

North Africa between France and Arab nationalism. It would condemn and boycott South African racialism. It would seek the fullest utilization and extension for Trusteeship Powers for the rapid achievement of self-government for Trust Peoples. It would support the U.N. and international action for the realization of independence and the development of all colonial area territories. It would support financially and technically the launching of large scale development programmes among all dependent peoples. In short, it would encourage the most rapid emergence of all colonial peoples to a position of equality and dignity in the family of nations.

BRITISH COLONIAL PROBLEMS

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THERE are three distinct problems in the British Colonies. The first relates to those territories where there is no European population of any considerable strength and where no military strategic issues are involved. The Gold Coast and Nigeria are examples of such territories.

The second problem relates to places of strategic importance such as Cyprus, Singapore and Aden. The third to colonial territories or protectorates where there are strong European populations within the territory. Examples of these are Kenya, the Rhodesias and the Protectorates in South Africa.

The Gold Coast and Nigeria are now well on the way to self-government and independence. As I write, an election is taking place in the Gold Coast which will determine whether its independence will be immediately recognised. Mr. Lennox-Boyd, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has said that if Dr. Nkrumah obtains a reasonable majority, its independence will be declared within the next few months. In the case of Nigeria there is already internal self-government within the three regions, East, West and North, and full independence is postponed only until the North is prepared to accept it.

It is a little humiliating to an Englishman that the colonial territories which are making the greatest advance towards self-government and independence are those in which British immigrant influence is least strong. If one asks a West African why it is that

his territories have progressed so rapidly, he will reply with a smile that the explanation lies in the mosquito. The mosquito? Yes, the mosquito which has spread malaria and frightened away European settlement.

This explanation is not quite fair. The West African territories had first contact with Europe, even though it was by the method of the slave trade. Subsequently, there were invasions from North Africa which also brought Europe nearer. Even so, it is disturbing that areas without European settlement should have advanced further than areas where there are European communities.

No one claims that all problems have been solved in such territories. Indeed, both Nigeria and the Gold Coast have had to face national disintegration by the re-emergence of tribal loyalties threatening their nationhood. In the Gold Coast the Ashanti have resented domination by the Coastal Government at Accra and have combined tribal consciousness with a renewed assertion of the traditional privileges of the chiefs. This is a warning that one may go forward to European conceptions of democracy too speedily. Dr. Nkrumah has wisely been ready to compromise by extending wide autonomy to tribal regions and by establishing advisory councils of the chiefs.

In Nigeria there has similarly been tension between the different tribes which live in the three regions. In the South, composed of the Eastern and Western regions, political awareness is highly developed and democracy largely accepted. In the North, however, there is a Muslim community under the influence of Emirs who are fearful of subordination to the more advanced South. Very wisely the two regions of the South have been ready to postpone independence for Nigeria as a whole until the North is ready to participate wholeheartedly. The South aims to give the North an example of the advantages of democracy by its use of the internal self-government which it now enjoys itself.

On the whole, one can say that Conservative Governments as well as Labour Governments in Britain recognise that the early achievement of independence in West Africa and similar territories is inevitable.

When, however, we come to areas of importance from the point of view of military strategy, the belief in self-government and self-determination is set on one side by British Conservatives. The conflict in Cyprus is due to the fact that the British Government regards the maintenance of military power on the island, to intervene if necessary in order to protect oil supplies in the Middle

East, as more important than the application of democratic principles. The same approach was responsible for the breakdown of the recent negotiations regarding a constitution for Singapore. Although the representatives of all parties in Singapore were prepared that Britain should maintain its control of Foreign Affairs and Defence, Mr. Lennox-Boyd insisted that Britain should also have a majority voice in the control of internal security. A similar problem is now arising at Aden, where the demand of the local population for self-government is being brushed aside on the grounds of its importance as a naval depot.

Three comments can be made on this Conservative attitude. The first is the inconsistency of denying democratic principles for strategic interests which are claimed to be essential for the success of Western democracy. It is not convincing when the military arm of the democratic cause rides rough-shod over the extended application of political liberty to newly awakened peoples. The inhabitants of Cyprus, Singapore and Aden are not encouraged to have much confidence in the peoples of the West.

The second point is that at the very moment when international tension and the danger of war are decreasing, Britain is challenging the principle of self-government on the ground that these areas are necessary for purposes of defence. History is against Britain. It is disastrous that our Government should be responsible for the repression of people for ends which are daily proving themselves less valid.

