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SOME SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF TRADE UNIONISM
IN GHANA AND NIGERIA

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Anthropology
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

June 1962

APPROVED:

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INTRODUCTION

Although much has been written on patterns of labor in West Africa, there are no studies which are devoted primarily to the social aspects of labor unions.

The purpose of this thesis is to try to determine to what extent the trade union movement has been affected, modified, or influenced by traditional economic, social, and political systems in Ghana and Nigeria. It will be necessary to consider first the major factors which have had a direct bearing upon the traditional and modern economic systems before the place of the trade union in the scheme can be assessed. Therefore, the thesis will include some descriptive data on traditional economic attitudes in Ghana and Nigeria and a comparison of these with the economic attitudes required for industrialization. Then the changes in attitudes and patterns of labor, which have accrued over time due to the impact of industrialization, will be treated. It will also be necessary to contrast the organization and function of traditional and modern economic associations in order to determine what influence these have had upon each other.

The study of trade unionism in Nigeria and Ghana is of interest for several reasons. The concept of trade

unionism and the basic philosophy behind it was entirely a foreign import. It has not superseded or replaced any economic association previously in existence in the traditional economic systems of Ghana and Nigeria. Moreover, at the time of its introduction, trade unionism was not modified in any way to adjust to the needs of West African labor. Labor unions were established and organized in virtually the same form and for the same function as in England. Second, although trade unionism was introduced in the same form, under the same legislation, and at approximately the same time in both Ghana and Nigeria, its subsequent development has not been similar. A final point is that since the concept of organized protest was generally inconceivable to the traditional societies of Ghana and Nigeria, the reasons behind its acceptance or rejection are important in consideration of culture change and adaptation.

At the present time, however, there are several problems or difficulties in a comparative study of labor unionism in West Africa and these may be summarized as follows:

1. Throughout Africa, except in South Africa and Nigeria, the trade union movement has been active only since the end of the Second World War. As yet, few detailed studies have been made of this emerging social phenomenon.
2. Neither the governments of Ghana and Nigeria nor the trade unions have kept complete records of the early stages of unionization.
3. There is also great difficulty in eliciting

current information from trade unions in West Africa. Part of the legacy of colonialism is a distrust of any person who is in any way connected with or assumed to be connected with the former colonial power. By extension, this distrust often applies to Euro-Americans in general.

4. Information volunteered by labor unions is often faulty or incomplete; for example, membership figures are generally inflated.

5. Finally, there is a lack of trained personnel available and interested, in the areas under consideration, who are qualified to undertake a study of this kind.

CHAPTER I

POPULATION AND URBANIZATION

The People of Ghana and Nigeria

The latest census figures available show the populations of Ghana and Nigeria to be, respectively, 6,690,700 and 36,625,000. Figures are available indicating the population breakdown by regions for each country (Ghana, The Central Bureau of Statistics Sept. 1961:1 and, Nigeria, Federal Office of Statistics Oct. 1961:3). For Ghana the figures are: Southern Ghana, including the Volta Region, 3,710,800; Ashanti Region, 1,697,300; Northern Region, 1,282,100. For Nigeria the figures are: Northern Region, 19,877,000; Western Region, 7,119,000; Eastern Region, 8,377,000; Southern Cameroons, 873,000; and Lagos Township, 379,000.

Each of these countries contains a great number of large and small tribal groups, distinguished largely by cultural and/or linguistic differences. In Nigeria, the number of tribal groups is very high; there are over one-hundred and fifty separate tribal groups of less than 10,000 members each. Of these, about one-third have less than 1,000 members. Approximately two-thirds of Nigeria's

population, however, are members of the four major tribal groups.¹ In the Northern Region, the majority belong to the Hausa and Fulani peoples; in the Eastern Region, to the Ibo; and in the Western Region to the Yoruba tribe.

In Ghana, linguistic and cultural differences are not as evident. There is a much greater degree of cultural homogeneity, especially in the southern regions. Even so, there are many groups politically conscious of their own cultural history and homogeneity. In the two southern regions, the peoples are separated on dialectal and political grounds and are conscious of a territorial unity. In this area the major groups are made up of the Akan speaking peoples who number about 1,235,000 (Manoukian 1950:11), the Ewe speaking peoples who number approximately 514,935 (Manoukian 1952:10) and the Ga-Adangme speaking peoples for whom no figures are available. In the northern region, linguistic and cultural diversity is more evident (Manoukian 1951; Rattray 1932). For example, there are at least thirty-three tribal groups which can be placed in either one or the other of the two major language families in this area (Manoukian 1951:7-9). Much of the diversity of cultural types, in this area, is directly attributable to the fact that geographically it is

1. The population figures by tribe are as follows: (Investment in Nigeria:1957:161)

Hausa ...	5,548,000	Ibibio ...	767,000
Ibo ...	5,484,000	Tiv ...	791,000
Yoruba ...	5,046,000	Edo ...	518,000
Fulani ...	3,041,000	Others ...	8,351,000
Kanuri ...	1,301,000		

a transitional zone between the Sahara Desert to the north and the tropical forest, to the south.

Economically, many of Ghana's and Nigeria's tribal groups show a great deal of homogeneity. With little variation, the traditional economy can be categorized under four general headings namely agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry, and miscellaneous crafts, such as woodworking and metal working. Each, however, is not mutually exclusive of the others, and all four industries often occupy the time of a single individual or his family. In a few cases there is specialization. For example, some of the Fulani groups are exclusively cattle raisers (Stenning 1959). Of the four occupations, nevertheless, agriculture is the primary economic pursuit.

Politically, great divergence in form is evident. This ranges in administrative form from councils of elders, as among the Ibo peoples in Nigeria, to the large confederacies and states such as the Ashanti in Ghana and the Yoruba and Nupe in Nigeria. Even with this divergence, when it concerns the land and customary obligations, Elias (1953:95) remarks that,

It is clear that whatever the difference in nomenclature and in spite of the varying degrees of political and cultural levels of the several ethnic groups..., there is a comparable uniformity, in essentials, of the privileges and responsibilities of the governing or administrative authorities over land and its use.

The basic concern of this paper is with trade unionism, which is largely an urban phenomenon. Since this does not

immediately concern rural communities and since the more modern urbanized sectors differ to a large extent politically, socially and economically from the traditional way of life, it is unnecessary to elucidate the varied manifestations of traditional life in its rural setting. Thus the attention of this paper will center on urban areas and their inhabitants.

Urban Centers

There are several problems in the study of African urban areas. One stems from the lack of adequate statistical material available in urban surveys, and another is due to the lack of an adequate definition of what constitutes an urban center, for, as Buchanan and Pugh (1955:63) note, in West Africa

Many of these lack the basic services and functions which constitute the criteria of an urban area in the west, and their population is often dominantly agricultural, working in the surrounding countryside during at least part of the year.

On the whole, urban centers have been separated from rural communities on either a basis of density and size or on a basis of function. The definition of an urban area, commonly used is

...a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals (Wirth 1938:1).

The functional method divides urban centers into such categories as production centers, commercial centers, political capitals, cultural centers, health or recreation

centers, and diversified cities (Gist and Halbert 1956: 6-10).

For Nigeria as a whole, Buchanan and Pugh have used the first method, setting the arbitrary dividing line of a concentration of population at 10,000 persons. The figures derived from this show that for Nigeria there are sixty-two urban centers which have a population of between 10,000 and 50,000 persons and eleven towns with a population of over 50,000. Nigeria's urban population amounts to about 2,500,000 persons or one-ninth of the total population. In Ghana, in 1948, as by comparison, fourteen percent of the population lived in towns of over 5,000 persons (Balandier 1956:495). The urban population of Nigeria can be regionally contrasted. In the Western Region about thirty-five percent of the population are town dwellers. This Region also accounts for about one-half of the total urban population in all of Nigeria. The Eastern Region is said to have seven percent of its population living in urban centers, and in the Northern Region this figure drops to four percent. In both Nigeria and Ghana, the highest percentage of urbanization is concentrated in the southern regions, especially along the coast.

Although there are many urban centers in Nigeria and Ghana, they are not all similar in either form or function. Very generally, four diverse types of urban centers can be classified, traditional agricultural,

traditional commercial, modern commercial, and modern industrial.

The traditional agricultural town is typical of those which existed prior to European contact and still exist in some areas. Limited for the most part to areas and groups which have a centralized political structure, this type can be found throughout most regions of Ghana and Nigeria. The towns' populations are basically homogeneous. Subsistence is based upon agriculture. The residents are allotted lands surrounding the town itself. Traditionally, the population concentration was formed as a defensive measure, and as a result the town was usually walled. The towns are very crowded, the compounds closely packed, and no, or very little, town planning is in evidence. Examples are the old Yoruba town of Ilorin in the Western Region of Nigeria and Old Ancheu in the Northern Region of Nigeria. Old Ancheu

...illustrates admirably the character of the smaller northern settlements....the compact character of the settlement, closely confined within its sheltering walls and girdle of marsh; this defensive clustering of population is a legacy of the unsettled conditions of pre-British days and results in phenomenally high densities... (Buchanan and Pugh 1955:64).

The basis of the economy of the traditional commercial town is still agriculture. The way of life and the structure of the town are still traditionally oriented. In form, there is very little difference between this type and those towns of the first category. Some differences, however, have been observed which because of their

presence, change the status and nature of the town in both foreign and indigenous eyes. The town is usually larger than the former type. It is often the political capital where the paramount chief as well as many of the minor chiefs reside. Here there are accumulated many full-time, paid artisans who serve the needs of the upper class residing within the city walls. These artisans work for and are paid by the chiefs. All trade and commerce is handled as a government or chiefly monopoly. This type of town is the administrative, religious, military and commercial center within the tribal or national boundaries. Examples of traditional commercial centers are Kumasi in Ghana, the capital of the old Ashanti Confederacy and Oyo, the capital of Yorubaland in Nigeria.

Modern commercial towns have been built up by Europeans and are basically modeled on European plans. They are comparatively new, well laid out and usually less crowded. They form not only the commercial center for European and African trade but also function as administrative centers. They may have been built primarily as an administrative center onto which a commercial nucleus has grown, such as the administrative and transportation center, Kaduna, in the Northern Region of Nigeria. The population in such towns includes a large number of government employees. Another typical example on a larger scale is Ibadan in the Western Region and Kano City in the Northern Region in Nigeria. They both are composed of separate but overlap-

ping parts and consist of the remains of the old traditional commercial sector onto which has been constructed the new section which contains most of the modern industrial, commercial and administrative units of the city (Buchanan and Pugh 1955: Ibadan, 68, Kano City, 72).

Modern industrial towns like Jos in the Northern Region and Enugu in the Eastern Region of Nigeria were created and built up, for the most part, by Europeans around some specialized type of industry, tin and coal mining respectively in the above cases. Attached to this nucleus are native towns which sprang up as a result of a wage-seeking population influx from various areas. In both this type and the modern commercial type, the towns are marked by a wide diversity of building styles and by the presence of a tribally heterogeneous population.

Trade unions tend to form and grow in urban areas, but the type of urban area is of great importance. In the traditional agricultural centers, the economic reserve is tied to the land. Agriculture tends to be an individual rather than a collective enterprise.¹ Employer-employee relationships are usually absent except in the few cases of seasonal employment of migrant laborers. Therefore, collective action for the betterment of working conditions was not formed in these

1. In this sense, individual is rendered to mean the family group which works as one and which has certain rights to land-use in perpetuity, granted as an oral contract or simply because of long standing membership in the community.

areas. In the traditional commercial centers of the past, the beginnings of collective action are to be found. These were composed of artisans, collectively grouped according to specific occupations. Since these artisans produced only for a special minority of the population, because of the traditional-religious origins of the trades and because of certain benefits to be derived from the craft practiced, they were not in a position to bargain for better conditions.

In the modern commercial and the modern industrial communities, the quantity and quality of material goods increased to a degree previously unimagined. The increase, along with other factors, played an important part in changing the lives of the indigenous population. These other factors are as follows:

1. The most important change was the high standard of living introduced by the Europeans and the African's desire to emulate it.
2. With the building of industry and commerce, there developed a need for both unskilled and skilled labor.
3. The employer-employee work relations that developed were largely impersonal and there was little regard given to labor conditions.
4. The work force, in many cases, consisted of persons of various backgrounds.
5. Finally, job competition became very strong and a need for protecting those jobs became vital.

Under these conditions, labor organization began to develop

and grow.

As in the traditional society, the urban population can be separated into a number of strata, but the basis for this structuring is not the same. For example, in the rural areas status is based primarily upon such factors as age, secular or religious office held, land ownership, and prestige gained from positions held in certain traditional organizations. In the urban areas other factors alter or render obsolete these rural values. Status here depends upon such factors as the wage earning position held, educational and technical background, religious affiliation, political rather than tribal affiliation, and the accumulation of material goods, especially of foreign import. A multi-class structure arises in the urban centers because of these factors which do not exist in the rural areas where political, economic and social activity is more limited.

Most urban centers are unofficially divided into a number of districts: commercial and industrial, residential for native, European and non-European white. This is not to say that the division of peoples is enforced by law but rather has its basis in personal preference. The native residential area is often divided into a number of subdivisions, often overlapping, which correspond to ethnic similarities. Each subdistrict or ward is controlled by an appointed or elected official whose main responsibilities are to see to the orderly conduct of the peoples of the ward and to serve as a minor unauthorized court of law. He also

functions as an acting representative to those outside the ward and those in other wards. Through the ward leaders most of the inter-ward dealings are resolved. Ward leadership is officially recognized in most municipalities although the position is without any real legal or political authority.

Relations between separate tribal units within the urban areas are governed by several factors:

1. The degree of cultural and linguistic affinity that exists between two peoples.
2. The traditional relationship between tribal units in the rural setting.
3. The size of the tribal unit within the urban area.
4. The degree of political dominance within the urban area.

CHAPTER II

THE DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR

Lord Hailey (1957:1361) remarks about the distribution of labor that:

On the whole, it may be said...that the greater part of the indigenous population is engaged in its own subsistence economy. A further but smaller proportion devotes itself mainly to the production of marketable commodities, and only a comparatively small proportion is dependent solely on wage-earning.

Statistics have been compiled for Nigeria and Ghana which, although inadequate in some respects, do in general point out how labor is distributed. The results of these studies indicate that the majority of working males are engaged in agriculture and occupations related to agriculture. In Nigeria, for example, seventy-eight percent of the male population, in 1952-1953, were so engaged. The remaining twenty-two percent were found engaged in various other occupations as listed in Table 1. These figures, however, tend to be misleading and do not show the numbers actually engaged in labor for wages. The majority of those listed under occupational group headings are in reality either in business for themselves or are working for establishments which hire less than ten workers and so are excluded from

Table 1. Primary Occupations of African Men - (1952-53 Census).

<u>Type of Occupation</u>	<u>Number of Workers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Agriculture, forestry and husbandry.	6,469,000	78
Craftsmen, all grades producing articles for manufacture.	508,000	6
Traders and employees engaged in commerce.	492,000	6
All government employees and professional workers.	231,000	3
Other Occupations.	584,000	7
Total	8,284,000	100

Source: Economic Survey of Nigeria 1959:108.

government surveys. As shown in Tables 2 and 3, only one and one-third percent, approximately 478,344 persons, of the population of Nigeria are engaged in wage labor and only six percent, or 292,022 persons, in Ghana. Of this wage-labor force, men form the majority of workers. In Nigeria, ninety-seven percent of the labor force are males, in Ghana ninety-four percent are men. The paucity of women in the wage-labor field is in the main due to the women's traditional preference to engage in independent trading. Another reason is the greater adaptability and aptitude of the males for work in heavy industry, such as coal mining, stevedoring and truck driving. A final factor which should be taken into account is the greater opportunity for males to receive educational and technical training which results in their

Table 2. Employment in Nigeria by Type of Employer, Industry, Sex and Region.

<u>Industrial groups</u>	<u>Government</u>	<u>Non-government</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agriculture, etc.	10,248	35,168	45,416
Mining and quarrying	-	49,506	49,506
Manufacturing	5,535	24,158	29,693
Construction	62,926	60,920	123,846
Electricity, etc.	4,289	5,833	10,122
Commerce	407	45,291	45,698
Transport, communications, etc.	11,114	37,542	48,686
Services	109,858	12,931	122,789
Miscellaneous	2,243	375	2,618
<u>Total</u>	206,620	271,724	478,344
Of which:			
Male	199,013	266,751	465,764
Female	7,607	4,973	12,580
And:			
Lagos	24,064	71,556	95,620
Northern Region	77,269	73,472	150,741
Western Region	51,036	45,394	96,430
Eastern Region	45,162	53,005	98,167
Cameroons	9,089	28,297	37,386

Source: Nigeria, Federal Office of Statistics Oct. 1960:81.

Table 3. Employment in Ghana by Type of Employer, Industry, and Sex.

