

"A Window on an Outside World":
Tourism as Development in the
Gambia

by Barbara Harrell-Bond



Promotion of tourism as it is occurring in the Gambia raises issues at the core of many "expert" assumptions regarding the objectives and requirements for Third World development. Papua-New Guinea's effort to promote "another development" is examined as an alternative orientation.

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Although the term development is rarely defined, it is ubiquitous in the literature on the so-called Third World. There is a widespread presumption that any project which is described as development will be of positive benefit to those among whom it is implemented. At the same time, however, there is a growing realization, at least in some quarters, that many of the development programs which have been promoted by international agencies and various donor countries have had unanticipated deleterious social, economic, and ecological consequences. It is now widely recognized, for example, that the emphasis upon the mechanization of agriculture has tended to push women out of farming and reduced their economic and social status.¹ The promotion of certain cash crops has, in many instances, led to the abandonment of diversified agricultural patterns which utilized a bush-fallow system and which were adjusted to the ecology. When climatic changes have occurred, unfavorable to the cash crop, people have found themselves without sufficient money to purchase the food supply which formerly they had grown for themselves. These and other related problems arising in the wake of development projects can be partly excused because they were the result of the planners' failing to understand the social or ecological conditions obtaining in a particular location. Presumably such undesirable consequences can be avoided in the future if those responsible are better informed.

Unfortunately, however, it would appear that other development programs fail to benefit the recipients (however benefit is defined) for reasons which would appear to be less innocent or naïve. Most agricultural programs promote the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Loans are made in the name of agricultural development for the purchase of products which are in surplus and therefore cheap because their use has now been restricted in those Western countries which produce them.² These invidious practices are continued despite the well-documented long-term dangers to both the population and the ecology.

There are other examples of development programs where the motives of the agencies involved are more obscure and where the cost/benefit ratio in social and economic terms is difficult to evaluate. One such example comes from Sierra Leone where in the 1960s the World Bank agreed to lend money to the government if, and only if, it phased out the railway. Although the long-term viability of the existing narrow-gauge railway was indeed questionable, at the time it was a functioning system linking remote villages and providing farmers with a means to transport their surplus crops to market. The plan did include provision for the construction of feeder roads which would, when completed, replace the old rail links, but few of these roads have been provided for the villages which were cut off by the closing of the railway. Although the government survived the political crisis

concomitant with the decision which put several hundred railway employees out of work, it is not possible to estimate the economic and social costs which have been, and continue to be, suffered by all those individuals and communities affected by this imposed policy. The loans for road construction have provided employment, but these opportunities have been largely limited to laborers. The contracts for building the roads have been awarded mainly to foreign companies. Since the railway has all but been eliminated, the demand for vehicles and spare parts which are not produced in Sierra Leone has greatly increased. It is at least debatable whether such a development program can be justified in either short- or long-term benefits to Sierra Leone.

This Report is concerned with a specific development program—promotion of tourism in Gambia—which raises issues at the core of some of the "experts'" assumptions regarding the objectives and requirements for development in Africa and of the presumed deficiencies of Africans—in this instance Gambians—to manage their own development affairs. As we shall see, the arguments for the necessity of expatriate control of tourism as a development industry are very reminiscent of those which were used to justify the civilizing mission of the colonialists in an earlier period. According to the United Nations expert who advised the Gambian government and the World Bank, the primary source of loans for the

project, tourism provides a unique opportunity for traditional (i.e., backward) African society because tourism gives ordinary Gambians a "window on the outside world."³

Baseline for Development

The Gambia became independent from British rule in 1965. During the 1950s when preparations were being made in other African countries for the transfer of political power, it was thought that Gambia was too small and too poor to consider independence as a viable goal. As a result of this attitude by the colonial administration, internal political development proceeded at a considerably slower rate than was the case in other British colonies. After some initial difficulties caused by the ambivalence of the British toward the Western-educated Gambians, a satisfactory constitution was drawn up and elections, held in 1962, gave the leadership of the country to the People's Progressive Party under the leadership of David Jawara as the first Prime Minister. In 1965 the Gambia was granted independence. David Jawara reverted to Islam and changed his name to Dawda. Although a presidential form of government was rejected by the voters in 1965, in 1970 it was approved by the electorate and the Gambia became a Republic on April 24, 1970, with Sir Dawda Jawara as its first President.

The Republic of Gambia is located on the west coast of Africa, surrounded on three sides by Senegal. Its boundaries extend for about 480 kilometers along both sides of the Gambia River, the most navigable river in West Africa. As is generally the case in Africa, the boundaries of this tiny country are completely artificial, having no relation to either geographic or ethnic lines of demarcation. They resulted from agreements between the French and the British in 1889 and were always (even for a period after independence) regarded as temporary. Today about 525,000 Gambians live in a country whose limits are approximately 10 kilometers distant from either side of the river. With a total

area of 11,000 km², 20 percent of which consists of saline marshes, the country has a population density of 47 persons per km², reportedly the fourth highest in mainland Africa. The population, growing at the rate of approximately 2.6 percent per annum, is unevenly dispersed. About 15 percent live in the Banjul-Kombo urban complex along the coast in an area covering some 88 km² where the growth rate has been increasing at about 6.9 percent a year. The people of the Gambia represent some 12 different ethnic groups, the 3 major ones being Mandingos, Fulas, and Wolofs.

Independent Gambia has been an unexpected success story. Given its size, poverty, location, and its history, its political stability since independence is not easy to explain. European contact with the region dates from 1455 when the Portuguese first entered the estuary of the river. British and French trade in the Senegambia area dates from the mid-sixteenth century. From 1661 onward the Senegambia was subject to continual conflict between the French and the British. But conflict was not limited to that produced by European contact. Many Senegambia kingdoms were powerful enough to maintain armies and internecine warfare was common. Political competition was complicated by the impact of proselytizing Muslim teachers in the nineteenth century. The presence of competing British and French trading interests in the area was exploited by local political leaders in their attempts to overcome their neighbors. For a considerable period the extent of the conflict discouraged the British from entrenching themselves in the area and there were times when it appeared that the Gambia River would be exchanged for some other possession with the French. The British presence was maintained on the Gambia River during the last two decades of the eighteenth century without any definite official support for their activities.

When the British decided to abolish the slave trade in 1808 it became

necessary to control the activities of British nationals along the western coast of Africa. In 1816 Captain Alexander Grant negotiated the cession of St. Mary's Island, adjacent to the south bank of the mouth of the river, and constructed administration buildings, harbor facilities, and barracks on the island. The new town, which was first called Bathurst, today Banjul, attracted a settlement of Africans from the surrounding area. The population was also greatly increased by Wolof merchants from the Cape Verde area and by other Africans who had been liberated from captured slave ships. In 1821 the area was placed under the administration of the Governor of Freetown. In the 1880s the British established the Protectorate of the Gambia encompassing its present boundaries, and in 1888 administrative control of the area was separated from Sierra Leone.

Development in the twentieth century under the British system was limited largely to the Colony area where port facilities were improved, some streets in Bathurst were paved, a hospital was constructed, and missionary groups maintained elementary and secondary schools. The single export commodity was groundnuts (peanuts) from which tax revenue provided just enough income to keep the government functioning. After 1942 the British promised to allocate money from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund for the improvement of the Gambia, but two disastrous experiences, the Yundum Egg Project and the Rice Farm at Wallikunda, inhibited any further major developments for the country. As a result the Gambia entered the 1950s pre-independence period still dependent upon one crop, having no all-weather roads anywhere in the Protectorate, and only one secondary school and one hospital there to serve over a quarter of a million people.

The structure of the Gambian economy has not altered in the period since independence, although modest development has been made possible by the doubling of world

MAURITANIA

ATLANTIC
OCEAN

SENEGAL

DAKAR

KAOLACK

BANJUL

THE GAMBIA

CASAMANCE

ZIGUINCHOR

GUINEA

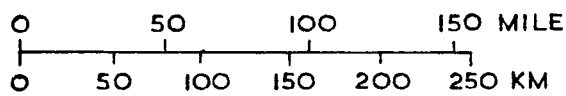
BISSAU

BISSAU

GUINEA

CONAKRY

FREETOWN



market prices for groundnuts. This has increased the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 1965 and 1975 from approximately D57 million to an estimated D153 million (D = Dalasis, D4 = approximately £1 or \$1.80). The country remains primarily agricultural with livestock, fisheries, and farming activities employing 85 percent of the economically active population.⁴ The per capita income of the urban minority living in the Banjul and the Kombo areas is 4 times that of the rural population despite the fact that 65 percent of the GDP comes from agriculture. As a result of this disparity of income, there has been an acceleration of the rate of rural-urban drift.

Cultivation methods with a hand hoe as the basic tool have remained largely unchanged and the attempt to introduce ox-drawn equipment has met with only limited success. Oxen must be fed during the dry season and the Gambia, being one of the Sahelian countries, has suffered from the effects of the drought of the past few years. Food shortages during the dry season make the keeping of oxen a luxury few can afford. The traditional bush-fallow system of agriculture requires, in the Gambia, a fallow time in excess of ten years and population pressures have caused a shortening of the cycle with a resultant decline in land fertility. Rice, millet, sorghum, vegetables, and fruits are grown primarily for local consumption in addition to groundnuts, the primary cash crop. However, it has become increasingly necessary for the Gambia to import food. While it is claimed that self-sufficiency in rice production will be attained by 1980, at the moment the Gambia imports 20,000 tons of rice annually. Livestock is another important agricultural product, but the grazing requirements of cattle herds and goats are placing increasing pressures on the land.

