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CAMEROON

PRESIDENT AHIDJO INTERVIEWED ON COUNTRY'S FUTURE

Paris LATITUDE AUJOURD'HUI in French Apr 82 pp 27-29

[Interview with President Ahmadou Ahidjo by Lucienne Hubert-Rodier; date and place not specified]

[Text] This May the Cameroonians will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of their republic. When all is said and done, it is a quite rare success on the African continent: some 200 ethnic groups are living together peacefully, there is political stability based on a representative system, the agricultural potential is well utilized, and just recently there has even been petroleum.

France is the chief partner of that country, which is governed by President Ahidjo. Ahidjo "the unifier," Ahidjo the "Cameroonian De Gaulle," and Ahidjo, one of the last of the African "founding fathers," here explains to our special correspondent how he views the future of his country.

He is called "the unifier," and rightly so. The first objective chosen by Haji Ahmadou Ahidjo, who was proclaimed president of the Republic of Cameroon on 5 May 1960--the year of independence for Africa--was the reunification of his country. His goal was to put together in one national body the English-speaking western part of the territory and the French-speaking community (nine-tenths of the country)--that is, British Cameroons (placed under UN trusteeship with internal autonomy in 1958) and the former French-speaking Cameroons, which had become independent in 1960.

On 1 October 1961, therefore, Ahmadou Ahidjo became president of the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

The second stage: once the pacification of a country made up of 200 ethnic groups (and a total of 7 million inhabitants) had been achieved, the United Republic of Cameroon came into being on 20 May 1972. This May the Cameroonians will celebrate the 10th anniversary of that reunification, the

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crowning achievement of the "peaceful revolution" desired by their chief of state. Having been reelected to a fifth 5-year term on 5 April 1979 (with 99.99 percent of the votes cast), President Ahidjo can pride himself on having made Cameroon a "governing democracy"--one of the few African countries, along with Senegal, to enjoy a regime in which the representative system operates normally. Political stability has been matched by an effort to achieve "balanced development" enabling Cameroon to experience relative prosperity despite the fallout from the worldwide crisis. Warning his fellow citizens against the mirages of petroleum, the recent discovery of which in the Kribi Sea gives new dimensions to the country's economy (5 million tons beginning in 1984), the Cameroonian president asserts that "black gold must in no case replace green gold." In his opinion, agropastoral resources are the most certain and lasting element in the country's development. He has translated that into the "green revolution" and the "village communities" to facilitate a return to rural life by young people who have been attracted by the lights of the city.

Added to all that is a foreign policy built around two basic options: nonalignment (the assertion of a national identity free of the blocs) and international cooperation (horizontally with the Third World to achieve the solidarity necessary for the transformation of economic relations, and vertically with the developed countries to establish a two-way flow--both ascending and descending--of trade). That is the objective of North-South dialogue, for which Cameroon is one of the African spokesmen.

Lucienne Hubert-Rodier: Whenever people speak of Cameroon, they say that it is an "island of peace and stability." Can we ask you the secret behind such balance in a world racked by confrontations and, more specifically, in an Africa ravaged by military coups d'etat, but also in a world that is in complete turmoil?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: As you know, Cameroon became independent in the midst of being torn apart by factions and of the development of disturbances resulting in bloodshed--the consequence of agitation and violent demonstrations by the political groupings and their repression by the authorities of the time. Those disturbances reappeared sporadically during the first decade of independence.

And as we know, those disturbances resulted in 1952 from confrontation among the political parties that were formed in East Cameroon under the French trusteeship. In the absence of a national consciousness, which was still in embryo, the proliferation of those parties spotlighted the marked polyethnic situation and the many cleavages in Cameroonian society which were often kept alive by the colonial authority. In building this country, therefore, it was necessary to start from a situation of instability, insecurity, and economic, social, and cultural underdevelopment.

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The great majority of Cameroonians realized that basic options and choices were needed and that it was necessary to establish and gradually strengthen modern and efficient government institutions that would guarantee everyone's participation in the management of public affairs, to promote at the same time a modern, diversified, and dynamic economy capable of insuring the happiness of all citizens, and, consequently, to guarantee the country's political independence.

All those freely accepted options and choices constituted the first steps on a long and difficult path which all Cameroonians are following with public-spiritedness and patriotism because they realize that our achievements must be jealously preserved.

As Cameroon--a nation of many ethnic groups, languages, and religions--faces a troubled world and an Africa racked by destabilization, it realizes that it owes its survival to unity alone.

The achievement and strengthening of unity have been possible only because of the existence, strengthening, and affirmation of one party: the UNC.

The UNC did not come into being by spontaneous generation. As heir to the pre-existing parties, it was born of the Cameroonian people's will to accept, in a collective and solidary manner, their vocation and their historical destiny--that is, to combine their efforts in building a united, just, and prosperous nation.

What we wanted was a great unified national party that would be freely joined by convinced Cameroonians: a party in which democracy, freedom of expression, and freedom of discussion can exist and in which various trends of opinion can exist, it being understood that the minority must accept the majority opinion.

What we are striving to establish is a "governing democracy"--that is, a regime in which the state, although it is a state of law protecting the freedom of the individual and allowing the people to participate in the management of public affairs, nevertheless possesses the means of translating the general will of the nation into reality, if necessary by overriding private interests.

Our philosophy of development is also designed to contribute to peace and harmony. Our economy is aimed at economic development with two goals in addition to simple growth: the first is a better distribution of activity over the entire territory to insure greater regional balance, and the second is parallel and harmonious growth for all levels of society to insure greater social justice. Those actions are naturally intended to help reinforce the country's national unity.

In our foreign relations as well, we are concerned to maintain our policy of nonalignment, which expresses our will to be independent of any hegemonic bloc. So we are open to international cooperation with anyone as long as that cooperation is mutually beneficial and does not erode our national sovereignty in any way.

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So there is no secret. It is a matter of rigorously and faithfully implementing the freely accepted options.

L. Hubert-Rodier: Do you regard as achieved the objectives you chose first in 1960, when you assumed the country's highest office, and then again in 1972 during the "peaceful revolution of 20 May," which was the starting point for the United Republic of Cameroon?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: All of Cameroon's progress since independence resides in the above-mentioned options, which point to the need for Cameroonian unity in peace, the building of the Cameroonian nation, and openness to international cooperation.

Today the Cameroonian nation is a reality.

Politically, everyone recognizes that Cameroon is a stable country where order and peace prevail. National unity is being constantly strengthened, and national democracy, in response to the profound aspirations of the vast majority of our people, is being strengthened.

Economically, there is sound and rigorous management within the framework of a planned liberalism that is intended to promote self-centered and balanced development and is based on the rational exploitation of our national resources and promotion of the various sectors, particularly agriculture. And all of that contributes to economic independence, equilibrium in the trade balance, self-sufficiency in food, and the financing of major infrastructure projects.

Lastly, in the social area, the work accomplished is reflected in a high level of school attendance within the framework of a necessary cultural revival, in health services that are to be expanded and strengthened, and in social justice, which is so dear to Cameroonians because together with planning, it constitutes the human and moral counterweight to possible excesses in our economic liberalism. But while all those objectives have been or are about to be achieved, a not inconsiderable amount of work nevertheless remains to be done. We are aware of this, and we feel that the positive achievements to date are the pledge and promise concerning what remains to be done.

L. Hubert-Rodier: What is the link connecting the various stages leading to "planned liberalism" within the framework of "self-centered development" and to the "control over development" that you made the objective of UNC action at the congress in Bafoussam?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: "Planned liberalism" was chosen as a method of development. While planning expresses our legitimate concern to make rational use of the available resources, limit the element of chance in economic undertakings, and consciously orient development toward moderate and previously determined objectives, we are also convinced that liberalism remains a decisive factor for progress. We are convinced of it because we do not believe that constraint is effective in economic matters, since liberalism fosters initiative, prompts responsible human participation in the struggle against underdevelopment, and thus preserves for the economy its indispensable human dimension, and, lastly,

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because it alone can harmoniously reconcile the requirement for rationalization with the need for private international cooperation in a country where savings are still insufficient and where the government, although compelled by the force of things to play a decisive role in stimulating, guiding, and overseeing the economy, is far from being able to assume the entire burden of development. Because of that, our plans remain essentially indicative in nature so as to provide scope for the spirit of enterprise, which is actually only another form of the creative spirit and therefore requires freedom in order to bloom.

By means of "self-centered development," we want to mobilize all our national resources and energies for the battle of development.

Thus Cameroon intends to fulfill its successive plans primarily with its own resources by mobilizing national savings, by dignifying investment--notably in the rural development sector--and by breathing more dynamism and rationality into overall management and operations through an effort at control.

But Cameroon has chosen the human cause as the end and means of development, with man to be master of his fate and judge and beneficiary of his happiness.

That is why, to round out our choice of planned liberalism, and to pursue and strengthen the choice of self-centered development, control over our development is seen as a search for ways and means likely to free us from a growth model whose quality, rhythm, and goal would tend to elude the chief beneficiary of that growth, meaning the Cameroonian individual.

This is a matter of the deliberate will of the Cameroonians to take charge of their own development first of all and before soliciting and taking advantage of the various kinds of outside assistance.

L. Hubert-Rodier: With the agricultural resources and energy potential at its disposal, could not Cameroon overcome--at least in part--the current serious economic crisis, which, to use your own words, "renders fruitless and inoperative all attempts to establish a more just international order"--meaning that new economic order which is the object of North-South dialogue, which you have always ardently desired, and whose major principles were further clarified at the meeting in Cancun?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: Every country in the world is trying, more or less successfully, to cope with the crisis that is currently raging. As far as Cameroon is concerned, we have every reason to be happy with our economy's performance, despite the hazards and pressures of the current international economic situation.

