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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

AFRICAN, INDIAN OCEAN COUNTRIES' ECONOMIES ANALYZED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 31 Jul 81 pp 1980-1981

[Text] At the conclusion of the first six months of 1981 there has been hardly any improvement on the whole in the economic situation of the countries of black Africa and the Indian Ocean. Occasionally the situation has even worsened. The only exceptions are the handful of oil-producing states.

A recent study by the FAO indicates that many countries of the African continent are undergoing severe food shortages. Besides Saharan countries such as Upper Volta, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, and Chad, the international organization also lists Cameroon, Madagascar, Togo, Angola, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique and Somalia.

In the Saharan countries the 1980-1981 harvest showed a decline in food production made worse by the shortfall of the preceding harvest. Only Niger that was spared by the drought enjoys a grain surplus. The situation is especially worrisome in Senegal which is short 400,000 tons of food.

Agricultural Output

A certain number of states were not able to take advantage of the price increase in francs that dovetailed with the rising dollar rate either because their exportable agricultural output declined or because of the collapse in world cocoa and coffee markets. The last mentioned product showed a surplus and was subject to export quotas established on the basis of the market situation by the executive committee of the International Coffee Organization.

Production value of the leading farm products marketed officially during the 1980-1981 harvest was to show a slight increase in constant currency in CAR and maybe in Togo too; stagnate in constant currency in the Ivory Coast, where the increase in current francs may be partly attributable to black-market imports of Ghanaian cocoa; remain stable in current currency in Cameroon, and noticeably plunge in Upper Volta, Senegal, Chad, Niger, Ghana and Burundi.

Forecasts of exportable quantities for the 1980-1981 farm crop output by French-speaking black African countries run as follows:

--Cotton (ten producer countries): 596,000 tons (-35,000 tons as against 1979-1980)

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- Coffee (Ivory Coast and Cameroon): 330,000 tons (-26,000 tons)
- Cocoa (Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Togo): 525,000 tons (+10,000 tons)
- Peanuts (Senegal, Mali and Niger): 697,000 tons (-236,000 tons)

Production value of the leading farm products marketed for the 1980-1981 harvest is therefore computed as follows in billions of CFA francs:

Cameroon (cocoa, coffee, cotton).....	310 (+2 as against 1979-1980)
Ivory Coast (cocoa, coffee, cotton).....	460 (+41)
Upper Volta (peanuts, cotton, shea).....	330 (-64)
Mali (peanuts, cotton, corn, millet, sorghum, rice).	360 (-95)
Niger (peanuts, cotton, millet, beans, sorghum).....	60 (-148)
CAR (coffee, cotton).....	200 (+33)
Senegal (peanuts, cotton, millet, sorghum).....	80 (-68)
Chad (cotton).....	130 (-20)
Togo (cocoa, coffee, cotton, palm cabbage).....	260 (+32)

In Benin, CAR, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal and Chad, production value of marketed products shows a decline as compared with the start of the 1970's.

Timber output in the African countries in 1980 slightly declined in Gabon and in CAR compared with 1979. It picked up somewhat in Cameroon because of new investments and improved transportation, and because of a noticeable increase in Ivory Coast shipments. Since the start of 1981 the market for tropical woods has been down. In the first quarter of 1981 French imports of undressed and sawn timber from Cameroon dropped 20% in contrast to the first quarter of 1980. Ivory Coast reduction is about 40% for undressed timber and 22% for sawn timber. In the Congo purchases by the lumber bureau rose at the start of 1981 for varieties other than gaboon mahogany, but sales dropped 20% in volume and 16% in value. Gabon had better luck, notably for gaboon mahogany. The same applies to CAR for loadings of undressed timber in the river ports.

Mining And Industrial Sector

In the mining sector the stagnation and even decline in developed-country industrial activity made itself felt in the first quarter of 1981 in the volume of output and exports by affected African countries. The tempo of extraction and shipments slowed down, sometimes considerably for iron ores from Mauritania, manganese ores from Gabon, phosphates from Senegal, and uranium from Gabon and Niger. Togo's phosphate sales held up until March and then noticeably turned down in April.

Government marketing of uncut diamonds in CAR (342,000 carats in 1980) continues to be severely and adversely affected by stepped-up smuggling.

Cameroon's oil production should come to about 4 million tons in 1981 (as compared with 2.8 million tons in 1980). In the Congo the 1980 level of 3.3 million tons should be exceeded with 4 million tons being reached. Forecasts for the Ivory Coast total 500,000 tons. Gabon's output has been waning for two years because of the

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gradual exhaustion of the deposits being worked. It may come to 8 million tons (versus 8.9 million in 1980).

In the absence of fresh statistics it is not easy to trace the growth of industrial activity since the start of 1981. Using high-tension electric power consumption as a basis for evaluation, Alucam's output showed some increase. The same sort of power consumption rose in the first quarter moderately in Senegal and Upper Volta and more pronouncedly in Togo. In CAR some stagnation was noted.

Refined crude oil tonnages for the first quarter of 1981 rose a little in Abidjan, while they decreased slightly in Gabon and quite perceptibly in Dakar.

Commodities Markets

For some months now world market prices in francs for most products exported by black African and Indian Ocean countries have been heavily influenced by the rising dollar rate. This means that there were better prices for oil, ores, leathers, bananas, cotton, oil seeds, rice, sisal, cloves, rubber and gum arabic. Prices were relatively stable for uranium, lumber, coffee (subject at the time to a decline in price quotes), and vanilla. On the other hand sugar, cocoa (for which the market was really depressed), pineapples and diamonds took a dive.

On the whole for most states there was a positive growth in the market prices of commodities exported between February and May 1981. The situation in Benin, Madagascar and Niger underwent no great change. But Cameroon, Ivory Coast and, somewhat less, CAR were affected by the recent development in market prices for their exported commodities.

