BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, AND LIBERIA: INSTITUTIONAL AND MORAL ASSISTANCE, 1908-1969

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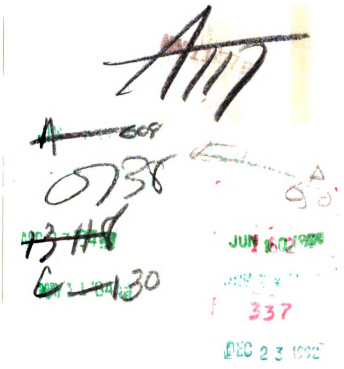
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ABSTRACT

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, AND LIBERIA: INSTITUTIONAL AND MORAL ASSISTANCE, 1908-1969

By

Harry Fumba Moniba

Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to determine the nature and significance of the relations between Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute and the Republic of Liberia from 1908 to 1969. Since that connection has, over the years, varied in degrees of directness and specificity, this research was planned to identify the effects of the relationship on the republic in terms of (1) the country's boundary disputes with Great Britain and France; (2) the education of Liberian students at Tuskegee Institute up to 1915; (3) the construction of an industrial school in Liberia; and (4) the establishment of Liberia's first rural teacher training institutes in the sixties.

Data

Primary data were gathered chiefly from the Booker T. Washington Papers at the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, relevant Liberian and U.S. Government

documents, other Booker T. Washington papers and publications in the Tuskegee Institute Archives, and the Minutes and Annual Reports of the Phelps Stokes Fund.

Secondary information, consisting mainly of books, articles, and unpublished works on Liberia, B. T. Washington, Tuskegee Institute, and teacher education, was also used. In addition, the writer travelled to Boston University, Washington, D.C., New York City, and Tuskegee Institute. In the last three places, he conducted interviews, some of which were tape-recorded and later transcribed for use in analyzing the data.

Major Findings of the Study

An analysis of the data collected revealed that Mr. Washington and Tuskegee Institute's relations with Liberia had the following important effects on the country's affairs: (1) Booker T. Washington encouraged the United States Government to intervene in the territorial disputes between Liberia and Great Britain and France. As a result of that intervention, Liberian sovereignty was preserved and foreign encroachments on her territories was minimized after 1911; (2) B. T. Washington's efforts to help train a new Liberian leadership at Tuskegee which would return home and teach the educational, social and economic philosophy of the institute failed because the students were unable to adjust culturally and could not reconcile their strong literary view of education with the strict industrial

orientation of the Tuskegee program; (3) Mr. Washington's desire to help build a "little Tuskegee" in Liberia was never realized in his lifetime. But his successor, Dr. Robert Moton, assisted in the construction of the school nearly fifteen years after Washington's death. However, because of monetary and other problems, Moton told the Phelps Stokes Fund that Tuskegee could only give its moral support to the new school and occasionally supply instructors, provided the travel expenses for such persons were paid by someone else. In general, however, Moton elected to play a secondary role in the affairs of the institution, leaving all responsibilities to the Fund; (4) Prior to 1960, Liberia had no systematic rural elementary teacher training program. Tuskegee Institute was contracted by the International Cooperation Administration and subsequently, the U.S. Agency for International Development in Liberia and the Liberian Government, to establish rural training institutes at Zorzor and Kakata. Today these centers supply most of the nation's elementary school teachers; (5) Finally, and perhaps most important, this study indicates that, with due respect to Mr. Washington and Tuskegee Institute's many sincere efforts in assisting Liberia, the black leader and the institute did not initiate any of the plans that involved them in the republic's affairs. In the case of the boundary crises, as in the education of Liberian students and the establishment of the industrial school

in Liberia, it was Washington's friends, Bishop Scott, Miss Olivia Stokes, and Minister Lyon, who suggested that aid be given in these matters and urged Mr. Washington to provide such an assistance. Even after the latter consented to assist in the building of the school, he remained quite cautious in the matter up to his death in 1915. The main credit for the construction of the Liberian school, therefore, goes to the Phelps Stokes Fund and the A.C.E.L. which provided the initial funds and personnel for running the institute. Likewise, in the case of the teacher training program, it was the Liberian Government and I.C.A. which initiated the plan and requested Tuskegee Institute to help implement it. But the real significance of Mr. Washington and the institute's involvement or relations with Liberia lies in the fact that they willingly acted as intermediaries through whom some U.S. officials, missionaries, and philanthropists rendered assistance to Liberia. This act demonstrated, more than anything else, Washington's general philosophy of helping blacks wherever and whenever it was feasible.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, AND LIBERIA: INSTITUTIONAL AND MORAL ASSISTANCE, 1908-1969

By

Harry Fumba Moniba

A DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this study to the memory of my loving father, who passed away in Liberia while I was studying in the United States of America.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation and thanks to Dr. Harold G. Marcus, Chairman of his Doctoral Committee, for his perceptive guidance, critical reading, and thoughtful criticisms and suggestions through all stages of the research effort. Sincere gratitude is also extended to the other members of the Committee: Dr. James R. Hooker, for suggesting the original idea and focus of the study, and Dr. Paul R. Sweet, for his friendly encouragement and assistance.

Indebtedness is acknowledged to the United States Educational and Cultural Foundation in Liberia for the financial coverage of the writer's expenses throughout his stay in the U.S.A., and to the Institute of International Education for its sponsorship of the foundation's grant. Special recognition is due to Mr. Blake W. Robinson, Executive Director of the Foundation in Liberia, for his constant inspiration during this study.

Many thanks are extended to the faculty and staff of Tuskegee Institute for their cooperation in providing information for the study. In particular, deep appreciation is accorded to Dr. Luther H. Foster, President of

Tuskegee Institute, Mr. Theophilus C. Cottrell, Administrative Assistant, Dr. Pearl W. Headd, Dr. Finley T. McQueen, formerly Director of the Tuskegee-Liberia Teacher Training Project in Liberia, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Benson, Foreign Students Advisor, Tuskegee Institute, Messrs. Philip Brown, Daniel T. Williams, Tuskegee Institute Archivist, and John P. Krouse, formerly Campus Coordinator of the Tuskegee-Liberia Teacher Training Project, without whose assistance this research could not have been completed.

Special thanks are also extended to Mrs. D. Ballin of the Phelps Stokes Fund, Mr. Henry van Blake of the West Africa Section of A.I.D. at the U.S. State Department, Mrs. Edna A. Falbo of the A.I.D. Reference Center, Dr. F. D. Patterson former President of Tuskegee Institute and presently President of Moton Institute, Mrs. Louis Harlan, Mr. John Armstrong of the Boston University African Studies Library, and Drs. Eugene DeBenko and John W. Hanson of Michigan State University.

The author expresses his gratefulness to Miss Vivian Jackson and Mrs. Joy Forgue for typing the rough draft of this thesis and to Mrs. Fayann Lippincott for typing the final copy.

Finally, the writer extends his sincere thanks and deepest appreciation to his wife, Minita and their sons, Harry Moniba, Jr. and Paul Lynn, for their love and

constant support without which this research could never have been done.