In that context, the vocation for agropastoral, fishing, and forestry activities is undeniable, and it is one of the main elements of balance. The government has therefore stepped up its efforts to turn the potentialities and vocations to the best advantage. Unfortunately, our action has been undertaken against an extremely unfavorable economic background. It can be said that for many years, there has not been one of our agricultural products which has not experienced serious difficulties due to the anarchy and inconsistency that prevail on the big world markets for tropical agricultural products.

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Thanks to the "green revolution" program, we can at least pride ourselves on having been self-sufficient in food at a time of shortages and famine in a certain number of Third-World countries. That trend will be continued thanks to revitalization of the village communities.

In recent years, developments in the industrial sector have been marked by large investments either to expand existing companies, such as CIMENCAM [Cameroon Cement Plant], CICAM, the brewery, and ALUCAM [Cameroon Aluminum], or to complete new projects such as CELLUCAM [Cameroon Cellulose Company] and SONARA [National Refinery Company].

Establishment of the National Hydrocarbons Company is in response to the need for a maximum rationalization of the process of exploiting our potentialities.

There is active exploitation of our hydroelectric resources. It should be mentioned that the Song-Loulou Dam, fed by the reservoirs at the Mbakaou and Bamindjin storage dam, has gone into service. And the Lagdo Project will go into operation in 1983.

A vast program is underway to build infrastructure in the areas of communication, transportation, and telecommunications.

The efforts put forth by our national maritime shipping company (Camshipping Lines) and the airline company (CAMAIR) are satisfactory.

The important thing is to concern ourselves with achieving better control over the mechanisms and process of our growth through forecasting, planning, rationalization, and improved moral standards in connection with economic activities.

We must also call on all the imaginative resources existing in Cameroonians, call for rationalization and self-control in their behavior, and appeal to their creative spirit so that the strategy for economic growth will integrate the problems posed by population growth, education, and employment with our overall system of development.

L. Hubert-Rodier: In your eyes, the regional organizations constitute concentric circles of solidarity. Do you consider that they are still best adapted to Africa, and on the same subject, what do you think of enlarging the UDEAC [Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa], as mentioned by President Bongo at the 17th summit meeting in Libreville?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: As far as I know, it was not a question in Libreville of enlarging the UDEAC, but of committing ourselves to the establishment of a community of Central African states in the spirit of the Lagos Action Plan. It is obvious that the achievement of such a plan requires thorough studies aimed at specifying the practical procedures for that community's establishment and operation.

For its part, Cameroon is prepared to study objectively any idea likely to result in a strengthening of subregional cooperation in particular and African cooperation in general.

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But it seems appropriate here for me to recall that in order to be serious and durable, any grouping must be based on real and specific similarities, affinities, and complementary features. Structures based only on emotional or political motivations are doomed to founder unless they are supported by an underlying reality--by foundations that give them a reason for being, strength, and awareness.

L. Hubert-Rodier: Does the Inter-African Force set up in Chad seem to be offering that country "a new chance" to solve its problems?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: The role assigned by the OAU to the Inter-African Force in Chad is essentially that of keeping the peace and helping to set up an integrated Chadian national army. In other words, that force has a duty to create the conditions favoring a return to normal life in Chad and the reconstruction of that country. In our opinion, it would now be appropriate to evaluate that force's mission in the context of the resolution on Chad that was adopted by the OAU Permanent Committee at its meeting in Nairobi on 10 and 11 February.

L. Hubert-Rodier: You have just made an official visit to Nigeria. In your opinion, can it be considered that the matter of last May's border incident is definitely closed? What is the outlook now for political, economic, cultural, and border cooperation between Cameroon and Nigeria?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: I have in fact just made an official visit to Nigeria at the invitation of President Shehu Shagari. I would like to emphasize first of all that my visit was a matter of reciprocity, meaning that it was not a consequence of the incident you mentioned. I would also like to point out that long before my visit, our two governments had agreed on a compromise concerning the solution to that problem after realizing that what it actually involved was a local incident whose significance should not be overstated or dramatized.

That being said, my visit gave us the opportunity to lay new foundations with a view to more active political cooperation that will enable us, through regular consultations between our two governments and especially our border authorities, to resolve amicably and peacefully, if not prevent, any incident likely to harm the good neighbor relations between our two countries.

The visit also led to positive results in the area of economic cooperation. We decided to sign new agreements in the areas of customs, posts and telecommunications, trade, and hydroelectric energy. So all in all, there are good prospects for cooperation between Nigeria and Cameroon.

L. Hubert-Rodier: Are you satisfied with Franco-Cameroonian cooperation, and in which areas might it be destined to develop as a result of the meeting by the Major Franco-Cameroonian Joint Commission?

Ahmadou Ahidjo: Being based on the equality of the partners and respect for their independence, sovereignty, and choices, cooperation between our two countries does not present any major problems. It therefore needs only to be continued, adapted to any possible and necessary changes, and, in that way, reinforced and improved.

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Cameroon is hoping for improvement in some areas of that cooperation having to do with trade and, more particularly, a rebalancing of our trade so that our trade balance will no longer show the deficit that has been recorded so far.

As far as the industrial area is concerned, it is desirable to encourage participation by French industrialists in the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises and of more complex projects requiring sizable investments.

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TENSION WITH FRANCE FOLLOWING ABORTIVE COUP SUBSIDING

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1897, 19 Mar 82 pp 773-774

[Article: "The Lesson From Patasse's Failure"]

[Excerpts] The tension existing between France and the Central African Republic since the abortive coup of Ange Patasse is subsiding. General Kolingba has in fact publicly stated that he does not wish to make the surrender of Patasse, who sought asylum in the French Embassy and to whom Paris has granted the right of asylum, a test of relations between the two countries. This position seems to have some merit, inasmuch as certain intransigent members of the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) would like to be able to try Patasse and eliminate from public life an opponent whose personality lends itself to controversy and who is a bothersome adversary.

When he was named minister of development in the first government set up by Colonel Bokassa after he ousted President Dacko, Patasse, agricultural engineer and director in the Ministry of Agriculture, had the reputation of being a man of progress quite naturally associated with the policy of fighting corruption announced by the army chief of staff in order to justify his takeover.

The 12 years during which Patasse participated in government and witnessed the degradation of the government, the development of the most total arbitrariness and the reign of corruption even more frightful than that which existed before Emperor Bokassa came to power, did not alienate the sympathy of a fraction of the Bangui population, including teachers, professors and university and high school students in search of a leader capable of ousting the tyrant. Moreover, he knew how to maintain his popularity through acts of generosity to students or the people living in certain low-income districts of Bangui. The origin of the resources which Patasse used would be surprising to some.

When Emperor Bokassa was overthrown, Patasse, who founded the Central African People's Liberation Movement (MLPC), was not in Bangui. Upon his return on 5 October 1979, he acted as leader of the opposition. He demanded a revision of cooperation agreements with France and the departure of French troops, whose presence was "a violation of national sovereignty." This nationalist talk could only be welcomed by part of the population, especially the intellectuals who had been humiliated by the circumstances of President Dacko's return to

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power in a military plane and accompanied by French paratroopers. Patasse's test of strength of the new government caused him to be incarcerated a month later and to remain in prison for 13 months. He was freed because of his state of health and within the framework of an attempt to relax the political atmosphere made by the chief of state. His trial, for "an attempt on government internal security," was to end in a dismissal which also applied to members of his family being tried along with him.

The principal leader of the opposition, Patasse watched the number of his rivals grow and opposition parties flourish while the dates of the referendum on the constitution and the presidential election came closer. Five candidates were to confront one another in the election campaign beginning on 1 March 1981. The proclamation of results by the Constitutional Council was postponed several days and Dacko's election by a majority of 50.23 percent was violently disputed by his adversaries because, they claimed, of serious irregularities in voting. While Pehoua, Maidou and Goumba combined gathered less than 10 percent of the votes cast, Patasse obtained 38.11 percent. He even won 5,000 votes in Bangui, the only city in the country to manifest real interest in political life. From that time on, he would constantly claim that without the manipulations of his adversaries, he would have won, thus contesting the legitimacy of President Dacko.

A certain malaise marked relations between France and the Central African Republic after the election of Francois Mitterrand, not that relations between the two governments were affected, but because of statements and positions taken, either by individuals in the French Socialist Party expressing their personal views or by the Socialist Party itself. Intervention in African internal affairs by preceding French authorities was denounced and it was recalled that the resignation of the minister of cooperation at the time of the ouster of Emperor Bokassa had been demanded in Parliament.

Criticisms grew even stronger when the Socialist Party, in a bulletin, expressed its "very strong disapproval of the repression" aimed at the Central African opposition following the explosion of a bomb in a Bangui movie theater on 14 July 1981, an attack attributed to opposition movements. Dacko's government then ordered the state of siege, suspension of the constitution, dissolution of two political parties and the suspension of Patasse's MLPC. Certain "authorized" circles manifested their "surprise" in Paris about the decisions made in Bangui. Three weeks later, President Dacko, apparently encouraged by the new French Government, took back the measure concerning the MLPC. Paris' attitude regarding him undoubtedly encouraged him to restore power to General Kolingba, who immediately set up a Military Committee of National Renewal (CMRN) and hinted that he would turn it over to civilians when the economic situation permitted him to do so.

