See 224.

the pledge given by the Secretary of State in April. I am sure we can rely on the Governor to keep Dr. Nkrumah up to the mark and I therefore suggest that we should now proceed as in the drafts opposite.

I think I should also make some observations on the possible repercussions of the action we take with Dr. Nkrumah on the action we may have to take in the Eastern Region of Nigeria when we have the report of the Tribunal set up to investigate Dr. Azikiwe's<sup>4</sup> connections with the African Continental Bank. There are I suggest substantial differences between the two African Ministers concerned. Dr. Nkrumah has shown himself to be reasonably competent and efficient over a wide range of internal affairs in the Gold Coast and we think there is still a good chance that he will continue to be competent and efficient after independence though no doubt he will afford himself the luxury of a number of unwise acts. We are therefore, I suggest, dealing with a political problem of a somewhat different order in that as far as Dr. Nkrumah is concerned we have not got a strong enough reason to put the clock back and we have a reasonable chance of granting independence gracefully, of preserving at least the good will which exists between the Gold Coast and the United Kingdom and of being able to say that the Gold Coast Government have published a report which is severely critical of them and that they have taken the necessary action to prevent the continuation of the abuses which formed the subject of the report. I cannot pretend that this is anywhere near a satisfactory situation but it is not wholly unsatisfactory. . . .

R.J.V.  
9.8.56.

*Sir H. Poynton*  
*Lord Lloyd*

. . . 2. There is one preliminary point which I should like to make before considering the substance of this matter. It concerns the status of the Report of the Commission of Enquiry and our position in relation thereto. The Commission was, I understand, appointed by the Gold Coast Government and has made its Report to the Gold Coast Government. No copy has yet been communicated to us officially. The copy we have got is a copy which was destined for Mr. George, one of the members of the Commission. It was sent to us by Sir G. Hadow under cover of the letter at (57) in WAF.238/162/01 Part A, which makes it clear that we must not disclose that we have seen it. On the other hand, Mr. George knows that we have seen it and have still got it. . . . It would therefore hardly be possible for us, even if we wanted to, to say or infer in public that we had not seen the Report – though Mr. Vile does not think that Mr. George would give us away if we did. This is a very awkward situation and, whatever else we may decide to do, it seems to me essential that we should ask the Governor to try to arrange for the Report to be communicated to us officially as soon as he can.

3. I have read very carefully the letter from the Secretary of State to Dr. Nkrumah, of which Mr. Vile has placed a copy opposite, and it appears to me, in the

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<sup>4</sup> B N Azikiwe, prime minister of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1954–1959; gov-gen of Nigeria, 1960–1963; president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1963–1966.

light of it, that there is no getting away from the fact that, the C.P.P. having obtained a substantial majority in the recent elections and having secured the passage of their Independence legislation by a substantial majority, we now have a firm commitment to take the necessary steps to ensure Gold Coast independence within the Commonwealth. . . .

That being so, it seems to me that it would not be possible for the Secretary of State to fail to carry out this undertaking or to attach a new condition to the grant of independence unless he could be sure of showing to the satisfaction of all reasonable men of all parties that, since the letter was written, some unforeseen circumstances of great gravity had arisen which made it virtually impossible or entirely inappropriate for him to carry out his undertaking, or to carry it out without imposing some new condition. The question to which we have to address ourselves is whether the revelations in the Report of the Commission of Enquiry constitute a circumstance of this kind. So far as concerns bribery and corruption for personal gain, it seems fairly clear to me that the revelations do not constitute such a circumstance; for plenty has been heard in the past about such bribery and corruption in the Gold Coast. I think what we have to consider is rather the findings in the Report about the control of the C.P.C. by the C.P.P. and the C.P.P.'s use of that control in order to gain political support. On this subject the most damaging paragraph in the Report – paragraph 74 – is not fully reflected in the summary of findings in paragraph 203 *et seq.*, but paragraph 203 (a), (c) and (1) and paragraphs 206 – 220, when read together, are very damaging.

I think we should be less than honest if we did not admit to ourselves that the revelations in this Report give serious grounds for believing that, if the Gold Coast is given independence next spring, its Government is likely to misuse its powers in order to consolidate its position and turn itself into a dictatorship. At the same time, however, it must be admitted that that is a process which is not unknown in some independent countries; and I fear it is questionable whether it would be accepted by public opinion generally as an adequate reason for not carrying out the undertaking to fix a date for independence.

On the other hand, the Report, when it is published, will clearly provide the N.L.M. with a great deal of ammunition and will help them to win a good deal of sympathy in this country. Whilst, therefore, I do not believe that we can go back on our undertaking to fix a date for independence, I suggest that it will be advisable to warn the Prime Minister about the Commission's Report when we show him the proposed statement about a date for independence, and possibly also to send a copy of whatever minute is sent to the Prime Minister to the Secretaries of State for Commonwealth Relations and Foreign Affairs. Nor do I think that, until that has been done, we can very well commit ourselves either to the Gold Coast Government or to the Governor about an early statement on a date for independence. If this is agreed, there remains the question whether, before making a recommendation accordingly to the Prime Minister, we ought to get firmer assurances about the handling of the Commission's Report. Here we are up against the difficulty referred to in the second paragraph of this minute. What we might possibly do, however, is to explain personally to the Governor that the Secretary of State is away; that he will wish on his return to consult his colleagues about the date for independence; and that in doing so he will be greatly helped if he can have a definite statement about the intentions of the Gold Coast Government in regard to the Commission's Report. We

could also at the same time raise with him the question of the official communication to us of a copy of the Report. . . .

In conclusion I should perhaps say a word about the repercussions on Eastern Nigeria. I am not in touch with the parallel issue there. But, from what I know of it, it would appear to me:-

(a) that all we have done so far is to insist on the appointment of a proper Commission of Enquiry, a course which the Gold Coast Government were, though I believe with some difficulty, persuaded to take;

(b) that the action which we insist on the Gold Coast Government taking on this Report will nevertheless clearly affect the action which we shall be able to insist on the Eastern Nigerian Government taking on the report of the Commission of Enquiry there.

(b) is clearly a serious point, except in so far as there may be reason to believe that Zik's offences in Eastern Nigeria will prove to be different in degree to those of the C.P.P. in general and Nkrumah and Gbedemah in particular, in the Gold Coast.

This is an aspect of the matter on which Sir H. Poynton will no doubt wish to comment and perhaps to consult Mr. Williamson. I must confess, however, that, even if it was thought advisable to demand the resignation of either Dr. Nkrumah or Mr. Gbedemah, or both, I do not quite see how we could ensure that that demand was met – that is unless we were prepared to abrogate the Constitution and reinstitute direct rule. I fear we are too preoccupied elsewhere to consider such a course.

I am sending a copy of this minute to Mr. Williamson, in case he should wish to comment to Sir H. Poynton.

W.L.G.B.  
10.8.56

*Mr Gorell Barnes*

Many thanks for this. I have not seen any of these G.C. papers to which your minute refers, so maybe what follows will not be a starter. But, briefly, my view is that the S. of S., without in any way going back on the promise of independence to the G.C., should (if the circumstances appear to justify it) call upon Mr Gbedemah and/or Dr Nkrumah to resign – & let it be known publicly that he has done so. If they refuse to resign, it is probably too late to do anything more, e.g. by way of suspending the constitution, or by going back on the promise of independence. But I feel the gesture – & I trust it might be more than that – at least ought to be made. (We did not promise independence to any particular Ministers, or set thereof, but to the country).

If we don't do at least that, we shall presumably be quite impotent *vis-à-vis* eastern Nigeria should Zik and his henchmen be found guilty by the Foster-Sutton Tribunal.<sup>5</sup>

T.B.W.  
10.8.56

<sup>5</sup> The Foster-Sutton commission of inquiry, chaired by Sir Stafford Foster-Sutton, chief justice of Nigeria, was set up in 1956 to inquire into the relationship between Dr Azikiwe, the government of Eastern Nigeria and the African Continental Bank.

*Sir H. Poynton*

. . . In general spirit I have much sympathy with Mr Williamson's outlook. But, if we demand the resignation of Mr [sic] Nkrumah and Mr Gbedemah and then do nothing about it when they refuse, shall we not have alienated them and the future independent Gold Coast government to no purpose?

If a general election had not just been held at our insistence, a possibility might have been to insist on one now. But that seems to me a card which cannot be played twice – especially as I gather a lot of the evidence summarized in the report had been given in public before the last election.

W.L.G.B.  
12.8.56

*Lord Lloyd*

. . . the Secretary of State's letter to Dr. Nkrumah of the 4th April, 1956 makes it virtually impossible for us now to go back on the promise of independence, but I don't think it debars us from deferring a statement of the date for independence until at any rate the Commission's Report has been published. What I have in mind particularly in saying this is that I should imagine that the publication of this Report in the Gold Coast might have a momentous bearing upon the question of independence, and I should imagine that it would also excite a good deal of uneasiness in this country and in other Commonwealth countries. Moreover, it is, I think, worth bearing in mind that earlier this summer we arranged for Mr. Gbedemah to visit Washington to introduce himself to Mr. Eugene Black, the President of the World Bank, and that the World Bank expect to be making a survey of the Gold Coast later this year to assess the suitability of the Gold Coast, when independent, for membership of the Bank and the I.M.F. I should think that the revelations in this Report might well cause the International Bank and the Fund authorities to think twice about admitting the Gold Coast, under its present Ministerial management, to membership of these bodies.

How we play the hand is another matter. . . . I think [the Secretary of State] could still play for extra time in order to consult his colleagues, using as a basis for "stalling" the argument already made, about our not yet having officially received a copy of the Report, and the fact that the Governor's telegram does not give any of the assurances for which the Secretary of State had asked.

As to the relation of all this with Eastern Nigeria, I have now attached at I in this folder further minutes by Mr. Williamson and Mr. Gorell Barnes. I agree that we cannot afford to let the Gold Coast position pass without doing everything we can to make it quite clear that we are not condoning the behaviour of Dr. Nkrumah and Mr. Gbedemah, though I am inclined to share Mr. Gorell Barnes's view that it is no use calling upon them to resign if we have no power to enforce their resignation short of abrogating the Constitution, and are not prepared to abrogate the Constitution. We can, however, make it very clear that that is what the Secretary of State thinks they ought to do and what would undoubtedly happen in this country. It may be possible that we can apply some other kind of sanction, such as refusing to support the Gold Coast candidature for full membership of the Commonwealth (i.e. attendance at Prime Ministers' Conferences) or for membership of the United Nations or other international bodies, until they have put their house in order. This will not, of

course, prevent them from getting into these bodies because I have no doubt that some other country will be willing to support them. But these are matters which I think can be gone into later, when the position is a bit clearer and when we have had time and opportunity to assess public opinion in the Gold Coast, the United Kingdom and the world at large, on the revelations in the Report. I am afraid I do not think there is much force in Mr. Williamson's admittedly ingenious argument that we are promising independence not to any particular Ministers or set thereof, but to the country. You can't grant independence to a country in the sense of a geographical entity. You have to grant it to the representatives of the country. The Gold Coast have had a general election within the last month and they have returned the C.P.P. Party. I do not believe it would be practicable to insist on another general election in the Gold Coast from this end. This could only happen if there was a strong enough demand in the territory itself – i.e. a strong enough indignation to bring about the downfall of the present Government. I fear, however, that it has too big a majority, and I doubt whether that is the way that public opinion works in the Gold Coast.

There is one other element in the timetable which should not be overlooked, and that is that the future of Togoland (i.e. integration with the Gold Coast) will be coming up at the next General Assembly of the United Nations. It is generally regarded as essential that, if we are to get the Togoland resolution through, we shall have to state a firm date for the independence of the Gold Coast. But the Assembly does not meet until mid-November, and the Togoland item may not come up until after Christmas, so that I do not think that this will in practice have any bearing upon our handling of the present crisis.

I am sorry to minute at such length and rather inconclusively. When you have read the papers I suggest that you and I and Mr. Gorell Barnes had better have a talk. It might, I think, also be useful to bring in Mr. Vile (although he has now left the West African Department) and Mr. Bennett, who has just taken over from him.<sup>6</sup>

A.H.P.  
13.8.56

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<sup>6</sup> The sequence of CO minutes on this issue is continued in 247.

**246** CO 554/807, no E/361

10 Aug 1956

[Jibowu Report]: letter from Dr Nkrumah to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the response of the Gold Coast government to the report of the Jibowu Commission

[When he forwarded Nkrumah's views on the Jibowu Report to the CO, Arden-Clarke referred back to Lennox-Boyd's tel of 27 July (see 241) and the suggestion therein that subsequent action was related to the question of announcing a target date for independence. The governor wrote to Eastwood on 11 Aug: 'The implication that the grant of independence to the Gold Coast might be withheld or delayed because of the Commission's findings is so far reaching and so potentially dangerous that I would prefer that the two subjects should be dealt with separately unless and until it is found necessary to marry them' (CO 554/1312, no 71).]

We recently discussed the action to be taken by this Government on the Jibowu Commission's Report on the Cocoa Purchasing Company. I write to confirm what I then told you.

2. It is my intention that the Report should be published as soon as possible, together with a statement by the Government. This statement is now in process of being drafted and I hope it will be possible to publish it with the Report not later than the end of next month.

3. I am prepared to adopt the recommendation in the Report that the Loans Section of the Cocoa Purchasing Company should be wound up and a new Statutory Board formed to take over its produce activities. Before winding up the Loans Section it will be necessary to make arrangements for the collection of the outstanding balances of the loans already issued either by the appointment of a Receiver or by some other means; in the meantime, I am taking steps to request the Cocoa Marketing Board to ensure that no further loans are issued by the Company. It is my intention to take this occasion to re-examine the whole problem of agricultural indebtedness and the Government proposes to consider various measures which may provide a solution. Some system of loans is, in my view, essential, but the method by which they will be made cannot as yet be decided.

4. I do not think it possible to accept the Commission's recommendation that the new Board to control produce activities should consist of three members to be nominated by the Government, three to be nominated by the Opposition, and the Chairman to be nominated by the Governor. The Government must assume responsibility for the disbursement of the public funds which will be entrusted to the new statutory body. They cannot discharge this responsibility unless they are in a position to appoint persons to the Board in whom they have confidence. It seems to me that you yourself might be placed in a difficult political position by having to appoint at your own discretion the Chairman of the Board who might be called upon, under the Commission's plan, to arbitrate between the proposals put forward by the Government nominees and the nominees of the Opposition. I am, therefore, considering alternative methods of appointment to the Board as well as the precise form legislation should take in order to ensure that loans will be issued on a fair basis in accordance with need, without regard to the political party affiliations of the recipients, and under which the Government will have a greater degree of control over the day to day activities of the new Board than they have at present over those of the Cocoa Marketing Board under the Cocoa Marketing Board Ordinance.

5. I have no objection to you informing the Secretary of State of this Government's intentions in this matter but would ask that no public reference is made to them until they have been announced in the Gold Coast.

**247** CO 554/807,

16 Aug 1956

[Jibowu Report]: minutes by M Z Terry,<sup>1</sup> J S Bennett and W L Gorell Barnes on policy to be pursued in the light of Dr Nkrumah's response

The Secretary of State held a meeting yesterday morning to discuss in the light of previous minutes the next steps to be taken in regard to Gold Coast Independence,

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<sup>1</sup> CO principal, West African dept 'B'.

with particular reference to the Report of the Cocoa Commission. Lord Lloyd, Sir Hilton Poynton, Mr. Gorell Barnes, Mr. Bennett and I were present.

2. At the time of the meeting it was known that Dr. Nkrumah had sent a formal letter<sup>2</sup> indicating the steps which his Government proposed to take in respect of the Cocoa Report. The letter itself had not, however, been received and its contents were not known.

3. It was agreed that while we were too far committed to be able to justify actually deferring the grant of independence because of the disclosures in the Jibowu Report, we should have seriously to consider deferring the public announcement of the date of Independence until we received some reasonably satisfactory assurances from Dr. Nkrumah about the action which he proposed to take on the Cocoa Report. It was accordingly agreed that the following action should be taken:—

- (i) To ask for the text of Dr. Nkrumah's letter to be telegraphed to us.
- (ii) To inform the Governor that there would be no objection to his forwarding to us by means of his proposed despatch the Independence Motion passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 3rd August.
- (iii) To seek the Governor's views about the present aims and objectives of the Opposition and about the line to be taken with the Opposition delegation which is understood to be on its way to the United Kingdom.
- (iv) To ask for a copy of the Cocoa Report to be sent to us officially.
- (v) To explain to the Governor in a Secret and Personal telegram why we need a copy of the Cocoa Report officially, why the announcement of the date of Independence is likely to be delayed beyond the 20th August: and to ask for his preliminary assessment of the security risk if we should refuse to announce the date of Independence until receiving satisfactory assurances about the action to be taken on the Cocoa Report . . .

The receipt of [Dr Nkrumah's] letter had the effect of making the draft prepared in accordance with the decisions at yesterday's meeting out of date.

6. The Prime Minister states in his letter:—

- (a) That he intends to publish the Report, together with a Government Statement, as soon as possible and not later than the end of September.
- (b) That he will accept the recommendation about winding up the Loans Section of the Cocoa Purchasing Company and forming a new Statutory Board to take over its produce activities.
- (c) That he will not accept the Commission's recommendation about the composition of the new Statutory Board because the Government must assume responsibility for the disbursement of the public funds which will be entrusted to the Board and cannot do so unless able to appoint persons to the Board in whom they have confidence.
- (d) That he considers that some measures will be necessary in order to deal with the problem of agricultural indebtedness and that he proposes to introduce legislation "to ensure that loans will be issued on a fair basis in accordance with need without regard to the political party affiliations of the recipients and under which the Government will have a greater degree of control over the day to day

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<sup>2</sup> See 246.

activities of the new Board than they have at present over those of the Cocoa Marketing Board under the Cocoa Marketing Board Ordinance.”

7. It seems to me that this is the most that we can reasonably expect to get from Dr. Nkrumah. On (a) I am doubtful whether publication could be arranged much earlier because of the length of the document. On (c) I think Dr. Nkrumah is on completely firm ground. As regards (d), it might be argued that we should wait to see what the measures are before agreeing to announce a firm date for Independence. I do not personally think that this would be the right thing to do. We have already agreed among ourselves that we are far too committed to Dr. Nkrumah to apply the ultimate sanction of refusing to grant Independence on the 6th March 1957 : all that we are considering is the deferment of the announcement. The point is whether our refusal to announce the date until we know what are the “alternative measures” (a step which would have certain disadvantages in creating an atmosphere of ill will) would be likely to influence Dr. Nkrumah in shaping his “alternative measures”. My own view is that other factors are just as likely (probably more so) to persuade Dr. Nkrumah to propose measures which are *prima facie* reasonable and honest, namely the desire to satisfy public opinion in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth at large that the Gold Coast is putting its house in order (because the Gold Coast is still anxious to secure Commonwealth membership) and secondly a desire to satisfy possible investors such as the International Bank and the United States Government that the Gold Coast is a reasonable place for investment. I think these factors will prove just as effective in influencing the shape of the “alternative measures” as might be our refusal to announce the date for Independence: and the latter would be an inflammatory measure which we should presumably avoid unless we are satisfied that it will achieve something which would not otherwise be achieved.

8. I do not mean to imply by the above that the “alternative measures” which Dr. Nkrumah will introduce will not in practice be found susceptible of abuse for corrupt purposes of either a party or personal nature. This is not, however, something which it is in our power to control, given the decision to award Independence so soon. There is in fact nothing that we can do in the time available to us to prevent corruption in public life in an independent Gold Coast for some years to come. Our present objective is inevitably a much narrower one and for its purposes I consider that the action taken by the Gold Coast Government in appointing a Commission of Enquiry with wide terms of reference and full powers, and the action proposed by Dr. Nkrumah in respect of the Commission’s recommendations, are in fact sufficient.

9. If the above view is accepted by higher authority then I think we can substitute for the draft Secret and Personal telegram proposed at yesterday’s meeting an alternative telegram telling the Governor that Dr. Nkrumah’s assurances are sufficient and that we can therefore proceed with the public announcement; but explaining that for purely procedural reasons there must be some delay. We should say that we will not insist on knowing what the alternative measures are before announcing the date of Independence but that we wish Dr. Nkrumah publicly to announce the proposals set out in his letter of the 10th August before the date of Independence is announced. I submit draft herewith.

10. I will now be preparing the first draft of a paper for the Cabinet. This will serve the dual purpose of obtaining Cabinet approval for the grant of Independence on the 6th March 1957 and for an early announcement of this date; and of giving us

the necessary authority to approach the Legislation Committee and Parliamentary Counsel in regard to the new legislation which will be needed (had we not been going to the Cabinet itself we were planning to go to the Colonial Policy Committee for this latter purpose). . . .

M.Z.T.  
16.8.56

I agree with Miss Terry's minute and draft.

It cannot be pretended that Dr Nkrumah's response . . . is everything that could be hoped for. But at least he has evidently recognised the need for doing something. He intends in particular to meet us on publication of the Jibowu report, which Ministers here yesterday considered most important. And the area of difference between us is now, as I see it, too narrow to warrant a break, or to be accepted in many interested quarters as justifying any attempt to hold out on independence. . . .

J.S.B.  
16.8.56

In view of the revelations in the Jibowu Report and what is now generally known about corruption and Fascist tendencies in the Gold Coast, I doubt very much whether any assurances of the present Government will really suffice to allay anxieties about the probable behaviour of an independent Gold Coast Government. . . .

For the rest, I am disposed to agree with Miss Terry and Mr Bennett generally, and in particular with their view that the enclosure to (361)<sup>3</sup> is as much as we can really expect to get out of Dr Nkrumah. . . .

W.L.G.B.  
16.8.56

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<sup>3</sup> ie Nkrumah's letter of 10 Aug (246). The tel sent to Arden-Clarke as a result of these minutes is reproduced as 249.

## **248** CO 554/1162, no 18 16 Aug 1956

### 'Gold Coast: steps towards independence': despatch no 27 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd

The events which I have to record since my last despatch in this series dated the 28th December, 1955,<sup>1</sup> reflect our continuing efforts to bring independence within the grasp of a country which vigorously professes its desire for it but which seems determined, if the acts and utterances of political leaders on both sides are any guide, to make the transfer of power as difficult as possible for Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. On the one hand the Government's inept provocation of the Opposition groups during the latter half of last year, to which much of my preceding despatch was devoted, has successfully convinced the Opposition of the necessity to continue a policy of non-co-operation in any round table discussions on the future

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<sup>1</sup> See 209.

constitution; on the other hand the Opposition groups, while fully prepared to accept a majority verdict of the country in favour of "Federation," had this been the outcome of the general election, are quite unprepared to accept the majority verdict which has in fact been returned in favour of a unitary form of government. Despite the best endeavours of both sides, we have, it seems to me, made a substantial, and indeed decisive, advance towards the grant of independence as a result of the recent general election: the potential beneficiaries have not succeeded by their irresponsibility or intransigence in disqualifying themselves as heirs to "freedom", nor have they been able to establish any pretension that the trustees have deprived them of their legitimate expectations, or are likely to do so.

2. Following the publication of Sir Frederick Bourne's Report, the Government invited all parties and groups to meet round a table to discuss it. This invitation was declined by the Opposition groups. A conference was none the less held (known as the Achimota Conference) attended by delegations from the Convention Peoples' Party, part of the Northern Territories, the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs, the Trans-Volta/Togoland Council, the Gold Coast Muslim Council, the Trades Union Congress, the Brong-Kyempem Council and (surprisingly) the Ex-Servicemen's Union. This conference adopted a number of Sir Frederick Bourne's recommendations, and its report was considered by the Government. The Government subsequently published a "White Paper" entitled "Constitutional Proposals for Gold Coast Independence" and "Statement on the Report of the Constitutional Adviser and the Report of the Achimota Conference". This document was debated in the Assembly, and adopted, and formed the basis of the Government's appeal to the country in July. The Opposition took no part in the debate and walked out *en bloc* on the second day.

3. In parallel with these developments action has been taking place on three subsidiary fronts: (a) the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company; (b) the Northern Territories treaties; (c) the future of Togoland.

With the greatest reluctance and as a result of more or less continuous public outcry from Opposition interests and unremitting pressure from behind the scenes by myself, the Government agreed in January to an enquiry being held into the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company. The enquiry was to be held by a Committee whose proceedings and findings would have been of little value, since the Committee would have had no power to take evidence on oath or to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; further pressure was therefore brought to bear on the Government to set up a Commission of Enquiry which would have these powers. It was only when the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Justice Jibowu, whose services were kindly made available by the Governor-General of the Federation of Nigeria, had made it clear that he would withdraw from the enquiry unless he and his colleagues were invested with the necessary powers, and after further resistance by Ministers, that the Government appointed a Commission under the appropriate statute. The Commission has now reported in terms which the Cabinet finds highly distasteful, and Mr. Geoffrey Bing, Q.C.,<sup>2</sup> has been

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<sup>2</sup> MP (Lab) Hornchurch Division of Essex, 1945–1955; assistant government whip, 1945–1946; constitutional adviser to the prime minister of Ghana, 1956–1957; attorney-general, Ghana, 1956–1957; adviser to President Nkrumah, 1961–1966.

employed to prepare a statement in vindication of the Government for publication together with the report. In brief, the report does not find that members of the Government used the funds of the Cocoa Purchasing Company for their personal benefit; but it does find that there was considerable impropriety in the use of these funds, and that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance knew of this and condoned it. The Commission recommends that arrangements be made to wind up the Company's Loans Section, that a new Statutory Board be formed to take over its produce activities and that the Board should trade with all cocoa farmers in the country, either individually or in groups, on an equal footing irrespective of their political affiliations. I have hopes of persuading the Government to accept these recommendations before the report and accompanying Government statement are published.

4. In connection with the progress made during the last few years towards the grant of independence the Chiefs of the Northern Territories have from time to time raised the question of the status of the Northern Territories treaties, and have argued to the effect that the existence of these treaties could operate as a means of staying the grant of independence to the Gold Coast as a whole until such time as the successors to the signatories of the treaties had agreed upon their abrogation with the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government. In order that the Chiefs of the Northern Territories might be fully and authoritatively acquainted with the attitude of Her Majesty's Government towards these treaties, I personally explained the position to them at a meeting in Tamale in May. Since it may be of interest to the other recipients of this despatch to know what considerations were conveyed to the Chiefs on this occasion, I take the unusual step of enclosing as an annexure a copy<sup>3</sup> of my address to the Chiefs which was made with your approval. On the day after this meeting I had an informal discussion with the Chiefs, lasting three hours. There was a general feeling that the advice of Her Majesty's Government should be accepted and that there could be no question of secession from the Gold Coast. I gained the impression that the Northern Territories Chiefs had at last accepted the fact that they cannot retain their protectorate status as an integral part of an independent Gold Coast. There is, however, no doubt that they are still suspicious and fearful of an independent African Government. At my suggestion they undertook to put forward through the Northern Territories Council, as quickly as possible, their practical proposals for the safeguarding of Northern interests in the independent constitution; the present indications are, however, that through dilatoriness and uncertainty they will fail to do so in time.

5. In May the first plebiscite to be held in a Trust Territory took place in British Togoland, the choice being between the following questions:-

- (1) Do you want the integration of Togoland under British administration with an independent Gold Coast?
- (2) Do you want the separation of Togoland under British administration from the Gold Coast and its continuation under trusteeship pending the ultimate determination of its political future?

The proportion of registered voters who participated was 82 per cent.; 58 per cent. of

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed.

the votes were cast in favour of the first alternative and the actual voting was 93,095 to 67,492. I gained the impression that many of those voting for the second alternative believed they were voting for a period of temporary separation under continuing British Trusteeship with a view to subsequent federation with an independent Gold Coast. No serious mal-practices were reported and the conduct of the plebiscite appears to have been highly satisfactory. In July, the Trusteeship Council passed a resolution noting that the will of the majority of the inhabitants was for union with an independent Gold Coast and recommending "that appropriate steps be taken in consultation with the administering authority for the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement for the Territory to become effective upon the attainment of independence by the Gold Coast". It is expected that this recommendation will be considered by the General Assembly of the United Nations in November.

6. In view of the deep cleavage of opinion concerning the form which an independent constitution for the Gold Coast should take, which is described in my previous despatch and mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, it became necessary to consider, in consultation with you, the steps which should be taken to ascertain whether there was a wide measure of agreement in favour of independence under any particular type of constitution. It became evident that the only course which held prospects of a satisfactory solution lay in a general election at which the form of the future constitution would be the issue, and I therefore made the most cogent efforts open to me to persuade the Prime Minister of the necessity for a general election as a pre-condition of the grant of independence. He was eventually convinced, but when he informed the Cabinet and the Party Executive of his decision, he encountered powerful opposition. While they appreciated the strength of the position which Her Majesty's Government could take up on the necessity for an appeal to the country, they could not face the responsibility of appearing to initiate an election which many members of the party would regard as premature and a sign of weakness under Opposition criticism, and there is little doubt that they had every expectation that an election at this juncture would result in a substantially decreased majority. Back-benchers, particularly those from Ashanti, were not prepared prematurely to jeopardise their salaries and perquisites. Accordingly, Ministers adopted the tactic of placing the responsibility elsewhere, and urged that the best solution was for you to declare the necessity for an election, thus enabling them to escape the odium of voluntary recourse to this expedient. Your statement in the House of Commons on the 11th May achieved the purpose and the conclusion of my speech in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th May, to the effect that having consulted the Prime Minister I proposed to dissolve the Assembly in due course and that a general election would then be held, was received with general applause from members on the Government benches for whom the dissolution would have been the occasion for violent recrimination had it appeared to have arisen from the initiative of the Government.

7. One of the arguments advanced by Ministers against a general election was that the large numbers of acts of intimidation and violence that were being committed for party political ends, particularly in Ashanti, precluded the holding of a "full and free" election. As this argument could hardly be regarded as strengthening their claim that the country was ready for an immediate grant of independence, it was soon dropped. Their fears however persisted and I was urged by the Prime Minister and his colleagues to reassure the country that law and order would be

maintained. This I did in a broadcast in which it was made clear that under the Constitution it was the Governor who was charged with a special and direct responsibility for the maintenance of law and order and was vested with the control of the Police and armed forces; that I had every intention of discharging my responsibilities, and that I invited and expected the co-operation of the Chiefs and people in holding an orderly and peaceful election. The broadcast was well received and, coupled with the immediate appearance of strong police reinforcements in all trouble areas and prompt and effective police action whenever an incident occurred, had a calming effect.

8. The subsequent election campaign was, except where local or personal issues were introduced, conducted generally on the lines: "a vote for Nkrumah is a vote for independence under a unitary form of government; a vote against Nkrumah is a vote for continued colonial rule"; and on the other side: "a vote against the C.P.P. is a vote for (a) a federal constitution which will give each Region a proper share in the conduct of its own affairs; (b) a fair cocoa price for the farmer; (c) integrity in public life". The result was a low average poll, although in Ashanti there was a considerable increase on the 1954 figures. Newspaper reports of the proceedings of the Commission of Enquiry into the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company had no perceptible effect on the election. Seventy-one members were returned for the Convention Peoples' Party as against 31 for the Opposition and 2 Independents. The geographical breakdown is as follows:-

Colony (Eastern, Western and Accra all together) ... ..	C.P.P. 44 seats out of a total of 44.
Trans-Volta/Togoland ... ..	C.P.P. 8 seats: others 5.
Ashanti ... ..	C.P.P. 8 seats: others 13.
Northern Territories ... ..	C.P.P. 11 seats: others 15.

One of the 2 Independents almost immediately joined the Convention Peoples' Party.<sup>4</sup> The Convention Peoples' Party thus holds over two-thirds of the total number of 104 seats, but is in the minority in two Regions.

The polling was observed by a small all-party delegation of Members of Parliament. Although, as on previous occasions, there were some imperfections in the organisation and there is clearly room for improvement in the preparation of registers, the election was carried out in an orderly manner and voters were able to cast their votes in secret and without justifiable fear of intimidation.

9. I had hoped that the result of the election would be a Government with a reasonable but not overwhelming majority and a strong and effective Opposition. This hope has not been realised. The Government majority is too large and the leaders will have difficulty in controlling their more extreme and unruly back-benchers: I fear the tail will wag the dog, as it has done all too often in the past. The new Opposition is stronger than the old in intellectual capacity and debating ability but has got off to a bad start: it missed the formal opening of the Assembly not by deliberate intent but inadvertently through sheer incompetence and it has already adopted the futile and sterile tactics of walk-out and boycott, to which the old Opposition was addicted.

<sup>4</sup> B A Konu.

10. The next step, following the direction of your statement in the House of Commons on the 11th May, was for the Government to introduce a motion in the Legislative Assembly calling for independence within the Commonwealth, with a view to its passage by a "reasonable" majority. A motion was introduced, debated and passed by seventy-two votes to none, the Opposition having absented itself, on the 3rd August in the following terms:-

"That this Assembly do authorise the Government of the Gold Coast to request Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, as soon as practicable this year, to procure the enactment by the United Kingdom Parliament of an Act to provide for the Independence of the Gold Coast as a sovereign and independent State within the Commonwealth under the name of Ghana."

I am aware from private conversations with Ministers that this insistence on 1956 (which is, despite its phrasing, the object of the motion) as the year within which independence should be granted is intended for the temporary appeasement of party supporters and that the Government, having made the request in these terms, feels safe from embarrassment by any section of opinion in the Gold Coast if independence is not achieved in 1956, provided that a date for the grant of independence early in 1957 can be fixed and published by, say, the end of October this year. The Government does not genuinely expect that it will be feasible for Parliament to pass an Act of Independence during the present year. I shall shortly be asked to address you in a formal despatch in furtherance of the object of this motion. Meanwhile, the tactics which the Opposition will now adopt remain to be disclosed.

11. In my previous despatch I referred briefly to the progress made by the Volta River Project Preparatory Commission and to the initial discussions between the United Kingdom and the Gold Coast Governments and the Aluminium interests due to take place in London last April. These discussions disclosed some differences in points of view between the Gold Coast Government and Aluminium Limited. Further progress now awaits a mission from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to the Gold Coast this year, which will survey the economic situation and credit-worthiness of the Gold Coast and will, at the same time, be asked to advise the Gold Coast Government on the terms required by Aluminium Limited in respect of their participation in the Volta River scheme. Thereafter it is hoped, if the Bank's reaction to the Gold Coast economy is favourable, that a second mission will visit the Gold Coast with a view to discussion of the possibility of the Bank's willingness to assist in financing the scheme.

12. The labour situation in the mining industry continues to give ground for anxiety. The Report of the Board of Enquiry contained proposals for short-term aid to be given by the Government to the Mining Companies by way of transport of labour, assumption of responsibility for the mines' hospitals and the provision of housing estates for labour. After the receipt of the Report, the Chamber of Mines met the Mines Workers' Union early this month. The Union demanded an all-round 15 per cent. increase in wages to be paid retrospectively from October 1953, to which the Chamber replied that the mines could not afford to grant any increases in wages, and that any such increases would have to be met by subsidies. Discussion has been adjourned until the 22nd August, and in the meantime the Chamber is seeking an interview with the Minister of Trade and Labour on the proposals in the Board's Report and the claims of the Union.

13. The great majority of overseas members of the Civil Service are, as is natural, watching political developments with varying degrees of anxiety (I refer here to the pensionable cadre). It is probably true to say that in the remote areas there is a considerable number of officers who are not seriously preoccupied with the course of political events; they are getting on with their job and can see some substantial results of their work. Disquiet increases as the geographical or hierarchical distance between the officer and the minister diminishes. Numerically the position is that, out of an overseas pensionable cadre of something less than 800, 142 officers retired with compensation for loss of career when the opportunity to do so with lump sum compensation first became operative in mid-1955. Since then, 129 have either retired with compensation or given notice of their intention to do so, and by the end of this calendar year they will have left the Gold Coast. Other trends of interest are: in July 1954 the total strength of overseas officers, pensionable and contract together, was about 1,340; it is now about 1,240; in July 1954 about 33 per cent. of overseas officers were serving on contract; at present the figure is nearly 50 per cent. It is impossible to foresee with certainty what the reaction of overseas officers will be to conditions as they will obtain shortly after the grant of independence, but it seems likely that the rate of wastage in the pensionable cadre will considerably, and inevitably, increase.

14. In accord with constitutional developments in the Gold Coast the arrangement whereby, since 1941, the Gold Coast military forces have been subject to the orders and directions of the Army Council was discontinued with effect from the 1st July. With effect from that date also West Africa Command ceased to exist, I assumed control of the Gold Coast Forces and the Gold Coast Government took over full financial responsibility. The present independent Gold Coast Command is functioning satisfactorily.

15. The contents of this despatch are summarised as follows:—

Paragraph 1	...	...	Preliminary comment on the political background.
Paragraph 2	...	...	Action consequential on the report of the Constitutional Adviser: (Sir Frederick Bourne).
Paragraph 3	...	...	Enquiry into the Cocoa Purchasing Company.
Paragraph 4	...	...	The Northern Territories treaties.
Paragraph 5	...	...	The Togoland Plebiscite.
Paragraphs 6 and 7	...	...	Circumstances leading to a General Election.
Paragraphs 8 and 9	...	...	The General Election.
Paragraph 10	...	...	The Motion calling for Independence within the Commonwealth.
Paragraph 11	...	...	The Volta River Project.
Paragraph 12	...	...	Labour.
Paragraph 13	...	...	The Civil Service.
Paragraph 14	...	...	Responsibility for the Gold Coast Military Forces.