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Government</u>	<u>Non-Government</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agriculture, forestry, etc.	29,436	14,193	43,629
Mining and Quarrying.	—	32,996	32,996
Manufacturing.	613	20,704	21,317
Construction.	25,413	25,299	50,712
Electricity, etc.	9,373	201	9,574
Commerce.	—	29,133	29,133
Transport, communication and storage.	20,322	8,674	28,966
Services.	48,644	27,021	75,665
<u>Total</u>	133,801	158,220	292,022

Of which:

Male	128,818	145,752	274,570
Female	4,118	7,578	11,696

Source: Ghana, The Central Bureau of Statistics March 1960:2.

preferential hiring by employers.

Tables 2 and 3 list the number of wage-earners within each type of industry. The figures have also been broken down to show whether the work is performed under government or non-government auspices. In Ghana, private employment figures account for forty-nine percent of the working population while the remaining fifty-one percent are divided among central and local governments and public boards and corporations.¹ In Nigeria, fifty-four percent are employed in non-governmental enterprises while forty-six percent are employed directly by the government. As can readily be seen, more than fifty percent of the wage-labor is in government service of some sort. In a breakdown by industry (Table 4) for Ghana and Nigeria, the percentage figures show no major differences in occupational groups except in those of agriculture and construction. In agriculture, this can be attributed, in all probability, to the presence of fewer large commercial farms in Nigeria as well as the greater number of cocoa farmers in Ghana who are in a position to hire extra wage-labor. In the construction field, the reasons are less obvious. No causes can be directly correlated other than that preference plays a greater part in the expense of national income on construction in Nigeria than in Ghana. Another reason

1. These latter are quasi-public development and management boards which have been separated from regular governmental operations in order to show how much of government expenditures are going into enterprises, such as government-owned mines and plantations.

might perhaps be that Nigeria was behind in construction, relative to Ghana.

Table 4. Percentage of Work Force by Industry.

<u>Type of industry</u>	<u>Nigeria</u>	<u>Ghana</u>
Agriculture, forestry, etc.	9%	14%
Manufacturing.	6%	7%
Mining and quarrying.	10%	11%
Construction.	25%	17%
Electricity, etc.	2%	3%
Commerce.	9%	9%
Transportation.	10%	9%
Services.	25%	25%
Miscellaneous.	4%	5%
Total	100%	100%

Source: The Table was compiled from figures given in Tables 2 and 3 of this thesis.

As a result of the low literacy rate and the lack of industrial development in both Ghana and Nigeria, the majority of workers fall into the unskilled class. Unskilled labor accounts for fifty-three percent of the labor force in Nigeria and forty-four percent in Ghana (Roper:1958:20). This is not to say, however, that the higher occupational roles are closed to the African, but rather that due to his inexperience, lack of education, and assumed lack of responsibility, these jobs are not easily available (Perham 1948:96). Statistics

which give some indication of the numbers of employees in definite occupational positions are not available for Ghana. However, they do exist for Nigerian labor, and it probably can be assumed that the percentages would be close to those for Ghana. Caution must be urged in considering the higher occupational positions listed in Table 5, for they include both Africans and Europeans.

Table 5. Occupational Status - Nigeria, 1957.

<u>Type of Employee</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Managerial, administrative and professional	10,160	3%
Technical and supervisory	7,581	2%
Clerks, shop assistants, etc.	62,476	13%
Foremen, chargehands, etc.	13,630	4%
Artisans	47,744	10%
Skilled labor	78,377	16%
Unskilled labor	238,428	51%
Apprentices	6,643	1%
Total	465,039	100%

Source: Economic Survey of Nigeria 1959:108.

Permanent wage labor has been legally defined, in Nigeria, to include those who work at least twenty days a month. Casual labor includes not only those working less than a standard number of days per month but also those who seek seasonal or short-time work. Lord Hailey (1957:1384)

notes that most labor is taken on a short term basis. For example, in the mines of the Gold Coast there was a one-hundred percent turnover in underground workers in one year, with thirty percent signing contracts for less than six months. There are several reasons for the higher percentage of casual laborers:

1. Because of the close tie of agricultural production to industrial production and because of the seasonal nature of the agricultural industries, the work year is cyclical.

2. Many workers are "target workers" whose employment tends to be sporadic, depending upon individual needs and wants. Furthermore, laborers use wage-labor as a means to supplement agricultural income and then only during slack agricultural periods (Nadel 1942:307).

3. The lack of industrial development and the lack of large scale year-around industries capable of absorbing a large permanent staff reduces the number of available permanent positions.

4. The fluctuating demand for products is also a factor contributing to employment instability. Thus, most labor is part-time and of short duration, working only during peak periods of production.

A further classification can be drawn among the varying degrees of skill of workmen as well as job preference and their relations to tribalism. For example, in the tin fields of the Jos Plateau in Nigeria, members of various

tribal groups are present: the Hausa, the Yoruba and the Ibo, as well as the surrounding inhabitants of the Plateau. Work-wise, they fall into two classes: semi-skilled and unskilled. Most of the semi-skilled jobs are filled by the Yoruba, Ibo and the Hausa, while the unskilled positions are taken by the indigenous peoples and the Hausa. The type of semi-skilled labor also tends to follow tribal lines. The Hausa are usually employed as headmen while the Yoruba and Ibo take jobs requiring some clerical or mechanical skill (Perham 1948:24). The reason behind this is most likely that opportunities for acquiring training in these skills are much greater in the southern regions where contact with industrial and commercial firms has occurred over a longer span of time.

The composition of the labor force depends upon the acquisition of certain basic and technical skills. It also depends on definite tribal preferences for certain types of work. There is no reason to presume that the peoples indigenous to the Plateau area are barred from the skilled and semi-skilled positions. Because most of them seek work only after harvest time and as a means to supplement agricultural income, they do not remain on the job long enough to acquire the skills.

CHAPTER III

AFRICAN ATTITUDES ON WORK RELATIONSHIPS

The immediate problem to be considered on the following pages is the African's concept of two economic systems, both the traditional and the modern. The views considered will concern the African's attitudes toward labor in general, toward employers and supervisors, toward other employees, and finally toward labor unions. The ideals and conflicts in ideals which the African faces when confronted with certain concepts of labor completely foreign to his traditional training show clearly in these attitudes.

While not all Africans react similarly to changes in work habits and attitudes, the greater number of industrial immigrants are faced with similar new problems. However, several factors exist which make it easier for the individual to fit into the industrial circle, such as proximity to urban and industrial centers, the frequency of first and secondhand knowledge of industrial practices and methods, and actual experience through full or seasonal employment.

Attitudes Toward Labor

The prime need of the majority of West Africans is

to ensure an adequate and substantial supply of agricultural products for the individual and his family. The methods of agricultural production are, on the whole, neither difficult nor complicated. Furthermore, the industry does not require constant attention or supervision. Time can be taken off in order to fulfill community or personal obligations without suffering drastic consequences in the long run, for work at certain periods can be delayed and completed later. Obligations are many and so a greater value is placed upon leisure time as an objective rather than on profit. As a result, when the biological necessities have been met, the social necessities can be attended to. Furthermore, the mark of a prosperous farmer is that he does not have to work, but he has others working for him. As a result, there is a strong preference for leisure and inconstant work habits. However, Herskovits (1960:90) remarks that:

Actually, nonliterate peoples, like ourselves, do as much work as they feel they must to meet the basic demands of getting a living, plus as much more as their desire to achieve any given end not encompassed by these basic demands calls for. Unlike workers in a machine economy, however, they take their ease at their own pleasure.

The judgement of laziness made against the African laborer overlooks the fact that their motivations are oriented in another direction. A greater value is placed upon leisure rather than upon additional work (Fortes, Steel, and Ady 1956:94). As Nadel (1942:360) states:

Many forms of enjoyment depend upon leisure: recreation and aesthetic pleasures; among the women, the possibility of keeping young

and attractive. They all form part of the standard of living which is typical of the highest social stratum of Nupe. Again, they become, as such, incentives for Nupe society at large, and affect the evaluation of specific occupations.

In order to attain these goals, the accumulation of wealth becomes the greatest incentive to labor. In Europe, the accumulation of wealth and its reinvestment in capital goods in order to accumulate more wealth becomes an end in itself. In other words, persons reinvest their wealth to extend their economic power or to extend their economic holdings, and from these flow political and social prestige and status. In West Africa, however, persons turn their surplus to social and political activity instead of economic extensions. In West Africa, also, the concept of what constitutes wealth differs from that of Europe. For example, among the Hausa the accumulation of wealth means more than just the amassing of a large amount of money. Wealth is a combination of various tangible and intangible items plus an indispensable, essential quality called arziki. Arziki is used as a general expression of good fortune. It is an intangible, elusive quality which cannot be bought or transferred to another. Smith (1955:14-15) remarks that:

Hausa say it is largely the gift of God...by which is meant that fortunate combination of circumstances as well as individual effort, acumen and personal charm are together, the essential prerequisites of arziki - while they continue together, arziki continues; when they cease to cohere, arziki withdraws, and left to his own individual resources, the formerly fortunate man rapidly loses the last traces of his fortune.

In Europe, varying degrees of social prestige are directly correlated with the amount of wealth accumulated. In West Africa this is not so. Prestige and status are gained through the direct expenditure of earnings in socially approved ways and on socially acceptable products. These include investment of capital in human labor which will insure a life of leisure, holding lavish kinship feasts, the giving of expensive presents and extending liberal hospitality, especially to members of one's kindred, through high marriage payments as well as the number of wives, and finally, investment in beautiful clothes, the ownership of a means of transportation and the means to travel widely (Nadel 1942:365; Smith 1955:14). These attitudes on the concept of wealth, its accumulation and expenditure, are still today regarded as important to social status and prestige.

When these attitudes are carried over into the industrial scene, they come into conflict with attitudes quite different but at the same time quite necessary to efficient industrial production. Industry requires certain standards. One of the most important is the development of an ethic for sustained incentive to work. Other standards are that there must be industrial planning, saving and investing to meet certain production goals. On the workers' part; they must appear at work regularly at a given time and for a given period every day. They must have a motive for work, a reason for doing it, whether it be for personal or national interest. They must attain a certain degree of literacy.

And finally, there must be built up and sustained an accumulation of skills (Kerr, Harbison, Dunlop and Myers 1960:238-239).

The industrialized African at the present time is constantly in conflict with two forces, the traditional and the modern social structure. When the demand upon the African to meet his social obligations outweighs his initiative or incentive to work, as it often does under the conditions set by management, conflict occurs. The duty to fulfill social obligations usually wins and is one of the causes for the high rate of absenteeism among the African labor force (Hodgkin 1958:121-122). As Lord Hailey (1957:1285) remarks:

...it should be noted that the African at work in the towns loses the leisure and the social occupations which are part and parcel of his village way of life. The peasant farmer is to a large extent his own taskmaster, and within the limits set by his subsistence needs and his processes of production he can plan his own working life. The freedom to take his leisure when he chooses and to co-operate in the social and religious ceremonies of the village community is not a negligible addition to the real income of the African villager, although it is not measurable. It is significant that his demand for leisure would seem to take precedence over his demand for material goods. A recent economic survey (Galletti, Baldwin, & Dina, Nigerian Cocoa Farmers, 1956, p. 294) of the cocoa-producing areas of Nigeria...found that the average amount of time spent at work throughout the year 1951-52 was 209 days for a man and 242 days for a woman. A proportion of the remaining time was spent in funerals, weddings, and other social occasions, and some of the idleness was enforced by the seasonal nature of the agricultural task. But when allowance is made for all these factors there is a substantial residue of voluntary unemployment which was chosen in preference to a gainful occupation.

To combat the traditional work patterns and to replace

them with ones which are structured upon lines necessary for industrial development has been one of the main concerns of both Ghana and Nigeria. Ghana, because of its more centralized form of government, has been much more effective than Nigeria in bringing about this conversion. In order to meet the ends desired and in order to undermine the dependency of the African on traditional sources, the Convention People's Party now in power in Ghana has set up social welfare programs under government control. It is hoped that these programs will provide sufficient incentive to the urban worker to release him from traditional obligations and transfer his allegiance to the central government. Various means to alter the traditional view of the African have been tried by the government.

1. Through the establishment of social welfare agencies and cooperative associations, under government control and supervision, it is hoped to establish a relationship between the government and the individual comparable to the traditional environment. The government attempts thereby to create a dependency on the part of the African toward the state for the relief of his immediate wants. An example of this type of organization is the Ghana Co-operative Insurance Society, Ltd., (Labour July 1960:26)

...a scheme under which...(the farmer and worker)... might get greater protection, social security and better living.

The insurance program offers such schemes as endowment policies for ten, fifteen, and twenty-five years, old

age policies, children's educational policies, and general insurance on buildings and vehicles.

2. Politically, the emphasis is on the establishment of a dependency of the individual upon the central government in general and the Convention People's Party in particular as the only agencies from whom all social and material benefits can come. In order to accomplish this end, the central government has placed little reliance upon the authority of traditional tribal officials and has in fact done much to curtail their power and influence in public affairs. Concerning this, Ward (1958:343) says of Ghana that:

The country had never altogether liked the 1925 arrangement under which paramount chiefs sat in the legislature to represent the provincial council of chiefs...But the C.P.P. had another reason for wanting to exclude the native authorities from the central legislature and to confine them to local government. On the whole, the native authorities represented the old order, whereas the C.P.P. represented the new. The chiefs and their elders were bound to think of libations and sacrifices and religious ritual, of precedence and ceremonial, of native customary law, of local interest and of the traditional and stately manner of doing things. It was their duty. And it was not easy for them to combine this essential duty with responsibilities to the nation as a whole. Moreover, there was an unfortunate cleavage between these members of the state councils and the younger educated men. The interests of educated men usually lay outside tribal affairs: in a career of western type or in national politics. Conservative elders were reluctant to admit educated men to membership of the councils, and were especially distrustful of an educated chief...To the C.P.P. the presence in the Assembly of thirty-seven members (total of 84 in 1952) representing this essentially conservative and

traditional outlook could be nothing but a hindrance to its efforts to modernize the country.

3. Through various forms of propaganda which have been designed expressly to create confidence in the acts of the central government, it is hoped to encourage greater dependence on its agencies. The benefits the worker can expect to be entitled to, if he conforms to government and trade union labor specifications and regulations, are frequently pointed out in government and trade union publications.¹ For example, Dr. Nkrumah had advocated that (Labour August 1960:8):

In co-operation with the Trade Union Congress, a systematic programme of incentives will be worked out in matters of promotion for exemplary work done, decoration for outstanding worker (sic), cash bonus and publicity for individual human effort. It will be part of the government's policy to organize training within industry and establish vocational schools for workers. With the re-organization of the Congress and the Government support, sanatoria and holiday resorts at the seaside will be built for workers and farmers.

And finally, the Trade Union Congress claims as one of the benefits which a member of the trade union can expect is (Labour August 1960:19):

A social insurance scheme...to give medical aid to members and their families in case of illness and to provide other social benefits such as relief in accident, disablement, distress and unemployment.

All these ways are meant to encourage a stable and permanent supply of wage-labor with few traditional ties or

1. Examples in cartoon form are presented on the following pages.

EQUAL WORK EQUAL PAY

AH!!.....
WHY AM I NOT
WELL PAID?

THERE IS
NO ROOM FOR
LAZINESS—
FRIEND!
WORK HARD
LIKE ME



by
COO

CARTOON COMMENT

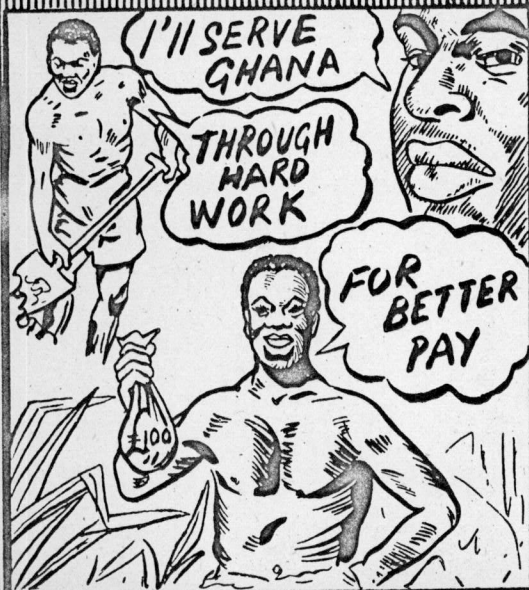
by Cod.



