

March 28, 1962

Dear Dr. Jox (n):

From the moment my plane landed in West Africa my thoughts were of South Africa. The thought was especially easy since the very first meeting of the opposition Nigerian Youth Congress I attended in Lagos opened with "Izwe Lethu."

Then I came to Accra and into the hotel strode a magnificent man--a sort of a cross between Chief Luthuli and Jomo Kenyatta, if you can conceive such a wondrous combination--and sure enough he turned out to be South African. His name is David Motsamaji. I'll have to look up his friend in London --Robert Keshu--and another South African by the name of Lionel Morrison--but that will have to wait till I return from Glasgow as presently I'm in London more or less incommunicado to get my reports written which I could not write the 2 months I was busy living and breathing Africa. But I'll be back here June 9th and from then till sailing date on June 21st I'll get to know Africa as it is as seen in London. It dawned on me that you may wish me to look some people up here --hence this hurried note. You can address me c/o American Express, London.

I ran into some police interference while in the Gambia, the last British colony in West Africa. It is now voting self-government, but that's first when the struggles will begin. Time becomes of the essence now and while the British were there 500 years and did not even build a single road from coast to coast, they now think that they must have "more time" before they (sic!) prepare the people for independence --but the people have been ready for centuries and these they do not intend to cede to the British. As mad as they were at my Marxist Humanism, or, as they put it, "while your anti-communism is interesting, what worries us is your pro-African nationalism," the thing that really brought matters to a head was the fact that I did not stay with Europeans, nor at a hotel, but in an African home and my constant companions were a Wolof, a Mandingo, and a Kula. Of course the first thing any one who has ears learns in Africa is that, whether it is "British speaking" or "French" or "Portuguese" --all this is strictly in the city only and strictly for the whites only--among themselves Africans speak African --and there is an internationalism even to tribalism for I got a much greater distance with Wolof in Senegal than with French even as Hausa served better both in Nigeria and Dahomey than either English or French. It has been fascinating and exiting, but also tiring especially the last 2 weeks in the interior of Gambia--"the bush."

I also would like to report that there are many, many places that read N&L and that the Report on South Africa was read avidly; also I had a copy of "Africa Today" which carried the picture of Chief Luthuli and his speech at Stockholm. It is this I inscribed and sent on to him by messenger.

How have you been? Have you seen my sister? I'll be back in the states in July; how about visiting me in Detroit. Yours,  
Earl

9573

Ibadan  
4/16/62

Dear Bessie:

9574

I know you must be worried about money because it's spent faster by being white than by being a drunken sailor and rolled. But DON'T send me any. Frankly, here is something I haven't even as yet told REB because I don't want to jump to conclusions and I want to see more than Nigeria --at least Ghana, its opposite, before I make any such decision-- but I feel I may cut my trip to Africa short rather than spend the money necessary for the entire 2 months stay. Here is what has happened. Nigeria really hasn't had a revolution --just a change of black for white administrators who have forgotten their past and their revolutionary will and are a bit "less efficient" than even Britain. I'm sure there is the other kind around --our M-H subjectivity but it is very nearly impossible to get anywhere but outside of it, and, believe me, if anyone can make people forget whiteness, it's me, but I am foreign and you just cannot get to have them open up. Haven't given up all hope, and the trip has many glorious avenues that will be most valuable to us, but not at the price of \$10 a day at a hotel and very nearly that much getting cheated out by taxicabs. I got so mad at one of them --they all cheat but this was the limit -- that I really started yelling at him for thinking all Americans are made of gold, and by the time I got the FREEDOM NOW button Mary gave me, I finally got him to cut price in half in lieu of the button, but even then what he asked for more, much more than FR pamphlet, was being taken to America. They all want to escape and I certainly cannot blame them, but but, but..

If I do cut the stay short by a couple of weeks the money may carry me through, if not to US, certainly to London, so we can speak then.

I'm in Ibadan nowhere the University College is, as British and arrogant an institution as ever you saw. I finally have my appointment with the principal --but only after I wrote an absolutely blistering letter as to his arrogance of writing to me in Ikoyi giving me 1 hour to come for an appointment to this town when there is only 1 plane a day and it never leaves or comes on time, and, as it happens I had that day to go to cocktails at the Governor-General's! And this is the man (Dike) who had written that wonderful sentence that it wasn't the tsetse fly but 400 years of opposition to Britain that kept Britain from completing its conquest of Nigeria before the turn of the century. Obviously it was only a sentence, an academic play for the "Chiefs" and not the masses or even that "resistance" means anything other than resistance to trade.

These letters--I mean to people in Africa--and the wasting of hours trying to get a single call through is another thing which is only in part due to the fact that there aren't enough lines now that freedom is here and all are calling all. For there isn't a single phone for thousands upon thousands upon thousands--just the big shots call each other. And since it isn't s-c it is inefficient as heck. Ah, well, on second thought do please forward this note to Olga to show to REB so they have an inkling of what might happen.

I hope Gogol is fully recovered. Love to all our wonderful, wonderful members, every single one of them, even those who play with CORE or what have you --what a distance there is between that and governmental mansions and \$12,000 gold beds for the wife of a Ghanaian s-c who couldn't even convince his spouse to return it till the women went on strikes against her!

Disregard  
Outlandish  
address  
from London  
Write my  
address in  
letter to  
Dug.

X/Kee  
HKS  
copy my  
letter to  
Dug

Olga, send this out to all.

April 19, 1962

Dear Friends:

Finally I have met some workers, youth, and generally socialist-minded, revolutionary activists --in a word, the masses, at a mass rally in opposition to the austerity budget. A special report for the paper is enclosed and should immediately be put into N&L as report "by our special correspondent in Africa" and in turn sent to Nigeria to the names I will forward, some of them to get a bundle from now on.

The great part of my finally getting to know this which was not publicized in the daily press but only by leaflet is that it was due, not to the big shot press card I got for other purposes, but to N&L. For, to be precise, my writing on N&L stationery (which I took with me) an absolutely blistering letter to one man African I heard about because he calls himself a socialist but who had not responded to my letter from US, that I would like to know exactly how Africans mean to build, not only Pan-Africanism, but world socialism, if they do not bother to establish fraternal relations with American Marxist-Humanists. The call came: the rally is here; come see for yourself.

And indeed it was a great experience for it is, after all, only 1 1/2 years since independence, and yet they are already openly opposed to the new government, and while Ghana is mentioned as "superior" because it has no private capital as the neo-colonialism dominating Nigeria, I noted (1) that to get even that favorable note in, the example used was that the Ghanaian Minister who built himself a marble house and his wife tried buying a \$4000 bed in London got sacked; (2) they stuck very much to the concrete here, with very, very great emphasis on labor. Indeed it was a labor rally not alone because most Nigerians are that, but because the Youth congress is actually the labor confederation, left wing, and they do not have an age limit; (3) the rank and file in Detroit would love to hear how the labor leaders of the "West" are disregarded as mere adjuncts to imperialism, which is why they insist on an All-African Trades Union Congress with no "foreign" connections--Russian or American.

The spirit is much, much livelier than in the US with each speech being preceded and followed by "Izwe Lethu", which slogan as South African "Our Land" is a tribute to their African, rather than only Nigerian solidarity, and a song--we'll have to sing it at our convention this September. Of course, after stand for 3 hours in the broiling sun, I was a bit on the sweaty side, but it was worth it.