**249** CO 554/807, no 363

18 Aug 1956

**'Cocoa report and independence': outward unnumbered telegram from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke**

Your telegram Personal No. 34.<sup>1</sup>

Cocoa Report and Independence.

As you know, I have been very seriously disturbed about the disclosures in the Report of the Jibowu Commission. While I have not been unaware of the difficulties to which you referred in your letter to Eastwood of the 11th August<sup>2</sup> I have also been obliged to bear in mind the considerable impact which the Report will undoubtedly make on public opinion in the United Kingdom and in other parts of the Commonwealth and the consequent need for it to be demonstrable beyond reasonable doubt that the Gold Coast Government understands the seriousness of the Commission's findings and is determined to remedy the abuses which have been disclosed.

2. The assurances given in Dr. Nkrumah's letter are not as completely satisfying as I would have liked, but I consider that they are the most that can be expected in the circumstances and that they are acceptable, though I would have preferred to know precisely what measures Dr. Nkrumah proposed to introduce to deal with agricultural loans in the future.

3. I do not (repeat not) therefore propose to defer announcing the firm date for Independence simply in order to receive further assurances from Dr. Nkrumah about the action which his Government proposes to take on the Commission's recommendations. Incidentally since United Kingdom Act of Parliament and Order in Council will be required to grant independence announcement by Her Majesty's Government will have to be worded so as to avoid prejudging decision of Parliament and Her Majesty. It will take the form of statement of Her Majesty's Government's policy. I assume, however, that before any public announcement is made either here or in the Gold Coast about the date of Independence, Dr. Nkrumah will publicly announce his intentions about the Cocoa Commission Report as described in his letter to you of the 10th August. Presumably he intends to make such an announcement as soon as the Legislative Assembly reconvenes on the 20th August but I should be grateful if you would confirm this.

4. You will, however, realize that there are other reasons why the intended date of Independence cannot be announced as early as the 20th August as was proposed in your Secret telegram No. 375. In the first place I am unlikely to have received by then your official despatch transmitting the Independence Motion passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 3rd August. In addition you will realize that it will be necessary for me to consult my colleagues here before any public announcement can be made, and matter cannot be laid before them until your official despatch is received, and until I have confirmation of the point at the end of paragraph 3 above. Having regard to the preoccupations of my colleagues with other matters at the present time I do not think it will be possible for them to consider this until the week beginning 27th August which means that the public announcement could not be

<sup>1</sup> See 242.

<sup>2</sup> See 246, note.

made until later that week. I assume, however, from paragraph 3 of your secret telegram No. 399 that you do not expect to be faced with serious difficulty if the announcement of intended Independence Day is delayed for some little time after the 20th August. If it were possible to defer this announcement until after publication of the report and Gold Coast statement thereon I should myself much prefer this since it would prevent any criticism here or abroad that Her Majesty's Government had concealed important information bearing on fitness of Gold Coast for independence before deciding proposed date. I have in mind for example effect on bodies such as International Bank. Report would in any case have been published before United Kingdom Bill can be introduced and if Her Majesty's Government's statement of intended date had already been made before publication of report this might be fastened upon in debate. Should welcome your views on this.

5. Please let me know if you wish me to send a non-personal communication which you can show to Dr. Nkrumah. You will realize, however, that fact that Dr. Nkrumah does not know that I have seen the report would make it very difficult to compose a suitable one. . . .

**250** PREM 11/1367, CP (56)204

29 Aug 1956

**'Gold Coast': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lennox-Boyd reporting the result of the general election and the steps to independence**

I seek the concurrence of my colleagues to make an early announcement that Her Majesty's Government will now introduce into Parliament a Gold Coast Independence Bill and that – subject to its passage through Parliament – the Gold Coast will be accorded independence within the Commonwealth on 6th March, 1957 or as soon as possible thereafter. I would prefer to call this self-government within the Commonwealth. Wherever possible I am trying to use (and get accepted) the words "self-government" for "independence." But as I have previously explained to my colleagues, it is too late to use these more reassuring words in the case of the Gold Coast.

*Recent developments*

2. The Cabinet last discussed the question of Gold Coast independence on 3rd May (C.M. (56) 32nd Conclusions, Minute 8).<sup>1</sup> With their approval I announced in the House of Commons on 11th May that, if a general election was held in the Gold Coast, Her Majesty's Government would be ready to accept a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth passed by a reasonable majority in a newly elected Legislature and that they would then declare a firm date for independence.

3. A general election was held on 12th and 17th July. It was observed by six members of Parliament drawn from both sides of the House. They have reported that they were satisfied that the election was conducted fairly and properly and in an orderly manner.

4. As a result, Dr. Nkrumah's party (the Convention Peoples' Party) was returned to power with only a slightly reduced majority. They now hold 72 out of the 104 seats

<sup>1</sup> See 228.

in the new Legislative Assembly and, although there was only a 50 per cent. poll, they won 57 per cent. of the votes cast throughout the territory.

5. Although the C.P.P. is strongest in the "Colony" or coastal area, where Dr. Nkrumah won all 44 seats and about 81 per cent. of the total votes cast, popular support for the C.P.P. was not limited to that area. In other Regions they obtained the following proportions of seats and votes:-

*Ashanti-*

8 out of 21 seats and 43 per cent. of total votes cast;

*Northern Territories-*

11 out of 26 seats and 45 per cent. of total votes cast;

*Trans-Volta Togoland-*

9 out of 13 seats and over 55 per cent. of total votes cast.

6. The new Legislative Assembly was opened on 31st July, and on 3rd August the Government introduced its expected motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth. All the Opposition members boycotted the debate (see paragraph 11 below) and the motion was passed *nem con*. If there had been a vote, the Opposition could not have mustered more than 32 votes against the Government's 72. I must regard the motion therefore as having been passed by a "reasonable majority".

7. The full text of the motion reads as follows:-

"that this Assembly do authorise the Government of the Gold Coast to request Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, as soon as practicable this year, to procure the enactment by the United Kingdom Parliament of an Act to provide for independence of the Gold Coast as a sovereign and independent State within the Commonwealth under the name of Ghana."

8. The Governor has informed me that despite the wording of the motion the Gold Coast Government will not object if independence should be deferred until the early months of 1957. In fact it has long been understood that 6th March (which is the anniversary of the signing of the Bond of 1844 from which British power and jurisdiction is generally derived) would be particularly acceptable to local opinion.

9. Two main questions arise. The first is the strength of the Opposition and the second concerns corruption in public life in the Gold Coast.

*The opposition*

10. The Opposition Parties won considerably less support in the election than they had hoped. They obtained only 31 of the 104 seats in the Assembly and have the support of one independent member. By Regions, the total non-C.P.P. vote in the Colony was 19 per cent., in Ashanti 57 per cent., in Trans-Volta Togoland 45 per cent., and in the Northern Territories 55 per cent. Thus even in Ashanti (the stronghold of the National Liberation Movement, which is the most articulate section of the Opposition), they obtained nothing like overwhelming support.

11. Since the election, the Opposition groups have indicated that they intend to boycott the Legislative Assembly until their demand for a federal constitution has been met. As I informed my colleagues on 3rd May, however, I do not consider it

practicable at this stage to operate a federal system in the Gold Coast. Moreover I consider that the Gold Coast Government's published constitutional proposals (which are based on the recommendations of the Constitutional Adviser appointed at my request last year) make reasonable concessions to regional feeling; they provide for a single chamber Legislature at the centre as at present but for the addition of Regional Assemblies with limited powers. The general election was held expressly to resolve the deadlock created by the difference of view between the Government and Opposition Parties, and was fought largely on the constitutional issue. As indicated, the C.P.P. won a large majority over the whole of the country, and my announced undertaking to Dr. Nkrumah did not qualify the expression "reasonable majority" by any reference to the Regions. Disturbing though the Opposition's intransigent attitude is, there are no legitimate grounds on which I could withdraw or postpone carrying out my public undertaking, nor do I think that such a course, even if practicable, would be justified or would promote a settlement.

12. Both the Governor and I have firmly impressed on Dr. Nkrumah (and will continue to do so) the importance of recognising minority rights and of making concessions to opposition opinion. The Governor has recently told me that he still hopes to bring the Parties together to discuss the question of regional devolution. Whether or not this leads to any modification of the Gold Coast Government's present constitutional proposals, it is clearly impossible for us to withhold independence on this account. Dr. Nkrumah's political opponents have the parliamentary and intellectual strength to form an effective parliamentary Opposition if they would only face their responsibilities in the proper constitutional way. I shall see that a delegation which they are sending to London are urged to follow that course. It must be hoped (though I'm afraid without much confidence) that responsibility and experience will gradually bring about an atmosphere of greater political toleration in the country.

13. It is not expected that the political conflict within the Gold Coast will seriously affect public security there before independence. If it did, it should not be beyond the power of the local forces of law and order to control the trouble.

#### *Corruption*

14. I have been seriously concerned about corruption in public life in the Gold Coast (one of the issues upon which the Opposition there have fastened). The Report of a recent Commission of Enquiry into the activities of the Cocoa Purchasing Company clearly establishes that the Company was used by the Government for Party purposes and that the Prime Minister and Finance Minister were both implicated by having condoned and connived at irregularities. Much of the money in the hands of the Cocoa Purchasing Company comes from cocoa growers in Ashanti. Their indignation at the use of their cash to help finance their political opponents is, to put it mildly, understandable. As my colleagues know, I have recently had to insist on an enquiry in Nigeria into the relations between the Premier of the Eastern Region and the Continental Bank, and the conference to discuss the next constitutional steps in Nigeria has been postponed pending the enquiry; though there is the important difference that in the Gold Coast case there is no suggestion of Ministers being *personally* corrupt. At my request the Governor has taken up with Dr. Nkrumah the serious situation created by the Cocoa Commission Report. As I have said to the Governor, I am obliged to bear in mind the impact which the Report will make on

public opinion here and in other parts of the Commonwealth and the consequent need for it to be demonstrable beyond reasonable doubt that the Gold Coast Government understands the seriousness of the Commission's findings and is determined to remedy the abuses which have been disclosed. I am glad to say that Dr. Nkrumah has now (on 22nd August) made a statement in the Legislative Assembly to the effect that the Report will be published very shortly with a statement of the Government's proposals in respect of its recommendations. He has promised the Assembly a full opportunity to discuss the Report and the Government's proposals. I understand from the Governor that the Report is expected to be published by 31st August, and that Dr. Nkrumah proposes to carry out most of its recommendations. I do not think we could look for more. I do not consider that the Report gives us grounds for going back on the undertaking I gave on 11th May, or should deter us from going ahead with the announcement of independence. I propose therefore that the announcement should be made at some time after the Cocoa Purchasing Commission Report is published but before 15th September, beyond which date the Governor advises me that it would be difficult to hold the position.

#### *The Protectorate*

15. The Northern Territories, unlike the rest of the Gold Coast, are a Protectorate, where we have Treaties with the Chiefs dating from the later years of the 19th century. During the last few years the Chiefs have, from time to time, argued that the existence of these Treaties could, and should, operate as a means of staying the grant of independence to the Gold Coast as a whole until such time as the successors to the signatories of those Treaties agreed to their abrogation. At a meeting with the Chiefs in May 1956 the Governor, with the authority of Her Majesty's Government, explained that Her Majesty's Government could not reasonably be expected to regard it as consistent with their policy of constitutional development to allow the Treaties to prevent or delay the attainment by the Gold Coast of full self-government; he pointed out that the North was already taking part in the political institutions of the country as a whole; and of course it has since participated in the general election. The Governor formed the impression from his meeting with the Chiefs that they had accepted the fact that they could not retain their protectorate status, though there is no doubt they are still not unnaturally suspicious of an independent African government.

#### *Togoland*

16. In May a plebiscite was held under United Nations auspices in the Trust Territory of British Togoland, the choice being between the following questions:—

- (1) Do you want the integration of Togoland under British administration with an independent Gold Coast?
- (2) Do you want the separation of Togoland under British administration from the Gold Coast and its continuation under trusteeship pending the ultimate determination of its political future?

The proportion of registered voters who participated was 82 per cent.; 58 per cent. of the votes cast were in favour of the first alternative; the actual voting was 93,095 to 67,492. In July the Trusteeship Council passed a resolution noting that the will of the majority of the inhabitants was for union with an independent Gold Coast

and recommending "that appropriate steps be taken in consultation with the administering authority for the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement for the Territory to become effective upon the attainment of independence by the Gold Coast". It is expected that this recommendation will be considered and, I imagine, endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in November.

#### *Commonwealth membership*

17. It has been explained to Dr. Nkrumah that "independence within the Commonwealth" does not *of itself* convey membership of the Commonwealth and that the latter requires the consent of all existing members. The Prime Minister wrote to the other Commonwealth Prime Ministers in July about Gold Coast membership of the Commonwealth, asking them whether they would agree in principle to accept an application for Commonwealth membership from the Gold Coast on the assumption that self-government was reached. If they agreed, it was proposed to send a further message when the question of membership had been raised and had become actual. All the Prime Ministers have in effect conveyed their agreement although the Union Prime Minister has done so grudgingly. The stage for a further message has not yet come; and I propose that we should consider its timing and form nearer the date of independence.

#### *Recommendations*

18. The conditions in my statement of 11th May have been fulfilled and in my view we are therefore committed to accepting the request of the new Gold Coast Government and Assembly for early independence. I accordingly recommend that:—

(a) we should inform the Gold Coast Government forthwith that Her Majesty's Government will at the first available opportunity introduce into Parliament a Bill to accord independence to the Gold Coast, and that, subject to Parliamentary approval, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government that independence should take effect on 6th March, 1957;

(b) I should make this decision public during the first fortnight of September (subject to (c) below) by means of a statement in Parliament (if sitting); otherwise by publication of a despatch to the Governor;

(c) other Commonwealth Governments should be given prior notice of our intention to proceed as in (a) and (b) above, our High Commissioners being given suitable briefing;

(d) the Cabinet should without further preliminaries authorise the preparation of the Bill required under (a) above and should invite the Legislation Committee to consider, as a matter of urgency, the steps needed to give it the requisite time and facilities early in the next Session. The Bill would be in the same general form as the Ceylon Independence Act of 1947, and would provide, in accordance with local wishes, that the name of the country should be *Ghana*. Provisions would have to be included to cover the incorporation in this new country of the Protectorate and Togoland, which are not at present part of Her Majesty's dominions; the precise form of these provisions presents some technical difficulty and is still being studied;

(e) the question of Commonwealth membership should be taken up separately as indicated in paragraph 17 above.

**251** CO 554/890, no 4

31 Aug 1956

**'Northern Territories': letter from C G Eastwood to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the means to end the protectorate status of the Northern Territories**

In the Preliminary Instructions to the Parliamentary Draftsman regarding the Gold Coast Independence Bill which was sent home in your confidential despatch of the 27th May, the Draftsman was asked to make provision for the Northern Territories to cease to be a Protectorate and to become part of Her Majesty's dominions, and for British Togoland also to become part of Her Majesty's dominions.

This of course means, to put it bluntly, that they both shall be "annexed" (though that word would not of course be used: they would be "deemed to be part of Her Majesty's dominions"). I doubt whether this should cause any difficulty in the case of Togoland where we will have the backing of the recent plebiscite and of a United Nations resolution, but it has been suggested that there might be rather embarrassing consequences if the Northern Territories were simply "annexed", particularly having regard to the fact that they are one of the areas where there is considerable opposition to the unitary form of government. We first thought that there might be undesirable implications for other parts of the Colonial Empire – such as the High Commission Territories in South Africa or the Federation of Malaya – but our Legal Advisers have disposed of this bogey. It still seems to us however that the Opposition in the Gold Coast and Members of the House of Commons here might make a considerable point of what they would say was arbitrary action on our part. You have of course already told the Protectorate Chiefs that H.M.G. will not let the Treaties stand in the way of Gold Coast independence and thus, in effect, that the Protectorate must come to an end. But, the critics could say, it is one thing simply to withdraw the Protectorate, as we withdrew "Paramouncy" in India in 1947; that leaves the formerly protected areas to make the best terms they can with the successor government; it is quite another thing to annex a formerly protected area and hand it over, bound, to the successor government.

We have therefore been considering whether there is any other way in which things can be done than simple annexation. Our Legal Advisers tell us that the only other possible course is to leave the Northern Territories juridically under Her Majesty's protection. This would be perfectly possible legally but that protection would in future have to be exercised by the Government of the Gold Coast. In other words the Northern Territories would become a dependency of the Gold Coast. They might of course continue to have as full representation in the Gold Coast Legislature as other parts of the country, as they do at present. Nevertheless it seems to us that to make them a dependency of the rest of the country would be open to even more objection than annexation followed by giving them equal status with the rest of the country. It would indeed weaken rather than strengthen their position *vis-à-vis* the Gold Coast Government. That Government might even argue from their continued protected status that they were not ready for full participation in the political organs of an independent country and might therefore exclude their representatives from the Legislature. We are not therefore much attracted by this alternative.

We did wonder whether it would be practicable simply to declare the Protectorate at an end and nothing more, somewhat on the lines of what happened in regard to

the Princely States in India. We are satisfied however that this would not be a starter. They simply could not be left in the air without any Head of State. Indian States had their Rulers who, I imagine (though I have not checked this) have now been replaced by the President of India. We imagine it is not a practical proposition to regard the Chiefs as Heads of their respective States and, if they were, who would be responsible for their external relations? It could only be the Gold Coast so they would in effect, in practice, still have something very like Protectorate status. All sorts of subsidiary difficulties would arise about nationality etc.

From the political point of view it is arguable that the best help we can give the Northern Territories is to make it clear in the Independence Bill that they are an integral part of the Gold Coast of *equal status with the rest of the country*. This would be the practical effect of annexation. From the purely legal standpoint the annexation procedure is certainly the simplest, since it will greatly facilitate the solution of many other subsidiary questions, such as those connected with nationality.

Our conclusion from all this is that, from both the legal and political angles annexation is the least objectionable procedure and that the possible criticism must be faced.

It has been suggested that tactically it might be a good thing to put the question to the Chiefs. The issue could be put to them quite simply:—

“You are going to be part of the Gold Coast; the rest of the country is part of Her Majesty’s dominions but the North is under Her protection exercised through the United Kingdom Government; the United Kingdom Government must drop out and though the Queen can still protect you, she could only do so through the Gold Coast Government, in which case you would have a status inferior to that of the South. There are only two practicable courses, (1) to remain under the Queen’s protection exercised through the Gold Coast Government, or (2) to become part of Her Majesty’s dominions in the same way as the rest of the country. It is for you to choose”.

But presumably this would have to be done in something like another Durbar and you may well think that it would be a mistake to have another Durbar on this subject.

May we have your comments on all this? I have thought it right to write at length but I think the conclusion is really quite simple and is that we must advise Ministers to go ahead with annexation and risk the criticisms. The criticisms may in the event not be very serious, though one cannot tell. Subject to what you may say, we shall proceed accordingly.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Arden-Clarke replied to Eastwood on 17 Sept 1956: ‘. . . I had an informal meeting lasting three hours with the Chiefs after the Durbar [at Tamale on 29 May 1956] and formed the impression that there was a general feeling that the advice of Her Majesty’s Government should be accepted and that there could be no question of secession from the Gold Coast; also that the Northern Chiefs had at last accepted the fact that they cannot retain their protectorate status as an integral part of an independent Gold Coast. In the circumstances I feel that it is unnecessary to hold another Durbar to put to the Chiefs the question suggested in the penultimate paragraph of your letter. I have consulted the Attorney-General and we are agreed that, from both legal and political points of view, annexation is the least objectionable procedure and that the possible criticism must be faced’ (CO 554/890, no 5).

**252** CO 554/1060, no 144

11 Sept 1956

**[Constitutional crisis]: CO record of a meeting between Mr Lennox-Boyd and a delegation from the NLM<sup>1</sup>**

*The Secretary of State* said that he was very glad to be able to see these representatives of the Delegation. Because of his other commitments the meeting could not be a very long one. He urged the Delegation to speak freely.

*Professor Busia* thanked the Secretary of State for receiving them. They were very glad to be able to make a personal appeal to him. They were in a difficult situation and needed his help.

He began by referring to the suggestion that the opposition parties should go and talk to representatives of the Gold Coast Government separately. He felt that this did not take account of the solidarity which had now been reached between the different parties represented in the Delegation. He was now the acknowledged leader of them all and, for instance, the representatives from the Northern Peoples Party would not find it easy to enter into talks with the Government unless he were present. He felt that Dr. Nkrumah's suggestion that the Opposition groups should be met separately was his way of trying to undermine the solidarity between them.

If the forecast in *The Observer* last Sunday had been correct in that the U.K. Government were thinking of making an announcement on independence this week "you would kill the Opposition in the Gold Coast". That was a mere statement of fact. They had had great difficulty in building it up to its present solidarity and strength. The Governor and the U.K. Government had often urged the importance of having a strong Opposition but he did not think that this idea was accepted by the C.P.P. who thought of the Opposition simply as the enemy of Dr. Nkrumah.

The end of the Opposition would also mean the lowering of the standards of public morality. The Enquiry into the Cocoa Purchasing Company had shown that that Company had been used for party purposes. He was sure that there was also a need for similar enquiries into other statutory corporations, for instance the Cocoa Marketing Board. He had himself produced a list of people who had received benefits from the Marketing Board simply because they were party men. If the Government found that it could keep itself in power by corruption and by using the corporations to reward its followers, then the Gold Coast was in for a system of one party government. There was a real danger of this. An early statement by the Secretary of State before the debate on the Jibowu Report would be interpreted in the Gold Coast as sanction by the Secretary of State for bribery.

"If", he said, "it was only a matter of waiting four or five years before we became the majority, perhaps we should not worry too much but the danger is that we may never come to power." There was a clear need for special safeguards to be embodied in the constitution. It was for this reason that they had asked for a Royal Commission.

If a Royal Commission was not possible there was an opportunity for the Secretary of State himself to solve the problem. Could he not come out and visit the Gold

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<sup>1</sup> The NLM delegation consisted of Busia, Braimah, R R Amponsah (general secretary, NLM, in Ashanti) and W E Ofori Atta (formerly of the UGCC, see part I of this volume, 19, note 9) of the GCP. Mr Hare was also present at the meeting.

Coast? It might mean a delay of one or two months but what was that in the life of a nation? If the Secretary of State could not come himself could he not send someone on his behalf?

*Mr Braimah* said that the Treaties between the Northern Territories and the Crown were still in force. Under these if they had to negotiate with a foreign power they had to do it through the Crown. It meant therefore that it was for the Secretary of State to see that the constitution was in a form acceptable to them.

They had specified the safeguards they wanted in the talk of the previous day with the Minister of State. Sir Frederick Bourne had recommended that there should be certain of these safeguards, e.g. Regional Assemblies and a House of Chiefs but that they should be established by ordinance and not in the constitution itself.

At the Durbar with the Governor at Tamale they had asked for a round table conference and the Governor had said that he would bring their wishes to the notice of Dr. Nkrumah. But the Governor as the constitutional head could not force Dr. Nkrumah to agree to these wishes.

“Self-government”, Mr. Braimah said, “has been forced on us. We will accept it but we want the safeguards embodied in the constitution and we would like to be consulted by H.M.G. on the minimum safeguards required”.

*Mr. Ofori Atta* said that one of the present Ministers of the Gold Coast Government had stated that he would like to abolish the Asanteman Council. If the Legislative Assembly was dominated by people from the South, as it would be, one could not tell what would happen.

He himself in 1947 had been one of the leaders of the United Gold Coast Convention and had been one of those arrested at the time. He had then tried to persuade Ashanti to agree to a unitary form of government but he now knew that that was not practicable.

On the bribery issue the Secretary of State, he said, had appointed a Commission in Nigeria. People in the Gold Coast respected him for this. He should be consistent and appoint commissions to enquire into the other corporations in the Gold Coast besides the C.P.C.

He emphasised the tendency to dictatorship or what he called the “personality cult”. Dr. Nkrumah’s head was, he understood, to appear on the stamps and on the currency of the new country. The name of Ghana had been chosen without any consultation with the country. The C.P.P. flag was to become the national flag.

The Secretary of State should recognize that Britain’s permanent allies in the Gold Coast were the Chiefs in the Northern Territories and Ashanti. They had faith in Britain and respect for its standards. They recalled also its pledge to help them in the development of their native institutions.

*Mr. Amponsah* said that the Assanteman Council at first insisted that there should be agreement on the constitution before a general election. After the election they insisted that agreement on the constitution was a prerequisite to independence.

*Mr. Amponsah* said that he had himself been on the Executive Committee of the C.P.P. and he knew that the C.P.P. wanted to abolish the Asanteman Council. “Nkrumah”, he said, “showed me a list of 26 people he intended to assassinate on independence. Our fears are reasonable and real”.

They asked for a federal system not because they wanted to divide the country but because the Gold Coast was not a natural unity. They believed that the only way to

preserve the existing unity was to build on a federal basis. A unitary form of government could, in their view, lead only to disunity and might lead to secession.

*The Secretary of State* thanked the Delegation for speaking with such candour. He said he fully appreciated their convictions.

He drew attention to his statement on 11th May.<sup>2</sup> He had long thought it essential to have a general election before independence and that election, he felt, would give an opportunity for the views of all to be expressed. The election had disclosed a clear majority for one party and the Legislative Assembly had passed a resolution asking for independence. He felt now under an obligation to live up to his declaration of the 11th May.

He emphasised, however, that the Opposition had a strong position. There was a great opportunity for them to play an important role in their country. The statutory boards were now to be brought more under the control of the Assembly and that would give the Opposition more power to control their operation.

He had listened very carefully to all they had had to say. He thought that the preoccupation of the Government over the Suez crisis would make it impossible for any statement about the future of the Gold Coast to be made this week but he would be misleading them if he left them in any doubt that a statement would be made at a very early date.

At the same time he would give most serious consideration to what they had said and he hoped they would not feel that their views had been brushed aside. While they must face up to the virtual certainty of a statement at an early date, he begged and prayed them to return to the Gold Coast and to play their part in the life of their people. "I will put all my influence" he said, "behind the Governor's urgings on Dr. Nkrumah to give reality to your regional requirements. I feel sure that we can hammer out a solution which will make possible the way of life that you want".

It was, he feared, a fact that the Gold Coast is not large enough for a solution on the Nigerian lines. He at first had thought that something of this sort might be possible but the task of creating and staffing all the different governments would, he was now convinced, have doomed such a course to disaster. He repeated that regionalism offered in his view great hope and that he would use all his influence to see that the regional proposals were welded into the constitution to become part of the permanent fabric of the country. He would take this up with the Governor straight away. He repeated his strong advice that they should return to the Gold Coast and use their position there to the best advantage and was sure they would never regret doing so.

Before the meeting broke up *Mr. Braimah* said that they were anxious that there should be some provision whereby the North should have control of funds for its development. The North did not have the men of education to provide for its government and it was largely manned and ruled from the South. It was very important that they should be assured of funds for development.

*Professor Busia* again emphasised that the time for trying to deal with the opposition parties separately was passed. He said that he himself had a long standing obligation to go now to Holland, where he had undertaken to deliver lectures at a

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<sup>2</sup> See 228 and 250, para 2.

University during the winter term but if his presence was really essential he thought the University authorities would understand if he returned to the Gold Coast.

As the Delegation left the room Professor Busia, Mr. Amponsah and Mr. Ofori Atta all made remarks to the effect that in discussions the opposition parties would not be found unreasonable.

## 253 CAB 128/30/2, CM 64(56)2

11 Sept 1956

### 'Gold Coast': Cabinet conclusions on the final stages of constitutional advance<sup>1</sup>

The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Colonial Secretary (C.P.(56) 204)<sup>2</sup> recommending that the remaining steps should now be taken to accord full self-government to the Gold Coast under the new name of Ghana and that the necessary legislation for this purpose should be prepared for introduction in the forthcoming session of Parliament.

*The Colonial Secretary* recalled that, with the Cabinet's approval, he had announced in Parliament on 11th May that the United Kingdom Government would be prepared to promote the final stages of constitutional advance in the Gold Coast towards full self-government after the people of the Gold Coast had been given the opportunity in a fresh general election to express their views on the proposed constitution and a motion calling for independence had been passed by a reasonable majority in the newly elected legislature. Both of these requirements had now been fulfilled and, although the Opposition Parties in the Gold Coast, mustering less than one-third of the seats in the newly elected legislature, had adopted an intransigent attitude and had refrained from voting on the motion for self-government, this was not a sufficient reason for modifying the policy to which the United Kingdom Government were committed. Every effort had been made to meet the wishes of the Opposition Parties by introducing the greatest possible measure of regional devolution into the new constitutional arrangements, but it would not have been practicable to have gone further and devised a federal form of constitution for the Gold Coast. Given the safeguards provided by the arrangements for regional devolution, the right course for the dissident Parties was to form themselves into an effective Parliamentary Opposition and to attempt to make the constitution work. He had emphasised this to a group of Opposition leaders from the Gold Coast now in London.

There were two further points. First, as regards corruption in public life, the Prime Minister (Dr. Nkrumah) had announced that the report of the recent Commission of Enquiry into irregularities in the finances of the Cocoa Purchasing Company would be published in full and that steps would be taken to bring the finances of such bodies under closer Parliamentary control. Secondly, the people of the Togoland Trust Territory proposed to appeal to the United Nations against the termination of trustee status for their territory. But the Trusteeship Council had, by a virtually unanimous decision, already decided to approve the termination of the trusteeship and there was little doubt that their recommendation would be endorsed by the General Assembly.

<sup>1</sup> Previous reference: see 228.

<sup>2</sup> See 250.

He therefore proposed to issue in the following week a public statement on the advance of the Gold Coast to full self-government with effect from 6th March, 1957, and to introduce the necessary legislation in the forthcoming session. The risk must be accepted that this announcement might lead to disturbances in the Gold Coast; but there was a certainty of much more serious disorder if the Government failed to fulfil their undertakings.

In discussion the following points were made:-

(a) *The Minister Of Housing*<sup>3</sup> said that the introduction of this unitary constitution would have the effect of placing the tribal inhabitants of the Central and Northern Territories of the Gold Coast under the control of the more advanced and educated merchant groups in the coastal areas. Moreover, it was proposed to withdraw from the Northern Territories without their consent the protectorate status which they now enjoyed. This was not a satisfactory discharge of our responsibilities. He strongly urged that, even at this late stage, further consideration should be given to the possibility of adopting a federal system.

*The Colonial Secretary* said that he was satisfied that, both on economic and financial grounds, the Gold Coast, with five million inhabitants, was too small to be divided into the five separate units which a federal system would entail. Nor was there any practicable alternative but to abrogate the protectorate treaties when, under any system of self-government, we should be unable to fulfil our obligations under them. The Chiefs concerned had seen that this was inevitable, and the provisions in the constitution for devolution of authority contemplated a House of Chiefs in the Northern Territory.

*The Commonwealth Secretary* endorsed the views expressed by the Colonial Secretary on these points.

Discussion showed that it was the general view of the Cabinet that, having regard to undertakings already given, there was now no alternative but to proceed with the introduction of the unitary constitution proposed for the Gold Coast.

(b) It would, however, be necessary to examine the implications for our policy in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland of the decision to withdraw protectorate status from the Northern Territories in the Gold Coast. The Governments of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had been assured that we could not withdraw protectorate status from the native populations in their territories which enjoyed it. It would now be necessary to satisfy these Governments that a policy in regard to protectorates was being followed which was not inconsistent as between one colonial territory and another.

(c) *The Chancellor Of The Exchequer*<sup>4</sup> said that it should be made clear to the Gold Coast Government that the proposed advance to self-government status would not carry with it a claim to any funds of the Colonial Development and Welfare Corporation. Moreover, Gold Coast balances now held in London amounted to nearly £100 millions. In view of the strains which sterling must be expected to suffer in the period immediately ahead, it might be desirable to defer the date on which full self-government should come into effect in case this might involve the risk of these balances being withdrawn for investment elsewhere.

On this, however, it was pointed out that the Gold Coast authorities were already

<sup>3</sup> Mr D E Duncan-Sandys.

<sup>4</sup> Mr M H Macmillan.

free to withdraw their balances from London, should they so wish, and it was agreed that the next stage of constitutional advance could not be deferred on that account.

The Cabinet:-

(1) Approved the proposals in paragraph 18 of C.P.(56) 204.

(2) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary and the Colonial Secretary, in consultation, to give further consideration to the implications for Commonwealth policy of the point recorded in paragraph (b) above.

## 254 CO 554/808, no 383

12 Sept 1956

### [Constitutional crisis]: outward unnumbered telegram from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on his meeting with the NLM delegation and a declaration by HMG on the date of independence

Following on the Minister of State's long interview with Opposition Delegation he and I had further three-quarters of an hour's talk on the 11th September with Busia, Braimah, Amponsah and Ofori Atta.<sup>1</sup>

2. I must say that both Minister of State and I are impressed by their sincerity, the conviction with which their views are held and the moderation of their attitude. I also feel that because of their Treaties H.M.G. have a special moral responsibility towards Northern Territories. Busia and others told the Minister of State that they welcomed the coming of independence of the Gold Coast and even the members from the North accepted it as inevitable. There was a certain amount of talk of a federal constitution but this was not pressed. They would be reasonably satisfied if the provisions for the Regional Assemblies and for second Chambers for any region that desired them were written into the constitution and if the machinery for amending the constitution were tightened up – in fact for something on the lines of the annex to the minutes of your most valuable meeting with Standing Committee of Northern Territories Council on 14th August. They said more than once that they did not want to be unreasonable.

3. It seems to me most important that Nkrumah should do all he can to reconcile the Opposition to the new constitution. Indeed would it be too much to say that if he does not do so his Government's writ may not run in Ashanti or the Northern Territories; and I do not see why he should not go a long way to meet them on the above points. The Minister of State told them that he had reason to believe that Nkrumah would be willing to meet the opposition parties individually. They all reacted very strongly to suggestion that he would not wish to meet them collectively. Busia emphasised that there was complete solidarity between all parties represented in the Delegation and he was now leader of the whole Opposition. The N.P.P. for instance would find it difficult to hold discussions with Nkrumah without his being present. They have worked hard to secure this solidarity and regarded Nkrumah's line as simply an attempt to break them up again.

4. I feel that if Nkrumah sticks to this line he is being unreasonable, and that he

<sup>1</sup> See 252. The record of the meeting between Mr Hare and the NLM delegation is not reproduced in this collection.

and his colleagues ought to be willing to meet an opposition delegation composed more or less on the lines of that which I have received. I shall be grateful if you will do all you can to persuade him to do so.

5. Minister of State and I both impressed on the Delegation the importance of their returning to play their part in the Legislature and in particular to be there for the debate on the Jibowu Report and we have some hope that they will do so though I fear it is unlikely that many of them will be back by Friday or even Monday. Apparently they intend to move some further motion on the Jibowu Report.

6. Busia himself as you know is pledged to go to Holland shortly till December but he did say that if he was really needed he would be willing to return to the Gold Coast. It seems to me essential that he should be there at this critical period. If you can tell me that Nkrumah will receive a united Opposition delegation to discuss their requests seriously I think I can persuade him to return.

7. The Delegation asked for the appointment of a Royal Commission. We held out no hope of that. Failing that they also asked that I should myself come out. I fear that would not be possible, but Minister of State would be very willing to come and I think it would be excellent that he should do so if it would assist in bringing about a reasonable compromise between the Government and Opposition. Alternatively we could pursue the idea of Nkrumah and possibly yourself coming home. I shall be glad of your views on this. Such visits would of course have to take place after declaration by H.M.G. of date of independence.

8. Delegation asked that this declaration should not be made before debates on Jibowu Report were over as declaration would encourage Nkrumah to treat the Report too lightly. I told them that preoccupation of Government over Suez would make any statement this week impossible but that I should be misleading them if I left them in any doubt that a statement would be made at a very early date.

9. The Cabinet have in fact now agreed that the statement should be made. I think however that there is substance in the view that Nkrumah should be left in doubt as to position till the Jibowu debates are over. I shall be grateful therefore if you will not (repeat not) pass this information on to him just yet. I am sorry it will not be practicable to make announcement in the House. Please telegraph your suggestions as to the date on which the despatch to you should now be sent and published.

10. Since the above was drafted I have received your telegram No.46. I see your difficulties but I am afraid I still feel strongly that statement should not be made until at least several days after Jibowu debate has been concluded:-

- (a) because of effect on Nkrumah's attitude to report if he knows that statement is about to be made; and
- (b) because it would look very bad if much mud was stirred up in the debate and statement was made practically simultaneously.

Surely you could explain to Nkrumah that matters other than Suez however important must take a back seat for the next few days.

11. Please however telegraph your views again after you have considered this telegram.

**255** CO 554/808, no 387

14 Sept 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: inward telegram (reply) no 48 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox Boyd urging that there should be no delay in announcing the date of independence

Your secret and Personal telegram WAF 16/2/05.<sup>1</sup>

I note that you were impressed by the moderate attitude of the Opposition delegation. Here their attitude from press and platform remains as belligerent and uncompromising as ever.

2. You should know that delay in announcing firm date for independence which was confidently expected this week is causing rapid deterioration in the situation. Government circles regard this announcement as the culmination of their years "struggle for S.G". They feel that they have been compelled to endure many things including an unnecessary general election in order to get such an announcement made. Delay in carrying out pledge given by the British Government to announce a firm date for independence is now being attributed to the whole Opposition and to the vacillation, or even to the bad faith of the British Government. I was able to explain to Nkrumah that the British Government's preoccupations with Suez inevitably involved delay and this explanation was accepted with reluctance. Now that Parliamentary time is being given for a debate on Cyprus this explanation no longer holds water and it is openly being said that if the only way for the Gold Coast to move the British Government is to behave like Cyprus – then let Cyprus be our model.