REPUBLICAN DAY DREAM

Ghanaian Worker

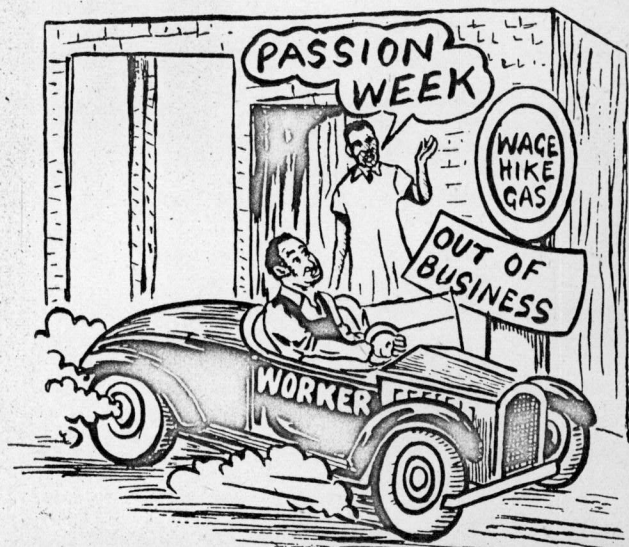
DAILY NEWS
July 1, 1960
GOVERNMENT SAYS
PROSPERITY
AROUND
CORNER



I'LL SERVE GHANA

THROUGH HARD WORK

FOR BETTER PAY



PASSION WEEK

WAGE HIKE GAS

OUT OF BUSINESS

WORKER

obligations. The tendency is to make the individual worker dependent upon fulfilling his own needs and at the same time to realign his attitudes and concepts toward labor so as to coincide with the goals of the central government, that is, to create a modern industrial state in the shortest period of time possible.

In Nigeria, however, the situation differs. There has been little attempt on the government's part to dominate the worker or to change his traditional attitudes toward labor. One of the reasons for this is perhaps that in Nigeria, unlike Ghana, the traditional authorities still maintain a strong hold in government circles, both regionally and federally. The ties, the feelings and the prejudices as well as regional self-interest still predominate. Under such a system, a strong central authority is virtually impossible and few are willing to give over regional rights to a central body. As a result each region becomes concerned with its own economic development and very little in the way of a centralized body of labor legislation is formulated. Furthermore, the acceptance of modern industrial ideals, causing a loss of some measure of traditional authority and threatening traditional ideals and attitudes is bound to be resisted. As long as modern industry does not insist upon disrupting traditional values and attitudes, it will be tolerated. In the event that it forms a threat to the traditional authority, as manifest in the regional and federal governments, industrial development can expect no help by way of government

legislation. At the present time, the development of work habits acceptable by modern industrial standards has been left to individual trade unions and modern business enterprises with little interference or help from the local or national governments. In the long run, this lack of interest on the government's part will lead to a much slower rate of industrialization. However, industrial development in Nigeria can both be helped and hindered by this lack of government interest. On the positive side, because of the lack of a restrictive body of labor legislation, a favorable atmosphere for the further establishment of commercial and manufacturing enterprises can be created. On the negative side, however, little effort will be made by the government to alter traditional attitudes or work patterns.

Attitudes Toward Employers

On the whole, the African laborer, particularly the seasonal and unskilled laborer, has little conception of industrial practices or goals. He is unfamiliar with the relation he should have to his employer, in the Western sense. The modern employer usually stands as a person who is estranged from the general milieu of African labor, who lives and works apart, always in luxurious surroundings in the African's opinion. He commands and is entitled to a great deal of respect and prestige because of his wealth, education, type of work performed, and inherent authority in the job situation. This respect, reverence, or awe is

not only shown to the white employer or manager, but is carried over to those Africans who hold similar positions and have acquired similar advantages. In the case of the plantation worker, Warmington (1960:117-118) states that:

The typical unskilled plantation labourer from the inland areas of the Southern Cameroons and French Cameroons, comes south specifically in order to get 'white man's work'. He usually finds it quite easily in one of the sections in which his people are accustomed to work, being recruited by the overseer or a headman of the section, often through the influence of a member of his own family. He rarely has direct contact with any superior other than his headman, overseer and timekeeper while he is a labourer, but he is nevertheless conscious that he is working for the 'white man' - directly for the European manager of the plantation, ..., and beyond him for 'C.D.C.', which is in essence a white man's organization...

The employer, in traditional African society, utilizes the labor of various groups at his disposal. Every society makes some provision in its economy for the creation of an association capable of performing tasks requiring varying amounts of labor. Some are voluntary associations such as mutual aid societies while in others membership is ascribed, such as age grades or kinship work units. The type of association and the use to which this organized labor is put varies from society to society, depending upon the economic needs of the group. Some societies have only one means of organizing labor but most societies have several forms. Finally, a temporal factor should be noted. Some associations are of short duration, organized for a specific purpose, such as road building and land clearing. When the

task at hand is finished, the group disbands. Other associations are of a more permanent nature, such as age grades or sets, guilds, and lineage work groups. These permanent associations have as well a permanent leadership based upon age and competence.

Employers in the traditional African society are generally of two types; those who are engaged in the supervision of agricultural labor and those who supervise industrial labor.

The agricultural employer on the primary level is usually the head of an extended family. He has certain rights over the members of his kinship unit concerning the supervision and direction of labor and the production and distribution of products. The authority may be extensive as among the Nupe of Nigeria and the Tallensi of northern Ghana, or restricted as among the Yoruba in southwest Nigeria and the Ashanti in Ghana. Reciprocal obligations between the employer and employee also vary with the degree of control. Among the Nupe, the domestic unit which works together is called the efakó. The head of this group must meet the following obligations which are expected of him by the members of this work group (Nadel 1942:245).

1. The efakó head supplies the hoes, axes and all other tools and also pays for their repairs.
2. He is responsible for supplying food, clothing and shelter for the members of the group.
3. The payment of the bride-price and all taxes are

the responsibility of the efako head.

4. He allots land to the individuals of his group. This land is used by the individual to supply goods above and beyond those supplied under normal conditions.

5. He is obligated to supply tools and a years supply of food to any member who wants to leave the efako group and set up a separate farm.

Among the Yoruba, the degree of responsibility within the extended family is much less. As among the Nupe, the household consists of one or more minimal lineages under the leadership of the oldest male. His title is Bale (Forde 1951:10-11). Much more individualism is allowed in Yoruba agriculture than among the Nupe and nearly all members, old enough to farm for themselves, are allotted their own land (Forde 1951:25-26). The consumption and distribution of agricultural products is, in most cases, handled on an individual basis, particularly if the individual has set up a separate household within the compound. As a result, the responsibilities of the Bale are less economic than social and religious. The Bale is still obligated to support and aid members of the family who find themselves temporarily in need. For this eventuality, each member of the compound is expected to contribute a share of his agricultural produce to the common stocks. Today, in the areas which have had the most constant contact with Europeans, the production of cash crops has become an important source of income. This in turn has led to the breakdown of the communal household

and a demand for independent income and distribution.

Among the Tallensi of northern Ghana, the pattern of organization at this level is basically the same. The basic economic group is the minor lineage.¹ (Fortes 1958:241-242-247-251-253). The minor lineage head (Kpeem), (Fortes 1958:252):

...has complete moral and ritual authority; he has the right to dispose of his dependents' labor, property, and persons; and he can use force or ritual measures to assert his authority.

For these rights, the Kpeem has certain responsibilities and obligations to the members of the lineage. He must provide food, clothes, and housing for the members. His other obligations include the provision of wealth for marriage as well as other religious and social ceremonies and the insurance of the welfare of the members' economic assets, the land and its products, by fulfilling ritual obligations (Fortes 1958:252-254). Furthermore, a major lineage head of the Tallensi can request the assistance of close and distant kin on labor projects. Those not in the immediate family, however, are under no obligation to comply unless compensated in some form.

The agricultural employer on the secondary level makes use of certain extra-kin associations within the

1. The Tallensi are extremely decentralized, politically. The society is divided as follows: maximal lineage of from nine to eleven generations; major and minor lineages in descendent order, each division being one generation removed from the previous generation; minimal lineage consisting of a man and his sons. Each grade of authority becomes increasingly generalized from the minimal to the maximal lineage.

local community. These may be of temporary duration such as cooperative aid of neighbors and friends or permanently organized groups, such as age grades or age set associations.

An individual farmer, lineage head or political head can call for assistance whenever the need may arise and when payment for these services can be afforded. In most West African societies, age grades are a prominent community organization, operating mainly in the social and political sphere. The lower grades usually function as a common source of mutual extra-kin labor for public or private use. In most societies there are restrictions on who may use their services. Among the Nupe, the labor of the age grades can be utilized only by lineage heads, old men without other support, and chiefs. The younger members of the family needing the service round up their age grade companions. The members are bound by associational rules to assist when called upon (Nadel:1942:248, 250).

Among the Yoruba and the Ibo peoples of southern Nigeria, this system of cooperative labor is also used. The Yoruba age grade system varies in external form from community to community but basically is similar in function. For example, among the Ekiti Yoruba in southeastern Yorubaland and among the Yoruba groups in the Northern Region (the Owe, Yagbe, Ifumu and Bunu groups) the two lower grades participate in private and public labor (Forde 1951:59).

In all cases of mutual aid, the employer is obligated to recompense the laborers for their work. The compensation,

by and large, is set by local tradition in the individual communities.¹ For the Jukun gaya group in Nigeria, a temporary association of neighboring farmers, payment is standardized at the rate of six pots of beer per twelve men plus an extra one for the leader at the conclusion of the work day (Meek 1931:405). Payment for labor can generally be classified into three types:

1. Immediate and material in which the payment is in drink, food, and/or money,

2. Immediate and non-material in which the payment is in the form of titles of prestige bestowed by the community upon exceptional workers,

3. Long-run and material in which payment is in the form of return labor, thereby insuring the security of the other members of the community in economic affairs.

Employers of industrial labor have been common in most of the larger communities for a long time. In nearly all West African societies, various crafts were practiced. These industries provided either part time or full time occupations, depending upon the fluctuations of demand, economic surplus, and the density of population. The major crafts practiced included iron, copper, and goldsmithing, weaving, pottery making, dyeing, and woodworking. These

1. According to Nadel (1942:250), payments have fluctuated, among the Nupe, with time and changing conditions. The farmers in recent times have economized on the cost of payment for age grade labor by one-third to one-half of the original cost with no corresponding decrease in incentive.

industries were often organized into associations or craft guilds.

In general, West African craft guilds were closed corporations. Membership was granted only to those within a definite kinship group. Restrictions of this sort arose as a result of a myth of common origin as well as the special social position conferred upon guild members by the political authority.

The selection of leaders of the craft guilds was based upon two factors: seniority and craft competence. Candidates for the top offices held their positions for life. The guilds also had a hierarchical order of authority, extending from the smallest working unit to the national level. Among the Nupe of Nigeria, this order encompassed four levels: national guild head, section head, family head and workshop head (Nadel 1942:265-269). Furthermore, the guild heads held titled positions of political authority, conferred upon them by their respective governments. Through this position, they received orders for products from their largest buyer, the traditional government. This position gave added authority and control to that which came from the position held within the kinship system. The guild and section heads controlled and directed nearly all of the economic, social, political and religious activities of the members. In return for this authority the guild leadership was placed under certain obligations to the membership. The obligations of the national guild head were to maintain

the social and economic position of the guild in national affairs, to settle disputes between members of the guilds in economic questions, and to receive and distribute large governmental orders for products to the guild at large. The section heads of the guilds had more specific obligations and responsibilities to the workers. For example, Nadel (1942:267) notes that among the Nupe, these include: the control of group income and the provision of working capital; the giving of advice on personal as well as professional problems; the sale of products; fulfilling the social obligations of the workers, such as providing bride-price payments; and providing food, clothing, shelter and the maintenance of the capital goods of the guild section.

In the modern industrial situation, the African seeking wage-labor makes a temporary transfer of allegiance from the traditional authority he has left, to the modern employer he now works for, and he expects to be treated in similar traditional fashion. In the case of the modern employer, the worker's expectations are seldom met and, as Warmington (1960: 118-119) remarks:

He does...feel annoyed at the lapses which he finds in his employment away from the standards which would be expected of a good 'master' - at arbitrary variations in conditions of work or in welfare facilities; at transfers to a different section or different work, especially when they take him away from his friends or when conditions are less pleasant than before (and, moreover, without any prior consultation or explanation);...whenever in fact he is treated as an impersonal unit. In such cases the employer is acting unfairly, and not in accordance with his obligations to his dependents.

In order to counteract this attitude of non-obligation, both the government and private business have instituted social welfare programs and incentive producing schemes which it is hoped will relieve any latent or overt hostility and create better working conditions, thereby increasing efficiency among the workers.

Attitudes Toward Other Employees

The wage-labor situation is, to the African, a new, mystifying and at times an unfamiliar situation into which he has voluntarily placed himself in close contact with many persons who are as strange to him as he is to them. The attitudes toward fellow employees, are, on the whole, tempered by the degree of relationship which the African holds in respect to other workmen. There are two work situations which can be spoken of as ideal to the African worker and obtain when the individual works, side by side, with a near kinsman and if the individual works in close contact with a fellow tribesman, whether related or not. All other persons are usually thought of as strangers, and a certain degree of hostility, uneasiness or distrust is felt on both sides. The cause of these feelings stems from two major sources; on the one hand, from the almost constant intra- and intertribal hostilities in this area, and on the other hand, from fear of supernatural forces.

Concerning the first point, until forty or fifty years ago, life was not secure beyond the boundaries of most village

areas. Each village or local community was a self-sufficient social entity, made up of kin and friends. All others outside the local community, who were unrelated by blood or marriage, were considered as strangers and, consequently, enemies. Wars and feuds were commonplace and involved states against states, states suppressing rebellious villages or tribal sections, or feuds between village segments. This condition of instability was evident in the many walled towns of the larger states and the carefully secluded and hidden compounds in the rural areas. Among those states which were federated under a nationally recognized paramount chief, such as the Nupe, Yoruba and the Fulani in Nigeria and the Ashanti, Mamprussi and Dagomba states in Ghana, warfare for conquest, plunder and slaves occurred at frequent intervals. For example, among the Nupe, Nadel (1942:109) notes that during the period from 1864 to 1895, ten major wars had taken place. Niven (1958:passim) also records that Yoruba history is one of a succession of internal and external strife. The Ashanti Federation, too, fought battle after battle to keep its state intact as well as to attempt to subjugate the Fanti peoples to the south.

Most struggles, however, were minor affairs and of short duration. These occurred either as raids by some small village against another of equal or smaller size for the purpose of plunder and slaves, or they occurred as feuds for the settlement of a legal dispute between two or more lineages. Slaves were in great demand in nearly all West African socie-

ties since they conferred prestige upon the owner and were an economic asset in the work they provided. Furthermore, in the religious ceremonies, slaves frequently were needed as sacrifices for community or personal welfare. Slaves came either as the spoils of war or were bought from other villages (Nadel 1942:103). Life was cheap and one could never be entirely safe from capture when away from one's village and family. For example, among the Tiv in Nigeria, Akiga (1939:379) remarks that:

A man who wished to visit another clan might have to make a wide circuit, spending five nights on the way, where, by the direct route, he need only have spent one. If he were so foolish as to travel in broad daylight, he would soon find himself in slavery. He would be caught by some one, and sold for a price at a distant market.

However, at times even one's own family was guilty of this sort of intrigue. Talbot (1923:328) writes of a case among the Ibibio in southern Nigeria in which an elder brother became jealous of the attempts of a younger brother to become as wealthy as he. The older brother, in revenge, made a pact with a group of men to capture and sell the younger brother.

The second cause of insecurity, producing perhaps the greatest amount of anxiety, is the fear of spirits and witchcraft. In West Africa, an individual is constantly in fear of inadvertantly offending one or more of the many spirits inhabiting the world. In addition, the threat of witchcraft or sorcery by some person or persons with a griev-

ance is constant. In most areas, the placation of these forces requires constant and regular sacrifices or the purchase of protective magic or charms. Among the Ibibio in Nigeria (Talbot 1923:21), a man may purchase 'medicine' (ibokk) for purposes of providing protection against spirits, ghosts and demons; to insure the winning of favors from others; in order to harm others; and for personal protection against natural calamities. The forces inherent in the ibokk also require propitiation for (Talbot 1923:21),

If a 'medicine'..., is neglected by its owner, it will send sickness or accident to him. Sacrifices, generally of a goat or fowl, are offered at least one a year, usually at harvest time.

In Ghana, Field (1960:134) has noted that the truck driver or lorry owner,

...is acutely conscious of himself as an object of envy, and has much anxiety lest those seeking his humiliation should bring it about by bad magic designed either to wreck his lorry or to bring it financial disaster.

In order to protect their property, the owners decorate their trucks with protective formulas designed to ward off this bad magic.

Because of the individual's inability to cope with all the powers which might threaten him, he feels the greatest security in his own community and among his own kin and friends. For each village has many religious associations or cults to which he may belong and which have the means of averting supernatural dangers through permanently established cult houses and/or shrines.

These examples are sufficient to demonstrate the reality of the fears of the individual when not in the reassuring contact of his family and friends.

It has been noted that the degree of efficiency can be correlated with how much at home the worker feels in the company of his fellow workers (Roper 1958:37, 44). What might be termed work homogeneity is evident at all levels of employment. The individual seeking wage-labor either joins or is recommended to join kinsmen or fellow tribesmen in a particular work situation. He in turn is obligated to find employment for any of his relations or tribesmen who come to him. This he usually does if a job is available either at the place where he works or where some opening exists at a place in which another relative or tribesman works (Warmington 1960: 117). Furthermore, in situations of employment which are dominated by one tribal unit, such as the Ibo in the Enugu Colliery in Nigeria or the Hausa, as foremen, in the Jos Plateau tinfields of Nigeria, the chances for outsiders being welcome would probably be very slim. Under the traditional social system, the obligation is to help kinsmen only.