The weakness is the lack of any feeling of solidarity, except a few general words, with Europe or America or anything that is white. The fact that oppression in Africa has always worn a white face is not the only reason for this; it is because the world labor and socialist movement behaved hardly different from the capitalists. And even now hardly a socialist word of solidarity has penetrated. I believe I am the first, and tomorrow when I meet some of them for a discussion I will see to establish lasting relations and direct correspondents for N&L from Lagos.

Hurriedly,  
Raya

I enclose also the Resolution they passed against the Austerity program, and please note in the leaflet on the Mass Public Protest Meetings that these being held over a period of 8 days, twice per day, for each neighborhood.

THE NIGERIAN YOUTH CONGRESS  
 THE NIGERIAN TRADES UNION CONGRESS  
 THE LAGOS TENANTS ASSOCIATION  
 INVITE YOU TO

## Mass Public Protest Meetings

ON  
 Austerity Budget  
 Control Rents: Cut Down Prices  
 Provide Jobs  
 Make Life More Secure For The Working People  
 Of This Country.

WHERE YOU CAN HEAR THE SPEAKERS:

DATE	PLACE	TIME	SPEAKERS
Wed. April 11th 1962	Loco Ojuelegba- Round About	11 a.m. 4 p.m.	Mr. Michael Imoudu Dr. Tunji Oregbeye Same Speakers.
Thur. April 12th 1962	Ijora Sawmill Ajegunle	11.30 am. 4 p.m.	W. O. Goodluck Ade. Thomas Same Speakers.
Fri. April 13th 1962	Apapa Wharf Road Mushin	11.30 am. 4 p.m.	Robert Onyia J. Okhenobo Bassey & Soji Odunjo
Sat. April 14th 1962	Ajegunle Near The Bridge	11 a.m.	Femi Okunnu. S. U. Bassey
Sun. April 15th 1962	Obale Oniwala	4 p.m.	Robert Onyia E. Ajise
Mon. April 16th	Apapa Dockyard Road	11.30 am.	W. O. Goodluck A. Ita.
Mon. 16th	Abule Ijesha	4 p.m.	Uche & Oyero
Tue. 17th	Ijora Municipal	11.30 am.	Bassey & Ita.
Tue. 17th	Shomolu	4 p.m.	Uche & Okhenobos
Wed. 18th	Ikorodu Road,	4 p.m.	Bassey & Ade Thomas

Thursday 19th

Monster Mass Rally at Evans Square, Ebute-Metta,

at 4 p.m.

Speakers: -

Mr. Wahab O. Goodluck  
 Mr. Jisadu  
 Dr. Tunji Oregbeye  
 Mr. Molokwu  
 Mr. C. U. Bassey

Say No to this Rich man's Budget  
 DEMAND BETTER LIFE FOR THE POOR  
 FOR MORE PAY, MORE JOBS, LESS LUXURY.

9576

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE JOINT MASS MEETING OF  
THE NIGERIAN YOUTH CONGRESS, THE NIGERIAN TRADE-  
UNION CONGRESS AND THE LAGOS TENANTS ASSOCIATION.  
HOLDING EVANS SQUARE LAGOS ON THURSDAY, 18th APRIL,  
1962.

ON  
MASS PUBLIC PROTEST MEETING ON AUSTERITY BUDGET

Whereas the Economic Programme 1962 - 1968 was prepared in consultation not with the Nigerian people but with imperialist countries;

Whereas this Programme envisaged that Nigeria shall continue to be a semi-colonial raw material appendage of imperialist industrial countries;

Whereas what the Nigerian people need is the industrialisation of this country so as to provide a basis for independence and rapid national growth;

Whereas, the loan policies proposed for financing this plan will lead Nigeria into greater enslavement to imperialist finance monopolies and the taxation policy constitutes a sell out to capitalists and imperialists and an attack on the living standards of workers, peasants, tenants and other ordinary citizens;

Whereas the so called austerity measures, including the cut in expenditure on social services will inevitably lead to inflation and to the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer;

Whereas it is clear from this so-called austerity budget that this present government, being a government of capitalists and landlords, is only interested in pumping money into the hands of capitalists and landlords and increasing the profits of capitalist, landlords, monopolists, imperialists and their hangers on, and has shown gross lack of interest in the welfare and development of ordinary people;

Whereas the nationalisation of banking, insurance, mines, plantations, transport and wholesale distribution and the drastic limitation of high exploitative monopoly profits is the only sure way at this stage of developing Nigeria's economic independence;

Whereas the control of rents and prices, the provision of full employment through industrialisation, the progressive increase of monetary and real wages and the increase and equalisation of social services are the only measures whereby any improvements in the standards of life of the common people can be encompassed;

Be it resolved and it is hereby resolved that this mass meeting of workers, tenants, youths and other suffering citizens, organised by the Nigerian Youth Congress, the Nigerian Trade Union Congress, and the Lagos Tenants Association

1. Rejects and calls upon the people of Nigeria to reject the so-called mobilisation budget;

..2

2. Renounces and calls upon the Nigerian people to renounce the imperialist-sponsored Economic Programme 1962 - 1968;
3. Demands and calls upon the people of Nigeria to demand an honest policy of bold industrialisation of our country, nationalisation of large foreign monopoly enterprises, an end to corruption and capitalist financial scandals, the robbing of poor Peter to pay the rich Paul, and a firm limitation of upper class incomes;
4. Rejects the so-called 10% cut in salaries of Ministers as not being real sacrifice;
5. Demands and calls upon the workers, peasants, youths, tenants and other sections of the common people to form a United Front to develop the movement to continue the struggle for;
  - (a) the control of rents and prices
  - (b) a policy of automatic wage increases in the face of on-coming inflation.
6. Calls for and asks the Nigerian people to call for a commission of enquiry into the property owning capacity of Ministers of state, Parliamentarians and High political functionaries and fix an upper limit of property ownership.

April 20, 1962

9579

Dear Inez:

I have already written Olga that this can be edited because I cannot stop to do so. Also I sent her both the Resolution adopted by this protest meeting and, unfortunately, also the leaflet which means I do not have the list of speakers, therefore if sometime I merely say 1st speaker, 2nd speaker, please put in name, since they spoke in order listed on the red leaflet. Do not use my name. Next week when I write Pol. Letter I will use Raya, but not in news report. I assume it will be played up on p.1 as 3rd article, & 1 single copy will be sent air mail to Dr. Otegbeye; if it costs too much then just send 1st page & the piece that goes over, etc.

R

LAGOS NIGERIA SPECIAL TO N&L

AFRICAN WORKERS OPPOSE AUSTERITY BUDGET  
AT THEIR EXPENSE

By Our Special Correspondent in Africa

On Wednesday, April 11, at 4 p.m. a mass rally was held to protest the austerity ~~budget~~ ~~budget~~ called for by the Nigerian Government's Economic Programme 1962-1968. The meeting was called by the Nigerian Youth Congress, the Nigerian Trades Union Congress and the Lagos Tenants Association. The one I heard was held in Evans Square, Ebute Metta; it was one of 13 such meetings held throughout the week in every locality from the Apapa Wharf to the Ijora Sawmill.