It was in Europe, where he traveled during the 5 months preceding his attempted coup -- generally in Paris -- that Patasse affirmed his position as the declared leader of the opposition to General Kolingba. At a Paris press conference on 6 October, he revealed his party's proposals to the CMRN, accompanied by a schedule for a return to normality of Central African political life. He asked for presidential elections at the end of 1981 and legislative and

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municipal elections at the end of January 1982. Receiving no satisfactory response, he filed a complaint, from Paris, with the Supreme Court of Bangui against Dacko and Kolingba for high treason, deeming the suspension of the constitution illegal. At the same time, he said that his party -- which he claimed enjoyed a majority -- was ready "to assume its responsibilities in obtaining a return to a normal situation." A little later, he accused leaders in Bangui of planning the "liquidation" of his supporters with aid from "foreign mercenaries," using the pretext of an attempted coup.

At the same time, Kolingba was naming representatives of the opposition to posts of responsibility. After Abel Goumba, president of the Ubangi Patriotic Front-Labor Party, named rector of the University of Bangui, prominent persons who had enjoyed great influence in political life over the past 5 years acceded to posts of high responsibility in the administrative hierarchy or in joint ventures. Among those benefiting from these promotions expressing a desire for a political opening vis-a-vis the opposition was Gabriel Dote-Badekara, who was close to Patasse.

The latter returned to Bangui from Paris on 28 February. On the evening of 3 March, Gen Francois Bozize and Gen Alphonse Mbaikoua made their move, counting on an uprising of the people, who remained indifferent in Bangui and the rest of the country. The CMRN had no trouble restoring order in a situation that was never seriously compromised. Patasse, sought by the authorities, then fled to the French Embassy and asked for the political asylum which France has just granted him.

Rightly or wrongly, Bangui has suspected that unofficial French police encouraged Patasse's attempt. It was reportedly not the SDECE [Foreign Intelligence and Counterintelligence Service], which, on the contrary, warned the government in Bangui of the plot being hatched. However, it is certain that Patasse did have rather close relations in France, not with members of the French Government, but with members of the Socialist Party whose sensitivities prompt them to suspect the legitimacy of any government originating in a coup d'etat, especially if the author is a military man. Perhaps they speculated on Patasse's promises to restore parliamentary democracy in Bangui. Or perhaps they simply did not disapprove strongly enough, which led him to believe that he was being tacitly encouraged by the highest authorities in the Socialist Party, who cannot be seriously suspected of complicity with him. But whatever the hypothesis, the French Socialist Party has yet to learn that it bears special responsibility because of the fact that it has a parliamentary majority in France and that its statements or positions have repercussions on France's international relations. The example of its recent statements on Moroccan and Ethiopian policies is an illustration of this. Consciously or not, part of French public opinion refuses to make a distinction between the French Government and the Socialist Party, an essential element in the majority. It should therefore not be surprising that foreign governments make the same mistake.

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

UBAC REPORT ON ECONOMIC SITUATION IN 1980

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 743

[Text] The activity report on the 1980 fiscal year of the Banking Union in Central Africa (UBAC), an establishment affiliated with the General Company group, provides information on the situation of the economy of the Central African Republic, whose rehabilitation of the productive structure after the events of September 1979 has not yet resulted in a lasting recovery.

Coffee exports for the 1979-1980 season totaled 10,945 tons (up 2,310 tons over the preceding season). Despite the drop in prices, the purchase price to the producer was raised from 300 to 330 CFA francs per kilogram. Action undertaken in the coffee area should result in a production of 14,000 tons by 1984 by all family crops.

For the 1979-1980 season, the cottonseed harvest amounted to 32,150 tons (down 4,387 tons), supplying 10,416 tons of cotton fiber (down 1,411 tons) after ginning.

Because in the drop in area planted to 1,200 hectares, tobacco production totaled 1,189 tons in 1980 (down 550 tons), including 573 tons of the Sumatra variety (tobacco for cigars), grown in the western region. The tobacco was of good quality and marketing was satisfactory.

Some 2.7 million hectares of useful forest were registered. Large-scale lumbering permits granted provided 479,600 cubic meters of rough timber in 1980 (up 30,500 cubic meters). Exports of rough timber, sawn wood and veneer totaled 169,000 cubic meters (up 16,600 cubic meters). Reorganization of the forestry sector should lead to an improvement in production.

In 1980, diamond production totaled 341,700 carats (up 27,500). Exports totaled 333,500 carats of rough diamonds and 2,000 carats of cut stones, representing a total value of 8.4 billion CFA francs. Gold exports amounted to 521 kilograms, worth 1 billion CFA francs. The future working of the Bakouma uranium deposit is still being studied and oil prospecting has been begun in the north.

In the industrial sector, 1981 saw the establishment of two breweries and the startup of the FAF Citroen vehicle assembly plant, which now assembles Visas.

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The River Transport Company (SOCATRAF) has been reorganized and its equipment improved for container transport. In 1980, 263,400 tons of goods were transported by river (upstream and downstream).

Thanks to diamonds and cotton, the Central African Republic has a favorable trade balance (surplus of 2.1 billion CFA francs in 1979). The first nine months of 1980 registered 14.6 billion CFA francs in imports and 18.5 billion in exports, which would indicate, at year's end, a higher surplus than in 1979.

Within such a context, the Banking Union in Central Africa developed its operations and strengthened its position. Its balance sheet on 21 December 1980 totaled 10.2 billion CFA francs. All customer resources (deposit and long-term accounts) amounted to 4.9 billion CFA francs (up 66.4 percent over the end of 1979). Reinvestments (portfolios and advances) represented 8.1 billion CFA francs (up 32.7 percent). The bank resorted to advances from the Ussing Institute (.9 billion CFA francs) and foreign resources. Outside the balance sheet, commitments for securities and guarantees and the opening of loans confirmed for customers amounted to 1.3 billion CFA francs.

The increase in general expenditures resulted in a drop in the result which, after amortizations, funds and taxes, amounted to 55.4 million CFA francs, compared with 96.6 million for the 1979 fiscal year. The general assembly of 22 June 1981 decided to distribute a dividend of 9 percent on capital of 550 million CFA francs, capital matched by 52.5 million in reserves.

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

BRIEFS

ARRESTED LEADER TORTURED--Paris, 9 Apr (REUTER)--The major opposition group in the CAR announced on Friday that one of the members of its political bureau, Professor Simon Bedaya Ngaro, has been transferred to the Ngaragba prison in Bangui where he has been subjected to torture. The Central African People's Liberation Movement, [MLPC] of former Prime Minister Ange Patasse stated that Professor Ngaro, associate member of the French Academy of Surgeons and former CAR minister of foreign affairs, was arrested during the March attempted coup to overthrow the government of President Andre Kolingba. Ange Patasse, former prime minister to ex-emperor Bokassa and presented as the brains behind the coup attempt, is still at the French Embassy where he sought refuge, French sources state. Rumors spread recently that Mr Patasse would leave the French Embassy for Togo where he had been given asylum. The MLPC calls for the "immediate release" of Professor Bedaya Ngaro and all militants and supporters of the movement who were "injustly arrested for breach of opinion." [Text] [AB100814 London REUTER in French 1746 GMT 9 Apr 82]

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ETHIOPIA

ELF-RC ELECTS NEW LEADER

JN012112 London REUTER in English 2055 GMT 1 Apr 82

[Text] Damascus, 1 Apr (REUTER)--One of the main guerrilla organizations fighting Ethiopia for the independence of Eritrea has elected a new leader, the Eritrean news agency said here today.

At an emergency meeting in Eritrea, the Eritrean Liberation Front-Revolutionary Council (ELF-RC) chose Abdullah Idris, a 38-year-old soldier, to replace Ahmed Nasser as executive committee chairman, it said.

The change was the second committee reshuffle since last summer, when the organisation came off worst in fighting with the larger and more powerful Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

The two guerrilla groups have long been bitter rivals for control of the Eritrean secessionist movement and attempts to form a united front have repeatedly foundered.

The ELF-RC lost most of its strongholds in Eritrea Province to the EPLF and some 4,000 of its fighters fled to neighbouring Sudan.

It represents a come-back for Abdullah Idris, who was thrown off the executive committee in a reshuffle last November after 10 years as ELF-RC chief of staff.

The new leader graduated from Syria's staff college in 1966 and has good relations with senior officers in the Arab world, Eritrean officials said.

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GABON

BRIEFS

CANADIAN INTEREST IN MINING PROJECT--On 5 March in Libreville, President Bongo, accompanied by Gabonese Minister of Mines Etienne-Guy Mouvagha-Tchioba, met with a delegation of Canadian businessmen interested in the mining research project on the Transgabonese line, 100 kilometers on both sides of the railroad, including the northern zone -- that is, the Booue-Belinga section. According to L'UNION in Libreville, the four Canadian businessmen, part of whom are interested in the establishment and equipping of laboratories and the others in mining research and operations, told the president of their desire to participate both technically and financially in the proposed railroad. They then talked with the different Gabonese administrative and technical departments, continuing the discussion begun with the chief of state. Programmed as part of the 1980-1982 interim plan, completion of the project will take 5 or 6 years, said Paulin Ampampa Gouerangue, Gabonese general director of mining and geology, adding that soil work has been underway for several months by the Geological and Mineral Prospecting Office (BRGM) of France and the Gabonese National Geological Service. The length of the project is extended because of the fact that it involves 140,000 square kilometers. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 743] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

PALM OIL PROJECT--On 5 March in Brazzaville, the SOCFINCO company [expansion unknown] joined with Congolese authorities in signing an agreement involving an agroindustrial project in Sangha in the northern region of the People's Republic of the Congo. Some 10,000 hectares of oil palms will be planted. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 744] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

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GHANA

OPPOSITION PRESS CONFERENCE FOUNDS NEW ORGANIZATION

Libyan 'Interference' Noted

AB021626 London GNA in English to GNA Accra 1415 GMT 2 Apr 82

[Text] London, 2 Apr (GNA)--The right of Ghanaians to choose their own leaders is in danger because of the failure of the ruling Provisional National Defense Council [PNDC] to announce a programme for the return to civilian rule.