The availability of adequate statistical evidence which could properly support this view is unfortunately lacking. Few social studies of work homogeneity have been made for urban Africa. Therefore, in the case of Ghana and Nigeria, the extent to which the work situation conforms to tribal and kin homogeneity can only be inferred from two studies, one on the population of the Jos Plateau and the

other of trade unionism in the Egyptian Sudan, in which tribal obligations seem to be of the same magnitude (Perham: 1948; Fawzi:1957).

In a study made of trade unionism in the Egyptian Sudan, Fawzi, in a study of stevedore gangs at Port Sudan, discovered that tribal connections dominated this portion of the labor market (Fawzi 1957:11). Interviewing seventy-three stevedore gangs, all of which were composed of twelve men and one headman, he found that there was a high degree of tribal homogeneity within the individual gangs. In

Table 6. Tribal Homogeneity Among Stevedores.

<u>Number of Persons Belonging to The Same Tribe as the Headman</u>	<u>Number of Gangs</u>
0	13
1 - 8	3
8 - 9	20
10	10
11	15
12	12

Source: Fawzi, 1957:11.

fifty-seven out of seventy-three gangs, seventy-eight percent of the members of each gang were tribally related, and in only sixteen out of seventy-three gangs were fewer than eight related to the headman. The study seems to point out a definite preference on the part of both the laborer in the

choice of fellow workmen and of foremen in the choice of their gangs. Whether this can be carried over to the modern industrial scene in Ghana and Nigeria has not yet been established definitely. However, several factors tend to indicate that this situation exists. First of all, tribal obligations and unity seem to be as strong. Examples of this can be found in the establishment of tribal unions such as those mentioned by Little (1957:582), whose main functions in the urban areas are to look after newly arrived persons, to provide a means of communication with the rural areas, to maintain and promote group solidarity and cultural homogeneity, and to provide economic assistance to needy members. Second, tribal preferences for certain types of employment have been noted, such as the preponderance of Ibo serving as underground miners in the Enugu coal mines and in the Jos Plateau mining companies as semi-skilled and skilled workers, and the concentrations of Hausa as foremen and Yoruba as clerical labor in the mines of the Jos Plateau in Nigeria (Perham 1948:24). Third, any individual can call for assistance, at any time, from another individual or group of individuals to whom he is related. He is also under obligation to return such aid whenever requested by a kinsman. The unemployed in the urban areas, as well as those disillusioned with urban working conditions, often make use of this aid. Field, in her study of the village of Mframaso in Ghana (1960:31), discovered at least one hundred and eighty-two unemployed in this small area alone, and as she remarks:

...each of these...is fed, clothed, housed and sometimes married at the expense of the illiterate person who paid for his schooling.

To sum up, the African appears to seek work not indiscriminately, but is either referred to a job by some friend or relative or he looks for employment where he knows he will find workers who are in some way related to him. He will not purposely look for work among persons whom he considers as strangers. Tribal hostility, especially among the unskilled workers, is very strong, and since this will come into conflict with traditional communal patterns of work, efficiency on the job will be diminished.

Attitudes Toward Labor Organizations

In order to appreciate fully the African's attitudes toward the form and function of trade unions, one must understand his traditional orientation toward organizations in general. His relationship to various forces and powers under the new modern system cannot help but be tempered by this traditional background, especially where it pertains to such factors as worker relationships, employer attitudes, and authority relationships. Tribal society, on the whole, is completely different with reference to the work situation found in modern European society, especially on such specifics as work goals, the organization of work projects and the degree of personal relationship among workers and between workers and employers. Lord Hailey's (1957:1459) comments

about cooperatives seem equally true of trade unions:

In the traditional organization there is a spirit of solidarity combined with a sense of reciprocity of rights and duties. But the appeal made by the co-operative movement is not primarily directed to the spirit of communal solidarity; its appeal is to the spirit of self-help and the intelligent furtherance of individual interests. Its success lies in the measure to which it can convince the individual that his own interests can best be secured by a disciplined association with others who seek a similar objective. If this demands some self-sacrifice on his part, the primary incentive lies not in the advancement of the welfare of the community but in securing the interests of the individuals concerned. The community will in due course profit in so far as its welfare depends on that of the individuals of which it is composed. The spirit of self-help and individual initiative is more characteristic of Western Civilization than of indigenous African society.

On the whole, the trade union organizations and the big industrial organizations are not generally understood or easily comprehended by the average unskilled African worker. Furthermore, he cannot see what relationship the trade union has toward the companies it represents. In the traditional system with which the African is most familiar, there are no divided loyalties. He knows where he stands with fellow workmen and tribal authorities, so loyalties are not split. On the industrial scene, Charles (1952: 425) writes:

Trade unions...come up against a major cultural characteristic of tribal society, which has no institution based on the idea of conflicting forces and organized resistance to or defense against the chieftain....For workers to combine against their employer would be anarchistic, a kind of open declaration of mistrust against...

the guardian chief, who is there to take the place of the clan, with the same power and responsibilities.

The African laborer, as has been pointed out in a previous section, has come to expect fair treatment and a kind of paternalism from his employer as a matter of course. This treatment should be the same as he would expect from traditional authorities at his own home. Here is where the main conflict occurs. When the treatment expected does not measure up to his expectations, the African is at a loss as to what relationship to hold toward the employer. Because of the seemingly aloof and malevolent character of management, the worker may take any one of several alleviatory roads open to him. He may quit and go home; he may remain under these strained conditions until a particular goal is met; or he may make a transfer of allegiance to a labor union if one exists where he works. Unfortunately, the trade union is not in a position to settle all grievances to the complete satisfaction of the members.

Some attitudes to trade unions are expressed in a survey conducted by Warmington of the workers of the C. D. C. Workers' Union (1960:107-109). The study included interviews with five hundred and sixty-seven men from various portions of the plantation. The questions were designed for the purpose of determining how the workers felt toward the union. Initially the workers were asked whether they liked this union; and is it a good union; and finally, the workers were questioned as to their reasons for joining the union.

Sixty-four percent answered in the affirmative and thirty-six gave a negative or neutral answer to the first question. The reasons for the 'yes' answer were that others, whose opinion they respected, say the union is good or that they have found out how and why the union operates. The 'no' and neutral answers were given for several reasons. Some accused the union of only wanting money and of offering nothing to the members. Others said that the union did not carry out its promises or that it did not act. These last were usually based on unresolved personal grievances. As Warmington (1960:107) remarks:

A few informants accused the union of siding with management rather than with the men, and there were quite a number of opinions that the union used to be good...but that it no longer worked well.

Nearly all the reasons given, however, were founded on inadequate knowledge of the functions of the trade union. Warmington (1960:111) goes on to say that in some cases:

...the Workers' Union seems to be regarded as analogous to a tribal union, but catering for all workers, rather than for men of one 'country'. A common pidgin name for it - the 'Black Man Union' - may help support the confusion.

Three major reasons were given by the members for joining. They joined for the union benefits, higher wages, and better working conditions, because their friends had joined, or because they were forced to join (Warmington 1960:109,112).

Much of the above pertains only to Nigeria; in Ghana, dues-paying membership to one of the National Unions is compulsory for all persons employed at wage labor. There is no

choice, and failure to comply could lead to a fine. Furthermore, active support is expected of all trade unionists on directives and actions taken by the executive board of the Ghana Trade Union Congress.

CHAPTER IV

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS

This chapter deals with background data on traditional economic organizations in the light of which the development of the trade union movement in Ghana and Nigeria can be more advantageously viewed.

Defining a functional classification of economic organizations and associations for West Africa is difficult since most are multifunctional. Hodgkin writes (1958:85):

Rigorous classification on a functional basis is impossible, since there are no clearly defined limits to the activities that any association may choose to undertake....an association brought into being to meet a particular recognized need may develop other activities in the course of its history....

The classification which will be used in this thesis is essentially that offered by Kenneth Little (1957:588). His procedure is to define broad categories based upon certain generalized traits into which associations may be placed and analyzed. K. Little's proposed classification distinguishes three broad types of associations: traditional, traditional modern, and modern.

Traditional Associations

Traditional associations are usually limited to one major function. They are informal and quite simple in organization. Membership is usually restricted to those persons resident in the same village or ward of a town. Finally, these associations are often related to other traditional institutions within the community. Traditional associations include three important subtypes.

Cooperative Work Groups

Various types of work groups and mutual aid associations exist among the peoples of Nigeria and Ghana. These work units range widely in size and function, depending upon the use to which they are put. Among some groups, the same work unit is assigned a variety of duties; in others there are separate, named, work units assigned to specific tasks. For example, among the Hausa, Smith (1955:114, 141) speaks of work units ranging in size from the gandu which includes at least two related adult males and their immediate families who work together on their own fields, to the gayya which includes the members of separate compounds in a village ward who work on community projects. The Nupe also have a number of named associations concerned with the maintenance of individual or communal labor. The Nupe divide all basic agricultural and industrial work performed by members of a family into two kinds, bucá and efakó. They are defined as follows (Nadel 1942:241):

Every kind of work done individually, its products and the income - individual income - derived from it, are bucá; and every work done jointly, in collective family work, producing output and income over which the family group or a section of a family group exercised joint rights is efakó.

Of the two, the efakó is considered as more essential to the welfare of the family. Bucá labor is in most cases allowed only after the efakó work has been completed by the individual. Extra-kin associations, among the Nupe, organized for public or private work include the egba and dzolo (Nadel 1942:248). The egba is basically composed of the community's young men and is utilized primarily for community labor projects and not usually for individual households. This is the mechanism through which the age sets are activated for economic purposes. The dzolo, on the other hand, is a mutual aid association of the farmers of a community who combine for the joint harvest of all their fields.

Among the Tiv, an individual can call upon various forms of mutual aid (Bohannon 1954:25-26). These include calling upon his best friend for help, calling upon individuals from his mother's group, and calling out his age set or junior age set (igba) for work parties (lôhô kwagh). All of the above are small work units and as with the lôhô kwagh usually work for only one day. Organized on a larger scale, there are both men's and women's work groups which are used primarily for agricultural labor. One such group is the women's hoeing party (lôhô). This is composed of the wives of several neighboring compounds and ranges in size

from sixteen to twenty women. They work under the leadership of a senior woman who chooses two or three older women to act as song leaders. The work continues for a period of two to three days or until all the fields of all the women have been weeded.

While the women's labor group is employed to hoe the fields of all who join in the party, this is not the case for the men's work group. Only the fields belonging to the man who calls up a working party are worked. Bohannan observed one very large work party (forty to fifty men). In this case the man called upon a friend from a neighboring lineage who brought with him all the men of his lineage. These worked together with the men of the first compound until all the work was finished in the fields.

All of these associations for mutual aid make some provision for payment of services rendered, and this is usually in either food, drink or both. Finally, most work groups involving fairly large numbers of people, and especially those organized around extra-kin, combine not only for the work involved but also for the social festivities which are included. The entertainment provided for the occasion, such as drumming, singing, and dancing, is an important and expected form of payment in many societies.

Craft Guilds

Roper (1958:48) has pointed out, in connection with craft organizations, that they had a definite place in traditional African society. Guilds or craft associations were

often formed among tribal groups for the purposes of guarding against unfair competition and settling disputes arising between craftsmen. The craft guilds were closely subordinated to the established tribal and political authorities who, in most cases, were their only customers; craftsmen's services were rendered almost exclusively to political or religious authorities. Among the crafts organized along guild lines are included gold, copper, and ironsmiths, woodcarvers, and weavers. A more detailed account of a guild is presented by Rattray (1923:301) in relation to the Ashanti of Ghana:

All goldsmiths formed a sort of brotherhood and any goldsmith had the privilege of calling a fellow goldsmith's wife 'my wife', and they were privileged to wear gold ornaments, a form of personal adornment otherwise rigorously restricted to kings, their wives, and other great chiefs.

The art of goldsmithing was passed on from father to son or to a nephew, and very rarely to a person who was not related by blood. As was previously mentioned, traditional associations were often related to other systems within the community. For example, in connection with religion Rattray (1923:301) writes that:

In Beckwei administrative division of Ashanti all the goldsmiths trace their origin to one Fusu Kwebi, the first of their trade. The bellows and a few of the weights and tools of this now almost divine ancestor are still preserved, and along with his Obosom (god), Ta Yao, have become the goldsmiths' particular god.

Another example can be cited from Yoruba villages in Western Nigeria (Lloyd 1953:30). Yoruba towns were and still

are composed primarily of a number of compounds each of which contains a number of patrilineally related families. The compounds within the village or town may or may not be related to one another. The characteristics of the traditional craft guilds were as follows:

1. Each trade or craft was the corporate property of a particular kin group. In the case of the Yoruba this included one or more compounds.

2. Only members related by blood could be trained and practice the craft. All craftsmen were related and usually lived within one compound.

3. Training in the craft began at an early age and lasted, usually, until the youth reached the age of sixteen. Training was an individual affair, undertaken between father and son.

4. Although the right to practice a craft was restricted and controlled by the lineage, there was no obligation to share the proceeds among the members. Payment accruing from services rendered remained the property of the individual. However, here as among the Nupe (Nadel 1942:268) large government orders were usually given directly to the national guild head who in turn distributed the work load and later the profits.

5. The guild association was headed and directed by the oldest practicing member of the compound. His title was Bale.

6. Craftsmen were organized on two levels; first that

of the compound guild which met once a week when both social and economic problems were discussed, and second, national or tribal guilds composed of all the members of the compounds who practiced the same craft associated for the purpose of providing centralized control of the craft industry. Among the Awka smiths of the Ibo in southern Nigeria, for example, six kindreds of the original eight to settle in Awka claim a hereditary right to the art of blacksmithing.¹ These six families, in order to:

...avoid trade jealousies between kindreds led to the division of the surrounding country into six territorial markets(Nigeria Magazine No. 61 1959:141).

The Yoruba national guild meetings were held every sixteen days at which time only economic matters were discussed. The head craftsman had a position of political importance because of special privileges granted to him by the king. For example, he had direct access to the king, a privilege allowed only chiefs, and he served as tax collector of the guild. Among the Nupe, the guild heads were also given special titles and were members of the royal court (Nadel 1942:266). By this means the court maintained some control over the activities of the guild.

7. Finally, craft associations were integrated within the existing religious systems in that each craft had its own

1. These are: the Omuko, Ezi-Awka, Ifite-Awka, Amikwo, Agulu and Umuzocha.

particular god or divine ancestor who had given the techniques to the original practitioners. For example, the Awka blacksmiths in the Ibo country believe that:

...their ancestor, Awka, was sent down by God with an anvil, an iron hammer and bellows to dry the earth, then a morass, for Nri, progenitor of the Agaku people (Nigeria Magazine No. 61 1959:136).

The Awka smiths also:

...have...their patron alosi called Akputakpu. Its shrine is in Agulu village, the home of the descendents of Awka's seventh son who, legend says, inherited his fathers profession. A propitiatory sacrifice is offered to it once a year....(Nigeria Magazine No. 61 1959:143).

Trader Associations

Each village or town usually contains a central market place which operates either continuously or on particular days, depending upon the volume of trade and the size of the population. The main characteristics of the associations of market vendors are as follows.

- The occupation of trader is almost exclusively in the hands of women in both Ghana and Nigeria. The women, selling one type of commodity, usually sit together in the market place. The organization formed by these traders has as its primary functions the settling of disputes between members and between members and customers, price fixing, and the prevention of encroachment of other traders who are not members of the association. In the smaller markets, each single-commodity association is headed by the oldest woman trader, while in the larger market centers there may also be

a market leader, male or female, who assumes jurisdiction over all the minor associations. As Bohannan (1957:152) remarks:

Every market in Tivland has either a headman, called the 'market chief' (tor Kasoa), or a group of three or four elders who may be called 'Those who look after the market' (m̄banengen kasoa). In the former case, it is often the market chief himself who hears disputes that arise in the markets, though he may delegate someone else to do it for him, especially if he is himself an important and busy man. 'Those who look after the market', in markets so organized, generally themselves hear disputes, either all together or two or three elders at a time.

Unlike the traditional craft guilds, the women are usually not related to one another. Business training is left to the individual who apprentices her daughter. Finally, the associations seem to have had no political or religious power or commitments, functioning almost exclusively in the economic sphere.

Traditional Modern Associations

The main characteristics of these associations can be outlined as follows:

1. The associations have a relatively formal organization, a variety of functions, and are syncretistic.
2. There is usually a written constitution incorporating the association's aims and rules.
3. The associations may or may not be named and have a special uniform.
4. In their formal aspects, the associations seem to

be modeled after Western practices.

5. The introduction of a money economy has altered its traditional features. Dues are now collected as well as entrance fees.

6. There is usually a larger number of office holders than in the traditional associations.

7. Tribal or regional similarity as a basis of admission to membership is not strongly adhered to.

Some of the most important factors contributing to the changes were the introduction of new tools and techniques, market expansion and a standard medium of exchange.