Even though I acknowledge and am grateful to all who have contributed directly or indirectly to the study, I alone am responsible for any mistakes or limitations it has.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.E.L.	Advisory Committee on Education in Liberia
A.C.S.	American Colonization Society
A.I.D. (U.S.A.I.D.)	Agency for International Development
B.T.W.P.	Booker T. Washington Papers
B.W.I.	Booker Washington Institute
C.W.A.	College of West Africa
D.U.S.M.L.	Dispatches of U.S. Ministers to Liberia
F.R.U.S.	Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States
I.C.A.	International Cooperation Administration
K.R.T.T.I.	Kakata Rural Teacher Training Institute
M.E. Church	Methodist Episcopal Church
N.T.A.	National Teachers Association
P.C.V.	Peace Corps Volunteers
R.T.T.I.	Rural Teacher Training Institutes (Kakata and Zorzor)
U.S.O.M.	U.S. Operations Mission (U.S. Overseas Mission)
Z.T.I.	Zorzor Training Institute

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Booker T. Washington never visited Africa. Nevertheless, his educational and social philosophy, symbolized by Tuskegee Institute, greatly influenced many countries on that continent. However, the extent to which that influence affected the different African areas never has been fully examined or realized. In West Africa, for example, Liberia has had a long, though somewhat checkered history of friendly association with Tuskegee Institute dating back to the time of Washington; and yet, no comprehensive study has been made of that relationship.

The purpose of this research is, therefore, to investigate that affiliation in order to determine the part played by Booker Washington and Tuskegee Institute in certain Liberian developments from 1908 to 1969. Specifically, this study will try to identify the nature and significance of Washington and Tuskegee's relations with Liberia: (1) at the height of the financial and boundary crises with Great Britain and France in 1908; (2) in the education of Liberian youths at Tuskegee; (3) in the development of an industrial school in Liberia (in this

connection, the writer will briefly examine the role of the Phelps Stokes Fund in the eventual establishment and administration of the school); and (4) in the development of rural elementary teacher training institutes in Liberia between 1960 and 1969.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it has not been done before. This uniqueness was confirmed by the enthusiastic expressions of cooperation and words of encouragement which the writer received from some of the administrators, faculty, and staff members of Tuskegee Institute while he was gathering his data in the winter of 1973. One faculty member summed up the general interest in the research in the statement, "I am glad to see you doing this study because I have always thought that somebody ought to write a history of our [Tuskegee's] involvement in Liberia. I wish you good luck, and if there is anything that I can help you with, please do not hesitate to ask me."[1]

Another reason why this investigation is significant is that, heretofore, most writings about Washington's life and work have often discussed his relationship with Liberia in a few pages and have tended to give the

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[1]Author's interview with Mr. Philip Brown, instructor at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, December 14, 1973.

impression that the Negro educator's contacts with the republic were isolated events. It is hoped that this study will dispel that notion and put his role in regards to Liberia in its proper perspective, namely, that of an early "pan-Africanist" whose concern about the poor economic and social conditions of under-privileged peoples, particularly the blacks, led to his involvement in Liberia. It is also hoped that this research will demonstrate how, in the case of the republic, Washington's philosophy of emphasizing economic security more than political freedom and social equality was underscored by the kind of educational program he urged the country to adopt. If the present study can contribute to the understanding of these aspects of Washington's role, and the continuation of that legacy by Tuskegee Institute, it will have achieved much and given that due recognition which many successful and distinctive contributions often do not receive.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study examines Booker Washington and subsequently Tuskegee Institute's involvement in certain Liberian affairs. It was not designed to test any specific hypotheses. It assesses B. T. Washington's role during Liberia's boundary disputes with her British and French neighbors at the turn of the century; it also investigates Tuskegee Institute's continuation of that cordial

relationship in the assistance it rendered in the construction of two rural teacher training centers in the republic.

Like many other studies, this one also was delimited by financial difficulties. Because of such monetary constraint, the writer could not undertake extensive travels in order to obtain some of the information that he needed. For example, except for the few materials which were available in the Foreign Relations of the United States (1870-1918), Despatches from the United States Ministers to Liberia (1862-1906), and the British Foreign Office Papers (1848-1902), the author did not get many other sources.

Money problems notwithstanding, the author visited Tuskegee Institute, the Phelps Stokes Fund in New York City, the Liberian Document Collection at the African Studies Library of Boston University, the A.I.D. Reference Center at the U.S. State Department, and the Library of Congress. During his travels, the writer collected his data chiefly from B. T. Washington's personal publications, addresses, correspondences with associates and Liberian and U.S. Government officials, other Liberian and U.S. Government publications of all types, Minutes and Reports of the Phelps Stokes Fund, Papers and Documents relating to the Tuskegee-Liberia Teacher Training Project in the sixties, and recorded interviews with Tuskegee Institute

administrators, faculty, and staff. The information gathered in this way was specific, and it was supplemented by secondary and other primary materials available at Michigan State University and several local libraries.

In general, then, this study was limited in scope and also in data and method of collection. In order to keep the interpretation of the results in its proper perspective, no attempts have been made to generalize the findings beyond the parameters described above.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In recent years renewed interest in the political and educational aspects of Pan-Africanism, and African nationalism has led to a reconsideration of the extent to which Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute influenced African affairs. Unfortunately, most of the works are general in scope and not particularly insightful. However, a few of these accounts have some relevance to the Liberian situation and therefore require some consideration.

A review of the relevant sources on Washington-Tuskegee Institute-Liberian relations reveals few studies on the subject. The best and most recent account is an article by Professor Louis Harlan.[1] In this concise study, Harlan pointed out that B. T. Washington and Tuskegee

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[1]Louis R. Harlan, "Booker T. Washington and the White Man's Burden," The American Historical Review, LXXI, 2 (January, 1966), 441-67. This writer is aware of Harlan's recent biography, B. T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856-1901 (New York, 1972). However, after reading it, he found that it was not particularly relevant to the present study. However, the work does present some interesting aspects of the events that helped to mold the kind of philosophy which Washington later adopted.

Institute's first venture in Africa commenced at the beginning of the century and involved a cotton growing project in the German colony of Togo. He further indicated that the success of the enterprise led to the inauguration of similar programs in cooperation with other colonial authorities in the Sudan, Morocco, and West Africa.

According to Harlan, although Washington's participation in these developments undoubtedly supported colonial structures that oppressed Africans, it was quite consistent with his acceptance of the "white man's burden" and with his partnership with white elite groups in the United States. In spite of such acquiescence, however, Washington did not hesitate to speak against extreme colonial injustice. In the case of the Congo Free State, for example, in 1904, when he learned about the subjection of local inhabitants to forced labor and police brutality, he criticized King Leopold's policies and used his influence with President Roosevelt and Congressional leaders to bring pressure on the Belgian Monarch. It is not known how successful B. T. Washington's activities in behalf of reforms were in the Congo, but shortly thereafter, the king surrendered the colony to the Belgian Government which introduced some moderate reforms.[2]

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[2]Booker T. Washington, "Cruelty in the Congo Country," The Outlook, 78 (October 8, 1904), 375-77.

Harlan also claimed that Washington played his greatest African role in Liberia. There his personal style and unofficial diplomacy involved the American Government in events which were far from her national interests. He encouraged the administration to intercede in behalf of Liberia in the financial and territorial disputes between the republic and Great Britain and France. That intervention, Harlan observed, was temporarily useful, but it created a semi-colonial relationship between Liberia and the United States.

There are, however, two important points which Harlan mentions but does not discuss in detail. First, he talks about Mr. Washington's involvement in Liberian affairs but fails to explain how and why it happened. Second, Mr. Harlan also mentions that B. T. Washington tried to assist Liberia educationally, but again, he does not describe the origins of that endeavor and whether it was successful or not. This writer hopes to discuss these two questions because they are basic to the understanding of B. T. Washington's actual contribution, or lack thereof, to Liberian developments.