This situation is unacceptable because the right to choose their own government is the birthright of all Ghanaians, Mr Justice R. J. Hayfron-Benjamin, until recently chief justice of Botswana, told a press conference here today.

The conference, at which he was the chairman but also principal speaker, was to inaugurate a newlyformed "Campaign for Democracy in Ghana" [CDG] aimed at advocating a return to civilian rule.

Mr Justice Hayfron-Benjamin who is a Ghanaian, said he had accepted the invitation by all political groups represented in the disbanded parliament to present a statement to the press for the launching because he felt his birthright was threatened.

He traced Ghana's 25 years of independence and pointed out the democratic rule in Ghana had faced threats of military interventions since 1966, thus depriving the people of their right to freely choose who should rule them.

Mr Justice Hayfron-Benjamin said early return to representative government is the only way the views of all sections of the people could be marshalled for Ghana's reconstruction, adding:

"If one claims to represent the people, then he should put himself up for an election."

Repudiating a suggestion that civilian governments had failed Ghanaians, he said rather it was military regimes that had failed the people.

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He added that if the PNDC failed to fulfill the CDG's request to announce a programme for the return to civilian rule, the members would search for the appropriate means to exert the necessary pressure for such a change. He would not give details of the nature of such pressure nor elaborate.

Mr Justice Hayfron-Benjamin referred to the erstwhile National Liberation Council regime which he said fulfilled its promise and returned Ghana to civilian rule until the 1972 intervention by the late Kutu Acheampong's military coup.

He said when the Acheampong government failed to announce a similar programme to return the country to democratic elections, the result was the AFRC [Armed Forces Revolutionary Council] intervention. He noted that the AFRC duly recognised the Ghanaian right to civilian rule and gave way.

The former chief justice therefore urged the PNDC to open the field soon for the various political groupings in Ghana to contest a democratically-organized elections.

He said it was the view of the groups involved in the campaign that Libya was interfering in Ghana's affairs.

Mr S. Addae-Amoako, former national organizer of the PNP [People's National Party] who shared the dais with Mr Hayfron-Benjamin, said the "bandwagon" now going round Ghana does not represent the people. They (PNDC) have forced themselves on the people.

Mr Addae-Amoako, who said he was hot during the 31st December revolution, told the press he had informed PNDC chairman flight-lieutenant Jerry Rawlings he was not against him personally, but that he (Amoako) was opposed to undemocratic takeover of government.

On Libya, he asked: "Do we see democracy in Libya? How can Libya help Ghana build democracy?"

He added that Libya's presence in Ghana posed a threat to West Africa and Africa in general.

Among those who attended by were Mr Henry Djaba, Major (rtd) Boakye Djan, Hutton Mills (Chappie), Alhaji Youssif Patty, former high commissioner in Lagos, E. D. Mahami, former first deputy speaker and a host of former PNP officials and leading members who were there ostensibly as spectators.

'Campaign for Democracy'

AB021425 London GNA in English to GNA Accra 1330 GMT 2 Apr 82

[Text] London, 2 Apr (GNA)--An organization calling itself "Campaign for Democracy in Ghana (CDG)" was inaugurated at a press conference at the Africa centre here today.

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Mr Justice R. J. Hayfron-Benjamin, until recently chief justice of Botswana, who read a statement, said he did so on behalf of all Ghanaian political groups which were represented in the third republic's parliament.

On the dais with him was Samuel Addae-Amoako, former national organization of the proscribed People's National Party (PNP), who together with Justice Hayfron-Benjamin answered reporters' questions.

Mr Justice Hayfron-Benjamin said the CDG was being inaugurated by concerned Ghanaians who are committed to a struggle to restore sanity and democracy into Ghana.

The statement went on: "For the record, about three months ago, the constitutionally elected government led by Dr Hilla Limann in Ghana, was overthrown in a coup d'etat led by flight Lt J. J. Rawlings.

"The initial misguided euphoria in the press which greeted the so-called second coming of Rawlings and his Provisional National Defense Council [PNDC], here and abroad, has now given way to embarrassed silence even for the most faithful disciplines of J. J. Rawlings. Within three months Rawlings' regime has grown up to become an instrument of terror and anarchy. A regime, which made promises for the hard-pressed ordinary man in Ghana, has gradually made the plight of the average Ghanaian already unbearable.

"As of now, not only has the regime proved beyond reasonable doubt that it is in no position to deliver the goods on its promise, but by its methods and conduct, it is also not acceptable to many Ghanaians and freedom-loving peoples of the world.

"We could list ad infinitum our grounds for asserting that the current military regime cannot be acceptable to Ghanaians and the international community. But for the moment we would like to confine ourselves to the most pertinent of our claims.

"The first striking thing about the regime is that it is unrepresentative, even for a military regime. It is made up of people who were simply hand-picked by known friends and hangers-on to the chairman of the PNDC, J. J. Rawlings. The arbitrariness of the regime in appointing or retaining people in many key posts has opened it to charges of tribalism and corruption already. In any event, whole regions and districts which are not adequately represented in the armed forces and the public services are effectively disenfranchised. The rumblings from this direction for those who want to hear have already started.

"For three months now, the Rawlings' regime has not been able to come out with a clearly formulated plan or program. It has merely set itself the task of transforming the social and economic structure of the Ghanaian society on the wings of social revolution. Experience has shown that when a group of

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people take political power on the vague promise of organizing social revolution without a clear-cut policy or strategy that group risks plunging the country into fascism whose ugly aspects include intimidation, political terrorism, arbitrary execution, curtailment of basic property and human rights, and above all the threat of civil war.

"Within the last three months Ghana has been exposed to all these social degradations and many more. Curfew has been in force in Ghana three months after the military takeover and still is. This insistence on imposing a curfew has infringed on the most vital of all human rights--freedom of movement--which has led to ruthless suppression of facts and truths considered to be inconvenient to the regime while at the same time allegations which are intended to discredit and smear public figures and successful businessmen with probity are given free flow in the media.

"This is understandable because soon after the takeover a number of independent-minded journalists were replaced with others who were given clear directives to toe the line or be fired.

"The general ban on all political parties and pressure groups has not been made to cover organizations like June 4th movement, new democratic movement, Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guards, from which the majority of Rawlings' appointees came. They are actually allowed to operate openly. All known state and traditional institutions in Ghana are under assault.

"The armed forces, police, students, prisons, the banks and courts are being dismantled, demoralized or rendered redundant. In this unrepresentative extra-legal structures like people's defense committees, national investigation committee and citizens vetting committee have become ready instruments to be used. [sentence as received]

"Although statistics vary and evidence is tendentious, the indisputable fact is that people are being killed in cold blood, property is being selectively destroyed and Ghanaians are fleeing or planning to flee the country. Those who have neither the means nor the will to leave are nervous.

"What matters in all these to us is that these events have in turn led to a kind of situation which has ominous consequences for our country. As of now the country is reported to be hit by serious shortages of essentials of life. Food and drugs are not only in short supply but those available are beyond the reach of the poor farmer and the average worker whose answer to their plight amounts to an incipient civil war. The country, in short, is on the brink of disaster which can only be averted by an alternative solution.

"It is against this background that we, the members of the campaign for democracy in Ghana, are proclaiming here and now that only democratic restructuring of our dear country can help stem the tide in which she is caught. We are, therefore, demanding of the PNDC to announce a clear program for a return to electoral and representative government in Ghana.

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"1. The announcement should be made immediately.

"2. The timetable should be planned to last not more than six months.

"We would like to announce at this stage that the responsibility for organizing a peaceful return to constitutional rule rests fully with the PNDC and our subsequent reaction to the PNDC regime will be largely determined by their response to our demands.

"We would also like to end our statement on this note: That the campaign for democracy in Ghana is non-sectarian. It is open to all Ghanaians who are opposed to an undemocratic way of life--young, old, farmer, soldier, student, policeman or ordinary worker and judges--as the only acceptable method of identifying and solving our problems under relative peace, law and order."

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GHANA

RAWLINGS: SECRET SERVICES ARE PURSUING ME

PM061255 Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 31 Mar 82 pp 25-29

[Excerpts] JEUNE AFRIQUE: It is normal in the region for a new head of state to immediately establish contacts with his neighbors. Following your coup you waited 3 weeks before sending a mission to explain matters to the Ivory Coast, Togo, Upper Volta and Nigeria. Why did you wait so long?

Jerry Rawlings: We were principally concerned with the domestic situation. But foreign policy rules apparently require the immediate sending of a delegation. May we be forgiven if we are not experts in protocol. We told ourselves that it was a more pressing necessity to protect people and property and to prevent anarchy.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: What do you expect from these countries? What is the nature of your relations with them?

Jerry Rawlings: The delegation returned with much hope. But it is still too early to say whether the messages brought back were sincere or not.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: You fear foreign interventions. What substance is there to this fear?

Jerry Rawlings: For the past 2 years the CIA and also, I believe, the French services have been pursuing me.

In any case the secret services of the majority of West African countries have done their utmost to prevent the coordination of revolutionary activities. Their aim is clear: to prevent the liberation of our countries. Now that the irreparable has been done, they are again working to try and achieve what they failed to do before: to multiply the number of conspiracies designed to eliminate us. If I live for long I will have time to talk about these matters. For the time being only my country's survival is important. We have reached such a low ebb that it is no longer a matter of dignity but a matter of survival.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: If you were to pay a visit abroad, which country would you visit first?