3. As to the Jibowu Report. Government circles regard this as yet another of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that have had to be endured for the sake of "freedom". They have published report, accepted its main recommendations setting out their plans to prevent a recurrence of abuses, have allocated Parliamentary time to discuss these matters and deferred debate to suit the convenience of an absentee Opposition. The Opposition have tabled motions demanding the resignation or the dismissal of Nkrumah, Gbedemah and Ako Adjei and a Royal Commission into the activities of the principal statutory marketing and development corporations. The debate which starts today and continues on Monday, and possibly Tuesday, is unlikely to stir up any more mud than Report has already stirred and will probably deteriorate into an unseemly vitriolic slanging match. It will have little effect on the standing of the Government in the eyes of the electorate and its importance can be judged by the fact that the Leader of the Opposition does not deem it worth attending. To attribute delay in making announcement on independence to this Report would be regarded here as evidence of bad faith on the part of the British Government.

4. You will by now have received Nkrumah's personal message.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See 254.

<sup>2</sup> Nkrumah's message was reported in inward tel no 47 from Arden-Clarke to Lennox-Boyd, 13 Sept 1956. It stated: 'If firm date for Independence is not announced before Assembly rises on 18th September I shall be in political difficulties. Opposition propaganda is to effect that their Delegation in London has succeeded in persuading you to defer date of announcement of self-government for Ghana. It will be difficult for me to explain reason for delay of announcement to my back-benchers, who are suspicious and restive. Very grateful for anything you can do to enable me to announce in Assembly that 6th March, 1957, has been fixed as date for Independence' (CO 554/808, no 384).

5. In these circumstances prevailing here I cannot (repeat not) advise any further delay in announcing firm date for independence and must press strongly for the publication of your despatch in time for announcement to be made in the Assembly before it rises at midday on Tuesday the 18th after the debates arising out of the Jibowu report have ended.

6. I will deal with other points raised in your telegram in a subsequent communication.

**256** CO 554/808, no 404

15 Sept 1956

[Independence date]: despatch no 1183 from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke confirming the date of independence as 6 Mar 1957

I duly received your despatch No.939 of 23rd August concerning the motion passed in the Legislative Assembly on 3rd August calling for independence within the Commonwealth.

2. Your despatch recalls my statement in the House of Commons on the 11th May that if a general election were held in the Gold Coast, Her Majesty's Government would be ready to accept a motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth passed by a reasonable majority in a newly elected Legislative Assembly, and then to declare a firm date for independence.

3. I note that the general election held on the 12th and 17th July resulted in the return to power of the Convention Peoples Party with a majority of over two-thirds, the party holding 72 of the 104 seats in the present Legislative Assembly.

4. I also note that on the 3rd August the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast introduced a motion in the Legislative Assembly calling upon Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom as soon as practicable this year to procure the enactment of legislation to provide for the independence of the Gold Coast as a sovereign and independent state within the Commonwealth under the name of Ghana. I note that this motion was passed by 72 votes to none, the Opposition members having absented themselves from the debate.

5. Since the motion calling for independence within the Commonwealth has been passed in the newly elected Legislative Assembly by a majority, which must clearly be regarded as reasonable, I now have the honour to inform you that Her Majesty's Government will at the first available opportunity introduce into the United Kingdom Parliament a Bill to accord independence to the Gold Coast and, subject to Parliamentary approval, Her Majesty's Government intend that independence should come about on the 6th March 1957.

6. The Trust Territory of Togoland under British Administration is at present administered as part of the Gold Coast. A plebiscite conducted in the presence of United Nations observers in May resulted in a clear majority vote in favour of union with an independent Gold Coast. The Trusteeship Council of the United Nations passed a resolution in July noting that the will of the majority of the inhabitants was for union with an independent Gold Coast, and recommending that steps should be taken for the Trusteeship Agreement to be terminated upon the attainment of independence by the Gold Coast. Provided that this resolution is endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations the appropriate action will be taken to include the territory of British Togoland within the independent Gold Coast.

7. Her Majesty's Government have noted the desire expressed in the Legislative Assembly motion of the 3rd August that the name of the Gold Coast should be changed to Ghana upon the attainment of independence. The necessary legal steps will be taken to give effect to this desire.

8. It is the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that at this turning point in the history of the Gold Coast all sections of the community will be able to work together for the general good. In the name of Her Majesty's Government I wish to convey to the Government and people of the country our heartfelt good wishes for its future success.

**257** CO 554/820, no 1

15–18 Sept 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: minutes by M Z Terry, Sir J Macpherson and Mr Hare on the question of further CPP concessions over the constitution

[These minutes were written after the meeting between Lennox-Boyd and Hare and the NLM leaders (see 252). On 17 Sept, Lennox-Boyd sent a message to Nkrumah through Arden-Clarke in which he stated: 'I am sure there will be no untoward hitches between now and the 6th March and I look forward to Ghana being welcomed as an independent member of the British Commonwealth.' He also expressed his hope that with goodwill on both sides, it might still be possible to bridge the gap between the government and the NLM. The message ended with a note to Arden-Clarke authorising the governor, if he thought it desirable, to add a sentence to the effect that while it would not be possible for Lennox-Boyd to visit the Gold Coast in the near future, Mr Hare would be willing to go out if Nkrumah and Arden-Clarke thought his presence would be of any value (CO 554/808, no 397, outward unnumbered tel, Lennox-Boyd to Arden-Clarke, 17 Sept 1956).]

... 9. It is clear from the above that there are no legitimate grounds for insisting that the C.P.P. should make further concessions in regard to the constitution. The Secretary of State has already publicly stated that since all efforts to bring the parties together have failed, he has decided that the only way to resolve the deadlock is by means of a general election. The general election has accordingly been held, and Dr. Nkrumah will undoubtedly *and legitimately*<sup>1</sup> take the line that the terms of the bargain have been fulfilled. It would be unrealistic in such circumstances and given the preceding history of events to expect him to be prepared to alter his constitutional proposals now that he has done all that the Secretary of State asked for.

10. At their meeting in the Colonial Office this week, the Opposition mentioned two major points:—

- (a) that the powers of Regional Assemblies should be increased and that both they and their powers should be written into the constitution; and
- (b) that the procedure for constitutional amendment proposed in the Government White Paper should be revised.

Both these points are covered in detail by the Government White Paper which was published three months before the election. In the case of the Regional Assemblies,

<sup>1</sup> Emphasis throughout in original.

the Government not only have the backing of an electoral victory to support their proposals but also the authority of the Bourne Report itself which recommended that Regional Assemblies (a) should have no legislative or financial powers, and (b) should be set up by separate Government ordinance and not be enshrined in the constitution. With such backing it seems unrealistic to expect that the C.P.P. will be prepared to change its policy.

11. As regards the procedure for constitutional amendment, it has already been suggested in Office minutes that when the draft amendment to the Constitutional Order in Council is received here it should be put semi-officially to the Gold Coast Government (via the Governor) that they should substitute for a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, a two-thirds majority of the total membership of the Assembly. The latter is the practice in a number of other Commonwealth countries. At his meeting with the Standing Committee of the Northern Territories Council on 14th August, the Governor stated that he had good reason to hope that the Government would be prepared to provide that amendments to the constitution should require a two-thirds majority of all members of the Assembly. This seems a pretty clear hint that this point at least will be achieved *without further effort on our part*.

12. There is thus virtually no room left for further manoeuvre in regard to the terms of the constitution; the one card which remains to be played is the Governor's personal influence with the Prime Minister, which is said to be strong. *The one and only means by which any further small concessions are to be gained, therefore, is by doing everything possible to enhance the Prime Minister's personal confidence in the Governor.*

13. It has been assumed in the past that the Colonial Office will accept the Government's proposals in regard to the constitution and simply translate them into the appropriate legal form (subject to possibly making semi-official representations through the Governor on a few important points as has already been done with some success in respect of the judiciary). The disadvantages of any other course (i.e. of attempting to bring Colonial Office pressure to bear on the Gold Coast Government) are as follows:-

(i) the Colonial Office position would be very weak having regard to the previous history . . . in particular the fact that the Secretary of State has unequivocally and publicly agreed that the issue should be put to the test of a general election and that he would accept the result.

(ii) There would be no point in "insisting" on particular constitutional forms since on the day after independence the Gold Coast Government will be able to rewrite the constitution in whatever form it wants; this is what independence means.

(iii) Further intervention by the Colonial Office at this stage would undoubtedly do very real harm to the Opposition cause. It would increase Government hostility towards the Opposition and by aggravating bad feeling between the parties would almost certainly make the Government adopt a more vindictive policy towards the Opposition after independence. The only hope for a more tolerant atmosphere between the parties lies in their being brought to realise that they have got to come to terms directly with each other; and that the day is now definitely and firmly over when they can appeal to the intervention of an outside authority. So long as they are allowed to continue to hope that they can so appeal to an outside

authority, there will be no hope of peace within the Gold Coast. This view has already been firmly expressed by the Governor in advice to the Secretary of State.<sup>2</sup>

(iv) Any further intervention by the Colonial Office on the constitutional issue would, having regard to the terms of the personal pledge to Dr. Nkrumah of 4th April<sup>3</sup> and of the public pledge of 11th May,<sup>4</sup> be too easily open to interpretation as a breach of faith by the British Government. It would thus be acutely provocative and would lose Her Majesty's Government considerable goodwill with the present Gold Coast Government. In this way future relations between the Gold Coast on the one hand and the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth on the other would be seriously prejudiced at a time when the declared policy is to build up an atmosphere of confidence and goodwill.

14. The only possible conclusion to draw from the above analysis is that the only hope in present circumstances is to leave this to the Governor to play in his own way during the next six months, since the Governor's personal influence with Dr. Nkrumah is the one remaining hold which H.M.G. has over the situation. Further intervention by the Colonial Office in regard to the constitutional issue will almost certainly be fruitless and quite certainly be politically provocative.

M.Z.T.  
15.9.56

#### *Minister of State*

I think you will wish to see Miss Terry's good and forceful note opposite. . . .

Miss Terry . . . shows that there is very little ground left for manoeuvre in regard to the terms of the Constitution. I have asked myself whether I too light-heartedly applauded the proposals which emerged from the discussion which you and the Secretary of State had with the N.L.M. delegation (following the interview you had with them). But I am quite unrepentant. Whatever the facts regarding the process of working out the form of the new Constitution and however badly or ineptly the Opposition have behaved, the truth in my view is that the apprehensions felt by the Ashantis and the people of the N.T's are well founded. And the danger of violent opposition to the Government is very real. What we have been doing in the past week – right up to the Secretary of State's personal message to Nkrumah on 17th September – is to try to persuade Nkrumah to meet the Opposition and *discuss* the safeguards that can properly be given to Ashanti and the N.T's, and to try to persuade the Opposition to behave responsibly. Our concern is that Ghana should have peace and not turmoil.

There remains the question whether the offer of Ministerial help from here will hinder rather than help, and whether the only hope isn't to rely on Sir Charles

<sup>2</sup> Miss Terry added a footnote to para 13(iii) of her minute: 'Dr Busia's appeal in "The Times" of 14th September for the Secretary of State to visit the Gold Coast clearly demonstrates that he still has not faced up to the realities of independence despite his protestations to the contrary. The time has come when Dr Busia should shoulder his own responsibilities instead of shifting them on the Secretary of State whilst he removes himself from the political arena.'

<sup>3</sup> See 224.

<sup>4</sup> See 250, para 2.

Arden-Clarke's influence with Nkrumah. I agree that we musn't thrust our help upon Nkrumah, and it has been left to the Governor to decide whether a visit by you should be proposed to Nkrumah. Sir Charles's influence with Nkrumah is very great but because he has been bound to back his Ministers his influence can be exerted only on Nkrumah, and he would not be completely effective as a bridge between the Government and the Opposition.

J.S.M.  
18.9.56

*Sir J Macpherson*

There is much truth in what Miss Terry says and she also says it with admirable clarity. But what you indicate at "X" must also be valid.

I think we can only wait for the Governor's reactions and then discuss.

J.H.H.  
18.9.56

**258** CO 554/808, no 422

26 Sept 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Sir J Macpherson enclosing a message from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the NLM. *Enclosure*: letter from Nkrumah to Arden-Clarke, 25 Sept 1956

[In replying to this letter, Macpherson informed Arden-Clarke that Lennox-Boyd found Nkrumah's message 'reassuring' and that there was 'nothing to criticise in the very fair way' Nkrumah now seemed to be setting out to achieve a measure of agreement by direct negotiation between government and opposition. He added that while Lennox-Boyd did not wish to pursue the idea of a visit by Hare at the moment, the secretary of state was still of the opinion that such a visit might eventually prove useful and that Hare would be ready to go out at short notice if required. Much depended on developments within the next fortnight (CO 554/808, no 424, letter from Macpherson to Arden-Clarke, 4 Oct 1956).]

You will remember that on the 17th September the Secretary of State telegraphed a personal message<sup>1</sup> for Nkrumah, which I passed on to him. I now enclose a copy of Nkrumah's reply which I thought the Secretary of State might like to see without any paraphrase. I should perhaps assure you that this letter was in no way inspired by me!

In my saving telegram of the 21st September, I said that I had not conveyed to Nkrumah the suggestion of a possible visit by the Minister of State because there was some prospect of a compromise being reached without extraneous intervention. I still hold this view of the prospect and do not think it would be advisable for the Minister of State to come here unless it was the genuine desire of both sides that he should do so. All the indications are that the Government would prefer that he did not come, and this is reflected in Nkrumah's letter.

<sup>1</sup> See 257, note.

## Enclosure to 258

I would be most grateful if you would convey to the Secretary of State my thanks for, and my appreciation of, his kind and helpful personal message which you quoted in your letter of the 18th September.

My colleagues and I are happy that the period of waiting and political uncertainty is now over. We are pressing on with the finalisation of our constitutional proposals with renewed vigour. I am very grateful to the Secretary of State for the patience, sympathy and goodwill which has been shown to us by Her Majesty's Government throughout. This co-operative and sympathetic attitude will ensure that the transfer of power from Her Majesty's Government to the new Government of Ghana takes place in the happy atmosphere of a coming-of-age celebration.

I am very glad that the Secretary of State saw the Opposition Leaders in London and was able to persuade them to take a more reasonable view of the Gold Coast's constitutional problems. Unfortunately there is still a great difference between what they say privately in London and what they declare publicly in the Gold Coast. Nevertheless I believe that, when the Secretary of State sees the proposals for the new constitution which we have drawn up, he will agree that we do in fact provide for much of what the Opposition have been demanding.

The difficulty, as you know, is that the Opposition have always refused to discuss their proposals in any detail: they boycotted the Select Committee appointed by the late Assembly to examine the question of a federal system of Government and a Second Chamber for the Gold Coast, refusing to allow members to serve on it or to give evidence before it; they refused to meet Sir Frederick Bourne or to disclose to him their detailed proposals; they refused to attend the Achimota Conference; they walked out from the debate on the Government's constitutional proposals; and they boycotted the debate on the Government's Motion seeking the Assembly's authority to approach Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom for the final transfer of power to the Government and people of the Gold Coast.

We have now reached a stage where the aspects of the problem which cause the Government the most concern are the practical administrative difficulties of setting up with the limited trained personnel at its disposal the elaborate full-scale Regional organisations which are needed to secure a greater measure of Regional devolution than has so far been achieved.

It is very unfortunate that leading journals of opinion in the United Kingdom such as "The Times" should continue to publish criticisms of the Government's conduct by the Leader of the Opposition when he refuses to return to the Gold Coast and make these criticisms in the Assembly where they can be effectively answered. I have not so far replied to these attacks for I regard it as an important constitutional principle to establish on the eve of Independence that such controversies should be conducted in the Gold Coast and within the normal Parliamentary framework.

For this reason I should be obliged if you would inform Mr. Lennox-Boyd that, while I am grateful to him for enquiring whether there is anything he can do, I prefer to continue to pursue the policy of making every reasonable endeavour to deal with the Opposition direct.

I hope to publish our White Paper on the Constitution not later than the *22nd October* and to begin the debate on the Government's proposals in the Assembly in the first week in November. The Government Chief Whip is already in touch with his

opposite number and will explain that, in order to see how far agreement can be reached on the constitution, the Government will invite representatives of the Opposition in the Assembly to meet members of the Government to work through the proposed constitution, Article by Article. When any change or addition is agreed the Government undertakes to adopt the change. Such differences as have not been resolved in this way can be decided after debate and vote in the Assembly.

I thank you with all my heart for your congratulations on the announcement of a firm date for the attainment of Independence. I have at all times been deeply grateful for your help and your counsel and I know full well that, so long as you remain as Governor, I can rely upon your unfailing support.

**259** CO 554/808, no 419 28 Sept 1956  
**[Constitutional crisis]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Dr Busia urging him to return to the Gold Coast**

[This letter was prompted by Arden-Clarke. In a letter to Lennox-Boyd referring to Busia's lobbying activities in London and his letters to *The Times*, Arden-Clarke stated: 'In the circumstances you may like to consider telling Busia that it is his duty, as the Leader of the Opposition, to stop frolicking about on the Continent and in England, to return to the Gold Coast and to take up Nkrumah's offer of discussions without delay' (CO 554/808, no 313, letter from Arden-Clarke to Lennox-Boyd, 24 Sept 1956). In the event, Busia did not finally return to the Gold Coast until the end of the year. Reporting his decision to return, Lennox-Boyd acknowledged that his prolonged absence had been a 'handicap to compromise' (CO 554/1060, no 186, unnumbered outward tel, Lennox-Boyd to Arden-Clarke, 24 Dec 1956).]

When you brought members of your Delegation to see me a fortnight ago, you told me that if you were really needed you would be willing to return to the Gold Coast.<sup>1</sup>

I have been heartened by the response of both Government and Opposition to the announcement of the date of independence. In particular I have been encouraged to read the Prime Minister's offer to discuss constitutional questions with representatives of the Opposition and the reply of Mr. Owusu on behalf of the Opposition to this offer.

As a result of a letter just received from the Governor I am now writing to you to say that I consider it your duty as Leader of the Opposition to return to the Gold Coast as soon as you can and to take up Dr. Nkrumah's offer of discussion without delay. You may of course have come to the same conclusion.

I do realise that this will involve your breaking commitments which you had entered into before you became Leader of the Opposition and that it may well be difficult for you to do this. But at the present critical juncture in the history of the Gold Coast you will, I know, agree with me that promotion of its interests must be for the Leader of the Opposition paramount over all other considerations.

May I tell the Governor that you will be returning within the next few days? Of course if I can do anything to help you to obtain a seat on an aeroplane I shall be glad to do so.

<sup>1</sup> See 252.

**260** CO 554/808, no 405

11 Oct 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: outward unnumbered telegram from Sir J Macpherson to Sir C Arden-Clarke reporting an interview with Dr Busia

Busia called on me this Thursday morning and I gave him wholesome advice. I think he is genuinely anxious to make next week's discussions with Government a success but he fears that in the last few weeks the extremists (on either side) may have gained ascendancy.

2. He was much concerned at report in London papers that Nkrumah is insisting that talks should be limited to members of Legislative Assembly. Busia said that he would entirely support Nkrumah in the view that ultimate responsibility must rest with the Assembly but at this stage before the constitution is discussed in the Assembly he felt it really important that the traditional elements such as the Na Yiri<sup>1</sup> and Asantehene who have a definite point of view which is not fully represented in the Assembly should be brought into consultation. It does indeed seem not unreasonable that there should be one or two representatives of the Territorial Councils at these pre-Assembly talks. Could you bring any pressure to bear on Nkrumah on this? Busia said he would be on very weak wicket in retraining his extremists if talks were limited to Assembly members. This might even lead to boycott of the discussions altogether. I told Busia that I thought that this would be crass folly and I feel pretty sure that he personally agrees. I also suggested that he should ask to see Nkrumah personally in accommodating mood.

3. He felt there would be better chance of discussions succeeding if they took place in the presence of some impartial person. He enquired again whether there would be any chance of the Secretary of State or Minister of State coming out. I told him that these matters should be settled in Gold Coast and that it would be worse than useless if a Minister appeared to come out to support one side only and that the Opposition. If the request came from both sides the situation would be different. In fact it would be impossible for the Secretary of State to come out in the near future and very difficult for the Minister of State to do so before the 20th October at the earliest. Would it be useful if talks took place at the Castle in the presence of yourself or Hadow? You have no doubt considered this already.

4. Busia knew that it had been intention of Gold Coast Government to publish some document on 15th October. I evaded answering question as to whether we had seen this document, as I do not know whether in the light of comments which the Secretary of State has felt bound to make on the Government's Proposals for the constitution (see his telegram No. 570) they will still wish to publish them. Busia was, however, told that we had some indication that Gold Coast Ministers would make a genuine effort to meet Opposition requests. This was based on fact that in some respect their Proposals go further towards doing so than Bourne or Achimota Reports.

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<sup>1</sup> Na Yiri, the Paramount of the Mamprussi people of the Northern Territories and a major figure in the Northern People's Party and hence in the NLM.

**261** CO 554/891, no 13

19 Oct 1956

[Colonial development and welfare]: letter from A D Peck (Treasury)<sup>1</sup> to A N Galsworthy<sup>2</sup> on the unspent balance of the Gold Coast CD(&W) allocation

[On 16 July 1956 Arden-Clarke informed Lennox-Boyd that the Gold Coast government had undertaken a review of its development schemes financed from CD(&W) funds. It was originally estimated that the amount which would be lost to the Gold Coast if the approved CD(&W) grant ended at independence in Mar 1957 would be of the order of £500,000. This estimate, which was subsequently re-calculated to be of the order of £1 million, included a grant of £350,000 to Kumasi College of Technology. Arden-Clarke explained that the schemes involved would be disrupted if the unspent CD(&W) balance were not made available after independence. The government had recently reviewed the first development plan and had been obliged, for lack of funds, to defer certain projects and also to raise funds set aside for the second plan to the extent of £12.8 million in order to complete the plan and add to it a number of urgently needed projects. If it were now decided to end the CD(&W) grant at independence, it might be necessary either to curtail schemes on financial grounds or to attempt to rush their completion. The latter course would, in a number of cases, lead to wasteful spending (CO 554/891, no 2, inward tel no 362, Arden-Clarke to Lennox-Boyd). Discussions between the CO and Treasury on the unspent CD(&W) allocation were held in Oct 1956 (see *ibid*, no 9, minute by Vile, 11 Oct 1956). This letter from Peck stated the Treasury position.]

I am writing to confirm what I think Rawlinson has already told you, namely that we think it would be wrong to allow the Gold Coast to be given access to the remainder of her C.D. and W. allocation. You are, of course, familiar with the line of argument which leads us to this conclusion since we discussed the matter at considerable length when you were kind enough to come over. I need, therefore, only summarise our arguments which are:-

- (i) that C. D. & W. money is intended for colonies and not for independent members of the Commonwealth;
- (ii) that in our present very difficult financial situation it is vital to retrench wherever we can. The amount involved for the Gold Coast must be no more than marginal. I believe that her revenues are running around £50–55m. and that she has reserves of £60m.
- (iii) just as the case for a concession on financial grounds is extremely weak, the case on political grounds for making some gesture is far from convincing. Given our policy of concentrating our resources on areas where we have vital interests at stake, it would seem quite wrong to expend them in the Gold Coast. Surely it cannot be argued that a refusal to make the money available would do very serious political damage in an area in which we are vitally interested?

I should perhaps add that we think that our case is reinforced by the fact that we are still faced with the possibility of having to pay up large sums of money in the years ahead for the Volta River project.

I am copying this to Hunt in the Commonwealth Relations Office.

<sup>1</sup> Assistant secretary.

<sup>2</sup> CO principal, 1946; assistant secretary, 1947; chief secretary, West African Inter-Territorial Conference, 1951–1954; assistant under-secretary of state from 1956 (responsible for Economic General, Finance and Statistics Departments).

**262** CO 554/891, no 14

23 Oct 1956

[Colonial development and welfare]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Mr Macmillan (Exchequer)<sup>1</sup> urging reconsideration of the Treasury decision on the unspent balance of the Gold Coast CD(&W) allocation

[Home supported Lennox-Boyd on this issue, arguing, in a letter to Macmillan dated 24 Oct: 'It would be bound to be most damaging to the new relationship we hope to establish with the Gold Coast, for which the Commonwealth Relations Office will be responsible, if we appear to be mean in this matter, and especially if we appear to be treating the Gold Coast differently from Malaya.' Macmillan was initially unmoved. He replied to Lennox-Boyd on 30 Oct: 'I am afraid that I am by no means convinced that what you propose can be justified on financial or political grounds.' The chancellor suggested that the matter should go to Cabinet. Lennox-Boyd in turn replied to Macmillan on 1 Nov: 'This is clearly something on which we both have strong views. I don't want to fling down a controversial gauntlet just at the moment, but I will circulate a paper for discussion within the next week or so' (CO 554/891, nos 16, 18 and 20).]

Our officials have been discussing the question of making available to the Gold Coast after independence the unspent balances at that date of their existing Colonial Development and Welfare allocations. The amount involved at that date will be about £1 million.

I understand that you considered this question last week and took the view that the Gold Coast should not be allowed to draw this money.

I must beg you most earnestly to reconsider this decision, for I am convinced that it would have really serious repercussions in the Gold Coast. As you know, the Gold Coast will be the first of the 'black' British African territories to achieve independence within the Commonwealth, and the experiment is therefore a most vital one since it will inevitably profoundly influence the course of future political development not only in our African territories, but throughout the Colonial Empire. One of the prime objectives of our policy in recent years has therefore been to hand over power in a spirit of amity and goodwill in an endeavour to ensure that the future State of Ghana maintains a friendly attitude towards the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth in general. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that the withdrawal of United Kingdom funds *which have in fact already been allocated to the country*<sup>2</sup> and which, rightly or wrongly they have always counted on getting, would be regarded locally as a most unfriendly act, and would very seriously prejudice the good relations which in other ways we are making such strenuous efforts to preserve.

We cannot moreover be unmindful of the fact that fairly considerable sums of United Kingdom money are to be allocated to the Federation of Malaya after the attainment of independence by that country. This fact will be public knowledge and even though it might be argued that the Emergency situation in the Federation puts that country into a special category, the fact that differential treatment in this respect is meted out to the Gold Coast might well create a sense of grievance which would continue to rankle for many years to come. As you know, African politicians suffer from an inferiority complex and would be bound to feel this kind of discrimination most keenly.

<sup>1</sup> Macmillan was chancellor from Dec 1955 to Jan 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Emphasis throughout in original.

These arguments are strengthened by those adduced in a letter from Cumming-Bruce (the C.R.O. representative in Accra) forwarded under cover of a despatch from the Governor of the Gold Coast dated 18th July (of which your Department has a copy) about the dangers of Soviet economic penetration after independence.<sup>3</sup> The reality of the fears expressed in that memorandum has been emphasised by recent events in Egypt. He was arguing (and the Governor agreed with him) that after independence continued financial assistance over and above C.D. & W. money might well be needed to prevent them turning to other less desirable quarters. That is not the immediate point: it will have to be considered separately: but if it can seriously be argued even now that assistance over and above C.D. & W. is necessary, a *portion* on the scale of the unexpended C.D.W. allocations is at least required.

I should like in particular to mention that a considerable proportion (£350,000) of the unspent C.D. & W. allocations consists of funds allocated to the Kumasi College of Technology on the advice of my Advisory Committee on Colonial Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology. This College is of the first importance to the Gold Coast, since it is the main local source to which the country must look for future supplies of the trained technicians for which there will be an ever increasing need in the years as the expatriate staff gradually leave and as the economic development of the country gathers momentum. It is, I suggest, an important long term economic interest of the United Kingdom that the teaching and general influence in this College should be British so that the future technical staff throughout the Gold Coast will naturally tend towards using British specifications and British equipment. To cut off British aid at this stage might well lead to other influences and other trade connexions ousting us. It is also not unimportant from the political standpoint that the College is situated in the heart of Ashanti, which is the stronghold of the Opposition movement within the Gold Coast.

I am also most anxious that we should not do anything which would cause the Gold Coast Government to break away from the various Inter-territorial research organisations in West Africa in which they at present participate. This would have damaging effects outside the Gold Coast.

The main arguments for allowing this money to continue to be made available to the Gold Coast after independence are political. I should, however, say that from the economic standpoint Gold Coast Ministers are certainly (and rightly) convinced that they are faced with a period of genuine economic difficulty involving serious retrenchment of expenditure. During recent years the social and educational services of the country have been considerably developed – for which there was great need – with the result that the Government is now faced with a substantially increased bill for recurrent expenditure. This coincides with a drastic slump in the world price of cocoa which is the main source of the country's livelihood. It would be completely inconsistent with the advice which we have given to the Gold Coast in the past to suggest that funds should be withdrawn from the Marketing Board reserves for general revenue purposes. It is not unfair to say that the Gold Coast's need for financial assistance from the United Kingdom is now and will in the period immediately following independence continue to be considerably greater than it was

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<sup>3</sup> Cumming-Bruce's letter of 18 July 1956 is not reproduced in this collection. His memo, originally dated 20 June 1956, on the danger of Soviet economic penetration in the Gold Coast, is reproduced as the enclosure to 238.

at the time that these C.D.W. funds were allocated. I do not think therefore that we should have any difficulty in justifying this assistance to the Gold Coast on economic grounds.

I agree that it will probably be inappropriate to allow the Gold Coast to draw the money after independence under the C.D.& W. Acts as such. That is not, however, the point at issue: what we are concerned with is the question of allowing the money to be made available *in some form or other*. One possibility which has been suggested is that the money should come from the Commonwealth Services Vote. That is, however, a question of mechanics which can be discussed later between our officials and which should not be allowed to influence the decision on the point of substance.

A decision on this matter is needed extremely urgently because it affects the drafting of the Gold Coast Independence Bill. The parliamentary timetable to which we are obliged to work if we are to adhere to our present undertaking to award independence by the 6th March, 1957 makes it essential that we should have a decision on this point within the next day or two. If you feel that it would make it easier to reach an early decision, I shall be very glad to discuss with you.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Alec Home.

**263** CO 554/891, no 28

16 Nov 1956

**[Colonial development and welfare]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Mr Macmillan (Exchequer) proposing a new formula for the unspent balance of the Gold Coast CD(&)W allocation**

[Macmillan accepted the formula outlined by Lennox-Boyd in this letter. The chancellor replied to the colonial secretary on 22 Nov: 'Though I am still far from happy at making any grant to the Gold Coast in respect of uncompleted C.D. & W. schemes, I can see the merits of your new proposal and I am prepared to agree to it without reference to the Cabinet. You will no doubt inform the Gold Coast Government of the decision as soon as possible. The details can be worked out by our officials. One small point. I think it will be essential to inform Parliament during the passage of the Bill what is proposed about Kumasi College' (CO 554/891, no 36).]

I wrote to you on the 1st November about the Gold Coast Development and Welfare allocation.<sup>1</sup>

Since then the situation has changed in two ways. Recent discussions between officials in our two Departments, the Foreign Office and the C.R.O. have led to the conclusion that U.K. funds will have to meet, in one way or another, a claim by the Swiss Government to the tune of about £350,000 for damage suffered by a Swiss firm trading in the Gold Coast during the 1948 riots; and the Gold Coast Government have just told us that the unspent C.D & W. balance of their territorial and Kumasi College allocations is likely on independence day to be only of the order of £650,000 and not of £1 million.

I need not trouble you with the details of the Swiss claim which are known to your officials. The important point is that, while technically the liability rests on H.M.G. in the U.K., we had earlier hoped to persuade the Gold Coast Government to settle

<sup>1</sup> See 262, note.

the claim, possibly by means of a loan to the Swiss firm concerned, with some limited assistance from the U.K. It is now clear that a loan is completely unacceptable to the Swiss. We already knew that the Gold Coast Government would find great difficulty in obtaining legislative authority for a straight payment to the Swiss firm concerned. There would also be the very serious risk that by drawing public attention to the matter claims would be stimulated from other foreign Governments to a total of up to £2 millions, for which we (that is the United Kingdom Government) would be liable in international law. Even if we could persuade the Gold Coast Government to run the considerable political risks involved in putting the case at all to their legislature, they would still expect us to take such a payment fully into account when deciding our policy about the unspent balance of the C.D.W. allocation. The same result can be achieved by abating the amount which we might otherwise have made available to the Gold Coast by the amount of the Swiss claim; and this is now my proposal. I recognise that this does not completely meet the point of principle that Colonial Governments should accept full responsibility for compensation for civil damage, but I am sure that it is sufficiently in accord with that principle to avoid any unfortunate precedent; and with the Gold Coast on the verge of independence there is no way of compelling them to accept that responsibility if (as might well be the case), they refused to do so.

I therefore propose that we should pay the £350,000 to the Swiss, that the Gold Coast should be given the Kumasi College allocation of £350,000 through the Commonwealth Services Vote but no more; instead they should surrender the rest of the balance of the territorial allocation, which is at present estimated at £300,000 but which may turn out to be higher. The arrangements to give effect to these proposals could be made administratively and need not be written into the Ghana Independence Bill, although Parliament would probably have to be told about the Kumasi allocation. The Bill would then simply disqualify the territory for C.D. & W. assistance after independence day, subject to adjustments in respect of expenditure before that.

These proposals are more modest and perhaps less difficult from your point of view than my earlier ones and I hope that we may be able to reach agreement on them without reference to the Cabinet. A decision on this matter is required urgently because it affects the text of the Bill which (subject to the Legislation Committee) is likely to have its first reading before the end of this month; and before the Bill is published we need a few days in which to tell the Gold Coast of the decision.

My officials have discussed these proposals with their opposite numbers at the Foreign Office and the C.R.O. and I am sending copies of this letter to Selwyn Lloyd and Alec Home.

**264** DO 35/6180, no 18 22 Nov 1956  
[Ghana Independence Bill]: letter from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Mr Heath<sup>1</sup>  
on the timetable for the second reading of the bill

I am writing, as agreed at the Legislation Committee, to put before you the reasons why I think it essential for the Ghana Independence Bill to have its second reading in

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Heath, government chief whip.

the House before the Christmas recess. Needless to say if it were possible to get it through all its stages that would be fine! But it is the second reading that matters most, though the timetable afterwards would then be very tight.

As you know, we are publicly committed to the 6th March, 1957, as the day for independence to come into effect, and everything must work back from that date. It would be quite unacceptable for the Independence Bill to receive the Royal Assent only on the eve of Independence Day. There are several very important things which must be done before independence and which can only be tackled after the Bill has become law.

First and most important there is an Order in Council to be made, carrying out the essential consequential amendments in the constitution of the Gold Coast. Several weeks must be allowed after the Independence Act has become law in order to put this into final shape, bring it before the Privy Council (bearing in mind the Queen's movements at the time) and get copies out to the Gold Coast in sufficient time before they have to come into effect.

Secondly, we have to consult the other Commonwealth Governments about the desire of Ghana to be recognised as a full member of the Commonwealth, which ought, of course, to take effect at the moment of independence. This consultation will necessarily take some time and it would be unreasonable to appear to be attempting to bounce the other Commonwealth Governments, although their Prime Ministers were sounded in a preliminary way when they were here in the summer. Alec Home and I think that it would be wisest not to approach the other Commonwealth Governments until the Ghana Independence Bill has at least passed its second reading in the Commons, so that it could not be said that we were asking them to commit themselves before it was clear that we were going to commit ourselves here.

Thirdly, (and this is at the moment very confidential), the Prime Minister has approved a proposal that the Queen should be asked to agree to a member of the Royal Family (probably the Duchess of Kent) representing her at the Ghana independence celebrations in Accra and opening the new Parliament there on the 6th March. While some preliminary planning can be done in advance, there cannot help being an element of uncertainty until the Independence Act has received the Royal Assent; and we shall need an appreciable interval after that in order to make the firm and final arrangements for the Royal visit.

Finally, we are bound to consider the effect in the Gold Coast itself of any prolonged delay. The Motion passed by the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly in August asked Her Majesty's Government to procure the enactment of an independence bill "as soon as practicable this year". In my published despatch dated the 15th September<sup>2</sup> to the Governor in reply I used, with Cabinet authority, the words "I have the honour to inform you that H.M.G. will *at the first available opportunity*<sup>3</sup> introduce into the United Kingdom Parliament a Bill to accord independence to the Gold Coast, and that, subject to Parliamentary approval, H.M.G. intend that independence should come about on the 6th March, 1957". Now that the new session of Parliament has begun, a marked delay in carrying out this undertaking might give rise to doubts of our sincerity among Gold Coast Government supporters, and could

<sup>2</sup> See 256.

<sup>3</sup> Emphasis throughout in original.

well cause a general feeling of uncertainty which would have an unsettling effect on relations between the Government and Opposition in the Gold Coast and on the state of internal security in the country. It would not meet this point merely to *introduce* the Bill soon, if the crucial reading debate were deferred until after Christmas.

I think it essential that the Bill should be through all its stages and on the Statute Book not later than the end of January. This would leave little more than four weeks before the actual transfer of power. That is the absolute minimum in which to carry out all the final constitutional, administrative and ceremonial arrangements. Assuming that Parliament reassembles after the Christmas recess on about the 20th January, as usual it would clearly be out of the question to crowd all the stages of the Independence Bill into the ensuing ten days, especially at a time when international or other events might be making urgent demands on Parliamentary time. Taking this with the important political considerations I have described, I hope you will agree that we ought to be sure of getting at least the second reading in the Commons over before the House disperses for the recess. Indeed I hope you will agree that by then we should if at all possible get it through all its stages in the Commons. It will, I hope, be largely uncontroversial.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Commonwealth Secretary.