Kenneth King discussed the influence of Washington and Tuskegee on Africa through the work of Mr. J. H. Oldham, an English missionary-statesman, who cooperated, in the twenties and thirties, with the Phelps Stokes funds to construct a missionary and Colonial Office consensus in

transferring the insights of the Hampton-Tuskegee method of education to Africa.[3] In a recent and more expanded study Mr. King gave what is perhaps the best account of the politics of the development and expansion of the Hampton-Tuskegee system to colonial Africa.[4] He explained the origins and early arguments for the need for a separate form of education for blacks, discussed its major proponents and opponents, and those who favored a middle-of-the-road position. In particular, he emphasized that Thomas Jesse Jones and the Phelps Stokes Fund were not in favor of any scheme for African students or black Americans which placed literary education above industrial-agricultural training or wanted both; Jones and the Fund also insisted that Hampton-Tuskegee methods were the only form of education that would benefit and content the blacks. King also added that this mistaken idea was compounded by an equally absurd belief that training African students at Tuskegee and Hampton would immunize them against political aspirations after they returned home. What Jones and the fund did not realize was that the very success of Tuskegee Institute as a black-controlled

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[3]Kenneth J. King, "Africa and the Southern States of the U.S.A.: Notes on J. H. Oldham and American Negro Education for Africans," Journal of African History, X, 4 (1969), 659-77.

[4]Kenneth J. King, Pan-Africanism and Education, A Study of Race Philanthropy and Education in the Southern States of America and East Africa (Oxford, 1971).

institution would encourage some students to return home and demand control of their own political and educational affairs from the colonial authorities.

Unlike Mr. Harlan's works, Mr. King's accounts do not specifically deal with B. T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute's relations with Liberia; instead, they discuss, not only the spread of their influence by the Phelps Stokes Fund, and some missionary and colonial agencies which admired and believed in the efficacy of the Hampton-Tuskegee system of education, but also how and where similar educational methods were developed in East and West Africa. Unfortunately, in the case of Liberia, Mr. King merely states that the Phelps Stokes Fund and the Advisory Committee on Education in Liberia (A.C.E.L.) sent Mr. James Sibley to that country in the late 1920s to help reorganize the educational system on an industrial basis. Although the reorganization subsequently resulted in the establishment of the Booker Washington Agricultural and Industrial Institute (B.W.I.), Mr. King neither discusses that event nor the dispute which later arose between the fund and the Liberian authorities over the administration of the school and the nature of its curriculum. Mr. King's failure to explain these developments in assessing the application of the Hampton-Tuskegee method of education to Liberia partly necessitated undertaking the present study.

King's analysis of the activities of Jones and the fund has a parallel in Edward Berman's work.[5] He discussed the fund's establishment of an African Education Commission for the purpose of forging a concerted policy to ensure that American and British missionary and philanthropic groups would reinforce and perpetuate the Hampton-Tuskegee educational model for Africans. He said that, although the commission travelled to Africa, studied native educational programs, and made recommendations along Tuskegee lines for adapting education to African needs, few of the proposals were implemented. Jones and the fund refused to allow Africans to have a voice in their educational future, and the latter, therefore, refused to accept what they considered to be the imposition of a system tailored for the blacks of the American South, but less relevant to their needs. Berman concluded that the lack of general implementation of the commission's recommendations was good because the reverse "would have radically altered the course of modern African history, and not in the African's favor."[6] In effect, the program would not have trained the kind of politically astute African leaders who led the independence movements.

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[5]Edward H. Berman, "American Influence on African Education: The Role of the Phelps Stokes Fund's Education Commissions," Comparative Education Review, 15, 2 (June, 1971), 132-45.

[6]Edward H. Berman, "American Influence on African Education," 145.

In another study, "Tuskegee-in-Africa,"[7] Berman explained the activities of Jones and the fund in regard to the application of the Hampton-Tuskegee methods to Liberia. Berman first outlined Booker Washington's earliest involvement in African affairs, and his communications with Miss Olivia Phelps Stokes for the establishment of a "small Tuskegee" in the Negro republic. He then pointed out that it was not until after Stokes and Washington died that the school was constructed under the auspices of the Phelps Stokes Fund. He also indicated that before and after the construction, the fund's personnel failed actively to consult with the Liberian authorities in the administration and curricular developments of the school. Such lack of consultation, he observed, angered the Liberians who, consequently, refused genuine participation in the program until the fund relinquished its operations of the school and permitted them to determine the nature and pertinence of the school's work to Liberian developments.

In spite of these observations, Mr. Berman's study does not present a detailed background of the Tuskegee story in relation to Liberia. In particular it fails to specify either B. T. Washington or Tuskegee Institute's role in the establishment of the Booker

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[7]Edward H. Berman, "Tuskegee-in-Africa," Journal of Negro Education, 41, 2 (Spring, 1972), 99-112.

Washington Institute and in the education of Liberian students at Tuskegee. Hopefully, this shortcoming will be eliminated by the present research.

Finally, William Thomas presented a brief account of the early communications between Washington and Olivia Stokes regarding the education of Liberian students at Tuskegee Institute.[8] He also discussed their initial plans for the establishment of an agricultural-industrial institute in the African republic. In addition, the study provided a short explanation of the way in which Washington assisted Liberia at the height of the financial and boundary crises in 1908. Mr. Thomas also outlined Miss Stokes' monetary assistance for the Liberian students who were already studying at Tuskegee Institute. In this connection, however, he neglected to discuss the success or failure of the program for training the Liberians at Tuskegee.

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[8]William H. Thomas, "An Assessment of Booker Taliaferro Washington's Educational Influence in the United States and West Africa Between the Years 1880 and 1925" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1972), pp. 142-165.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND TO BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S INVOLVEMENT IN LIBERIAN AFFAIRS

Anglo-Liberian Boundary Disputes, 1860-1908

Liberia's Declaration of Independence of July 26, 1847, was made particularly urgent by the contentious behavior of Great Britain and France in treating the new state as a philanthropic experiment of the American Colonization Society (A.C.S.) or at best, an unclaimed colony of the United States.[1]

Following the Declaration of Independence, the first president, Mr. Joseph J. Roberts, made a goodwill tour of Europe in early 1848. Somewhat surprisingly, Great Britain, which had previously treated the colony with high-handedness, was the first to recognize the new republic. This acknowledgment was accompanied by a gift of two small gunboats.[2] Also, while in England, the

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[1]Charles H. Huberich, The Political and Legislative History of Liberia, Vol. 1 (New York, 1947), pp. 227-276. A. Doris Banks Henries, The Liberian Nation (New York, 1954), pp. 49-76. Baljit Singh, "American-Liberian Relations in the 19th Century," Journal of Human Relations, 10 (1962), 405-18.

[2]Henries, Liberian Nation, p. 102.

president intimated to Lord Ashley that he intended to end the slave trade in the Gallinhas territory between Shebro Island and Cape Mount in the northwest part of the country. He planned to buy the territory from its inhabitants, but he did not have the $10,000 necessary for the purchase. Lord Ashley arranged for a $5,000 gift for Mr. Roberts. The president later acquired a matching contribution from a few Liberians and some resident Americans. With the money, he bought the Gallinhas and thus extended Liberia's northwest coastline by at least fifty miles.[3] Following what was evidently a successful state visit, President Roberts returned home at the end of the year to await the inevitable response of the other European nations to the Liberian declaration.

Fortunately, Great Britain's recognition was followed by other European states between 1852 and 1860. The United States, for domestic political reasons, deferred recognition until 1862, fifteen years after the republic was established. By the end of its first two decades, Liberia had gained formal recognition and occasional material support from most of the world powers.[4] For a while the country entertained euphoric hopes of international goodwill. Unfortunately, this dream was never realized.

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[3]Sir Harry Johnston, Liberia, Vol. 1 (London, 1906), pp. 224-227.

[4]Henries, The Liberian Nation, p. 102.

Liberia was later to learn the true meaning of the maxim: "well begun is half done." Great Britain and France were to teach the young country some harsh lessons.