The third consideration is that British policy is futile. After the loss of life, the encouragement of racial bitterness, the deterioration of British prestige, and heavy expenditure which the British economy can ill afford, few doubt that in the long run the rights of these peoples must be conceded.

When we turn to the third group of territories, those in which there is considerable European settlement, the prospects are still more disturbing. The problem of military strategy may pass within a decade but the problems of multi-racial societies will persist. Unless there is a radical change in the attitude of the white minorities in Central and East Africa there is likely to be a prolonged period of tension if not of conflict.

In Central Africa, covering the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, there are six million Africans and 200,000 Europeans. The six million Africans are represented by six members in the Federal Parliament whilst the 200,000 Europeans have twenty-five members. In fairness I should add that there are three additional European

members with the duty of watching African interests, but my association with leaders of the African trade union movement in Northern Rhodesia and of the African Congress in Nyasaland indicates that Africans are well able to voice their own interests.

Opposition to this European domination is strong in the Rhodesias because much racial discrimination is practised there, and in Nyasaland because this is primarily an African state. There is deep resentment that they should be brought under the control of a European settler community.

This political domination reflects economic domination. In December 1953 the United Nations published a survey of social conditions in non-self-governing territories. The figures of living standards in Northern Rhodesia were startling. They showed that the *per capita* income of Africans was £10 16s. a year, including the value of subsistence crops. The *per capita* income of non-Africans was given as £483 6s. More startling was the fact that one-third of the value of the total wealth produced in Northern Rhodesia passed in dividends, interest and profits each year to financiers in Britain and America.

The most acute conflict in the multi-racial territories has occurred in Kenya. Lord Chandos, when he was Secretary of State for the Colonies, said that the emergence of Mau Mau had nothing to do with the social and economic grievances of the African population. I do not know how anyone can visit Kenya and believe this. Violence reflected three deep frustrations.

The first was social. In a sentence, we have destroyed the old tribal community life without substituting a society in which Africans have a conscious place and loyalties. The second frustration was economic. The Kikuyu reserve was so overcrowded that half a million Africans suffered from land hunger and became cheap labour on the spacious European farms or in the towns. When I was in Nairobi in 1952, the Attorney-General informed me that there were 10,000 homeless Africans in the city each night, and the conditions of overcrowding were so terrible that the death rate from tuberculosis had trebled in seven years.

The third frustration was psychological. When I first visited Kenya in 1950 my two companions were the East African representative of the United Nations, a Doctor of Philosophy at Columbia University in New York, who was a negro, and the First Secretary in the Office of the High Commissioner for India, who had an Honours Degree at Oxford University. We spent one hour trying to find a restaurant where we could have a meal together.

Everywhere no African was admitted. I was ashamed and my friends were humiliated. I ought to add that this ban is now being lifted, but undoubtedly the feeling among Africans that they were regarded as second- or third-class human beings did more to arouse bitterness than any other cause.

During the height of the Mau Mau crisis the Europeans were stunned into promises of concessions. One of the unhappy tendencies in Kenya now is to modify those promises. For example, the new proposals for their enfranchisement are contemptuously rejected by self-respecting Africans. They embody the new and dangerous principle of the multiple vote. Many Africans will have no vote at all, whilst others can attain two or three votes on qualifications which include not only education but income and property.

I am aware that these conditions and concessions will appear relatively progressive to many in South Africa, but British governments, whatever their political complexion, have since 1923 accepted the principle that the interests of the indigenous people are primary and that colonial territories should advance to self-government and self-determination on a democratic basis. When criticism is voiced of South African policies, I am always conscious that in many British territories we still deny the African peoples human rights, educational opportunity and the economic conditions which will permit a healthy life. It is our duty to right these wrongs if we are to have the moral authority to be critical of others.

Perhaps the best that can be said about Britain at the present time is the awakening of interest in colonial problems. Three years ago it used to be said that the House of Commons was indifferent. That cannot be said now. Questions are poured upon the Colonial Secretary and the debates are intense in feeling. The phenomenal growth of the movement for Colonial Freedom, which in twenty-six months has reached an affiliated membership of four million, is an indication of public concern. I think one can say that, despite the obstacles which I have described, Britain will move forward to an enlightened and just colonial policy.