Cooperative Work Groups

Mutual aid associations are still active and in much the same form as mentioned previously in most of the rural areas, especially in agricultural production. The duties and obligations of both employer and worker have not drastically modified the patterns of labor or the techniques used in agricultural labor.

Where age grades or sets exist, their functions have been somewhat modified because of an extension of duties and the influence of Western ideas and technology. Age grades are often used on large scale public works projects, such as roads and bridges. An example is recorded among the Yoruba people in Kabba Province in Nigeria concerning the use of age grade labor on road construction (Nigeria Magazine No. 62 1959:249-251). The age grade group was led by a man who had specialized in leading such groups for more than thirty-eight

years. The work was combined with a pleasurable activity, for, as the article states, the headman:

...was engaged in turning the grading of a new surface into a dance. Helped by some local drummers, he danced an intricate measure in front of a line of young men, whose hoes would suddenly bite into the ground in time with the music. A few bars later, all the workers were dancing as their hoes fell.

In the more urbanized areas of Nigeria and Ghana, full time workers are now employed on public works projects and are paid out of administration revenues.

Craft Guilds

There have been some changes in the traditional modern craft guilds which can be summarized as follows:

1. The introduction by the British of new crafts, such as barbering, building construction, and bicycle repairing, resulted in a breakdown of the traditional family control of such activities. They could not be owned and controlled by a particular kin group, but were open to anyone. Another factor influencing the decline of craft industries was the introduction of cheaper and better made foreign goods. How this affected the Awka blacksmiths of the Ibo peoples is reflected by the following statement (Nigeria Magazine No. 61 1959:153):

Against Awka products Birmingham and other hardware goods are competing successfully in price and quality. The demand for weapons has been dulled by law and order. Ornaments, from Awka smithies have been denounced as archaic, 'cumbersome and unwieldy' by the new civilization.

While much of the traditionally styled workmanship has now become, by and large, a thing of the past, this heritage

has not altogether been forgotten. Much of the traditional artistry of the woodcarver and the blacksmith has been incorporated in various modern public buildings, religious structures and interior furnishings. Examples of this workmanship can be found in the excellent reproductions in Nigeria Magazine (No. 60 1959:60-75, No. 61 1959:136-156).

2. Training and proficiency now depend largely upon some knowledge of Western technology. Tools are no longer made but purchased.

3. The guilds are composed of a number of persons practicing one trade. The members may or may not be related. The association is headed by a craftsman who is either the oldest member, first to practice in the town, or is elected by general consensus.

4. There is a set body of rules regulating membership. Every craftsman must be registered with the association, must attend meetings, and must pay dues regularly. Failure to do so can lead to a fine or a confiscation of tools. These rules also apply to strangers, even if only practicing the trade for a few weeks in a particular town. In some areas craft guild rules are enforced by local political authorities.

5. Economically, the guild functions to maintain a reasonable standard of work, determine rules for apprenticeship, fix wages for journeymen as well as their conditions of employment, fix prices for goods produced, and settle disputes among craftsmen, craftsmen and workers, and craftsmen and customers. The guild undertakes no social insurance programs

for its members; this is handled in the traditional manner by the guild member's lineage.

6. Politically, the guild head has the same prerogatives and obligations as his traditional counterpart, although in reality he functions only as tax collector and does not officially represent the members of the guild, who are represented through their individual lineage heads.

7. There exist several grades of skills: apprentice, journeyman and master. The trade organization sets rules of competence for each grade.

8. Religion plays no great part because of the ethnic and regional diversity of the members. However, the apprentice, upon reaching the grade of master, is formally blessed by the head craftsman at a ceremony which officially marks the transformation of the novice to the new status of master.

Trader Associations

In general, the formal aspects of trader associations have remained the same. The organization has changed little with Westernization except in the newly created industrial and commercial centers, such as Accra in Ghana and Lagos in Nigeria. What changes there are have been the result of the several factors mentioned above plus an expansion in the number of trade commodities and the rise of a class of middlemen traders. The markets are now composed of two types of traders, the traditional single-commodity traders, and multi-commodity traders who have set up credit with one of the large import firms. The goods are sold to the traditional traders

who in turn sell to the general public (Acquah 1958: 69-72, 86). Only traders of the first type are organized into an association.

Modern Associations

These are associations which are wholly modern in organization and objectives, and whose form and structure are modeled on Western practices. Little similarity is found between the traditional and the modern associations. Because of the introduction of foreign ideas of government and economics, many of the traditional and the traditional modern associations, in the form previously established, have been replaced by a more formal political organization, especially in the more urbanized sections of the countries involved. The authority over, and control of, various forms of associations have been placed in the hands of local political authorities who have been empowered to deal in such matters through the enactment of by-laws and rules. Through the modern political media, the duties and functions formerly performed by the traditional associations and groups, are now handled by special government departments set up for the purpose of the regulation of health, public works, education and social welfare. The regulation of labor, conditions of employment and wages also form part of the functions of the government. These powers formerly held in the hands of the guild leaders have been transferred to the modern political authority. With this transfer of regulatory authority, there was no longer a need for the tradi-

tion-oriented associations. New associations based upon the legal framework developed by the modern central government grew to replace them.

The following pages will be concerned with the growth and development of one form in particular, the trade union. The discussion will be divided into two sections, one for Ghana and the other for Nigeria.

Trade Unions in Ghana

Prior to the Second World War, the organization of labor in Ghana proceeded slowly. As in most of West Africa at this time, industrialization had not developed sufficiently to employ more than a minute percentage of those who were available and willing to work. Ghana was still largely a primary producer whose largest industries were mining and the growing and marketing of cocoa. The only other outlet for wage-labor was the civil service. It was among government workers that the nucleus for trade unionism first developed, largely under government sponsorship and supervision.

During the First World War, because of a pressing need for workers, the Gold Coast Government for the first time took an active part in labor affairs. First, it set up a Central Labour Bureau for the recruitment of labor, and second, it established Provincial Advisory Boards to deal with wage adjustment problems (Roper 1958:52). These bodies functioned fairly well until the conclusion of the

war, when production and defense work declined and caused a drop in employment. Many of the unemployed took advantage of the rising price of cocoa on the world market and returned to the rural areas. Those remaining in the urban areas felt a squeeze between a rising cost of living and stable wage rates. Although unorganized, in the modern sense, three groups of workers, the Public Works Department employees, the Railways Artisans and Workers, and the Mine Workers, presented to the government, in February of 1919, a petition for higher wages (Roper 1958:52). This plea, owing to the absence of any arbitration machinery, was settled at a high managerial level. At this time, trade union organization was nonexistent. Organized protests were temporary and sporadic. No attempt was made to create a permanent organization representing the working class through which to protest labor conditions. This stemmed from lack of outside support and education in the labor field rather than from any lack of organizational ability on the part of the workers. It had already been shown in the protest of 1919 and in subsequent strikes of the Railway and Public Works Department employees in 1921 that the workers formed a militant band ready for action. It must be pointed out that at this time labor disputes were sometimes resolved through what the workers considered to be the traditional way, that is through the existing native authorities, the chiefs (Roper 1958:54).

Although not assisting in the organization of workers,

the colonial administration did not legislate against it. A reaction to unionization, however, stemmed from three major sources: management of private and public businesses, central and local administrations, and the native administrations. Other factors during the period 1919 to 1938 that seriously hampered trade union growth and development were the following:

1. The migratory labor supply which was not easily organized added to the slow growth of unionism.
2. The cycle of depressed and inflated cocoa prices caused either a labor shortage or an excess of labor in the urban areas. During the periods of inflation and high cocoa prices the workers felt no need to organize, as working conditions and wages were ideal for their needs. During depressed periods with high unemployment, organizing proved difficult except among those in skilled occupations.
3. Most persons employed as wage laborers worked either for the government or the mining companies. In the former, organizational development was hampered because of the lack of governmental support and because of its paternalistic attitudes toward the African workers. In the mining industries both management and the high labor mobility discouraged trade union organization.
4. Finally, the intrusion of native authorities into employment problems tended to discourage labor unionism.

Although no spectacular nor even solid advance in trade union organization took place during the crises years

from 1929 to 1932, it can be said that during this period the idea of unionization first took root among the divergent groups of wage-laborers.

Since 1929, the British Parliament has passed a series of Colonial Development Acts which contain provisions for help in trade union organization in all projects and industries which were partially or wholly paid for out of government funds. However, because of administrative difficulties and a lack of funds, Bourret (1949:175) remarks that it was not until:

...1938 that the first labor department of any West African Colony...(was established in Ghana, and)...the department, which consisted of four European and six African officials, strongly supports the movement for trade unionism and collective bargaining.

The Labor Departments were run by a Labor Commissioner and assisted by a staff which (International Labour Organization 1958:469):

...includes various experts such as factory inspectors, officials in charge of vocational guidance and placement, and considerable office staffs. These Labour Departments are part of the local administration, but they deal only with labour problems and report directly to the chief officer of the territory.

On a higher level there were three bodies which directed and assisted the colony's labor departments. These were: a Social Service Department in the colonial office that advised and co-ordinated labor policy; a Labor Advisor and two assistants, under the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who acted as intermediaries between the Secre-

tary and the colony's Labor Departments; and a Colonial Labour Advisory Committee which studied labor problems and advised the Secretary of State for the Colonies on these matters.

In 1941 a Trade Union Ordinance was passed in the British Parliament that officially sanctioned the development of labor unions, thus lending official support where previously it had been lacking. As stated by The International Labour Organization (1958:223):

The principal characteristic of the legislation specifically designed to protect and guarantee the right of association in the British Territories is that it is based on models largely determined by United Kingdom's law and practice and intended to enable trade unions to pursue their objectives with legality, subject to certain safeguards.

With the passage of this ordinance, professional organizers from the British Trade Union Movement were engaged, and with the help of the labor officers, began working in Ghana early in 1942. Even with government help and backing, it was only toward the end of the war years that trade unions developed enough strength for action. Some of the causes for this slow beginning can be attributed to suspicion of public authorities, strong dependence still on the native authorities, a lack of educated leadership among the workers, and the workers' dependence upon government action in the settlement of industrial grievances. It was during these troubled times that the strike became the dominant means of obtaining results in trade union

disputes.

With the conclusion of World War Two, there followed a period of economic and social unrest. Inflation, brought about by lump sum payments in retroactive wage adjustments, and an increase in the labor force, caused by returning servicemen, contributed toward the unstable conditions. The returning veterans, having been trained technically and having in the course of their travels experienced a different and often higher standard of living than they had known previously, were no longer satisfied to remain at their present level. It was during this post-war period that the trade union movement experienced its greatest growth. From a slow starting point in 1942, union membership rose at an accelerated rate.

Table 7. Trade Union Growth, 1942 to 1957, Ghana.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Unions</u>	<u>Membership</u>
1942	4	913
1943	4	-
1944	11	482
1945	14	6,030
1946	24	10,976
1947	28	30,458
1948	41	38,135
1949	56	17,985
1950	61	28,170
1951	65	32,908
1952	73	35,129
1953	73	46,309
1954	-	-
1955	82	48,520
1956	-	-
1957	80	128,000

Source: Roper 1958:107.

In February of 1958, the United States Department of Labor published a limited survey of labor unions in Africa. Although designed mainly to serve as a directory of labor unions, the survey includes much valuable data on the number and size of the trade unions as well as a very short and concise background sketch for each country covered. The number of trade unions in Ghana was at that time over eighty, with a combined membership of about 128,000. The unions ranged in size from the Ghana Mines Employees' Union with a membership of 26,581, to the Accra Chemical Works' Union with only twelve members. Generally speaking, close to seventy percent had a membership of five to one thousand and only seven percent had a membership of over ten thousand.

Table 8. Trade Union Size, Ghana.

<u>Membership Range</u>	<u>Number of Unions</u>	<u>Percentage of Unions</u>
5 to 500	23	42%
500 to 1,000	14	26%
1,000 to 5,000	10	18%
5,000 to 10,000	3	6%
10,000 and over	<u>4</u>	<u>7%</u>
Total	54	99%

Source: U. S. Office of International Labor Affairs,
1958:13.4-13.16.

It would be advisable before proceeding further to look at the forms which the trade unions have taken. According to Acquah (1958:84) and Roper (1958:68), the organiza-

tion of trade unions takes the forms of enterprise unions, general unions, and industrial unions. An enterprise union is one whose membership is limited to the employees of a single company or to the branches of a single company located apart from the head office. An example of this type is the United Africa Company Employees' Union. General unions are those which include in their membership persons of unrelated trades as well as both skilled and unskilled craftsmen. These are similar to enterprise unions except that they may include more than one company and locality. The industrial union is composed of persons working within one certain type of industry, crossing company lines. Broadly speaking, the industrial union is national rather than local in scope, but many of the enterprise unions can also be considered national if the single company, with all its branch offices, negotiates as a unit. Of the sixty trade unions registered in Accra in 1955, forty-three were national, while only seventeen were strictly local unions. Some of the reasons for the modest development of industrial unions or for the amalgamation of related trade unions can be given as follows:

1. Amalgamation was resisted by the unions who had gained higher wage benefits for themselves. They feared that combining with a union on a lower wage scale would tend to depress their wages.

2. Testing and apprenticeship standards were not uniform and, according to Acquah (1958:84):

Consequently, there have not emerged classes of workers who feel an identity of skill and purpose irrespective of where they are employed.

3. There was employer hostility to any plan to create combinations beyond company lines. They preferred to deal separately with their own employees.

For these reasons the trade unions tended to remain, for the most part, small in size and limited in scope. This fundamental weakness produced further complications. A small membership resulted in limited funds, and a low standard of administration created an inefficient, ineffective organization incapable of unified action. Attempts to solve this problem had been only partially successful. The lack of communications as well as the dispersion of major employment centers over a large geographical area were two major remaining obstacles. The smaller unions had neither the time nor funds available to send delegates to a national convention. On the other hand, a national convention could not depend upon a sufficient and constant supply of funds to maintain itself.

The need for some type of unification of trade unions under one central head had been uppermost in the minds of many of the larger labor associations. The result of this concern was the organization of the Trade Union Council, in 1943, at the request of the Railway Workers' Union. Although affiliation was not compulsory, a large number of trade unions joined during the years 1945 to 1948. The structure of the T. U. C. was modeled essentially on the lines of the

British T. U. C. and served in an advisory capacity to the member unions. At the convention, local and regional differences were ironed out and new ideas in union management were exchanged. The Trade Union Council was not an effective body, however, because it could not exert adequate pressure to force adherence to its policies.

From 1947 on, political events entered the picture and resulted in a change of emphasis and orientation in the Ghana Trade Union Council. In general, the T. U. C., as a national expression of the trade union movement, became a militant body. The trade unions were one of the few channels through which local leaders could make their political, social, and economic views heard and felt. During this time, also, the power potential reversed. The individual trade unions decreased in influence on the national scene, and the T. U. C. gained in power.

One of the basic reasons for the growing T. U. C. strength was the greater degree of political independence given to the Ghanaians by the colonial administration. Since 1947, Ghanaians had been allowed to control completely the internal affairs of the country; external affairs still remained under the authority of the colonial administration. Political parties grew and with them a great many militant leaders. Two parties grew to national prominence: The United Gold Coast Convention Party, which advocated a moderate path to political freedom, and the Convention People's Party, a militant offshoot of the U. G. C. C. under the

leadership of Kwame Nkrumah. Both political parties based their strength on the urban population, and appeals were directed in this direction. However, the U. G. C. C. looked for support among the urban elite while the C. P. P. focused on the urban and rural working class. Working through this media, the C. P. P. succeeded in inciting, with the help of organized labor, a "Positive Action Strike" in 1950. The results placed the C. P. P. in a position of political power, but because of the riots and reckless strike tactics, trade union and T. U. C. solidarity were greatly weakened. The T. U. C. was finally reorganized under new leadership in 1951 but in 1952 a rival T. U. C., the Ghana Trade Union Congress, was formed. In 1953, however, this group merged with the former T. U. C., and at the Tenth Annual Convention in 1954 formed the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress. From this point on, stable conditions prevailed in the national trade union movement (Roper 1958:76-79; U. S. Office of International Labor Affairs 1958:13.2-13.3).

In January of 1957, at the Thirteenth Annual Convention of the Ghana Trade Union Congress, the General Secretary, John Tettegah, introduced a resolution calling for the structural reorganization of the G. T. U. C. This resolution was adopted at the Fourteenth Annual Convention a year later. The plan consisted of two basic modifications which tended to form an all-powerful centralized body through which all trade union policy would be forthcoming.

The first point concerned the structure of the Con-

gress. According to Tettegah (1958:26-28) the Congress will:

...be composed of sixteen National Industrial/Occupational Unions....(and the) National Unions of the Congress before the adoption... (of this new resolution, afterwards)...shall seek membership of one of the 16 National Unions according to their industry, trade or service....The National Union will continue to enjoy the same autonomy as at present.

The second point concerned the government of the Congress. There was to be a Supreme Congress which would meet biennially. The delegates would be elected from the sixteen National Unions on the basis of membership, one delegate for every five hundred members. The Supreme Congress would elect from its members an executive board of twenty-five members, one representative from each National Union plus nine at large.