In 1851, the amicable relations between Britain and Liberia was underscored by London's appointment of the Rev. Augustus W. Hanson as its first consul at Monrovia. Unfortunately, however, the latter, a native of the Cape Coast Castle and of African descent, only served in that capacity for a year because of reportedly disrespectful treatment by the Liberian authorities. Although no immediate attempt was made to find a successor for Hanson, British-Liberian relations did not suffer. In fact, in 1852 when President Roberts again went to England in order to secure British recognition of Liberian sovereignty over the Gallinhas territory which he recently had purchased, London not only acknowledged Liberia's right to the area, but also provided return passage for the president on a British warship.[5]

In 1860, trouble began in the Gallinhas region when an Englishman, John Myers Harris, defiantly established a trading post between the Sulima and Manor Rivers. Liberia seized Harris's two schooners and took them to Monrovia. Mr. Harris appealed for help to Governor Stephen Hill of Sierra Leone, who at once dispatched a British warship to

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[5]Johnston, Liberia, pp. 230-232.

Monrovia, where it forcibly recovered the schooners.[6] Without any effective means of resistance, Liberia acquiesced to this act of gunboat diplomacy.

Thereafter, Harris became increasingly defiant of Liberian laws and received much support from the Sierra Leone Government. Such continuous disdain for Liberian ordinances gradually caused anxiety in the minds of many citizens. In 1862 President Stephen Benson decided to visit Great Britain to negotiate a just solution to the problem. He travelled via Freetown, where he hoped first to discuss the question with Governor Hill, who declined to engage in any serious talks; instead, the British official advised him to seek a definite decision in the matter in London.[7]

When the president arrived in England, Earl Russell addressed a dispatch to him acknowledging Liberian claims and sovereignty over the area, thence eastward along the coast to the San Pedro River, some sixty miles east of the Cavalla River, which today marks Liberia's eastern boundary with the Ivory Coast.[8]

When informed about the document, Harris, backed by Freetown, protested vehemently and intensified his

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[6]Frederick Starr, Liberia (Chicago, 1913), pp. 101-104. R. Earle Anderson, Liberia: America's African Friend (Chapel Hill, 1952), pp. 84-85.

[7]Johnston, Liberia, p. 242.

[8]Ibid., pp. 243-245.

defiance of Liberian statutes in the territory. Benson was determined to end Harris's contumacy, so he again captured and impounded the Englishman's schooners. This time, it was decided that a mixed commission of Liberian and Sierra Leone representatives should convene in Monrovia to adjudicate the matter.[9] Meeting in April 1863, the commission did not remain in session for long because the uncompromising position of the parties forestalled any progress. The British commissioners stubbornly declined to accept what had been conceded by London, while the Liberian delegates resolutely clung to their position. The British produced many specious letters and title deeds which they claimed to have obtained from the Gallinhas chiefs, but which were rejected immediately by the Liberians. Despite the impasse, the Liberian Government returned Mr. Harris's ships, although not before it levied a small fine on him "for breach of customs regulations."[10]

In the face of such gracious gestures, Harris reverted to his clandestine activities and became bolder in flouting Liberian customs and commerce regulations, behaving much like an independent chieftain. In 1869, he organized a small force of Gallinhas natives and attacked the Vais people. The government brought relief to the latter, and Harris's little army was quickly defeated and

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[9]Henries, The Liberian Nation, p. 179.

[10]Starr, Liberia, pp. 102-104.

put to flight. Feeling betrayed, the Gallinhas avenged their defeat by turning against Harris and burning one of his factories. The Englishman blamed the Liberian Government and claimed damages for the destruction of his property, but Monrovia rejected the claims. In frustration, Harris and some other British traders incited some friendly aborigines to destroy Liberian settlements in the Mano River area. The government again sent a small force which promptly stopped the vandalism and brought the situation under control, at the cost of much British and Liberian property. Once more, Harris held Liberia culpable for his losses and claimed $30,000 in damages, a demand immediately rejected by Monrovia, but strongly supported by Freetown.[11]

In the summer of 1870, President Edward Roye travelled to England to discuss the Harris problem with British officials. While in London, Lord Granville surprisingly suggested that the Sierra Leone frontier extended eastward to the banks of the Sulima River where Harris was operating, and recommended the establishment of a joint commission to study whether, in fact, Liberia had any rightful claims to the disputed region. It was an unexpected suggestion because since 1856, no one, except Harris, backed by Sierra Leone, had questioned Liberia's

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[11]Governor Arthur Kennedy to President James Payne, April 9, 1869, D.U.S.M.L., October 24, 1868-January 24, 1872, Vol. 2. Anderson, Liberia: America's African Friend, p. 85.

ownership of the territory. It seems, however, that part of the basis for the policy change was Governor Kennedy's admonition that conceding the area would "seriously interfere with British trade and would eventually lead to collisions between the two governments."[12] It is not known whether the president ever accepted the proposal, but when news of the suggestion reached Monrovia, it aroused public indignation and suspicions about whether Mr. Roye had compromised the country's right. These doubts, together with the loan affair which we shall discuss in the next section, were aggravated by rumors that the president allegedly planned to use unconstitutional tactics to extend his term of office, all of which stimulated a public outcry against the administration. Mr. Roye was deposed in October 1871 and on January 1, 1872, former President Joseph Roberts was re-elected to succeed him.[13]

Sometime after his inauguration in 1872, President Roberts visited London in order to work out a more reasonable settlement of the Harris or northwest boundary problem. In his annual message for 1873, he said that his mission was not successful because "Her Majesty's Government

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[12]Arthur Kennedy to Granville, January 25, 1869, cited in M. B. Akpan, Liberia: Author and Victim of the Scramble for Africa" (paper presented at the Sixth Annual Liberian Studies Conference held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, April 26-27, 1974), p. 22.

[13]A. Doris Banks Henries, Presidents of the First African Republic (London, 1963), pp. 54-59.

felt themselves precluded from departing from the arrangements come to in 1871 for settling the Liberian Boundary Question."[14] This was in reference to the "Granville Proposal" which aroused much public sentiment during Roye's visit to London.

Roberts' failure to effect an immediate settlement of the dispute left the matter in abeyance until 1878. Meanwhile, in 1874, the legislature approved a program for further exploration and annexation of hinterland territories. Shortly thereafter, Mr. B. J. K. Anderson traversed the northeastern section of the country signing treaties of commerce and friendship with many of the local chieftains. In order to strengthen these agreements, he urged the government to establish, as soon as possible, a chain of military outposts in the new regions and to help educate the sons of the chiefs. The suggestions were never implemented because of the lack of funds and qualified frontier administrators.[15]

On the diplomatic front, Liberia designated Dr. Edward Blyden as its Minister to Great Britain. "The specific purpose of his appointment was to effect a

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[14]Annual Message of President Joseph J. Roberts to the Liberian Legislature, African Repository, L (1874), p. 165.

[15]M. B. Akpan, "Black Imperialism: America-Liberian Rule Over the African Peoples of Liberia, 1841-1964," The Canadian Journal of African Studies, VII, 2 (1973), 222-23.

resumption of negotiations concerning the northwest boundary dispute."[16] In December 1878 Governor Samuel Rowe of Sierra Leone sent a dispatch to Monrovia proposing another meeting in Freetown to renew negotiations.[17]

In the meantime, Governor Rowe's Secretary, Mr. L. Edwards, visited the disputed territory and bribed some inhabitants to testify against Liberia. After the trip, Mr. Edwards, filed a report, a copy of which the governor transmitted to the Foreign and Colonial Offices in London, purporting to show the determination of the chiefs in the region to resist Liberia's exercise of any sovereignty over them. Both offices agreed that to concede to Liberia's demands would "disturb the peace, and consequently the trade . . . which contributed substantially to the revenue of the Sierra Leone Government."[18]

When Sierra Leone recommended that the commissioners meet in Freetown on January 1, 1879, Liberia accepted, although it was strategically disadvantageous for her. The president appointed former President James S. Smith and Attorney General Joseph W. Hilton to lead an eleven-man Liberian team. The group arrived in Freetown on December 29, 1878, and later was joined by Ambassador

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[16]Paul A. Hirning, "Liberian Boundary Problems" (Unpublished paper, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1970(?)), p. 7.