Jerry Rawlings: I do not know. That depends on who invites us and on the aim of the visit. It is natural for us to reply to countries that have been honest with us.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Libya and the Soviet Union. Are they more honest than the rest?

Jerry Rawlings: Libya and the USSR can be really honest. After all, the Libyans are not communists. Ghana is more important than anything else. I would like to see myself in the mirror and see only my own reflection, not the white man's reflection.

We must rediscover our own real culture and depend on our own strength. This is what 14 million Ghanaians want.

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IVORY COAST

PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT YEAR FORECAST FOR 1982

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 3 Mar 82 pp 14-15

[Article by Siradiou Diallo: "Ivory Coast: a (Very) Difficult Year"]

[Text] Houphouet's country is a successful construction, but a fragile one. Unity is more necessary than ever. For a failure would be the failure of all of West Africa.

There is every indication that 1982 is, and will be a particularly difficult year for Ivory Coast. To be sure, the country has experienced some shocks in the past. The pseudo-conspiracies in 1964-1965 that nearly beheaded the political general staff and the high levels of the administration, as well as the uprising that at the instigation of Niagbe Kragbe broke out in October 1970 in the Gagnoa area still remain in the memory of all.

But compared to today's violent convulsions, those events tend to seem like mere epiphenomena. Indeed, for several months, a strong wave of discontentment and disputation has been washing over the country. Dissatisfied over the gradual lowering of their buying power, workers in the public and private sectors are resorting to wildcat strikes to exact wage increases. Thrown out of their jobs as a result of the falling-off in operations, young unemployed persons do not hesitate to take to the streets to get the attention of the authorities. "Papa Houphouet must give us work," they proclaim as a sort of refrain.

Spoiled in the past, cadre make no secret any more of their anger at the freezing, and even sometimes the substantial lowering of their salaries. Those in state companies, whose rates are aligned with those of their colleagues in the civil service, are particularly vociferous with their bitterness. And are openly threatening to go to war against the government. It is true that some of them, who used to lead a life of luxury in Abidjan, have been unemployed since the dissolution of their enterprises nearly 2 years ago. Unemployment is also the obsession of students, whose violent demonstrations induced the authorities to close the University of Abidjan as of 10 February.

Up until the past few years, indeed, Ivorian students had no trouble finding work once their studies were over. They were not only hired immediately, either in the civil service or in the private sector, at comfortable salaries, but they were automatically housed in areas specially built for them. Sometimes,

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even, the state helped them through subsidies and special opportunities, to soon become the owners of their private houses. However, 3 or 4 years ago, the butter of abundance began to melt in the hot sun of circumstances. So yesterday's happy, carefree privileged persons quickly yielded to the gloomy white-collar unemployed of today. Is it not whispered about that some 2,000 cadre from the faculties of letters and law of Abidjan University are now tramping the sidewalks in search of jobs? Hence their anger, expressed in pamphlets, in which among other grievances, may be read: "We refuse to be out-of-work intellectuals."

Oddly, the reopening of old wounds believed forever healed is being witnessed. For example, the Betes' veiled opposition to the regime. It is known that the inhabitants of Daloa and Gagnoa only rallied at the last moment (and in a way lacking spontaneity) to President Felix Houphouet-Boigny. So it is not surprising now to see the latter asking the Bete cadre, among them Gen Zeze Barouan, head of the general staff of the armed forces, to censure the "destabilizing action" of "those among the students and teachers" (Bete understood) at the university.

In fact, all this agitation is only the foam on a tidal wave of which the substructure is above all of a political order. Given the head of state's advanced age, candidates for the succession are getting impatient. Clans are multiplying, competing with each other and tearing each other apart, each using all the means at its disposal in hopes of being in the best place. One delegation follows another to the country's hinterland at a rapid rate, making all sorts of promises: water supplies, electrification, paved roads, hospitals, schools... Marabouts, soothsayers, and wizards are having a very fine time. Some candidates are bringing them in from the four corners of Africa, while others have no qualms about sending missions as far away as India and Pakistan.

The tension is all the higher because the "Old Man" remains calm and refuses to give the slightest hint about the choice of the vice president destined to succeed him. What is more, there has to be one-upmanship. So recently he dropped this remark on the dumbfounded cabinet: "I know which people are hustling. They can go on doing so. But be sure of this, none of them will be designated. You are in for a surprise...." The head of state has so successfully spread confusion that any forecast is proving extremely foolhardy.

In the face of the fog enveloping the institutions and giving rise to doubts and uncertainty as to the country's future, it is not surprising that the nation's driving forces are stirred to anger. But however legitimate their irritation, it should not go so far as to call into question what has been achieved already. Even though some may be in a hurry to take over from the "Old Man," even though others feel he should no longer stay beyond his time in office, they should still all show calm and cool-headedness. And above all, not let their ambition come before the unity that Ivory Coast needs.

This country, which is nothing other than the fruit of Felix Houphouet-Boigny's political genius, is in fact a successful construction, but a fragile one. Despite present difficulties, it is the only country in Africa south of the Sahara to have an infrastructure strong enough to pursue rapid, coherent development. In every area, the work accomplished by the "Old Man" over the past 20 years is immense.

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Ivory Coast is one of the few countries, if not the only one, south of the Sahara, that can be crossed in every direction, thanks to a road system that leaves little to be envied of those in developed countries. In which any city in the interior can be reached by dial telephone, while the same system provides links with about 50 foreign countries, including the principal ones in Africa, America, and Europe. In which electricity and running water, in common use in all the towns, are reaching the rural areas with astonishing speed. Not to mention that Ivory Coast, along with Cameroon, is one of the only two countries in the south Sahara in a strong position to be self-sufficient in foodstuffs. It is a notable fact that these worthy results have been achieved without violence, and especially without shedding Ivorian blood.

Proof of the confidence that the country continues to enjoy abroad are the recent visits to Abidjan by eminent western bankers, such as the Americans William Draper, president of EXIMBANK [Export-Import Bank], and David Rockefeller, for Chase Manhattan Bank, or the head of Barclay's Bank (British). This shortly after the large loans just granted by the World Bank and the [International] Monetary Fund. And just before a huge loan that Paris is reportedly preparing to grant. The enticing oil prospects being offered Ivory Coast are surely not unrelated to this shower of amiable gestures.

But still, Ivorians must not be beguiled by illusions. If their country is being so much courted, it owes it above all to the stability and tireless efforts incarnated by Houphouet-Boigny for nearly 40 years. All it would take would be for the "Old Man's" dialogue, understanding, and realism to be replaced by parochial quarreling, rivalries, and personal ambitions, to send foreign cadres, experts, and investors flying off like a flight of sparrows from a rifle shot. And for the dazzling Ivorian showcase to shatter into a thousand fragments, leaving the country to sink as other African nations have sunk before it, under the dual influence of the impatience and irresponsibility of their leaders.

That is why, at this crucial time that Ivory Coast is going through, it is up to all the nation's driving forces to help the "Old Man" to get past the relay in the best of conditions. In any case, a failure would not belong to Ivory Coast alone. It would be the failure of all of West Africa, whose precious symbol of wisdom it is, as well as its last keystone. Especially since the voluntary withdrawal, a year ago, of Leopold Sedar Senghor in Senegal.

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IVORY COAST

SOCIAL UNREST ATTRIBUTED TO MOVE TOWARD DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC WOES

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 14 Mar 82 pp 12, 13

[Article by Koffi Mamane: "Why the 'Insurrection' "]

[Text] A paradoxical result of the move toward democracy desired by the head of state and the revealer of a difficult economic situation.

Closure of the University of Abidjan; suspension of higher education teachers' salaries; question of "destabilization outside Ivory Coast" brought up. The social climate, already somewhat touchy, suddenly got gloomier early this year in a state which until now seemed to be one of the most stable on the African continent. The fact that the current show of peevishness got its start at the University of Abidjan is certainly raising questions about realities in Ivorian society: the Abidjan campus has no reputation for being a hotbed of critics nor a haunt of great war-chiefs. The student-teacher rebellion began, anyway, in a fashion that that some intellectual circles in Abidjan describe as banal.

Groundless Rumor

Professor Laurent Gbagbo, one of the most prominent figures among Ivorian intelligentsia, was to give a public lecture on the topic of democracy. The hall is full for all his public pronouncements, and at the beginning of February, the tradition did not fail: notables of the sole party, the Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast -- African Democratic Rally section (PDCI-RDA) attend Professor Gbagbo's meeting. And, as usual, the students, who consider that the lecture is primarily "their business," refuse to give up their armchairs and seats to the government party officials. Provocation or none, the lights go out in the middle of the lecturer's address, and he is even bullied and jostled.

The next day, 12 February, there is a rumor about that Laurent Gbagbo has been arrested. A groundless rumor, but enough to bring school children and students into the streets of the capital. An unprecedented event, the jobless from Abidjan's shantytowns join the demonstrators. Some official vehicles are overturned and some shops attacked, which is nothing new in itself, but in Abidjan is something of an innovation.