The Gambia River, the central feature of the country's geography, winds through three countries, Guinea, Senegal, and the Gambia. While its importance as a resource is

obvious, any further development is not without problems. Because the river all but divides Senegal, there have been repeated attempts to convince the Gambia to cooperate in the building of bridges, but the river is still crossed by ferry. Ocean-going vessels can travel some 240 kilometers up the river but present plans to build a bridge about 182 kilometers upriver would limit navigability. The river is tidal and during the dry season the reduced flow of fresh water permits the intrusion of salt water. Feasibility studies are now being conducted to assess the possibility of building a barrage which would prevent this salt intrusion and protect the water for irrigation purposes. There is concern, however, that insufficient information is available to determine the extent to which such a development would affect fish stocks. Similarly Senegal is interested in the river being developed as a source of hydroelectric power, but the building of dams would flood otherwise habitable land. Whatever developments are planned for the Gambia River will require regional cooperation, given the three countries whose populations will be affected.

The Gambia has virtually no mineral resources worth exploitation, with the possible exception of ilmenite (titanium ore), which many years ago was mined along the coast. Forests in the country are rapidly becoming incapable of supplying local requirements in timber, poles, and fuel. Even though a forestry department was created to manage the country's forest resources there have been problems in enforcing conservation regulations and in 1972 an aerial survey revealed that 11 percent of the protected forest parks had been cleared.

Banjul, the capital of the Gambia, is situated on an island of less than two square kilometers in area and is densely populated. The city is linked to the Kombo St. Mary division on the south bank of the river by a bridge. Although the city is supplied with electricity and water, the present system of sewage treatment

involves the use of septic tanks or night buckets which are often dumped into open storm sewers. Urban communities which have been growing up south of the river and along the Atlantic coast present even greater needs for the provision of amenities. All these and other problems faced the newly independent Gambia in 1965 and it is remarkable to compare progress made since that date with development during the decades the country was under colonial rule.

In the Gambia's *Five Year Plan for Economic Development 1975-76-1979-80* it is observed that when the country achieved independence there was considerable doubt whether the new nation could survive.

As a very small country wholly dependent on one cash crop, and still in receipt of substantial budgetary assistance, with the heights of both the Civil Service and Commerce dominated by expatriates, and with few resources other than its people and its river, the new Government faced a considerable challenge (p. 11).

Progress since independence has been outlined in the *Five Year Plan*. Employment opportunities have increased, but 90 percent of this increase has been in the public, non-productive, sectors. Considerable advance has been made in the transfer of foreign-owned assets to public ownership. All but two of the foreign trading firms operating in the Gambia have withdrawn. Most of the private modern industrial sector, however, continues to be dominated by foreign interests. The standard and coverage of social services have improved; the number of rural health stations has increased from 66 to 80 and the number of primary schools from 83 to 94. A total of 2,000 persons are estimated to have an annual income of over D6,000, but 300 of these are expatriates. One of the impressive things about the Gambia has been its effort to live within the limited financial resources of the country and the salaries of

government officials are among the lowest in Africa.

Although there has been an attempt to diversify the economy the Gambia remains almost totally dependent upon agriculture for its earnings of foreign exchange, 95 percent of which are earned from groundnuts. Tourism accounts for about 6 percent of the GDP and foreign exchange earnings from this industry are optimistically estimated at about D4 million. Progress in the development of the economic infrastructure is also reported in the *Five Year Plan*. An all-weather trans-Gambian road has been constructed, river transport has been improved, and the communications system has been extended. Power consumption has increased and electricity and water supply services have been provided in seven provincial centers.

Enrollment in schools has been expanded. There were three times as many children receiving primary education in 1975 as at independence in 1965. Secondary school enrollment has almost doubled in that same period with 5,971 students in 1975. Education beyond secondary school remains limited to vocational and teacher training and the Gambia continues to be dependent upon overseas courses for university studies or specialized training. The *Plan* cites other examples of the modest improvements in the conditions of life in the Gambia since independence and these include a limited expansion of health facilities, more programs to combat nutritional problems resulting from the drought, and efforts to increase the number of community development field workers in rural areas.

Tourism

According to one writer, developing countries turn to international tourism in the hope that it will provide a solution to financial problems.⁵ The aim is to achieve several objectives: an increase in the Gross National Product (GNP), an inflow of foreign exchange required for the needs of economic development, the

diversification of the economy, and the creation of new job opportunities. Tourism, it is asserted, may be employed to encourage the development of particular regions, to stimulate intermediate demand, and to precipitate changes in the economic structure which are favorable to development.

It is important to note, however, that Gambia did not *turn* to tourism as a development enterprise. Nor is tourism in this country the result of publicity from Alex Hailey's novel, *Roots*, as many Americans might suppose.⁶ *Tourist agents discovered the Gambia*. In 1965, 300 tourists spent their holidays on the Gambian beaches. The following year the Vingsor Club 33 of Sweden brought 528 tourists and continued to be the sole tourist agency operating in the Gambia until the 1971-72 season when Danish and later British agencies started to bring tourists in as well. As shown in Table 1, the number of charter tourists arriving in the Gambia has grown from 300 to 21,049 in just 10 years. The majority of the tourists are Swedish or Danish, these two nationalities accounting for between 80 and 90 percent of the total of air charter tourists. Table 2 shows the composition of air charter tourists by nationality between 1968 and 1976.

When tourism in the Gambia began, the dominant age-group was 50 years and over but, as shown in Table 3, the age-structure of the tourists has shifted with the 30-49 year group now being in the majority.

Winter holidays in the sun have always held an attraction for Europeans and although there are a number of obvious destinations, agents were able to sell the Gambia as the nearest country to Europe that could guarantee a pleasant seaside climate during the winter. The dry season lasts from November to April and the relative humidity during that period remains between 30 and 60 percent. The temperature varies between 23 and 27 degrees centigrade (70°-80° Fahrenheit). The water temperature along the 48 kilometers of beautiful white beaches bordering the Atlantic ranges, during this period, between 23° and 26° C. The shortest day, at the height of the tourist season, is eleven and a half hours. The Gambia, as a tourist attraction, was also promoted because of its "stable, democratic government" and the ease of communication, English being the official

The Gambia did not "turn to tourism as a development industry," the tourist agents discovered the Gambia.



language.⁷ Moreover, the "interesting culture allowing attractive excursions"⁸ and the "exotic atmosphere of Africa"⁹ were particularly emphasized as marketable commodities.

The obvious salability of winter holidays in the Gambia by tourist agencies operating primarily in Scandinavia was firmly established by 1970, although the number of hotel beds (as shown in Table 1) had not quite doubled. There were some major problems involved in extending facilities for tourism. The liberal policy of the Gambian government toward foreign investment, taxation, and duty on imported materials would certainly encourage the expansion of hotel facilities by foreign entrepreneurs, but it must be recalled that the colonial government left the Gambia with very limited provision for power and water supplies and those amenities which did exist in 1965 were primarily limited to Banjul. Tourism could not expand without the extension of such facilities. Foreign investors were eager to cash in on the untapped potential of tourism in the Gambia, but in order for the venture to be profitable, *someone else would have to pay* for the necessary infrastructure of access roads, sewage works, communication systems, water and electricity supplies. Clearly the tiny airport with its corrugated metal runway would also have to be modernized. It was evident that the Gambian economy could not influence this kind of development. Tourism as a development industry began to be promoted as a solution.

In 1972, an area west of Banjul, along the Atlantic coast, was identified as a potential site for tourist facilities. After physical plans and engineering studies were carried out, the project was evaluated by a number of World Bank missions and found suitable for an International Development Association (IDA) credit.¹⁰

The infrastructure necessary for the expansion of tourism required a number of components which were identified by the World Bank and United Nations experts. These in-

Table 1
Air Charter Tourist Arrivals and Hotel Beds 1965-66 - 1975-76

Fiscal Year	Charter tourist arrivals	Increase no.	Increase %	Hotel beds no.	Increase %
1965-66	300			162	--
1966-67	528	228	76	162	--
1967-68	796	268	51	172	6
1968-69	806	10	1	201	17
1969-70	1,207	401	50	310	54
1970-71	2,601	1,394	115	390	26
1971-72	8,031	5,430	209	856	119
1972-73	15,584	7,553	94	1,334	56
1973-74	18,651	3,067	20	1,993	11
1974-75	21,049	2,398	13	2,047	3
1975-76					

Source: The Republic of the Gambia. Tourist Statistics 1966-67 - 1973-74; Tourist 1974-75, Banjul, July 1976; Ministry of Information and Tourism (Mimeo November 1976).

*estimated

Table 2
The Composition of Air Charter Tourists by Nationality 1968 - 1976
(Percentages)

Nationality	68-69	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76
Swedish	87.0	72.7	78.2	75.0	68.8	57.5	59.4	49.1
Danish	6.6	8.0	7.6	15.1	18.5	27.5	27.5	29.1
Other Scandinavian	3.9	5.5	3.3	3.6	5.2	3.2	1.8	13.1
British	0.2	5.1	3.0	3.2	4.0	4.1	1.9	0.2
German	--	--	--	--	--	2.0	2.0	2.6
Other	2.4	8.8	7.0	3.0	2.5	5.7	6.5	5.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The Republic of the Gambia, Tourist Statistics 1966-67 - 1973-74, Banjul, July 1974; Tourist Statistics 1974-75, Banjul, July 1976.

*In 1974-75 Norwegian tourists were included in the number of Swedish tourists.

cluded the development of the present water supply and electric power systems serving the Banjul, Kombo St. Mary, and Kombo North Areas and their extension into the

tourist and "labor support" areas. This last area referred to the new communities which, as will be discussed shortly, were to be required to house the labor force serving the

Table 3

The Age-group Distribution of Air Charter Tourists 1968 - 1975
(Percentages of Total Number of Tourists)

Age-group	68-69	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
0-14	3.2	2.3	2.6	3.6	4.2	5.1	5.4
15-29	6.8	14.1	23.0	26.1	31.8	28.8	27.2
30-49	38.4	39.9	39.5	37.6	36.9	39.0	40.1
50 and over	50.7	43.4	34.0	31.9	25.7	26.3	27.3
Not stated	0.9	0.3	0.9	1.0	1.2	0.8	--
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The Republic of the Gambia, Tourist Statistics 1966-67 -1973-74, Banjul, July 1974, 1974-75, Banjul, July 1976.

tourist industry. The power plan for Banjul required a switch to oil-fired generating. Telecommunication facilities had to be extended to the tourist and labor support areas. Sewage and solid waste disposal had to be provided for the tourist hotels. Access roads along with secondary roads and pedestrian paths between resort sites and within the labor support areas were also to be constructed. The resort sites also required public beach facilities and shopping areas.