To assist in the implementation of this reorganization, the government was petitioned by the T. U. C. to initiate certain legislation for the benefit of the union movement. As a result, the Industrial Relations Act of 1958 was passed in Parliament. Four basic points of this act placed the newly reorganized T. U. C. in a stronger position (Labour Oct. 1960:17):

1. A checkoff system was made enforceable by law. This placed the T. U. C. and the National Unions in a stable financial position. A steady and reliable source of revenue could now be expected.

2. The union shop was mandatory. Every person seeking work in industry now had to join, within thirty days of

his employment, the trade union representing the workers of that industry. In this way the labor force became completely unionized, for:

...the bill made it compulsory for every employee whether he is a civil servant or whether he is employed by a firm, to become a member of the Trade Union Congress. (Labour Oct. 1960:17).

3. All employers were compelled to hire workers through the T. U. C. hiring hall.

4. An Unfair Labour Practices Tribunal was created to handle worker grievances.

With the Industrial Relations Act behind them, the newly reorganized T. U. C. program was adopted, with little resistance, on April 10, 1959. Figure 3 contains the schematic diagram of this organization. Now for the first time in Ghanaian labor history, labor policy was centered in one body which was empowered by law to direct, advise, and regulate the affairs of labor.

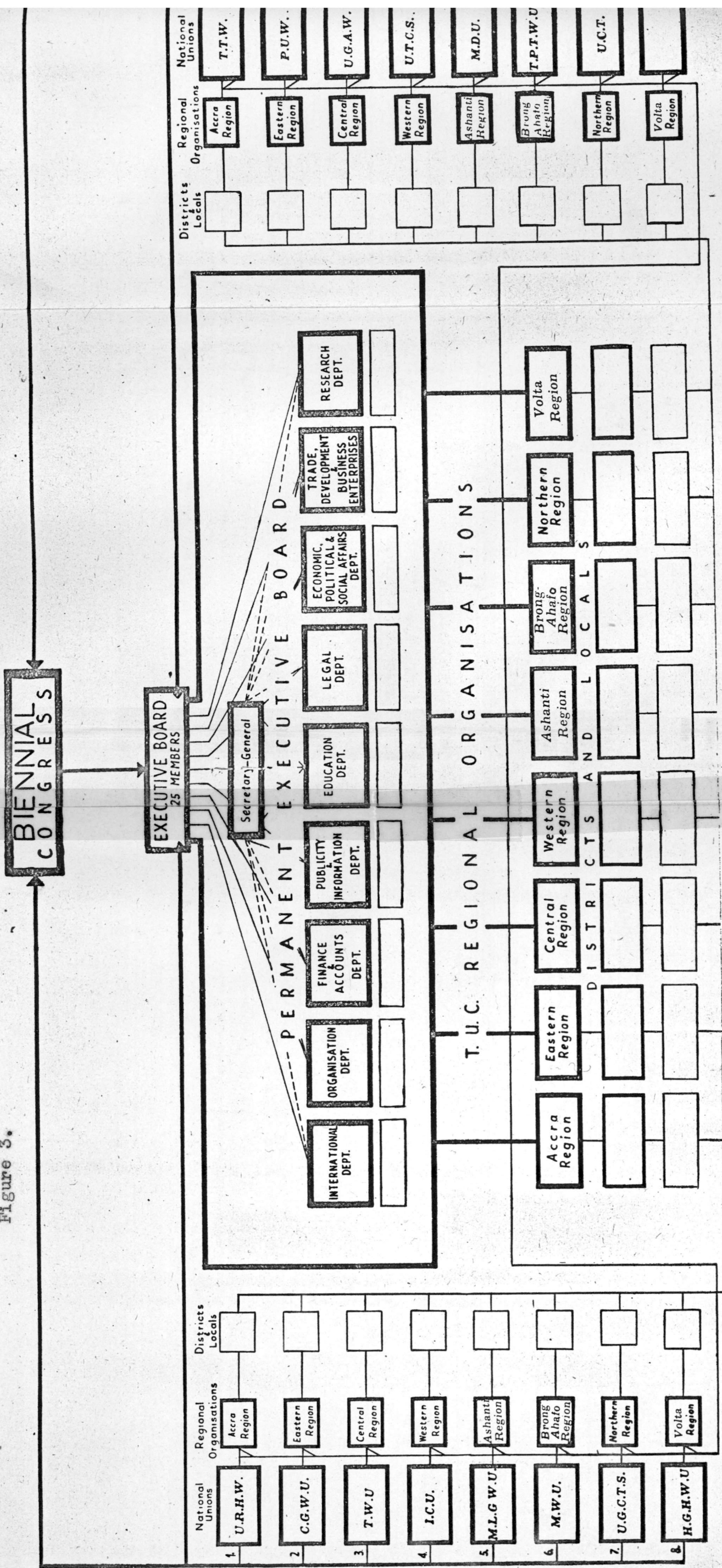
The government of Ghana took a further hand in labor matters when, in July 20, 1960, a National Apprenticeship Advisory Board was created in order to (Labour Sept. 1960:7):

...assist tradesmen in improving their skill, thereby creating opportunities for them to enjoy better working conditions with increased productivity.

This move was necessitated by the need to standardize the requirements for the training of skilled labor.

Finally, following in the anti-traditionalist pattern of the C. P. P., the government passed a bill compelling all

Figure 3.



NEW T.U.C. STRUCTURE — YOUR NATIONAL UNIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Union of Railway and Harbour Workers (URHW) | 11. Union of General Agricultural Workers (UGAW) |
| 2. Construction and General Workers Union (CGWU) | 12. Union of Teachers and Cultural Services (UTCS) |
| 3. Timber and Woodworkers Union (TWU) | 13. Maritime and Dockworkers Union (MDU) |
| 4. Industrial, Commercial and General Workers Union (ICU) | 14. Teamsters and Private Transport Workers Union (TPTW) |
| 5. Municipal and Local Government Workers Union (MLGWU) | 15. Union of Catering Trades (UCT) |
| 6. Mine Workers Union (MWU) | |
| 7. Union of Government Clerical and Technical Services (UGCTS) | |
| 8. Health and General Hospital Workers Union (HGHWU) | |
| 9. Transport and Telecommunication Workers (TTW) | |
| 10. Public Utility Workers Union (PUWU) | |

eligible males to register for work with the T. U. C. These men who were so registered could be placed at work, with or without personal consent, at the discretion of the T. U. C. Furthermore, they could be transferred forcibly to any part of the country in which work was available. This bill was passed in order to counteract the tendency of the African worker to remain in the large urban areas. In the city, he lived on the support of relatives, even though no work was available, and refused to move to other areas in which there was a labor shortage. Many workers, who had claimed traditional kin-group support while unemployed were now put to work. (New York Times Aug. 27, 1960:2).

Trade Unions in Nigeria

Little progress was made in organizing labor into bargaining units on the industrial scene up to 1939. Although several labor associations had been organized since the early 1930's, they suffered from many handicaps (Roper 1958:52-57). Some of the factors which tended to inhibit trade union growth and development at this time are listed as follows:

1. The lack of protective legislation left the labor unions unsure of their position in relation to their employers. As Warmington states (1960:4):

...in the absence of any trade union legislation, the legal position of these unions

was a little obscure and they probably relied for their continued existence on the tolerance of their employers and on their pursuit of moderate policies and the avoidance of actions likely to irritate the employers....

2. An unstable labor force, made up for the most part of migrant, unskilled laborers who sought work for an indefinite period of time, was not conducive to the organization of labor unions.

3. There was a lack of a feeling of exploitation among the workers. The worker has (Warmington 1960:118):

...no initial a priori idea that there may be 'exploitation' of his labor by the employers: he has left home voluntarily and come to work to get better opportunities than exist at home, and there is no essential conflict that he can see between his interests and those of his employer in the nature of employment. Indeed, having no understanding of the real purpose of the industrial enterprise - the concept of profit is not generally understood in relation to the activities of the corporation, and the relations between worker and employer are generally assumed to be analogous to family or tribal relations....

4. During the depression period employment fell. This period of unemployment placed the trade unions in a weak bargaining position. A return to somewhat stable conditions and slow economic expansion during the latter part of the period, 1937-1939, however, did not revitalize trade union activity. Generally, the periods which mark the greatest expansion in the trade union movement are those in which employment conditions, wage rates, and living costs change rapidly.

5. The few job opportunities caused by lack of industrial development hindered the building of a permanent labor force.

6. Wage-laborers usually were not wholly dependent upon the wages they received for full support. The wages earned either helped to supplement their agricultural incomes, or wages were supplemented by agricultural produce grown near the centers of employment. As a result, the worker felt no immediate interest in bettering his working conditions.

From 1939 to 1945, two factors of great importance encouraged both rapid industrial development and trade union organization. The first was the enactment, beginning in 1939, of the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. The acts called for the compulsory registration of trade unions, the establishment of a labor department, and defined the status, rights and the legal obligations incumbent upon the trade unions. As stated by Warmington (1960:7):

The growth of trade unionism has been facilitated by the passage of protective legislation and by government's policy of positively encouraging the establishment of responsible workers' organizations and guiding them on the lines considered (on British experience) to be the soundest ones.

By 1941, a Labour Department was officially set up and staffed. With the help of trained union organizers, registrations proceeded at a quick pace.

The second factor to influence trade union growth

was World War Two. The war years called for an expansion of industrial units in order to supply the allied world with strategic materials for defense. Increased manpower demands were made by the newly established industries and many changes on the economic and social level resulted from this expansion:

1. There was a rapid increase in employment stimulated by both industrial expansion and the need for recruits for the armed forces. This in turn brought about a labor shortage.

2. The rapid economic expansion brought an end to stable prices and wage rates.

3. As a protest to soaring prices and high living costs, trade unions were organized.

The rapid increase in both the number of trade unions registered and of members listed is evident from the following Table.

Table 9. Growth of Trade Unions, 1940-1945, Nigeria.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Unions</u>	<u>Membership</u>
1940	5	3,500
1941	27	12,892
1942	80	26,275
1943	85	27,154
1944	91	30,000
1945	97	27,261

Source: Roper 1958:107.

The trade unions which formed at this time were, however, in an awkward position. Any disruption of the war

effort would only bring about disapproval from the government since at this time most of organized labor consisted of government employees. This did not prevent the newly organized labor unions from demanding certain benefits by threatening to strike. This proved to be so effective that soon the strike became the basic bargaining tool. The administration then was forced to take an active hand in the settlement of labor disputes which led to several official wage boosts. These raises formed an added incentive for further trade union growth. (Roper 1958:58-61).

A period of economic unrest following the war caused a further expansion of the trade union movement. Returning veterans looking for work, increased numbers of technical trainees from the wartime industries, and a rising cost of living also contributed to the unrest. At this time, strikes became increasingly the method employed for the settlement of trade disputes. Trade unions, although recognized by the government, were not seen in a favorable light by private industry. Since they failed to recognize the trade unions as representatives of labor, management often would not negotiate. Little understanding was shown by either side, largely due to the inexperience of both sides in the handling of such affairs. Private business felt that its prerogatives in the management of its own affairs were endangered, and refused to consider the demands of union representatives. They often went to such extremes as locking their doors, dismissing all employees, or removing the labor leaders

to other branches of the company. Small wonder then that, in the face of the resistance by both sides to understand the other's position, trade unionism grew as fast as it did.

Table 10. Growth of Trade Unions, 1946-1949, Nigeria.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Unions</u>	<u>Membership</u>
1946	100	52,747
1947	109	76,362
1948	127	90,862
1949	140	109,998

Source: Roper, 1958:107.

The colonial administration failed to provide the adequate mediation and arbitration machinery through which negotiations could take place peaceably (Roper 1958:62-67).

From 1950 to 1960, trade union development is marked by a decrease in the use of the strike and an increase in the solving of labor disputes at low-level mediation. This was brought about mainly through the Labour Department's increased activity in the affairs of labor and management. Instead of a large company-wide strike, official or unofficial, being called over some minor local issue, grievances were settled at lower managerial levels. For example, during the period 1954 to 1955, there had been fifty labor disputes of which thirty resulted in strikes. The most important was the strike of the mineworkers on the Jos Plateau over wage claims. This strike finally had to be set-

tled by an arbitration tribunal.¹ In the period 1956 to 1957, there occurred one hundred and five disputes of which only thirty-three resulted in strikes. Only one of these had to be settled by arbitration (U. S. Bureau of Foreign Commerce 1957:94).

Under stricter governmental supervision and control, the trade union movement grew more quickly than at any other period of its history. Following government example, more and more of the privately owned businesses accepted unionization. The registration figures bear this out quite well.

Table 11. Growth of Trade Unions, 1951-1960, Nigeria.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Unions</u>	<u>Membership</u>
1951	144	144,386
1955	177	165,082
1960	250	250,000

Source: U. S. Bureau of Foreign Commerce, 1957:169.

Accurate figures for determining the size of trade unions are almost impossible to obtain; they are usually overstated and because of the migrant nature of most of the labor supply, union membership rosters are in a constant state of flux. Then too, little is done by the union officials to keep accurate accounts of trade union membership. Even so, an informed guess can be made from the statistics

1. The mine workers seem to have been a constant source of lengthy labor disputes. The bloodiest and most national in scope prior to this time was the mine workers' strike at Enugu, November of 1949, in which many persons were killed or injured.

available. Warmington (1960:7) states that about thirty percent of the trade unions claim a membership of over a thousand while over one-third of the trade unions have less than one hundred members. Of the one-third with less than one hundred members, about one in five have less than fifty members. These figures indicate that unions are either very large or very small. The figures quoted are partially confirmed by those which were taken from the information gathered by the United States Department of Labor.

Table 12. Size of Trade Unions, Nigeria.

<u>Membership Range</u>	<u>Number of Unions</u>	<u>Percentage of Unions</u>
0 - 500	13	22%
500 - 1,000	10	17%
1,000 - 5,000	27	46%
5,000 - 10,000	2	3%
10,000 - 20,000	6	10%
20,000 and over	<u>1</u>	<u>2%</u>
Total	59	100%

Source: U. S. Office of International Labor Affairs, 1958:21.4-21.20.

Care, however, should be taken when using the above Table, for of the three hundred and thirteen trade unions registered, only sixty have been listed by the Department of Labor. Nevertheless, the figures given for union membership come close to the estimated total number of wage earners listed as belonging to labor unions in Nigeria. Furthermore, assuming that only the largest have been listed is as erroneous as it is to assume that those not listed fall into the

less than one thousand membership bracket, for if such were the case the percentage figure derived from the revised figures would be eleven percent above one thousand and eighty-eight percent below one thousand and consequently in sharp disagreement with figures given by Warmington. All in all, it is highly probable that while most of the remaining unlisted trade unions undoubtedly fall into the lower brackets, enough claim a large membership so that the distribution is not too different from the original figures.

Federations of Labor

Before going on to a discussion of some of the difficulties and particular problems which have been encountered by the Labour Department and union organizations in Nigeria, attention will be turned to trade union organization at a higher level, that of trade union federations.

The Nigerian Trade Union Congress was first organized in 1943 and served for many years as the only representative of labor on a national scale. A split in the Congress occurred in 1949, mainly on political grounds. To resolve the differences which arose, a new organization emerged in 1953 called the All Nigerian Trade Union Federation. By the end of 1954, thirty-eight of the one hundred and seventy-seven Nigerian trade unions had become affiliated. This represented about 91,215 out of 165,082 members. From 1954 until 1957 only an additional nineteen trade unions joined the national association (U. S. Office of International Labor Affairs 1958:21.2-21.3).

There were several reasons for this failure to affiliate:

1. Because of the great size of Nigeria, the distance between industrial centers and the very poor means of communication, there is a real difficulty in correlating activities between the T. U. C. officials and the separate unions.

2. The cost of travel and the time lost from work prevent frequent meetings of union delegates. As a result, the T. U. C. officials tend to act on their own concerning matters of policy.

3. The burden of financing the travel and incidental expenses of union delegates is prohibitive to most affiliated unions.

4. Many of the trade unions distrust the motives of the T. U. C. because of its tendency to become involved in politics.

In April of 1957 another split occurred and a dissident faction of the A. N. T. U. F. formed another organization called the National Council of Trade Unions. The newly organized N. C. T. U. consisted of twenty affiliates. By the end of 1957 the A. N. T. U. F. embraced thirty-nine affiliated unions with a membership of 57,116. The N. C. T. U. contained twenty-four affiliated unions with a membership of 49,946 (U. S. Office of International Labor Affairs 1958:21.2).

Problems in Trade Union Development

Trade union development has been hampered by par-

ticular problems which cannot be solved quickly but which must in time be eliminated or alleviated before an efficient and effective control of industrial relations can be achieved. The problems fall into one of three major categories: organization, internal administration, and employer relations.

Difficulty in the communication of ideas looms as one of the basic problems. This includes not only the difficulty of communication between union officials and union members, but also between industry and the trade union and between the public administration and the labor union.