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Concerned about law and order, the political bureau of the PDCI-RDA, summoned by the party president and head of state, Felix Houphouet-Boigny, holds an extraordinary meeting expanded to include the government, on 13 February. At the close of this meeting were decreed the closing of the university and the suspension of salary payments to higher education teachers and payment of funds for the union activities of students and teachers not affiliated with the party. The teachers' union is mainly SYNARES, the African Union for Research and Higher Education. Since its inception, SYNARES has never been willing to be affiliated with the General Union of Ivory Coast Workers (UGTCI) a section emanating from the sole party. That, incidentally, reveals the sort of atmosphere prevailing between the teachers' union and the government. Not only that, but Ivorian teachers, as a whole, have always kept apart from PDCI-RDA activities, which, in some people's opinion, makes them "potential opponents." Could SYNARES have decided to "go on the offensive"? A few isolated acts, though effectively carried out, do not permit that conclusion to be drawn. Neither do they provide any categorical or genuine proof of subversion from abroad, an expression which causes glances toward neighboring Ghana, where Captain Rawlings has just taken power.

There is every indication that the dissatisfaction being demonstrated in school and university circles is, on the one hand, the paradoxical outcome of the movement toward democracy desired and led for nearly 2 years now, by the head of state, and on the other, revelatory of a troubled economic situation.

It really seems as if "democratization within the single party framework," though it has broken a few locks and bolts and restrictions dangerous in the long run, has also revealed its own limits. With the floodgates open, it also looks as if an appetite for broader democracy and greater freedom of expression, inevitable "pitfalls" after two decades of economic growth, is making itself felt. The more so, in that since independence, fearful and rightly so for national unity that is still being sought, the authorities have been controlling the movement of ideas to the utmost, for fear that they might lead to a renewal of regionalist or ethnic sentiments. Result: Felix Houphouet-Boigny's regime has maintained and strengthened national unity, assured the security of foreigners by fighting xenophobia, but it has also had to rein in all opposition.

It is equally true that the student unrest is the result of an economic situation which has been on the verge of stagnation since 1979, as a result of the drop in market price and the sale at loss of coffee, cocoa, and wood, the country's main source of foreign currency. The regime is also paying the price of its "candor" toward Giscard's France.

A sentimentalist like most Africans of his generation, faithful to the end in his friendships, President Houphouet-Boigny tried to pursue with the former French regime a policy that he had fostered since independence, in 1960: privileged ties and unfailing solidarity with Paris, protection of French interests. In return, Paris had not been grudging in its support of its partner, particularly in relentlessly defending Ivorian raw materials on the world market.

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Painful Awakening

All that was gradually to change under Giscard. So Abidjan found in Giscard's France only a profiteering partner, without idealism in cooperation, concerned only with grabbing juicy contracts of no future benefit to Ivory Coast, or carry off lucrative operations that sometimes smacked of highway robbery.

So, besides questionable deals in Ivorian sugar, some turnkey factories that will never work would have been sold to Ivory Coast through businessmen that are reportedly very close to the former French authorities. The awakening is said to have been a very rude one for President Houphouet, who, as a sign of disapproval, closed the Ivorian market on several occasions in 1980 and 1981 to French businessmen to the advantage of their West German, American, or Italian competitors.

And it was probably with relief that the "Old Man" learned of Valery Giscard d'Estaing's departure and the arrival in office of his old friend Francois Mitterrand. Felix Houphouet-Boigny was, incidentally, the first African head of state to be welcomed by the new French president. He paid a long visit to Paris last summer and met Francois Mitterrand several times, working with him to strengthen the old personal relationships again and the ties between the two states. The Ivorian president even pleaded the case for some thorny African matters, such as French-Guinean relations, which are having trouble in recovering after the quarrel that brought the French Socialist Party into opposition with the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG).

The fact remains that under Giscard's seven-year period of office, Ivorian state funds, that had formerly prospered, got into some real difficulties. So it is therefore not at all surprising that the jobless of Abidjan, like the academics, less and less buoyed up by "the Ivorian miracle," and in the absence of a plan for society, should call the government to account or get restless.

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MAURITIUS

REFUSAL TO TRADE WITH SEYCHELLES ALIENATES PEOPLE

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 1-14 Mar 82 p 17

[Article by Jonathan M'Haruia: "Ramgoolam Is Hoist With His Own Petard"]

[Text] By adopting a negative attitude toward trade with Seychelles, the Mauritian Government has succeeded on one score: creating unanimous antagonism toward itself.

Intracorp Company, whose basic objectives seek to promote trade cooperation within the framework of the regional economy (see AFRIQUE-ASIE No 257, 18-31 January 1982), was formed by certain leaders of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM), in particular Paul Berenger, Kader Bhayat, and Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo. Less than 2 months after the company's formation, the concrete results already recorded show, on the one hand, that a big step has been taken in the area of regional trade cooperation, and on the other hand they refute the accusations brought by the men of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam's regime against the principal opposition party.

In fact, following an initial Seychellois mission organized at the end of January by Intracorp Company and headed by E. Desnousses, director of SEYCOM (Seychelles Commodity Company, a Seychellois import-export company), and E. Hoareau, director of ULC (Union Lighterage Limited, a state company which owns the Seychellois ship "5 June"), firm contracts were settled on involving annual trade worth 20.3 million rupees,* 14.7 million to be shipped to Seychelles and 5.3 million in the other direction [figures as published].

At the beginning of February a second Seychellois mission, headed this time by D. Bradburn, director of WEL (Works Enterprises Ltd), who has the role of minister of public works in Seychelles, signed contracts for orders worth more than 6 million rupees for 1982.

On the occasion of its first voyage--the "5 June" arrived in Port Louis on Wednesday, 10 February--the Seychellois government ship took off again several days later with orders signed by WEL and SEYCOM amounting to nearly

*One French franc equals 1.7 Mauritian rupees.

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3 million rupees. Although the "5 June" left Mauritius headed for the Seychelles with its hold filled with Mauritian goods--this will be positive for Mauritius's balance of payments and for the island businesses involved--it had been able to bring in only 50 tons of copra and 63,000 coconuts. The Mauritian Government had in fact refused two Mauritian importers permission to import 9 tons of frozen fish and 10 tons of salted fish.

Even though the reciprocity principle favors the Mauritian side, in view of Mauritius's greater export potential compared to that of Seychelles, Sir Seewoosagur's regime has not modified its negative attitude one bit. On one score, at least, the Mauritian Government has succeeded: it has created unanimous antagonism for itself, since in all political and economic circles there had been the expectation of a goodwill gesture on its part vis-a-vis the Seychelles--all the more so since the latter country has made important concessions that benefit Mauritius, especially regarding selling prices.

While this negative attitude on the part of the Mauritian Government is aimed mainly at Intracorp, which through its successes is inaugurating a new era in relations between the region's sister islands--and in the process this attitude undoubtedly allows the MMM to score some points countering the policy of Sir Seewoosagur's regime of subservience to Pretoria--the fact remains that the government in office in Port Louis has in that very fashion demonstrated its total lack of interest in genuine regional cooperation, which is necessarily the way of the future for the Indian Ocean nations. This has resulted in more than one individual in Port Louis saying that there would be genuine regional trade expansion after the general elections which will take place toward the end of April. In the meantime, the MMM leaders who founded Intracorp Company, and in particular Paul Berenger, Kader Bhayat, and Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo, who have been assigned the role of being the driving force in promoting trade and cooperation among the Indian Ocean countries, have already made contact with Reunion's socialists. This contact followed a request expressed by the latter for Intracorp Company to have a representation on Reunion which would make it possible to expand commercial links with its sister island. The next objective after Reunion will be Madagascar.

Nodules

Intracorp Company is already giving the impression that it would be possible for it to export Mauritian goods to Reunion as well as to reexport Seychellois and Indian products there.

In addition to trade, regional cooperation could take on a new dimension, what with the discovery by an Indian research vessel, the "Gaveshani," of impressive-sized nodules in the Indian Ocean, including the Mauritian and Seychellois zones--nodules containing several metals.

The mining of these nodules--which are made up usually of manganese and iron but also of copper, cobalt, nickel, titanium, and molybdenum--could

be carried out via a consortium of Indian Ocean countries, as proposed by two Indian researchers, S. Saigal and Dr Qasim, who took part in the exploration, especially since India envisages developing the necessary technologies.

While India has decided to send six research ships soon into the Indian Ocean with a view to examining more thoroughly the nodule deposits discovered there by the "Gaveshani," regional cooperation will nonetheless be able to expand in sufficient scale in this area only after the impending vote in Mauritius--and only if the progressive forces emerge victorious from it. In reality, relations between Port Louis and New Delhi distinctly deteriorated after Sir Seewoosagur's government aligned itself completely with Washington's views, particularly regarding the Diego Garcia base.

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MOZAMBIQUE

CHISSANO VIEWS AFRICAN CRISES

PML41513 Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 29 Mar-11 Apr 82 pp 28-30

["Exclusive" interview with Mozambican Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano in Rome by Augusta Conghiglia: "The Total Decolonization of Africa, That Is Our Task..."--date not given]

[Text] [Question] The last OAU Council of Ministers meeting finally consecrated the admission of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic [SDAR] into the continental organization. Can this be described as a victory for progressive Africa?

[Answer] After the majority of African states had sent a letter to the general secretariat stating that the SDAR was a sovereign African state and therefore had the right to be a member of the organization in keeping with the charter, Morocco refused to accept that fact for 2 years. Since the various mediations did not succeed it was not possible to wait any longer. Therefore, it was necessary for the decisions taken by a majority to be respected and for the secretary General to implement the letter and spirit of the charter. The same countries wrote to Edem Kodjo and that prompted him to take the decision which everybody knows was taken at the Council of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa.

[Question] Thus going against the decisions taken by the implementation committee at the third Nairobi summit....

[Answer] How could the committee reach a decision leading to the holding of elections--which presupposes the signing of a cease-fire--without specifying the parties in conflict? That tended to show that Morocco was busy pushing the OAU into adopting an unjust position toward the West Saharan people. We could not tolerate that any longer.