Part of the scheme included the establishment of a hotel training school for 50 students. This in turn required funds for the construction and equipment of classrooms, as well as for technical assistance. A food storage and marketing program was included in the list of required components with the aim of increasing the proportion of locally produced food consumed by tourists in order to reduce imports. Funds were also needed for the establishment of a project management unit, to finance a promotion campaign to attract foreign investors to the tourism sector, for studies of the

socioeconomic effect of international tourism on the development of the Gambia, for research into the use of groundnut shells as an alternative fuel for electricity generation, and for technical assistance.

Funds became available from the African Development Bank, the Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau, and the World Bank to finance a five-year program, *The Tourism and Infrastructure Project, 1975-80*. Loans of \$9.2 million were granted by

these agencies and in addition the Gambian government pledged \$2.1 million. All these funds were to be directed to financing the infrastructure relating to tourism. In answer to the question of how much tourism was going to cost, one observer replied:

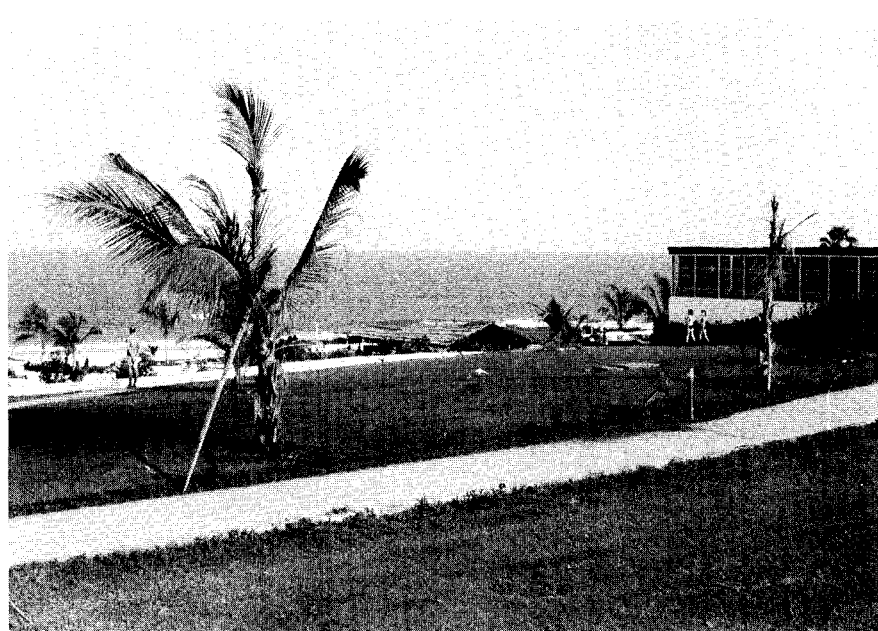
"... the plain answer to your question is that the Gambia is pledging \$2.1 million directly, plus using \$9.2 million from outside donors (which could better be spent elsewhere), plus expending all its internal staff and resource efforts to this industry when energies could be otherwise directed for, e.g., rural development. And this means tying up funds and resources until 1980, though the World Bank program will probably need to extend it longer."

These totals do not include the \$5 million plus which is being borrowed to build an international airport, "an essential prerequisite to substantial further development of the tourist industry."¹¹

The Investor's Perspective

Before considering the questions raised by these comments and the relative economic benefits to the Gambia arising from this concentration on tourism, let us look at the possibilities of tourism from the point

Agents were able to sell the Gambia as the nearest country to Europe guaranteeing a pleasant seaside climate during the winter.



of view of the foreign investor. The information is derived from hotel feasibility studies which were prepared by foreign consultants.¹²

At the moment tourism in the Gambia is limited to the six months winter season, but data from the monthly distribution of visitors to the Canary Islands suggested that it is not unrealistic to expect that at least a small market for summer tourism could also be developed in the Gambia. The government's tourism development plan is supported by a policy of attracting foreign visitors and entrepreneurs to provide tourism facilities. The incentives offered include a number of concessions.

1. An investment guarantee covering fiscal stability, repatriation of capital, and the transfer of dividends and profits.

2. Relief from the payment of purchase tax on capital products bought locally and a refund of up to 90 percent of duty payable on capital products bought locally. (Since none is locally produced, these are products previously imported.)

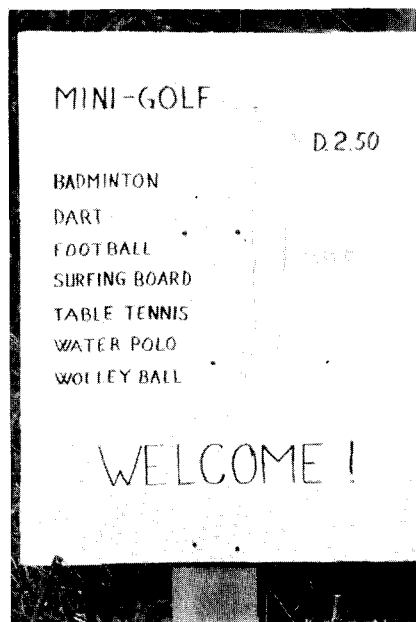
3. Duty relief on all imported construction materials and machinery.

4. An income tax holiday of up to eight years.¹³

An investor, interested in developing tourist facilities, may obtain a Development Certificate and may, after the expiration of the tax holiday period, carry forward and set off any net loss incurred during the tax holiday against chargeable income for six more years.

Investors were also to be encouraged by the modest salaries which would be paid to staff. The breakdown of employment required is as follows: 5

Some recreational facilities provided for tourists.



The Gambia £295

A winter sunshine wonderland! A place where the sun shines and where waters caress you with their blissful warmth as you swim from sunsoaked golden beaches: this is The Gambia. A tiny part of Africa's immensity; a land in darkest Africa but bright with endless winter sunshine.

The Gambia is an exciting and intriguing miniature of the dense jungles and great rivers of Africa and the strange sights of that strange land. A place where the pulsating rhythm of tribal drums and dance can still mystify and thrill; where hippos and crocodiles are still at home in the great river that is the heart of this land, and life itself for the fishermen in their dugout canoes is untouched by time. Unbelievably, beside this scene from a Tarzan epic, the glorious golden beaches shimmer in the sun and hotels afford simple modern comfort from which to sunsoak and explore.

Just three hours further than the Canary Islands, but a lot nearer the sun!

[From a Cooks advertisement]

The vast majority of the tourists come from Scandinavia.



percent would be expatriates holding mostly managerial and supervisory positions; 50 percent skilled local employees working as waiters, room-boys, barmen, reception staff, junior cooks, and maintenance personnel; and, finally, 45 percent employed in less skilled occupations such as ancillary kitchen staff, watchmen, gardeners, and cleaners. The estimated salaries to be paid to these three groups are:

Expatriates (5%)	D1,500 /mo.
Skilled (50%)	D180/mo.
Less skilled (45%)	D130/mo.

Local employees' salaries are paid only during the tourist season, further reducing the annual expenditure. The feasibility studies include a detailed financial analysis of the potential rate of return on investment in the industry, and suggest investors may expect between 13.1 and 20 percent return depending upon the class of hotel and an assumed interest of 8.5 percent on the capital invested with a repayment period of 15 years. The economic life of the hotels themselves is estimated to be in the region of 30 years.¹⁴

Returns on Investment

Critics of the government's decision to develop the tourist industry have

questioned the economic wisdom of the policy. Because of its large import requirements, net foreign exchange earnings have been small. Tour operators and hotel owners prefer to hire expatriates and, as a result, the impact on employment has been small. In fact, tourism has provided only 2,100 jobs for 6 months of the year. The demands of the industry have obliged the government to make large investments in the infrastructure for the hotel areas, thereby diverting financial resources away from other and perhaps more beneficial uses.

The economist employed to analyze the economic impact of tourism concluded that the industry had produced a cost/benefit ratio which is "most likely substantially greater than one."¹⁵ His analysis, however, constitutes a spurious numerical formulation based upon subjective judgments regarding the evaluation of most cost items. The net foreign exchange earnings from tourist spending for the year 1973-74 were, for example, estimated at D3.69 million. The data for this estimate were based upon a 54 percent response rate to a questionnaire administered to departing tourists. Net foreign exchange earnings associated with tourist accommodation amounted to an estimated D2.31

million. Again, this figure was based upon data gathered from *one* beach hotel. To the assumption that these data were applicable to the other charter hotels operating in the Gambia was added the assumption that net profits before taxes did not exceed 10 percent of the total turnover.¹⁶ Numbers which were attached to such concepts (part of the mystification of economic theory) as marginal propensity to save and marginal propensity to import in an economy such as that of the Gambia must necessarily be based totally on speculation and, in this context, the conclusions of the analysis became utterly meaningless.

There are three direct sources of revenue to the government from the tourist industry which can be measured with a degree of accuracy. One of these is the revenue obtained from customs duties levied on food-stuffs. Eighty-five percent of food-stuffs consumed by tourists are imported at a dutiable rate of between 17.5 and 25 percent. The other two sources of income are airport taxes and the hotel or "bed tax," the latter being fixed at 0.5 Dalasis per bed and night.¹⁷ The total of these earnings received by the government directly attributable to the tourist industry in 1973-74 was D1.48 million.