[17]Johnston, Liberia, p. 268.

[18]Akpan, "Liberia: Author and Victim," p. 24.

Blyden. Although they arrived early, the delegates were kept waiting for several weeks before their counterparts appeared.[19] When the commission finally met on February 12, 1879, the sessions only lasted for two days, during which the British used every dilatory tactic they could, and in the end, they refused to concede anything to Liberia. Such stubborness resulted in an impasse and a temporary suspension of the negotiations.[20]

When the meeting reconvened at Sulima on April 1, the parties had not changed their basic positions. This time, the British brought some 1500 native witnesses whom they housed in temporary shelters.[21] Many of these men had received payments of up to $30 in order to testify for the British.[22] Against this large number, Liberia could only muster three witnesses, two of whom were disqualified by the British. To add to their discomfiture, the Liberians produced four deeds, one of which was not an original. The British called these documents "a bad swindle" and a "tissue of lies." Liberia protested and the meeting broke up on April 24, again without effecting any settlement.[23]

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[19] Johnston, Liberia, pp. 269-270; Henries, Presidents, p. 65.

[20] Akpan, "Liberia: Author and Victim," pp. 26-28.

[21] Ibid., p. 25.

[22] Ibid., p. 27.

[23] Ibid., p. 29.

Following this abortive conference, there were no further discussions for nearly three years. Then, Sir Arthur Havelock, who had succeeded Samuel Rowe in 1880 as governor of Sierra Leone, decided to resume negotiations and informed the Liberian president of his intention to visit Monrovia for the same purpose.[24]

On March 20, 1882, the governor arrived in Monrovia accompanied by four gunboats. He demanded that Liberia accept the Maffa River [Mano River] as the northwest boundary with Sierra Leone and pay $42,500 compensation to satisfy Harris and other outstanding claimants.[25] Overawed by the presence of the gunboats, the government appointed Dr. Blyden and Mr. William M. Davis to negotiate with the governor. The men produced a four-point reply to Sir Arthur's demands, claiming

1. That the boundary should be fixed at the Sulima River instead of at the Maffa as suggested.

2. That London should join Liberia in declaring the San Pedro River as the southeastern boundary of the Republic.

3. That Britain should free Liberia from the payment of compensation for all alleged losses by the British traders.

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[24]Havelock to President Gardner, March 7, 1882, and M. A. Aenney to Frederick Frelinhuysen, June 23, 1882, D.U.S.M.L., May 9, 1882-October 7, 1884, Vol. 9, Nos. 8 and 9.

[25]"Propositions offered by H. M. Government for Settlement of Questions at Issue with the Government of the Republic of Liberia," March 22, 1882, Ibid., No. 2; N. B. Akpan, "Liberia: Author and Victim," pp. 32-33.

4. That Liberia would modify her revenue laws, open the Mano and Sulima Rivers' regions to foreign traders, and open up other points for foreign trade along the coast. [The 1865 Ports of Entry Law restricted foreign traders to six ports: Robertsport, Monrovia, Marshall, Grand Bassa, Greenville, and Cape Palmas.][26]

The governor refused to accept these statements of reply and insisted upon Liberia's unconditional acceptance of his proposals. Under duress, Liberia protested vehemently, but yielded to the demands, and Havelock returned to Freetown.

When the Liberian public learned of what had transpired, it angrily demanded submission of the dispute to arbitration. In the prevailing atmosphere, the senate refused to ratify the "diktat." A local newspaper summed up the general mood:

> The Senate has expressed the national will, and correctly represented the feeling of the citizens. The people of Liberia may be forced by overwhelming power to abandon a part of its present domain, but they will not relinquish it of their own free will . . . . England asks for too much. To yield to the proposals of Consul Havelock would be national suicide. The people . . . would rather see Liberia destroyed by British arms than make any such concessions.[27]

When Sir Arthur heard about the public opposition to his imposed settlement, he returned to Monrovia with his gunboats and demanded immediate ratification of the proposals.

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[26]Secretary of State, G. W. Gibson to Dr. Blyden and William M. Davis, March 24, 1882, D.U.S.M.L., May 9, 1882-October 7, 1884, Vol. 9, No. 3; Johnston, Liberia, p. 248.

[27]"Liberia's Peril," African Repository, 58, 1 July 1882), 93-4.

The senate refused again to ratify the plan and strongly advised that the president,

> should not accept the proposition of H. M. Government fixing the northwest boundary of Liberia at the Marfar [Mano] or Cape Mount River . . . . That he should not sign or cause to be signed any convention or treaty ceding or relinquishing any public domain of Liberia under any pretense whatever.[28]

In March 1883, the Colonial Office cabled and instructed the governor to annex the disputed territory and fix Liberia's northwest boundary at the Mano River. Accordingly, Havelock took possession of the region and officially informed Monrovia: "I am directed to point out to your Government that the coastline . . . which extends to the north bank of the Mannah River, is now and must remain British territory."[29] Angered by this unilateral action, Liberia appealed to the United States to use its good offices to induce London to suspend the occupation and to agree to a fair and honorable arbitration of the matter.[30] In response, President Arthur advised the republic to accept the "fait accompli" because he thought that the proposal was reasonable.[31]

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Havelock to Secretary of State, March 19, 1883, D.U.S.M.L., May 9, 1882-October 7, 1884, Vol. 9, Misc. No. 13, inclosure 1.

[30] President Alfred Russell to U.S. President Chester Arthur, April 23, 1883, D.U.S.M.L., May 9, 1882-October 7, 1884, Vol. 9.

[31] President Chester Arthur to Alfred Russell, June 12, 1883, Ibid.

Upon receiving the American reply, the Liberian leader could only thank his counterpart and humbly add, "the course you favor will at an early date be adopted by this state."[32] Thereafter, Liberia appointed Messrs. Henry Grimes and Benjamin Anderson to negotiate with Sir Samuel Rowe, the British representative. On November 11, 1885, the men signed a treaty which formally fixed the country's northwest boundary at the Mano River. The agreement was couched in vague language, badly defining the hinterland boundary line and Liberia's navigation rights on the river. However, it provided for Britain's payment of $23,750 to Liberia as compensation for losses sustained in acquiring the territory.[33]

For nearly a decade after the treaty was signed, Liberia enjoyed free navigation on the Mano River. This tranquil atmosphere was disrupted when, in 1895, rumors reached Freetown that some traders were using the waterways to smuggle guns into the hinterland. The British responded by stationing soldiers at the main river crossings. They also arrested and imprisoned several smugglers, including some Liberians. In 1901 Liberia tried to resolve the misunderstanding by sending a commission to London. When the delegation arrived in the British capital, it was

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[32]President Russell to Chester Arthur, August 23, 1883, Ibid.