**265** CO 554/808, no 450

23 Nov 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: outward unnumbered telegram from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the breakdown of the talks between government and opposition and the threat of secession

Your savingram No. 1264.

Constitution.

It appears that the constitutional talks and the Assembly debate have failed to close the gap between Government and Opposition, and I am disturbed to see Press reports that Asanteman Council and its political associates are demanding partition and implicitly reviving the threat of secession.

2. Paragraph 6 of your savingram under reference promises further observations after Assembly debate. These will no doubt include your own assessment on a secret and personal basis of the political situation now reached and prospects during the few months remaining before intended date of independence. How serious do you consider the demand for separate independence for Ashanti and Northern Territories to be? Do you envisage it being backed by an appeal to force (or by civil disobedience which would challenge the Government to use force) either before or in the period immediately following the final transfer of power? If violence should occur on such an issue, could the present Government count fully on the police and the local troops, bearing in mind their racial composition? (In this context we have noticed several passages in Nkrumah's speech last week apparently designed to woo the North and detach it from Ashanti).

3. I am meeting a group of Conservative Members of Parliament interested in West Africa on 27th November and it would be very helpful to have at least your preliminary assessment by telegram by Monday 26th, if necessary to be supplemented by a more detailed assessment later. I must in any case be prepared to deal with these issues if they are raised in debate on the Independence Bill.

**266** CO 554/808, no 452

25 Nov 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: inward telegram (reply) no 67 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the threat of secession and the possibility of violence

Your immediate secret and personal telegram WAF 16/2/05 of 23rd November.<sup>1</sup>  
Constitution.

I am satisfied from most recent appreciations that the intention to secede is seriously entertained by the Opposition leaders in Ashanti and by the Asanteman Council (see (3) in my telegram No. 596 in this connection) but have no reason to believe there is an equally strong or developed determination in the Northern Territories.

2. The situation is being very closely watched, but as regards any violent steps which may be contemplated in support of threat of secession, appreciations are necessarily very largely speculative and there is no firm evidence of action by way of organisation or preparations to this end.

3. There is, however, a distinct possibility that there will be sporadic outbreaks of violence in Ashanti leading up to non co-operation with the Government at a point this side of the grant of independence and to an unqualified declaration of intention to secede with effect from 6th March. There are no good reasons for thinking that the Gold Coast Police and Military forces will not be able to deal with the situation up till 6th March. Thereafter, although Ministers appear confident of their ability to restrain the situation, I cannot give an assurance that the Government will be able to count fully on the Police and local troops; much will depend on the manner in which they are used and their leadership and how far the Ashanti people prove to be prepared to follow a sustained course of non co-operation involving personal inconvenience and discomfort. It is pertinent that a number of African Police Officers have lively apprehensions as to their probable treatment by an uninhibited Government after the grant of independence, especially those who have in the course of duty taken action against prominent members of the C.P.P.

4. I see no prospects of agreement on the provisions of the new Constitution. Even if superficial agreement were possible, and I think it is not, it is probable that a fundamental unwillingness to tolerate the present Government would persist in Kumasi and large areas of Ashanti. It seems likely, though this is largely speculation, that the grant of independence will be followed by an uneasy period in which there will be a continuing interaction of defiance against the Government in Ashanti and measures taken by the Government, not always well judged or effective, to impose its will; each of these factors serving to keep others alive until commonsense prevails. For some time after the grant of independence the Government would be unwise to rely on the disciplined forces at its disposal to carry out unduly oppressive measures.

5. I am going on tour tomorrow, returning on the 2nd December, and shall be visiting Ashanti to discuss with officials there the latest appreciations which they have formed, and I hope on my return, if not before, to telegraph a more detailed and firmly based appreciation which will include the situation in the Northern Territories.

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<sup>1</sup> See 265.

**267** CO 554/994, no E1

8 Dec 1956

**[Financial aid]: personal message from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the Gold Coast's contribution to the sterling area and the possibility of UK aid to finance development in the Northern Territories**

I would like, on the occasion of the Second Reading of the Ghana Independence Bill, to express my own and my Government's thanks to you for the kindness and consideration which you have shown to us throughout the negotiations which have led up to the Bill.

In the event of your desiring any further information on any subject in regard to it I hope you will get in touch with me but generally speaking I think that previous memoranda have covered all the issues involved.

In regard to Development Fund grants, it may perhaps be of value if I re-state the Government's position. We consider that since these Funds are paid by the United Kingdom under United Kingdom law it would not be right or proper for the Gold Coast Government to question or to argue in any way about any decision which the British Government and Parliament may come to in the matter.

There are, however, certain considerations arising out of the Gold Coast position which, I believe, should be before the British Parliament when the matter is considered. As you know the Gold Coast provides 25% of the net visible dollar earnings of the Colonial Commonwealth. This is, we consider, a tremendous achievement for a country with comparatively such a small population as the Gold Coast and which is facing considerable problems of its own at the moment. The reason why we have been able to do this is that we have, as you know, most strictly controlled our dollar imports while at the same time our exports are very considerable dollar-earners. However, the nature of these exports, while greatly assisting the Sterling Area, involves problems in the internal affairs of the Gold Coast. By concentrating on cocoa we have been of great assistance to the Sterling bloc as a whole but we are never in a position to plan for long periods ahead because of the fluctuating price of cocoa on the world market. In these circumstances it is very difficult for the Government to make the provision which they would like to make for the Northern Territories. The Government would wish, if they were certain of the funds, to make a substantial allotment to be exclusively devoted to development in the Northern Territories and they would wish to associate the Northern Territories Council and, when it is set up, the Northern Regional Assembly in the use of these funds. From the nature of things in the North it is probable that Northern opinion would wish the development money to be spent on non-productive services which would in all probability involve the Central Government in recurrent expenditure. Since the world price of cocoa cannot be predicted, the Government are not in a position to make the firm promise for the substantial amount which they would like. Nothing would appear to be an act of worse faith than if the Government wrote a sum into the Constitution and then was subsequently unable to provide it.

The Government are glad that the Gold Coast will not only remain within the Commonwealth but intends to remain in the Sterling Area and they consider that the dollar resources of the Gold Coast can make a really material contribution towards dealing with the dollar problem of the Sterling Area. For this reason they feel there is

an argument for assisting them in dealing with a situation which arises out of the very circumstances which enable them to assist the Sterling Area.

A further point arises in relation to Togoland. Once again the Gold Coast Government consider that since they have supported the demand for the integration of Togoland with the Gold Coast it would be wrong for them to ask for financial assistance from Great Britain because they have assumed this particular liability. On the other hand, the frontiers of Togoland were not drawn in accordance with the natural lines of communication which lead to Lome or on the basis of the communications originally built by the Germans but in order to meet an arrangement come to in the past between the British and French Governments for the division of German territory. In order therefore to fulfil the Gold Coast obligation to the United Nations the Government have to undertake major development works in, particularly, the part of Togoland included in the Northern Territories. A particular example of this is the Bimbilla-Bawku Road which will cost £400,000 and which will open up the extreme Northern part of the former Togoland Trust Territory.

Other communication projects in Togoland which are either completed or in the course of completion include the Eastern trunk road which will cost, when finished, £1,352,000 and the new Volta Bridge which will open up Togoland to the Tema Harbour and which has cost close on £700,000.

As I have said, quite irrespective of what the British Government does, it is the Gold Coast Government's intention to remain within the Sterling Area and also to assume all responsibilities for Togoland Trust Territory. Nevertheless the Gold Coast's ability to assist the Sterling Area must largely depend upon internal stability and this is in part affected by the ability of the Government to make adequate provision for the Northern Territories, included in which is a portion of Togoland. In all these circumstances it may seem to the British Government and Parliament that we would be both assisting each other if the British Government were able to make a contribution towards the development of the Northern Territories.

I have written also in this sense to Mr. James Griffiths and to Mr. Callaghan<sup>1</sup> as I felt it was important that on both sides of the House the Gold Coast position was understood. Naturally, however, I have not mentioned to them the various other matters of controversy between us such as the Swiss claim<sup>2</sup> or the points on which our views about the Constitution may not altogether coincide.

The Gold Coast Commissioner's Office in London has distributed to all Members of the House of Commons a background paper, giving the history of the Constitutional discussions in the Gold Coast and has also sent to them a copy of the Government's Revised Constitutional Proposals and of my speech in the Assembly.

Once again may I repeat the thanks of myself and my Government for the services which you have rendered to the Gold Coast. If there is an opportunity in the debate I would be grateful if you could say how much I have appreciated the services of the present Governor.

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<sup>1</sup> James Griffiths, S of S for the colonies, 1950–1951; and James Callaghan, MP (Lab) for South-East Cardiff from 1950.

<sup>2</sup> See 263.

**268** CO 554/820, no 6

12 Dec 1956

**[Ghana Independence Bill]: minutes by C G Eastwood and Mr Lennox-Boyd on the drafting of the bill**

I have had some talk with Sir Ralph Hone,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bennett and Miss Terry about the position resulting from last night's debate.

*Timetable: 6th March – independence*

The Order-in-Council must be made and published an appreciable while before this, so that the people of the Gold Coast will know what their constitution is to be when Parliament is opened on the 6th March. The Queen will not be available between February 17th and 23rd. I think we should aim at getting the Order-in-Council passed at the latest on the 16th February. (This is a Saturday so we had better say the 15th).

The proposed White Paper is to be debated in Parliament. Following that debate there may be need for consultation with the Gold Coast Government and amendment of the proposed Order-in-Council in certain particulars. We ought to allow the best part of a fortnight for this and for the necessary time for the printing of the Order-in-Council. In other words the debate ought to take place at the latest on Monday, 4th February.

The White Paper ought to be published a week before the debate, i.e. on Monday, 28th January.

This means that it must be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval the moment he gets back from Central Africa.<sup>2</sup>

*Contents of the White Paper*

It seems to us that it would be a mistake to try and put virtually the whole Order-in-Council with its full legal definitions and so forth in the White Paper – the Gold Coast's own draft which we have not got runs to 35 pages – and that it would be better to present a document not much more elaborate than pages 2 to 7 of the Gold Coast's White Paper. Here in 34 paragraphs they give all the material information.

I would hope that we should be able to say that this document had been agreed with the Gold Coast Government. That would depend on how far we are able to carry them with us on the matters which we have taken up or are intending to take up with them. The Order-in-Council will of course be passed on the responsibility of H.M.G. in the U.K. but it is obviously highly desirable that as far as possible it should embody an agreed constitution.

*Points at issue*

We have not yet been through the Hansard of yesterday's debate in detail but it seems to us that there are five main points at issue. Considered minutes on each of these will be coming forward separately within the next few days.

The five points are as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> CO assistant legal adviser.

<sup>2</sup> Lennox-Boyd was scheduled to visit Central Africa for three weeks from the end of Dec 1956.

1. *Independence of the judiciary*

Dr. Nkrumah will let us have our way over this though apparently somewhat reluctantly.

2. *Public Service Commisison*. Ditto.

3. *Powers of regional assemblies*

It may be right not to press for more than the Government propose on this.<sup>3</sup> For the moment I reserve my view. A considered note will be coming forward.

4. *Fundamental rights*

This is a most difficult one. All our instincts are against trying to define fundamental rights and if we do it for Ghana may it not set an awkward precedent for other places?<sup>4</sup> On the other hand if it is going to make a real difference to the Opposition it may be better to do it. Again I reserve my view until considered minutes have come forward.

5. *Procedure for amendment of the constitution*

There was considerable pressure in the House<sup>5</sup> for additional safeguards on this and I think we all agreed that something is desirable. Equally we are all agreed that the constitution must not be made too rigid. Probably what is at present proposed – a two-thirds vote in the Central Parliament – is sufficient to secure a change of all but the most important matters and it is only these really important matters which need be doubly entrenched. The question is how can that best be done? Various suggestions have been made as to possible additional entrenchments:–

- (a) A majority vote in a majority of Regional Assemblies;
- (b) A second two-thirds vote in the Central Parliament after a general election;
- (c) Mr. Griffiths' idea of a Second Chamber specially constituted for this purpose only of representatives of the Regions;

and I dare say that there are others. Again we shall be submitting a considered minute on this in a day or so with the idea of putting all these suggestions to the Gold Coast, perhaps with some sort of a lead in favour of one or other of them.

*Immediate action*

As I have indicated we shall be putting up proposals on the points at issue in the next day or two.

Sir Ralph Hone will be proceeding with the drafting of the Order-in-Council, so far as he can pending a decision on these points.

Incidentally it will be well to bear in mind that Mr. Paterson, the Attorney-General, is at present home on leave and available to help when required. We gathered that Dr. Nkrumah pays a good deal of attention to his advice.

I submit draft telegrams about the debate and the decision to have a White Paper, and to pave the way for the further communications which will be required.

<sup>3</sup> Lennox-Boyd noted in the margin: 'I don't agree'.

<sup>4</sup> Lennox-Boyd noted in the margin: 'Bother precedents. This is nearly *sui generis*'.

<sup>5</sup> Lennox-Boyd noted in the margin: 'Very much so'.

Mr. Gbedemah will be passing through London from New York very soon. I gather he is likely to be available in London on Monday and Tuesday. If the Secretary of State can see him then it would no doubt be very useful. If not we will at any rate see him in the Department.

The Secretary of State may wish to have a word with the Chief Whip, or to write him a line, about the likelihood of time being required for a debate on the White Paper.

The C.R.O. are taking action about approaching the Dominion Governments on Commonwealth Membership.

C.G.E.  
12.12.56

My instinct is to go there myself for a lightning week. Can't we revise programme to allow this – say back from Lusaka to Accra and Kumasi on January 22nd?

I feel strongly this might help a lot. Don't please think of 1,000,000 reasons why not. The Governor will do that for us.

I feel very strongly about this and have almost decided to go.

Please fix to talk at first chance on return from Turkey which doesn't crowd out Lim Yew Hock and the Tunku. Don't worry about Mintoff.

A.L.B.  
[nd]

**269** CO 554/994, no E2

14 Dec 1956

[Financial aid]: letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to Sir G Laithwaite on Dr Nkrumah's request for UK aid to finance development in the Northern Territories

The Prime Minister asked me to come to see him on 11th December, about his personal request to the Colonial Secretary for a contribution from H.M.G. towards the cost of development of the Northern Territories.<sup>1</sup>

2. He said that, as the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations will shortly be responsible for handling relations with Ghana, he would be grateful if I would draw the attention of the C.R.O. to his message. He asked me to explain that the Gold Coast Government does not wish to ask for external assistance: such a request would in his view be liable to be misconstrued in some quarters as implying that Ghana was not fit for independence, since she could not stand on her legs. But nevertheless he was unable to see how the Ghana Government could at this stage raise the money required for the reasonable development needs of the Northern Territories in the next few years, and he considered that it was of major political importance that he should before independence be able to give an assurance to the North that these needs would be met. The Northern leaders themselves had placed considerable emphasis on the needs in the constitutional discussions of recent months.

<sup>1</sup> See 267.

3. The scale that Nkrumah has in mind is £1½ million per annum for ten years, and I gathered that he hoped that H.M.G. would contribute half the whole sum. He seemed to think that it might be possible for some kind of commitment to be given on behalf of H.M.G. at the Committee stage of the Ghana Independence Bill next week.

4. I said that I would, of course, gladly draw the attention of the C.R.O. to the correspondence. But I added that it seemed to me to be out of the question that H.M.G. could reach a favourable decision on any proposition of this kind without protracted and careful consideration. Ghana development must presumably be considered as a whole and I thought that it was unlikely that H.M.G. would feel able to consider the problem of the Northern Territories in isolation from other aspects of any future plans. After some discussion Nkrumah said that he appreciated that H.M.G. could not fairly be expected to take precipitate decisions on such matters in the course of the proceedings of the Ghana Independence Bill. Nevertheless, he expressed the hope that a Government spokesman might indicate the Government's willingness to consider the question of possible future assistance for Ghana development.

5. The scarcely veiled threat in the message to the effect that Ghana membership of the sterling area is liable to reconsideration if H.M.G. does not accede to the request is so silly and offensive that I thought I should not let it pass. I suggested that it was most important that, in any discussion and correspondence, the Gold Coast Government should be careful to refrain from any statements which might shake confidence in her future financial position and thereby prejudice her credit; and I said that any references, however oblique, to possible reconsideration of the decision to remain in the sterling area seemed to be highly dangerous from this angle. I also reminded him that Ghana membership of the sterling area was just as much in the interests of Ghana as of the rest of the sterling area. The Prime Minister took this in good part, but Mr. Geoffrey Bing, Q.C., who was present throughout, strongly contested my contention. The Prime Minister's message was drafted by Bing who now advises him on most matters concerning relations with H.M.G: the presumption is that it was Bing's idea that the "case" should be presented in this way, and Nkrumah, in this as in other matters on which he takes Bing's advice, is not really aware of the mischief that is liable to be done by taking it.

6. I imagine that there will be little inclination in London to agree to the suggestion that some special contribution should be made by H.M.G. to development of the Northern Territories: apart from other considerations, Ghana development must be viewed as a whole and ill-conceived projects would do more harm than good. Nevertheless, there seems to me to be a case for some external assistance for Ghana development in the public sector from 1958 onwards if (but only if) the Volta River Project remains on the horizon as a practical possibility. I am writing separately about this. It would be helpful, therefore, if any reply sent to the P.M.'s message is not completely negative: perhaps it might be possible to say in a personal message something on the lines that, if the Ghana Government wish in due course to raise questions of future Ghana development, H.M.G. will be glad to discuss them.

7. Lord John Hope's reference in the Second Reading debate to the examination of possible means of facilitating Commonwealth investment has, I think, been interpreted here so far as having no particular relevance to Ghana problems: but no information is available as to the nature of the proposals under discussion.

8. I have sent a copy of this letter to Eastwood and Poynton at the Colonial Office.

**270** CO 554/994, no E3

14 Dec 1956

[Financial relations]: letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to H A F Rumbold (CRO) on the grievances of Gold Coast ministers over the winding up of UK-Gold Coast financial relations

The authorities here have noted that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, in his speech of 11th December at the second reading of the Ghana Independence Bill, referred to the interest of the Commonwealth Development Finance Company in the Gold Coast in the context of the end of Colonial Development and Welfare grants and Commonwealth Development Corporation operations. I was asked yesterday by the Prime Minister's Office to mention that reference to the C.D.F.C. in this context is thought here to be out of scale with the relatively modest role that the Company is likely to play here.

2. The background is that Gold Coast Ministers have been disappointed at the size of the grant authorised by H.M.G. in consideration of the termination of the Colonial Development and Welfare assistance; they hoped for a great deal more, and have alleged that, if it had been made clear that they were liable to be saddled with residual financial responsibility for C.D. & W. projects, they would not have agreed to the inclusion of some of the projects concerned in their development programme. They do not at present think that the Commonwealth Development Finance Company is likely to be able to make any very substantial contribution in Ghana, and there is a feeling that the significance of the correspondence which the company have had with the Gold Coast Government in the last few months is being exaggerated for political purposes.

3. I commented that, whatever, the scale of future C.D.F.C. operations might be, any contribution at all would clearly be useful and should be encouraged: and I said that I was not clear that any useful purpose would be served by making negative comments about the prospects. But I was nevertheless asked to register the point.

4. This is both captious and trivial but I did not refuse to call attention to Ministers' reaction because it illustrates the atmosphere here on financial relations. The point of substance is that Gold Coast Ministers believe that they have been treated meanly in the winding up of the financial relations of Colonial status. The War Office is regarded as the worst offender: all concerned here, expatriate as well as African, have been incensed at the scale of the charges presented to the Gold Coast Government in respect of the transfer of responsibility for the Gold Coast Military Forces from the British West Africa Command to the Gold Coast Government. But H.M.G. are thought to have been mean also over the winding up of C.D. & W. grants. I am afraid that a myth has established itself in Ministers' minds that H.M.G. have failed to show an understanding of Gold Coast needs and outlook on financial issues similar to that shown on political issues, and that the result is that the Gold Coast has been shabbily treated. The fact that this is rubbish is unlikely to prevent it taking firm root in local thinking: and the ill-smelling weed is likely to thrive under the careful tending and fertilizing of certain mischievous unofficial expatriate elements that are exerting an increasingly powerful influence here on Ministers. These forces are doing their best to denigrate H.M.G. and encourage Ministers to believe that H.M.G.'s policy on Ghana independence has always been actuated solely by British self-interest.

5. I have sent a copy of this letter to Eastwood at the Colonial Office.

**271** CO 554/994, no 3

14 Dec 1956

[Financial aid]: letter from F E Cumming-Bruce to Sir G Laithwaite on UK aid to finance Ghana development. *Enclosure*: memorandum by Cumming-Bruce, 'Future Ghana development in the public sector', Dec 1956

In my letter of 18th July<sup>1</sup> I suggested that, in spite of the very strong financial position of the Gold Coast in the past, H.M.G. should in certain conditions be prepared in principle to consider a request from the Ghana Government for assistance for development after independence. The suggested conditions were, first, if the Volta River Project remained ahead as an objective of policy and, secondly, if an assessment of reasonable development needs and potential sources of finance confirmed the necessity for external aid.

2. Further discussion in the last six months with those concerned in Accra with questions of finance and economic development have confirmed the views expressed in July. Hope of eventual implementation of the Volta River Project at a relatively distant date will not by itself suffice to keep Ghana steady in her relations with the West. I therefore suggest that we should consider what scale and type of public development the Ghana Government would be well advised to undertake, how they should set about planning it – the administration is not competent to make plans without guidance – how much external assistance, if any, is likely to be required, and to what sources Ghana should eventually apply for funds. I enclose a memorandum summarizing what seem to be the main considerations and suggesting certain forms of action.

3. I recognize that there are very strong objections to any direct financial assistance from H.M.G. to Ghana. We cannot afford to contribute capital to Commonwealth countries except on really sound and profitable ventures. Moreover, as underdeveloped territories go, Ghana is relatively rich. But the risks of serious undermining of Ghana stability seem to be sufficiently great to justify special action as an exceptional transitional step and as a means of priming the pump of American aid. As seen from here, there is a reasonable prospect that the American attitude would be favourable, but the chances of adequate U.S. help would be very much greater if we ourselves were to make *some*<sup>2</sup> contribution. And, as the Americans will probably look to H.M.G. for guidance on Ghana affairs for a time after independence, as at present, it seems to be a matter of some urgency that we should clear our own minds on the objectives.

4. If it is agreed in 1957 that the Volta River Project should be abandoned *cadit quaestio*: for Ghana will then be able to apply to other projects resources ample for the needs of the next few years. But, as I have suggested in a separate letter, it would be a material help as a stabilizing factor in Ghana's external relations if the Volta Project remains in prospect at any rate for some years.

5. From some comments on my memorandum of 20th June,<sup>3</sup> on the risks of Soviet penetration, which were sent to the Trade Commissioner by the Board of

<sup>1</sup> Not printed but see 238 and 240, para 6.

<sup>2</sup> Emphasis throughout in original.

<sup>3</sup> See 238.

Trade on 25th October, it appears that the Board of Trade do not realise how serious a threat to U.K. interests we here consider lies ahead. I do not myself view the problem mainly in terms of countering a probable Soviet economic offensive. This is the particular aspect which I emphasised in the summer, since it had not previously been considered here; but the Soviet threat is a long term matter, the gravity of which is guesswork, and the main immediate point is that United Kingdom interests are directly threatened, whether or not Russia should embark on a well-devised policy to establish a position of influence. The threat comes from the relative irresponsibility of Ghana Ministers, their defective knowledge, the prospective exodus of most of their competent advisers and administrators, and the bad advice increasingly received by them from disaffected mischief makers. We and other Western Governments must be in a position to exercise enough influence on Ministers to keep them on the rails: and for this purpose the West must have something to offer as well as advice.

6. It seems likely that, if it is agreed next year with Ghana Ministers that the Volta Project must be put on the shelf, they will raise the question of assistance for Ghana development at the completion of the present development plan in 1958. Nkrumah's personal approach to the Colonial Secretary about a possible contribution by H.M.G. to the development of The Northern Territories is relevant.<sup>4</sup> Such an approach would require careful handling; it is most desirable that in such circumstances we should give a helpful reply promptly, and it is difficult to see how we shall be able to do so unless preparatory action is set in hand at once.

7. This letter and the enclosure have been prepared in consultation with the Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister (on a personal basis) and the Trade Commissioner, who concur.

8. I have sent a copy of this letter to Eastwood and Poynton at the Colonial Office.

#### Enclosure to 271

##### *Difficulties attached to discussion of future Ghana development*

The scale of future Ghana Government development operations is a central financial problem in the Gold Coast. It also has important political aspects. While much the greatest single issue is, of course, the Volta River Project, the rest of the development field cannot be ignored, and in the short run is of greater practical significance. It is a thorny subject to handle. The Gold Coast administration has not yet made any co-ordinated attempt to consider the problems ahead, and, without some guidance, decisions will almost certainly be taken piecemeal on grounds of political expediency without due weight being given to long-term financial aspects. It is, moreover, a very delicate matter to give any guidance or help. Ministers are intensely suspicious about external interest in Ghana economic affairs. They are liable to regard any effort to help them as motivated by ulterior designs to maintain undue Western influence. From various unofficial quarters they are advised that, on terminating political control of the Gold Coast, the United Kingdom Government will try to build up new

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<sup>4</sup> See 267.

indirect control by economic and financial means: and, such suggestions, in spite of their manifest nonsense, are listened to and fit into Ministers' preconceptions and prejudices. The conclusion suggested in this memorandum is that some external assistance will be necessary unless the Volta River Project is definitely abandoned. But the suspicions and sensitivity of the Government make it advisable that no official initiative should be taken by H.M.G. or other governments to propose aid. The first move should come from Ghana. Any direct proposals for external assistance to Ghana would otherwise be viewed with deep suspicion.

*Rate of capital expenditure by the Government on Development and Welfare in the last five years*

2. Expenditure on development and welfare services since the entry of the C.P.P. to office in the Gold Coast has been at a relatively lavish level. This was made possible by the cocoa boom. The Government obtained unprecedented revenue from cocoa duty, and the limits to the rate of spending in recent years have been physical and administrative rather than financial. Ministers have had funds for anything that could be operated and have thus been sheltered from all the main financial problems. They have been able largely to leave out of account in planning expenditure the normal need to concentrate on revenue producing projects. The high capital expenditure has left a legacy of very heavy recurrent costs, e.g. in education and health services. Now that the price of cocoa has returned to a normal level, these new recurrent charges preclude expenditure from revenue on new development and welfare services for the foreseeable future. During the boom years the Government were able to build up satisfactory capital reserves, but it has been necessary to draw fairly heavily on these to balance the budget since the end of the boom. Ministers are beginning to realise that the golden years are over, but have not yet acquired much sense of the value of money. They still tend to think in terms of sums out of proportion to the limited resources of the country: and financial control and co-ordination has been seriously weakening during the years of spending spree.

3. The rate at which development\* expenditure has been running since 1952 has been about £215 millions per annum. This level is being maintained in 1956-7. In 1957-8 it is likely to fall to about £5 millions, and when in mid-1958 the First Development Plan is closed, the total expenditure in the seven years is likely to have amounted to some £100 million. The capital was raised mainly from revenue from cocoa duty, supplemented by borrowings from the Cocoa Marketing Board (also made possible only by the boom), with contributions of £3½ millions from the United Kingdom Government (Colonial Development and Welfare funds), and about £½ million from the United States Government.

*Funds likely to be available for future development*

4. At the close of the First Development Plan in 1958 there is likely to remain between £15½ and £16½ millions of the reserve funds accumulated during the boom for new projects. This is the total sum likely on present estimates to be available to the Ghana Government for future development, including any Gold Coast contributions to a Volta River Project, except to the extent that money can be

\* The term "development" is used by the Gold Coast Government in a very broad sense, including new education, health and welfare projects.

borrowed or is contributed as gifts from other Governments. There is no prospect for the foreseeable future of any margin of revenue after meeting ordinary recurrent expenditure, or of further capital windfalls accruing to the Government as a result of high cocoa prices. The sum might be increased by up to, say, £10 millions if the Government laid hands on the unencumbered resources of the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board, but, apart from political difficulties, this might reduce the Board's reserves below the level required for its probable commitments. A much larger sum would be available if the past Marketing Board policy was abandoned, at the expense of future stability: for the overseas reserves of the Cocoa Marketing Board are of the order of £70 million.

*Prospect of adequate expenditure on general development if the Volta River project is abandoned*

5. If the Volta River Project were abandoned in 1957 and the Ghana budget were balanced by retrenchment to the extent required to offset rising maintenance commitments, the Gold Coast Government might be able to float a loan in London for development projects to the extent of, say, £5 million as a maximum and possibly the World Bank might be prepared to make a loan. By one means or another, it seems that funds could be found for development expenditure at a scale of, say, about a third of the First Plan without external assistance, which ought to be fully adequate from the point of view of political and economic stability. (It would be a difficult administrative problem how to plan for revenue earning projects and the Gold Coast is not well equipped to solve it: and other projects would create a future problem of recurrent maintenance costs which Ghana might be unable to meet.)

*Inability to finance general development if the Volta River project is pursued, or postponed without being abandoned*

6. If some form of Volta River Project were pursued, however reduced in magnitude, all available Gold Coast resources, in the form of both accumulated funds and borrowing potential, would have to be allocated to it: and there would be no funds for any other project. But some other development would be necessary for political stability. This would have to be financed from external sources. There could be no question of supply of more than a token sum of capital by H.M.G. if we contributed to a Volta River Project, but, in view of their professed sympathy for the Gold Coast, the U.S. Government might help. It is possible that in due course the Canadian and other Commonwealth Governments might also be ready to assist.

7. If next year the Volta River Project is neither pursued nor abandoned, but a decision is deferred for, say, two or three years, Ghana's capital resources ought so far as possible to be husbanded for her possible future contribution. Some continued development would however be essential in such circumstances both politically (especially in the Northern Territories) and economically. It would have to be on a much smaller scale than in the past, and there are indications that some senior Ministers may be beginning to recognise this. Possibly the International Bank would agree to a loan, provided it was assured that the budget would be brought under control, and it is to be hoped that the U.S. Government would make a substantial contribution. But, if assistance proves to be required and it cannot be obtained on an adequate scale without some U.K. participation, there seems to be a strong case

for a contribution by H.M.G. in 1958-9 as a transitional step in the interests of Gold Coast stability.

8. Unless in such circumstances adequate external assistance were given, it is likely that after 1958 the Ghana Government would either spend the remaining part of the reserves required for an adequate Ghana contribution to a Volta River Project, or borrow from the Soviet Union, or resort to unsound methods of finance. The latter would (1) undermine the Gold Coast economy, (2) probably have serious indirect effects on commercial and U.K. exports to Ghana, and (3) lead to serious repercussions in external relations.

*Policy required to facilitate relations between H.M.G. and Ghana in the initial period after independence*

9. As seen from Accra, it can now be taken for granted that the Volta River Project will not be pursued in 1957, but from the angle of relations with Ghana there are strong arguments for not abandoning the project altogether at this stage, provided that there is still a genuine prospect that some scheme might eventually be approved. The best arrangement from the point of view of H.M.G. would seem to be that discussed in paragraph 7 above, i.e. an interim period before a decision on the Volta River Project in 1959 or 1960, during which external assistance would be given from Western sources to Ghana to enable her to undertake a modest amount of further development, without compromising her capacity to participate in a Volta Project later on.

*Need for guidance for provisional planning in Accra*

10. Development cannot be turned on and off like a tap without notice, and some practical plans ought soon to be made for 1958 and after. For instance, the departments concerned in the execution of the development programme want now to start taking decisions whether or not to retain overseas executive staff at the end of their present contracts. The basic need is for administrative assistance in planning: for the existing Gold Coast administration is not competent to draw up plans for propositions that are economically sound and commercially attractive. The problem is aggravated by the exodus of the administrative officers principally responsible for development matters and the absence of competent replacements.

11. Nothing ought to be done by other Governments to suggest that any assistance might be granted to Ghana unless and until Ghana takes the initiative in raising the issue, and it will be some time yet before Ministers grasp the position and face the facts. But it would be useful if some guidance could be given in confidence to key expatriate officers in the Ghana Service, on the hypotheses on which they might proceed, to enable them to steer Ministers in the formulation of policy.

*Desirable to exchange views with the U.S. Government*

12. It would presumably take several months for H.M.G. and the U.S. Government to take decisions in principle on the desirability of assistance and the nature and scale of aid likely to be forthcoming. The World Bank and U.S. Government would presumably have to be the main source of capital, but the Americans will depend on H.M.G. for a lead in the initial period of independence: and their Mission in Accra will look to the U.K. High Commissioner's Office for guidance in this field. We ought therefore to be in a position to be able to let the U.S. Government have an

assessment of the problem of Ghana development as we see it, and obtain their reactions. This could, if desired, be arranged without difficulty through the U.S. representative in Accra, with suitable supplementary action with the U.S. Embassy in London.

#### *Preliminary exploration required in Accra*

13. Before any such approach, some preliminary work would have to be undertaken to reduce the problem to concrete terms. It would, for instance, be desirable to have some provisional assessment of what classes of development project the Ghana Government would be likely to propose for inclusion in a Second Development Plan. The Gold Coast authorities already have some ideas and the International Bank may be prepared to make some relevant comments, if asked, in the light of the views of the Mission that has recently visited the Gold Coast.

#### *Timing*

14. We ought to take steps so as to be able after the next Volta discussions with the Ghana Government to make some comments to them, if necessary, on future development problems. I understand that the next Volta talks might be desired by the Ghana Government after the next Ghana budget, about mid-1957. This does not leave much margin for clearing our minds.

15. It is therefore recommended that preparatory action should be set in hand now, designed to enable an encouraging response to be made quickly *if and when* an approach should be made by the Ghana Government, such action being merely preparatory and entirely without commitment.

#### *Dangers of failure to set preparatory work quickly in hand*

16. Ghana Ministers will have no inkling of the complications and difficulties attached to international assistance. They would be likely to interpret normal delays as a sign of lack of sympathy, and might very well take ill-considered decisions to resort to unsound methods of finance. Alternatively they might turn to the Soviet bloc.

#### *Possible international framework for external assistance*

17. If it is agreed in principle that some external aid will be necessary, it would probably at some stage be helpful if the negotiation and planning of assistance could be co-ordinated between the Ghana Government and other governments on Colombo Plan lines. *Prima facie* this need not, it seems, present difficulty.

#### *Recommendations for action*

18. It is suggested that the following action should be taken:—

- (1) Agreement to be reached between the Departments concerned in Whitehall on the financial scale of Ghana Governmental development that would in our view be required for reasonable stability after the end of the current Development Plan, and the sources to which Ghana ought to look for finance.
- (2) If it is agreed that decisions on the Volta River Project should be postponed and that external finance will be required for some additional other development pending the Volta decisions,

- (a) consideration to be given to the question how to equip Ghana with the administrative means of development planning:
- (b) some guidance to be given as soon as possible on a personal basis to senior expatriate officials concerned in Accra to help them in the formulation of policy:
- (c) other Governments or authorities concerned to be confidentially informed of H.M.G.'s views on the objectives, the scale of needs and the importance of meeting them from Western sources:
- (d) in due course a positive response to be made to any approach from the Ghana Government about the possibility of assistance.

**272** CO 554/994, no E5(b)

15 Dec 1956

[Financial aid]: memorandum from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd on the arguments in favour of UK aid to finance Ghana development

In view of the debate on Tuesday on the Committee Stage of the Bill it may be helpful if I gave you one or two more details about the question of financial aid.

2. The Commonwealth Finance Development Corporation referred to by the Under Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations is, I think, the Commonwealth Development Finance Company Limited. We quite realise here that this Company can be of considerable assistance, particularly in advising on proposed projects and we are at the moment seeking their advice on one or two matters. However, as was stated in the Colonial Office savingram, Circular 515/53 of the 16th June, 1953, the field of operations of the Company will be essentially in productive industry. There is thus little likelihood of the Company being a source of finance for Governments, Municipalities or other bodies concerned with general development. As you know our main concern is how to ensure a steady development income for long-term projects in the Northern Territories. The Commonwealth Development Finance Company Limited cannot help us with this and use of the Company is open to other disadvantages. For example, we were on the point of signing an agreement with [the] Colonial Development Corporation to establish a clinker cement factory at Takoradi in co-operation with the Tunnel Portland Cement Company Limited. The total capital requirement was £655,000 of which the Government were to take £172,900 and the Colonial Development Corporation £166,250. The Government was also to spend £248,000 on harbour facilities. Provision was also made for the Tunnel Company to have the option of extending to Tema which would require another £ $\frac{1}{2}$ M. worth of harbour construction and a total investment of £835,000. The Government are faced with the problem of finding alternative investment to that of the Colonial Development Corporation but they can hardly apply to the Commonwealth Development Finance Company Limited since their cement shareholder is the rival of the Tunnel, the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers Limited. Secondly, we have been considering the proposal to establish a flour mill at Tema which it is hoped might reduce the cost of bread locally. This was to be done in collaboration with Les Grands Moulins de Dakar. The total investment contemplated was £1 $\frac{1}{2}$ M. and the Colonial Development Corporation was invited to put up just over £ $\frac{1}{2}$ M. of this. The sudden cutting off of Colonial Development and Welfare Funds would make it necessary for us again to have to seek alternative finance at a time when owing to the need of deciding on the port facilities required at Tema time is extremely short.