One of the other effects of the industry which has been used to promote tourism was the promise of increased employment opportunities for Gambians. There is, as noted, a total of 2,100 persons employed in tourism and their opportunities to earn are, for the most part, limited to the 6-month season. It was claimed by the planners and apparently documented by one sociological study that manpower utilized by tourism would *naturally* rotate between working in the agricultural sector during the wet season and the seasonal demands of the tourist industry.¹⁸ Even if employees were able to rotate between tourist and

The feasibility studies promised foreign entrepreneurs a return of from 13 to 20 percent on their investment in the tourist industry.



agricultural work, the harvest season and the tourist season coincide. A study of the social and economic costs of tourism which is now being conducted in the Gambia has, however, collected data which proves this rotation does not occur. Doubts have been cast on salary levels, opportunities for advancement—sometimes illiterates and secondary graduates hold the same jobs—and other benefits such as for health care.

Examination of the economic study reveals other unwarranted assumptions about behavior which have arbitrarily been assigned values and included in the favorable analysis.¹⁹ The economist assigned to the task admitted, for example, that expatriates represent the largest portion of the wage bill in the restaurant and hotel sector (32%) but, he asserts, most of them live more or less permanently in the Gambia. Therefore he assumes that the "leakage" in foreign exchange will be only "somewhat higher" for this group than for other Gambians as a result of the expatriates' demand for food with a higher import content and their greater amount of foreign travel. It is not known how many service industries associated with tourism are owned by expatriates nor, in the economists analysis, is this source of foreign exchange "leakage" even considered. An example of one such business owned by a Swedish couple is a laundry/dry-cleaning establishment which serves the hotels. Radio Syd is a commercial station operating in the Gambia which is also foreign-owned.

The "intangible costs" of tourism is another area where only very subjective numerical evaluations may be made. These include what are described in the economic report as the "negative demonstration effects" resulting from the impact of the exposure of the Gambian society to the behavior of the European tourists. This, according to some observers, resulted in the shattering of existing cultural values and the

increase in such social problems as begging, stealing, and prostitution.²⁰ The economist's equation included the figure of D1.0 million as the evaluation of these "intangible costs." The requirements of the total implementation of the development program designed for the tourist industry by the experts will, however, have far greater consequences for Gambian society than the already observed increase in the antisocial behavior. The evaluation of these consequences becomes a political question as to the kind of social order thought to be desirable.

Bafuloto

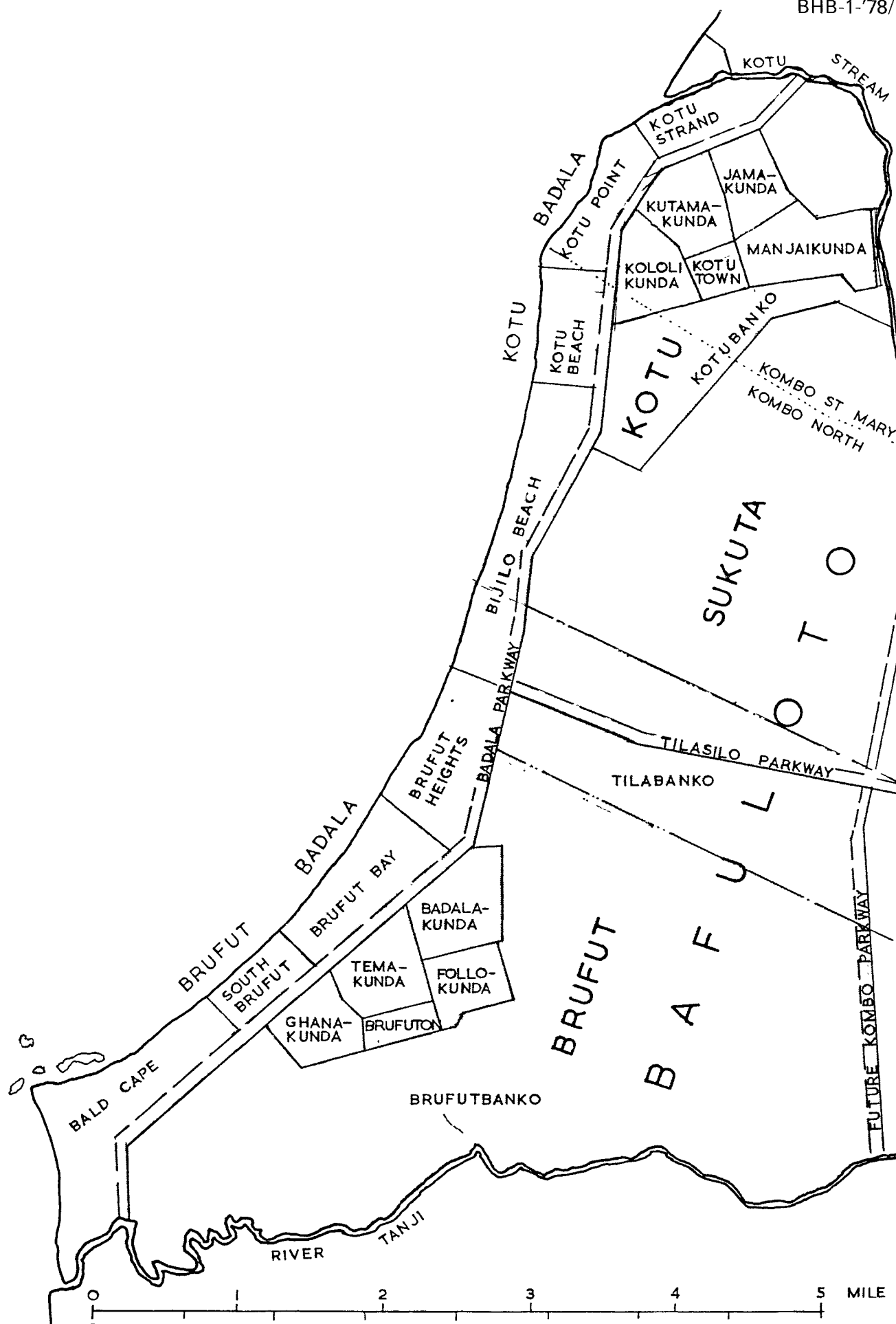
In 1971 the United Nations sponsored basic environmental and physical planning studies as the necessary preliminary to loan allocation for the infrastructure required for the further development of the tourist industry. Bafuloto refers to the region around the beach area which was to be allocated to tourism.²¹ Three main publications resulted from the UN "expert's" investigations and were referred to as the "pre-investment studies." Their main purpose, however, was to convince the funding bodies and the Gambian government that the reorganization of society necessary to meet the requirements of the industry coincides with changes which are

not only desirable but mandatory for any "developing Third World" society.

Fundamental to the argument are certain explicit assumptions about the characteristics of Africans and their traditional social organization which are thought to be incompatible with the demands of modernization. The plan aimed to provide the structural means to correct these deficiencies. Thus a palliative was offered to anyone who happened to notice that tourism as a development industry would not have the effect upon the economy commensurate with the investment required. The overall effect of the program would meet the basic needs of development in society. Tourism was simply a convenient catalyst which was at hand, and came to be described as a *generator of national development*. With tourism serving as the generator of development in the Gambia, the various ministries within the government came to be described as the "potential clients." By implication the tourist agents, and other foreign investors, are their "patrons," emphasizing the dependency relations which development, according to this approach, tends to promote.²² The societal changes which would result from this type of development are based upon the all



The economic life of the hotels were estimated to be 30 years.



too familiar ideological preconceptions concerning the nature of traditional and modern society, where the representatives of modern society, the aid agencies, see themselves as transmitting the assumed advantages of Western industrial society.

In 1976, as shown in Table 1, there were 2,047 beds available for tourists. The plan envisaged the sale of 20 hotel sites to foreign investors, increasing the number of hotel beds to 7,000 by the end of the project.²³ Because tourism is labor intensive, at least for six months, some provision had to be included in the plan to avoid the squalor of slum development and other problems associated with the rural-urban drift. These could be expected to increase in response to the employment prospects. Although the expert recognized that urbanization is always accompanied by certain problems and that its scale must necessarily be limited, urbanization in itself was not to be avoided. The assumption was explicit: "no known development occurs without urbanization."²⁴ The existing towns in the coastal region were considered too small to have the developmental effects possible in an urban setting and so two new towns were planned in the rural areas of Brufut and Kotu. The project would convert this agricultural area with a population of 4,000 into an urban complex accommodating 50,000:

*"... the urban population in the Gambia is too small to attract the scale of activity which is needed for further development of the national capital city functions. Only further urban population growth can bring about the specialized skills, institutions, industries, etc. needed for national development."*²⁵

By "disassociating" the labor force for the industry from the existing urban centers the government would be able to maximize benefits of this kind of development through strict control. The plans for these two new towns would necessarily involve the government in enormous expenditure and, as the expert acknowledged,

*"... the question is often asked why income derived from development of coastal land should be spent in that area. To put the question simply: 'Why should we spoil the waiters whilst their brother farmers in the country remain primitive?'"*²⁶

The answer is summed up in the notion of tourism as "generator." The "cultural goals" of urbanization, as expressed by the United Nations expert, are to increase the quality and enjoyment of existing cultures. The urban cultural patterns achieved in the demonstration are ultimately to determine the national pattern and so "the policy is to promote existing cultures and access thereto, but not to bar access to those counter-cultures which inevitably emerge with the cultural development of a people." Thus the new towns provide the "primitive brother farmers" with a model and the project areas will provide "stepping stones" for development which will reach, eventually, the remotest village.²⁷

The location of the new towns was also justified in terms of the aims of this kind of development. As illustrated on the map of the coastal area, the new towns were to be located well back from the beach and the tourist hotel sites.

