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Progress Report

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

Colonial Services Club
3 South Parks Road
Oxford, England
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Mr. Walter S. Rogers
Institute of Current World Affairs
522 Fifth Avenue
New York 18, New York

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I have completed two terms of resident study at Oxford University, and have six weeks of vacation before starting on the third. It seems a good time, now that the trailing affairs of last term have been cleared up, for me to check back over my first six months with the Institute, see what I have learned and done, and write some sort of a progress report.

In previous newsletters I have outlined the events of my trip to England and described the hospitable treatment received at Oxford. Thanks to the influence of the Institute and its friends I was quickly admitted into New College and the University; and much more rapidly than one would expect of a foreign government agency, the facilities of the Colonial Service Club and the Institute of Colonial Studies were made available to me. All of the faculty and Colonial Service people have been interested and helpful; and as I have indicated in earlier letters there has been little need for me to laboriously search for material on colonial and African affairs: instead the problem has been one of making the right selections from a program of lectures, courses and seminars too comprehensive to be grasped in its entirety.

During the first (Michaelmas) term, which began only a few days after I arrived last October, I crowded my schedule with the largest possible number of lectures and classes. These included Commonwealth history, African geography and history, British local government, British central government, colonial administration, federal government, basic anthropology and social anthropology. This deprived me of the benefits of intensive, departmentalized study, but it enabled me to make a survey of what Oxford had to offer, so that I could decide what I needed most for the next term.

At the same time I attempted, by observation and by outside reading, to get a small insight into current British political thought and to determine the limits of the framework of public opinion within which colonial policy has to be formulated. This obviously could not be done properly while living in the peculiar intellectual atmosphere of Oxford University and Town; but some idea could be gained by listening to the Labor-Tory arguments among Colonial Service classmates and friends. The fortuitous anticipation of the general election

made these arguments more intense and perhaps more candid. When I leave for my area I believe I shall have a fairly good idea of the political attitudes of the colonial bureaucracy and an impression, at least, of popular feelings in the metropolitan nation.

During October I was invited to join the Oxford East Africa Society, an organization of students and faculty members from EA or interested in EA affairs, which holds regular meetings where visiting authorities speak on particular EA problems. The membership includes natives (with several tribal chiefs) as well as Indians, Arabs, and the sons and daughters of white settlers. The speeches and discussions at the meetings I have attended have been very candid, with the most radical racial and separationist views being freely advanced by the non-European members. My present supervisor Miss Margery Perham, who is regarded by many as the foremost British authority on African affairs, tells me that this circumstance is unique to Oxford---that nowhere in Africa itself will I find these bitterly opposed factions gathered in free discussion.

During the first term Mr. Kenneth E. Robinson, head of the Colonial Studies Institute, was my supervisor. His guidance was extremely valuable, and it was he who carried out the negotiations of getting me into a college after I had arrived so late. On his advice my reading was at first confined to the more general works on colonial government and on British Africa as a whole, to give me a foundation for more specific reading later on. Near the end of the term I began to concentrate on EA itself. Books such as Colonial Policy and Practice by Furnivall and Colonial Civil Servant by Burns were followed by more specifically descriptive titles, like Race and Politics in Kenya and The Sorcerer's Apprentice by Perham and Huxley. And by the beginning of the second term I had also made a small start on the mass of government reports and studies of the EA area.

The extent of available reading material, even aside from the lectures and other sources, by this time appeared large enough for me to decide to change my plans, and remain at the University for three instead of two terms. Learning my way around Oxford, too, had absorbed a good deal of time, so that I had not been able to devote as much time to pure study as I should have preferred.

The term had been enjoyable, though. Most of October seemed more like spring than fall, and there was a good chance to admire the antique architecture against a green, pleasant background before the winter set in. I lived in a 16th Century house on Longwall Street, convenient to my lecture halls, with two undergraduate fellow boarders and a rather interesting landlady. She had a large group of friends among the junior faculty members in literature and the humanities, whose views on politics, philosophy, and that favorite topic of critical conversation called the American Way of Life, were always bubbling

forth. For recreation I bicycled around the countryside, and after the winter set in I rode occasionally at a stables on the outskirts of town. The Colonial Services Club, two theaters, the movies, and of course the eternal hospitality of Dick and Jeanne Nolte were on hand whenever I felt the need for an evening's relaxation. At the end of term Dick Nolte and I went to Paris, and I continued on to visit two days with John McCarthy at Lans, near Grenoble.