The spirit of the meeting was high, the audience participation vocal, and unlike meetings in the United States, was punctuated by freedom songs and under the rallying cry "Izwe Lethu" (Our Land). The songs were also acted out so that hands went up when the song spoke of "Africa is rising" and hands went down "to fall no more" "Africa has risen to fall no more". And people stamped their feet to "Africa is marching to fall no more."

Dr. Tunji Otegbeye, president of the Nigerian Youth Congress, said that their congress is calling the so-called mobilization budget "Stagnation Budget No. 1". He spoke of the freedom movement in the 1940's and 1950's that won independence for Nigeria and put the leaders into power, and what did it gain them? In 1960 with independence came rise in prices, in 1961 prices rose again, and by now they are fantastic. But were wages raised since 1959? A loud shout of "No" went up from the crowd. No the only thing that went up were the salaries of the ministers. And not only the salaries and the luxury houses they live in "but the influence they have. They know the state machinery. They know which companies get contracts. The jobs go to their friends as well as their wives and concubines."

He said a lot is made about the need to industrialize the land and about the Niger Dam and the need for electricity but "if you put electricity in the thatched room, you are just looking for a fire. Time is running out. We have to take effective political action. We are nothing but a semi-colonial country now. They speak of the need of austerity to industrialize. Why not start with cutting their salaries and put them in the national fund. Nationalize the banks--Barclays has made too many millions out of you and the new imperialism they continue to do so. That money should go into national fund. Keep all our resources, nationalize major means of production, mining and petroleum. The lot of workers doesn't seem to matter to these politicians. They are unfit to enjoy the confidence of the people. It is our struggles



To me however the most exciting moment was when a Hausa youth made a brief speech about African socialism and we "want a socialist Nigeria" because the Northern part of the country is the most backward where feudal emirs still rule and Hausa language is used by those potentates to hide a monolithism that outdoes Russian totalitarianism. As the main song for the youth puts it, "There is victory for us

In the struggle for Africa  
There is victory for us  
For us, for us,  
In the struggle for Africa  
There is victory."

The role of the young women also was evident and Miss Sola Odubonojo, the Secretary of the Students' Affairs for the Nigerian Youth Congress, brought out laughter throughout when she introduced the Resolution proposed, by saying "The rogues who sit in the parliament every day will have to listen. If it doesn't change their minds, we will take other action." The Resolution read:

(Inez, if you have space quote 1st 3 pars, skip to 6th, then go to "Be it resolved" merely saying to reject the budget, and then over on p.2, last 2 pars, 5 & 6. If there isn't that much space, I would just quote 1st 3 pars & then immediately go to p.2 & pars. 5 & 6)

~~xxxxxx~~

I must also add a personal note. I was most elated when they asked me too to vote for this Resolution which was passed unanimously. Although I most certainly was a "foreigner", and despite the fact that before the meeting started, there was a good deal of suspicion of ~~xxxx~~ any American. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ This is so not only because of the role of American imperialism but because the trades unions in America through the ICFTU is considered, as they put it "an intruder into African affairs. We do not believe in any bloc, East or West and don't want to become a pawn of any. We want only African unions. The others intrude in our affairs and try to buy..." By the time however I explained that the rank and file workers in America have as little use for the trades union leaders in their country, consider them bureaucrats whether they are on American or African soil, a fraternal bond was created so that at the end they wanted to know why didn't I vote and wouldn't listen to the fact that I wasn't Nigerian.

April :

Darling John:

Finally I got yesterday the 1st lett today came two in a row, so I suppose that by the here tomorrow they will all have missed me. But it to hear from you, even if you complain about that H though I thought you knew what to expect--by the ti you will have paid off the huge "international debt. I can start all over again, what? "Bid Bad John", 1 anyway.

Yesteday I wrote Olga that finally I located African socialists and that the writeup of the meeting will follow, but it may be another day before I actually can do so, but they can count on that special spread for the 3rd spot of p.1 of May issue. As a matter of fact, the reason I didnt get around to finishing was that after 3 hours standing in a grueling African sun listening to speeches, I got home to do some work which wasn't finished till 1 a.m. only to be awakened at 6:30 a.m. (the usual hour for awakening you here for tea!) by some members of the Nigerian Youth Congress who wanted to express how glad they were to get to know me, and how they would look forward to the material from US, and of course they had to do so that early because they were leaving for organizational work in the Mid-West, part of which is trying to break off from the left.

Today it was finally the interview with Azikiwe. A smooth talker, he. First he met me by looking as much like a worker-free lancer as possible, then he pulled out a pamphlet of an address he had delivered on Pan-Africanism last year in London, published on very fine paper, which made reference to my pamphlet, and after all that buttering up, he proceeded to speak in a comradely fashion on almost anything (except when it came to Russia's suppression of Hungary he pulled the stuff about their being for non-violence (sic!) and that a duly constituted gov't. had been done by wishes of masses once, and of all things the CIA "we were told" was behind it. O that I gave him a piece of my mind and he backed down and said he'd be happy to see all material, etc. Naturally I didn't tell him I had gone to the new opposition's meeting for I did not speak of internal affairs. It may make a nice piece for Africa Today, and I frankly don't know what to do about the piece for Africa Report because I just don't know whether I want them to know my views. Well, we'll see in a week or so. In any case, instead of the 1 hour allotted for my interview, he kept me an 1 1/2 and in fact I made the move to leave which I suppose is less than polite to Governor-General but I was already way late for an appointment with the President of the Nigerian Youth Congress. Please tell Inez that the exact name of that person is Dr. Tunji Otegbeye, Ireti Hospital, 60 Patey St., Ebute Metta, Lagos, Nigeria. That is the #1 for getting bundle, pamphlets, etc. Also to add to the list of the person getting a bundle, and 1 of each pamphlet: Eme A. Okereke, 160 Herbert Macaulay Rd. around Ibadan, all they know, Nigeria. In fact, pass this letter around news. all they know, I love you and they should get the other

*Handwritten note:* Please enter your list from me with the form please!

9582

*Handwritten note:* Love - Pa

April 23, 1962

9583

Dear John:

Compared to Lagos, Accra is Paris! The wide avenues, the cleanliness, the spirit of the people as against the "Yes, madame's, makes you almost prefer s-c to private "enterprise". I'm sure I'll find the slums soon enough but the very fact that I didn't have to go either to the Governor's mansion or suburbia to find clean streets and more healthy-looking, modern-dressed and beautiful women not restricted to the upper echelons who can take of themselves. And my pickup (who himself came back only a few months after being away studying in England 6 years tells me this is all new Accra town, the work of the "Osagyefo"(pronounced with a soft g, and all the time instead of either name)!-

Unfortunately, the prices are even more sky-high-- double what I complained off in Lagos! Definitely my trip to Africa must be cut short; by the time I get up to the Gambia for the elections I'll be very nearly broke; of course there I'll be able to stay with Africans, but then I don't know whether my stomach will take it. In any case, I'm sure I'll be back in the States a week in advance of time, and back in London perhaps even ahead of that. In any case tell all not to write me to Accra any more. Next stop is Gambia & as mail is lower there they might say a few words there.