*"The project attempts to turn the potential cultural conflict between the population and the near constant stream of tourists into cultural stimulation, by a specific relationship of privacy and contact. The privacy is established by the maintenance of a 'space bubble' between the visitors and visited, the contact is established through the visitors' interest in events such as the fanal processions, drumming, music, dancing, and in local crafts."*²⁸

In short, tourists would be attracted to the Gambians. Each resort site would be equipped with a *bengdula* which, the United Nations expert explained, means "meeting place" in Mandinka, a local language.²⁹

"The bengdulas provide sheltered stalls for the sales of handicrafts and souvenirs, and allow petty traders to

*conduct their business at the beaches rather than on the beaches.... The bengdulas, a social experiment, are designed to prevent commercial squatting by providing traders with the best possible sites... which are irresistible magnets for tourists...."*³⁰ *At the points of highest tourist traffic density provisions are made for marketing nodes and craft centres, the latter, spectacularly located under the proposed umbrellas of the water towers, are the gateways to Kotu and Brufut. The craft centres at the water towers symbolize that both ancient tradition and emerging technology contribute to the quality of life."*³¹

The beach would, as a result of this arrangement, be relieved of the "socially undesirables" and such concerns as beach hygiene and maintenance would be easily attended.³²

The plan for the development of the coastal area to serve the needs of tourism required, as already noted, fundamental changes in social organization. The *Plan* pointed out that the established "static agricultural traditions" must give way to new skills in market gardening and land suited to market gardening was identified and reserved for that purpose. The traditional administration system of the village where the *alkali* or village chief governed together with a council of elders must also, according to the *Plan*, be transformed and the

*"new town lands, Kotubanko and Brufutbank, will fall under the jurisdiction of the municipal councils on which the alkali serve only as councillors. The council was to be chaired by a professionally trained and Government-appointed Municipal Commissioner, accountable to the Minister for Local Government Land and Mines."*³³

The land tenure system was also to be altered and legislation would "introduce a rationalized system of land administration...."³⁴ The *Plan* provided for such amenities as sanitation, water and power supply, and

included definitions of the types of housing which would be permitted. A traditional compound type of accommodation built from indigenous materials would *not* be acceptable and legislation would require that only "permanent" housing be approved. It was presumed that the Gambia would be dependent upon planning consultants for overseeing the administration of the urban development project because "the agrarian background of West African culture and the comparative newness of urban

settlements has prevented the evolution of a system of urban government which satisfies present needs."³⁵

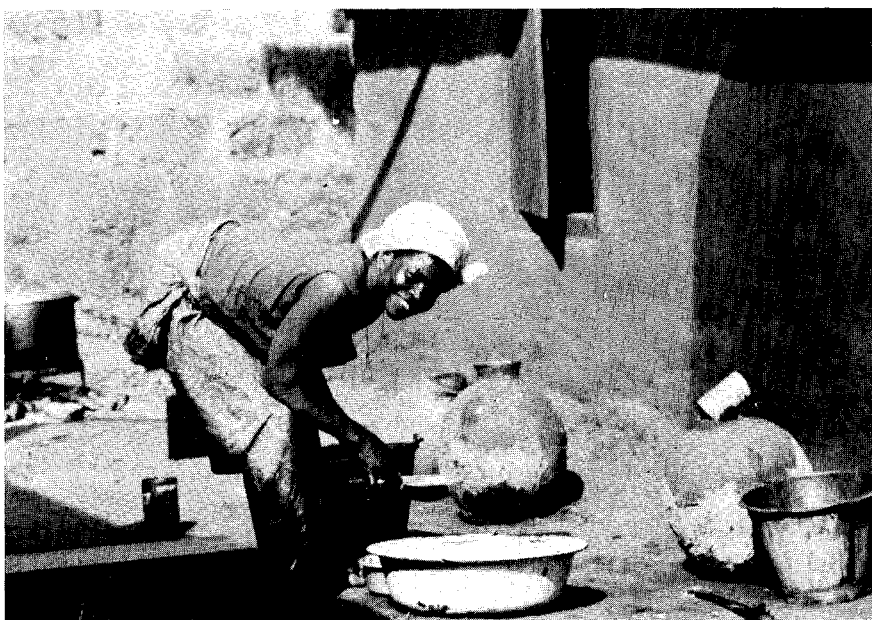
The necessity for enforcing urban management regulations is emphasized because the European tourists "are sensitive [apparently Gambians are not] to health and aesthetic standards and are quickly discouraged by deficiencies such as uncollected refuse stacked along the streets, odors and smoke from burning dump sites, litter in the

countryside, floating debris, and scum on scenic water."

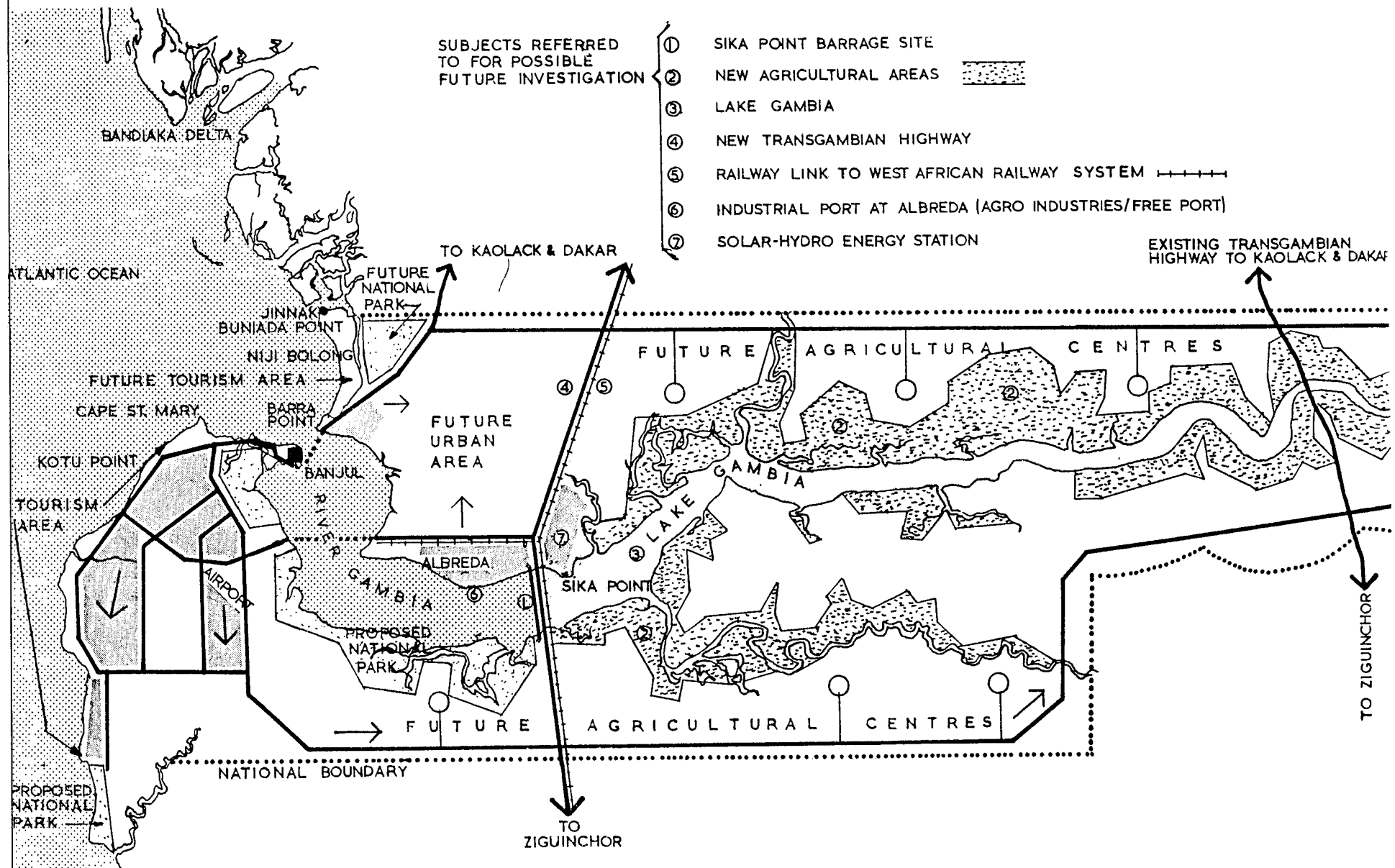
One of the effects of transforming the development areas into urban centers will be to alter the basic family unit which, in the Gambia, has been the extended family. "The economic rationale of the extended family lies in the need to organize as many hands as possible in the provision of agricultural products for all. The rationale is based on the assumption that agricultural productivity is determined not by the quality of labor but the quantity."³⁶



The Plan includes market areas so that such scenes as this will be eliminated, leaving the beaches free of the "socially undesirables."



Building from indigenous materials will be prohibited in the new "labor support" areas.



With the change from agriculture to tourism and urbanization it was presumed that the extended family would disappear. As the expert points out, outside employment reduces the labor force available for agriculture and "the rewards promote a new material consciousness." "*Material awareness*," according to the expert, will ideally replace traditional values and a big family will come to be viewed as an expensive luxury. Apparently this particular expert mistakenly believed that polygamy was based upon differences in sex ratios in Africa for he says that as people turn to monogamy, while being economically attractive to them it will not be so morally attractive, since it may leave "an undue number of women unmarried."

Another example of the serious lack of understanding of African culture is illustrated in the remarks regarding the effects of tourism on what is described as the "caste system" of traditional Gambia. The expert argues that such occupations as woodcarving are associated with a "lower caste" and that the demand for tourists for arts and crafts will lead to the gradual disappearance of this caste system.³⁷

Stereotypes of Africans and African Society

In this discussion of the plans for implementing tourism as a development program for the Gambia we have already seen how factors such as presumptions about the proper direction for social change in line with Western values, ignorance of local social organization, and stereotypes of Africans and their culture, have influenced the arguments in favor of the adoption of the experts' proposals. But there are further stereotypes in use which also deserve discussion.