In contrast to the situation that prevailed for a number of years, it is now countries that produce cocoa and coffee (and that have no mineral resources) that are in an unfavorable situation. Countries that harvest oil seeds, however, are unable to take full advantage of an international climate that presently favors them, because of the effects of the drought on their exportable production.

Financial Situation

Owing to a variation in the level of net foreign holdings during the period April 1980 to the end of March 1981, the balance of foreign settlements was negative not only in Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger and Senegal, but even in Cameroon. Conversely, it was positive in Benin, CAR, Congo, Upper Volta, Mauritania, Togo, and Gabon most of all. Ghana, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Somalia too suffered either losses of foreign currency assets or an increase in their debt burden.

In the same period, April 1980-March 1981, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Madagascar benefited from sizable assistance from the International Monetary Fund. So did, to a lesser extent, Benin, CAR, Upper Volta, Mali, Niger, Chad and, in particular, Togo. Ghana, Liberia, Mauritius and Somalia too, among others, got significant aid from the IMF. Contrariwise, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon and even Mauritania put more into the IMF than they withdrew from it.

Only in five states did the treasury on the local level occupy the position of creditor vis-a-vis the banking system. Those countries were: Benin, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta and Niger.

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Over the past 12-month period total currency in circulation contracted slightly in the Ivory Coast. It expanded only very little in Upper Volta, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. In Gabon and Mauritania, the expansion was between 20 and 30%. It was more pronounced in CAR and Congo (between 30 and 40%) and even more so in Madagascar (40%), Benin (45%), and Cameroon (45%).

Credits for the economy rose moderately in Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The rise was slightly more noticeable in Benin, Congo, Gabon, Madagascar. In contrast, the 30% rate was exceeded in CAR and Cameroon. Other states registered large expansions of credits placed at the disposal of their economies: Gambia (55%), Ghana (23%), Sierra Leone (26%), Somalia (26%) and Zaire (31%).

Latest consumer retail price indexes reveal over the past twelve months a quite moderate rise (less than 10%) in Cameroon, Gabon, and Senegal; more of a rise in Ivory Coast and Upper Volta. The annual inflation rate was even higher in CAR, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania and Togo.

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CAPE VERDE

GENERAL REVIEW OF NEEDED, PLANNED ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENTS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1864, 31 Jul 81 pp 1978-1979

[Excerpts] Two poorly equipped ports--one of them in Praia, the capital--an airport which should be modernized, a deficient agriculture, a non-existent industry.... Indeed, Cape Verde was not the most precious jewel in the Portuguese colonial crown. That this rather inhospitable land--which, however, has a certain charm--became independent in 1975 can be truly thought of as a wager. But at least, independence will bring the advantage of increased assistance to this country, that used to receive few subsidies from a metropolis itself little developed.

If one looks at the total picture of Cape Verde's economy, all meaningful indicators are in the red and figures are alarmingly negative. In the agricultural sector, for instance, production during the last 10 years only reached 40 percent of the level of the sixties, which was deficient even at that time.... In 1978, agricultural production was 20,000 tons, covering only 3 percent of actual needs. Despite foreign assistance, 34 percent of the total population is suffering from malnutrition.

Fishing activities, still in the artisanal stage, only bring in an average of 9,000 tons of fish and crustaceans. If one is to add to this an embryonic--not to say non-existent--industrial structure, the 50 percent differential between the GNP and total outlays is not surprising, with the rest being made up by remittances from abroad and international aid. Per capita income amounts to less than 200 dollars (170 according to World Bank figures).

As for foreign trade, exports only cover imports at the rate of 4 to 6 percent. This is where the fashionable expression of "the deterioration of the terms of exchange" acquires its full meaning. With the recent increases in the cost of fuel, the average value of an exported ton is about one-fourth that of the average imported ton, a factor aggravating still further an already chronic deficit. The Cape Verde Republic receives significant aid that permits it to survive. This foreign assistance comes as food assistance, aid to various programs and projects and, finally, technical assistance.

Between 1975 and 1979, foreign aid reached 4 billion escudos, or 100 million dollars. At the end of 1980, the total amounted to 138 million dollars (in 1979 the GNP was 2,251 million escudos). In relation to food aid, authorities have decided to apply a new method: instead of simply distributing donations, a practice that has nefarious economic consequences, part of them (75 percent) are marketed and the rest distributed. Sale proceeds go to the national development fund whose resources are used to finance

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various projects, such as the establishment of an entire network of warehouses for a 3-month reserve supply of wheat and corn.

On the basis of what we have just reported, one could well ask if it is really necessary to plan for a future that seems hopeless. Nevertheless, one must answer affirmatively, not because of simple conventional replies, but because some hope does appear on the horizon. A rapid survey seems to confirm this.

To begin with, let us specify that a plan for 1982-1985 has been prepared and that it is integrated into the planning for the 1981-1990 decade. Sector by sector, a number of projects have been studied: some of them are ambitious and all of them aim at the "long-term implementation of an independent national economy in which everyone's basic needs will be satisfied." To carry out this objective, it is necessary to achieve an annual growth rate of the GNP of 7.8 percent during the next 10 years. Let us briefly examine the principal projects in the various sectors of the economy.

Agricultural and livestock. These two activities represent 23 percent of the GNP and the government has assigned (for 1982-1985) priority to investments in this sector. As early as 1980, they represented already one-third of public investments, and they are estimated at 90 million dollars for the next period.

Despite the deterioration of the soil, there are, incontestably, a number of possibilities in this field, where only 3 percent of arable land is under irrigation. To increase the irrigated acreage (8 to 10,000 hectares) by improved water retention, to reconvert the non-irrigated surface by establishing new crops, concentrate the two basic crops--corn and beans--on more appropriate terrain, these are the projects under study in the field of agriculture.