[Question] At the same Nairobi meeting in January, another committee, meeting on the Chad question, took decisions which went against all the OAU's previous resolutions. What do you think of that?

[Answer] During the last OAU summit in Nairobi, it was clear that President Goukouni Oueddei was asking that the inter-African force should help train a national army to replace the foreign troops who were then guaranteeing the defense of the territory. There had never been any talk of any reconciliation at all.

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Thus there has been a change in the OAU attitude compared with the June 1981 assembly. But this problem is different from that of the Sahara: in the latter case it was a question of the administrative implementation of a decision. In Chad's case we are still awaiting a report which the ad hoc committee is to submit to the member countries. Chad has a government recognized by the OAU with which we have met for discussions on several occasions and which cannot be compared to any force in opposition. There is no power vacuum. Power is in the hands of the National Unity Transition Government [GUNT] which has, however, decided to hold elections. It was with the aim of creating the right conditions for those elections that President Goukouni had hoped to be able to count on a force capable of guaranteeing order and peace in his country.

[Question] What view should be taken of the decision taken by the heads of state committee to draw up a timetable for holding elections and the withdrawal of the inter-African force on the one hand and achieving a reconciliation with Hissein Habre's FAN on the other hand before the next OAU summit?

[Answer] When we have seen the report we will be in a position to decide. There could be no solution without the GUNT's agreement. And the GUNT has rejected the committee's decision.

[Question] After the third Nairobi summit several African capitals expressed their disappointment, among others Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, who even spoke of the "need to restructure the OAU." Do you share that view?

[Answer] I think that the differences and conflicts which exist among the various members should be expressed. It is a way of consolidating ourselves and settling them through debate. It is not the first time that our differences have been openly expressed. When Angola was admitted, we took a clear stance: If the OAU refused that country's admission then that organization no longer had any reason to exist. The only possible decision was admission. As far as the Sahara is concerned it must be said that since the days of Spanish domination the OAU had remained rather on the fringe of the decolonization process. That problem had been debated more at the United Nations than in the pan-African organization and the OAU did not play its rightful role in the affair. That partly explains the vacillation of some African countries.

We have now reached another critical point in our history. If the OAU were to disappear because some countries leave it, it would mean that it is no longer the OAU as laid down in the charter.

The countries which have withdrawn, on the other hand, have not abandoned the organization. By leaving a meeting like the Addis Ababa meeting they have started a kind of struggle, a show of strength. There are some among them who dispute the admission procedure and not the SDAR's rights. Morocco, however, constantly withdraws from meetings....

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On the other hand it is possible that these "crisis" might lead us to re-define our positions, for instance to locate the common enemy once again and thus have a more combative and determined organization. It is in that sense that we can talk of restructuring. In Lagos we had explained in detail the content of the battle to be waged for economic independence. Today we must jointly define the new objective without allowing ourselves to be diverted from the real problems: this complete decolonization of Africa is our task. Africa's political liberation is our task. Africa's economic independence is our task. The latter has been neglected too often as is shown by the little attention paid by the member countries of the OAU's "B" commission.

[Question] The decolonization of Namibia is still a burning issue. What is the present position with the contact group's latest proposals?

[Answer] SWAPO and the Frontline Countries have given their answer to the electoral system proposed by the Group of Five. The ball is now in their court. They were disappointed by our refusal but they must have expected it. The "one man, two votes" system proposed cannot be accepted. It goes against democracy and facilitates the infiltration of South African and imperialist agents into the government bodies with which an independent Namibia would be equipped. The contact group claimed it was not putting forward proposals in accordance with South African wishes but the fact is that they are exerting pressure on SWAPO to agree and not on South Africa to implement UN Resolution 435.

[Question] At the same time South Africa is pursuing its attacks on the Frontline Countries and stepping up repression in Namibia....

[Answer] We--I am referring to all the countries in the region--should continue to act on two fronts: on the domestic front by mobilizing the masses against outside dangers and at international level by showing, particularly to world public opinion, the dangers which this situation poses for peace and by arousing greater solidarity.

We have always known that the situation would not be settled while South Africa was led by a minority racist regime. It has the support of some Western countries but, as during our liberation struggle, we are trying to prompt their peoples to support us. We are waging a diplomatic battle by making our interlocutors aware of the problems which all the southern African countries are experiencing. The regional cooperation which we are trying to develop is encountering owing partly to the indifference of the countries which are supposed to be contributing to the efforts we are making for greater economic independence from South Africa.

[Question] Is U.S. policy playing a role in the Western countries' slowness and caution in responding to the wishes of the Frontline Countries and the SADCC (note) (Coordination Conference for the Development of Southern Africa which comprises Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.)?

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[Answer] Some countries are, of course, aligning their policy with U.S. policy. In addition the United States controls a large number of international economic institutions and relies on its allies' participation in implementing its policy.

But in addition to those elements, there is a clear lack of political will on the part of some Western countries. Some of them have not realized that they could not cooperate with us in the same way as with any other partner, that the nature of our struggle implied stances requiring sacrifices from them. Thus they have not pledged to help our vital struggle to release ourselves from the South African hold. That may be because they identify with South Africa and it is always difficult to fight yourself....

Leaving aside their short-term interests they ought to understand how important it is to eliminate that odious regime and hence guarantee the future of their relations.

[Question] Is that a case of shortsightedness?

[Answer] Let's say it is excessive obstinacy on the part of the West which is failing to learn from the past. We became independent at a time which was not chosen by them and they continued to fight us. In Zimbabwe, after supporting forces which did not represent the people they were surprised by the Zimbabwe African National Union's victory. In Angola they continued to give their support to the antipeople forces well after the victory of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. And they have still not abandoned hope of undermining the country's progressive forces once and for all.

[Question] Especially since the example of those independent countries in southern Africa has started to awaken other peoples in the region. In that connection Mozambique's action is aimed at stirring up the governments of those countries most of which were just passive satellites of South Africa....

[Answer] We wanted to develop regional cooperation with the governments of those countries, moving beyond the differences which exist between us. The economic situation itself is prompting us to do that. The countries in the region with which we had virtually no relations before independence have begun to show interest in our economic policy and to understand it. We explained to them that our interests were the same and the trade or transport agreements which we concluded together prove it. Our common goal, beyond our differences, is to liberate ourselves from dependence on South Africa which we inherited from colonization.

[Question] Is not the normalization of relations with Portugal on the basis of real reciprocity a new positive point to the credit of Mozambique diplomacy?

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[Answer] Certain circles in Portugal completely disdained our independence. We were intransigent and firm and, finally, thanks also to President Eanes' clear will to establish relations on an equal basis, we achieved that normalization consecrated by his recent visit.

While having no preferential status, the former mother country and our country can have particularly advantageous relations owing to the importance of the economic sectors under consideration. The effective development of those relations will depend on Portugal's will.

[Question] It is said that Portugal's entry into the EEC could have the positive effect of drawing with it its former colonies which have not signed the Lome agreements....

[Answer] Those are not the terms in which the problem is posed. What objective interest do we have in adhering to that convention? None for the time being.

It must not be forgotten that there is an EC with common economic and financial interests, composed of countries governed by similar systems and constituting a relatively monolithic entity.

But that is not true of the countries which have signed the Lome agreement. It forms an apparent unit described as the "southern" bloc. It seems preferable to us to promote bilateral relations with the EEC which was not created solely to cooperate with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries....

[Question] Do you have observer status in CEMA?

[Answer] No yet. We were invited to several meetings and then asked to be full members of it. Indeed there is intensive cooperation between us and CEMA members in various spheres and this is constantly being developed and now requires coordination.

[Question] Are the situation in the Indian Ocean, with the Diego Garcia Base, the instability of the Comoro Islands, the reactionary maneuvers in Mauritius, the latest events in the Seychelles and the attempts to destabilize Madagascar worrying for you?

[Answer] Of course and we support all the initiatives taken to demilitarize that zone. We hope that the United States, which is clearly not very "interested," will resume talks with the Soviets. The problem of that strategic zone will be debated in the United Nations next year and Madagascar has also proposed a conference.

The dangers of war in that region involve Africa but also Asia. The United States must, therefore, withdraw its bases. But that is not enough while

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the Western countries make use of South Africa for their strategic plans in the region. And those plans are still being developed. Indeed it must be noted that although Brazil has withdrawn from the plan to form a South Atlantic pact--a decision which we welcomed--that plan has nonetheless not been abandoned and, only recently a meeting aimed at reviving the South Atlantic Treaty Organization took place in Argentina and was attended by South African military.

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NAMIBIA

BRIEFS

EIGHT GUERRILLAS KILLED--Windhoek, Namibia (South-West Africa), Apr 13, REUTER--A police counter-insurgency unit killed eight guerrillas of the South-West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) during a clash in northern Namibia at the weekend, a police spokesman said today. A Namibian home guard died in the skirmish with about 90 SWAPO men 75 km (50 miles) north of Grootfontein, the spokesman said. Although this is outside traditionally white farming area, farmers in the Grootfontein District have been warned to be on the lookout for SWAPO infiltrators, he said. Special police units form part of the South African-led forces fighting a 16-year-old bush war against SWAPO guerrillas based in neighbouring Angola. [Text] [AB131338 London REUTER in English 1028 GMT 13 Apr 82]

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NIGER

EDF AID GOES TO AGRICULTURAL WATER PROJECTS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 737

[Text] The European Development Fund (EDF) has just granted 2 billion CFA francs in nonrepayable aid to finance four agricultural water projects in the Niger River Valley, it has been learned from the EDF delegation in Niamey on 3 March. The projects include the development of an irrigated perimeter at Namarde-Goungou (260 hectares), rehabilitation of the Karma and Karaigorou projects (300 hectares) and total overhauling of the Tillaikaina terrace (70 hectares).