The "exotic culture" of Africa is often used by tourist agencies to

African dancing would, according to the expert, provide an "irresistible magnet" drawing the visitors to the visited.

promote tourism in the Gambia as in other parts of Africa. Juffure, the Mandinka village from which Alex Hailey claims descent, must be declared a national monument and protected as a traditional village to retain its "appeal." West African dress, dancing, drumming, and crafts are other aspects of the exotic culture which attract tourists. The plans for the new towns included places acoustically designed for dancing and drumming. There was apparently no awareness that these arts have not been professionalized as in Europe and constitute an integral part of community life. Similarly, religious activities are recognized as requiring suitable sites and facilities for expression of this aspect of the local culture. Wild animal imagery is also incorporated into the notion of exotic culture and although the Gambia has virtually no game left, the Landrovers, Combis, and buses which are used to transport tourists on upcountry "safaris" are painted with zebra stripes.

More serious than these stereotypes are those which include assumptions about the character of Africans. It is quite generally believed that Africans acquiesced quietly in the face of imperialist forces.³⁸ This notion of the passivity of the African is lauded in the Bafuloto plan: "The Gambia is

a traditional country and tolerance is part of the tradition. Without this, tourism could not have achieved the highest growth-rate in Africa."³⁹

While possessing the positive virtue of receptivity, Africans lack, according to the expert, many of the skills and character traits which are essential for carrying out their own development program or for controlling or even managing the tourist industry. Tourism, the Gambian government is solemnly warned, is a *commercial enterprise* and as such requires entrepreneurship, capital, and such specialized skills as technical competence, financial ability, promotional skills, and marketing talent. "Gambian private enterprise has so far lacked the right combination of these factors. The need to combine these factors in the right way presents an obstacle to Gambian private enterprise."⁴⁰

The aim of the project is to increase, in time, indigenous abilities and opportunities for commercial participation by limiting the duration of hotel development rights (to the foreign investors) to 30 years."⁴¹ This is the period which the expert deduced would be required for the Gambian's educational level to be improved sufficiently to take over the management of their own industry. "The timing of such opportunities



could be anticipated to coincide with the emergence of a generation of Gambians who have received training and experience in hotel administration and business management."⁴²

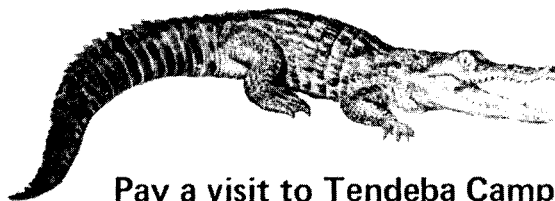
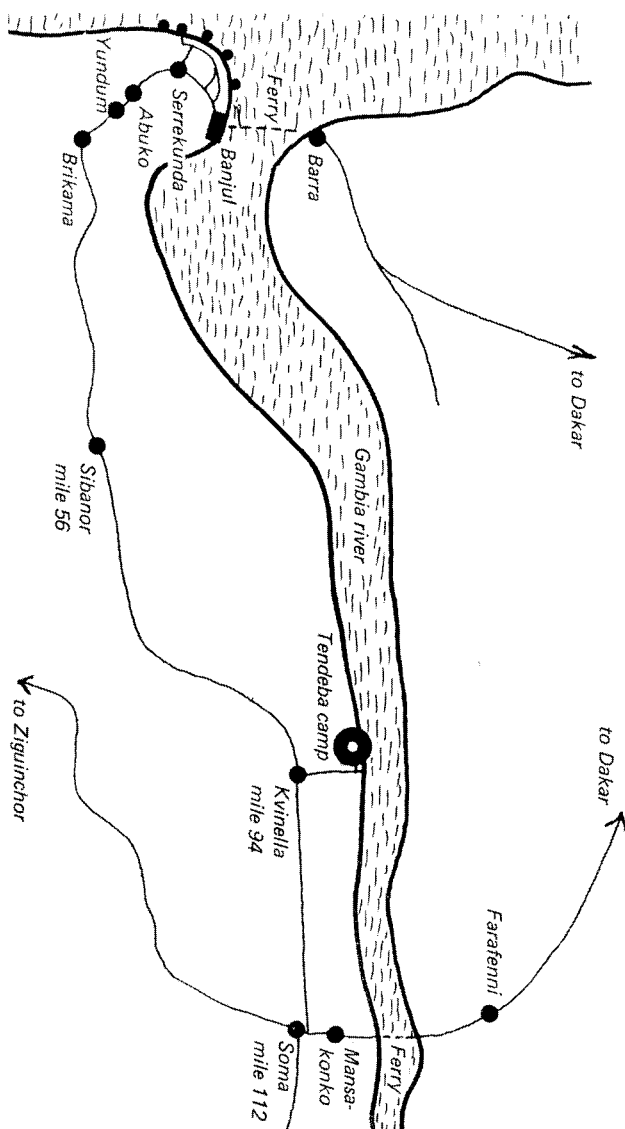
It may be recalled that the hotel feasibility studies included in their calculations the fact that *the economic life of a hotel structure was 30 years*. In the meantime, while the Gambians are waiting patiently (May we assume that patience is a virtue which is associated with tolerance?)

for the potential for profits to the foreign investor to decline, they can "practice" private enterprise along "the 'market routes' in the *kunda* (settlement) which encourage commerce at the minilevel." The Bafuloto Plan was far-sighted enough to include opportunities for Gambians to move through the required stages of development of business skills and incorporated them in the plan. "The *bengdulas* (meeting places) encourage participation in sales to tourists at an *improved level*. The shopping centers

in the resorts provide a range of *advanced levels* of participation in touristic commerce."⁴³

The question of adequate education for modernity is also considered. The government is encouraged in the plan to expand the primary school system to accommodate 100 percent of this age group and to provide secondary schools for up to 50 percent. Tertiary education should be limited to 5 to 10 percent. The provision of schools is not sufficient; attention must be paid to the content

"Exotic Africa" imagery is employed by the agents to attract tourists to the Gambia.



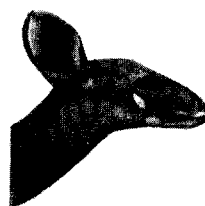
Pay a visit to Tendebe Camp

Tendebe Camp is located ap. 150 km upwards the river. It's a bungalow village down by the riverside just close to the bush.

There you'll have the opportunity to see "the real" Gambia in a closer view, with excursions in pirouges on the small creeks, or a trip by jeep out to the savanna and the bushes. Also you can take a morning stroll out in the bush together with a gambian guide. Later in the evening we'll lit up a log-fire, and there'll be original african dances, performed by the local inhabitants.

The restaurant will serve fried barracuda or a delicious gulasch made on wild boar. If you would like to stay during the night, we can offer you rooms with one, two or three beds. The bungalow is also equipped with bar, swimming-pool and showers.

Arrangements for the bustransfer will be taken care of by the tour-leader. On the other hand you can go by taxi (ap. 50 dalasi) or by air. Travelling time by car is about 2 hours.



We garantee you, that a visit at Tendebe Camp is something you'll never regret!

Welcome to the bush.

Wille o Elizabeth

of education. Again the expert is concerned about the fact that the skills of contemporary Gambians typify "both the qualities and problems of African society and are limited to those which are

"'Agrarian in origin'.... Relevant problems exist in the field of entrepreneurship, supervision and management. These areas, together with education in sciences, would appear to require the special attention of the education authorities. One move at the level

*of basic education which may stimulate an interest in related fields would appear to be the introduction of educational toys. At present the stimulants normally available to children in other societies are unavailable in the Gambia."*⁴⁴

The solution to the problem as proposed by the United Nations expert serves only to magnify the banality of these statements. He recommends that in basic education, a new source of assistance may be exploited: "the goodwill which many tourists have towards the Gambia."

"This goodwill is expressed in gifts of clothing, informal scholarships and assistance to associations. In the case of tourists from Sweden, there is an active Gambia-Sweden association which is assisting the Red Cross Society in the Gambia. It is proposed that national goodwill associations be encouraged to collect and forward, in lieu of clothes, educational aids and toys, such as Quizenaire, Lego, and Mechano, for distribution to schools throughout the country. The importation of clothes depresses

PRESERVE THE ANIMAL LIFE!

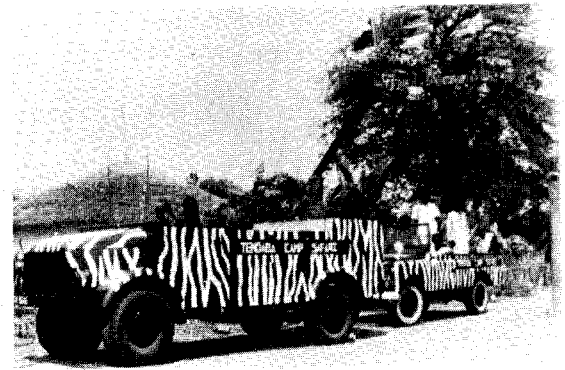
Do not buy hyde or leather goods.
Do not buy "framed" wings of butterfly.



We have antilops, wild boars and many other wild animals at our camp.



The vulture keeps the roads and land clean.