Industrial size poses a second problem. Most industries in Nigeria are of a small size in which the family makes up the basic working unit, augmented in some cases by a few hired laborers. These small industries provide most of the wage earning opportunities in the country and this poses a handicap of no mean proportion to the development of an active trade union organization. The workers in the small businesses are often related and closely tied to their employers who not only pay their wages but very often include such extras as housing and food. The mutual loyalties which the employer and employees develop are strong, especially in view of the constant face-to-face contacts between them. This tends to build up a sense of mutual obligation and trust. It is no wonder then that unionization tends to be stronger in the larger industries where no such intimate contacts are possible.

Third, the characteristics of the labor force itself are the greatest detriment to the organization of labor unions. The high mobility rate, seasonal work habits, and lack of technical education are all factors which hinder the establishment of the stable, permanent, and specialized labor force seemingly necessary for an effective trade union program.

The defects in the internal administration of trade unions are caused by many of the same factors mentioned above. Poor communications and individualistic tendencies of leadership lead to unorganized general policy. Union branches tend to go their own way in labor policy. There is a lack of moral as well as financial support from the membership. Also, because of the lack of union leaders trained in trade union practices, Warmington (1960:10) notes that:

Standards of administration of Public Monies in West Africa tend not to be high when there is not strict supervision by a body which can apply sanctions against misapplication or poor accounting....There seems to be a tradition of more or less personal administration of funds, possibly on the analogy of chiefly administration.

The Department of Labour has looked askance at such behavior and at times has had to ask the Registrar of Trade Unions to revoke the registration of the offending labor union.

Relations between trade unions and employers, in the past and at present, have not always been congenial. The fault arises mainly because of the intolerance shown by

both sides which has often led to bad bargaining procedures. As Pedler (1951:101) remarks:

Among the teething troubles of African trade unions is the tendency to make unreasonable demands. Deplorable examples have occurred of strikes which could never succeed because the workers' demands were beyond all possibility of acceptance.

On the other hand, management has not always been willing to recognize the labor union as a responsible body which represents their workers. Warmington (1960:93) writes, concerning the attitude of the Cameroons Development Corporation:

There seems to have appeared on occasion a rather patronizing attitude, and, despite superficially friendly relations, a tendency to dismiss the statements of the union during consultative meetings and in negotiations as either ill-informed or unreliable, and some of their more progressive suggestions as being hardly open to consideration. This attitude, whether it were consciously held or not, would tend to lead to unnecessary bad feeling, and hence to difficulties in later negotiations.

As can be seen, the main factor leading to poor relations is caused directly by the inexperience in the handling of labor negotiations of both parties involved.

A final note to be touched upon concerns the psychological factor which can, when consciously or unconsciously expressed, affect negotiations. As Warmington (1960:12) remarks:

The unionist's attitude to a European management is necessarily affected by his attitude to Europeans qua Europeans - as representatives of an imperialist power or as foreign commercial exploiters, or simply of a rather arrogant

alien race - as well as by exaggerated differences in culture and ways of thought. The European has corresponding subconscious attitudes towards the African negotiators, coloured by general European trends of thought about Africans, and the fact that previously most contacts which the Europeans may have had with Africans have been with subordinates or servants rather than with equal parties to a contract.

CHAPTER V

TRADE UNIONS AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Introduction

There are more adequate reference materials upon which to draw conclusions on the relations between trade unions and the political system than was the case for the development of trade unions in either Ghana or Nigeria. Because of the close connection between political and economic life, much more has been written on the subject.

The average African laborer today is torn between two loyalties. This dualism is caused by the juxtaposition of two fields of administrative power: on the one hand the traditional authority structure which is generally localized in character, and on the other, the modern political system which is basically an import, modeled on the British system of government.

In West Africa the traditional political systems were marked in the most generalized sense by a monarchic administration coupled with a legislative and advisory body which was democratic in form. Both bodies served as a check upon the policies and powers of the other.

The monarchical nature of the traditional govern-

mental forms was evident by the choice of chiefs, both minor and paramount. In this case the leaders chosen were essentially those whose primary qualification was that they were members of the royal lineage within the community. This choice of leaders exemplifies the monarchical nature of the system in that only members of the local or regional royal families could be considered for the position of chief and as well for certain other positions of authority conferred on the basis of heredity. In the hands of these officials was placed the responsibility for the administration of the state. This included the distribution of lands, the appointment of minor officials, and the conduct of affairs of state, such as the organization of religious ceremonies which in itself formed the bulk of the activities of the chief of state. The office and the office holder were in the peculiar position of being in a more sacred than secular standing within the community. The chief was treated as a sacred agent. The well-being of the country or community depended upon his well-being. He carried within himself and in his actions all the sacred authority of the nation's and the community's Gods and God-like ancestors. His authority in all matters could not be disputed by any private citizen unless that citizen sat on the general council.¹

1. Even today the supporters of Dr. K. Nkrumah claim this sacredness of office to be operative (New York Times November 19, 1961:Sec. IV, p. 4).

The leaders of the state were limited in their powers by an advisory council made up of the heads of the leading families of the state. These met in conjunction with state executives and acted as advisors to the chiefs concerning problems not immediately covered under present legal precedent. In this way the heads of government received advice on local affairs and on the temperament of the population at large. Disregard of advice without sufficient cause, or admonishment by the general council for an ill-formed action could lead to the deposition of the chief. This very feature helped to prevent the government from becoming autocratic in form.

Traditionally the large states in Ghana and Nigeria, the Ashanti and the Yoruba for example, were not highly centralized. Each nation-state was composed of numerous semi-autonomous provinces. The provinces were broken up into a number of districts and subdistricts, each of which maintained many rights of self-determination in local and regional affairs. This loose federation of provinces and districts was bound together less by force than by a common heritage of such features as common language, customs, history, and territory.

As was stated previously, the formulation of government policy was democratic in the extreme, reaching to the lowest administrative unit within the state. At the lowest level, the village, the administration was formed as at the highest level, with a council and a chief. The meetings

were seldom closed but rather open to all adult members of the community. The temper of the community was always taken into account in the preparation and formulation of legislation. No action was taken which was not in unanimous agreement by all members of the council.

The modern political system with its free elective process, along with modern urbanization, increase in non-agricultural wage-labor, educational institutions, and the greater heterogeneity of population have led the way to greater personal freedom. Young men, particularly the educated, were ill-disposed toward the traditional authorities because of their conservative natures and their illiteracy. Under the new system an outlet was created, not only for the desires of the purely wage-seeking element of the population, but also for those dissatisfied persons who were previously contained within the traditional political system. Young men now could succeed more quickly and at an earlier age in the cities than under the traditional system. Another example of the means by which the modern political structure has aided the breakdown of traditional authority is the establishment of social welfare agencies designed to serve some of the same functions, such as sickness, accident, and unemployment insurance, as those within the traditional structure. The new political system is universal. It crosses not only ethnic but also religious and linguistic lines. Rules and regulations are equally applicable to all citizens within national boundaries.

Labor and the Modern Political Systems

As pointed out in an earlier chapter, the grouping of labor into economic associations was a traditional practice. Craft guilds and traders' associations formed the bulk of these organizations, but these forms differed widely in function and organization from the modern industrial unions. Although craft guilds and traders' associations exist today side by side with labor unions, the traditional forms had and still have no great influence on the structure and function of the present-day trade unions (Roper 1958:48-51). This study is concerned basically with the urban wage-earning element which in Ghana and Nigeria accounts for between five and ten percent of the population of both countries. Furthermore, this labor force is confined to the large population centers where traditional authority is relatively weak and uninfluential.

The labor union as an economic organization has been legally sanctioned, not by traditional authorities, but by the modern political machinery set up in both states. Moreover, the trade union is a body which has grown up within a framework of modern political law and sanctioned as the only legal force which is capable of and authorized to handle collective bargaining procedures in the modern industrial system. The labor movement is obligated to follow the legal structure as set up by the modern political system of which it forms a part. As a result, its actions are subordinated to the authority which legally sanctions its

existence. Because of its legal standards and law making powers, the government stands in a position to influence the growth of the labor movement. This power has been used extensively by the government of Ghana, as will be shown, but not, as yet, by that of Nigeria.

Ghana

In Ghana there is theoretically a two party system. One party, the Convention People's Party, predominates politically. The opposition, the United Party, is for all practical purposes defunct. This was amply demonstrated when the C. P. P. changed the form of government in 1960 from a loose federation to a strong central government and formed the Republic of Ghana over the objections of the United Party (Hessler 1960:29-31). A further example is the arbitrary imprisonment or exile of the top officials of the United Party, recently, as enemies of the state (New York Times October 4, 1961:1; and November 4, 1961:3).

The trade union movement has been very closely associated with the C. P. P. almost since its inception in 1949. The trade unions, as organized groups, were easily utilized toward gaining political ends, and they were used for this purpose. Adam (1959:126) writes that:

Modernization, social as well as economic, has been the keynote of this party's success. The growth in numbers of educated, detribalized citizens who need political organization and nationalist feelings to replace lost kinship ties and tribal loyalties, has provided a dedicated core of party workers.

This core of "dedicated party workers" is not only

to be found in the rank and file but also among the very leadership of the trade union movement itself. John Tettegah, the man largely responsible for the reorganization of the Trade Union Congress, is not only the General Secretary of the T. U. C. but also is a member of the C. P. P. Central Committee working closely with government officials. In its bid for power, the C. P. P. has not only depended upon mobilizing labor toward its own ends but has also reciprocated in many ways, such as meeting the demands of the more militant labor leaders. For this support, labor had unconditionally supported the C. P. P. in every political struggle. In an address, Mensah (Labour Nov. 1960:26), the Western Regional Secretary of the T. U. C. praised:

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who relieved the workers of economic hardship by the introduction of co-operative movements through the medium of 'Indusco' - Industrial Co-operative Societies Limited and the National Council of Co-operatives.

Labor's obligations to Dr. Nkrumah and the C. P. P. are further stressed (Labour Nov. 1960:23):

The clearest, most precise and positive contribution that Ghana Labour owes toward... the new Republic of Ghana - is to help in creating the principle system upon which a socialist way of life can be established and progressively developed.

And, it might be added, the T. U. C. follows the C. P. P. line on economic development. In the same article, Ghana Labour is called the "industrial wing" of the C. P. P., while the party is in turn spoken of as the "political expres-

sion" of the labor movement. Finally, becoming increasingly militant, the article further states that (Labour Nov. 1960:23):

Ghana Labour is naturally and originally committed to follow the Party-line...(and) ...no deviationist tendencies shall be tolerated from the rank and file...

In a statement by Frank de Veer (Labour Nov. 1960: 26), another high-ranking labor leader, the:

...worker's loyalty to the President and the government was unconditional and,... that no one could enjoy full protection and support of the trade union movement if he was not a member of the C.P.P.

Finally, in order to impress union solidarity and loyalty upon the membership, a list of points members should keep in mind was published (Labour Oct. 1960:4; Nov. 1960:22):

- You Are An Enemy Of The Union If...
- * You are an enemy of your trade union if you secretly convey a decision taken at a union meeting to management.
 - * You are an enemy of the union if you accept money or promotion as favour in return of leaking union information to management purposely to antagonise your union official - You are equally a traitor.
 - * You are an enemy of your union if you stand against a majority decision of the union which you know very well was taken in the interest of the movement.
 - * You are an enemy of the union if you fail to attend union meetings regularly.
 - * You are an enemy of the union if you undermine the solidarity of the working class movement.
 - * Any worker found indulging in these and other subversive activities must be exposed and denounced as the greatest enemy of society.

In education, the C. P. P. has taken further steps to ensure the close cooperation of labor by the establish-

ment of the Kwame Nkrumah Institute. In a speech delivered at the opening of the Hall of Trade Unions, Dr. Nkrumah (1960:6) stated:

I feel proud that my name should be associated with this Institute which will give educational and ideological training to Party activists, trade union officials, officers of the Farmers' Council and co-operators of the National Co-operative Council. In addition it will train freedom fighters from all over Africa who wish to come to Ghana for ideological and educational orientation.

The Institute will comprise two sections, namely, the Positive Action Training Centre and the Ideological Training Centre. The Kwame Nkrumah Institute will be controlled exclusively by the Central Committee and will not be subject to any regulations of the Education Department or the Ghana Educational Trust. It will be the chief means of counteracting the miseducation which has continued for so long and will in due course effectively direct the freedom movement for African emancipation.

The values and ideals which the political party considers necessary for the purpose of creating a socialist state will undoubtedly form the basis of the curriculum. While the Institute offers many subjects of very real and practical use for labor leaders, there is no denial that "Nkrumaism" will stand high on the list of those subjects required as a prerequisite for candidates taking course work.

Nigeria

In Nigeria's present situation, three political parties predominate in Federal and Regional affairs:

1. The National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons,

under the leadership of Dr. N. Azikwe, is the most militant and radical of the parties. Originally formed in the Eastern Region, it has managed to remain in control of the Eastern House of Parliament, as well as to become the spokesman for the opposition in the Western Regional Assembly.

2. The Action Party which controls the Western House of Parliament is under the leadership of Chief Awolowo, and was formed to counteract both the policies of the N. C. N. C. Party as well as to represent the interests of the Yoruba peoples. Conservative and somewhat ethnocentric in policy, it has not attained great national prominence in the Central Government.

3. The Northern People's Congress was formed as (Adam 1959:121):

...a political party in much the same way as the Democratic Party in Southern States of the United States, that is, it is primarily an instrument for the protection of an endangered social structure rather than a repository for national or regional policies.

This party now controls the administration of the Federation of Nigeria and is headed by Prime Minister Tafewa Balewa, a liberal member of the N. P. C.

As a result of this regional split in political affiliation, the situation in Nigeria is quite a bit more complex than that of Ghana. Several factors can be cited to point this out:

1. There is no single political party which controls the Federal Government to the exclusion of its oppo-

sition. Neither does any one party control exclusively the policy-making executive board.

2. The political party of greatest strength, the Northern People's Congress, derives most of its support from the area of least industrialization and consequently of least labor unionization.

3. The area of highest union organization is in the Western Region whose political party, The Action Party, comes out only second best in the formulation of national policy.

There is no evidence as yet of a feeling of national union solidarity great enough to have any political potential and which can effectively be put to use for the benefit of any one political party. Indeed, the evidence points out that a policy of independent action on the part of both labor leaders and the unions is more in line with trade union ideology in Nigeria.¹ At times, however, large scale industrial strikes have been used by political parties, but there is no evidence of the instigation of strikes by the union for political purposes. Rather, in times of such economic turmoil, promises are made by the contending parties to the trade unions for their support in an election. No prolonged allegiance to one party or the other, on either

1. For instance, reference can be made to the inability of organized labor to combine into a National Trade Union Congress expressing unity of purpose. Instead, today, there are two national councils to which only about one-third of the registered trade unions are affiliated.

a national or regional basis, is brought out by the record (Warmington 1960:7).)

Labor leadership is rather independent. It does not relish relinquishing its independence to the whims and fancies of politicians. On the hand, neither will it attempt to mobilize the forces at its disposal for the benefit of any higher ideological cause. It prefers to maintain the status quo. This separation of economic from political power becomes very evident from Warmington's study of the C. D. C. Workers' Union. In this case, the trade union had been used for personal benefit in relation to political ambition. Persons would attain an administrative position in the union through which wider contacts would be attained beyond union circles. Prestige was gained because of this position, as well as personal recognition over a large area, but rather than make use of the facilities of the trade union, the leaders would resign and then run for political office. This routine was followed in five successive instances during the history of the C. D. C. Workers' Union (Warmington 1960: 30).

Another example of the attainment of personal power strictly within the economic sphere and unattached to any single political motive is the case of B. O. Ojiye who, as Hodgkin (1958:137) states, conformed:

...to the traditional chiefly pattern: a 'wizard', who built up a great reputation for himself by the wage increases which he won for his miners, and came in time to dominate the mine management as well as his own union....

His unscrupulous handling of the Enugu Colliery Workers' Union, however, finally led to his imprisonment. Both of the above cases come from basically rural areas where central control is least likely to be strong. The situation may be quite different in the highly urbanized centers. Unfortunately there appears to be no information available at present as to the relative importance of trade unions to the political movements in such areas.

CHAPTER VI

THE EFFECTS OF TRADE UNIONISM IN GHANA AND NIGERIA

Although trade unionism is comparatively underdeveloped in Ghana and Nigeria, it has directly influenced certain aspects of the social, political, and economic systems of these countries. The greatest influence has been confined largely to the modern urban areas and its permanent residents. The percentage of wage-laborers, even including temporary workers, is still less than ten percent of the total populations of both countries. Of this small number, less than fifty percent have had any contact with labor unions in the past. This group is small numerically, but it is an important force today and will increase in importance with the growing industrialization of the future. Its importance stems from the fact that union members form the basis of a particular elite. In this elite, the beginnings of the formations of a new social structuring, based upon standards other than traditional may be seen. This new social class of industrial wage-laborers has emerged from contact and adaptation to a new economic system. Its importance lies in the potential influence it may be expected to have upon all segments of

West African society. Already definite changes and alterations in patterns of thought and action have occurred in most spheres of daily life. Several generalizations can be made concerning this emerging elite and its role in economic, political, and social change.