Among the 30 or so projects, let us mention: preparing the Santa Catarina plateau and the Barca Valley (island of Santiago) for cultivation; the reforestation of the valley's high areas; the reconstitution of the plant cover of the hydrographic basins; the improvement of 3,000 hectares of pluvial crops; the creation of 3,000 hectares of pasture land. As for the Brava-Fogo projects, it includes: 400 hectares of afforestation, 800 hectares of reforestation, 400 hectares of coffee cultivation, 1,000 hectares of fruit cultivation and 1,000 hectares of market-gardening land. Special credits will be devoted to the anti-desertification fight through the construction of nearly 900 small dams.

Fishing. This activity constitutes one of the main resources of the country. Efforts to date have been significant. Artisanal fishing (3,000 fishermen, 1,000 boats, 200 of which are motor-equipped) will be given assistance and the industrial fishing fleet (only 3 boats thus far) will be increased. Refrigeration and freezing installations will be modernized. These measures will foster increased export possibilities and will better serve domestic needs. A total of 31 million dollars in investments is envisaged only for the period 1982-1985.

Industry. Industry only represents 10 percent of the GNP, indeed a small part of the country's economy. Some small canning factories, a clothing plant, a shoe factory, a mill and a small repair yard constitute most of the industrial activities. The shipyard planned for Maio represents, by itself, almost one-third of the investments in this sector.

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According to planners, industrial production should progress at the average rate of 10 percent per year during the next decade, and create 1,500 jobs.

Transports and communications (7 percent of the GNP). With 10 islands scattered over the ocean, one can easily perceive the urgency of the problems concerning transports and communications.

For the next 10 years, total investments in this sector amount to 131 million dollars: they include the strengthening of the commercial fleet, which only numbers 30 small boats at present, the improvement of the only two real port facilities, Praia and Sao Vicente, as well as the modernization of the Amilcar Cabral international airport. If these infrastructure projects are carried out, the Cape Verde islands will again possess the maritime strength that was thwarted for so long.

Commerce and tourism (21 percent of the GNP). At the end of the year, the construction of a new hotel in Praia will boost available beds to 750. Sites are picturesque, the environment calm and refreshing, the people hospitable: tourism has a future, but how many infrastructures are needed before this comes to pass....

As for commercial activities, objectives are the following: improvement of the distribution network, the establishment of new warehouses, the creation of a "compensation fund" for the stabilization of prices of imported produces and the establishment of an international trade department.

Obviously, these projects should go hand in hand with the accelerated training of cadres. This is a difficult problem in all developing countries, indeed a bottleneck which often prevents the implementation of programs otherwise well planned.

That investments envisaged for the next decade reach 600, even 700 million dollars, to which should be added the financing of reoccurring expenses, really has no great significance for Cape Verde at this point. What is important is to develop a nation, as long as it exists, and make it viable. This is an arduous task fraught with obstacles, which presupposes, on the part of donors, a sustained effort and a great deal of patience, and on the part of the recipients, a reasonable degree of ardor and understanding. This perhaps runs counter to the economic situation at present, but undoubtedly expresses an increased sense of international solidarity.

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

DAYS OF DACKO REGIME SAID TO BE NUMBERED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 245, 3-16 Aug 81 pp 18-20

[Article by Ginette Cot: "Dacko's Downfall"]

[Text] Less than 3 months after leftist forces gained power in France, the situation in the CAR [Central African Republic] continues to deteriorate at a more rapid rate. One basic reason is that nothing or almost nothing has changed the system set up in Bangui by Giscard's government; this system is truly a time bomb. If Mitterrand's victory of 10 May 1981 raised great hope among the Central African people, it also created a real panic in government circles in Bangui and among those holding the ultimate power in this capital. As everyone knows, panic is a poor adviser and can lead to terrible excesses. This is all the more so says the opposition because David Dacko, who returned to power in Bangui in September 1979 in the luggage compartment of a French Transall, has neither learned nor forgotten anything. Thus he is tempted to revive past scenarios, one of which in 1960 enabled him to usurp power by muzzling all opposition while another allowed him to leave the political scene without difficulty or injury by turning the power secretly over to Jean-Bedel Bokassa.

The situation is even more dangerous because an unwholesome crowd is at work in Bangui. People have not forgotten that 150 members of the French colony, long-time residents of the CAR, signed a statement supporting Bokassa after the massacre of primary and secondary students in April 1979. People also know that well-established economic and financial groups in the CAR represented by men like Dematos and Plantevin are very nostalgic about Giscard's era and work feverishly with the strongmen in Dacko's government. Furthermore, the latter is spurred on by zealous personnel sent by Giscard d'Estaing--technicians, secret agents and former colonialists--and that thus far, only one, a close adviser of the president, a Mr Serre, has left the area, officially for a vacation. Finally, Dacko, who integrated into his increasingly unreliable army former members of the notorious imperial guard of Berengo, turned to Moroccan mercenaries to strengthen his personal guard. He could, if necessary, to create disorders, obtain support from some heads of nearby nations, like Mobutu and Bongo who are also fearful about the changes in Paris.

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Blackmail

Given these conditions where it seems as if the CAR were in some way preparing to be a testing ground where those nostalgic for Giscard's government and the openly neocolonialist regime could very well seek to trap and trip the new French government, all provocations--and thus the terrorist blast of 14 July 1981 was the first warning--and all forms of blackmail are possible.

Although he sent his prime minister, Simon Narcisse Bozanga, to Paris to try to sweet talk the new French leaders, Dacko, in an interview with a Parisian weekly made threatening noises: "Either the French are our friends and they will have no difficulties about military facilities or they are not and we will go our separate ways." In other words, either you accede to our requests and continue with Giscard d'Estaing's ways or we will look elsewhere for a protective umbrella to keep us in office or, at least, preserve our privileges.

While Dacko sounded out the possibilities in certain capitals, mainly Cairo and through an intermediary, Washington, Bangui greeted a new American ambassador, Arthur H. Woodruff, an experienced diplomat and specialist in African and European affairs, who affirmed the support of the United States for the objectives of the Central African government as well as the Reagan administration's intention to "renew cooperation" between the two countries.