Ready for a trip into the bush



*21 bungalows
+ annex.
98 beds.
Bar, restaurant
souvenirshop*



*On our creek — tours
you have the opportunity
to see pelicans and silc-
herons.*



*promising weaving and tailoring industries, whereas educational aids would provide a foundation for the types of skills which are essential to development."*⁴⁵

The irony of all these outrageous notions stems from the fact that trading and commerce existed in West Africa on a basis of "private enterprise" for hundreds of years before the colonial period. If the acquisition of these skills represents the highest form of human development, then the Gambians like Africans everywhere possessed them, and to such a degree that the long and hazardous sea voyage to West Africa from the fourteenth century onward was worthwhile for the European traders. These came to exchange goods with people who were supposedly backward in entrepreneurship. The commercial abilities of the Africans were in fact developed to such an extent that they threatened the profits of the Europeans and resulted in the armed domination of Africa by Europe in order to eliminate local competition.⁴⁶ The persistence of these stereotypes, however, and their incorporation into a development plan serves to sustain dependency relations which were fostered during the colonial era. Throughout the UN reports one finds a dominant theme; at every point in the implementation of the program of tourism as a generator of development, the Gambians must, because of their innate limitations, rely on foreigners and this reliance will only grow as time passes. As the expert puts it, "There is an increasing need for expatriate expertise to man the gaps which are increasing with development."⁴⁷

"A Window on an Outside World"

While acknowledging the fact that the sociocultural problems associated with the implementation of the tourist industry as a development program are many, the report argues that "There can be no developmental change without conflict,...

Tourism, according to the UN expert, would provide ordinary Gambians with a "window on an outside world."

it is suggested that a determined effort in the project area be made to minimize the social cost of the conflict."⁴⁸ The very location of the urban settlements was designed to minimize that conflict: "By simultaneous exposure of the children to both a traditional sociocultural environment and external influences, it is hoped that a synthesis will be reached.... The means of the experiment are threefold: tradition/education/stimulation, the latter provided by the Badafa, which is a window on an outside world."⁴⁹

Since this development program was not to be limited to the project areas near the coast but would also serve as an example for the entire country, the report pointed out that "This window is not proposed to be confined to the coast, the increasing touristic interest in the Gambia River enables touristic centers to be placed further upriver each year in the form of safari-camps reached by river-cruisers."⁵⁰

It has already been noted that the Gambia is predominantly a Muslim society and as such is characterized by conservative values. Beyond promoting tourism in the Gambia on the basis of its "exotic African culture," tourists receive little or no information about the characteristics of this



culture which might lead them to respect its values or, at least, to conform to its standards of decency in public behavior and dress.⁵¹ Although attempts are made to keep the Gambians out of the beach areas, no similar measures are taken to keep tourists out of the towns and settlements. Tourists appear to have few inhibitions about dress and it is common to see them clad in the briefest swimming attire strolling along the roads and shopping in the stores and the market. Nude beaches are common and topless bathing suits are standard gear for women. Muslims congregate in large numbers on feast days to pray. Tourists apparently find this phenomenon interesting and gather, clad only in beach wear, to watch the faithful. Apparently there is no concern about the offense such behavior causes to the local population's sense of modesty. It can be argued that the Gambian government could enact and enforce legislation which would prevent this type of behavior. There are, however, other problems which have emerged which would be more difficult to control with legislation.

The United Nations expert who devised the development plan pointed out that, "Disparity of income between visitors and visited is indirectly a cause of tourism and must be accepted as an integral problem of the industry," but he promised that the project would "reduce the disparity" and that it "particularly attempts to improve the distribution of benefits."⁵² Until now there is no evidence that any attempts to distribute benefits in economic terms have been effective. Truancy among schoolchildren has reached alarming proportions because the youngsters are on the beach, begging from tourists. Theft has increased greatly and armed robberies on the beach are becoming common. Such crimes are common in many parts of West Africa, but they have not been so in the Gambia.

While female prostitution is common, male prostitution among young Gambians is rampant. Middle-aged Scandinavian women, the age-group which predominates among

tourists, openly solicit, and the potential rewards for the young men concerned are not simply limited to the payments they receive. For West Africans any display of affection between the sexes in public is regarded as highly objectionable and is a serious breach of etiquette. It is, however, a common sight to see European women walking arm in arm with Gambian men. A substantial number of these women are marrying young Gambians who, in most cases, have no education other than that which they may have received as part of their Muslim religious training.

Certainly such relationships disturb the continuity of familial relationships among the Gambians. Marriage ceremonies are not only being performed in the Government Registrar's office, but they also take place in the Mosques. Although a few do remain in the Gambia, most of these couples return to Scandinavia. The possibility of traveling to Europe serves as an enormous incentive to young African men employed at low wages in the tourism industry. One young man, the lifeguard at the hotel where I stayed, explained how a German woman had proposed marriage to him. He was, however, already committed to marry a local girl. The German woman sent him money throughout the rainy season and returned the next year to try to persuade him. She argued that she could give him "everything." As he put it, "It was very difficult for me. I earn 100 Dalasis a month [less than \$50]." There is no precise information on the numbers of young men who are involved, but one Gambian, whose patron was Swedish, told me that in the city where he lives in Sweden there are more than a hundred such Gambians. Their problems are so acute that he and some friends have formed an association to attempt to give assistance of various kinds. There are stories of such Gambians who have been brought back to their country because they became insane. Whatever individual problems these young men may face, the practice has wider ramifications for the Gambia.

At a fairly trivial level, it is certainly not pleasant today for a woman to be in the Gambia on her own and in order to avoid unpleasant situations it is necessary to make it very clear that she is *not a tourist*. Unless that is made explicit, young men anticipate that any woman tourist may provide the possibility for immediate financial gain and perhaps even the longed-for opportunity to travel abroad. Those who have traveled in West Africa will appreciate how unusual is this behavior, for Europeans, and especially women, are normally accorded respect. There is no equivalent in West Africa for even the flirtatious whistle of workmen which one has to endure in Britain.

While it is certainly not meant to be implied that male prostitution is any more objectionable than female prostitution, it would appear that male prostitution in this context gives rise to the more serious problems. These include the violent sexual crimes which are occurring with alarming frequency on the beaches of the Gambia. Rape in West Africa is a crime which rarely happens and in other West African countries it is almost unheard of for a European woman to be attacked. A rare exception to this rule occurred in Nigeria after Brigadier Murtala Mohammed was assassinated, when

some European wives of Nigerians were beaten. These were not sexual attacks, but were analogous to reactions to Germans or Japanese in the United States during the World Wars. In the Gambia, however, it is no longer safe to be on the beach alone and there have been instances when rape has been committed even when the victim was accompanied. The evidence suggests, moreover, that these expressions of rage are not directed toward Gambian women.

There are other social problems which are increasing in association with tourism. Although marijuana grows wild in the tropics, traditional culture frowns on its use and the legacy of the imposed English law makes its consumption illegal. The tourists, however, represent a lucrative market for the easily obtainable drug, and its use among the Gambians who associate with tourists during the course of their work has become common. It appears that some "exchange" also takes place; that is, there is some evidence of hard drugs entering the Gambia through the agency of the European tourists. While it may be possible to label these problems as merely symptoms of the "intangible costs" of tourism, the reality of the situation makes nonsense of such platitudes as:



"Tourism in the Gambia has, so far, been marked by a natural and genuine person-to-person interest of the population and the visitors, until now mainly from Scandinavia. The attitude is reflected in the expression 'Hello, my friend' . . . ,"

and such meaningless statements as:

*"Tourism in itself promotes international contacts and cooperation, but [the] project also promotes national and international dialogue of development aspects not directly related to tourism. The project promotes an orientation to the dialogue towards action by people for people."*⁵³

Another Development

Tourism over the past 2 years has fallen off by an estimated 8 to 10 percent. While most believe that this decline is only temporary, some observers predict the trend will continue. I asked the United Nations representative who is now working in the Ministry of Planning just what would happen if the tourist industry collapses. His reply was, "Well, the Gambian government will still have to pay back their debt." Given the limited resources of this country, it is hard to see just how this would be possible. Moreover, the Gambia's indebtedness is not limited to the loans associated with tourism. But even were tourism to remain viable for the foreign investors, the future for the Gambia appears less than promising. Is there any other model for development?

In a discussion of the role of law in underdeveloped countries, Professor Yash Ghai has considered a different approach to development which is referred to as *another development* in relation to the newly independent country of Papua New Guinea.⁵⁴ As he points out, when Papua New Guinea became independent in 1975 its leaders had observed the failure of development efforts in both Africa and Asia. They had seen how Third World countries have suffered from increasing social stratification, the despoilation of the environment, and the negative influences of transnational corporations.

At the same time, the Papua New Guinea leadership was keenly aware of the backwardness of their own economy and of how little control their people had over that economy. An awareness of these realities impelled them to attempt to devise policies which were based upon the aims of another development.

The approach of another development does represent one definite advance in that its aims are made explicit and the concepts used are, for the most part, defined clearly enough to permit examination. It may be interesting to consider another development in the light of criticism of the notion of tourism as a generator of development in the Gambia.

According to Professor Ghai, the proponents of another development advocate a reordering of the priorities of development goals so that the first goal would be the eradication of poverty and the satisfaction of the minimum human needs for food, shelter, health, and education. Fulfillment of such an aim would, it may be assumed, require that the focus be on rural agricultural development. It also implies a basic equity in the distribution of the resources produced by and available to the country. Another development would also aim to be endogenous and self-reliant. It should be based on resources that belong to the country. Dependence on foreign resources and skills should as far as possible be avoided. Key decisions should be made by the people of the country, not by outsiders. Development, according to this approach, should be in harmony with the environment. The ecological balance should not be upset by excessive rates of consumption, nor should resources be squandered in pursuit of short-term gains which would otherwise be the heritage of future generations.