I had held off, up to this time, from any deliberate move toward making contacts in the Colonial Office in London. I felt it would be better to confine my relationships to the group of colonial scholars and officials whom I had met here in Oxford until I should have learned a good deal more about my area. Then I would be able to ask intelligent questions and understand the language. But on returning from France I found that my plans for reading and study could not be carried out during the last weeks of the Christmas vacation, my landlady having changed her mind about the date my rooms would be ready for me to move back in (an assertion of social independence, which landladies enjoy wherever housing is strictly a seller's-market commodity). The next best use I could make of the time seemed to be to return to London and spend a week or so familiarizing myself with the Colonial Office at the lowest possible level, and exploring some of the libraries and other academic sources.

My first contact with the Colonial Office aroused more interest than I expected. The first person I talked with, a Mr. Peter Canham who edits a Colonial Office journal, insisted on introducing me at once to authorities on up the line. They were all naturally curious, and I felt forced to an early decision to explain my project in reasonable detail. The EA specialist Mr. Wallace suggested that it would be wise to give the Colonial Office something in writing to confirm my explanations and to explain the objectives of the Institute. Feeling that this could best be accomplished by asking you to draft a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, explaining my position, I got off a hurried letter. Your subsequent communication to the Secretary settled the matter; the Institute now has assurance from the Office that I will receive all possible assistance and information; and the Director of the Africa Office Mr. Cohoen has personally informed me of his interest and eagerness to help.

Mr. Cohoen and the others have told me that it is essential to obtain the government's blessing before undertaking any kind of a study project in British Africa. The EA European communities in outlying areas are small, and district officers and other officials will always be aware of the presence of foreign travellers. Suspicion would naturally be aroused by moving about without having made some explanation to the central government beforehand; and it would be within the power of local

officials, through their control over transportation and other facilities, to make things very difficult.

The obvious danger in accepting government aid would be that I might become identified with officialdom, and regarded as another Britisher by the natives and Indians. I do not believe this will hold true if I am careful how much aid I accept, asking only for permission to travel and perhaps for some sort of credentials with which to reassure local people. I discussed this aspect with Mr. Cohoen, and he said that he felt sure the EA governments would respect my preferences in the matter.

During later trips into London I met other Colonial Office and academic authorities concerned with African affairs. Besides Mr. Andrew Cohoen and Mr. J. H. Wallace whose help will be vital in a very direct manner, I now know Mr. Hudson, who is in charge of the African Studies Branch. As the superior of Mr. Canham in matters pertaining to the publication of official journals he will be able to help me a lot on the research side. The same goes for Mrs. E. M. Chilver of the Social Science research Council; and for Dr. Audrey Richards, a London University professor of anthropology who has since left to accept a chair at Makerere College, Kampala, Uganda. The latter assured me that she would see that I would be allowed to make full use of Makerere during work on my thesis. A Mr. Wraith, also of the University of London, who has traveled to Africa on various government missions, gave me a long list of references in EA education and research projects. Miss Margaret Read, head of the Colonial Studies Branch, University of London, will be perhaps the most useful of all. (I met her through using the letter of introduction given me in New York by Mr. Stackpole.)

With such a long list of district officers, anthropologists, Secretariat officials, native authorities, and some tobacco and coffee traders I have not yet mentioned all ready to play host, and with Mr. Roger Norton, the EA Commissioner in London ready to help me with visa and entry arrangements, I seem to be all set. I shall be able to motor the length and breadth of Tanganyika, Kenya, and Uganda, with stages of never more than 200 miles between points where I am told I will be a welcome guest. (I am toying with the idea of such a trip, after my first month or so in Nairobi, to drive on west around Lake Victoria and back through Tanganyika, ending up at Dar-es-Salaam, the Capitol.)

The second (Hilary) term, beginning late in January, was scholastically more productive than the first. I had learned my way around Oxford, and my ideas on how to undertake the further handling of my project gradually took more definite shape. With the help of my new supervisor Miss Margery Perham, who took Mr. Robinson's place while he went to Africa on a Colonial Office assignment, I was able to select a thesis topic and make other decisions concerning my EA plans.