Blackmail about foreign protection and blackmail about domestic disorders--these are the two weapons used by the Dacko government and its accomplices to try to intimidate Mitterrand's government.

For a long time, the day-to-day realities of the CAR have shown the futility of the promises Prime Minister Bozanga made in Paris about the democratic process. Since his trumped-up election last March as head of state, Dacko has shown his true colors. Not only has he indefinitely postponed legislative elections called for in the new constitution, but he has heaped disgrace on, and launched a real witch hunt against the opposition. At the same time, he has followed a hateful policy of tribal division. The UGCT [General Union of Central African Workers] was disbanded on the pretext that the trade union was politicized and thus anticonstitutional and the opposition was not allowed to use the radio, the only way to reach the largely illiterate population. Militants and sympathizers of the opposition parties were removed from the civil service. There were illegal arrests. Weapons were distributed to members of the UDC, the government's party, to set up militias. The very lives of opposition party leaders, especially Dr Abel Goumba, president of the FPO-PT [Ubangi Patriotic Front-Labor Party] were specifically threatened.

While the tension became ever more unbearable, various sources agreed that preparations were being made for a coup d'etat. In order to withdraw with the government in power and to maintain his privileges and future tranquility, Dacko reportedly approved a plan to assassinate General Kolingba, Central

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African army chief of staff and bring to power his adviser and member of his ethnic group, Monsignor Ndayen, archbishop of Bangui. Several high officials, among them Gen Sylvestre Bangui, almost all from Dacko's tribe, were supposedly responsible for carrying out this plan, a simple transfer of power disguised as a coup d'etat. In the confusion, the opposition leaders were to be assassinated.

Whatever the case, the terrorist explosion of 14 July 1981 occurred in this climate of extreme tension and confusion; it was the first of its kind in the Central African Republic.

The facts are known. On the evening of 14 July at 2145 local time, a bomb exploded in the Le Club movie house in the heart of the capital; it was frequented both by Europeans and Africans. The ceiling of the theater completely collapsed. Three people including a French aid died and 32 were injured, 5 French citizens. The MCLN [Central African Movement for National Liberation], a tiny group formed on 30 December 1980 by Dr Iddi Lala, expelled, after several warnings, on 5 September 1980 from the FPO-PT by Dr Goumba because of his opportunism, lack of discipline and greed, claimed responsibility for the explosion; it apparently was not supposed to be an isolated incident (two unexploded bombs were found the following day at the Central African National Electric Company and the National Diamond Office; a third was found several days later at Bouar Base where most French military forces are stationed.)

Panic

This was only the first of many activities, stated a MCLN spokesman, "until the last French soldier leaves the CAR." From the evidence, however, it appears that the goal was just the opposite of the stated objective; the interests of those responsible for the blast are identical to Dacko government interests. First we note that true opposition to the neocolonial governments which have succeeded one another since independence in the CAR have never resorted, even at the most terrible moments of the Bokassa dictatorship, to such methods. The fact that this explosion occurred when leaders of the French left who have continually criticized Giscard d'Estaing's policy in the CAR have just come to power makes it more questionable. Someone supposedly wanted to create panic in the CAR European community, make the French troops stationed in the country act and force the Elysee Palace to take some improper action that would not be taken otherwise.

In other words, this explosion only adds to the horrible suspicions about the Lala group which, among other things according to reliable sources, reportedly paid for its participation in the Dacko government by assassinating-- which the MCLN supposedly was ready to do--opposition leaders.

If there were any illusions left, Iddi Lala's movement was totally discredited in the eyes of the people who were deeply shocked by the 14 July 1981 blast.

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The FPO-PT--whose president, Abel Goumba, was in Europe then to arrange personal matters before settling permanently in the CAR--was the first opposition movement to react. In a communique to the press in Bangui, the FPO-PT held "the reactionary forces working in the CAR responsible for the explosion" and stated: "Despite the change of government in France, the system of secret agents set up by Giscard d'Estaing is still intact in the CAR under Dacko's protection to prevent, by criminal maneuvers...any dialogue between the socialists in power in France and Central African progressives." Terming the explosion "a disturbing precedent," the FPO-PT stressed that "blind terrorism would not solve the Central African problem."

In their turn, on 17 July 1981, former presidential candidates united in a temporary political council, condemned "this unprecedented crime in the country's history" in a joint communique. "In fact, who could profit from this act of terrorism?" they asked. "Would it be the opposition? Armed with the most formidable, effective weapon, the constitution, and strengthened by its great popularity, the opposition would not get involved in blind terrorism which could only weaken it. Would the government and its henchmen profit?" asked the communique a little later. "This theory should not be rejected....Indeed, did this government through its prime minister not ask French authorities, among other favors, to leave French troops in the CAR? The terrorist act of 14 July 1981 would by its nature justify this continued presence, if only to provide for the security of the 3,800 French citizens living in the CAR. Moreover, was this not a fine pretext to eliminate the bothersome opposition and restore the dictatorship? A similar scenario allowed Dacko in 1960 to get rid of MEDAC*, jail its leaders and set up MESAN [Movement for the Social Development of Black Africa] as the only party."

Excess

Indeed, we know how Dacko hurriedly seized the pretext of the 14 July blast to implement a plan he had in mind for a long time. Deliberately grouping together, as if he did not know better, the tiny group of Iddi Lala and Abel Goumba's movement, and making them responsible, he not only banned the MCLN and the FPO-PT but also suspended "because of sympathy" with those responsible for the blast, the MLPC [Central African People's Liberation Movement] of Ange Patasse. An international arrest warrant was issued for Lala and Goumba. Leaders and militants of the FPO-PT and the MLPC (Patasse escaped the dragnet) were arrested immediately. A special court was set up and orders were given to prevent "suspicious individuals and well-known agitators" from leaving the country.

Several days later, on 21 July 1981, a state of siege was decreed throughout the country and the Central African army was ordered to shoot on any gathering.