The realization of the goals of another development require structural transformations both internally and in international economic and political relations. "At the economic level, this means that ownership and control over the means of production

must belong to the producers, so that a minority does not appropriate the surplus. At the political level, this means a wide-scale democratization of power. Human rights have to be established and guaranteed and power has to be shared."⁵⁵

The leadership of Papua New Guinea took the principles of another development seriously in the drafting of their new Constitution and in the policies they devised for administering the newly independent country. Eight major aims were delineated as follows:

1. A rapid increase in the proportion of the economy under the control of Papua New Guinean individuals and groups and an increase in the proportion of personal and property income that goes to Papua New Guineans;
2. More equal distribution of economic benefits, including movement toward the equalization of incomes of the people and toward the equalization of services in different areas of the country;
3. Decentralization of economic activity, planning, and government spending, with emphasis on agricultural development, village industry, better internal trade, and more spending channeled to local and area bodies;
4. An emphasis on small-scale artisan, service, and business activity, relying where possible on typically Papua New Guinean forms of business activity;
5. A more self-reliant economy, less dependent for its needs on imported goods and services and better able to meet the needs of its people through local production;
6. An increasing capacity for meeting government spending needs from locally based revenue;
7. A rapid increase in the equal and active participation of women in all forms of economic and social activity;

8. Government control and involvement in those sectors of the economy where control is necessary to achieve the desired kind of development.⁵⁶

It is clear that the policies and objectives which have been devised by the Papua New Guineans are in considerable contrast to the aims of development as expressed in the Bafuloto Project. They contain no demoralizing innuendoes regarding the capacities of the indigenous population to manage their own affairs. The traditional patterns of social organization are not seen as handicaps to progress toward their goals. But behind such idealism regarding the future of Papua New Guinea lies the somber truth that despite any Third World country's attempts to be self-reliant, the aims of another development cannot be achieved without international collaboration for the transformation of the relations between rich and poor countries in order to redress existing inequities. Another development recognizes "that the patterns of consumption in the rich countries have to change, so that they consume less than their present disproportionate share of the resources of the world."⁵⁷ Another development would leave no room for the promotion of such charlatan development programs, which are only very thinly disguised maneuvers for the promotion of economic self-interest. Cooperation with countries attempting to realize the objectives of another development in Africa will require the rigorous exposure and rejection of the persistent stereotypes of Africans which are too frequently incorporated in aid programs in order to justify dependency relations. Another development demands a radical reassessment of the arrogant presumptions that modernity, development, or progress can only be defined in terms of the values held by western industrialized countries.

Such a reassessment itself makes it necessary that the privileged nations of the world come to understand the history of their relations with the rest of the world which permitted them to achieve the way of life which they now enjoy, and how this history has led to the political struggles African countries are today experiencing.⁵⁸

The Gambia's Future

There are those who strongly question whether the Gambian economy has or will ever benefit from tourism. Only recently has the government become aware of the social costs that accompany this particular development program. In addition to recognizing the importance of cost/benefit ratios and other financial considerations, moreover, Gambians have begun to consider some of the larger issues.

The Gambian government in its *Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development* incorporates some of the aims and spirit of another development. The emphasis throughout the plan is on rural development, the principal objective being to reduce the disparity between urban and rural incomes in favor of the rural population.

"The strategy to improve incomes, develop production of goods and services to satisfy the basic needs of the population, reduce the dependence of the economy on external factors, and effect socioeconomic structural change for accelerated self-sustained development and for self-reliance, will be based on comprehensive rural development with agriculture as the base and lever for effecting change in attitudes and structure, as well as for improving living conditions and development capabilities. Major

*structural changes in the economy and society will only take place after rural development has had its full impact."*⁵⁹

The *Plan* incorporates the aim to place the control of the economy in the hands of Gambians and to decentralize economic activity, planning, and government spending with the emphasis on agricultural development. The plan also includes self-reliance as an objective. These and other elements of the Five Year Plan appear to be in fairly close harmony with the model of another development which Papua New Guinea is attempting to implement.

It is a very great pity that such a large proportion of the Gambia's resources in both manpower and money will be primarily focused on the implementation of the Bafuloto Plan over the next few years. As we have seen, its aims are in direct conflict with those of another development and with the objectives of the Gambian government as expressed in the Five Year Plan. It can only be hoped that the consequences of the kind of development which has been promoted by the international agencies, where the benefits accrue largely to foreign investors, will not result in insurmountable barriers to another development in the Gambia. A great deal will depend on how Western industrialized countries as "donors" and the international agencies as interpreters of the concept of development respond to the challenge of another development.

(May 1978)

NOTES

1. Tinker, I., *et al.*, (eds.) *Women and World Development*, New York, 1975.
2. Mittelholtz, B. "The Gambia: An Overview of its Human Environment," mimeographed report, Attorney General's Chambers, Banjul, the Gambia, n.d.
3. Bolt, D. *Bafuloto: Environmental Studies, Part 2 of 3*. UNDP Physical Planning and Development Project, The Planning Office, Banjul, the Gambia, November 1973. (Hereafter cited as *Part 2 of 3*.)
4. Mittelholtz, B., *op. cit.*
5. Facht, J. "The Economic Effects of Tourism in the Gambia," unpublished report, November 1976.
6. Alex Hailey, an American Black, after conducting research traced his ancestry to the village of Juffure, the Gambia. His story has been televised in a series entitled *Roots*.
7. Facht, J., *op. cit.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Hans Munk Hansen Group Hotel Feasibility Study*, a report for the Government of Zambia, unpublished 1976. (Hereafter cited *Hans Munk*.)
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Facht, J., *op. cit.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. A warning to tourists. Bed tax is added to the hotel bill after the cost of accommodation has been computed. It does not, therefore, detract from hotel profits.
18. Peil, M. "Unemployment in Banjul: The Farming/Tourist Trade-off," *Manpower and Unemployment Research*, Vol. 10, No. 1, April 1977.
19. Facht, J., *op. cit.* How can, for example, such concepts as *marginal propensity to save* or *marginal propensity to import* be given numerical values in the absence of empirical data?
20. *Ibid.*
21. Bolt, D. *Bafuloto: Environmental Studies, Part 1 of 3*. UNDP Physical Planning and Development Project, The Planning Office, Banjul, the Gambia, January 1974. "Bafuloto," according to Mr. Bolt, the United Nations expert, is a local term meaning land between two rivers and has been used to name the area reserved for the tourist industry as shown on the map. "Expert" is the label given to consultants employed by the United Nations.
22. *Part 2 of 3*, see especially p. 75.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 39, and especially p. 72.
25. Bolt, D. *National Settlement Network Studies* UNDP-UN/OTC Physical Planning and Development Project. GAM/69/003 First Action Phase, part b, January-June 1974. (Hereafter cited as *National Settlement Network Studies*.), pp. 13-14, 41.
26. *Part 2 of 3*, p. 31.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 33-34. *Snow-ball effect*, *demonstration effect*, and the *multiplier effect* were other expressions which were employed to make the point that the planned urban development resulting from the tourist industry would be the model for development throughout the Gambia.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 11. "Fanal" refers, according to the expert, to the "handcrafted illuminated model of a boat, carried in procession at Christmas" (*Part 1 of 3*, p. 8). Although the end of Ramadan, a Muslim fasting period, may have occurred around Christmas when Mr Bolt was in the Gambia, the procession has nothing to do with the Christian holiday. It occurs in the Gambia and in Sierra Leone each year at the end of Ramadan.
29. Mr. Bolt states that, "The use of names for concepts and locations which have meaning to the indigenous population is seen as an important link in the Gambianization of the development process" (*Part 1 of 3*, p. 87). Since only a small proportion of the indigenous population is literate in English, he could have recommended that these words be written in Arabic script. The use of this script to write indigenous languages was discussed in Barbara Harrell-Bond, "Local Languages and Literacy in West Africa" [BHB-1-'77], *AUFS Reports*, West Africa Series, Vol. XVII, No. 2, 1977. After writing that *Report 1* discovered that the usage is given more recognition in the Gambia where signposts at the Ministry of Works in Banjul, for example, were printed in English, the official language, and in Mandinka and Wolof, the latter written in Arabic script.
30. *Part 1 of 3*, p. 11.
31. *Part 1 of 3*, p. 11.
32. Such notions as the "space bubble" to separate Gambians from Europeans and the emphasis upon hygiene sound very similar to the arguments used in Sierra Leone when racist attitudes began to be explicitly incorporated into colonial policy and the Hill Station settlement was proposed in order to separate Africans and Europeans for ostensible health reasons. See Spitzer, L. "The Mosquito and Segregation in Sierra Leone," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 2, No. 1 (Spring 1966), pp. 49-61.
33. *Part 1 of 3*, p. 7
34. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 114. Since one of the sources of foreign exchange to the Gambia would be through tourist spending, the plan advocated that local products be available for purchase. Carvings made by artists in West Africa are functional. There is no surplus and although trade in African art has motivated a considerable amount of effort to copy traditional art in order to meet the commercial demand, artists cannot work with sufficient speed or produce in sufficient quantity to meet the market of thousands of tourists in the

Gambia. Moreover, the copies of African art usually on sale look old and original. This takes time even though the aging is accomplished through artificial means such as burying the sculpture in a termite mound. The United Nations experts have now found a solution. There is now a plan to start a school for teaching African artists how to mass produce tourist art.

38. Zekiros, A. and M.C. Wiley. "Africa in Social Studies Textbooks," unpublished mss., African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977.

39. *Part 2 of 3*, p. 57.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Tourism as a Generator in National Development: A Proposed Development Technique in the Gambia*, *Seventh Quarterly Report*, Planning Office, March 15, 1973, p. 9.

43. *Part 2 of 3*, p. 57 (emphasis added).

44. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

46. Rodney, W. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London and Dar es Salaam, 1972.

47. *Part 2 of 3*, p. 52.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

49. *Ibid.* Badala is "the local term" for coast.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

51. Although one could draw this conclusion simply by observing tourist behavior, interviews with many tourists indicated that they knew nothing of African society and had been given no information about the Gambia before they came other than the fact that there were beautiful beaches and modern hotels.

52. *Part 2 of 3*, p. 70.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 29 and 71.

54. Ghai, Y.P. "Law and Another Development," Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, n.d.

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*

57. Davidson, B. "The Nation States of Africa," *New Statesman*, March 24, 1978.

58. Ghai, *op. cit.*

59. *Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development 1975/76 - 1979/80*. Republic of the Gambia, July 1, 1975, pp. 1-2.