Since the first EDF grant and with the startup of Koutoukale, over 1,200 hectares in the Niger River Valley will have benefited from the total harnessing of water.

These developments should make it possible to support a population (farmers and their families) of some 18,000 persons. The area will have a total production of 12,000 tons of paddy rice and 1,500 tons of fruits and vegetables, according to Ms Gabrielle Von Brochowski, EDF representative in Niger.

She emphasized that the projects are part of the Nigerien Government's policy to promote the "integrated development" of the population, which will be encouraged to become "self-managing," and achieve food self-sufficiency by diversifying crops by joining livestock raising and agriculture.

Finally, additional actions are planned within this framework, such as ensuring a drinking water supply, reforestation, rural development and cooperative training.

EDF sources say that on the whole, with the completion of these projects, the EEC will have financed 25 percent of the agricultural water projects in Niger.

The project will take 24 months for the work itself and another 36 months for operating assistance. Its cost will be borne as part of the nonrepayable aid of the 4th and 5th EDF grants.

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NIGER

BRIEFS

FRENCH FINANCIAL AID--Through the Central Fund for Economic Cooperation (CCCE), the French Ministry of Cooperation and Development has granted Niger special financial aid amounting to 5 billion CFA francs, it was learned from the French Cooperation Mission in Niamey on 4 March. The aid is in two parts. The first is a CCCE loan backed by the Aid and Cooperation Fund (FAC) for 3 billion CFA francs and will be used to finance four projects: repair of rural trails (500 million); additional work on the Gaweye Hotel in Niamey (910 million); the balance of the Nigerien Government's participation in the Nigerien Coal Company at Anou Araren (SONICHAR) (1,515,000,000); and a forestry project (75 million). The second phase includes a CCCE loan for 2 billion CFA francs and will finance Nigerien projects not yet submitted. This special aid of 5 billion CFA francs corresponds to the amount of the request made by Nigerien authorities to the French Government within the framework of financing their National Investment Fund (FNI) for 1982. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 737] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

FRG COOPERATION AGREEMENTS--On 6 March, Konrad Porzner, secretary of state in the Ministry of Economic Cooperation of the Federal Republic of Germany, was received by Col Seyni Kountche, Nigerien chief of state. The meeting concluded the one-week visit made by Porzner to Niger beginning on 2 March. Two financial cooperation agreements for 14.6 million German marks (1,825,000,000 CFA francs) were signed. The first, involving additional financing totaling 13.6 million German marks (1.7 billion CFA francs), will be used to finance the second phase of construction of the Niamey Radio Station. An initial agreement for 12 million marks (1.5 billion CFA francs) was signed for the project by the West German minister of economic cooperation, Rainer Offergeld, at the time of his visit to Niamey on 16 January 1981, the Nigerien Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalls. The second accord, for 1 million marks (125 million CFA francs), will provide additional financing for the Tiaguirire Forage Ranch, 40 kilometers south of Niamey. The FRG has already contributed some 12,075,000,000 marks, or 1.51 billion CFA francs, to the project. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 737] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

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SENEGAL

THREE CHANGES IN ELECTORAL CODE PROPOSED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 731

[Text] At its 2 March meeting, the Senegalese Council of Ministers approved various bills and orders aimed at reforming the current electoral code. Three major innovations are proposed by the government and will be submitted to the National Assembly.

1) A combination of two types of voting: on the one hand, voting out of a majority list on one ballot at the departmental level for the election of half (60) of the deputies; and on the other hand, proportional voting at the national level for the election of the other half. In addition, only parties having obtained at least 5 percent of the votes will be represented in the Assembly.

According to Minister of Information Djibo Ka, the adoption of this combination of different types of voting is aimed at taking into account the integral multi-party system instituted in Senegal, where there now exist 12 political parties, compared with only four at the time of the drafting of the 1977 code. The proposal would also modify the electoral code, which provided for the election of all deputies by proportional voting at the national level.

2) Chairmen of the polling places and their assistants will be named, not by the mayors and rural council chairmen as in the past, but by the prefects and therefore, the administration.

3) Only political parties recognized at least four months before the elections will be authorized to present candidates for the presidential and legislative elections. Any candidacy must also be presented by a political party.

In addition, the 16 January 1982 issue of the Senegalese JOURNAL OFFICIEL carried Organic Law No 8180 of 28 December 1981 relating to the election of the president of the republic and deputies in the National Assembly. The provisions of that law concern: the declaration and filing of candidacies; the election campaign; counting of the votes and the proclamation of results; and election disputes.

This text, which abrogates certain provisions of the electoral code and any preceding texts relating to the election of the president of the republic,

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stipulates that the candidate for the highest office in the land must have the backing of a legally established political party.

Regarding deputies, their number increases from 100 to 120 (Article 31).

It should be noted that Law No 8180 of 28 December 1981 gives the Supreme Court extensive powers in order to ensure that equality between candidates be respected. When a candidate appeals to the Supreme Court, the Court may (Article 10) send injunctions to administrative authorities, who are required to take the measures requested by the Supreme Court.

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SENEGAL

BRIEFS

MARSEILLE-FOS, DAKAR CONTAINER SHIPPING--The Senegalese maritime company SIIMAR (Senegalese-Iberian Maritime Industries), recently set up in Dakar, has announced that it will soon establish a regular "all container" line between Marseille and Dakar. It will initially serve Senegal with the "Diego Nabou," a 130-EVP [expansion unknown] container ship, which will depart from Fos every 18 days. The ship's first stop at the container terminal in the western basins of the Autonomous Port of Marseille is scheduled for 27 March. Service to Dakar from Fos will be direct, without any stops in between, resulting in a transit time of 9 days between Fos and Dakar. With the "Diego Nabou," SIIMAR will provide its clients with the entire range of 20- and 40-foot dry containers, as well as 20- and 40-foot isothermic containers that can carry all types of goods at hot or cold temperatures. In addition, it will provide group service with "outfitters' containers." A second 180-EVP all-container ship will be put into service very soon by SIIMAR, which will enable it to provide a departure every 12 days. It will also soon have a cold-storage facility in Dakar, enabling it to hold isothermic containers upon arrival or departure. It should be noted that SIIMAR-Dakar has asked Francemer International, whose main office is in Marseille, to act as its general agent for service. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 732] 11,464

NEW SHIP ON DAKAR-ZIGUINCHOR LINE--On 2 March at the shipyards of the Autonomous Port of Dakar, Mrs Elizabeth Diouf, wife of the Senegalese chief of state, christened the "Casamance Express," a new ship that will replace the "Cap Skirring" on the Dakar-Ziguinchor line. Mrs Diouf was accompanied by Assane Seck, minister of state for equipment, and Robert Sagna, secretary of state for maritime fishing. The new vessel also makes it possible to resume traffic, interrupted for over 3 years, in keeping with the desire repeatedly expressed by the people in the southern region of the country, particularly at the time of the trip of then Prime Minister Abdou Diouf to Casamance in 1979. The "Casamance Express," 77.53 meters long outboard and 12.03 meters wide, is equipped with two main engines, each capable of developing 1,500 hp. Maximum speed is 14 knots. The ship will be able to carry 500 passengers and 100 tons of goods. Tickets for the "Casamance Express" range from 3,000 francs to 30,000 francs, depending on whether one travels third class (benches) or first class (air-conditioned cabin with meals). Minister of Equipment Seck

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emphasized that the vessel, purchased thanks to the services of Danish experts, is the best suited to the task assigned to it. According to him, although the purchase price of the boat is unbeatable (700 million), it must be admitted that under the present circumstances, it cost the government dearly. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1896, 12 Mar 82 p 732] 11,464

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UGANDA

SHOOTING REPORTED IN KAMPALA 10 APRIL

AB101047 London REUTER in English 1037 GMT 10 Apr 82

[Text] Nairobi, 10 Apr, REUTER--Residents reported heavy shooting and fresh security sweeps in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, today on the eve of the third anniversary of the overthrow of dictator Idi Amin.

The residents, contacted by telephone, said the shooting lasted for three hours and seemed centered on the northwest suburbs of Bwaise, about five km (three miles) from the city centre.

It was not clear who was involved in the gunfire, the residents said. Security forces have stepped up operations against anti-government guerrillas in recent weeks but Bwaise is not an area where the guerrillas have been active, they said.

Shortly after the gunfire died down seven army trucks were seen coming from Bwaise and driving through the city centre carrying about 100 male civilians each, they added.

This week Ugandan security forces arrested thousands of civilians for identity checks in a vast operation aimed at flushing out guerrillas and their supporters, diplomats said.

Ugandan President Milton Obote was seen driving into Kampala early today with an escort of 20 heavily-armed vehicles. He is normally accompanied by six, the residents said.

Kampala has been rife with rumours this week of a guerrilla attack planned to coincide with the third anniversary tomorrow of Kampala's capture by Tanzanian troops and Ugandan exiles which ended Amin's bloody reign.

Diplomatic sources said that the centre of Kampala was normal with shops open and people going about their business. There was even a traditional Easter holiday yacht race on Lake Victoria, the sources added.

Ugandan security forces have stepped up operations against anti-government forces since guerrillas attacked the capital's main army barracks on February 23 in some of the fiercest fighting since Amin's overthrow.

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Residents said that the majority of those detained in this week's security operations had been freed. Some rocket launchers and mortar tubes were found in the operation, diplomatic sources said.

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END