*MEDAC was established by Abel Goumba after the nationalist policy of MESAN, movement founded by Boganda, had been betrayed.

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Did Dacko in his panicky fear with his desire to set up a bloodthirsty dictatorship go too far and thus put the rope around his neck? It is too soon to tell, but it is highly unlikely that socialist France will give him any help with this policy. No doubt it was not a coincidence that the usurper of Bangui stated, 3 days later on 24 July 1981, against all evidence, that "this was not a threat to the process of democratization" and he tried hard to show that "the CAR is one of the few countries in Africa where human rights are completely respected, where there are no political prisoners."

For his part, indulging in an excess of cynicism and arrogance, Prime Minister Bozanga condemned "any interference in the domestic affairs of the country. There would be time," he stated, "for the French socialist government to send emissaries to learn about the situation and obtain all appropriate information...."

If the Dacko government seems to act like a fish stranded on the beach it is because French officials reacted circumspectly and firmly. Thus, at the announcement on the state of siege, French minister of defense, Charles Hernu, confirmed that French troops stationed in the CAR were confined to barracks and would only intervene if the security of French citizens were threatened. Prior to that, official circles in Paris expressed amazement about the repressive measures taken by the Dacko government. "We wonder," stated these circles, "about the scope of these measures and we point out at this time that, during his visit to Paris, the CAR prime minister stressed the democratic nature of the current government in the CAR and its desire to continue the multiparty experiment."

Perhaps the disapproval was more clearly and plainly expressed. In any event, many signs indicate that the new French government has "all the facts" not only on the true nature and competence of the Dacko regime but also on the degree of support and credibility of the various opposition groups which currently rally around the upright old timers on the return of the Central African neocolonial policy. The newspaper LE MONDE hinted in its foreign bulletin of 24 July 1981 that the sympathies of the Elysee were with Dr Abel Goumba who did not at just the right moment claim to be a socialist and whose reaction to the 14 July 1981 blast showed "the serenity of a leader who was not seeking merely to replace Dacko."

No doubt, the French government intends, as it has continually implied, to avoid any initiative which could be termed an interventionist policy, even undoing the imbroglio created by the Giscardian regime. Those blackmailers should be well aware that socialist France cannot act as if it were still the mother country and the CAR a colony. However, if the Central African people and their most important, true representatives must have the final say; Paris, nevertheless, is partly responsible for a solution to the burdensome inheritance from the recent neocolonial past; the new French authorities cannot expect to go on indefinitely without sinking in turn into the inextricable mire. As Dr Goumba told us, "France has a certain moral responsibility, if only because for 20 years, the CAR has truly been the exclusive, even

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personal work of various French leaders in the Elysee. This reached its height when Giscard d'Estaing entered the Elysee; he acquired a property of 2 million hectares in the CAR, has interests in almost every business venture and truly put his stamp on the country. We cannot forget that the system set up by Giscard d'Estaing remains intact. In Bangui, secret agents come and go without authorization, uncontrolled. This situation is dangerous even for the French socialist government. Today any provocation is possible. It is vital to remove the personnel sent by Giscard's government.

Downfall

"I hope that the orders to French troops to act only in the event of a foreign danger or to protect the French community will be scrupulously obeyed. Who would deny that a trifle could ignite the powderkeg?

"The French government cannot say 'solve this yourself' and wait, knowing that with the Dacko regime, the basic conditions for democratic political life are impossible."

Certainly recent events in Bangui show the danger of maintaining the Dacko regime and his henchmen, not only for the CAR's future and the long-range objectives of France in this region of the continent but also for the very objectives of the new policy which the Mitterand government plans to implement in Africa. There is no doubt that if all financial and logistical support to the puppet government in Bangui ceased, this would cause its downfall because it is rejected by a vast majority of the country's vital forces. In other words, the days of the regime of Bokassa's successor are henceforth numbered.

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA

REGIME'S SURVIVAL SAID TO DEPEND ON MOROCCAN DETACHMENT

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 245, 3-16 Aug 81 p 24

[Article by Fode Amadou: "Malabo Under Nguema II"]

[Text] The deteriorating political, economic and social situation in Equatorial Guinea deeply worries western neocolonialist circles. After 2 years as head of state, President Obiang has not been able to improve minutely the people's standard of living, much less their security.

Foreign diplomats in Malabo almost unanimously agree that if Morocco withdrew its military contingent, rivalry within the Mongomo clan for control of power would inevitably result in the overthrow of the head of state.

After removing a bloodthirsty dictator, Macias Nguema, on 3 August 1979, this nation of 280,000 inhabitants hoped that an era of stability, security and relative democracy would finally begin. Has the situation changed very much? It has not.

The capital, Malabo, with 30,000 inhabitants, is divided in two. On one side there is the presidential palace, the cathedral, security and police buildings, torture chambers and the shady gardens where the new president, Col Teodoro Obiang Nguema, nephew and former deputy minister of defense of the late president, is protected night and day by well-armed Moroccan guards. On the other there is the people whose elite, the intellectuals were cut down, massacred by the hundreds by Macias Nguema; the people are not more confident about the new petty dictator of Malabo.

Have the people of Equatorial Guinea been liberated? "It is 'liberation' by Moroccan bayonets," say Guinean intellectuals openly. In fact, approximately 200 Moroccan officers and soldiers are responsible for the false stability of a government torn by two rival ethnic groups which have long fought for power. There is the Mongomo clan (name of Macias Nguema's village in the far east of continental Equatorial Guinea) whose inhabitants belong to the Fang tribe, by far the majority. The Fangs have refused to share government responsibilities with the country's other tribe, the Bubis--settled on the island of Bioko where Malabo is--who daily must endure the threats, provocations and extortion of the national police.

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Neither massive arrests by government officials, repression, torture nor the unexplained disappearances of many opponents whose only crime sometimes was to criticize the Fangs' hold on administrative controls has silenced the anger swelling throughout the country. This anger is exacerbated by the economic slump and acute social problems of the Guineans.