Meanwhile I came upon one of these never-ending holidays Good Friday seems to start here on Thursday and go straight through Monday, so all is closed, even mails & I cannot make my contacts.

Do please ~~xx~~ tell Inez to send Labeledz of the Survey (but to his home, Ilford House, 135 Oxford St., London, W.1) that article on Deutscher she wanted to send in the 1st place & I'll write him directly.

Hope the paper came off and is a superior issue. I will write Olga officially tomorrow but I continue to remain in Africa & merely want to hear news of US, not to participate in it.

Love,

*Does Take care, I'll be back in Africa, I'll be back in Africa, I'll be back in Africa.*

April 23, 1962

Dear Olga (for REB-NEB)

Briefly and to the point. The Africa trip, while exciting and new and filled with points for us, has only convinced me the more that there is no substitute for Marxist Humanism and, as an organized expression, it exists only in the US. Therefore, while Africa will certainly be in the book, it will not be the book. No doubt part of the reason is that subjectivity, in the sense of absorbed objectivity, can only be heard when one speaks the same language and in the continent where oppression has always worn a white face it is quite impossible to have a common language between white and black. But that is only part of the reason. The other, the greater part, is that it has been an against movement not a for and by the time it got to be a "for some-thing," it has already been in power. However, the best, for example, in Nigeria, which I described in my report, the youth and worker-unionists now in opposition to the new, it still describes 1956 as the year of Suez not the year of the Hungarian Revolution.

I am only two weeks here but I am convinced that what I have witnessed so-called center (Nigeria) and "left" (Ghana) and still colonial Gambia I will have seen the three sides of the spectrum that will enable me to come to some conclusions without needing to spend so much of the organization's money to stay here the entire 2 months. I will therefore cut off a minimum of a week from the time of scheduled return and will therefore be back the last of June rather than July 5th. And I may cut off more than that from the African trip. It all depends when I get to Gambia, but as I view things now, I would rather spend an extra week with Harry McShane and some days in London and see whether we can nail down any publisher. For the one thing, I assure you, that is needed most of all, in Europe and in Africa, and for that matter USA, is M&F.

To me the center of the September conv. will have to revolve in the most comprehensive, serious, full-bodied, thoroughly thought-out and discussed, and not just "agreed to" but acted upon organizational development. I simply will not move away from that topic, no matter whether I'm giving Africa & the world report, or Saul is giving Lit. report or John finances, and no one, absolutely no one, can talk of theory, unless theory is to mean organization. I ask all of you to think day and night, to act day and night, to prepare day and night, to have results to discuss for those 3 days.

Yours, *Karl*  
Olga, please find somewhere in my files 2 things I must have for London that has opened up with ed. of Survey writing to me on LT (1) the lecture on LT as Theoretician, (2) the old ('38) article on LT. Some interesting developments may occur there and see that it waits for me at American Express, London, no later than May 25th or thereabout, marked "Hold". When the holiday (Good Friday, No Work Sat, Sun, Mon) is finally over I'll get to know Accra and write again. But I felt it necessary to hurry this along so that the leadership is aware how my thoughts are running re cutting trip, and, above all, conv.

9584

May 1, 1962

*Ambassador Hotel*

P.O. BOX 3044  
ACCRA - GHANA

TELEPHONE No. 24648 (10 LINES)  
CABLE ADDRESS: AMBASSADOR, ACCRA



Darling John:

Isn't it a wonderful way to celebrate my birthday--I've established some connection with the underground in South Africa!

The day began very ordinarily, as I wrote in the morning when I told good-bye to Accra, saying I was going to take your present and buy me a golden pair of earrings, which I did, very tiny ones as Ghana gold money. Then things began to happen --first I was invited to Achimota but this time not just to meet the person but to eat lunch with his wonderful family and so establish connections that will last after my departure. I returned home to the hotel to pack

when  
Some grand looking man, a sort of cross between the locks of Jomo Kenyatta and Chief Luthuli walked in, and of course I just can't resist asking him is he East or South African, and he turned out to be the latter and immediately I get a chance to talk quietly and the fact that I knew so much of South Africa, including Dr. Jordan and his report, and then he gives me names both in London and elsewhere and promises to write if he can get back to the country which he feels he can. Also AFRICA TODAY really has a better name than AFRICA REPORT when it comes not to the academic world when it is the other way around, but to the actual movement, and the issue had Chief Luthuli's picture on cover--and after that we could hardly part; in fact, he is bringing to Luthuli, plus my name and whereabouts from tomorrow, for I did have to go in and pack and I'm writing to you this last note, and I must be up at 6 a.m. for that plane to Gambia.

One thing for Osagyefo there is no doubt that Africans do feel they'll get aid here, and when I told my new-found friend that I felt all talk of free Africa means nought unless South Africa is free, he was quite ready to forget I was white, but he says people just don't realize how strong the underground is, that it just isn't true that after Sharpeville things died, and even on Ron Segal and his giving up AFRICA SOUTH he says, Well, you just can't go with an individualistic intellectual--they either understand organization and accept discipline --or you don't know where they'll end. As to what he said of academicians --and all this when we just said a few words on missionaries--but mainly it was that I'm beginning to know African features so well I can almost tell which part of Africa they come from--sometimes I even guess the tribe. Well, anyway I feel good and I sure love Accra despite all I wrote yesterday of which, unfortunately, every word is true nonetheless. The last thing life in Africa is like --is simple.

Pass this around to REB-NEB & all love, *Bob*

9585

TO THE REB\*NEB - The week spent in Accra

MAY 1, 1962

9586

Because the opposition wasn't organized, as in Lagos, and meeting only with the official view was so damning for a new independent country that has so recently won its freedom, I have withheld writing, ~~and~~ Even now I am not building a Weekly Letter around "Nkrumaism"--yes, there is this hybrid here in full Stalinist form--but only addressing myself to the leadership, although I have no objection to it also being sent to the membership. It is only that I do not want to rush into print with it, not even in mimeographed form.

First there was the formal letter--~~and~~ the secretary of the cabinet's cold answer to my friendly letter addressed to Nkrumah before I left. It said that it is doubted the "Osagyefo would be available", but I would be directed to the proper ministries. Next came the entry into the first secretary's office of the Ministry of Information where, after 10 minutes of the Kremlin chill and the request to read back the notes I took, I felt that I hardly wanted to interview any one. However, there had been the great strikes before I came and I thought I might get a whiff of it, no matter how cold the attitude would be now, so I asked to see Tetegah, General Secretary of Labor. I was told he was not in town --he has now evidently been given the assignment to tend to "foreign" affairs: All-African Trades Union Congress--but I could see his deputy, a Mr. Magnus-George.

The meeting with him was the payoff--you never saw either a more administrative mentality, or a more arrogant and ignorant (especially on the Negro question) show-off. I was loaded with official material which veers between chauvinism and the most unbridled name-calling since Stalin's days of other African unionists who are in the so-called "Oakar group." The cartoons of the ICFTU is always Uncle Sam drawn by a combination of old radical caricaturist and present anti-Semite, with a rich hat and a hooked nose, and he is always passing out gold to "imperialist and neo-colonialist stooges"--Tom Mboya and any one else that doesn't please Ghana-Guinea axis.