3. This, however, is not as I have explained previously the main development issue. The Gold Coast Government are well aware and indeed so stated in their Economic Survey for 1955 (page 35, paragraph 30), that the establishment of industries would be a slow and difficult process and that determined efforts would need to be made to achieve even a limited programme. The problem in the Gold Coast is not so much finding outside finance as obtaining trained technicians and managers and the requisite industrial raw materials. As I said when I wrote to you last<sup>1</sup> the real problem which we are facing is the need for being able to write into the Constitution a reasonable sum to be devoted over a long period to development in the North. This development would not be in itself productive but it would create the conditions under which revenue-producing development could afterwards be undertaken. The Gold Coast Government consider that the country's reserves are quite sufficient for it to embark on development of a revenue-producing sort, but the uncertainty of the cocoa price must mean that no Government could commit themselves to development which is not productive unless they were assured that the economy was sufficiently buoyant to bear the recurrent costs.

4. The arguments in favour of some such aid being given to Ghana I can perhaps conveniently summarise as follows:-

(a) The Gold Coast has never made undue demands on Colonial Development and Welfare Funds. Only £1½M. out of a total development fund of £121.6M. has been provided from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds, and taking even indirectly contributions into account, the grant total United Kingdom aid is less than £3.5M. £118.3M. or more than 94% of the total sums set aside for development accrued either directly or indirectly from cocoa surplus. The Government had on the 31st December, 1955, still a reserve of £58.9M. for financing continual development. This balance could of course have been greatly increased had the Government at an early stage pressed for extra Colonial Development and Welfare grants and it seems to me an argument in favour of giving special consideration to Ghana's position when other parts of the Colonial Commonwealth have benefited by the past restraint of the Gold Coast.

(b) The Gold Coast has been of the greatest assistance during the last five years to the Sterling Area as a whole in maintaining dollar balances. Looking at this problem as a whole there was a net loss, since 1951 and 1955, of £77M. in dollar and gold reserves of the United Kingdom. Over the same period the Gold Coast contribution in net visible dollar earnings, that is to say dollar exports less imports from the United States, Canada and other American account countries, has been £95.5M. The total export of gold to the United Kingdom has been £48M. thus giving a total contribution which can be offset against the drain on the Sterling Area as a whole of £153M. In order to keep up gold production the Government have undertaken expenditure of various sorts including the payment of a subsidy of £100,000 a year to four mines and by the starting of various tax reliefs. By so doing at a critical stage they have secured a steady flow of gold to Britain. Similarly the net dollar balance has been maintained by the most rigorous control of imports from dollar countries. In the same way the Gold Coast has maintained a favourable balance of trade with Western Germany and Switzerland. On the

<sup>1</sup> See 267.

grounds of this vital assistance rendered at a critical period it seems to the Gold Coast Government that at least their present aid problems should be looked at in a sympathetic and understanding light.

(c) If it is possible for the Government to go ahead with the Volta River Project, this will not only involve certain cuts in other development projects but it will also impose a strain on the Gold Coast economy which in its turn may well be reflected in political unrest which, to complete the circle, will discourage the project going forward. Government is firmly of the view that in order to obtain internal stability it is necessary to deal with the special problem of the Northern Territories by means of development expenditure on such things as roads, water supplies and irrigation, soil conservation and human and animal health measures which are likely to be unremunerative in the short run and which are beyond the capacity of the Government if they restrict their development in the manner suggested by the Volta River Preparatory Commission as essential to keep the economy in balance for the carrying out of the Volta Scheme. This Scheme would of course benefit the United Kingdom to the extent of \$100M. saved annually on aluminium dollar projects.

5. Obviously this is not a matter which can possibly be settled in Parliamentary discussions of the Bill. What my Government are most anxious to obtain is an assurance that the mind of the British Government is not closed to the provision of some form of economic aid to deal with these problems and will be prepared to discuss this question with Gold Coast representatives before independence. It is too early now to make other than tentative proposals but it might perhaps be possible, though an expert examination of the economic implications is essential, to earmark a proportion of the yield of the cocoa development tax if it rises beyond a certain figure to the repayment of any advance obtained from the United Kingdom Government for long-term development. The essential feature of any scheme must be, I think, that there should be a sum set aside for development in the North for a fixed period of time. Government would welcome Commonwealth cooperation in the administration of the Fund and Commonwealth discussion on the projects upon which it was to be spent.

**273** CO 554/994, no 7

18 Dec 1956

[Financial aid]: letter from A D Peck (Treasury) to R J Vile.

*Enclosure*: Treasury brief on clause 3 of the Ghana Independence Bill

We had to do a short brief for the Economic Secretary explaining why we cannot give direct aid to independent members of the Commonwealth and it has been suggested that you might like to have a copy. I enclose one.

Enclosure to 273

1. This Clause (a) cuts off Ghana from C.D. and W. aid, and (b) prevents the C.D.C. from operating there. Opposition amendments are intended to eliminate or weaken these provisions.

2. In the Treasury view the provisions are right. There should be no question of providing alternative Exchequer aid for the following reasons:—

(i) We are already carrying a heavy burden in respect of our dependent territories (about £19m. for development and, say, £22m. for grants-in-aid) and we cannot afford to add to it. Presumably it is not being suggested that existing money could or should be diverted from the colonies to independent members of the Commonwealth.

(ii) Exchequer aid necessarily involves a measure of control and examination which would be quite inappropriate for, and would be resented by, independent territories. How could we, for example, probe the local revenue position to see whether an adequate contribution was being made from this source?

(iii) It would shake the confidence of outside investors and inhibit the proper course of Ghana's development if it became known that, whereas before independence she had virtually looked after herself, after independence she had to rely on assistance from H.M.G.

(iv) Ghana is a rich territory and can well afford to finance her development from her own resources and from the other sources available to independent members of the Commonwealth.

(v) We should be setting a most undesirable precedent if we were to agree to Exchequer aid for Ghana. Hitherto H.M.G. has accepted the principle that independence means financial self-sufficiency and we see no reason for breaking it, particularly in the case of a wealthy country like Ghana. If we did, it would be very difficult to hold the line in the case of, say, Nigeria or the Caribbean Federation. It might moreover lead to claims being made by existing members of the Commonwealth.

## 274 CO 554/994

19–21 Dec 1956

[Financial aid]: minutes by J S Bennett, C G Eastwood and A N Galsworthy on the prospects of UK aid to finance Ghana development

I have had this file opened to consider the general question of financial and economic aid to Ghana as it now stands after the debates on the Independence Bill have been concluded in the House of Commons, and in particular to consider what reply the Secretary of State should be advised to send to Dr. Nkrumah's messages.<sup>1</sup> The present correspondence springs in part from that about Colonial Development and Welfare assistance but Dr. Nkrumah's request now goes a good deal wider than that. The letters from Mr. Cumming-Bruce provide background.<sup>2</sup>

2. A certain amount of ground has been cleared, if only in a negative sense: now that the Bill is through the Commons, we can take it as settled policy that if there is to be any aid to Ghana after independence it is not to come from C.D. & W. or C.D.C. I think we can also put on one side the two or three specific financial transactions which have from time to time come up in this context. The decision to fulfil the

<sup>1</sup> See 267 and 272.

<sup>2</sup> See 269–271.

grant to Kumasi College after independence on the C.R.O. Vote has now been published, but it is a once-for-all specific item which clearly does not answer the general case now put to us. H.M.G. are also meeting the Swiss claim, but we can expect no credit for that in the present context, both because the Gold Coast Government never admitted their liability and because we have as good as told them that we have recouped ourselves out of the Gold Coast's unexpended territorial C.D. & W. allocation. Equally the question of the military buffer stocks is a limited item which must be settled on its own merits; even if it were possible to persuade the War Office that their claim should be dropped on political grounds, they would on past experience be likely to contend that the W.O. Vote could not properly be charged with a political measure and they would expect to be recouped from the C.O. or C.R.O. Vote.

3. The question is therefore whether a case can be made to the Treasury for general financial aid to Ghana after independence over and above the normal channels open to Ghana such as the International Bank and the C.D.F.C., which were mentioned in last night's debate.

4. There is obvious Parliamentary pressure for this to be done through some channel or other. In dealing with it the Secretary of State said:

“ . . . I would like to make it clear to the Committee and to the people of the Gold Coast that the Bill does not mean that we intend to wash our hands of all their affairs or to dissociate ourselves from their future development. Quite the contrary is the case . . . I am in touch with the Gold Coast Government on the question of economic aid and I am ready at all times to discuss personally or through the Governor matters of that kind . . . ”

At the same time Ministers endeavoured to convince the House of the limitations; for example, the Minister of State's words:

“ . . . Ghana will not be in precisely the same position after independence as it was before. It cannot be. That is in the nature of becoming independent. My Rt. Hon. Friend and myself and all of us are anxious to find means of making Ghana able to get what it needs, but we cannot go further than the facts of the case dictate . . . ”

5. Having re-read the correspondence with the Chancellor in the C.D. & W. context,<sup>3</sup> I do not see how the Colonial Office can have any chance of convincing the Treasury that there is a case now for aid to Ghana on the sort of general political ground of helping emergent territories that was urged in the recent Parliamentary debates. The Treasury brief for their Minister<sup>4</sup> reinforces that view. We cannot prove actual need, nor produce the sort of special circumstances that I understand have been advanced and accepted in the case of Malaya.

6. If that conclusion is accepted, the only remaining possible ground would be some consideration of high policy not directly related to the economic merits of the case. Dr. Nkrumah has in effect brought forward two such grounds:—

<sup>3</sup> See 261–263.

<sup>4</sup> See 273.

(a) Ghana's bargaining position as a dollar earner for the sterling area: it is for Economic Division to assess what weight, if any, can be attached to this implied threat.

(b) The need on political grounds for development grants to the Northern Territories. This is an ingenious attempt on Dr. Nkrumah's part to exploit the known tenderness in the United Kingdom about relinquishing this Protectorate, but I really do not think it will wash. No such special grant has been made from U.K. funds during the colonial era, and I cannot see how its introduction at the moment of independence could be justified to Parliament, consistently with the view that the Gold Coast as a whole is ripe for independence, and with the stand which Ministers have already taken about the implications of independence. Nor do I think we should accept Dr. Nkrumah's implication that the Ghana Government could justifiably transfer this burden to the U.K. Government if they find they have not enough money to go round. If they genuinely want, as they say, to do their duty by the North, they ought to economise somewhere else to make it possible. In fact, it should be worth a good deal to the C.P.P. Government to buy the support of the North, which, with its preponderance in the police and army, is to some extent in a position to sway the balance between the Colony and Ashanti. Even if Dr. Nkrumah's unconvincing assertion that the stability of the Gold Coast is an economic rather than a political problem were valid, there seems to me every reason for not relieving the Gold Coast Government of the necessity of facing the problem themselves. I conclude therefore that the case for a special U.K. grant for the Northern Territories will not stand up.

7. Evidently Dr. Nkrumah expects no more in reply at this stage (i.e., before independence) than a general assurance that doors are not closed. Subject to Economic Division's comments and unless there is some new element unknown to me, I would advise that even that reply should be in such language as to leave little ground for hope that anything will come through the door. I feel sure it would be a mistake to allow false hopes to continue.

8. I annex WAF 221/742/01 on which we have been considering the C.R.O. draft reply to Mr. Cumming-Bruce's suggestion that special aid would be justified as an antidote to the risk of Russian penetration. The draft reply is consistent with the discouraging policy recommended above, but would clearly be inconsistent if there were any question of Ministers revising that policy as a result of the recent debates. I have therefore thought it advisable to hold the reply to Mr. Cumming-Bruce in suspense until the policy is firm.

J.S.B.  
19.12.56.

*Mr. Galsworthy*

... I am clear that there is no case for an immediate financial grant to the Gold Coast, beyond, that is, the Kumasi grant already agreed.

I am equally clear that it would be very useful politically in the Gold Coast for a sum to be set aside for the development of the Northern Territories. I agree with Mr. Bennett that it is primarily for the Gold Coast Government to deny themselves in other directions in order to have money to develop the North.

But their financial future is at the moment so uncertain, with the (relatively) low price of cocoa, that one can easily appreciate that the Gold Coast Government see difficulties in tying themselves to find a fixed sum each year for this purpose over a period of years.

Paragraph 5 of the second enclosure to No. (5)<sup>5</sup> amounts to a request by Dr. Nkrumah for a grant which might be repaid out of the yield of the cocoa development tax if it rises above a certain figure. I am afraid that is definitely not on.

But Mr Cumming-Bruce recommends that we should not give an entirely negative reply to the Prime Minister.<sup>6</sup> He suggests that we should say something on the lines that if the Ghana Government wish in due course to raise questions on future Ghana development H.M.G. will be glad to discuss them. Maybe we could go a little further than that and undertake to consider favourably an Exchequer loan if it was necessary to enable the Gold Coast to maintain the development programme in the North. Or possibly we could undertake to back an application by them to the International Bank for assistance – I am not sure whether that would be a practical or valuable thing to do.

Some such arrangement would have very considerable political advantages here in that it would go some way to meet the proposal, behind which there is great parliamentary pressure, that emergent territories should not be left entirely unsheltered in the international financial world in the first few years after their emergence but that something should be done for them until they are able to establish their own credit-worthiness.

If what I have suggested is accepted as a possibility, action would be to send a copy of the correspondence, where they do not already have it, to the C.R.O. and the Treasury putting the idea to them and suggesting a discussion early after Christmas. There can be no question of the Secretary of State replying to these messages before he leaves. He has already acknowledged them in a telegram to the Prime Minister which went yesterday but we ought to be able to telegraph or write to him in Central Africa not later than the 10th January at the latest as to the lines which we think the reply should take.

I should have no objection to a letter to Mr Cumming-Bruce on the lines suggested in the enclosure to No. (19) on WAF 221/742/O1 below although it would need a little titivating to take account of his latest letter which is at No. 3 on this file.<sup>7</sup>

C.G.E.  
21.12.56

*Mr. Eastwood*

As you have told me that you need these papers this evening I have only been able to read through them very quickly, and before expressing a firm view on the main issues raised in this correspondence I would want an opportunity to study the papers in some detail especially in relation to the exercises we ourselves have done in recent months about the Gold Coast's financial prospects over the next few years.

<sup>5</sup> 272 in this collection

<sup>7</sup> 271 in this collection.

<sup>6</sup> See 269, para 6.

2. However I think I can say now that, based on the several talks that Sir H. Poynton and I have had recently with the Treasury and C.R.O., both at official and ministerial level, over what came to be known as the "problem" of emergent territories, I see no prospect of our being able to give the Gold Coast an undertaking as in X<sup>8</sup> of your minute. As regards Y,<sup>9</sup> the only thing that would carry weight with the International Bank would be if we were ready to guarantee a loan from the International Bank to the Gold Coast. We have discussed this possibility in recent talks with the Treasury and the C.R.O. but have been forced to the conclusion that it is not a practicable proposition: to mention only one of the obstacles, it would need special legislation before H.M.G. could give any such guarantee.

3. Both the Treasury and the C.R.O. have recognised that we shall certainly have to say to the Gold Coast, in reply to paragraph 5 of Dr. Nkrumah's message, that we will be prepared to discuss their problems with them, and frankly I do not think we shall be able to go beyond that in replying to this message.

4. But any such discussions would need very careful handling, in my view. My impression is that the Gold Coast would not be able to make out any case on grounds of need for any sort of financial assistance if the Volta River project is shelved. On the other hand, Mr. Cumming-Bruce has suggested in paragraph 4 of his letter at No. 3<sup>10</sup> that it would be a material help as a stabilising factor in Ghana's external relations if the Volta River project remains in prospect at any rate for some years. I do not think this latter point has as yet been fully thought through. But if we did decide to play the hand along those lines, we might very well thereby create a need for external financial assistance on the part of the Gold Coast which in the end (i.e. if and when it becomes clear that the Volta project is not on) would turn out to be quite artificial. That is our dilemma. I am not of course suggesting that it is necessarily insuperable, and obviously we must be ready to hold discussions with the Gold Coast. But we do need, in my view, to go into the tactics of this matter very carefully with both the Treasury and the C.R.O. before we can decide on the most suitable reply to Dr. Nkrumah's message; and I think we will have to be ready to tackle this with the other two Departments as soon as possible after Xmas, despite the fact that we on our side are going to be very heavily engaged in the Malayan talks.

5. The drafts enclosed in No. 19 on WAF 221/742/01 will, I think, need to be looked at again in the light of the talks we shall need to have with the Treasury and C.R.O.

6. I fear this is not very helpful, but I really think I should be misleading you if, at least at this stage, I were to strike a more optimistic note. Nevertheless I do think we ought to be able to stage some quite useful talks with the Gold Coast though, as I have said, the ground will need pretty careful preparation.

A.N.G.  
21.12.56

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<sup>8</sup> X refers to the idea of an Exchequer loan in para 4 of Eastwood's minute above.

<sup>9</sup> Y refers to the idea of an application to the International Bank in para 4 of Eastwood's minute above.

<sup>10</sup> 271 in this collection.

**275** CO 554/820, no 9

22 Dec 1956

[Constitutional crisis]: inward telegram no 79 from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd on a proposal that the secretary of state should visit the Gold Coast

[In his message to Nkrumah, dated 20 Dec, mentioned in the first para of this tel from Arden-Clarke, Lennox-Boyd explained that he was visiting Central Africa for three weeks after Christmas and that he might call in at Accra on 20 Jan on his return journey to settle any outstanding points affecting his White Paper on the Gold Coast constitution. Nkrumah subsequently extended an invitation to Lennox-Boyd to visit the Gold Coast in the manner suggested by Arden-Clarke (CO 554/820, no 10, inward tel no 80, Arden-Clarke to Lennox-Boyd, 22 Dec).]

Your secret and personal telegram WAF 16/2/027.

I handed your message to Nkrumah. His first reaction was strongly to oppose the idea of a visit from you before independence. The result of lengthy discussion which followed is contained in my immediately following telegram.

2. Nkrumah feared three things:—

- (a) That your visit would be regarded as a triumph for the Opposition.
- (b) That you would wish to preside at a Round Table Conference and whole constitution would be thrown into the melting pot.
- (c) That he would be forced into making concessions which would render constitution unpalatable to his party and unworkable in practice.

As regards (c) he said he would take the line that the British Government could give him any constitution they liked and that after independence if he found it unpopular and unworkable he would tear it up and go to the country with a new constitution of his own.

I was able to assure him about (b).

As regards (a) I suggested this could be avoided if he himself extended an invitation to you to come to the Gold Coast and this is what is meant by paragraph 5 of his message.

3. I suggest Nkrumah's invitation might refer to your statement in the House that you had not ruled out the possibility of a visit to the Gold Coast and to your intention to produce a White Paper about constitution; that he feels it might assist you to finalise your White Paper if you were able to discuss matters personally with him and his colleagues and others on the spot and that if you could find time for it he would welcome a visit from you. In your reply you could give him the assurance for which he has asked that you have no intention of summoning and presiding at a Round Table Conference. I should be glad of your comments on this procedure.

4. Personally I shall be delighted to welcome you and Lady Patricia at the Castle but I am afraid you will find yourself the target of memorials and demonstrations and that you will be batting on a very stick[y] wicket. Luckily we have no Lock or Laker.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Lock and Jim Laker, two English test cricketers, both spin bowlers.

**276** PREM 11/1859

2 Jan 1957

[Constitutional crisis]: inward telegram no 2 from Mr Lennox-Boyd (Northern Rhodesia) to Sir A Eden on Dr Nkrumah's invitation to the secretary of state to visit the Gold Coast

[Lennox-Boyd sent this tel from Northern Rhodesia during his Central African visit. A reply accepting Nkrumah's invitation had already been sent (31 Dec 1956). In it Lennox-Boyd stated: 'It is not my intention to preside at a round table conference or to reopen any general discussion of the whole of the constitution. But I would like to take this last opportunity to do what I can to help the new foundation of Ghana to begin its life with maximum of goodwill on all sides.' Eden, however, had reservations about the visit. In his tel 137 of 1 Jan to Lennox-Boyd, the prime minister explained that the colonial secretary's presence was required in London because decisions about defence and national economies affecting his responsibilities had to be made 'in the next few weeks'. Eden was also concerned that Nkrumah might present Lennox-Boyd with an 'unexpected demand' and his tel ended (para 3) with a reference to the possibility that Lennox-Boyd might be asked to include other visits as well. Home urged that the visit should go ahead. In a minute (3 Jan) to Eden he suggested that 'we may be faced with an ugly situation on the eve of independence' and one which would make it impossible to endorse Ghana's membership of the Commonwealth. Arden-Clarke's intervention persuaded Eden to change his mind. In a tel dated 2 Jan to Lennox-Boyd in Northern Rhodesia which was repeated to London, Arden-Clarke expressed both his and Nkrumah's concern that the visit might not take place and added that public opinion in the Gold Coast was 'counting heavily on [the visit] as affording the last chance of reaching a peaceful solution of local difficulties'. Eden responded with a tel to Lennox-Boyd dated 4 Jan which stated: 'In view of Arden-Clarke's opinion in Gold Coast telegram No. 1 to you it is clear that you should go. Good luck.' Originally scheduled for 20 Jan but delayed because of Eden's resignation, Lennox-Boyd's visit took place between 24 and 30 Jan. He was accompanied by Eastwood and J O Moreton, his private secretary (PREM 11/1859).]

Your telegram Personal No. 137.

I have been giving careful thought to your message and to the obvious doubt in your mind as to whether this is a good plan or not. Its origin lay in the requests from both sides of the House that I should do it. I immediately passed these on to the Governor making it quite clear that I thought it was a good idea. The Governor discussed with Nkrumah and as a result the invitation came. I don't think there is any danger of the possibility you mention namely that Nkrumah, who had not suggested the visit, would use it to face me with some unexpected demand.

2. My considered view is that Nkrumah accepts it as much in his interest as in ours that the new Constitution should get off to as tranquil a start as possible, and that a visit from me would do a good deal to ensure this. All my instincts are strongly in favour of the visit.

3. I do not foresee any likelihood of a demand for other visits as suggested in your paragraph 3.

4. Though these are matters of first class importance in a field where we still largely have control of events, I would of course readily accept your final decision on whether I can best help forward our common interests either by taking this last opportunity of visiting the Gold Coast or by returning a few days earlier to be available for the discussions you mention.

**277** CO 554/994, no E/24/C

16 Jan 1957

'Economic assistance to Ghana': CO brief for Mr Lennox-Boyd during his visit to the Gold Coast. *Appendix III: 'The Volta River project'*

I. *The Gold Coast's financial position and prospects*

1. The last six years have been a time of great prosperity for the Gold Coast. This prosperity has been based almost entirely on the very high prices which have been obtainable throughout the period for the country's main export, cocoa. The cocoa producers have received a much higher return in real terms than they were accustomed to before the war. At the same time, through the imposition of a high export duty a high proportion of the increased receipts from cocoa has been taken by the Government; and the Cocoa Marketing Board has also used the opportunity to build up its stabilisation and other reserves to a level which has appeared likely to be sufficient to meet all contingencies.

2. The Government has used most of its receipts from the cocoa export duty to finance a development programme of exceptional size, – much the largest in any colonial territory, – which has been in progress since 1951. It will probably be completed during 1958. This programme has consisted of two parts:–

- (a) the 1951 Development Plan, with certain additions made in subsequent years, which is a general plan covering basic services of all kinds – communications, social services, official buildings, and agricultural and industrial development; and
- (b) schemes financed from the Reserve Development Fund, which include the development of Tema Harbour and Township, plus some additional housing development and preliminary work on the Volta River Project.

At the same time the country's extremely good financial position has allowed a general expansion of services carried on the ordinary budget, and recurrent expenditure has increased nearly two and a half times from 1951/52 to 1956/57. Only part of this increase has been due to the maintenance and operation of equipment and services provided under the Development Plan.

3. The total cost of the development programme is put at £118m. This is made up of £89.5m. (including a reserve of £1.5m. for contingencies) for the Development Plan, and of £28.5m. for the Reserve Development Fund schemes. On completion of the programme there is expected to be about £20.5m. remaining in the various development funds. But as this estimate assumes a contribution to development from the budget of £3.5m. in 1956/57, which on account of the worsening financial position seems unlikely to be realised, the actual amount is likely to be about £17.0m. It is intended that there should be a second Development Plan to follow on the completion of the present one, and the estimated cost of schemes already proposed for this plan is about £15.5m. The amount of uncommitted reserves is therefore very small indeed. By far the greater part of the funds used or allocated for development since 1951 – about £110m. out of a total of £138m. – has come from cocoa export duty through the ordinary budget; of the rest about £20m. has come from loans – mainly raised within the Gold Coast – £2.5m. from C.D. & W. funds, and the remainder from miscellaneous sources. The Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board appears to have reserves of about £70m., of which £51m. has

been kept as a stabilisation reserve. The remainder is needed for research, teaching, insurance and other funds.

4. Up to June 30th, 1956, the total amount spent on the Development Plan was £67m. (out of a total of £89.5m.), and on the Reserve Development Fund schemes £10.5m. (out of a total of £28.5m.), leaving £22.5m. and £18m. respectively to be spent. Expenditure will probably continue at least to the end of 1958. Taking both parts of the programme together, a very high proportion (36.6%) of the total expenditure is on communications – railways, roads, harbours, and Post Office services, – 22.6% is on social services, 23.6% on common services and general administration, and 17.3% on services such as agricultural and industrial development, and electricity and water supplies. Direct expenditure on agriculture is 5% of the total. The large equipment of basic services which the programme is providing is bound to mean a large increase in recurrent charges for their operation and maintenance, most of which must be borne on the ordinary Budget, as it is only for certain services, such as rail transport, harbour use, and electricity supply that the consumer can be charged directly.

5. As a result both of the general rise in expenditure and the increased recurrent costs due to development, and the falling tendency of cocoa prices, the budgetary position is now becoming extremely difficult. Recurrent expenditure (i.e. excluding contributions to development) has risen from approximately £19m. in 1951/52 to an estimate of approximately £45m. in 1956/57. The estimates of revenue for 1956/57, which provide for an income of £48.7m. have been made on the basis of an average cocoa price of £230 per ton f.o.b. for the year, which seems most unlikely to be realised (the present Accra price is about £170 per ton).\*

All the receipts from the cocoa duty up to a price of £200 per ton are now required for recurrent expenditure, only receipts above this price being available for development. If the present price trend continues it may well not be possible even to cover recurrent expenditure without drawing on general budgetary reserves, unless taxation is increased or spending is cut. Moreover, the International Bank Mission which went to the Gold Coast recently have estimated that the completion of the development programme will increase annually recurrent expenditure by a further £3m. Some increases in taxation were imposed in the 1956/57 budget, and it has now been decided to seek means of cutting expenditure.

6. The Minister of Finance, Mr Gbedemah, has stated that future development expenditure, after the completion of the present programme, must be confined to revenue-earning projects and those which will increase the national income. A high priority is to be given to agricultural development, the needs of which are very great, since, despite its gold, diamonds and manganese, the Gold Coast is basically an agricultural territory with no great industrial possibilities (at least until the volume of demand in the domestic market is greater). The Volta Project, if proceeded with, would eventually be a valuable supplement to, but could not take the place of, agricultural improvement; but its costs are very high by comparison with any contribution which the Gold Coast Government could probably make towards it in the near future – unless there is a substantial rise in cocoa prices – as there are practically no development reserves which are not required either for the completion

\* A rise or fall of £10 per ton in the cocoa price means an increase or reduction of about £1.1m. in receipts from the export duty.

of the present programme or for subsequent schemes which appear to be fairly firm commitments.

## II. *Dr. Nkrumah's requests for financial assistance*

7. On the 8th December, 1956, the Prime Minister sent to the Secretary of State a personal message, of which a copy is attached at Appendix I.<sup>1</sup> In this message the Prime Minister referred to the difficulty of financial planning in the Gold Coast owing to fluctuations in the world price of cocoa. He said that, if his Government could be certain of the funds, they would wish to make a substantial annual allocation, to be written into the Constitution, for development and welfare in the Northern Territories, including Northern Togoland; but added that since the world price of cocoa cannot be predicted the Gold Coast Government are not in a position to make the firm promise to the Northern Territories for the substantial amount that they would like. He went on to say that the Gold Coast's ability to assist the Sterling Area must largely depend on internal stability, which would in part be affected by the ability of the Gold Coast Government to make adequate provision for the Northern Territories. "In all these circumstances", he concluded, "it may seem to the British Government and Parliament that we would be both assisting each other if the British Government were able to make a contribution towards the development of the Northern Territories."

8. Two days later the Prime Minister asked Mr Cumming-Bruce to see him about his request for a contribution from H.M.G. towards the cost of development of the Northern Territories.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Nkrumah said the Gold Coast Government does not wish to ask for external assistance, lest this be misconstrued as meaning that Ghana is unable to stand on her own feet financially; but nevertheless he could not see how the Ghana Government could raise the money required for the reasonable development needs of the Northern Territories in the next few years. He explained that the scale of contributions to the Northern Territories which he had in mind was £1½m. a year for ten years, of which he hoped that H.M.G. would contribute 50% (i.e. a contribution from H.M.G. of £750,000 a year for ten years, or a total of £7½m.).

9. On the 15th December Dr. Nkrumah sent two further personal messages to the Secretary of State. The only reference to economic assistance in the first of these messages was contained in the following paragraph:

"The question of stability in the Gold Coast is in the view of the Gold Coast Government an economic, rather than a political problem, and it is for that reason that my Government lays the greatest stress on the arguments contained in the memorandum which the Officer Administering the Government is attaching to a despatch to you (this is the personal message at Appendix I). The Gold Coast Government do not of course expect that it would be possible in the remaining stage of the Bill in the House for any firm undertakings in regard to these matters to be made. What we should like is a statement that before independence there will be further discussions on the problems raised. Such discussions would however be without prejudice to either side's position."

<sup>1</sup> Appendix I is reproduced in this collection as 267.

<sup>2</sup> See 269.

The second message dealt exclusively with the question of economic assistance, and is reproduced as Appendix II.<sup>3</sup>

10. This second message refers to two projects for which the Gold Coast Government had hoped to obtain finance from the C.D.C., *viz.* a cement project and a proposal to establish a flour mill at Tema. The decision that the C.D.C. must not embark on any new projects (both were broached with the C.D.C. only at a very late stage, and could not be permitted under our policy regarding the operations of the C.D.C. in "emergent" territories) means that the Gold Coast Government will have to seek alternative finance for them (this is dealt with in paragraph 21 below). The message explains however that this is not the main development issue: the real problem for the Gold Coast Government, according to Dr. Nkrumah's message, is the need to be able to write into the Constitution a reasonable sum to be devoted over a long period to development in the North which would be mainly of an unproductive nature. The message goes on to say that what the Gold Coast Government are anxious to obtain is "an assurance that the mind of the British Government is not closed to the provision of some form of economic aid to deal with these problems (*i.e.* the development needs of the Northern Territories) and will be prepared to discuss this question with Gold Coast representatives before independence". The message suggests tentatively that it might be possible "to earmark a proportion of the yield of the cocoa development tax if it rises beyond a certain figure to the repayment of any advance obtained by the United Kingdom Government for long term development. The essential feature of any scheme must be that there should be a sum set aside for development in the North for a fixed period of time. Government would welcome Commonwealth co-operation in the administration of the Fund and Commonwealth discussion on the projects on which it was to be spent".

### III. *Financial assistance from H.M.G. to the Federation of Malaya*

11. It is quite likely that Gold Coast Ministers will contrast the assistance which H.M.G. has agreed to make available to the Federation of Malaya with the absence of any such promise to the Gold Coast.

12. Our assistance to the Federation of Malaya originates from certain undertakings given to the Federation at the time of the Constitutional Conference in January and February, 1956. The principal undertakings then given related to the provision of assistance, if a financial need was shown, in respect of the Emergency and the expansion of the Federation's Armed Forces, and were expressed in the Report of the Constitutional Conference, as follows:

#### (a) *The Emergency*

"Regarding the future financial relationship between the United Kingdom and the Federation of Malaya, we agree that it is most important that the Federation should go forward to full self-government in circumstances which will give a fair assurance of its future financial stability. In this context, we recognise fully the vitally important position of the Federation in the world-wide struggle against communism and the fact that operations in the military sphere must be backed by a sound and vigorous programme of economic and social development.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix II is reproduced in this collection as 272.

During the interim period Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to help the Federation should it become clear that, having regard to the necessity for the Federation Government to make provision for an expanded programme of economic and social development and to the need to maintain reserves at the right level as a precaution against possible fluctuations in the prices of rubber and tin before the Federation's rubber replanting schemes bear fruit, there is a need for financial assistance from the United Kingdom towards the cost of the Emergency. To this end we agree that a meeting should be held as soon as possible between the United Kingdom and Federation Governments with a view to determining the necessity for such assistance.

It is recognised that the attainment of full self-government implies the principle of financial self-sufficiency. Nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government recognise the common interest of both Governments in bringing the Emergency to an end. For this reason, if the Emergency has not been brought to an end by the time that full self-government and independence within the Commonwealth is attained, Her Majesty's Government will still be prepared to consider with the Federation Government whether the financial needs of the Federation would justify special assistance from Her Majesty's Government towards meeting the cost of the Emergency over and above the substantial assistance which will continue to be given through the forces and services provided by the United Kingdom to sustain the fight against the Communist terrorists."

(b) *The expansion of the Federation's armed forces*

"Apart from their continuing commitments in the Federation in respect of its external defence, Her Majesty's Government will maintain their undertaking to finance certain capital costs of expansion of the Federation Armed Forces in an agreed programme."

In addition, H.M.G. gave the following undertaking with regard to the *Federation's C.D. & W. allocations*:-

"If, at the time when the Federation attains full self-government within the Commonwealth, there is any unspent balance of allocations made to the Federation under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, the approval of Parliament will be sought to enable an amount equivalent to any such balance to be made available to the Federation for development expenditure."

13. In pursuance of these undertakings, as a result of the financial talks with the Malayan Delegation which have just been concluded, H.M.G. have agreed to provide the Federation with assistance as follows:-

(a) *The Emergency*

(i) H.M.G. will provide the Federation with a grant of £3m. a year for each of the three years 1957/59.

(ii) At the end of 1959 the question of assistance from H.M.G. towards the cost of the Emergency will be reviewed, in the light of the Federation's financial position and needs at that time, to consider

(1) whether, and if so to what extent, assistance may be needed towards the cost of the Emergency in the two following years (1960 and 1961), subject to a maximum of £11m. over those two years;

(2) the form of any such assistance, i.e. whether it should take the form of a grant, or an interest free loan, or a combination of both.

(b) *Assistance towards the expansion of the Federation's armed forces*

(i) In 1953, in order to assist Malaya in the fight against Communist terrorists, we undertook to provide them with a grant of up to £7.29m. towards the capital costs of a programme of expansion of the Federation's Armed Forces. Owing to the drain of the Emergency on their resources, this expansion could not have been undertaken without assistance from H.M.G.

(ii) This programme has now been abandoned and superseded by another which will cost more. As at the 1st January 1956 (the date from which the Federation's new plans have been drawn) there remained an unspent balance of some £6.5m. from our 1953 grant of £7.29m.

(iii) We have agreed that this balance of £6.5m. may be used for the new programme. To this we have added further cash assistance of £1.3m., and we have also undertaken to provide equipment in kind to an estimated value of some £5.5m. We have also promised to hold further discussions later with a view to the provision of additional assistance over certain camps and installations.

(iv) Our total assistance to the new programme, in both cash and kind, therefore amounts to £13.3m. (of which £6.5m. is the balance of grants promised in 1953), plus whatever further assistance we give later in regard to camps and installations.

(c) *Assistance for development*

The Federation Delegation sought a loan from H.M.G. at low rates of interest (3% over 40 years) of up to £45m. for their development programme. We told them that we could not accede to this request, since it would be contrary to H.M.G.'s practice to provide direct Exchequer assistance for development to an independent member of the Commonwealth; and that in consequence we could not go beyond our undertaking at the Constitutional Conference to make available to the Federation, after independence, a grant equivalent to any unspent balance on that date of the Federation's C.D. & W. allocations.

We also told the Malayan Delegation that we would allow the C.D.C. to participate financially (provided such participation meets the requirements of the Overseas Resources Development Acts) in two projects which, though not yet started, have been under consideration by the C.D.C. for a very long period. These are the proposed Malayan Industrial Development (Finance) Corporation and the Land Development Authority. They differ from the two Gold Coast projects referred to in paragraph 10 above (the cement project and the proposed flour mill at Tema) in that the two Malayan projects have been under examination by the C.D.C. for well over a year (much longer in one case), whereas the question of possible C.D.C. participation in the two Gold Coast projects has been raised only quite recently. The Malayan Delegation were told that we could not permit C.D.C. participation in other Malayan projects which, like those in the Gold Coast, are only of very recent origin.

14. If Gold Coast Ministers do seek to use the Malayan settlement as an

argument in support of their request for financial assistance from H.M.G., the following points can be made:

(a) Our assistance to Malaya relates to the Emergency and the building up of the Armed Forces, both of which are vital common needs in the world-wide struggle against Communism. Despite massive assistance from H.M.G., who have borne the whole cost of the British forces in Malaya, the Emergency has represented a tremendous drain on Malaya's financial resources. Both for this reason and because of fluctuations in the price of rubber, Malaya has been unable to build up a strong financial position in recent years: indeed in 1954 H.M.G. had to provide her with grant-in-aid assistance of £6m., and when the allocations were made (primarily on the basis of financial need) under the C.D. & W. Act of 1955, the Federation's need was revealed as one of the largest of all the colonial territories (she was given a new allocation of £4m.).