Aside from directing my reading and criticizing the outline

of the thesis, she gave me access to her own research files, and saw to it that I met a few more Africa authorities. Among these were the novelist and political writer Mrs. Elspeth Huxley and her mother the Hon. Mrs. Grant. Mrs. Grant, one of the early Kenya settler ladies, offered her house at Nakuru as "a place to come and stay whenever you want peace, or have some serious writing or thinking to do." Mrs. Huxley is a leading exponent of the "moderate" Settler point of view, which pro- pounds that it is unwise to attempt to give political privileges to native populations except very slowly, and that our own democratic forms of government cannot for a long time meet the real administrative needs of such backward peoples. This is the defeatist view, actually, of current British policy.

I narrowed down my list of lectures during Hilary term, and made a stronger point of hearing more of the evening talks by visitors. Alan Paton, author of Cry, the Beloved Country, delivered a lecture on race relations in South Africa; Mr. N. G. Fuggles-Couchman, Technical Advisor, British Overseas Food Corporation, spoke on the technical aspects of the EA groundnuts scheme; Dr. Dean Smith of the London School of Tropical Hygiene and Tropical Medicine spoke on nutrition and colonial development; Mr. E. Parry, Deputy Labor Advisor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, gave his views on problems of colonial trade unionism; and a number of French officials and professors held a series of discussions on French colonial problems. These were in addition to lectures by Oxford faculty: Miss Perham on Lord Lugard and his part in the African empire; Miss Peter Ady on financial problems of colonial development; and Mr. W. E. Beckett and Mr. G. B. Masefield on agricultural problems. There was also a three-day conference one week end on the "Place and Problems of Higher Education in British Tropical Africa" under the chairmanship of Professor Vincent Harlowe, at which Miss Perham, Professor Frankel, an Africa economics specialist, Oxford, Mr. Walter Adams, of the Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies, Professor Margaret Read, and Mr. W. E. F. Ward, Deputy Advisor on Education to the Secretary, put forth their ideas on the nascent affairs of colleges and universities in British Africa.

This list makes the term appear more crowded than it really was. Actually, through cutting my day lectures, I secured more time for reading during the Oxford library hours (which are different than at Princeton, perhaps because the British wish to save electric power); and I was also able to catch up somewhat on periodical and newspaper reading, both general and directly pertinent to my project. For a month, now, I have been keeping a scrapbook of clippings which will be of use in my thesis. The colonies are also much discussed by radio commentators and in broadcast speeches by colonial officials, and I have a rented set in my room now.

A typical morning of last term would have included break- fast with my landlady and a copy of the London Times; then a

walk over to Rhodes House for a lecture or two, and 11:00 o'clock coffee at Rhodes House with some of my Colonial Service friends; then an hour or so in the library or at my own desk, followed by lunch at one of the hotels. A typical afternoon might include a walk through one of the parks or by the river Isis, a tutorial with Miss Perham or a class in federal government under Professor Wheare, tea at the Club, and an hour or so of reading. The evenings were given over to lectures, study, or recreation. Occasional trips to London broke the routine; but I felt willing enough during the wet-winter part of Hilary term---my favorite recreational pleasures being of the outdoor variety---to stick close to my books, and leave off serious playing until I should get into the EA wilds, where there would be a chance to take a rifle and climb a few hills.

The greatest single gain during this second term, to my mind, was the more definite idea of how to start on my project, and the resultant selection of a specific target or objective. I refer here to the ideas concerned with the "thesis" which I have mentioned but not yet explained. These ideas have, I think, given me answers to the questions which have been puzzling me since I first began to realize the full scope of a study of colonial government and the EA area. Where to start? What method of analysis to employ? Economic? Political? Sociological?

Mr. Robinson had mentioned during the first term that the subject of regionalism in EA might be a good thesis topic, should I decide to become a candidate for an Oxford graduate degree. He explained that to his knowledge no one had done a serious study of the EA High Commission and other agencies of regional control operating throughout the area of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, and Zanzibar. Other faculty members told me that such a study, if properly carried out and the results published, would be a valuable contribution to British knowledge, since the problem of promoting greater regional cooperation among the colonies is a prime consideration in policy today.