I couldn't get him to get off the subject of America as State Department and "many as" representative of labor, although I said I was a Marxist-Humanist, connected with rank and file labor, not its labor bureaucracy, much less the State Department line. Nor would he get off the fact on how glorious it is that there is no trades union in Ghana free from government. He told me most proudly that they now don't even have trades union membership cards, the Party card is good for all organizations--party, youth, farm, labor, etc.etc.--and that the workers who struck have voted "unanimously" not only to return but to make up for last time. ~~xxxxxxx~~

And when I moved over to the Negro question, he assured me that they fight for his civil rights in America, but after all the Negro was an American, "had no land in Africa" and couldn't be considered African just because his "color is black."

At the same time he did want a good press--it is Africa today rather than Africa Report that did get me in, and they were certainly trying to win me over by fawning at the same time as talking down to an American who couldn't be expected to understand the really new world.

On the other hand, the very first thing that the girl at the hotel asked me to see was "The Budget and You". Obviously she didn't think this was her side of the story. At the same time

it isn't anything as simple as just "fear" that workers don't speak up. There is obvious pride that the country has moved forward, that they are not beholden to anyone imperialist power, that Accra has a history, not merely of past, but of the present Pan-African movement, and one taxicab man had the sign "Blacks Conquer."

Yet the anti-American campaign is a fiasco--I have yet to meet someone who doesn't want to go to America. At the same time the pro-Soviet campaign hasn't won all that is supposed to have won them in warmth. Indeed if anyone talks in private it is to criticize their stay in Russia but as to the unbearably high cost of goods there and the not so obvious but present lack of the vaunted love for the black man. Rather they felt the Russian was as prejudiced but "smart not to show it too openly."

The white academicians at the University are from the 1930 Stalinist-tainted variety, although academically they stand high. One told me without any shame that "in the 1930's we rather believed the Moscow Trials", but objected to my saying, 'es, I wanted to spit at all of them.

There is the Party and above ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> The Leader and every newspaper (even opposition) must somehow use Osagyefo six dozen times since that is his official title, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of the Republic, and Leader of the Party; and everyone from Pioneer Youth, to Leaders Brigades and Workers' Brigades must pay homage to his wisdom, etc.etc.etc. (I'll deal with Nkrumahism sometime before this trip is over but not presently.)

I have met some wonderful people who refer to the "warrior mentality" and recognize how painfully Nkrumah lacks theory, especially the theory he claims he expounds, Marxism and Hegelian philosophy. I was even invited to speak on Hegel, but unfortunately it was for next Friday, whereas I'm leaving Wednesday. But I'm sure I've made friends and correspondence will continue some way--they lack the efficiency and might of a GPU, so we can be thankful for that, and many try for foreign assignments because they feel it is too soon to attack, that Ghana may have reached the crossroads, but not yet the Rubicon, and therefore one should be patient, or escape till the workers or "someone" "somehow" gets them back to the right road.

The more I see of Africa, as of Europe the last trip, the more I recognize that history never will forgive us if we who have theory do not build an organization to correspond both in comprehensiveness of outlook and membership. We must, we must, we must! I wouldn't have exchanged this experience for any other, but it is to ourselves we must look, and our own roots we must develop for, on a world scale, there is no one that can combine this rootedness which yet refuses to be separated from the global outlook. That indeed is the saddest part of the trip-- both here and in Nigeria where there is an opposition--and that is lack of a world sense, world solidarity, world working people, world view, new world relations among human beings. But the contacts have been made, and they'll develop, I feel certain.

--Raya

✓\* Olga, please send me to London c/o American Express (to get there May 22) an outline --some 6 pp. called Part V of book or something like that which begins with a quotation from Herzen that I don't actually quote but merely say on "algebra of rev."--on Subjectivity. There are 4-5 copies that Eleanor made for me somewhere on desk. Thanks.

9587

COPY --- COPY

May 4, 1962

Dear Miss Raya Dunayevskaya:

I'm a teacher of economics at one of the universities in Tokyo. A few years ago, I read your "Marxism and Freedom" and was moved enthusiastically.

I had been a communist since 1930's and put to prison during the world war II but when Hungarian people revolted in 1956, I left the party. Since then I'm coming to the conviction that the stalinist party is the enemy of the people. Your book helped me to convert very much.

Recently I wrote a small piece about your book for "Vanguard" -- an organ of anti-stalinist marxism. I will send it by separate cover. Now I want eagerly to translate and introduce your book for our students and workers. If you permit it, I'll be very happy.

Cordially yours,

(Signature)

P.S. A friend of mine wrote a letter to you c/o Bookman Associates last November.

9588

May 7, 1962

Dear Olga: (for REE)

I have just met the head of the Gambia Workers' Union—M.E. JALLOW. Not only is he a militant organizer who has a closed shop agreement on the docks, although this is really still a semi-colony. But it is actually their general strike in 1960 and 1961 that produced the political movements toward independence and this month they'll get the self-government step. Naturally no party wants to admit that it is the workers spontaneously who have been the backbone of it all.

Mr. Jallow has managed also to keep out of the tug of war between not only "East" and "West" but even intra-African fight between Dakar and Casablanca. He feels that great as it is to get rid of colonialism and one must keep at it till full freedom is achieved, it will not be full freedom so long as one exchanges one type of oppression for another. As he puts it, "I admire Nkrumah for his nationalism and what he and what Toure achieved, but we must now fight for the independence of the workers' trades union movement and their interests. He has also read A-A and is enthusiastic about it.

IN A WORD? HE IS A PERSON NOT ONLY EVERYONE WILL WISH TO MEET, BUT WILL LEARN A LOT FROM. Naturally he wants most of all to talk to Denby, but he wants to meet the whole group, and I assured he would also just love to stay with John in my place --IF he gets to the US.

The point is he is going on a charter tour to Canada and whether or not the AFL-CIO will invite him to USA as well is a moot question. I hope so, and so does he. What I did was tell him about us--he reads N&L--and urge him to try to come to Detroit, assuring him that even though I would not yet be back in the country --he is due there if he gets there in 2-3 weeks--he would find home and comrades, giving him the home phone, the office phone, plus Olga's and Johnny's addresses and home phones, so be on the lookout for something really special.

At the moment, because this is the most backward when it comes to mails, and I'm doing so much greater (comprehensive) a job here because of the entry to Africans with an African by my side I just do not have time to write, but I will at the end of it and then we'll see.

For the time being we just have to work on two different planets--you on the home front with all responsibility for paper and organization; me here. No doubt I'll get some contribution in also for this issue of the paper.

Yours,

9589

Senegal  
May 10, 1962

Dear Olga (for) (EB-NEB):

Senegal will be another Algeria in the years to come. There is that ~~xxxxxxx~~ French settler element that is making profit out of Africans, that has made Dakar into a Paris away from Paris, with its culture, its bookshops, its music, plus a dash of "Negritude" in it (and the same goes for its paintings and sculpture), its schools sans a dash of Negritude in it, plus the wonderful climate as contrasted to the miserable winters in the original homeland. So this (plumbing and movies and theatres included) is what they will fight to keep, what will give birth to its OAS when the Africans in the slums rise to claim their land and try to rid themselves of the present French leadership in black faces while French power is in white faces.