Cocoa exports, the country's main resource with lumber, dropped from 40,000 tons at independence in 1968 to 8,000 tons today. Since farming has been gradually abandoned, the networks to move and market agricultural products have seriously deteriorated.

With the notice to terminate fishing agreements between the former Macias regime and the Soviet Union, Malabo has turned to the West, particularly Spain, the former colonial power. Although 400 Spanish technicians have been sent, fear which the government arouses in the people and political instability dominate the situation. The only miracle which could revive the country's economy comes from the strong smell of petroleum from the Gulf of Guinea bordering on Nigeria, Cameroon and Gabon. Without this still-undiscovered manna, the UDEAC [Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa] does not intend to approve the integration of Equatorial Guinea into its ranks.

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA

FRENCH FINANCING OF PROJECTS IN 1981

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1865, 7 Aug 81 p 2058

[Text] At its 15 January 1981 meeting, the board of directors of the Aid and Cooperation Fund (FAC) decided to provide financial aid to Equatorial Guinea from the Ministry of Cooperation. The aid will be used for five operations or projects totaling 16.2 million French francs, or 810 million CFA francs.

The first operation, amounting to 3 million French francs (150 million CFA francs), involves assistance to the National Energy Company. The second, for 2 million francs (100 million CFA francs), will permit continuation of a geological and mining research program throughout the country. The third operation, totaling 4.5 million francs (225 million CFA francs), involves construction of a cultural institute in Malabo. The fourth action totals 4.2 million francs (210 million CFA francs) and will permit completion of the second installment of repair work on the Malabo Port. The fifth, amounting to 2.5 million francs (125 million CFA francs), will be used to finance a programming mission with Equatorial Guinean authorities in order to make prefeasibility studies for projects.

This program was completed, at the 3 April 1981 session, by an action totaling 1.2 million francs (60 million CFA francs), whose purpose is to set up an office to design rural development projects.

The details on the projects are as follows:

Assistance to the National Energy Company: In March 1980, a team of experts with the task of exploring the hydroelectric potential of Bioko Island and the Rio Muni region determined the main guidelines of the project: completion of a diagnostic mission in order to bring the equipment and services of the National Energy Company up to specifications; the choice of a hydroelectric site and the completion of a feasibility study for a dam; and the equipping of a hydrological department on Bioko Island.

Systematic prospecting: The first installment of geological prospecting was done in Rio Muni Province throughout 1980 and the first quarter of 1981. The results of this research made it possible to determine the form to be given to the rest of the project. The new program will take 2 years and cover the entire country (about 28,000 square kilometers). Work will include: a documentary and photogeological study; geological survey sections; and mining prospecting tests.

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Malabo Cultural Institute: At the request of the Equatorial Guinean authorities, at the time of the signing of the cooperation agreements in November 1979 in Paris, the Ministry of Cooperation decided to finance construction of a French cultural institute in Malabo and to rehabilitate the Bata Cultural Center. The institute will be built on a 2,000-meter-square site granted by the government and located in the center of the capital.

Malabo Port repair: The first phase of work, costing 8 million francs, involved repair of the main port berthing pier. The work included: repair of the underwater joints on the pier wall; reconstruction of the filter placed behind the pier wall; repair of the pier platform head. The second phase of work will include rehabilitation of storage hangars, construction of a port personnel building and completion of a pier lighting system.

Development office: This subsidy is for the purpose of financing a programming mission to enable Equatorial Guinean authorities to identify and make prefeasibility studies for projects that might find financing.

Rural development project design office: Prepared by a team of experts in January 1981, this project will be in two phases. During the first, the main objective will be to define the homogeneous agricultural areas, determine their physical and agricultural characteristics and make an inventory of agricultural potential. During the second phase, projects will be designed based on the inventory and worked out further on the technical, economic and financial levels.

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MAURITIUS

BERENGER PREDICTS MMM VICTORY IN ELECTIONS

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE No 245, 3-16 Aug 81 pp 26-27

[Interview by Herve-Masson: "We Will Win the Election"]

[Text] Francois Mitterrand's election as president of the republic and the victory of leftist forces in France is considered, as AFRIQUE-ASIE has reported and repeated, a significant event by Third World public opinion and political circles.

In the southwest area of the Indian Ocean, especially in Mauritius, this change has aroused great hope among working people and leftists. The progressive MMM and the PSM [Mauritian Socialist Party], which are preparing to collaborate during the legislative elections of next December-January, have been strengthened.

Given this state of affairs, MMM Secretary General Paul Berenger recently visited Paris. He met with officials of the French left and granted several interviews to the Parisian press. During a rambling talk with Parisian supporters of the MMM and representatives of Mauritian emigrants in France, Berenger explained some of his party's positions and the primary purpose of his short stay in Paris to AFRIQUE-ASIE.

We know that, contrary to international law as established by the United Nations, the Chagos Archipelago was taken from Mauritius by the British in 1965, set up as a British colony (British Indian Ocean Territory-BIOT) and loaned by London authorities to the United States which then set up a large military and nuclear base in Diego Garcia, the largest island.

The people of Chagos, the islanders, approximately 500 to 600 families of Mauritian origin, were sent to Mauritius where the labor government has done nothing to welcome and resettle them. These islanders are at present the poorest, most underprivileged people in Mauritius.

Mauritian public opinion was greatly aroused by a hunger strike by several islanders, followed by the arrest of eight women who dared show their solidarity (they are liable to prison sentences with their trials scheduled to open in late July). Opinion was sufficiently aroused for the government

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to agree to send an official delegation to London for talks with British authorities on just financial compensation for the forcibly transplanted families.

Meanwhile in early July, Prime Minister Seewoosagur Ramgoolam flew to London and Paris (where no doubt he hoped to beg some sous).

Shopping?