Trade Unionism and the Economic System

Although several forms of economic association were known in traditional society, it was not until the introduction of trade unionism by the British in the early 1940's that an organization whose prime objective was the protest of conditions of labor, was known. Mutual aid associations of various types are still much in use in traditional society. In spite of the many technological innovations which have been introduced by the Europeans, the daily agricultural routine has not basically changed. Few persons have as yet taken to large scale commercial farming or can afford to invest in costly labor saving farming devices. As a result, it is cheaper to call upon one's kin or friends when large amounts of labor are required than to invest in agricultural machinery.

The essentially conservative nature of rural areas, the close religious ties between man and the land, and also the traditional restrictions on the use of land, have had a direct bearing on the maintenance of the status quo. Moreover, community organizations are still very much an integral part of the social life in the rural areas. These associa-

tions act as a unifying force within the community in that close extra-kin ties are created. This in turn fosters a feeling of community well-being which transcends individual well-being through the mutual aid of all the members.

Although, over the years, the rural areas have tended to retain their traditional economic associations with little transformation in either form or function, this has not been the case in the larger villages and the urban areas. Contact with modern commercial and administrative institutions, as well as the influence of new ideas, has tended to modify much of traditional life and social organization.

The traditional economic association which has undergone the greatest change because of this European influence in the urban areas, has been the craft guilds. The general organization and function of the traditional guilds were markedly similar from society to society in Ghana and Nigeria. Each guild was formed of kindred, had a hierarchy of titled positions, was organized on local and national levels, and claimed a mythical origin of the craft and consequently the sole right to practice a certain craft. The guilds were basically concerned with economic problems, but in addition each had definite political, religious, and social prerogatives and duties. The head craftsmen of the guilds, in most cases, were given political titles and were considered members of the royal courts. The guild members themselves enjoyed a special social status within the community. Religiously, the guild often formed the nucleus of a cult with special extra-craft functions.

The guilds maintained strict control, often backed by political powers, over the production and distribution of goods as well as control over who might practice the craft. Three major factors in the political and economic scene contributed to the breakdown in the monopolistic control of the traditional guilds over industrial production:

1. The enforced peace under the British administration brought about a decrease in the need for armaments. Since the making of weapons formed the greater part of industrial production in many communities, a very important source of revenue was cut off.

2. The importation of European products, such as agricultural tools, textiles, and ornaments, made obsolete many traditional crafts because of the superior quality and competitive cost of the imported goods. This also had a drastic effect on the income of craftsmen as the traditional governments favored the imported goods.

3. The introduction of modern manufacturing techniques and technology, as well as new occupations, contributed to the breakdown of the traditional guild system. These innovations became public rather than private property.

Lacking the powers to control both producers and the production of goods, and with the loss of the greater part of their business, the guilds were in no position to dominate the market. Because the guild heads no longer could fulfill their obligations to the guild members, the members

in turn could no longer afford to give support to the guild leaders. To adjust to these conditions, craftsmen were forced to adopt new ideas and techniques as well as supplementary crafts in order to compete with free craftsmen. This led in turn to each craftsman becoming an individual economic unit, dependent upon his own ingenuity and adaptiveness to modern needs for support. The developing individualism aided by the absorption of new industries resulted in the breakdown of family control over production and distribution. This in turn led to the weakening and disintegration of the traditional craft organizations.

In its place, a new form of commercial and industrial control developed. The new association based its organization on the need to regulate and standardize economic conditions within a given industry. Structurally, the modern associations retained few features of the traditional guild organization. Several differences between the two forms are that in the modern guild, membership is open to any practicing craftsman, regardless of kinship ties, leadership is on an elective basis, and the members are governed by a formal set of rules and regulations agreed upon by all.

At the same time that the traditional organizations were undergoing a reformation, a new form of economic association was established in Nigeria and Ghana to meet the needs of wage-labor. This organization was the trade union. Trade unionism, however, was a form of association com-

pletely new and little understood by African labor. One of the reasons behind this difficulty in adaptation was that in traditional society, organized protest to recognized authority was seldom, if ever, resorted to. There was usually no need as the wants of workers were taken into account since the social status of the employer was partially dependent upon keeping as many workers as he could laboring in his behalf.

Another reason was that trade unionism made an appeal to the individual to combine with others for his own personal benefit. To the Ghanaian or Nigerian who had been brought up to consider first the welfare of the community rather than his own personal interests, this emphasis was out of focus with his training. However, trade unionism continued to expand, particularly after the Second World War. The growth in membership was very erratic, usually dependent upon the success of the trade union in meeting demands. The reasons for joining, in most cases, varied with the individual. Most persons showed little comprehension of the basic philosophy behind trade unionism and when questioned as to joining gave as reasons that they were forced, asked, or told to join. Many on the other hand, mistook the function of the unions and presupposed them to coincide with the functions of tribal unions or associations of a social or political nature with which they were more familiar. Changes in these attitudes required, above all, a permanent membership, active par-

ticipation in union affairs, and an understanding of the principles involved in the functions of organized labor. Since membership tended generally to be fluid, especially in the early days, little progress was made. On the whole, trade unionism, on its own efforts, made little headway except among certain classes, mainly among the skilled and professional workers and in certain large scale industries such as mining.

The presence of trade unions and European ideas of labor relations have served a dual purpose. First, an organization has been created by which an effective block of manpower is capable of bargaining with management on an equal level for the improvement of conditions of labor. A second purpose is manifest through its influence in changing attitudes concerning work, employers, and the responsibilities of wage laborers. To some extent, trade unions have acted to soften the impact on the workers of the radical changes involved in the shift from traditional to modern concepts of labor. Through this machinery the economic wants and needs of the wage-laborer are made known to the employer. The employers of industrial labor have also certain basic wants and requirements which are necessary to efficient industrial production. Although new patterns of labor are agreed upon and enforced by contract through labor negotiations, the greatest change in labor practices affects the worker, who must of necessity reform his work patterns. For modern industrial technology is unitary in

the sense that it cannot conform to the needs of the people but rather the people must conform to its needs. Of all the changes to which the African has to conform, an adjustment to a change in work patterns is the most difficult. The trade union forms an instrument which cannot be easily ignored by management and through which the African can have a voice in the speed and type of change which best suits his temperament.

In traditional society, the pattern of work is informal and although a certain amount of labor is expected of each individual, this can be done at the individual's convenience. There is also a close tie between religion and social and economic life. Much of the Africans' time is taken up satisfying social and religious obligations which occur at irregularly spaced intervals. As a result, much time is needed away from work. Furthermore, leisure time is highly valued as indicative of social status within the community. These factors have evolved into a pattern of labor which allows an informal work routine, irregular work habits, and a preference for leisure.

Counter to this runs a set of work patterns which developed out of the needs of modern industry. This work-ethic, ideally, demands of the wage-laborer that he work hard, be efficient, maintain regular hours at work, be dependable, be capable of assuming responsibility, and be able to take over a job with a minimum amount of training. An industrial society demands a certain degree of regi-

mentation and stability. There must be a steady source of labor available, trained and willing to work permanently.

In order to bring this about, the modern governments of Ghana and Nigeria have instituted welfare legislation. This legislation is designed, especially in Ghana, to decrease the control of traditional authorities and also to transfer the functions of social welfare from the family to the state. These programs give the individual an alternative to complete dependence upon his family for welfare. It is hoped that the incentives offered by the governments will be great enough to break up traditional kinship obligations and free more persons for work where and when needed. Since this legislation is fairly new, the effect it will have on the supply of labor for large scale industrial projects, such as that of the Volta River Power Project in Ghana, is unknown.

Attitudes toward employers in traditional society were usually tempered by the individual's actual relationship to his employer. There is, in traditional society, a standardized set of reciprocal obligations which regulate the behavior and actions between employers and employees. When entering the wage-labor market, the individual is placed in a setting in which these factors are inoperative. The individual is unsure of his position in relation to his modern employer. The type of work as well as the conditions of labor are equally unfamiliar. The modern employer is respected as a controller of economic

assets and as a leader. However, conflict occurs when the modern employers fail to meet obligations expected of an employer in traditional society. These obligations are, generally, to look after the social welfare of the employee and his family, to give counsel and advice to the employee's personal problems, and to furnish the individual with food, clothing and lodging. The modern employer is concerned with the social welfare of his workers only when it affects production, and feels his responsibility ends with the payment of wages.

Since the African worker is usually a rural emigrant, he comes into an unfamiliar situation in the city and participates in a much different life. His working companions, more likely than not, will be members of other tribal groups. He will have little of the companionship and sense of belonging that is typical of his small community. There are few friends to turn to and relatives to confide in. Contacts in the trade union may provide a substitute for the sympathy expected from employers and fellow employees. The trade unions, in this respect, perform an essential service in providing an outlet for the presentation and resolution of workers' grievances.

Trade Unionism and the Political System

Trade union involvement in political affairs developed along very different lines in Ghana and Nigeria. Whereas in Nigeria trade unions have purposely remained

aloof from politics, preferring to retain their independence, the trade unions in Ghana have in essence become an arm of the central government.

The relationship of trade unions to the modern political systems in both countries can be viewed in two ways, the influence of trade unions on the political system and the influence of the political system upon trade unionism. In Ghana, since its emergence as a free nation, there are extremely close ties between trade unions and the dominant political party in power. These ties grew out of mutual agreement as to the future economic and political development of Ghana as an industrial nation. Since trade unionism did not receive support from traditional sources and since economic innovations directly or indirectly threatened to undermine or drastically change traditional patterns of authority, labor turned to the only organization responsive to its needs. In return for this political confidence and need for political support, the trade union leadership became politically active. One of the issues which brought about this change in political allegiance from traditional authorities to modern authorities, was the lack of influence of the younger educated element in the governing of traditional affairs. Another factor which influenced this was that the modern political and economic organizations offered an alternative outlet for the expression of liberal ideas. The elite that emerged became very popular and influential, especially among the younger members of the country. This

emerging elite found the media of trade unions and political parties to be effective and useful expressions of their ideas.

In both Nigeria and Ghana the development of industrialization has led to the growth of large urban centers. These areas were not as populous in pre-British days, and their growth has depended upon migration from rural areas. Unfortunately, the working force in the industrial centers contains a high percentage of migratory short-time workers. Migratory labor has not proved to be a dependable source of wage-labor. In most cases the migrants had neither first hand background in industrial practices nor were they very well educated. This resulted in raising production costs because of the high turnover and expensive training processes. For these reasons industrial production needs a permanent labor force. In order to create a permanent labor supply, greater incentives had to be offered to induce labor to leave the rural communities and take up permanent residence in the cities where their labor was needed. Furthermore, these incentives had to be great enough to counteract traditional obligations. With this end, the government of Ghana complied. Social welfare measures were legislated which included unemployment insurance, health and welfare programs, and pension plans. Also both the central government and the labor unions united in wholehearted support of privately and publicly established cooperative and insurance schemes. It was hoped that these measures would offer alter-

native welfare programs to those existing in traditional society. Second, it was hoped to create an independent atmosphere in which the individual could succeed in divorcing himself from traditional kinship obligations and become increasingly dependent upon outside authorities for his welfare.

The government of Nigeria, however, has not taken as strong a stand on social welfare measures. Nigeria's federal structure is very weak and very much under the control of traditional authorities in two out of three of its regions. Any plan to alter the established customs would meet with serious objections. As a result, the trade unions in Nigeria have preferred to remain free of political control and domination, functioning almost exclusively in the economic sphere. The larger trade unions have been wooed from time to time for their political support, but for considerations of practical interest, labor has not become openly affiliated with any one party. On this issue, labor has shown an intelligent restraint to becoming embroiled in non-economic matters. The Enugu Colliery Workers' Union and the C. D. C. Workers' Union, both organizations capable of effective political action, have refrained from political activity. Although the leadership of both unions commanded considerable prestige and respect among the membership, none directly used this potential to gain political office or to involve their unions in political action.

One final point can be made. This concerns recent

attempts by the government of Ghana directly to control all trade union activity through either political influence or legislation. In 1959 all trade unions were reformed into sixteen large national unions under the control of a central executive board and indirectly under the control of the central government. Next, all union members were required to join one of the national unions, to register if unemployed at the union hiring hall, and to submit to a "voluntary" checkoff. Furthermore, all employers were required to apply for help through the hiring hall. Finally, further legislation was enacted to force all persons able to work and who were not employed to register and accept employment from whatever source and wherever needed. This was passed in order to force workers out of areas oversupplied with labor into areas where there was a shortage. It also was hoped to force economic hangers-on from dependence for support upon working members of their family, a traditional obligation that many abused.

This extreme control of labor contrasts sharply with the comparative freedom of the worker in Nigeria. However, the conditions behind this are quite different for both countries. In Ghana, the government has instituted a program of fast industrial expansion which calls for the control and regulation of a large labor force in order to insure some measure of success. As industry expands, so will the need for more industrial labor. As a permanent labor supply has not developed voluntarily, mainly because of

traditional ties to land and family, it has had to be forced. Since this legislation is fairly recent, the impact it will have upon the traditional economy and social system cannot as yet be fully ascertained. One thing that is certain, however, is that as time goes by traditional authority will be substantially weakened.

The Trade Unions and the Social System

Intermittent or permanent contact with the modern economic systems of Ghana and Nigeria has produced changes in various aspects of the social system. Labor in both countries is of two general types: migratory short time laborers and permanent laborers. By and large, most permanent laborers are union members and form the basis for the laboring elite. Among this elite, modern attitudes toward employers, labor, and industrialization have become engrained and part of their lives. It is to this class that transient labor looks for explanations concerning modern industrial practices. Although migrant labor comes under the influence of trade unions for only a short while, the concepts of industrialization are no longer new. Some of the effects are retained and adapted where possible in the rural economic situation. This is a foot in the door and is the unconscious mechanism by which the permanent elite transmits their influence to the rural community. The function of the elite is in lessening the tensions of adaptation of new attitudes and ideas through a sympathetic

understanding of the newcomer's problems and concerns. Through the medium of the trade union, the wage-laborer's exposure to modern economic concepts and ideas is made more meaningful. In this way the trade union performs a very valuable function.

The urban areas already have had an impact on the traditional kinship system, as regards both the size of the kinship unit and its functions. The range of extra-kin associations of a traditional nature has also been drastically curtailed. Both permanent and transient labor are not only limited in social contact with peoples of similar background but are forced, because of the heterogeneous nature of the urban centers, into direct contact with others of dissimilar backgrounds. Furthermore, because of limited income, as well as limited living space, it has become increasingly difficult to support persons other than the immediate family. Another point which should be stressed is that the family head in the urban areas no longer has control over economic activities and, therefore, cannot look after the welfare of members of the extended family as he could in the traditional system. Traditional obligations often must be overlooked in view of economic expediency. With this smaller circle of kin, social contact must be sought elsewhere and under different circumstances. In this way, the trade union functions as an association in which the individual is thrown into social contact with others with whom he has something in common. The services

provided by most Ghanaian and Nigerian labor unions combine both the economic and the social. In the social sense the trade union replaces traditional social organizations, such as age grades, although on redefined lines. Another important function of the trade union is that it affords a listening board at which the wage-laborer can expect to receive a sympathetic hearing on his particular grievances. This in itself helps to foster a transfer of allegiance from the traditional authority to the trade union.

The trade union also has done much in democratizing attitudes between members of various tribes. Most trade union constitutions stress the fact that tribal affiliation is no bar to membership; and indeed it would be to their disadvantage to do so. The equality of all members has done much to break down tribal hostilities where they exist. However, the constitution cannot guarantee that union leadership will not be taken over by the dominant group within the organization. Inter-tribal antagonisms and jealousies are still much in evidence in the urban areas and among all classes even though both the government and the labor organizations have made attempts to minimize their effects.

In the urban areas a new class structuring has emerged; it is based upon criteria other than those used in traditional society. The values upon which this class system is based are material wealth, degree and type of education, and occupation. All three are usually taken together in considering social position although each forms

a separate hierarchy with its varying degrees of prestige. Only occupational status will be considered here. Certain occupations, here as elsewhere, command a greater degree of prestige and respect than others, regardless of the amount of income to be derived. In the traditional rural economy, agricultural labor and small scale craft industries were considered the most respected. With the expansion of education and the increasing influence of modern technology, values have changed. Today, the two most sought after occupations are office work and truck driving. In areas where trade unionism is strong and most industries unionized, prestige is an additional benefit derived from membership. Within trade unions, occupational differences are also recognized by the membership. In the C. D. C. Workers' Union in Nigeria, for example, the office personal were treated with a high degree of respect by the unskilled plantation workers. Until the practice was stopped, only these persons were elected to union offices. Although trade unions in themselves are not the cause of an occupational class structure, they do much to foster it by defining the lines on which it is in part drawn.

Even though the trade unions in Ghana and Nigeria have not, until now, greatly influenced the bulk of the population, they remain important as an organization that should aid in the transition from the traditional economic system to the modern industrial system. They function as a bridge between the old and the new, and even though they are only one means, they are potentially a very important one.

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Typed by Beverly L. Ramsperger