As I continued to study I kept examining this idea with several questions in mind: (1) To what extent would it further Institute objectives of making me an EA and colonial government specialist? (2) Would the undertaking tend to narrow my observations and perhaps prevent me from obtaining the necessarily broad outlook of an "area" authority? (3) How well did my present background and education fit me for this particular approach? Would I be better fitted for some other method of attack?

The answers to the first and second questions seemed to be implicit in the obvious breadth of a study of regional agreement and regional government. Any thesis on Regionalism in EA would have to deal with every political, economic, and social factor in the area; and the four to six terms residence at Oxford and perhaps two years of observation and study to be

embodied in the writing should, I think, take me a good distance toward becoming usefully knowledgeable about colonial government and EA.

The third question seemed to answer itself in negative terms. I am not a qualified economist, and therefore cannot embark on a primarily economic approach; I am not an anthropologist, which Professor Herskovitz and others have told me is an almost essential prerequisite for attacking EA problems from the sociological angle. But on the positive side, for tackling a study having to do with political agreement among racially and culturally different groups of people, my experience did seem to have something to offer. Schooling in the Princeton Politics department in the International Relations field, army dealings in matters of liaison among Chinese, Indian, Burmese, Japanese elements, service with military government agencies in the Japanese occupation seemed to have provided a reasonable basis for comparison. Travel and experience with the British in India should also help.

At the beginning of the term I outlined my plan for such a study and consulted Miss Perham and received her approval. When I received your own concurrence I at once made the necessary changes in my schedule here so that I could orient all of my work here toward gathering material for the thesis. Each lecture and each bit of reading now gives me something to fit under one of the subheadings of the outline. At the end of the term the thesis title, Regionalism in East Africa, and my candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy were officially approved by the University.

Having such a clear-cut objective has improved things a lot. I have been able to proceed with travel arrangements, leave of absence applications and other administrative details which have to be accomplished well in advance. The thesis outline, which is detailed now to the point of tentative chapter and paragraph headings, gives me a handy checklist for reading, for observation, for determining priorities, and a central "hook" upon which to hang every fact I pick up during the next two years.

Aside from this usefulness in regimenting my thoughts and efforts, this plan might possibly enable me to produce a useful book for Americans interested in EA and the problems of regional cooperation. Miss Perham also suggests that such a publication would supply British readers, for the first time in a single volume, a coverage of the history and current status of extant regional government agencies of the area.

As now planned, the first chapters of the thesis are to deal with general geography---topography, soils, climate, resources, distances. Next will come a brief historical summary of the migrant and indigenous peoples and their institutions. The impact of Western technology and culture, the details of European invasions, the changes wrought by modern communications, and the evolution of present-day regional governmental agencies

will be treated in increasing detail. This will mean that the High Commission and its technical services, such as post office, telegraph, cattle-disease and tsetse fly control, etc., will have to be analyzed in terms of the actual authority they possess across EA colony boundaries. The final chapters are to be aimed at summing up the problem and giving a detailed picture of the present day factors of EA politics---the mass native and Indian feelings, the organized political parties, labor groups, economic factions, bureaucracy, etc. There will be an attempt, if practicable, to advance criticism of a constructive sort; or at least to give an opinion as to the limitations within which schemes for further central government will need to be implemented.

So much for the thesis itself.

The remainder of the second term went the same as before, but with a little better organization. The subheadings of the thesis began to govern my selection of books and to tell me which I should read first. For instance I laid aside some less general works and began carefully to read Fitzgerald's geography, Africa, first; and in my selection of government reports I began to favor those of the various Colonial Office committees on "closer union in the colonies" and "regional agreement."

This reading called my attention to my need for some knowledge of American colonial experience, and an idea of the extent and basis of American interest in EA. I devoted some time to locating statistics on dollar and sterling investments, and have read a little of American affairs in the Pacific dependencies. I have sought a few details for comparative purposes out of accounts of military government in Japan and Germany. But such digressions have been minor; in the main I have stuck to my organized plan, and gone more deeply into the basic physical and demographic aspects.