(b) The Gold Coast, on the other hand, has not had to contend with an Emergency, and during the period of the cocoa boom was able to accumulate very substantial financial reserves, so much so that no further territorial allocation was needed, or could have been justified, under the 1955 C.D. & W. Act.

(c) These facts show the substantial differences between the position of Malaya and that of the Gold Coast. So far as military forces are concerned, the Gold Coast already possesses adequate forces. In the period April 1949 to July, 1956 H.M.G. in fact contributed a substantial amount, conservatively estimated at some £4.5m. towards the maintenance costs of the Gold Coast forces.

15. Gold Coast Ministers may well argue that our treatment of the Gold Coast in regard to the balance of their C.D. & W. Allocations is less generous than that accorded to the Federation of Malaya.

A comparison between the treatment of the Gold Coast and the Federation of Malaya in the C.D. & W. field shows that in general the Gold Coast have been treated on the same principles as the Federation. The position is as follows:—

#### *Federation*

- (i) the Federation will not be eligible after independence for C.D. & W. assistance as such; but
- (ii) the unspent balance of the territorial allocation at the date of independence will be made available to the Federation in the form of grants through the Commonwealth Services Vote. This balance was estimated at £4m. on 1st January 1956 but will be less at the date of independence (target 31st August 1957, say £3.5m.);
- (iii) that part of the C.D. & W. scheme for the University of Malaya building programme which is earmarked for expenditure in the Federation (some £400,000) will be made available through the Commonwealth Services Vote to the Federation after independence.
- (iv) after independence the Federation will not receive any benefit from central or regional C.D. & W. schemes except on a paying basis.

#### *Gold Coast*

- (i) as for the Federation;
- (ii) the unspent balance of the territorial allocation at the date of independence

is estimated by the Gold Coast at about £200,000: we estimate that it will be nearer £300,000. This balance will not be made available to the Gold Coast. H.M.G. will however pay the Swiss Government about £350,000 to discharge a liability arising from the Accra riots in 1948 when considerable damage was done to foreign, including Swiss, property, for which a claim was subsequently lodged against H.M.G. by the Swiss Government. We regarded this as a proper liability on the Gold Coast Government, but they declined to accept it. H.M.G. decided to meet the claim because (a) we were advised that H.M.G. was liable in international law; and (b) it would have been politically impracticable to insist that the Gold Coast Government should pay (present Gold Coast Ministers were involved in the riots).

(iii) £350,000 will be made available through the Commonwealth Services Vote for the Kumasi College of Technology, i.e. the same treatment as in (iii) for the Federation;

(iv) as for the Federation.

The main difference is thus not of treatment, but in the amount involved and in the existence of the Swiss claim in the case of the Gold Coast. The estimated unspent balance of the territorial allocation at date of independence is much larger for the Federation than for the Gold Coast because the former received, on the basis of need, a territorial allocation of £4m. in 1955 whereas, as the Gold Coast had no financial need, she received no new allocation in 1955 and is still spending her pre-1955 allocations.

#### IV. *The Volta River project*

16. Development planning in the Gold Coast has hitherto been dominated by the Volta River Project. A description of the present position is at Appendix III. All parties likely to be interested in the Project are now reserving their position pending the result of the recent I.B.R.D. Mission to the Gold Coast. All the signs are that the I.B.R.D. are not likely to advocate the early launching of the Project, but this is probably not known to Gold Coast Ministers. It seems clear that the Gold Coast Government would have great difficulty in finding its contribution to the Project.

17. Although it would be premature to reach any conclusion about the probable course of events, the Secretary of State should know for his own information that the best assessment we can make is that it seems highly improbable that a decision to undertake the Project can be taken for some years unless of course Aluminium Limited takes a new and more encouraging line. It is however very important to avoid creating any impression that H.M.G. have in any way lost interest in the Project.

18. It would be advisable not to take any initiative in raising this matter with Gold Coast Ministers. If they raise it as a separate issue, it would be necessary to take a non-committal line. It will of course be discussed in the context of development planning (v. para. 21 below).

#### V. *Suggested line to be taken with the Gold Coast government*

19. As regards the Prime Minister's request for some form of assistance from the U.K. Exchequer to enable the Gold Coast Government to make fixed annual allocations for development in the Northern Territories, we can only take the line that Exchequer assistance for development to an independent member of the

Commonwealth would be contrary to H.M.G.'s practice and to intra-Commonwealth relations. This applies with added force to grants for a particular part of the territory of a Commonwealth country, which could easily be misunderstood as implying some continuing U.K. responsibility for the region concerned. We cannot therefore meet that particular request. We have taken a similar general line with the Federation of Malaya (*vide* paragraph 13(c) above).

20. But the Prime Minister has asked that talks should be held between H.M.G. and the Gold Coast Government, before independence, to consider the Gold Coast's development problems, "without commitment on either side". We can readily agree to consider these problems with the Gold Coast. There does not, however, seem any point in doing so until the Gold Coast Government have mapped out a development plan for the period after independence. Only then will we and the Gold Coast be able to consider their development problems. In any case neither side would be in a position to give this matter the unhurried attention it deserves during the few weeks remaining before independence.

21. We suggest therefore that the Secretary of State might say on this point, in reply to the request in the Prime Minister's personal message of the 15th December, that while direct assistance for development from the U.K. Exchequer would not be feasible, we would certainly be ready to consider with the Gold Coast Government their development problems, as the Prime Minister has suggested. We do not however think that discussions could be really meaningful until the Gold Coast Government has made further progress with its development planning for the post-independence period. We recognise that the uncertainty with regard to the Volta River Project makes such planning difficult. Nevertheless we suggest that the Gold Coast should draw up some plans, even though they may of necessity be fairly tentative, and that we should then have talks with them to consider their development problems and to explore the prospects of raising the finance required.

#### *Possible assistance from the CDFC*

22. This matter was raised by Dr. Nkrumah in his personal message of the 15th December, and as Dr. Nkrumah's message reveals a misconception it is desirable that it should be corrected.

23. The Secretary of State might say that we were very glad indeed to see that direct relations have now been established between the Gold Coast Government and the C.D.F.C. The C.D.F.C. was set up in 1953 with the specific object of assisting in the finance of Commonwealth development projects. We know that they are keenly interested in assisting Ghana after independence, both in regard to the provision of finance for approved projects and in the provision of technical and other advice on industrial development projects. They are in a unique position to provide such assistance because of their standing in and wide contacts with the City and U.K. industry, and they are reinforcing their staff so as to be able to give the best possible service. We believe the Gold Coast Government will find the C.D.F.C. a real source of help and advice in the future.

24. As regards the proposed cement project, the Prime Minister suggested in his message of the 15th December that the C.D.F.C. would not be able to help since one of the proposed participants, Tunnel Portland Cement, is a competitor of Associated Portland Cement Limited, who are one of the shareholders of C.D.F.C. We understand however from C.D.F.C. that they are perfectly free to work with any

industrial firm, whether it is among their shareholders or not. In fact, they have already made an investment in association with Tunnel in a cement works in New Zealand. There is therefore no reason why the Gold Coast Government should not approach the C.D.F.C. with this project. In view of the strong desire of the C.D.F.C. to be helpful to the Gold Coast, we most certainly recommend that the Gold Coast Government should make this approach. The Gold Coast Government might also put to the C.D.F.C. the project for a flour mill at Tema, also referred to in the Prime Minister's message.

VI. *Questions relating to the Gold Coast military forces which may be raised by Gold Coast ministers*

25. Gold Coast Ministers may raise two financial questions affecting the hand-over in July 1956 by the War Office of their military forces.<sup>4</sup> The War Office seek to be paid for military buffer stocks and fixed assets; Gold Coast Ministers have resisted the first request and are likely to object to the second.

*Military Buffer Stocks*

26. These are the reserves of stores and equipment which are necessary for the Gold Coast Military Forces to tide over the period when normal maintenance stocks have been unduly run down. The stocks cover periods of between six months and a year. All but a small fraction of them are in the Gold Coast, and were in fact taken on charge by the Gold Coast Military Forces when the War Office handed over responsibility for those Forces in July 1956. Their value is £528,450.

27. The Gold Coast argue that they should not pay for them, basing themselves on the obligation of the War Office to hand over the Gold Coast Forces in a sound condition, and on a pledge given to them by Sir David Roseway (the then Deputy Under Secretary of State, W.O.) in January 1955 that "the Gold Coast Government should pay all from the day of take-over, but should not pay for stores in hand". That statement was made in January 1955, and it was not until May 1956 that the War Office made it clear that they would not agree to hand over buffer stocks.

28. The War Office argument is based on their interpretation of Sir David Roseway's statement that it referred merely to authorised holdings of equipment on charge to units of the Gold Coast Forces at the date of hand-over and was not intended to cover buffer stocks which were of course kept in reserve. They regard the handing over of buffer stocks as affording a dangerous precedent since other territories in East and West Africa will in due course be in the same position as the Gold Coast. If for political reasons it is decided that H.M.G. should bear the cost then claims should not result in a loss to Army funds. To any person unmindful of the nice distinctions between stores held on unit charge and those in an Ordinance [sic] Depot the War Office would seem to be completely committed. It has been impossible so far to cause them to alter their view and it is now proposed that the Secretary of State should write to the Secretary of State for War on his return.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on this issue, see T 220/1102, file entitled 'West Africa: (i) cost of defence measures; (ii) defence implications of political developments in the Gold Coast'.

### *Fixed Assets*

29. These are military buildings constructed either wholly out of War Office funds or partly out of War Office and partly out of Gold Coast funds. There are about twenty-one buildings in all. In accordance with the general principle that assets on which H.M.C. funds have been spent cannot be transferred permanently to another Government's custody without appropriate reimbursement, the War Office are demanding payment for the War Office share of the *in situ* valuation of these buildings. The amount is £504,900. They say that this principle was followed in the case of India and is being applied to the East African Forces. It was not followed in the case of Burma owing to the devastation which Burma had suffered during the war.

30. The War Office proposal, which with Treasury concurrence has been put to the Gold Coast, is for payment of the sum of £504,900 less 6% which represents the War Office estimate of the maintenance charges during the last six years, which have been at Gold Coast expense. The War Office and Treasury are prepared to negotiate on the cost of annual maintenance. We have not yet had a reply from the Gold Coast to the proposal that was made to them.

31. If Gold Coast Ministers raise these matters the Secretary of State might take the line that he has been kept informed of their progress and that he proposes on his return to take them up personally with his colleagues in order to ensure that an early settlement can be reached.

### Appendix III to 277

The Preparatory Commission estimated that at full production (210,000 tons of aluminium) the project would cost £231m., compared with the 1952 provisional estimate of £144m. Even this huge figures does not take account of further possible increases caused by world inflationary pressures for which the Preparatory Commission thought that a further 40% might be allowed.

2. At the discussions last April Aluminium Limited said that there were other competitive projects elsewhere which had decreased the attractiveness of Volta, that instead of their buying power on a cost plus basis they required a guaranteed price over a long term and that the amount of capital they could raise for the smelter was limited. The effect of these proposals would be to transfer all the risk of the power project to the Volta River Authority. As regards the financing, the U.K. representatives said that the ability of the U.K. to contribute to the scheme had been reduced on account of their other commitments and the U.K.'s economic position. The actual sum which the U.K. would be prepared to provide would depend to a large extent on the finance available from outside the Sterling Area, and particularly the International Bank.

3. The talks therefore terminated on the basis that all parties would reconsider their position and in the meanwhile the International Bank would be sounded.

4. The International Bank sent a mission to the Gold Coast in November to study the Gold Coast economy in general and had in the forefront of their consideration the impact of the Volta Scheme. In the next month or two the mission will report to the Bank and the Bank will let us and the Gold Coast know what their general feelings are. Our guess is that the Bank will not say anything which will encourage

the parties to an early beginning of the Volta project. The fall in the cocoa price which has occasioned substantial drawings on Gold Coast reserves, the current high interest rates and business considerations, which make heavy investment in a new and unestablished independent country somewhat speculative, are all discouraging features.

5. After they have heard what the International Bank have to say, the Gold Coast will presumably reconsider if, when and on what basis they wish to proceed. (It may well be that some less grandiose scheme can be evolved, e.g. an alumina plant which would carry out the first step in the production of the metal or possibly a smelter which will produce aluminium in the first instance from imported bauxite, thus deferring expenditure on Gold Coast bauxite mines and railways. This possibility should *not* however be mentioned to Gold Coast Ministers.)

6. The future of the scheme is therefore very uncertain and neither the U.K. or the Gold Coast Governments' nor the Aluminium Companies' final attitudes can be predicted. In the meantime Sir Robert Jackson and the remaining staff of the Preparatory Commission are continuing to assemble background data. Until July the Commission is financed 50% by H.M.G. Thereafter if the Commission continues it will be wholly responsible to, and financed by, the Gold Coast Government.

## 278 CO 554/994, no E/24/B

18 Jan 1957

[Financial aid]: minutes of a meeting between Gold Coast government ministers and representatives of the Northern Territories in the Legislative Assembly in Dr Nkrumah's office on 14 Jan 1957<sup>1</sup>

[Eastwood noted at the top of the first page of these minutes: 'Got by stealth! Knowledge of its existence not to be disclosed.' In a separate note Eastwood commented: 'This is a nasty one, but it is important not to turn it down *too* flat because it is the P.M.'s way of winning the North to his side.']

2. The Prime Minister stated that the Government proposed to approach the Secretary of State for the Colonies during his forthcoming visit to the Gold Coast with a view to obtaining from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom financial assistance to facilitate the accelerated development of the Northern Territories. The Prime Minister had had this matter under consideration since the Constitutional Talks in October, 1956, and, as he had informed Northern Territories members of the Opposition shortly after these talks, he was of the opinion that this question should not be treated as a party-political issue. He accordingly desired that the Government's approach to the Secretary of State on this matter should be endorsed, and supported by all Northern Territories Members of the Legislative Assembly.

<sup>1</sup> The first para of these minutes listed those present. They were Dr Nkrumah, Mr Gbedemah, Mr Botsio, Mr Abavana (minister without portfolio), A Asumda (ministerial secretary, Ministry of Works), E A Mahama (ministerial secretary, Minister of Agriculture), S D Dombo (deputy leader of the opposition), B K Adama (opposition chief whip), Mumuni Bawumia, J A Braimah. In attendance: J Duncan (principal assistant secretary, prime minister's office).

3. The Prime Minister then outlined the Government's proposal and in discussion amplified and clarified points raised by Opposition Members of the Legislative Assembly. For ease of reference the proposal is summarized as follows, *viz*:—

- (a) There should be spent on development of the Northern Territories over a period of 10 years the sum of £30 million.
- (b) Whether or not this sum can be obtained from Gold Coast sources must depend upon the average price obtainable for cocoa.
- (c) As a basis for discussion it is suggested that there should be set up a special Northern Territories Development Fund into which should be paid all the yield of tax on cocoa *after* the cocoa price has risen above £230 per ton.
- (d) The sum paid into this Fund would be limited to provide the monies required to bring the Fund up to £30 million and to repay to the United Kingdom Government any sum which they had advanced.
- (e) The United Kingdom Government should be asked to advance on the average £3 million per year and the repayment of this advance would be the first charge on the Fund. The Fund would, however, continue to be augmented until a sufficient reserve was built up to meet the balance of the development costs without recourse to the United Kingdom Government.
- (f) Appropriate arrangements would have to be made in the event of the proposed Development Fund not producing sufficient funds to repay the United Kingdom Government advance.
- (g) The plan of development of the Northern Territories would have to be so phased that all recurrent expenditure was met from the Fund and that at the conclusion of the development period there were either revenue-producing schemes or else the increased taxable yield of the Northern Territories was sufficient to pay the additional recurrent charges occasioned by the development.

4. The following additional points were clarified in discussion, *viz*:—

- (a) If the grant had not been repaid in full to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom by the end of the ten-year period, the Ghana Government would have to reconsider its commitments in the light of all relevant circumstances with a view to opening appropriate negotiations with the United Kingdom Government.
- (b) The Government considered that it would be tactically unsound to seek an outright grant with no provision for eventual repayment for, if such a grant were made, it would create a precedent for similar requests being made by other Colonial Territories on their attainment of Independence. The grant proposed would thus in effect be a loan which, subject to Ghana's budgetary position improving in the event of a rise in the price of cocoa, would be repaid.
- (c) The grant, if made, would be used exclusively in the Northern Territories including the Northern Section of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship.
- (d) The Government could not venture to forecast whether or to what extent a special development grant for the Northern Territories would affect Ghana's entitlement to awards from any *Commonwealth* Development and Welfare Fund which it was understood the United Kingdom Government was contemplating creating.
- (e) If the price of cocoa again reached a very high level, enabling extensive

development to be undertaken by the Ghana Government, the Northern Territories would in addition receive its full share of such development.

5. Mr. Dombo, supported later by Mr. Braimah, expressed a desire that the Secretary of State should be asked to include in the United Kingdom Government White Paper on the Ghana Constitution Order in Council a statement of the nature of whatever grant the United Kingdom Government agreed to make for the development of the Northern Territories. After suggesting that the grant should be paid to the Northern Territories direct, Mr. Dombo agreed that the administration of the grant should be a matter for the Central Government. Mr. Dombo also proposed that there should be a Special Development Office for the Northern Territories.

6. In reply to a query by Mr. Braimah the Prime Minister stated that, provided the grant could be secured, he could see no harm in having the provisions regarding its disbursement guaranteed in the Ghana Constitution Order in Council.

7. In conclusion Mr. Braimah on behalf of all Northern Territories Members of the Legislative Assembly present thanked the Prime Minister for calling the meeting. All present were in agreement with the Prime Minister's proposals and with his objective, the raising of the standard of living in the Northern Territories.

**279** CO 554/994, no E/23

23 Jan 1957

'Northern Territories development': memorandum by Dr Nkrumah.

*Minute* by A N Galsworthy

[This memo was enclosed with a letter dated 29 Jan from Nkrumah to Eastwood which read: 'I have discussed with the Secretary of State aid for the Northern Territories and a scheme by which Britain could assist to guarantee the Ghana Fund which we are proposing to set up for this purpose. It may be useful for you to have the enclosed memorandum which you might care to see is considered at the Colonial Office when the matter is discussed' (CO 554/994, no 23).]

One of the most important causes of political dispute in the Gold Coast has been the allocation between regions of the limited funds available to the Government for development.

2. Ideally the Government would prefer to allocate funds where the need is greatest. In practice, owing to the impossibility of the country's economy supporting ever increasing recurrent costs from non-productive capital expenditure, development has in a large measure had to be restricted to self-supporting projects. This tends to result in development taking place in the more prosperous parts of the country.

3. It is however essential that special steps are taken in regard to the North and on this the Government has already had discussions with Members of the Assembly on both the Opposition and Government sides. There is general support for the Government's proposals in this matter.

4. The Government have suggested that a special development allocation of £30M. should be spent in the next ten years in the North. The object would be primarily to raise agricultural production by 10%. Since 80% of the gross national product in the Northern Territories derives from subsistence farming, a 10% increase in agricultural productivity would result in 50% increase in cash income.

The scheme would also provide for further education and other amenities not connected with agriculture, but its main emphasis would be on soil conservation, water supplies, agricultural service and feeder roads.

5. The cost of the Northern Territories development would be financed from an Under-Developed Area Fund which would be raised as follows:—

(a) When the price of cocoa was more than £221 and less than £240 per ton, half the duty in excess of £50 per ton would be paid to the Fund. With a crop of 200,000 tons this would yield up to £2M. per annum.

(b) When the price of cocoa was between £241 and £260 per ton two-thirds of the duty on cocoa in excess of £50 per ton would be paid into the Fund; this would yield up to £4M. per annum.

(c) When the price of cocoa exceeded £260 per ton the whole of the duty above this figure would be paid into the Fund until such time as the Fund totalled £30M.

6. As can be seen from the table in the Appendix<sup>1</sup> setting out cocoa prices over the last 10 years, if the cocoa price follows a similar pattern it is likely that over a 10-year period the Fund would be fully subscribed. It is most unlikely however that the cocoa price will so adjust itself that a regular £3M. a year would be available each year.

7. In these circumstances, it is therefore suggested, on the conditions set out below, that the United Kingdom Government should be invited to advance a sum of up to £3M. annually whenever there was not sufficient money in the Fund to meet the recurrent cost of the scheme. As soon as funds accumulated in the Fund any outstanding United Kingdom advance would be repaid. Any direct United Kingdom contribution to Ghana would therefore only arise if in the course of the whole of the next 10-years cocoa never rose to a sufficiently high price to pay off the sum advanced.

8. In return for an agreement to make these advances the Ghana Government would

(a) agree to consult with the United Kingdom Government in regard to its Sterling Area policy so as to get Ghana's dollar and gold earnings as high as possible and Ghana's dollar purchases as low as possible, and

(b) agree, as far as possible, to employ on Northern Territories development projects United Kingdom firms and United Kingdom products.

9. In the event of the United Kingdom agreeing to this proposal the Government of Ghana would propose the setting up of a development authority on which the Government of Ghana and the Northern Regional Assembly would be represented which would contain, in the event of the United Kingdom desiring it, United Kingdom representatives.

10. The Gold Coast Government considers that it is of the utmost importance that steps are taken immediately to deal with the problem of Northern Territories development. They would therefore like to know by March the 6th, 1957, whether the United Kingdom Government are prepared to carry out the proposals set out above. The Gold Coast Government think it might well be possible to make

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed.

alternative arrangements for aid but this might involve Ghana having to agree to make much larger dollar purchases with her present dollar balances. The Gold Coast Government is proud that over the last five years they have contributed a positive balance of £153M. to the gold and dollar reserves of the Sterling Area and they would like to make an arrangement which would enable them to continue making such contributions.

#### Minute on 279

... 2. Dr. Nkrumah's request in NO. E/23 is a request to H.M.G. to underwrite a ten-year Development Plan of £30m. for the Northern Territories. The proposal is that a special fund should be established for this purpose, and that H.M.G. should advance to the fund each year, by way of loan, whatever sums may be necessary to finance annual expenditure from the fund of £3m. a year after there has been paid into the fund the product – at the varying scales set out in paragraph 5 of the Memorandum – of cocoa revenue when the price of cocoa exceeds £221 a ton. Such advances would be repaid as and when cocoa revenue accumulated in the fund. The secret note at E/24/B indicates that, if the price of cocoa did not rise to levels which would enable H.M.G.'s advances to be repaid by the end of the ten years, the Government of Ghana would "open appropriate negotiations" with the U.K. Government. I take this to mean that Ghana would ask us either to cancel any outstanding balance of the debt, or seek our agreement to their repaying it as and when they could. Though this is not stated explicitly, the Gold Coast obviously contemplate that any advances made by the U.K. Government would be interest-free.

3. In paragraph 8(a) of his Memorandum Dr. Nkrumah states that, in return for H.M.G.'s acceptance of these proposals, the Ghana Government would agree to consult with the U.K. Government in regard to Ghana's sterling area policy "so as to get Ghana's dollar and gold earnings as high as possible and Ghana's dollar purchases as low as possible". I do not read this as a veiled threat that, if we do not accept the proposals, Ghana will leave the sterling area, but rather as a genuine offer that Ghana would, as a *quid pro quo*, exercise stricter control over her dollar expenditure than she would otherwise be able or willing to do. Though we do naturally hope that Ghana will exercise some measure of restraint over her dollar expenditure, such an offer on Ghana's part is not in fact anything like as valuable to us as she likes to think it is.

4. Dr. Nkrumah's memorandum asks for a decision before March 6th. Despite the final paragraph of Mr. Eastwood's minute at No. 24, Miss Terry's minute shows that the Secretary of State does wish to send a reply before that date.

5. I have not at this stage attempted a detailed examination of Dr. Nkrumah's proposals. That would certainly be necessary if we accepted the principle that we should afford direct Exchequer assistance of this kind to an independent Ghana. But the prior question is: can we, and should we, accept that principle?

6. Hitherto it has not been our policy or practice to make direct Exchequer assistance available towards the capital development programmes of independent Commonwealth countries, save to the limited extent permitted under Section 3 of the Export Credits Guarantee Acts. As a result of the debates in the Lords on the Committee stages of the Ghana Independence Bill we are about to review our whole

policy with regard to assistance from the U.K. towards Commonwealth development. That review will certainly cover the position of newly independent members of the Commonwealth such as Ghana. But until the outcome of that review is known, and the necessary policy decisions have been taken, I do not see any prospect at all of our being able to convince the Treasury – nor, for that matter, the C.R.O. – that any special *ad hoc* measures should be agreed for Ghana.

7. Also, while I personally have little doubt that Ghana is going to experience quite severe financial difficulties in about two years' time or so, it really is very difficult indeed to consider Dr. Nkrumah's request on its merits without any knowledge of what her development plans for the post-Independence period are likely to be. In this connection I would draw attention to paragraphs 19–21 of the brief that we prepared for the Secretary of State for his recent visit to Ghana, a copy of which is registered at No. E/24/C.<sup>2</sup> It seems to me that the remarks in those paragraphs are still valid.

8. For these reasons I do not myself think that we shall be able to return a reply to Dr. Nkrumah's memorandum substantially different from the line suggested in paragraph 21 of the brief. In the light of developments since that brief was prepared we should not perhaps go so far as to state categorically that direct assistance from the Exchequer for development would not be feasible; and we ought to make some appropriate reference to the general review on which we are about to embark. But the rest of that paragraph seems to me about as far as we could in present circumstances go. This would unquestionably be stonewalling, but I don't think it would be altogether negative.

9. We have now reached the stage in our relations with Ghana at which, even though we have to send a reply before March 6th, the C.R.O. and Treasury have a larger interest in the reply than we have. We must therefore carry those two Departments with us in the reply that is sent.

10. I suggest that we might perhaps have a talk about this, with a view to preparing a submission for Ministers. Meanwhile I have sent the C.R.O. and Treasury a copy of Dr. Nkrumah's memorandum under cover of the flimsy opposite.

A.N.G.  
13.2.57

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<sup>2</sup> See 277.

**280** CO 554/823, no 95

25 Jan 1957

[Constitutional crisis]: letter from C G Eastwood (Gold Coast) to J S Bennett on the progress of Mr Lennox-Boyd's visit to resolve the constitutional impasse [Extract]

[Very little record of the discussions during Lennox-Boyd's visit is to be found in the Public Record Office. The records of most of the meetings which took place are deposited with the Ghana National Archives. Eastwood's letter reproduced here has been edited because the bulk of the transcript is concerned with the minutiae of constitutional drafting and as such it was intended to be used by Sir Ralph Hone who was writing the final draft of the independence constitution.]

The talks here are really going very well and we are quite hopeful of getting something better than "reluctant acquiescence" which was the best H.E. hoped for when he arrived. We are off tomorrow to the North. I have not time to give you details, but here are some points on the draft Order in Council which we have now cleared. This is for Hone to be getting on with. . . .<sup>1</sup>

I think I shall probably come home as originally arranged arriving early Thursday. But we may *all* stay on here an extra day to get the thing tidied up. We will try to get *all* the drafting done before S of S & I part – & preferably leave a copy of d'ft White Paper here (to be printed simultaneously?). John Moreton tells me HMSO can work on Sat'y's & Sundays if they are paid enough. We may well have to do this. But as at present advised I am inclined to think we shall produce a document which we can say we are confident will provide a framework within which all parties will be content to start their independent life (or words to that effect) & if that is so then the debate on the W[hite] P[aper] can if need be take place at any time until just before the O[rder] in C[ouncil] is made as there will be no question of any amendment of the O[rder] in C[ouncil] & the debate wd only be a sounding board for the S of S to give publicity to assurances, supplementary to the constitution, which he hopes the P.M. will give him.<sup>2</sup>

We shall get that constitutional changes of "entrenched" clauses shall require (i) a bare majority vote in the Nat Assy referring them to the Regions, (ii) a bare majority in a bare majority of Regions, (iii) a 2/3 rds vote in the Nat Assy [sic].

The no. of Regions to be written into the Constn. Any change in their boundaries to require the assent of the Regions concerned. No concession on Brongs after all.<sup>3</sup>

We shall get what we want on P[ublic] S[ervice] C[ommission], J[udicial] S[ervice] C[ommission] & Public Officers Agreement.

Constn will say there shall be Regl Assies: their powers & composn to be determined by a Commission (composition specified) to report within X months etc etc.<sup>4</sup>

Forgive the scribble. It is 12.30 a.m. & I haven't stopped since 7.30 a.m. & must be up at 6 a.m. to fly to Kumasi and Tamale. Back Monday evening.

<sup>1</sup> At this point Eastwood's letter becomes handwritten and it is heavily abbreviated.

<sup>2</sup> These assurances were effectively the agreements sought at the meeting between Lennox-Boyd and Botsio and Gbedemah at the CO on 7 Feb 1957; see 288.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of this is unclear. A Brong-Ahafo region was established in Ghana, thus splitting Ashanti, in April 1960, but who was conceding what to whom is not clear from this text although it is clear that the CO disapproved of the provocation inherent in so splitting Ashanti.

<sup>4</sup> A reference to the Regional Constitutional Commission (chairman, Mr Justice Van Lare) which reported in Apr 1958.

**281** CO 554/1388, no 22

25 Jan 1957

[Independence celebrations]: inward telegram no 42 from Mr Lennox-Boyd (Gold Coast) to Lord Home on a UK airforce contribution to the Ghana independence celebrations [Extract]

[The issue raised by Lennox-Boyd in this tel was discussed by the Cabinet on 5 Feb. The chancellor, now Mr Thorneycroft, explained that £55,000 had been proposed as a UK

contribution to the independence celebrations of which £35,000 was required for a fly-past by Valiant fighter aircraft. Thorneycroft doubted whether expenditure on this scale was necessary or justifiable. In discussion it was pointed out that with the USA and the USSR sending their most modern types of aircraft, it would be embarrassing if the UK was not represented on a comparable scale. The Cabinet therefore authorised the fly-past but concluded that it should be possible 'without damage to our prestige, to eliminate the rest of the proposed expenditure' (CAB 128/31/1, CC 7(57)4.)

I have just heard it is only proposed that we should send a cruiser and a frigate to represent our Armed Forces at Independence Celebrations. The Governor and I both feel very strongly that we should send effective air contribution too. Celebrations will undoubtedly be a big occasion with representatives from all over the world present. Many have lately come to doubt our strength. Surely it would be madness to miss this wonderful opportunity of demonstrating outstanding qualities of our Air Arm on a particularly impressionable occasion. Eastwood tells me Royal Air Force were ready to send 4 Valiants but that Treasury turned it down because we could not afford extra £35,000 it would cost. But can we afford not to send them? Americans are sending jet fighters. It would be disastrous if theirs were the only planes or if they were joined only by USSR planes. I feel very strongly about this. Will you please take it up with the Chancellor on my behalf and I hope you will support me yourself. I should be quite ready to telegraph Prime Minister if that would help. Understand very early decision necessary. . . .

**282** DO 35/6127, no 3

28 Jan 1957

[Sterling area]: outward unnumbered telegram from A N Galsworthy to C G Eastwood (Gold Coast) on the advantages to Ghana of remaining within the sterling area

Your telegram No.17.

Ghana's Membership of Sterling Area.

We assume that what Nkrumah is suggesting in essence is that unless H.M.G. can provide financial assistance Ghana may feel it would be to their advantage to retain their dollar earnings instead of selling them to the Central Reserves. There could of course be no question of H.M.G. considering "buying" collaboration in Sterling Area matters. Ghana's continued membership of Sterling Area would admittedly serve our interests, but in our opinion it will also serve theirs. Core of the problem is: would "leaving the Sterling Area" add to Ghana's resources? Clearly not, indeed, the reverse, for the following reasons:-

- (1) Countries outside Sterling Area do not share advantages of
  - (a) free flow of private capital from United Kingdom (which in Ghana's case is much the largest source of this type of investment);
  - (b) access to London market for raising Government loans, which is reserved to Governments of Sterling Commonwealth (although capital is at present short in London, Ghana will no doubt wish to take advantage of this facility at later stage).
- (2) Exchange control would have to be interposed between United Kingdom and

Ghana and probably between rest of Sterling Area and Ghana as well. This would mean interposition of Exchange Control barrier between Ghana and country when her reserves now are and would be bound to remain for some time (see paragraph 4 below) and where banks and other financial institutions which serve her (e.g. assurance companies) are located. The liquidity of the great majority of commercial banks operating in Ghana depends on their free and constant access to London and its many markets. It would take years to establish a comparable connection with any other money centre, and interposition of a barrier between the local commercial banks and their existing liquidity centre clearly would introduce highly undesirable frictions with effects on the commercial community and general economy of Ghana.

(3) As a secondary but still important corollary, Ghana herself might well need to establish her own complicated system of exchange control which would be far more difficult to administer than the present system, in which all the knowledge and experience of the central monetary institutions of the Area are at Ghana's disposal. We doubt whether Ghana would in fact be able to do this unaided, in view of the complicated technical problems involved and the demands on suitably qualified staff (this argument rests on Ghana's relatively weak balance of payments position, see (6) below).

(4) Of Ghana's exports in 1955, 46% went to Sterling Area, 31% to O.E.E.C. countries, and only some 18% to Dollar Area. On basis of these figures she gets only 18% of her export proceeds in dollars and can settle for whole of her import trade and invisibles in sterling. Weakening of Ghana's links with sterling would be bound to have adverse effect on Ghana's trading relations, which would be all the more serious at times, such as the present, when cocoa prices are falling.

(5) All these natural effects allied with disturbance of confidence, which would be created by reversal of repeated statements by Gold Coast Ministers of their intention to remain in Sterling Area, could do their credit no good. This would be true not only in regard to their old friends in Sterling Area, but also in regard to any other alternative sources of capital they might have in mind, including international bodies (clearly borrowing externally by Ghana is going to be difficult until she has established her credit worthiness by her own policies. It is difficult even for colonies, let alone a newly independent country, to borrow on satisfactory terms, or indeed at all, in North America in present state of markets).

(6) Gold Coast Ministers probably feel that Gold Coast is a net contributor to Sterling Area because it has a dollar surplus. What matters is not only her dollar surplus but her overall balance on current account. Though this has been favourable in recent years, it will probably prove to have been in deficit in 1956 and again in 1957 because of level of cocoa prices. This trend reinforces point about confidence in (5) above, and if Ghana did not sell her surplus dollars for sterling her sterling deficit would be that much larger.

2. In general, while above indicates immediate disadvantages we would see from Ghana's point of view, problem can clearly not be looked at in isolation from more general one of need of Ghana Ministers to build up confidence in new régime at a time when it will have many other problems to face. Quite apart from political problems, Ghana will have to cope with problems of a rising budget deficit, an emerging balance of payments deficit and establishment of a new currency. It would immeasurably complicate Ghana's ability to cope with these problems if at same time

it was making radical change in its financial relations with rest of the world and denying itself advantages of allying its currency with a larger one (sterling) which is used to finance over one-half of the world's trade.

3. If question of confidence in sterling as a reserve currency is raised, you should point out firmly that it is fundamental to H.M.G.'s economic policy that sterling parity should be maintained at \$2.80 and necessary measures are being taken to that end. We are satisfied that our underlying trading position is sound, and the recent weakness of sterling was due to short term factors. We have recently mobilised massive support in dollars and sterling is now strengthening rapidly.

4. For your own information, with reference to point about use of Ghana's reserves in paragraph 1 (2) above, if the Gold Coast wished to "leave the Sterling Area" this would raise a difficult problem about whether we could permit any weakening of Sterling through undue (repeat undue) sales of sterling by Ghana for dollars, as opposed to ordinary financing of a current deficit out of reserves. We would however not (repeat not) wish you to get drawn into this argument if it can be avoided.

5. We recognise that Ghana Ministers will probably wish after independence to spend dollars rather more freely perhaps than hitherto. Secretary of State can say that there is no question but that they will be free to use their own discretion, though we naturally hope they will show restraint, like any other independent member of Sterling Area.

6. Finally, political consequences of "leaving Sterling Area" should not be overlooked. All members of Commonwealth except Canada are in the Sterling Area, but there is considerable variety of practice between them on matters of detail which amply provides for their individual needs and circumstances. Sterling Area is a flexible system and does not impose strait jacket on its members. This is well known. Consequently, if Ghana were overtly to take steps in direction of "leaving Sterling Area" on independence despite economic and financial arguments in favour of her continued membership, impression would be created that decision had been taken on political grounds. It is difficult to foresee at this stage what full consequences of this might be, but we cannot believe it would not result in severe set back to external confidence in Ghana, with all that would imply.

**283** CAB 134/1555, CPC(57)2

28 Jan 1957

**'Ghana Independence Bill: role of Colonial Development Corporation':  
joint memorandum by Lord Home and Lord Perth for Cabinet Colonial  
Policy Committee**

Clause 3(4) of the Bill which will reach the Committee stages of the House of Lords on 31st January provides that the Corporation will not be able to undertake new projects in Ghana after independence, though operations commenced before will be allowed to continue. This Clause encountered considerable criticism in the House of Commons and amendments were put forward by the Opposition designed either to delete the Clause or to amend it to enable the Corporation to continue to embark on new projects in Ghana during a further ten years. The Government rejected the amendments, basing their case on the grounds that the C.D.C. was designed to

function in territories for which the United Kingdom was directly responsible; that it was inappropriate to use an instrument designed for this purpose for the development of the independent Commonwealth; and that to suggest that Ghana could not stand on its own feet and attract external investment capital was undesirable. The Government spokesmen pointed out that in fact the C.D.C. had not operated significantly in the Gold Coast so far, and that certain new projects in which the Gold Coast Government had asked the C.D.C. to participate could be handled effectively by the Commonwealth Development Finance Company. Moreover the Government had undertaken to consult Commonwealth Governments on the suggestions made in the Debate on 30th November for new machinery to channel investment capital to the Commonwealth and had an open mind on this subject.