[33]Starr, Liberia, p. 106; Henries, Presidents, p. 69.

offered a treaty which, in addition to providing for too much interference in Liberian affairs, did not recognize the country's right to the river, but instead, gave her the privilege of passage as a matter of comity.[34] The delegates refused the British offer and returned home. Two years and many private discussions later, London consented to a joint commission to delimit the boundary. By this delimitation, the district and town of Kanre-Lahun [Kailahun] fell to Liberia.[35]

Shortly after the boundary survey and the delimitation, a conflict erupted between some chiefs. The British complained that one of them had raided a Sierra Leone border district. Since Liberia had no frontier force to suppress the disorder, they requested permission to do it. Liberia granted the request, assuming that the British troops would be withdrawn as soon as the situation was rectified. However, once the mission was completed, the British did not evacuate their forces.[36]

In 1906, the Liberian commissioner, Mr. Lomax, supervised some local elections involving Chiefs Fahbundeh,

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[34]U.S. Minister to Liberia Owen Smith to Secretary of State John Hay, June 14, 1901, D.U.S.M.L., January 17, 1901-December 29, 1903, Vol. 13, No. 132, "Memorandum of Agreement between H.M. Government and the Republic of Liberia," February 29, 1902, Ibid., No. 175; "The Liberian Mission," West Africa (August 3, 1901), 919-26.

[35]Starr, Liberia, pp. 108-113.

[36]Ibid.

Gardi, and Bawma in the Kailahun district. After the elections, Chief Fahbundeh expressed dissatisfaction because part of his former domain had been given to Chief Gardi. Supported by the British occupation forces, he attacked and intimidated the other chiefs who were favorable to Liberia.[37] Britain's support of Chief Fahbundeh produced some concern in Monrovia. The government sent Secretary of State Johnson to London to settle the problem, but the British refused to discuss anything with him. Although they had no designs on the republic,

> they believed that the French were planning to encroach upon the territory; and that if this should happen Great Britain would find it necessary to take territory along the Sierra Leone borders as a matter of self-defense.[38]

Mr. Johnson returned to Monrovia without resolving the difficulty.

In January 1908, the British Consul, Braithwait Wallis, sent an ultimatum to the president outlining certain reforms which London wanted to see Liberia effect within six months. These reforms included (1) the appointment of a financial expert who would place the country's finances on a sound footing and act as adviser to the government; (2) the appointment of at least three European (British?) customs officials; (3) reform of the

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[37]Johnston, Liberia, p. 305.

[38]Raymond L. Buell, The Native Problem in Africa, Vol. II (New York, 1928), p. 786.

judiciary; and (4) the establishment of an efficient police force under competent European (British?) officers.[39] Consul Wallis warned that if Liberia refused to implement his proposals London would not guarantee her independence and territorial integrity and would respect no guarantees by any other powers. As he imperiously put it, "Liberia . . . must not lose a moment in setting herself seriously to work to put her house in order, or be prepared, at no distant date, to disappear from the catalogue of independent countries."[40]

As the representative of a powerful nation, Mr. Wallis's ultimatum had its desired effect on Monrovia.

> The Government acquiesced entirely in the proposed programme. It appointed new officials in the customs service, passed a law creating a frontier force under European officials, and took steps to establish the Chief Inspector of Customs, Mr. W. J. Lamont, an Englishman, as financial advisor to the Republic.[41]

However, lack of funds and the inconsiderate haste with which the reforms were inaugurated led to their termination.

The failure of the reform program exacerbated relations between Britain and Liberia. Thereafter, everyday that passed seemed like a count down to the end of the

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[39]Memorandum from His Britannic Majesty's Government on the Subject of Reforms in Liberia, January 14, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #394 (S).

[40]Ibid.

[41]Report of the American Commission of 1910, "Affairs in Liberia," Senate Documents, 61st Cong., 2nd Sess., 60, 457 (1909-1910), p. 24. (Hereafter cited as "Affairs in Liberia," Senate Document, No. 457.)

republic as an independent state. There was a great deal of uneasiness among the people. President Arthur Barclay and Deputy Attorney General T. McCants Stewart went to England to seek a solution to the crisis. Upon their arrival, the president asked H.M. Government to join the United States as a guarantor of Liberia's independence and territorial integrity. The Foreign Office, "expressed itself first as seeing with regret the gradual curtailment of the territory of the Republic. It attributed that curtailment to the ineffectual administration in matters of police and finance."[42] In spite of this sympathetic statement, London deferred action on the request pending Liberia's settlement of her boundary problems with France. This apparent refusal not only underscored the extent to which relations had deteriorated between London and Monrovia, but also sent the latter scurrying to settle her difficulties with France.

Franco-Liberian Boundary Disputes, 1879-1908

Liberia's problems with France began when Paris sought to unite its settlements contiguous to the republic. Since Liberia's geographical position posed a problem for such a policy of incorporation, France tried to deal with the situation by laying claim to areas belonging to

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[42]British Foreign Minister Edward Grey to American Ambassador Whitelaw Reid, July 23, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 698.

Liberia. In 1842 she established a foothold at Cape Mount and at several other places along the coast.[1] At that time the Liberians protested vehemently and Paris temporarily abandoned her initial claims. However, during the late 1870s and the middle 1880s, when European imperialism in Africa began to gain momentum, France thought it necessary to reclaim her "ancient rights" to the coastal enclaves. By that time, Liberia had acquired importance in European eyes as the home of the "Kruboys" who served as stevedores for most of the European commercial houses along the West African coast.[2] Partly in order to expand her colonial domains and also to gain control of a large source of Kru laborers, many of whom inhabited southeastern Liberia between the San Pedro and the Cavalla Rivers, France revived not only its specious claims to parts of the Liberian coast, but also began to interfere in the internal affairs of the republic.

The first indication of this diplomatic meddling occurred in 1879, a critical year for the country. The Anglo-Liberian northwest boundary commission had just adjourned without an agreement; and the government had scored a somewhat pyrrhic victory during the fierce Kru and

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[1]Roland P. Falkner, "The United States and Liberia," American Journal of International Law, 4 (July 1910), 541-42. James L. Sibley and D. Westermann, Liberia--Old and New (Garden City, New York, 1928), p. 18.

[2]Johnston, Liberia, pp. 294-298.

Grebo rebellion in the country's southeast. These and other difficulties undermined the nation's image and raised doubts as to its capacity for self-government.[3]

In this precarious situation, a Frenchman, Mr. Leopold Carrance, who was the Liberian Consul-General at Bordeaux, informed the Liberian Secretary of State of France's desire to make Liberia a protectorate. Mr. Carrance urged Monrovia to accept the proposal because, among other things, it would bring postal and commercial benefits. The secretary communicated Mr. Carrance's intentions to American Minister John H. Smyth, who promptly requested clarification of the Unites States' position regarding the issue.[4]

Upon receiving Minister Smyth's dispatch, Acting Secretary Hunter requested Mr. Edward Noyes, the U.S. Minister to Paris, to inquire into the matter and report to him. Personally, Hunter thought that France's motive was to forestall further British encroachment by strenthening Liberia's status through strong France-Liberian economic ties. Nevertheless, he instructed Minister Noyes to convey to the French Government the United States' concern for Liberian independence. He underscored Washington's position by stating:

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[3]J. D. Hargreaves, Prelude to the Partition of West Africa (London, 1963), p. 242.

[4]JNO. H. Smyth to Evarts, May 30, 1879, F.R.U.S., 1879, p. 718.