Headed by Minister Purryag (named by Ramgoolam) and made up of James Burty-David, president of the incumbent Labor Party; Paul Berenger, representing the parliamentary opposition (33 deputies against 34 in the Labor Party and 3 who resigned from the PSMD [Mauritian Social Democratic Party]) and representatives of the islanders, the Mauritian official delegation was greeted in London with the news that the British considered the matter closed because the Mauritian prime minister had signed a so-called final agreement. The islanders who demanded 8 million pounds will be granted in all and for all 1 1/2 million. In addition, they would be obliged to sign an agreement individually renouncing any future return to their country. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, on a private visit to London, bluntly refused to meet his own delegation saying he was only in London "to buy some clothes!"

Berenger wanted to point out this amazing situation to the Parisian press, politicians and the solidarity committee set up in France itself.* It should be added that in Mauritius the British government's refusal to meet (and the Mauritian prime minister's complicity) were regarded as a great insult. Mr K. Deerpaisingh, PSM chairman, stated that "in the end, the British attitude is not worthy of a civilized country and should be criticized as it deserves." "The free world must be proud of this," said ironically the president of the GWF [General Workers Federation], the powerful trade union. Alain Laridon, another trade union member, felt "the English are declaring war on us...."

Berenger stated that the MMM, now in the opposition and no doubt in power in the future, would continue to work for the return of the Chagos to Mauritius and the dismantling of the Diego Garcia base. "We plan," he said, "to promote a true policy of nonalignment toward the blocs and we will not tolerate a base by any great power on land belonging to Mauritius."

Diego Garcia and the islanders were not the only concerns of the MMM secretary general. We asked him what he thought of the left's accession to power in France and what its consequences would be for his own party.

The MMM, explained Berenger, is neither a communist nor a traditional socialist party. "Basically, we are a progressive front with our marxists and non-marxists. Having said this, the MMM considers the PCF

*Diego Garcia International Solidarity Committee (France), 20 rue de Rochechouart, 75 009 Paris.

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[French Communist Party] and the PSF [French Socialist Party] brother parties. We have had ties with the PCF for a long time and we feel a solidarity for the PSF which is not a social-democratic party like many of its western counterparts. In this context, we plan to strengthen our ties with these two brother parties."

[Question] Could you be more specific about political activity?

[Answer] No doubt general elections in Mauritius will be held in late 1981 or early 1982 at the latest. I do not think I am being overly optimistic in stating that the MMM-PSM coalition will win. Thus we will have a mandate to govern. Now we will inherit a crisis-ridden Mauritius--10 to 15 percent unemployment, a huge foreign debt, a wide-spread housing crisis, etc.. In short, we will inherit a catastrophic economic and social situation. We would like to count on emergency aid from socialist France to deal with this. I discussed this with PCF comrades and they promised their support.

In addition, perhaps first of all, there are the problems of our sugar imports, protected thus far by the Lome agreements. We want the French government's help to maintain these agreements and protect our exports to EEC countries from the consequences of a protectionist policy which we think is looming on the European horizon. Finally, we are especially concerned about the militarization of the Indian Ocean. We feel France can play a moderating role there.

[Question] Is there anything else?

[Answer] There are thousands of problems. One of the most important is our economic relation with the Republic of South Africa. Mauritius depends heavily on the apartheid for food and tourist business. We want to put some distance between us. The French government can help us.

[Question] How is the MMM doing?

[Answer] Very well, thank you. The time of the turncoats, those of our members who for personal interest joined the Labor Party, is over. Our 30 remaining deputies are reliable. Our alliance with the PSM brings an equal number and we contemplate the future with justified optimism. We will win the next election.

Thus we met in Paris with Paul Berenger who is sure of himself and his party's upcoming victory.

Complete Seizure of Diego Garcia

On 15 July 1981, several days after negotiations between the Mauritian delegation and Great Britain on indemnity for the families deported from the Chagos Archipelago in 1965 broke off, the American navy released \$300 million to finance large-scale projects to develop the Diego Garcia military base.

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Heavy material, to equip 12,000 sailors, has been unloaded on the island. The landing strips will be enlarged to accommodate giant C-5 transport planes and B-52 stratgic bombers. There will be work on port installations and military buildings; it is scheduled for completion in 3 to 5 years.

Later, the base will permanently house 2,150 American soldiers. Diego Garcia is thus destined to become one of the largest U.S. military bases in the Indian Ocean and increasingly becomes a strategically indispensable site for the imperialist gendarme in the event of a crisis in the Gulf nations.

Mauritian opposition is fighting to reverse this situation, demilitarize this area completely and restore the Chagos Archipelago to Mauritius. This is an explosive matter.

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TANZANIA

BRIEFS

COMPENSATION FOR INVENTORS--On 27 July, the Tanzanian Parliament passed a bill making it possible to grant medals and a sum of money to any person in Tanzania who makes a discovery or designs an invention accelerating the "country's socioeconomic development." The law was adopted in the form of an amendment to the 1968 law on scientific research and was proposed by Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs Basil Mranba. Mranba stated that .5 million Tanzanian shillings had been reserved by the government for 1981-1982 to give compensation to inventors. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1865, 7 Aug 81 p 2062] 11,464

TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM--In presenting his ministry's budget to the National Assembly in Dar-es-Salaam recently, Tanzanian Minister of Communications and Transport Ibrahim Kaduma indicated that TAZARA (Tanzania Zambia Railway Authority) was going to import 14 diesel-electric locomotives and 16 motors made in the Federal Republic of Germany for locomotives of the DFH-2 type. The problem of transporting the funds for TAZARA between Zambia and Tanzania will also be solved. The Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) will also import a machine in 1981-1982 to lay new track on certain sections of the central line of the Tanzanian railroad system. The company will also buy trucks and buses for road transport. During the fiscal year, it will launch a 20-year development program costing a total of 6.4 billion Tanzanian shillings, with the financial aid of Canada. The minister engaged the National Transport Corporation (NTC) to put more buses on routes for Dar-es-Salaam users. The urban transport company, UDA [expansion unknown], will have 600 buses by 1986 and 75 percent should be permanently operational. The Kamata Company (National Bus Service) will have 120 buses by June 1985. It will soon open a line to Lindi and Mtwara. Three regional transport companies are being expanded in Dodoma, Ruvuma and Mtwara and two others will be set up in Mwanza and Tabora. The minister also asked the NTC to examine operations of TACOSHILI (Tanzania Coastal Shipping Line) and to set up a 5-year plan to get the company off to a new start. The "Mwenge," one of its vessels now idle and which was originally to carry livestock to Saudi Arabia, should be used profitably. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1865, 7 Aug 81 p 2062] 11,464