It was a sad day for me personally\* to meet Leopold Sedar Senghor who had written so profoundly, though a bit abstractly and with a dash of apologetics for De Gaulle, about the Humanism of Marxism. I said in my original review, if you'll recall the appendix to A-A, that this precisely is the tragedy of the African revolutions, that so overpowering is the consciousness of backwardness and the need for relationship to the advanced technology, that it gives rise to ~~xxxx~~ being kept in tow by De Gaulle France. It is now more than just a dash of De Gaulle; it is identification with the metropole to such an extent that it cannot but lead, on the one hand, to the counterpart of the Algerian "pied noir", and, on the other hand, the counterpart of the Moslem revolutionary--this time the Wolof.

To the questions I addressed to him (herewith enclosed) he answered by repeating what was in his "African Socialism" (giving me this time the full French text) plus his own Catholic deviationism (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin et la Politique Africaine) and many, many abstractions from the ~~xxxxxxx~~ superiority of the spiritual to the "scientific" socialism as seen in ~~xxxxxxx~~ "poetry and art" that shows its Negritude and yet is a product of the schools of Paris, pointing to a painting on the wall of his studio. As for Senegalese economy and trades unions, the proper ministries were referred that I suppose I'll see tomorrow. (Incidentally, he speaks English quite well and understands it even better, although he dictated his answers to me in French and I took them down in English shorthand.)

The unfortunate part is that the language barrier, among others, will keep me from the underground that is sure to arise if it already isn't here. Senghor is a very charming and sensitive man (and also much handsomer than his pictures) and it just put me in the doldrums to see what <sup>the</sup> objective pull of our world of state capitalism can do to destroy men. By now I'm just anxious to get out of here and get back to the Gambia which is still in flux and has not yet reached its cross roads, much less crossed over the Rubicon as Nkrumah as done on one side of nuclear power and Senghor on the other. Believe me, no one has what we have in Marxist Humanism and its organizational expression, which, I hope, this convention will see to realize itself also in some good "old-fashioned" full time rev. leaders.

Yours, Mae

\*Not to mention its ludicrous side of first having sent chauffeur and translator to meet me and put me up at a good hotel, then finding it filled, moving me to a 3rd rate one, only to ask me at the interview at end, I was staying, wasn't I at --the very, very top bracket hotel which I haven't ever seen though you hear of it and no doubt I'll see it from the outside!

9590

QUESTIONS ADDRESS<sup>d</sup> TO THE HONORABLE LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR, May 10, 1962

There are four categories of questions I should like to address, stemming from my assignments for the American press, and from my own book on the relationship of ideologies and mass movements:

I. IMPACT OF COMMUNISM ON AFRICA, direct and indirect, both as it relates to the overall struggle for the minds of men, and as it relates to the specific rift between Cassablanca and Monrovia, or, put in terms of the trades union debate, Ghana and Dakar.

II. RELATIONSHIP OF AFRICA TO THE NEGRO AMERICAN. On this level the Negro press is concerned not only with the people to people relationship, rather than the governmental one, but also with the question of what <sup>President</sup> Sekou Toure has called "full Re-Africanization."

III. Senegal's Developmental Plan since independence. This too has a dual aspect: 1) concretely, industrialization, agricultural development, labor force; and 2) intra-Africa and world-wide relationship of developed to underdeveloped economies. In this respect I had written to M. Mamouda Dia as the author of the fine work on the economics of underdevelopment and world solidarity.

IV. Finally, as a Marxist Humanist I have had the utmost admiration for your profound writing on the humanism of Marxism. This is why I began writing you two years ago. The new book in progress by myself on the relationship of ideology to mass movements is concerned with the fact that I feel strongly on the fact that there is a veritable conspiracy between the nuclear titans, the United States and Russia, to force an identification between those two opposites, marxism and Communism, which hinders the struggle for the minds of men. Since there is no such vulgar identification in Africa, I wondered how African socialism, Negritude and the African personality can be used by all shades of the political spectrum --yourself, Dr. Azikiwe, Osagyefo Nkrumah, and M. Sekou Toure.

9591

from the Protectorate, Brigama,  
the Gambia to NEWS & LETTERS

May 16, 1962

1511 KATH  
9592

Dear John: (really for an item in N&L; ~~time~~ You or Olga work it up  
 into an article as I have no time)  
 Yesterday I had my first experience in the protectorate,  
 where meetings are called without a moment's notice, to be attended  
 by hundreds, complete with political speeches, singing, dancing,  
 drums. The most exciting one of all happened at Brigama where  
 800 people gathered to hear the speaker of the Peoples Progressive  
 Party, the opposition party here which is modeling itself on  
 Pan-Africanism and the most exploited and most numerous of the  
 tribes, the Mandinkas. [The women were the most dramatic and  
 inspiring of all the participants. Most of them are illiterate  
 and yet they are the most intelligent, the most revolutionary and  
 with the greatest integrity, not to mention the fact that they  
 are very beautiful in features, in carriage, with their golden, long  
 earrings and some golden jewelry on forehead. The extension of  
 fraternal greetings to Americans, especially Negro Americans,  
 "and ~~women like ourselves~~ women like ourselves", was spontaneous, and  
 spoken simply and movingly. [The chairman of the Women's section  
 said: "I am very happy that you came here all the way from America  
 to visit this village and see what we are trying to do for our  
 country. The women are eager to improve their lot. They will get  
 more out of independence than the men. Women are more sensible  
 than men and no one can corrupt them. They know what is good for  
 them and do not listen to bribery because they have integrity."  
 The speaker was a young Mandinka. [She was followed by one speaking  
 for the elder women and really brought the open air meeting to  
 applause, including, of course, from me, with her slogan "Freedom  
 Now"! After welcoming me and saying she was speaking for the  
 women elders, she said, "The struggle is to remove ourselves now  
 from the condition of slavery toward freedom. For this struggle  
 we must display integrity. Otherwise before we get ourselves out of  
 slavery we would again be brought into another." Then she turned  
 to me personally and said, "I speak to you as one woman to another.  
 You have made something out of yourself in the world, writing books  
 and coming to see us here. We women too are struggling for  
 something; we see a future in this party, the PPP, which we have  
 promised to support because it is fighting for freedom which  
 we should have had long ago. We want freedom now!" Since that  
 is also the slogan of the freedom riders --and I was also able to  
 add what an impact the role of the African women in the African  
 freedom struggles have made on the American workers, some of whom  
 have even named their children in honor of these, (You see how I  
 remembered Leonidia and I believe Inez too should do so--as soon  
 as I find a beautiful Mandinka name for her) I did not at all  
 feel like a stranger but a Gambia Mandinka on the freedom road.  
 (Mandinka names suggested by Inez, SAJO, BINI ANLIZ)

I hope this reaches in time for the deadline. And now  
 that I know one word in Mandinka NYAATO (forward), it's only proper

I had with them (plus) books I have - Fair

*July, ed. Carefully marking foot, simple scissor. Please send to London directly. From the Gambia Special to NEL. address - I misplaced his letter, he definitely gave a different address than that by Surveil.*

The Young Workers Movement of Gambia held a meeting on May 8 on "World Youth Movements" with Kaya Dunayevskaya as speaker.