> . . . it is evident that this Government must feel a peculiar interest in any apparent movement to divert the independent political life of Liberia for the aggrandizement of a great continental power which already has a foothold of actual trading possession on the neighboring coast.[5]

One month after Secretary Hunter's instructions to Mr. Noyes, the latter completed his investigation and reported that:

> The French Government has never proposed or expressed a desire that Liberia should be placed under its protectorate; it has, on the contrary, declined to entertain any scheme looking to such result.[6]

He also mentioned that Mr. Huart, another Frenchman who was the Liberian Consul General in Paris, had admitted to having "endeavored to secure the commercial protection of France for Liberia," but he denied any implication in Mr. Carrance's scheme for making Liberia a French protectorate. It is obvious that the two Frenchmen were using their diplomatic positions to further France's, rather than Liberia's interests. Whether Paris' negative official response was genuine or not is a moot point. What matters is that Washington's quick inquiry into the situation made France drop the proposition, although its desire to control

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[5]Hunter to Noyes, July 17, 1879, F.R.U.S., 1879, No. 158, p. 341.

[6]Noyes to Evarts, August 20, 1879, F.R.U.S., 1879, No. 159, p. 342.

Liberia or part of it was hardly dampened by a diplomatic denouement or by a prompt disclaimer.[7]

In 1884 France again tried to gain a foothold on Liberian territory by establishing a trading factory on Kent Island which was located in the Mano River Bay. At that time the Anglo-Liberian northwest boundary negotiations were in progress and Liberia was trying to convince Great Britain that the river's thalweg should be used as the boundary. The French move was, therefore, not only inopportune, but also tended to jeopardize the negotiations, and Liberia accordingly lodged a strong protest. Paris declared that the factory was established by a private concern; therefore,

> The unauthorized act of lease by a French citizen of Liberian territory unlawfully would not be countenanced by France, and that Liberia had no cause to fear contention on the part of the French Government as to claim upon the territory in question.[8]

In spite of this official repudiation, coupled with a promise to evacuate the island, the French occupation had already induced difficulties which Liberia feared. The British quickly argued that the French action presaged future problems which the republic would

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[7]Anderson, Liberia: America's African Friend, pp. 88-89. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Liberia in World Politics (Westport, Conn., 1970), pp. 105-106.

[8]Smyth to Bayard, December 7, 1885, F.R.U.S., 1886, p. 299, inclosure No. 67.

encounter if the Mano River remained a neutral waterway. They told Liberia,

> You will have difficulties with the French if the matter remains as it is, but we are more capable of dealing with the French than you. If we are substituted for you, you will have nothing to fear from that quarter. It is, therefore, in your interest to let the Manoh River be English and not neutral.[9]

Although Liberia refused to accept the plan, Great Britain eventually gained control of the river in 1885.[10]

Following the Anglo-Liberian treaty of 1885, France censured the British for the officious manner in which they had treated Liberia. While criticizing London, however, France herself tended to display a kindly and indulgent demeanour towards the republic, which masked her imperialistic designs. The echo of criticism had barely been muffled when France proclaimed that the boundary of her Ivory Coast colony extended from the San Pedro River westward to Cape Palmas in Liberia and beyond. She also asserted her shadowy claims to Grand Bassa and Cape Mount in the republic on the basis of treaties signed by French naval officers with chiefs of the territories.[11]

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[9]"The Liberian Mission: Interviews with the Plenipotentiaries," West Africa (August 3, 1901), 920.

[10]"Agreement Between the United Kingdon and Liberia Respecting the Navigation of the Manoh River," American Journal of International Law, Supplement 7, 3 (July 1913), 177-80.

[11]Bayard to McLane, January 13, 1886, F.R.U.S., 1886, inclosure, pp. 298-299.

In December 1885, Secretary of State Arthur Barclay expressed his government's concern about the French claims to U.S. Minister Smyth and requested American assistance. Smyth transmitted Barclay's request to Washington,[12] and in the following month, the State Department instructed Minister Robert McLane in Paris to inform the French Foreign Office of America's deep interest in the territorial integrity of the republic and to ascertain, whether, in fact, the alleged treaties concluded by the French officers did not violate Liberian rights.[13]

Mr. McLane promptly notified Paris of Washington's "peculiar interest" in the maintenance of Liberian independence and requested an official clarification of the treaty-making activities of the French officers. He also indicated that if the alleged agreements were true, and he had no doubts they were, then they were in direct contravention to statements made by Ministers Waddington in 1879 and Jules Ferry in 1884, disclaiming any designs upon parts of Liberia.[14]

In response to the American communication on behalf of Monrovia, Paris declared,

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[12]Smyth to Bayard, December 7, 1885, F.R.U.S., 1886, inclosure, pp. 298-299.

[13]Bayard to McLane, January 13, 1886, F.R.U.S., 1886, No. 67, p. 298.

[14]Vignaud to de Freycinet, August 6, 1886, F.R.U.S., 1886, inclosure 2, pp. 306-307.

> We have deemed it necessary, on this occasion, to recall to the Liberian Government the ties, already old, which unite to France the populations of Grand and Petit Berreby [both in the disputed area], by virtue of a treaty signed with us by their Chief February 4, 1868, and which was made public.[15]

The validity of this claim is questionable for two reasons: first, France did not ratify the treaty until 1883; second, the agreement was signed some eleven years after chiefs of the region had sold the territory to Maryland County which later made it a part of Liberia when the latter joined the republic in 1857.[16]

Despite American protests France began to make plans for effective occupation of the region. Between 1887 and 1889, a Frenchman, Captain Binger, explored southeastern Liberia and the Upper Niger. His exploration not only disproved the myth that the "Mountains of Kong" [Nimba Mountains?] were a hindrance to the commercial expansion from the Ivory Coast to the Western Sudan, but also proved the feasibility of linking up Ivory Coast with the other French possessions in the Upper Niger. Diplomatically, the result of Binger's mission hardened France's resolve to deal strongly with Liberia. In assessing the possibilities, Mr. Eugene Etienne, Undersecretary for the Colonies, commented that Binger having

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[15]de Freycinet to Vignaud, August 18, F.R.U.S., 1886, inclosure 3, p. 307.

[16]Bayard to McLane, March 22, 1887, F.R.U.S., 1887, pp. 289-291.

> traversed important territories bordering the region disputed with Liberia, spreading French influence among natives, has led me to reopen my study of the question and to consider whether, by conceding so completely the claims of the Republic of Liberia, we had not compromised our position in those regions.[17]

In 1890 and 1891, France dispatched several treaty-making expeditions to the disputed coast between the Cavalla and San Pedro Rivers.[18] Thereafter, she sent copies of the accords to Washington and London. Before the two governments could respond to these developments, British Ambassador Sir Julian Pauncefote informed Washington that his government was not disposed to act without first knowing the American position. Secretary of State James Blaine told him that he had already instructed Ambassador Jefferson Coolidge to inform the French Foreign Minister that,

> the Government of the United States does not accept as valid or acquiesce in the protectorates announced . . . so far as the same may relate to territory pertaining to the Republic of Liberia westward of the San Pedro River, unless it shall appear that Liberia is herself a consenting party to such transactions.[19]

Pauncefote relayed the American response to London, and afterwards, his government told Paris that Britain would resist any French attempt to extend the protectorate beyond

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[17]J. D. Hargreaves, "Liberia: The Price of Independence," Odu: A Journal of West African Studies, n.s., No. 6 (October 1971), 5.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Blaine to Coolidge, June 4, 1892, F.R.U.S., 1892, p. 165.

the Cavalla River to Grand Bassa. It also instructed Ambassador Edgerton to make it quite explicit to the French that,

> the acknowledgment of the notification of the treaties and of the French protectorate resulting therefrom, which covered the Liberian territory between the Rivers San Pedro and Cavalla, was not to be taken as prejudicing the claim of Liberia to the territory between those rivers.[20]

In spite of the British and American remonstrations, France occupied the region and unilaterally established the Cavalla River as the boundary between Liberia and the Ivory Coast.