As opportunity offered I continued to meet authorities to whom you and others had referred me. At the Embassy in London Mr. John E. Orchard gave me a good description of ECA's part in the development of backward colonial areas, and an idea of how President Truman's "Fourth Point" concerning aid to local governments in such areas might be implemented in the future. At New College I dined one evening with Sir Christopher Cox, Educational Advisor to the Colonial Office. He told me about the educational picture in EA and gave me a list of authorities to see when I arrived. I have also made a number of friends among Dr. Orchard's assistants in the ECA section of the Embassy in London. Among these is a Mr. Malcolm Crawford who has been working these past months on problems of capital investment in Africa. My list of acquaintances in Oxford has lengthened a little, to include a number of British army and air force officers; and I have met nearly all of the faculty members in any way concerned with colonial studies and EA.

Since January I have been taking lessons in Swahili, the language which serves as a sort of lingua franca throughout the major areas of EA. Because of the time which would be required---five or six hours of drill each week---I am aiming only at having a basic vocabulary and idea of grammar before I sail. I think this will get me by with only two hours a week here. And I may be lucky and find an instructor on the ship.

My present address, the Colonial Services Club, is handier to my classes and more quiet than my previous lodgings. My room is large and comfortable, and it faces the garden. Being able to take all three meals in the club dining room is another advantage, since restaurants in Oxford leave much to be desired. The Club is a hostel for Colonial Service officers and cadets and was overcrowded last term when the Second Course officers were all at Oxford. Most of them have left for their districts or have been sent out to various towns in the United Kingdom, to be attached to local government agencies for a sort of apprenticeship.

I think this just about brings me up to date. For the week of April 12 I plan to attend a symposium on colonial administration at the University of Bristol, where Dr. Margaret Read and others, including a Mr. Klaus Knorr of Yale, will lead a series of discussions on colonial administration and the colonial policies of the various colonial powers. The rest of the vacation and Trinity term will be spent in continuing my studies and in preparing for my departure in late June.

My travel reservations are already made. I sail from London June 20 on the Durban Castle, which takes some 20 days to reach Mombasa, via Suez. At Mombasa I will say hello to a couple of classmates and then drive up to Nairobi, headquarters of the High Commission.

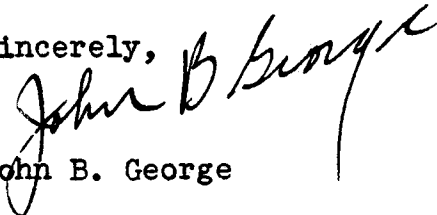
From this time onward plans are indefinite. But they tentatively envisage a period of orientation at the High Commission; a trip around Lake Victoria with stops at Makerere College to see Dr. Audrey Richards, North Mara and Biharamuto, Tanganyika, to see and learn about native administration from my friends Paul Wren and Ronald Smith (both district officers); and various other points to observe the functioning of the Technical agencies of the High Commission. I also hope to get up to Nakuru, Kenya, to have a look around and to see Mrs. Grant; and perhaps down to Lindi in the southern part of Tanganyika, where Alistair Pollock, an Oxford classmate who happens to share my fondness for the out-of-doors, will be running a district. It is his idea that he might take a two week leave, and take me inland into Southern Province where there are a few primitive villages and some good shooting. He tells me that a rifle and camera afford a good ticket into the back places, where a notebook, typewriter, and horn-rimmed glasses have come to be highly suspect.

I am applying for the maximum amount of leave of absence from Oxford, so that I may keep my plans flexible and return whenever it may seem best. I shall need only one more term of

actual residence to fulfill D. Phil. eligibility requirements, but I think it quite likely that another year will be required to fill in academic gaps revealed during the first period of field observation. As to the length of time in EA this first trip, I shouldn't like to say. Eight months to two years, with a full year (planning to be back in time for Michaelmas term, 1951) being the best guess?

If EA is like the other less civilized places I have seen, time will move more slowly there. I will be able to spend more time enjoying the relaxing, handicraft pleasure of organizing my thoughts into more readable letters than this one. At least I'll be able to give you a much better picture than that provided by the fifty-odd pages I have written in between the pleasant but energy-dissipating distractions of Oxford.

Sincerely,



John B. George

Received New York 4/3/50.