The speech related the varied youth organizations--Zengakuren of Japan, news & Letters Youth Group and Freedom Riders of CORE in the United States, the Committee of 100 in England and the Socialist Youth of Scotland--to the philosophies they expounded. The speaker asked that the Gambian delegates to the Conakry conference of Pan-African Youth held on April 26th report on that before discussion is opened on the entire question of the relationship of ideas--Pan-Africanism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism--to organizations. The report was then made of the enthusiasm which permeated the youth conference which had represented 25 African countries, and which was impressed by the "progress Guinea is making. Both men and women are playing equal parts in the development of the country. You see them in all walks of life, from engineering to police force, from the field to the office, and in all other political, social and cultural spheres, just like men. Apart from that, Guinea is giving African culture back to Africa, all of Africa, including our Gambian Sabia Manpara's dancing on stilts. They believe that the African personality must be felt by the whole world, that the boundaries between Africans put up by colonials should be broken down." He then enumerated the Resolutions passed on that question, on the encouragement of free migration and student exchange in all African countries, establishment of African institutes where African culture will be taught, the study of both French and English in all schools to put an end to the language difficulties which at present divide African from African, the demand for the return of artistic works exported from Africa after World War I, and, above all, the fight against neo-colonialism in its many forms, including portfolio embezzlements; and, finally, the necessity not to be involved in the cold war and to achieve true and full Pan-African unity instead of the present division between Casablanca and Monrovia or Dakar.

The most exciting part of the meeting was the discussion. Here was a country, still nearly colonial, with not a single bookshop in the country and no newspaper unless you can call the British *Government colonial newspaper* appearing 3 times a week, a newspaper, and with the fear inherent especially among civil servants speaking its mind. *Yes* The questions all dealt with ideas, especially the difference between Communism and Marxist Humanism. The rejection of imperialism and capitalism was complete, and the idea that, because Gambia is the last of the West African countries to be on the threshold of freedom might signify also that it will be the first to have the most ~~comprehensive~~ total of all African revolutions, gaining from the experience of Ghana and Guinea, but going further ahead to truly new human relations --that idea was the one that brought the biggest applause.

*(except mission one)*  
*Inform P. Bros Bulletin*

In the end not only was the speaker thanked in a way of extending fraternal solidarity between black and white, US and Africa, but special greetings were voted both to A&L Youth groups and Freedom Riders, and request for international correspondence with all other groups described. The speaker then said she felt sure that she could thank them and return the greetings to the Africans not only from the Americans but from the British and Japanese as well for all youth are trying hard to reshape a world they didn't make into all humans would wish to inhabit instead of destroy with in a nuclear holocaust.

A new page of freedom is being written today in Gambia in the elections for self-government but none will rest until it is full freedom.

SPECIAL FOR NEWS & LETTERS (FROM THE GAMBIA)

THE WEST DOESN'T UNDERSTAND

by ~~W. S. S. S.~~ NYASWACO

African countries, wrenching off the shackles of colonialism, emerge in an ideologically divided world.

They want to safeguard their hard-won freedom and independence; they want to see themselves as recognized, respectable states, and more than anything else, they want to gain economic independence.

We have been exploited by the Western bloc, not the Eastern bloc, and on the achievement of political independence, we want exploitation by the white master to stop. We find it difficult to get rid of foreign exploitation. It remains as the scar of colonialism.

In our endeavour to find a way round it, we seek aid. The communist bloc's response in this case is quicker and more favourable than the West whose governments and their capitalist firms have exploited and used our continent's resources and manpower without much benefit to us, but with much benefit to investors in their stock market.

The communists do not haggle much over the question of aid. On the contrary, they encourage us to take aid from them--aid which is mostly interest free.

What does the West do? All sorts of questions are raised, and before the balance can be dipped on our side, all our efforts are needed, they say we must present, and they must investigate, the grounds for investment so that they are to be satisfied.

Are we not, on independence, free to declare our neutrality, our unwillingness to be drawn into a cold war which will result in the total annihilation of the human race if it turns hot, and our unwillingness to form, to join the ranks of a non-military powerful force for peace -- a moral force that resorts to moral pressure rather than physical force or pressure to bring in results, the civilized non-committed bloc.

Every African country has imbibed more of Western culture than Eastern culture. This we do not want. Everything good cannot possibly come from one set of people only. We now realise the folly of this. We glance about us and see the flaws of Western culture, we reject them. We cannot live in a vacuum; something must replace them. We look to the east and find some good points, take them up, but we still have to glance back on our shoulders to see what lies in our downtrodden culture. Oh, what a relief; we found much more than we expected. There is much we overlooked during colonial days.

We strove ~~to~~ <sup>even</sup> to this up and up in our governments too. We find that we have to alter some points in the western influenced manner of government.

We took what is good in the Western manner of government, what is good in the Eastern manner of government, and what is good in our own society. We blend them and in the process mould something never before seen on earth. Something that is clear of all the flaws of the three systems and made of their dream.

no the Bureau told the workers that the Michigan Machine has  
You are quite aware of the fact that the plant-fitters have tried  
to get the plant-fitters to work for the Michigan Machine  
we produce this. It is in its infancy and therefore in  
delicate structure. Don't call us communists. Don't  
call us anything but Africanists. Our doctrine is Africanism.  
Our doctrine is Africanism. Encourage us. Don't try  
to say it is wrong. What you think to be wrong may  
one day be your accepted doctrine. The world's future lies in  
Africa. Look to our doctrine. Study it and give a fair constructive  
criticism. Don't judge us from the outside, but from the inside.

Student Youth  
Bathurst

Dear Johnny and Inez -- to Johnny because this and one other item  
I'll send is for the youth page; to Inez because it is important  
to learn always to be concrete, concrete, CONCRETE. workers or  
youth may sound concrete, and it is when it comes to defining

classes. It is not when <sup>paper</sup> it is all about workers and each article  
does not specify which country or which type of workers they are.  
In this case I'm referring to the continuation of p.1 article  
on Nigerian workers, and yet p.7 or whatever it was, said "Workers  
Protest Austerity Budget"--how, how the heck could anybody see from  
that it was a special article all the way from Africa. Surely if  
there was no space for both workers and Africans then AFRICANS should  
have headed the article. I'm not as angry as I sound, but I do  
remember one other time having such an argument with Andy on p.2  
where the category of worker, which was very different than the auto  
we always talk about, was not specified in headline and I insisted  
I would not be interested in reading yet one other article on auto  
workers but if the headline had told it was --- then I would have.

Now on this article above, the headline even  
special to N&L 1st is wrong, therefore note in heading I show that  
it should read FROM THE GAMBIA SPECIAL FOR N&L. At the conclusion  
of this I specified student youth, Bathurst, but actually student  
youth is not necessary since he did give us the name, but Bathurst is.

The other item I will type out is a brief  
piece on a meeting I addressed which was so enthusiastic that they  
sent greetings to N&L youth and RR; so bold face that par, or even  
run it in a special box.