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ZAIRE

BRIEFS

AID TO POLAND--The Zairian Executive Council decided at its weekly meeting on 7 August to send the Polish people 20 tons of coffee and 20 tons of tea. [Text]
[Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1866, 14 Aug 81 p 2115]
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ZAMBIA

SURVIVAL OF TAZARA SAID TO BE IN JEOPARDY

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 245, 3-16 Aug 81 p 25

[Article by Masautso Masautso: "Tazara's Illness"]

[Text] The Chinese-built Tanzanian-Zambian railroad (Tazara), 1,860 km long which was initially baptized Great Railroad of Independence (Great Uhuru Railway) seems to be dying quietly a mere 6 years after the first train ride.

Initially considered a symbol of close cooperation between the Third World countries, the Tazara, which cost several million dollars, is today a source of disappointment affecting the governments of Zambia and Tanzania as well as that of China.

After several months of serious operational problems, passenger service was suspended for 3 weeks in April.

A short statement from the Zambian general manager in Dar es Salaam, Maj Gen Charles Nyirenda, only said that "due to circumstances beyond the company's control, passenger service has been suspended until further notice." No other information was given. Passenger service was suspended for almost a month. Only merchandise was shipped which meant a loss of several thousand dollars for the Tanzanian-Zambian organization.

Although the railroad has never come so close to complete closing since its opening during ceremonies for the 11th anniversary of independence, 24 October 1975, the Tazara has been operating at a loss. Last year, China had to come to its assistance with a loan of \$10 million to purchase spare parts for locomotives and rolling stock. Chinese aid came after a seven-point plan was drawn up and presented by the tripartite council of ministers which met in Lusaka last September; it worked to put the company back on track after this threat of bankruptcy.

The proposed measures included a 10 percent increase in contributions and the assignment of a team of Chinese experts to the Tazara to solve the problems.

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Zambia and Tanzania agreed to allocate \$4 million to repair the railroad. The two countries also signed an agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany on the delivery of 14 locomotives. It is hoped that these measures would help to restore the problem-ridden railroad whose monopoly was already threatened by the reopening, in Zambia, of the southern route which had been closed by the former racist leader of Rhodesia, Ian Smith.

Ian Smith and his puppet successor, Abel Muzorewa, also added to Tazara's misfortunes when, 2 years earlier at the height of the war for the liberation of Zimbabwe, they sent Rhodesian commandos into Zambia to blow up railroad bridges.

For Zambia, the Tazara was to help transport the country's essential exports and the imports vital to its future industrial development. The railway opened new prospects for agricultural and industrial development and for populating the provinces of the Center and North.

A Vital Road

On the other side of the border, in Tanzania, the railway passes through a vast mineral-rich (coal and iron) area and the most fertile lands not yet under cultivation. This was the only large-scale project which could be taken over by Zambia and Tanzania and was the only sizable Chinese aid program in Africa.

China aided the two countries after the lukewarm responses of the traditional western financial powers, including the World Bank. Reimbursement of the loan--long term and interest free--was \$200 million, divided equally between the 2 countries for a period of 30 years beginning in 1983. Now that the railroad is having difficulties, can it provide Zambia and Tanzania with the financial means for reimbursement?

In addition to the problems about locomotives and rolling stock, other difficulties have arisen--high rates for Zambia and congestion at the port of Dar es Salaam which has caused a considerable delay for Zambian merchandise.

However, new wharfs are under construction and additional docks are slated to try to handle this considerable traffic.

Today, when traveling the 1,860 km of the railroad, we see that the two countries have not yet fully exploited the developmental prospects created by the railroad.

Tanzania has either failed or spent too much time exploiting its mineral resources. Zambia's population seems to emigrate quickly from the villages to the cities, leaving the land along the railroad uninhabited and uncultivated. Full utilization of the line should have definitely improved regional cooperation beyond the borders of Zambia and Tanzania--Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda all use the port of Dar es Salaam. The railroad should

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have contributed substantially to the liberation of southern African countries still using South African ports.

If the Tazara stopped operating, the governments of Zambia and Tanzania would be responsible. China has done everything possible to give them remarkable technical aid when no one else wanted to.

The two countries then must make the railroad viable so it will truly live up to its name, Great Railroad of Independence.

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ZAMBIA

BRIEFS

TRADE UNION LEADERS' RELEASE REQUEST--Meeting for 2 days in Ndola at the end of July, the ZCTU (Zambia Council of Trade Unions), asked President Kaunda to release four trade union leaders arrested by Zambian authorities (MARCHES TROPICAUX, 31 July 81, p 2007). After examining the situation of the workers in the copper production area, the general Council of the ZCTU, which includes 60 percent of the active population of Zambia, also asked the government to appoint an independent investigative commission to study relations between the government and workers and to examine the causes of the recent mining strikes. The commission will also have to determine whether the four trade union leaders arrested tried to overthrow the government, as President Kaunda stated. Herbert Bweupe, general vice president of the ZCTU, suggested that the commission include members of organizations from outside of Zambia, such as the OAU, the International Labor Organization (ILO) or other UN organizations. He also stated that the government should not hold Zambian unions responsible for the country's economic difficulties and political instability. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1865, 7 Aug 81 p 2062] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1981] 11,464

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