2. The Clause encountered similar opposition in the Second Reading Debate in the House of Lords on January 24th. In fact, all speakers from the Opposition and the Government side urged that the Clause should be withdrawn. The principal arguments adduced were that the C.D.C. could uniquely provide efficient executive management based on its experience which should not be lost to newly independent countries; that the Clause implied the brusque abandonment of Ghana and created a bad precedent for Malaya (in respect of which the Government have confirmed that the same policy will apply); and that it is necessary for the U.K. Government to continue to help newly independent Commonwealth countries. The suggestion already made in the Commons debate on 30th November that the C.D.C. might have its power extended to cover the Commonwealth was reiterated. It was also contemplated that the C.D.C.'s future itself was in jeopardy since it would have less and less to do as other territories became independent.

3. Though these arguments do not remove the objections to deleting the Clause which were voiced by Government spokesmen in both Houses, it seems clear that unless some support can be obtained in the Lords there is danger of the Government being defeated and the Bill being amended and returned to the Commons. It would be most undesirable that the Bill should be returned either as a result of a Government defeat or through the acceptance of an amendment by the Government, because, apart from other reasons this would hold up the passage of the Bill and probably would have embarrassing consequences for the further action that has to be taken. It is essential that the Royal Assent should be given in time to permit the Order-in-Council to be made by the 15th February. Any further Parliamentary delay might also have adverse consequences in the Gold Coast by causing the impression that there was a last minute hitch in the progress towards independence.

4. It is H.M.G.'s firm policy that Exchequer funds are not made available for capital development in independent Commonwealth countries. Indeed, the recent request by Malayan Ministers for a Government-to-Government development loan was refused on this very ground. Admittedly there have been exceptions to this policy in special cases, for example under Section 3 of the Export Guarantees Act, but the suggestion made in the Debates would mean a reversal of this policy, and the use of U.K. Government money for independent countries as a normal and regular procedure, since the C.D.C. is an organisation which operates with Exchequer money.

5. There are in fact two issues: one is whether financial help should be given from U.K. Government funds to newly independent countries; the other is whether, if this is conceded, the channel should be C.D.C. It seems essential that these

questions should be clearly distinguished from the argument (for what it is worth) made by the speakers in the Debates, that it is desirable that the C.D.C.'s managerial and technical "know-how" should be retained in some form for the benefit of the newly independent territories.

6. Even if it were decided to reverse the policy indicated in the preceding paragraphs and make Exchequer money available to newly independent territories on the same basis as to existing Colonies, it is by no means a foregone conclusion that the C.D.C. would be the right instrument. Numerous practical problems would require prior solution, including questions of Ministerial responsibility, definition of the limits of its power in independent countries, etc. On the other hand – though we do not think this would be likely to lead to anything substantial – it might be possible to explore ways of associating the expertise of the C.D.C., but not its finance, with other agencies involved in development schemes in newly independent Commonwealth countries whether financed privately or, exceptionally, by some kind of assistance from the United Kingdom Exchequer. (This would involve an amendment of the Overseas Resources Development Acts.)

7. Efforts are being made to arrange a discussion with some Members of the Lords to try and induce them not to oppose the Clause as it stands and we will report on the outcome at the Committee. Meanwhile the following considerations are put before the Committee:—

(i) It is right that the Clause should stand, both on grounds of timing and of substance.

(ii) It is essential to avoid giving any pledges which would commit the Government to reversing its policy on financial aid to independent Commonwealth countries without full study of the implications of such a step.

(iii) In any case there could be no question of entering now into any such commitments having regard to the present state of our economy.

(iv) Most of the arguments used to support the contention that the C.D.C. has some unique competence in the field of overseas development are fallacious, though it is difficult to say this outspokenly in Parliament in view of the "mystique" about the C.D.C. which Lord Reith<sup>1</sup> has created. For the most part the C.D.C. has operated in recent years as a "finance" house, lending money to Government and statutory bodies rather than undertaking direct development projects itself. Its alleged expertise is derived from partnership with sound industrial and commercial concerns rather than from its own administrative, executive and technical staff. Though it has been argued that it will "dwindle away" as more Colonies become independent, the fact is that it still has a big job to do in the Colonies which are likely to remain our direct responsibility for years to come and we are anxious that it should not be distracted from that task. The question of providing the Corporation with more resources for these tasks has already been raised and is under examination. The skilled management which it is alleged the C.D.C. can provide could also be furnished in other ways, e.g. through the C.D.F.C.

8. Two alternatives suggest themselves:—

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman, CDC, 1950–1959.

(a) If the outcome of the talks with certain members of the House of Lords referred to above is satisfactory this should enable us to maintain the present line. This would certainly be the best course for the following reasons:-

(i) It would avoid further pressure from the Gold Coast and Malaya, on this matter. Both Governments have accepted the position. If we were to give either Government the impression that the policy was uncertain, we would have to expect further pressure from them for assistance from U.K. Government sources although in the form of C.D.C. finance. In the case of Malaya this would be particularly embarrassing, since the recent financial settlement, which took account of present policy regarding the C.D.C., was intended to be a final one and was in fact a "package deal".

(ii) It would avoid blurring the distinction between independent Commonwealth countries which must for their own good learn to stand on their own feet, and the dependent territories for which we have actual and direct responsibility.

(iii) Any departure from the present policy might create the impression that H.M.G. did not regard Ghana as being immediately creditworthy.

(b) If it seems that this line cannot be held in its entirety then we must consider what is the least concession which will satisfy the critics. We must both retain the Clause and preserve the principle that United Kingdom Exchequer money cannot normally be made available for the development of independent Commonwealth countries. What we could do, while retaining the present clause, might be to undertake that

(i) a review will be made of the whole question of the United Kingdom's role in the development of newly independent Commonwealth countries, in the light of the replies which we receive to the general enquiry made to other Commonwealth countries about the possibility of establishing new machinery (see paragraph (i) above) and the ways in which various existing agencies can be used;

(ii) if this review led to the conclusion that provision should be made to enable the services of the C.D.C. to be made available in some appropriate manner over and above the continuation of their existing operations to the newly independent Commonwealth countries, legislation would be introduced to amend the Overseas Resources Development Acts as necessary;

(iii) any arrangements made as a result of the review would be applied to Ghana.

**284** PREM 11/1859

29 Jan 1957

[Commonwealth membership]: minute by Lord Home to Mr Macmillan<sup>1</sup> on messages to Commonwealth prime ministers

At the time of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting last July Sir Anthony Eden wrote to the Prime Ministers of all other Member countries on the subject of

<sup>1</sup> Macmillan replaced Eden as prime minister on 13 Jan 1957.

membership of the Commonwealth for the Gold Coast.<sup>2</sup> In response to his letter Commonwealth Prime Ministers (despite some argument on the part of Mr. Strijdom) agreed in principle to accept an application for Commonwealth Membership from the Gold Coast, on the assumption that self-government was reached by that country.

Sir Anthony said that, once the question of Membership had been raised and had become actual, he hoped that it would only be necessary to send a further message to the Prime Ministers on the subject by telegram. The Government of the Gold Coast have in fact raised the matter with us (see the enclosed exchange of telegrams),<sup>3</sup> and the Ghana Independence Bill has passed the Commons and is due for its Third Reading in the Lords this Thursday. It may be assumed, therefore, that Independence will come about on the 6th March.

The sending of a further message to Commonwealth Prime Ministers has been held up because we wanted to be sure that there was no danger of any deterioration in the internal situation in the Gold Coast, and I asked the Colonial Secretary to let me know, when he reached Accra, whether we could go ahead. He has now telegraphed asking that the other Prime Ministers should be approached at the earliest opportunity.

In view of his recommendation, which I support, I suggest that you should now send messages, on the lines of the enclosed drafts, to

- (1) the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and Ceylon;
- (2) the Prime Minister of South Africa – whose reply was less forthcoming than that of the others and consequently calls for a slight modification of the second sentence of paragraph 1; and to
- (3) the Prime Minister of Pakistan – who has taken office since the previous correspondence, and the text of whose letter requires modification accordingly.

If you approve messages on these lines, I will arrange for them to be sent at once through our High Commissioners.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs.

I am full of forebodings about the whole Gold Coast experiment but I can see no way out of the recommendation above.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See 234, note.

<sup>3</sup> Enclosures to this minute not printed.

<sup>4</sup> The final sentence of this minute was added as a postscript beneath Home's initial and the date. Macmillan commented (29 Jan) 'I agree'. It is unclear whether he agreed to the course of action proposed in the minute or to Home's gloomy feelings about the future of the Gold Coast in the final sentence.

## **285** PREM 11/1859, CC 6(57)7

1 Feb 1957

### **'Ghana': Cabinet conclusions on clause 3 of the Ghana Independence Bill excluding Ghana from the operations of the Colonial Development Corporation**

*The Commonwealth Secretary* said that, in accordance with the normal conception of the functions of the Colonial Development Corporation, Clause 3 had been included in the Ghana Independence Bill in order to debar the Corporation from undertaking new projects in Ghana after the date on which it attained full

self-government. This clause had attracted strong criticism in the House of Lords, partly on the ground that it might prejudice the results of the Government's review of future investment in Commonwealth countries. If, however, Clause 3 was omitted from the Bill, Ghana would remain legally eligible for assistance from the Corporation under the Overseas Resources Development Acts. It was for consideration, therefore, whether Government spokesmen in the forthcoming debate should offer to accept a suggestion which had now been put forward that the clause should be omitted from the Bill but that the Corporation should, at the same time, be directed by the Government not to undertake any new scheme of development in Ghana until the result of the comprehensive review of investment in the Commonwealth was known.<sup>1</sup>

*The Attorney-General*<sup>2</sup> said that, on a preliminary review of the question, he was doubtful whether the legal effect of omitting Clause 3 from the Bill would be as had been assumed. He would wish, however, to give further consideration to this question.

In discussion it was suggested that, when the review of future investment in Commonwealth countries was complete, it might be necessary to introduce a new investment policy which would distinguish, in respect both of Colonies and of independent countries, between those territories which genuinely needed financial assistance and those which, although possessing adequate financial resources, required help in the form of manpower, technical advice, etc. This, however, was a long-term project. Until the review was complete it would be dangerous to countenance any breach of the principle that the Colonial Development Corporation should operate only in Colonial territories. In the light of the Attorney-General's examination of the legal implications of omitting Clause 3 from the Ghana Independence Bill, it would be necessary to give further thought to the tactics to be adopted in the resumed debate on the Bill in the House of Lords.

The Cabinet:—

(1) Invited the Attorney-General to examine, as a matter of urgency, the legal implications of omitting Clause 3 from the Ghana Independence Bill.

(2) Invited the Colonial Policy Committee to give further consideration to the tactics to be adopted in the resumed debate on the Bill in the light of the Attorney-General's considered opinion on the legal issue.

<sup>1</sup> The review produced a report, *The United Kingdom's Role in Commonwealth Development* (Cmnd 237) which was published in July 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Sir R Manningham-Buller.

## 286 PREM 11/1859, CPC 3(57)

5 Feb 1957

### 'Ghana Independence Bill': minutes of Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee on clause 3

The Committee resumed their discussion of the difficulties which had arisen in the recent debate in the House of Lords regarding clause 3 of the Ghana Independence Bill, which provided for the cessation of schemes under the Colonial Development

and Welfare Acts, 1940–1955, for the benefit of Ghana, and for the exclusion of Ghana from the field of future operation of the Colonial Development Corporation. The Committee were reminded that on that occasion the Government had undertaken to consider the possibility of omitting the clause and of taking such administrative action as was necessary to achieve the purposes for which the clause had been designed, pending the completion of their consultations with the Commonwealth Governments on the problems involved in financing development in the Commonwealth.

In discussion, the Committee were advised that, while it might be open to the Government to make no more schemes under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts for the benefit of Ghana pending their review of the general question of the financing of Commonwealth development, no power appeared to exist in the absence of the proposed clause to terminate schemes already in force under those Acts. Moreover, the omission of the clause would leave the Colonial Development Corporation free to function in respect of Ghana, and it was doubtful whether it would be within the letter or the spirit of the law to attempt to achieve a contrary purpose by means of directions under the Overseas Resources Development Acts.

In these circumstances, the Committee concluded that there was no alternative but to retain clause 3 in the Ghana Independence Bill. It was agreed that the Lord Chancellor should expound the legal position to the House of Lords and that the Government would explain that every effort had been made, although without success, to meet the desire expressed in the previous debates that the legal position should be left open pending the actual decisions to be taken later regarding financial assistance for territories newly attaining self-government. The passage of the Bill had now become a matter of great urgency since it would be necessary to present an Order in Council regarding the revision of the Constitution of the territory to the Privy Council by 15th February.

The Committee:—

Agreed that the debate on the Ghana Independence Bill in the House of Lords should be resumed on the lines indicated, on the basis of the retention of clause 3.

**287** CO 554/809, no 470

5 Feb 1957

[Constitution]: letter from Dr Nkrumah to Mr Lennox-Boyd suggesting that provision should be made for amendment of the constitution by means of a referendum. *Minute* by C G Eastwood

I am very sorry indeed that at this late stage such a serious difference should have arisen over the Constitution. As, however, I explained to the Governor, I could not carry my Cabinet or my Party with me if I were to approve constitutional proposals which did not include the ultimate safeguard of a referendum.

As you know the Gold Coast Government are genuinely anxious to have as much regional devolution as is possible. In a developing country, however, it is always possible that too many powers might be transferred to the Region or that it might be necessary for some reason in the future to withdraw certain powers from them. I

think I am right in saying that from time to time it has been necessary for the British Parliament to alter the powers of Local Authorities, taking away powers from County Councils, for example, and transferring them to Local Councils and the like. It is particularly important, to give merely one instance, that as our towns develop, the powers of the Regional Assemblies are limited so that more power may be given to the Municipal Councils of such places as Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi. The difficulty, as we see it, is that if Regional Assemblies obtain certain powers they may have a particularly parochial attitude towards giving them up and it is essential ultimately that there should be power to appeal to the people in a situation where there is a constitutional deadlock.

It would be indeed tragic if at this late stage there arose the serious disagreements between our two Governments which are bound to occur if the British Government insists in omitting a proposal which we consider to be absolutely vital.

As was agreed with Mr. Eastwood when he met the Cabinet and His Excellency the Governor on your behalf, the following is the substance of the words agreed:

“If a proposal for an amendment to the Constitution has been referred to the Regional Assemblies but it does not secure the support of two-thirds of all the Regional Assemblies, then the proposal may be referred by a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the National Assembly to the country by way of referendum.”

I gave my original draft to Mr. Eastwood.

It is absolutely the farthest which we can go and if such an essential safeguard is not included it would be impossible for the Government to agree to your proposals.

I shall be grateful if you would let my two Ministers<sup>1</sup> see the final draft of the White Paper and the Order-in-Council.

May I say personally how much I appreciated your visit and how much I hope that the good relations which I think have been established will not be marred at this last moment over an issue which is perhaps merely a misunderstanding.

I send my kindest regards to Lady Patricia and to yourself.

Minute on 287

*Sir J. Macpherson*

. . . I should explain in regard to Dr Nkrumah's letter that there is no justification whatsoever for the statement in it that I agreed in any way to the proposal that he makes in it. As I have explained in a previous minute the proposal was put forward in the last moments of a long meeting. No consideration at all was given to its merits then but the Governor and I promised to consider it. When that meeting was breaking up the Prime Minister handed me a slip of paper with the text of the alteration proposed. I discussed this with the Governor that evening and, as you know, we decided that the proposal was not acceptable.

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<sup>1</sup> Botsio and Gbedemah visited London in Feb 1957 to discuss this last minute disagreement over the constitution and a number of other related issues. The record of their meeting with Mr Lennox-Boyd on 7 Feb is reproduced in 288.

The Governor spoke to me about this during our telephone conversation yesterday. He was evidently pretty indignant at the terms of this letter (as indeed I am) and entirely confirmed what I have said above.

I suspect the hand of Mr. Bing in this. It is remarkable that Mr. Gbedemah and Mr. Botsio never once referred to our alleged agreement on this point.<sup>2</sup> This is not the first time that we have found that the spoken words of the Prime Minister and his senior colleagues are much milder than what is written for them.

C.G.E.

8.2.57

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<sup>2</sup> A reference to the same meeting with Botsio and Gbedemah. Macpherson noted in the margin at this point in Eastwood's minute: 'It was a blatant try-on'.

**288** CO 554/809, no 468

7 Feb 1957

[Constitution]: CO record of discussion between Mr Lennox-Boyd and Mr Botsio and Mr Gbedemah

*Constitutional safeguards*

*The Secretary of State* said he had not asked for formal support from Gold Coast Ministers or from the Opposition leaders for the proposals he had put forward during his recent visit to the Gold Coast, but he thought that they had reached mutual understanding, if not a binding contract. He was therefore surprised at the proposal which had now been put forward that if the required consent of two-thirds of the Regional Assemblies was not obtained for a proposal to amend the entrenched clauses of the constitution, then the issue could be put to the whole country by way of referendum.

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that the constitution under which Ghana would enter upon its independent status might not be its final form. The Gold Coast Government were anxious to assure both the British Government and the people of the Gold Coast that there was no desire to tamper with the constitution unnecessarily, but at the same time it must not be made impossible for reasonable changes to be effected. The Gold Coast Government had agreed to a two-thirds majority of members of the National Assembly before any change could be made in the constitution, and they had also agreed to further assurances to protect regional interests. But they considered it wrong that a narrow majority in one or two Regional Assemblies would be able to frustrate an amendment of the constitution which might be generally desired by the mass of the people; and they therefore wanted the opportunity of consulting the whole country if such a situation was reached.

*The Secretary of State* welcomed the intention of the Gold Coast Government to make a declaration that the constitution would not be altered unnecessarily. He had found suspicions on his arrival in the Gold Coast and he wished at all costs to avoid the constitution being either so lacking in safeguards for regional interests that there would be a declaration of secession by Ashanti after independence, or on the other hand being so unacceptable to the Government that they would feel bound to make drastic changes after independence. He felt that the present suggestion for a

referendum undermined the whole basis of the entrenched clause procedure. For example, it would mean that the Ashanti Regional Assembly could be abolished by a referendum of the whole country, even though the whole of Ashanti might be opposed to it.

*Mr. Gbedemah* pointed out that the abolition of a Regional Assembly was an extreme case.<sup>1</sup> *The Secretary of State* said that the Opposition parties in the Gold Coast would look at extreme cases and he could not conceive that the Ashantis would accept such a provision. If imposed it was likely to lead to a unilateral declaration of secession, in which the Ashantis would have the sympathy of Members of Parliament on both sides of the House.

*Mr. Botsio* said that the principal difficulty was agitation for a separate Brong Region. The vote in Ashanti might go against the creation of a separate Region, but on the other hand the rest of the country might be wholeheartedly in favour. It would place the Government in an impossible position if they had to defer to the wishes of a minority of the people.

*The Secretary of State* said it was an inevitable consequence of the entrenched clause procedure that certain constitutional changes could be prevented if two Regions voted against it. If the entrenched clause procedure was to be undermined by a provision for a subsequent country-wide referendum one might as well do away with the whole procedure, since it would be nothing but a sham.

*Mr. Gbedemah* reiterated that a constitutional change might be prevented if there was a majority of, for example, only 21 votes to 19 against it in two Regional Assemblies. These votes might represent a minority of the electors and moreover the Assemblies concerned might be unrepresentative of their Regions.

*The Secretary of State* said it would be impossible to differentiate between Members who were elected by large majorities and those who were elected by small majorities. In the House of Commons each M.P. had one vote regardless of his majority, and this was normal democratic procedure. He suggested that it would be better to concentrate on measures to ensure that Regional Assemblies were truly representative of their Regions. He also pointed out that at the last General Election the C.P.P. had obtained 43% of the votes, and if it was felt that members of Regional Assemblies were unrepresentative the party would no doubt turn its machinery on to the Regional elections.

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that he had noticed that Paragraph 34 of the White Paper implied that elections to Regional Assemblies should be held every four years. He felt that these elections should be held every three years.

*The Secretary of State* said he was very willing to accept an amendment providing for this.

It was agreed that this offered the best solution to the difficulty, but that Paragraph 34 should be retained without the words "member of a Regional Assembly and no" in the first line, so that it would be made clear that elections to Local Government Councils should be not less than every four years.

### *Townships*

*The Secretary of State* said that special provision could be made to cover the point

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<sup>1</sup> On this, see 289, note.

about townships in the Prime Minister's letter. A growing town would be in a position to influence the Regional Assembly, since there would be provision for alterations in electoral boundaries to take account of changes in population.

#### *Public Service Commission*

*Mr. Gbedemah* said that he thought it would be preferable to omit the last sentence of paragraph 11 of the White Paper in which it was stated that the Prime Minister intended to consult the Leader of the Opposition before making appointments to the Public Service Commission. However, it was explained that this sentence carried no legal obligation and that it would not be embodied in the Order in Council. It was quite clear that the Prime Minister still had the last word and the sentence merely reflected a gentlemen's agreement to which the Prime Minister had subscribed.

#### *Police*

*Mr. Gbedemah* hoped it would be possible to omit sub-section (i), Police, from paragraph 28 of the White Paper. However, he accepted its inclusion when it was explained that the Regional Constitutional Commission was simply to report on the degree of devolution practicable and that it would be for Parliament to legislate following the Commission's report.

#### *Composition of Regional Constitutional Commission*

It was agreed to omit the word "Puisne" in paragraph 30 of the White Paper.

#### *Appeal commissioner*

*Mr. Gbedemah* explained that the Gold Coast had had undesirable experience of assessors sitting with Commissioners. They tended to spin out their work so as to draw more allowances and the Commissioner could not sit if the assessors absented themselves. It was explained that the power to sit with assessors was permissive only, and it was agreed that the relevant sentence of paragraph 37 of the White Paper should be re-drafted as follows:—

"It will be permissible for the Appeal Commissioner to sit with assessors or to call on any person to give him advice on local law and custom."

#### *Amendment of constitution*

In amplification of paragraph 47 of the White Paper it was explained that the Order in Council would provide that if a Regional Assembly had failed to consider a Bill within three months silence would be taken as consent.

It was agreed to re-draft the final two sentences of paragraph 47 of the White Paper in a more positive way as follows:—

"When the Assemblies of two-thirds of the Regions have expressed their approval of the Bill the Third Reading can be taken in the National Assembly, where to become law it shall require the support of two-thirds of all members of the Assembly."

#### *Timing*

*The Secretary of State* explained that since Monday was the last day on which a debate on the White Paper could take place in the House of Commons in order to fit

in with the timetable for making the Order in Council it was necessary to publish the White Paper on Friday, February 8th. He proposed to accompany it by a short statement in the House. He felt that if the House was satisfied that the proposals contained in the White Paper were generally acceptable to leaders of opinion in the Gold Coast there would be no pressure for a debate.

\* \* \*

The meeting resumed at 2.30, when Mr. Gbedemah informed the Secretary of State that he had spoken to Dr. Nkrumah, who had agreed that since the provision for a referendum might delay matters it should be dropped, subject to the further amendments to the White Paper which had been agreed to during the morning.

*Mr. Botsio* added that Dr. Nkrumah was planning to make a broadcast on Saturday and it was thought that Dr. Busia would also do so. It was hoped that each would be able to say that they agreed with the terms of the other's statement.

*The Secretary of State* expressed his gratification at the Prime Minister's decision and thanked the two Ministers for the helpful spirit in which they had approached the problem.

In conclusion the Secretary of State mentioned that one provision which had been agreed during his visit had accidentally been omitted from the White Paper. This was the provision that any proposal to abolish a Regional Assembly or diminish its functions or powers would require the consent of the Regional Assembly concerned, in addition to the other safeguards. Ministers expressed the desire that there should also be provision for a referendum within the region concerned, and it was therefore agreed that the following new paragraph should be added after paragraph 47 of the White Paper.

“48. Any bill for the abolition or suspension of a Regional Assembly or for diminishing its functions or powers shall require the consent of the Regional Assembly of the Region concerned. If it is rejected by that Assembly it may be submitted to a referendum in the Region and if approved by a simple majority vote this shall be regarded as constituting the required approval of the Regional Assembly.”

**289** PREM 11/1859, CC 8(57) 5

7 Feb 1957

‘Ghana’: Cabinet conclusions on the new constitution

[The White Paper mentioned in these conclusions was published as *The Proposed Constitution of Ghana* (Cmnd 71) Feb 1957. In the White Paper the secretary of state noted that the constitution outlined ‘provides reasonable safeguards against abuse and a fair and workable foundation on which the people of Ghana will be able to build their independent nationhood within the Commonwealth’. Under the proposals any bill to amend the constitution had to be passed by a two-thirds majority of the whole number of members of parliament; amendments to certain basic clauses, including those concerning the public service, the regions, the houses of chiefs, elections, suffrage, and certain individual liberties, required in addition the prior consent of two-thirds of the regional assemblies. Any bill to abolish a regional assembly or reduce its powers required the consent of the assembly concerned or, if rejected by the assembly, a majority in a referendum in the region. The proposals were for Ghana to be divided into five regions and by acts of the Ghana parliament a regional assembly was to be established in each region with powers as specified in the act for each regional assembly in spheres specified

in the constitution. The White Paper proposed that the constitution would provide for a Regional Constitutional Commission to be established with a judge as chairman. The Commission was to have the duty of reporting on the composition of the regional assemblies and the functions to be entrusted to them. It was also to report on the form of legislation necessary to give effect to its proposals. The proposals in the White Paper were enacted in the Ghana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1957 (S I 1957, No 277). The Regional Constitution Commission met under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Van Lare and reported on 14 Apr 1958. Although obliged by the constitution to introduce the bill in the form drawn up by the Commission, the government moved amendments designed to convert the assemblies into advisory bodies. The bill as amended was enacted. The opposition boycotted the consequential elections to the regional assemblies. Except for half a dozen independents, CPP candidates were elected to all seats. The one effective action of the assemblies, prior to the repeal of the act under which they were established, was to provide the two-thirds majority support needed to amend the entrenched clauses in the constitution. This was achieved in the Constitution (Repeal of Restrictions) Act, 1958 (No 38). Thus, despite representations by Lennox-Boyd in 1958, provisions previously insisted on by the British government had been repealed by the end of the year.]

*The Colonial Secretary* said that the purpose of his recent visit to Accra had been to allay the disquiet among the Ashanti and the tribes in the Northern territories that their local traditions and institutions would not be preserved under the new Constitution for Ghana. A satisfactory agreement had been reached as a result of his intervention. The Prime Minister of the Gold Coast, Dr. Nkrumah, however, had subsequently proposed to adopt certain provisions which would nullify the safeguards introduced to cover the interests of the Ashanti and the Northern territories. It had been necessary for two Gold Coast Ministers, Mr. Gbedemah and Mr. Botsio, to pay an urgent visit to London. After further discussion, agreement on all points had been restored, and every possible step had been taken to entrench in the actual Constitution safeguards for the rights of the tribal and regional peoples. The White Paper setting out the Constitutional proposals for the Gold Coast would be published forthwith.

The Cabinet would welcome the gracious suggestion by H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent that she should extend her forthcoming visit to the Gold Coast on the occasion of the independence celebrations in order to visit the Ashanti and Northern territories. Such a visit would do much to allay inter-regional suspicions, and would make an important contribution towards a successful start for Ghana as an independent State.

The Cabinet:—

Took note, with approval of this statement.

**290** CO 554/994, no 28

1 Mar 1957

[Financial aid]: outward unnumbered telegram from Lord Perth to Sir C Arden-Clarke conveying a message to Dr Nkrumah on the question of UK aid to finance Ghana development

Will you please give the following message to the Prime Minister on my behalf.

*Begins.*

In your confidential letter SCR 0086 of the 29th January you sent to Eastwood a memorandum for the Secretary of State's consideration about possible United

Kingdom aid towards the development of the Northern Territories.<sup>1</sup> I feel sure that the Secretary of State, who has been indisposed for some days, would want you to have at least an interim reply to your memorandum before the 6th March. As I expect you will know, the Government *inter alia* have recently undertaken to make a comprehensive review of the United Kingdom role in the development of new independent Commonwealth countries. Though this review is now proceeding it will inevitably take some little while to complete and I am sure you will understand that it is not possible for us to commit ourselves at all about your proposals in the meanwhile.

2. We are of course very ready to consider your development problems with you, as you suggested in an earlier message to the Secretary of State, on the 15th December last.<sup>2</sup> Apart however from the fact of the review to which I have referred, we doubt whether any useful progress could be made in such talks until your Government has made further progress with its development and financial planning in the post-independence period. I quite appreciate that the fact that no decision has yet been taken with regard to the Volta River Project must make forward planning difficult. I do however feel that the talks would not be much use without the background of some fairly definite plans. Our proposal is therefore that there should be discussions later this year between representatives of the Gold Coast and United Kingdom Governments at which, in the light of the outcome of our general review, we can jointly consider your development problems and explore together the prospects of your raising the finance required. We sincerely hope this proposal will commend itself to your Government.

3. The following Question was asked yesterday by Mr. Mason in the House of Commons:—

*Begins.* What further consideration he has given to the need for special aid for the backward Northern Territories in Ghana; and what are his proposals for assuring economic and financial assistance to this territory in the future. *Ends*

Mr. Profumo.

*Begins.* Certain proposals were made by the Prime Minister of the Gold Coast to my Rt. Hon. Friend when he was recently in the country. As the House will be aware, H.M.G. have already undertaken to make a general review in which will be included the role of the United Kingdom in the development of territories which have recently attained independence. This review is now under way and will be completed as soon as possible. When this is done we hope to discuss with the Government of Ghana the general problem of her development plans. *Ends*

Ends.

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<sup>1</sup> See 279.

<sup>2</sup> See 272.

**291** CO 554/1162, no 19/A

5 Mar 1957

**'Gold Coast: review of events leading up to independence':  
unnumbered despatch from Sir C Arden-Clarke to Mr Lennox-Boyd**

This will be my last despatch to you in the series inaugurated by you in 1954 for the information of Ministers. This is not the time or place to attempt a comprehensive review of recent political history or of the social and economic changes and other factors that have brought about the transformation of the colonial territory of the Gold Coast into the independent dominion of Ghana. The atmosphere in which I write is heavy with the intense preoccupation of the Government with its imminent "freedom" and with the excited expectation of a whole country for the unfolding of a new era the full significance of which will take some time to appear. All I propose to do is to bring the record up to date, and to run briefly through the salient events of the past six months.

2. You will remember that, in August last year, we had reached the stage where the Government, fortified by their clear victory in the July General Election, had requested Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to grant the Gold Coast its independence, within the Commonwealth, as the Sovereign State of Ghana. The Opposition, though it had increased both numerically and in its debating power, had continued its tactics of boycotting the Assembly on important occasions; and the situation throughout the country, though less tense than it had been during the first six months of the year, still afforded little ground for hope that Independence would be achieved in unity and brotherly love. There was ground for anxiety until the middle of September when the Prime Minister was able to announce the British Government's intention, subject to Parliamentary approval, to grant full Independence on the 6th March, 1957. Professor Busia, the Leader of the Opposition, was at this critical stage in his country's fortunes absent in Europe with his attention temporarily diverted to the academic side of his career. In his absence, the Deputy Leader, Dombo, gave a qualified welcome to the announcement, and there seems to be no doubt that the Opposition were taken by surprise by the simultaneous announcement, not achieved without considerable pressure behind the scenes, that an opportunity would be provided for the Opposition to discuss the Government's constitutional proposals not only inside the Legislative Assembly but, if they so desired it, also outside the House.

3. When they had recovered their balance the Opposition, not unreasonably, claimed the Government's offer as a substantial victory, largely achieved through the activities of the delegation which had waited on you and on the Minister of State on September 10th and 11th.<sup>1</sup> There was a noticeable lowering of the political temperature, and for the first time for several months a break in the clouds. The Government had prepared but not published its constitutional proposals in the form of a Secret White Paper and this was used as the basis for the constitutional discussions between Government and Opposition representatives which started on the 16th October. To everyone's surprise, and perhaps to the surprise of the delegates themselves, a cordial atmosphere was created at the outset and generally persisted

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<sup>1</sup> See 252.

throughout, though it diminished towards the end. A considerable measure of agreement was reached on a number of points, and though no unanimity was attained in the outcome, the discussions at least served the very useful purpose of bringing the political leaders together round a table and of bringing into the open the main points of disagreement: these points concerned the creation of a Council of State and of an Upper House, the powers and functions of Regional Assemblies and of Regional Houses of Chiefs, and the procedure for amending the constitution. On all these points there remained an apparently irreconcilable divergence of opinion between the two sides.

4. On November 7th the Government published, in the form of a White Paper, its Revised Constitutional Proposals for Gold Coast Independence. This document set out the Government's views, as modified in the course of the constitutional discussions, and also the points on which it had not been possible to reach agreement with the Opposition. It was a considerable improvement on previous productions, but was still defective in a number of aspects, particularly the desire on the part of the Government to have direct control over the Public Service and over the appointment of Judges. The White Paper was debated in the Assembly on the 12th, 13th and 14th November in an atmosphere surprisingly calm at all times and often indeed cordial; and was approved, with one minor amendment relating to the method of removing Judges, by 70 votes to 25. It is an interesting illustration of the Opposition's eccentric parliamentary tactics that, in spite of their tenacious disagreement with the Government on a number of points, they did not press to a division a single one of the Government's proposals.

5. The pace now quickened. A draft Order-in-Council reflecting the Government's constitutional proposals was hastily prepared and sent to you on the 23rd November. On the 28th November the Ghana Independence Bill was read a first time, and on the 18th December it had passed through all its stages in the House of Commons. On the 20th December you decided, in the light particularly of the misgivings expressed on all sides of the House during the second reading, that you would visit the Gold Coast and use your personal influence to bring the two sides together, if not in unanimity on the constitutional question at least in reasonable co-operation in working it. The Prime Minister reacted sharply to your decision, fearing a plot to deprive him of the fruits of his electoral victory earlier in the year and, worse still, loss of face at what would be claimed as a substantial victory by the Opposition. You were able to calm his fears to the extent of assuring him that it was in no way your intention to preside over a round-table conference or to throw the whole constitutional issue once more into the melting-pot. The year thus ended with a sense of apprehension on the Government side, a sense of expectancy on the Opposition side, and a general feeling of relief throughout the country that there was still a prospect of Ghana's achieving her independence without the bitterness and bloodshed which had threatened to mar it.

6. The success of your visit here from the 24th to the 30th January was two-fold, in that on the one hand it allayed the worst misgivings of the Opposition parties regarding the shape of things to come, while on the other hand reassuring Ministers and the Government supporters of your own *bona fides* and that of Her Majesty's Government. It was a very considerable achievement to have persuaded the Government to accept so many modifications in their constitutional proposals; and though neither you nor I were at any time over-sanguine regarding the permanency

of these new constitutional arrangements, there is no doubt that the most favourable atmosphere possible was created for the launching of the new State.

7. After your departure the career of the Gold Coast moved swiftly and peacefully towards its close, though not without alarms and anxieties for those at the bedside. The Ghana Independence Bill passed through the House of Lords on the 5th February and received the Royal Assent two days later. Meanwhile the Prime Minister suddenly decided to send the Minister of State (Botsio) and the Minister of Finance (Gbedemah) to London immediately to interview you.<sup>2</sup> The ostensible reason for this curious and unexpected manoeuvre was dissatisfaction with the omission from the draft constitutional White Paper (which it had been agreed should be published simultaneously in London and Accra) of provision for a referendum in the case of a deadlock over amendment of entrenched clauses. Looking back now, it seems possible that this issue was raised merely as a pretext and that the sole object of this last minute visit was to give the appearance locally that the Government was having the final say in the preparation of the White Paper. In a country where "face" is so important such a manoeuvre would be quite in accordance with normal form. However that may be, you were able quickly to dispose of their apprehensions, whether they were genuine or simulated. It was then possible to lay the White Paper before Parliament and this was done on the 8th February, no debate being held. The Constitution Order-in-Council itself was approved by the Privy Council on the 22nd February.

8. So now, to-morrow, we shall see the demise of the Gold Coast and the birth of Ghana. Whether it be "new Presbyter: old priest" once again or not, the auspices are more favourable than any of us dared hope a year ago. The unity of the country has been preserved and seems likely to hold fast, though no one can tell what stresses and strains will be put on it by the Government and its wayward supporters. The Northern Territories have generally accepted the new Constitution with goodwill and a quite genuine desire to co-operate with their Southern brethren. Nothing more has so far been heard of the instructions to counsel in the United Kingdom to test the legality of the discontinuance of the Northern Territories protectorate status or the abrogation of the various treaties of friendship and trade. By and large Ashanti too seems to have accepted its moral victory as adequate compensation for the abandonment of its claim for federal status. I have no doubt however that Ashanti will remain a thorn in the flesh of the Government for many years to come. There is good ground for hope that the responsibilities of nationhood will force the wilder politicians on both sides to a realisation that all parts of the country will have to swim together if they are not to sink separately.