On the whole the last issue of the paper was  
magnificent; I thought however that the RP was way too long.  
Here is a joke for Detroit workers and you can  
make up a RV of it if you wish: I was typing an article for AFRICA  
NYAATO and I couldn't believe my eyes about the constant reference  
to "Michigan machines", thinking I don't know how to read their  
handwriting. But it was indeed a "Michigan machine" --some road  
building equipment sent from Detroit that is constantly breaking down.  
"Everyday the plant fitters are trying to bring the Michigan Machines  
up to date, but the present mechanical superintendent is not ready  
to hold even the smallest-spanner to do a job. Therefore he is not  
fit to work on Gambian s.il..." The correspondent from works team

9595 acce



- COPY -

May 23, 1962

Dear John,

One gets to know the African Sun when one is away from the narrow coastal strip and into the bush which is galling or appears so; has as much sand, and is not so white, as the Sahara; impossible combination of sand, rock, and more sand and more bush that is called a road—(the main road, it is called that.) This after 375 years of British rule!

I don't know how one can possibly call the drag races wild driving—you should see what a driver must do here—literally driving between trees, or half in a sand-dust and half over a rock, twisting in and out of wide expanse of land and yet somehow get "there"—a village of thatched huts with people sleeping on nothing but a mat on the floor or what passes for a bed,—a straw mattress on a hard springless bed—there may be 2 or 3 in that "house" which is really just 3 walls and a door and the whole family sleep together or outside—many sleep outside. When somebody "great" comes like a visitor from America—most had never in their life seen one—naturally "the best" bed is given up and they crowd on outside. One of the places was rat infested. I had no sooner fallen asleep—I've learned how to sleep at once on no matter what, and after a day in that broiling sun with very little food, you would too!—when I felt something alive in bed with me. I screamed and jumped out of bed; the scream aroused the whole compound—a combination of these huts with a little bantaba, a shady tree around which all sit ~~and discuss~~ and discuss, and a straw fence around it. So in trooped a half dozen men (many with me in a nightgown) to help catch or rather chase out the rat. The apology given me was: they were sorry they hadn't told me before to keep the kerosene lamp on; that keeps the mice outside and they all sleep with that on or zelse, so on went the lamp and that was the end of that sleep. I must have lost 10 pounds in those 5 days in the interior—but in spirit all was made up and more.

For it was in preparation for the election and all villages were having meetings and singing and drums and more talk—you can hold meetings at the drop of a hat at any time of the day or night; the Africans never seem to ~~not~~ sleep and it takes just the appearance of a truck or a drum and five minutes they have all appeared out of the huts or fields and assembled at the bantaba—all meetings are open air and you either stand or sit on the sand-grass with a few hard chairs and plain benches brought out to seat the speakers, the elders, the guests. It all takes just a few minutes and there you face a sea of eager faces and lots of tales of suffering and talk of independence soon and how they can at least get a well or perhaps not so impossible a causeway for the rice fields or at least an ox everyone sends a message to America.

On Friday I went up in "The transport" provided by the Chief Minister. (There is no public transportation, not even in the capital, Bathurst, so anything that moves is called a transport, whether it is a taxi that really is not in the sense of that nothing is private and pile in in front and in back, or a truck or a boat or for that matter a bicycle.) Of course the Chief Minister in a colony isn't really very high up. Remember how surprised we were when we'd get things from Ikromah or Nyerere before independence but already they were "Chief Ministers" and all we'd get as address is a post office box? Well, that's about all they command and since there are no mail deliveries everybody tracks down to the post office and picks up his own—if there is a post office and there are damned few in the protectorate.

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But to get back to the story. The Chief Minister, P.S. N'jie, is a member of the ruling party, United Party, and he intended going up with me himself, but I wasn't surprised to see his Secretary and driver instead without him, because just a few hours before I had been called by the police for a second "chat". I had given another speech, (to some wonderful high school youth that I'll describe in another letter) and as this is really a police state ~~with~~ with plenty of spies around they knew it at once and so the very first thing in the morning a policeman came to fetch me to see the sup't of police—the last time it was his assistant I had seen. This one reminded me so much of the worst of the Uncle Toms talented tenth that I felt I hadn't left some of those southern universities that never dared invite me. In any case, he tried pulling a neat trick on me. Without saying a single word of the meeting, and pretending it was all a technicality, he informed me I was "illegally" in the country and he was surprised to find I had come back from Dakar—he hadn't known anything about it till he saw me and Dixon the night before at the Hotel Atlantic restaurant—we went there after the meeting. For "reentry" into the country it seems I need another visa, etc. etc. Obviously they had all been waiting for me to return by air and stop me from entry but as I returned by overland route in an African "transport" and as it was on Sunday when there was no immigration officer on duty, I did not meet up with that surprise.

I quickly scotched that clumsy attempt by showing (1) that after just 3 days in the country I had immediately gone to report to police for an extension and been told it wasn't necessary. (He quickly brought up the subordinate who supported my story and got a dressing down, but I stopped that too by saying it wasn't true only the subordinate had done so.) (2) On the contrary his own assistant, a Britisher, had seen my passport and was so busy lecturing me on my exacerbating relations and thinking evidently that that would scare me off and I wouldn't lecture again, that he never mentioned I had overstayed my leave. (He was brought in and tried just to stick to the fact of my return from Senegal as if I had returned in the dark of the night and it was my fault they have no immigration officer on duty.) Whereupon the Superintendent left the room in a huff and the next thing I was brought into the office of the Commissioner of Police himself—as British, polished a man as ever you saw with all the politeness, etc. built into a 1st. class tyrant.

By this time I decided also to implicate the superintendent who had gone to the trouble of calling the immigration when I was leaving to check on whether I have a return trip—which I did but I doubt he was told so since the subordinates take very little interest in all this red tape, but in any case he must have known since I had made it quite clear at my first interrogation that I was going up to Dakar and returning to watch the elections. Finally, I said quite sharply that "if it hadn't been for another matter with which the assistant superintendent and superintendent were concerned and about which they have all the ~~particulars~~ particulars, this technical matter would never have arisen in the first place and I have no intention of leaving before I have completed my assignment."

So the Commissioner said, "Well, now there is the question of your reentry into the country without a visa, and there is also the question of your function. We have no opposition to the press but you asked for entry as a tourist and stated you were a housewife. A function of press is a function even where one does not get paid. If you are asking to remain till the 23rd I'll extend your visa till the 24th. You can leave the passport with us and we'll return it to you." I said, No, I'd rather it be done right there and I'll take it with me since I was due to leave with the Chief Minister in just 3 hours. So I got my visa extended to 24th—great generosity, what?—and the Chief Minister did not appear but he also did not stand me up, so up to the protectorate I went. That for Friday and Sat.

Sunday I went with the leader of the opposition party, Mr. Jambou, the People's Progressive Party, and Tuesday or last night I returned. Throughout there,

in between, on the one side, the physical hardship, and, on the other hand, the political exhilaration. I was followed by the police every inch of the track—only very very politely, every presiding officer at an election booth meeting me with "O, yes, Mrs. D, we heard about you and heard you were 'somewhere' in the protectorate". I was also photographed—supposedly just for their tourist memories that an American reporter covered it all, and would I send them the articles, etc. etc. And when finally I reached the airport—Dixon and I were specifically  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour ahead of scheduled departure I was met by the porter with "Mrs. D, we've been waiting for you; the air transport has been here sometime." Well, the police haven't heard the end of this one as I intend to write it up not only in my report for Africa Today—but also in the British press. But as the election wasn't complete—1811 call Dixon and find out the results in June and combine the reports.

—Rae