9. As regards Togoland, the Trusteeship Council resolution recommending the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement had acquired added force from the announcement in September that Her Majesty's Government intended that the Gold Coast should, subject to Parliamentary approval, attain independence within the Commonwealth on the 6th March, 1957. This resolution was subsequently considered in the Fourth Committee in November and early December. During the long debate which took place, a number of critical speeches were made, the most strongly worded of which came from the delegates of Venezuela, Guatemala and Thailand.

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<sup>2</sup> See 287-289.

Most of these speeches however were based either on a misunderstanding of the real issues or on a misinterpretation of the plebiscite results. A few, which were more clearly argued, advised the Committee against voting for union until the proposed constitutional instruments had been examined and found satisfactory, and independence had, in fact, been granted to the Gold Coast; the view was also expressed that union might well prove to separate more peoples than it united. Eventually a draft resolution introduced by India, of which Burma, Canada, Ceylon, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Pakistan, Peru and Sudan became co-sponsors was put up to, and approved by, the General Assembly in plenary session on the 13th December. This resolution expressed the Assembly's approval of the union of Togoland under British Administration with an independent Gold Coast, and accordingly invited the Administering Authority to take such steps as were necessary to that end. It also noted that the Trusteeship Agreement would cease to be in force upon the date on which the Gold Coast became independent and the union with it of Togoland took place. The voting was sixty-three votes to nil with Afghanistan, Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Venezuela abstaining.

10. Throughout all the recent intense political activity, the general labour situation remained remarkably quiet. This was due partly to the fact that the cost of living had kept stable, and partly no doubt to the abundant opportunities for employment which the preparations for Independence presented in the large towns. But there is little doubt that this lull was mainly due to the rapt preoccupation of Labour leaders with the imminence of Independence and the possibilities about to open before them: a factor which also assisted the settlement of the long-standing dispute in the Mining Industry. The outlook for the future is however uncertain. With the current low cocoa price development works are being drastically curtailed, and there will inevitably be widespread unemployment among the non-migratory artisans and clerical workers. This is a vocal class, and there may well be serious trouble ahead, particularly if the Government finds itself unable to meet the claims for higher wages now pending from several trade unions of Government employees.

11. The Civil Service has survived a troubled period without major damage. It was gravely unsettled by the publication in November of the Government's "Revised Constitutional Proposals" which provided for the vesting of executive powers relating to the Civil Service in the Governor-General acting on the advice of the Cabinet, made the Public Service Commission subject to the Cabinet supervisory authority, and gave the Cabinet the power to make the regulations under which the Commission works. The publication of Her Majesty's Government's White Paper, Cmnd. 71, and the new Constitution Order-in-Council has ended a period of speculation and apprehension and has had a good effect, and the publication of the proposed Public Officers Agreement will do much to complete the repair of morale. There are, however, a number of thoughtful senior civil servants – African quite as much as Overseas – who lack confidence in the Government's future attitude towards the Civil Service and are depressed at the standard of administrative capacity displayed by Ministers. They are worried by the instability of Government policy in general and by the erratic nature of much current Ministerial decision, and they sense at the political level a resentment and tendency to "show where the power lies" which may take despotic form.

12. There will in any case now be an increase in the rate of premature retirement of "entitled officers", but the speed of the final "run-down" of the pensionable

overseas cadre will depend upon how the Government handles things in the first months of Independence. The vital continuity must come from the senior African civil servants, but it is in its attitude to them, the representatives of the respectable middle class, that this basically proletarian Government is least happy. There is a mutual suspicion which the Government should take the initiative in dispelling, but there are few indications that it will find such a course palatable. There is in principle an acceptance at Ministerial level of the need for an effective Civil Service, but emotionally the politicians have not yet been able to rid themselves of resentment against an institution of durability and respectability which has such a clear connection with the former régime.

13. I should like here, in this valedictory despatch, to pay tribute to the work of the Overseas civil servants during the past arduous eight years. Those of them who had joined the Colonial Service before the Second World War and who had served only in the Gold Coast found, in varying degree, the process of adjustment to a Ministerial form of Government always difficult and often extremely irksome. The hierarchical system of classical colonial administration has many merits, amongst which are a clear chain of command and the ample opportunity given to practical men to get on with the job with the minimum of interference from either superior officers or professional busy-bodies. It does however have the defect that it shelters them from the winds of public opinion and the blasts of party politics. My pride in my membership of Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service has been greatly enhanced by my experience of the way in which my colleagues have met the heavy demands made in this country on their professional skill, their common sense, and their adaptability to situations which often varied with astonishing rapidity. It would have been too much to expect that there would be no casualties. But there were very few who could not adapt themselves to the new Gold Coast and I dare say that not a few who shrank from the prospect opening before them have since regretted their timidity.

14. Though I will not in any way belittle the achievements of professional and technical officers in fitting themselves on the whole so smoothly and effectively into the changing pattern of the Civil Service, I must single out Administrative Officers for particular praise. As everyone knows, certainly every Gold Coast "corner-boy", administration consists merely of signing letters and payment-vouchers prepared by overworked and underpaid clerks. Administration is thus, on this theory, an expensive fifth wheel to the governmental coach, which should if possible be eliminated in the interest of economy, efficiency, &c. At the outset of the Nkrumah régime, Administrative Officers came under heavy fire from the politicians. There are no longer the barrages there were in the early days but a pot-shot or two still does not come amiss to an M.L.A. with time on his hands and declining popularity in his constituency. It is true that Ministers have been forced by the facts of life to appreciate the role of the administrator in the scheme of things, but they have still a long way to go before their appreciation is adequate to the tasks they expect of their administrative cadre. Through all this, Administrative Officers have preserved an exemplary calm and resilience, and a truly remarkable readiness to accept the burdens placed on them; and I would wish it were in my power to guarantee them a future more rewarding of their talents than the one now unfolding before them.

15. The temptation to be sententious on this occasion is difficult to resist. I have so often proclaimed my faith in the future of this country, and I shall be proclaiming it on so many occasions next week, that I am in danger of being deafened by my own

echo. But I do in truth have faith in Ghana, or rather in Ghanaians. In spite of the present low standards of public morals, and of the crudities and naïveties which disfigure political life, there is much sound human material on the farm, in the street, and perhaps most particularly in the secondary school classrooms and the Halls of the University College. The only trouble is that at present the elite is so small, perhaps too small yet to leaven the lump at all thoroughly, certainly too small to man all the key positions created by Independence. But if there are many vices in public life here, there are many virtues too: vigour, common sense, generosity, tolerance, a strong sense of humour – a useful armoury with which to fight one's way in the world. There has been talk in the Press and elsewhere of Nkrumah's "dictatorial tendencies". I have not myself, in my association with him, noted any strong bent in this direction: indeed I have had on many occasions to stiffen him to take decisions which did not seem to me to call for any unusual exercise of will power. Vanity is there of course, in full measure, and with it dislike of criticism. But anyone who has at all seriously tried to get a Fanti fisherman, an Ashanti farmer, or a miner from the Northern Territories, to do something he does not want to do, will find it difficult to envisage the establishment of a dictatorship in this country, be it under the leadership of Nkrumah or anyone else.

16. What success this Government makes of its independence will depend for several years, it seems to me, on three factors: the quality and extent of the practical sympathy with its problems which it receives from the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth countries; the financial aid which it obtains from the Western world; and the continuance of its present sensitivity to world opinion. In the short run I have no doubt that Ghana will make many blunders and often tread close on the heels of disaster; but that is the only way in which a fledgling nation can learn to use its wings. In the long run I am confident that Ghana will become, if not a model country, at least a respected, progressive, and peace-loving member of the comity of nations. Her fellow-members of the Commonwealth will need to treat her with tact and sympathy. Given this, and as much practical encouragement as possible, I am sure she will not disgrace us.<sup>3</sup>

17. The contents of this despatch may be summarised as follows:–

Paragraph 1: Preliminary comment.

Paragraphs 2–8: Political events September 1956–March 1957.

Paragraph 9: Togoland.

Paragraph 10: Labour.

Paragraphs 11–12: The Civil Service.

Paragraphs 13–14: Overseas Civil Servants.

Paragraphs 15–16: The future of Ghana.

<sup>3</sup> The note of cautious optimism struck by Arden-Clarke in this his final despatch was echoed by MacLennan in the first despatch he sent to the CRO on 5 June 1957 in his new role as UK high commissioner to Ghana. The tone of MacLennan's despatch stands in marked contrast to some of the earlier gloomy predictions which emanated from the CRO. Beginning with the assertion that the government of Ghana had yet to find 'a coherent policy to replace the comparatively simple objective of Freedom', and then proceeding to review the political scene since independence, MacLennan's despatch ended with the following observations: 'I do not wish, however, to paint too gloomy a picture of the situation here. Ghana must not be judged by comparison with Canada or the United Kingdom, or even with India or Ceylon which have a longer tradition of Government and a much larger educated class, but

against the background of Africa. Lacking a permanently settled European community, Ghana also lacks the political and social standards of Europe and – an inevitably slow process – has to accumulate by her own efforts the capital resources, the scientific techniques and the educational background which the peoples of the West have inherited. Dr. Nkrumah has said that the people of this country will want to do things in an African way, and perhaps we must accept that the African way will include some elements, such as a readiness to acquiesce in a degree of corruption in public life, which would not be tolerated today by us. In so far as such practices lead to inefficiency, we may hope that they will gradually be recognised as undesirable, and, it may be, will in due course be condemned also as immoral. Meanwhile Ghana, deprived of the material advantages of a European settlement, enjoys the inestimable advantage of being almost completely devoid of the tensions which bedevil the multiracial communities of East and Southern Africa. The people of Ghana, if one may generalise on such a subject, strike the observer as happy and contented, even if their contentment is the reflection of a happy-go-lucky spirit. They also demonstrate a vitality and a potential energy which with education and wise leadership may yet give Ghana a distinctive place in the world' (CO 554/824, no 156).

**292** PREM 11/1859

5 Mar 1957

[Independence day]: outward telegram from Mr Lennox-Boyd to Sir C Arden-Clarke conveying a personal message to Dr Nkrumah

[With the Duchess of Kent representing the Queen at the independence day celebrations in Accra on 6 Mar, the British government was represented by a delegation led by R A Butler, the home secretary, and Lord Perth. Nkrumah wrote to Macmillan on 27 Apr thanking him for sending a delegation of 'such high standing'. The letter continued: 'As Ghana begins her new life of independence, she is greatly encouraged by the thought that Britain, which has been of so much help to her in the past, is still with her and can be counted on as a great and ever-abiding friend. . . . We consider this moment appropriate to pay tribute to your country's wise leadership and guidance, to the large number of British civil servants with whom we have enjoyed many happy years, and to the general public of Britain who have also taken a keen interest in our affairs and have always wished us well.' The CRO believed that the letter was 'couched in such warm and friendly terms' that a public acknowledgment was called for. It had also not escaped the CRO's attention that with Nkrumah having sent a similar letter to Chou En-lai thanking him for sending a Chinese delegation to the independence day celebrations, it would do not harm 'to show that Dr Nkrumah can write and thank his friends as well as the Chinese' (Snelling to MacLennan, letter, 15 May 1957). Macmillan replied to Nkrumah on 13 May: 'I heartily reciprocate your good wishes; and I assure you that we in the United Kingdom look forward with equal confidence to a long and happy association with Ghana, to the benefit of both our countries and to that of the Commonwealth and the world at large.' Nkrumah's letter and Macmillan's reply were published in the press on 24 May (PREM 11/1859).]

Grateful if you would convey following personal message from me to the Prime Minister.

*Begins.*

I am delighted to send my warmest good wishes and congratulations to you and all the people of Ghana on Independence Day. This happy achievement crowns the work that Great Britain and Ghana have done together in years past. Although my association with your country as Secretary of State for the Colonies is at an end, I shall continue to take the most lively personal interest in the progress of your affairs.

I value very much the opportunity which I had a few weeks ago to visit Ghana. In my talks with you and your ministers and other political leaders I was much

impressed by the evident desire of you all to put aside past differences and to enter on the new responsibilities and opportunities of independence in harmony and goodwill. I am sure that if this spirit continues in the months and years ahead the future of Ghana, under your wise leadership, will be a bright one. You will know that you can at all times count on the friendship of us all in Great Britain.

Alan Lennox-Boyd





## Biographical notes: parts I–II

### Arden-Clarke, Charles Noble, 1898–1962

Kt 1946; CAS from 1920; administrative officer, Northern Nigeria, 1920–1933; acting principal assistant secretary, Nigerian secretariat, 1934–1936; assistant resident commissioner and government secretary, Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1936, and resident commissioner, 1937–1942; resident commissioner, Basutoland, 1942–1946; gov and C-in-C, Sarawak, 1946–1949, Gold Coast, 1949–1957; first gov-gen and C-in-C, Ghana, Mar–July 1957; member of Monckton Commission on Central Africa, 1960

### Botsio, Kojo, b 1916

Educ Adisadel College, Cape Coast, Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone (BA); postgraduate work in education in Brasenose College, Oxford University; treasurer, West African National Secretariat, London; vice-principal, Akim Abuaka State College, Kyebi; general secretary, CPP, 1949; imprisoned for 'Positive Action', 1950; returned unopposed, Legislative Assembly, 1951; minister of education and social welfare, 1951; minister of communications and works, 1953; minister of state, 1954; leader of Legislative Assembly, 1956; minister of trade and industry, 1957; minister of external affairs, 1958–1959; asked by Nkrumah to resign as secretary of CPP's Central Committee, 1959; dropped from Cabinet, 1961; reinstated as minister of external affairs, 1963–1965; chairman, State Planning Council, 1965; detained, briefly, after 1966 coup; joined the dying Nkrumah in Bucharest, 1972; negotiated with National Redemption Council for return of Nkrumah's body to his birthplace at Nkroful in Ghana; sentenced to death for allegedly plotting overthrow of National Redemption Council (sentence commuted

to life imprisonment, 1973); released from prison, 1977; director of operations and chairman of Campaign Committee of People's National Party (although barred from running from office), 1979

### Braimah, Joseph Adam, 1916–1987

Educ Government School, Tamale; Gonja administrative service from 1933; member of Coussey Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949; visited England to study local government, 1949; elected MLA, 1951; minister without portfolio, Feb–June 1951; minister of communications and works, June 1951–Nov 1953 (resigned); his resignation led to appointment of Korsah Commission; member of national executive of NPP from 1954; chaired United Party after independence, 1957–1959; expelled from United Party and became tenth and final northern MP to cross floor to CPP benches, July 1959; chairman, State Housing Corporation, 1960; placed under house arrest for four months for criticising CPP's 'Work and Happiness' programme, 1962; member of National Liberation Council's Political Committee following 1966 coup; appointed chief regional officer for Northern Region after 1969 elections

### Burns, Alan Cuthbert, 1887–1980

KCMG 1936; Colonial Service from 1905 (Leeward Islands, 1905–1912, Nigeria, 1912–1924); colonial secretary, Bahamas, 1924–1929; deputy chief secretary, Nigeria, 1929–1934; gov, British Honduras, 1934–1940; assistant under-secretary of state, CO, 1940–1941; gov and C-in-C Gold Coast, 1941–1947; acting gov, Nigeria, 1942; permanent UK representative, UN Trusteeship Council, 1947–1956

**Busia, Dr Kofi Abrefa, 1913–1978**

Of Wenchi Stool family; educ Mfantsipim School, Gold Coast (Methodist Synod School, 1927–1930), Achimota College and Oxford University; Carnegie research student, Oxford, 1941–1942, 1945–1947; Nuffield College student, Oxford, 1946–1947; BA London, MA DPhil (social anthropology) Oxon; member of staff Wesley College, Kumasi, 1932–1934, Achimota College, Accra, 1936–1939; administrative officer (district commissioner), Gold Coast, 1942–1949; officer in charge of sociological surveys, 1947–1949; lecturer in African studies, 1949–1951, senior lecturer in sociology, 1952–1954, and professor of sociology, 1954–1959, University College, Gold Coast; elected MLA and then National Assembly of Gold Coast/Ghana, 1951–1959; leader of GCP (est 1952) and leader of parliamentary opposition, 1956–1959; went into exile, 1959; held visiting positions in the Netherlands (The Hague, Leiden and Wageningen), the UK (Oxford and York) and Mexico; director of studies for World Council of Churches, Birmingham, 1962–1964; returned to Ghana following 1966 coup which overthrew Nkrumah and chaired National Advisory Committee of National Liberation Council in 1967; led Progress Party which won 1969 general election and served as prime minister of Ghana until 1972 when ousted in coup led by Col I K Acheampong

**Cohen, Andrew Benjamin, 1909–1968**

KCMG 1952; Malvern and Trinity, Cambridge; CO from 1933 (from Inland Revenue); served in Malta, 1940–1943; assistant secretary, CO (East and Central African Dept) from 1943; assistant under-secretary of state (Africa Division) 1947–1951; gov of Uganda, 1952–1957; permanent UK representative, UN Trusteeship Council, 1957–1961

**Coussey, James Henley (Mr Justice Henley Coussey) d 1958**

Kt 1958; educ Hampton Grammar School; called to Bar, Middle Temple, 1913; puisine judge, Gold Coast, 1944–1952, member of Executive Council, 1943; chairman,

Committee on Constitutional Reform, Gold Coast, 1949

**Cranborne, Viscount, *see* Salisbury, 5th Marquess of****Creasy, Gerald Hallen, 1897–1983**

KCMG 1946; CO from 1920; accompanied S of S to Ceylon and Malaya (1928) and to West Africa (1935); principal private secretary to S of S, 1937–1939; seconded to Ministry of Supply, 1939–1942; assistant under-secretary of state, CO, 1943; chief secretary, West African Council, 1945–1947; gov, Gold Coast, 1948–1949, Malta, 1949–1954

**Creech Jones, Arthur, 1891–1964**

MP (Lab) 1935–1950; executive member, Fabian Society; member, CO Education Advisory Committee, 1936–1945; chairman, Fabian Colonial Bureau and Labour Party Imperial Advisory Committee; vice-chairman, Higher Education Commission to West Africa, 1943–1944; parliamentary under-secretary of state for colonies, 1945–1946; S of S for colonies, 1946–1950

**Cumming-Bruce, Francis Edward Hovell-Thurlow (8th Baron Thurlow cr 1971) b 1912**

KCMG 1961; entered Dept of Agriculture for Scotland, 1935; transferred to DO, 1937; principal private secretary to S of S, 1946; assistant secretary, 1948; served in New Delhi, 1949–1952; adviser on external affairs to gov of Ghana, 1955–1957; deputy UK high commissioner, Ghana, 1957; assistant under-secretary of state, CRO, 1958; deputy UK high commissioner, Canada, 1958; UK high commissioner, New Zealand, 1959–1963, Nigeria, 1964–1967; gov, Bahamas, 1968–1972; chairman, Institute for Comparative Study of History, Philosophy and the Sciences, 1974–1980

**Danquah, Dr Joseph Kwame Kyeretwie Boakye, 1895–1965**

BA LLB PhD; educ Begoro Grammar School (1908–1912) and London University; read law at Inner Temple 1922–1927; called to Gold Coast Bar, 1927; established

first daily newspaper in Gold Coast, the *Times of West Africa*, which was published 1930–1935; secretary, Gold Coast and Ashanti delegation to CO, 1934; general secretary, Gold Coast Youth Conference, 1937–1947; elected by JPC as member of Legislative Council, 1947; founder member of UGCC, 1947; detained by colonial govt following Feb 1948 riots; member of Coussey Committee, 1949; elected MLA 1951 and helped form GCP in 1952; defeated at 1954 and 1956 elections; supported NLM; stood as United Party candidate against Nkrumah in 1960 presidential election; detained by Ghana govt in 1961 and again in 1964; died in custody in 1965

**Dawe, Arthur James, 1891–1950**

KCMG 1942; Berkhamsted and Brasenose, Oxford; CO from 1918; secretary, Malta Royal Commission (1931) and mission to Malta, 1933–1934; assistant secretary, 1936; assistant under-secretary of state, 1938; deputy under-secretary of state, 1945–1947

**Eastwood, Christopher Gilbert, 1905–1983**

Eton and Trinity, Oxford; CO from 1927; seconded as private secretary to UK high commissioner, Palestine, 1932; secretary, International Rubber Regional Committee, 1934; principal, CO, 1935; private secretary to S of S for colonies, 1940–1941; seconded as principal private secretary, Cabinet Office, 1945; assistant under-secretary of state, CO, 1947–1952 and 1954–1966; commissioner for crown lands, 1952–1954

**Gater, George Henry, 1886–1963**

Kt 1936; Winchester and New College, Oxford; local government from 1912; CO permanent under-secretary of state, 1939–1947 (seconded to Ministry of Home Security and Ministry of Supply, 1940–1942)

**Gbedemah, Komla Agbeli, b 1912**

An Ewe, born in Warri, Nigeria; educ Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

School, Cape Coast, and Achimota College; teacher, High School, Akwapim, 1935, and Accra Academy, 1939–1943; confectioner, and timber contractor; chairman, Committee on Youth Organisations, 1948–1949; vice-chairman, CPP, 1949; manager and editor, *Accra Evening News*; detained by colonial govt following Feb 1948 riots; led CPP while Nkrumah was in prison; elected MLA, 1951; minister of health and labour, 1951–1952; minister of commerce and industry, 1952–1954; minister of finance, 1954–1961; minister of state for presidential affairs, 1961; in voluntary exile, 1961–1966; returned to Ghana, 1966; founder and leader of National Alliance of Liberals, 1969; elected member of parliament for Keta constituency, Aug 1969; leader of opposition, barred from taking seat in National Assembly and forbidden to lead political party under article 71 of second republican constitution; ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, National Redemption Council, Mar–June 1972; detained, Apr–July 1978

**Gorell Barnes, William Lethbridge, 1909–1987**

KCMG 1961; Marlborough and Pembroke, Cambridge; served in HM Diplomatic Service (1932–1939) and offices of War Cabinet (1939–1945); assistant secretary, Treasury, 1945–1946; personal assistant to prime minister, 1946–1948; seconded to CO as assistant under-secretary of state, 1948–1959; joint deputy under-secretary of state, 1959–1963

**Griffiths, James, 1890–1975**

MP (Lab) from 1936; minister of national insurance, 1945–1950; S of S for colonies, 1950–1951

**Hadow, Gordon, b 1908**

Kt 1956; Gold Coast administrative service from 1932; deputy financial secretary, Tanganyika, 1946; under-secretary, Gold Coast, 1948; secretary for civil service, 1949; secretary to gov and to Executive Council, 1950–1954; deputy gov and secretary for defence, 1954–1957

Home, Alexander Frederick Douglas-(Baron Home of the Hirsell, life peer, cr 1974) b 1903 14th Earl of Home 1951–1963; Sir Alec Douglas Home 1963–1974; MP (Unionist) 1931–1945, (Con) 1950–1951, (Unionist) 1963–1974; parliamentary private secretary to prime minister, 1937–1940; joint parliamentary under-secretary of state, FO, 1945; minister of state, Scottish Office, 1951–1955; S of S for Commonwealth relations, 1955–1960; leader of House of Lords 1957–1960; lord president of the Council, 1957 and 1959–1960; S of S for foreign affairs, 1960–1963; prime minister, 1963–1964; S of S for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, 1970–1974

Jeffries, Charles Joseph, 1896–1972

KCMG 1943; Malvern and Magdalen, Oxford; CO from 1917; assistant under-secretary of state from 1939; joint deputy under-secretary of state, 1947–1956

Jones, Arthur Creech, *see* Creech Jones, Arthur

Laithwaite, (John) Gilbert, 1894–1986

KCIE 1941; Clongowes and Trinity, Oxford; served in India Office, 1919–1936; private secretary to viceroy of India (Marquess of Linlithgow), 1936–1943; deputy under-secretary of state for Burma, 1945–1947, for India 1947, for Commonwealth relations, 1948–1949; HM representative/ambassador, Republic of Ireland, 1949–1951; UK high commissioner, Pakistan, 1951–1954; permanent under-secretary of state, CRO, 1955–1959

Lennox-Boyd, Alan Tindal (1st Viscount Boyd of Merton cr 1960) 1904–1983

MP (Con) 1931–1960; parliamentary secretary, Ministry of Labour, 1938–1939, Ministry of Home Security, 1939, Ministry of Aircraft Production, 1943–1945; minister of state, CO, 1951–1952; minister of transport and civil aviation, 1952–1954; S of S for colonies, 1954–1959

Listowel, 5th Earl of (William Francis Hare) b 1906

Parliamentary under-secretary of state for

India and Burma, 1944–1945; postmaster-general, 1945–1947; S of S for India (Apr–Aug 1947) and for Burma (Apr 1947–Jan 1948); minister of state for colonial affairs, 1948–1950; gov-gen, Ghana, 1957–1960

Lloyd, Thomas Ingram Kynaston, 1896–1968

KCMG 1947; Rossall, Gonville and Caius, Cambridge; CO from 1921 (from Ministry of Health); secretary, Palestine Commission, 1929–1930; secretary, West India Royal Commission, 1938–1939; CO assistant secretary from 1939; assistant under-secretary of state from 1943; permanent under-secretary of state, 1947–1956

Lyttelton, Oliver, (1st Viscount Chandos cr 1954) 1893–1972

KG 1954; company director; MP (Unionist) 1940–1954; president of Board of Trade, 1940–1941; minister of state in War Cabinet, 1941–1942; minister of production, 1942–1945; president of Board of Trade and minister of production, 1945; chairman, Associated Electrical Industries Ltd, 1945–1951; S of S for colonies, 1951–1954; chairman, AEI Ltd, 1954–1963

MacLennan, Ian Morrison Ross, 1909–1987

KCMG 1957; assistant principal, CO, 1933; parliamentary under-secretary of state, DO, 1937; Office of UK high commissioner, Canada, 1938–1943; private secretary to S of S for dominions, 1943–1944; Office of UK high commissioner, Union of South Africa, 1945–1948; UK high commissioner, Southern Rhodesia, 1951, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1953; CRO assistant under-secretary of state, 1955–1957; UK high commissioner, Ghana, 1957–1959; UK ambassador, Republic of Ireland, 1960–1963; UK high commissioner, New Zealand, 1964–1969

Macpherson, John Stuart, 1898–1971

KCMG 1945; Malayan Civil Service, 1921–1937; seconded to CO, 1933–1935; served in Nigeria, 1937–1939; chief secretary, Palestine, 1939–1943; member, Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, 1943–1945; comptroller for development and

welfare in West Indies and British co-chairman, Caribbean Commission, 1945–1948; gov of Nigeria, 1948–1954; gov-gen, Federation of Nigeria, 1954–1955; CO permanent under-secretary of state, 1956–1959

**Mangin, Thorleif Rattray Orde, 1896–1950**

Kt 1949; sub-lieutenant, RNVR, 1915–1919; Colonial Service, Gold Coast, from 1919; provincial commissioner, 1939–1944; secretary for native affairs, 1944–1945; chief commissioner, Colony, 1945–1950; OAG, Oct–Dec 1946 and Mar–June 1949

**Moyné, 1st Baron cr 1935 (Walter Edward Guinness) 1880–1944**

MP (Unionist) 1907–1931; minister of agriculture and fisheries, 1925–1929; Financial Mission to Kenya, 1932; chairman, West India Royal Commission, 1938–1939; parliamentary secretary, ministry of agriculture, 1940; S of S for colonies, 1941–1942; deputy minister, Cairo, 1942–Jan 1944; Cabinet minister-resident in the Middle East, Jan–Nov 1944; assassinated by Stern Gang

**Nkrumah, Dr Kwame, 1909–1972**

Educ Roman Catholic Elementary School, Half Assini, Western Region, and Government Teachers' Training College, Achimota; schoolmaster, 1931–1934; studied in US gaining degrees at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania (BA STB) and University of Pennsylvania (BD MA MScEd); instructor in history and philosophy, University of Pennsylvania, 1944; studied law at LSE during which time he was also general secretary, West African National Secretariat, London, and joint secretary, Pan-African Conference, London and Manchester; editor, *New African*, London, 1945–1947; returned to Gold Coast Dec 1947; first general secretary, UGCC; detained by colonial govt following 1948 riots; resigned from UGCC, demanded 'self-government now' and formed CPP, 1949; imprisoned for inciting illegal strikes during 'Positive Action', 1950; elected to LA as member for

Accra Central under new constitution, Feb 1951; released from prison (12 Feb 1951) and became leader of government business in the Assembly, 23 Feb 1951; awarded honorary LLD from Lincoln University, USA, June 1951; prime minister of Gold Coast, 1952–1957, of Ghana, 1957–1960; minister of external affairs, 1957–1958, of the interior, 1958–1959; first president of the Republic of Ghana, 1960–1966; overthrown in military coup while out of the country in 1966; given sanctuary in Guinea, later travelling to Romania for medical treatment where he died in a sanatorium in 1972

**Rees-Williams, David Rees (1st Baron Ogmores cr 1950) 1903–1976**

MP (Lab) 1945–1950; chairman, Burma Frontier Areas Committee of Inquiry, 1947; parliamentary under-secretary of state, CO, 1947–1950; parliamentary under-secretary of state, CRO, 1950–1951; minister of civil aviation, June–Oct 1951

**Salisbury, 5th Marquess of 1947, (Robert Arthur James Gascoyne Cecil) 1893–1972**

Viscount Cranborne 1942; MP (Unionist) 1929–1941; parliamentary under-secretary of state, FO, 1935–1938; paymaster general, 1940; S of S for dominion affairs, 1940–1942 and 1943–1945; S of S for colonies, 1942; lord privy seal, 1942–1943; leader of House of Lords, 1942–1945 and 1951–1957; S of S for Commonwealth relations, 1952; lord president of the Council, 1952–1957; resigned over Conservative colonial policy

**Saloway, Reginald Harry, 1905–1959**

KBE 1954; ICS 1928–1946; secretary for rural development, Gold Coast, 1947–1950; colonial secretary, 1950–1951; chief secretary and minister of defence and external affairs and periodically acting gov, 1951–1954

**Scott, Robert, 1903–1968**

Kt 1953; CAS from 1928; assistant district officer, Uganda; served in Palestine as assistant secretary, 1937, administrative

secretary, 1942, financial secretary, 1944, principal commissioner on special duty, 1945; delegate at Anglo-American talks, London, 1946; colonial secretary, Gold Coast, 1947-1950; OAG, 1947 and 1949; administrator, East Africa High Commission, 1950-1954; gov of Mauritius, 1954-1959

**Stanley, Oliver Frederick George (1896-1950)**

MP (Con) 1924-1950; parliamentary under-secretary of state, Home Office, 1931-1933; minister of transport, 1933-1934; minister of labour, 1934-1935; president of Board of Education, 1935-1937; president of Board of Trade, 1937-1940; S of S for war, 1940; S of S for the colonies, 1942-1945

**Swinton, 1st Earl of cr 1955 (Philip Cunliffe-Lister) 1884-1972**

Philip Lloyd Graeme 1884-1924; KBE 1920; Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister 1924-1935; 1st Viscount Swinton 1935-1955; MP (Unionist) 1918-1935; president of Board of Trade, 1922-1923 and 1924-1929; S of S for colonies, 1931-1935; S of S for air, 1935-1938; Cabinet minister-resident in West Africa, 1942-1944; minister for civil aviation, 1944-1945; chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster and minister of materials, 1951-1952; deputy leader of House of Lords, 1951-1955; S of S for Commonwealth relations, 1952-1955

**Williams, Owen Gwyn Revell, 1886-1954**

Entered Inland Revenue in 1910 and transferred to CO in 1911; assistant secretary, 1926-1946

## Bibliography 1: Public Record Office sources searched

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The documents reproduced in this collection constitute only a minute proportion of the records which relate to the history of the Gold Coast/Ghana in the period 1941–1957. The following classes were searched and read in arriving at the preceding selection. It should not be assumed that all files in the runs listed below are actually available for consultation.

### 1. *Cabinet*

#### (i) *Cabinet committees*

War Cabinet Africa Committee: CAB 95/10 (1942–1943)

General series from 1945:

Africa Committee: CAB 134/1–5 (1949 only)

Colonial Affairs Committee: CAB 134/52 (1945–1947)

Colonial Development Committee: CAB 134/64–67 (1948–1951)

Commonwealth Membership Committee: CAB 134/786 (1943–1944)

Colonial Policy Committee: CAB/134/1201–1203 (1955–1956)

#### (ii) *Cabinet Office*

War Cabinet conclusions (minutes): CAB 65/17–67 (1941–1945)

War Cabinet memoranda: CAB 66/14–67 (1941–1945)

Cabinet conclusions from 1945: CAB 128/1–30 (to 1957)

Cabinet memoranda from 1945: CAB 129/1–84 (to 1957)

Cabinet Office registered files:

Colonial affairs: CAB 21/809–816, 1681–1695

Gold Coast, West Africa, constitution: CAB 21/2888

Prime minister's minutes: CAB 21/2277–2281B

### 2. *Chiefs of Staff Committee*

These records throw little light on the end of colonial rule in the Gold Coast. General strategic issues are located in the series DEFE 4–7 and 11 (see also CO 968 for more material on colonial defence issues).

### 3. *Colonial Office*

#### (i) *CO original correspondence, 1941–1957: geographical classes*

Gold Coast: CO 96/770–830 (to 1951)

West Africa: CO 554/131–994 (from 1951)

(ii) *CO original correspondence, 1941–1957: subject classes*

The most important of the subject classes is CO 537: Colonies general supplementary ['secret'], especially CO 537/3226–6697. The CO 537 lists are indexed by country and by subject but the indexes are not comprehensive and a thorough search is recommended.

Other relevant subject classes are CO 854 (Circular despatches); CO 1032 (Colonies general); CO 968 (Defence); CO 852 (Economic); CO 866 (Establishment); CO 936 (International relations); CO 967 (Private Office); CO 875 (Public relations); CO 927 (Research); CO 859 (Social service); CO 876 (Welfare and students).

4. *Commonwealth Relations Office*(i) *DO original correspondence: DO 35*

This important and extensive series becomes important as the Gold Coast moves towards internal self-government from 1954 and the CRO assumes responsibility for the external affairs of the Gold Coast in 1955. The file runs for the period 1951–1957 are DO 35/2126–7158.

5. *Prime Minister's Office*

Correspondence and papers, 1945–1951: PREM 8/2–3, 732–733, 9324

Correspondence and papers, 1951–1957: PREM 11/1367, 1859–1860

6. *Treasury*

There is only limited direct concern with the Gold Coast in the various Treasury series. The most relevant runs are to be found in T 220 (Imperial and foreign division), especially T 220/433, 1102, and T 236 (Overseas finance division), especially T 236/3771–3785, 4317–4318, 4527–4530

## Bibliography 2: Official publications, unpublished private papers, published documents and secondary sources

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### 1. Official publications

#### (a) United Kingdom

*Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of British West Africa, 1945–1946* (chairman, W Harragin) Col 209, 1947

*Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948* (chairman, Aiken Watson KC) Col 231, 1948

*Statement by His Majesty's Government* (thereon) Col 232, 1948

*Gold Coast: Report to His Excellency the Governor by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949* (chairman, Mr Justice J H Coussey) Col 248, 1949

*Statement by His Majesty's Government* (thereon) Col 250, 1949

*The Volta River Aluminium Scheme* Cmnd 8702, 1952

*Gold Coast: Despatches on the Gold Coast Government's Proposals for Constitutional Reform exchanged between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and His Excellency the Governor, 24th August 1953 to 15th April 1954* Col 302, 1954

*The Proposed Constitution of Ghana* Cmnd 71, 1957

#### (b) Gold Coast

*Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Africanisation of the Public Service* (chairman, R H Saloway) SP no 1, 1950

*Report (with Legislative Council decisions thereon) of the Select Committee appointed to examine the questions of Elections and Constituencies* (chairman, F K Ewart) SP no V, 1950

*Gold Coast: Regional Administrations, Report by the Commissioner* (Sir S Phillipson) 1951

*Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to make recommendations concerning Local Government in Ashanti* (chairman, W H Beeton) 1951

*Report of the Commission on the Civil Service of the Gold Coast, 1950–1951* (chairman, Sir D Lidbury) SP no IV, 1951

*Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the Lidbury Report* (chairman, K A Gbedemah) SP no III, 1952

*Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Representational and Electoral Reform* (chairman, W B Van Lare) SP no I, 1953

*Gold Coast: The Government's Proposals for Constitutional Reform, 1953*

- Report on Finance and Physical Problems of Development in the Gold Coast* (by D Seers & C R Ross for the Office of the Government Statistician) 1953
- Report on Industrialization of the Gold Coast* (by W A Lewis) 1953
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## Index of Main Subjects and Persons: Parts I–II

This is a consolidated index for both parts of the volume. It is not a comprehensive index, but a simplified and straightforward index to document numbers, together with page references to the Introduction in part I, the latter being given at the beginning of the entry in lower case roman numerals. The index is designed to be used in conjunction with the summary lists of the preliminary pages to both parts of the volume. A preceding asterisk indicates inclusion in the Biographical Notes at the end of Part II. Where necessary (eg, particularly in long documents), and if possible, paragraph or section numbers are given inside round brackets.

Two British officials – Arden-Clarke and Sir T Lloyd – appear prominently throughout the two parts of the volume. In both cases the index provides, in addition to page references to the Introduction, the first document reference only; subsequent references can be identified from the summary lists. In the case of Lennox-Boyd, references are provided up to the point at which he became colonial secretary in 1954; thereafter references can be identified from the summary list in Part II. In the case of Nkrumah, who appears intermittently in part I but extensively throughout part II, the document entries are subdivided by subject for part I only; part II subject entries can be identified from the summary list.

The following abbreviations are used:

- App – Appendix in Part I (pp 381–411)
- E – enclosure
- N – editor's link note (before main text of document)
- n – footnote

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