In March 1892 Liberia directed its Consul General in Belgium, Baron von Stein, to negotiate with the French representatives, Hanotaux and Haussman, for a delimitation treaty.[21] After deliberating for five months without reaching an agreement, the French offered a draft treaty to Liberia. The latter balked and appealed to the United States for advice and assistance. However, Secretary of State Bayard, after expressing his government's interest in the preservation of Liberian sovereignty, pointed out that America's function in the dispute was to act as a "conciliatory medium in securing an harmonious and an honorable adjustment of difficulties" between the two

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[20]Lincoln to Foster, August 5, 1892, F.R.U.S., 1892, p. 231.

[21]"Message of the President of Liberia," The Liberia Gazette, Vol. 1, No. 4 (December 8, 1892), 1.

governments and not as an agent for the republic.[22] This reply did not help Liberia's position, and she had to continue the discussions, hoping that France would compromise. Unfortunately, France remained inflexible and permitted no changes in the proposed draft.

Realizing that his country had no other alternative, Liberian Secretary of State Gibson said of the French offer, "under the circumstances, it will be ratified as the best thing to be done in view of the fact that we are not able to cope with so great a power as the French Government."[23] Similarly, American Minister William McCoy expressed this lack of power to do anything about the country's plight:

> the friends of Liberia can only be interested spectators hoping that all difficulties may be surmounted and that this republic may continue to be the portal through which civilization may reach the interior [of Africa].[24]

On December 8, 1892, Liberia reluctantly signed the treaty with France and thereby diminished her coastline by at least fifty miles. As part of the settlement, Liberia received 25,000 francs as reimbursement for the expenses she incurred

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[22]Raymond W. Bixler, The Foreign Policy of the United States in Liberia (New York, 1957), p. 18.

[23]Gibson to McCoy, March 10, 1893, D.U.S.M.L., February 4, 1892-December 6, 1896, Vol. 11, No. 123 (Foreign Misc.).

[24]McCoy to State Department, Subject: Franco-Liberian Treaty, 1892, February 1, 1893, D.U.S.M.L., February 4, 1892-December 16, 1896, Vol. 11, Nos. 51-52.

in establishing settlements in the expropriated region. In return, she agreed to cooperate with France in recapturing and repatriating inhabitants of the lost territory who had fled from French jurisdiction.[25]

Three years after the treaty, France began to build military outposts along its northern frontier with Liberia. In 1897, a French colonial official, Mr. Hostains, explored the southeastern sections of the country. Two years later, he and Captain d'Ollone undertook a more extensive expedition from the Ivory Coast through the interior of Maryland and Sinoe Counties in Liberia to the Cavalla and St. Paul Rivers' basins and the Nimba Mountains.[26] Although similar ventures were later carried out in the same region by other Frenchmen between 1901 and 1904, none was more significant than the Hostains-d'Ollone explorations which resulted in a French claim to two thousand square miles of territory that the Liberians believed to be theirs.[27]

The continuing French explorations and subsequent encroachment upon the republic caused much concern in Monrovia. In 1903 Liberia therefore asked France for a

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[25]Convention Between the Government of France and the Republic of Liberia, December 8, 1892, F.R.U.S., 1893, p. 298.

[26]Johnston, Liberia, pp. 306-308. Starr, Liberia, p. 115.

[27]Anderson, America's African Friend, pp. 90-91.

definite delimitation of their frontiers. Shortly afterwards, she asked the United States to provide an engineering officer to serve as surveyor and Liberian representative on the proposed Delimitation Commission, but Washington gave no favorable reply.[28]

Upon hearing about Liberia's request for a commission, the British offered to pay the republic's expenses for the project, provided France received no consideration in the delimitation that would give her an advantage in the hinterland.[29] However, shortly before the commission met, the British reneged on their promise. Instead of giving funds to Liberia, they provided a surveyor to work for the republic. Monrovia declined the offer and asked the United States for the necessary aid. Minister Lyon asked Washington to provide assistance as well as to send a representative with the proposed commission to investigate commercial conditions in the interior. The State Department rejected the suggestion.[30]

In 1904 Liberia sent Attorney General Johnson and Supreme Court Justice Dossen to Paris to join Consul von

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[28]Liberian Secretary of State Travis to Lyon, January 23, 1903, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14, No. 43, inclosure 1.

[29]Lyon to John Hay, December 8, 1903, D.U.S.M.L., January 17, 1901-December 29, 1903, Vol. 13, No. 24.

[30]Lyon to John Hay, December 8, 1903, D.U.S.M.L., January 17, 1901-December 29, 1903, Vol. 13, No. 24.

Stein in the delimitation talks. Unfortunately, the men did not get along well because as Johnson and Dossen put it,

> Baron von Stein, during our discussions on the said delimitations, openly agreed with the French Ministers and opposed us; on several occasions, anticipating the French and raising objections to our propositions before the reply of the French had been made. We are of the opinion that the Baron used his influence to render our efforts abortive and our mission a failure.[31]

Frustrated by such behavior, Johnson and Dossen returned to Monrovia and recommended von Stein's dismissal as consul. In reporting the mission's failure to Washington, American Minister George Ellis said that in addition to the internal dissension among the Liberian delegates, the negotiations were aborted "because the French Government desired to impose certain restrictions and conditions in delimiting the boundary to which Liberia felt she could not accede."[32]

Following the breakup of the negotiations, Mr. Barclay decided to occupy the disputed area by "establishing settlements and [military] outposts and exercising political control of all the territory conceded to the republic,"[33]

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[31]Liberian Commissioners to France to President Arthur Barclay, September 6, 1905, and Lyon to John Hay May 26, 1904, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14, Nos. 102 and 49, inclosure 1.

[32]American Chargé d'Affaires Ellis to Acting Secretary of State Alvey Adee, September 28, 1904, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14, No. 68.

[33]Message of the President of Liberia Communicated to the Second Session of the Twenty-ninth Legislature, Monrovia, December 15, 1904, p. 15, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14.

by the treaty of 1892. However, lack of manpower and funds induced him to return to the Paris conference.

In 1905, therefore, the president sent Dr. Blyden to resume talks at the French capital. He was instructed that if the French insisted on excluding Liberia from any territory understood by the treaty of 1892 to belong to the republic, he should "consult the American Ambassador in Paris and Lord Lansdowne in London as to the propriety of referring the matter to the private arbitration of the representatives of the United States and Great Britain."[34] After spending six months in Paris without any success, Blyden returned to Monrovia.

Following the failure of Blyden's mission, France intensified her activities in the Liberian hinterland. She also dispatched a warship on a "courtesy call" to Monrovia.[35] The effect of the visit was not lost on the authorities; for shortly thereafter, President Barclay travelled to Europe in order to settle the boundary problems with his British and French neighbors. When he arrived in Paris, the French, having learned that London had decided not to conclude frontier disputes with Liberia until the latter had completed delimitation talks with

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[34]Lyon to Secretary of State John Hay, April 25, 1905, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14, No. 102.

[35]Lyon to Alvey Adee, May 8, 1905, and Lyon to John Hay, June 21, 1905, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14, Nos. 109 and 112.

France, also refused to compromise with the Liberian leader. Instead of negotiating, they gave him a draft treaty to sign. The president protested and sought American assistance for submission of the matter to arbitration. American Minister Henry White "advised Mr. Barclay to accept the treaty, urging that, if he failed to do so, the French would make further encroachments, and the Republic would meet with greater losses."[36] Therefore, the president accepted the French demand and directed Secretary of State Johnson and the Liberian Charge d' Affaires in Paris, Mr. J. P. Crommelin, to meet with French representatives Gustave Binger and A. Soulange-Bodin and discuss the details of the accord. On September 18, 1907, the two sides officially signed the French draft and agreed to exchange ratifications before March 1, 1908. By the terms of the accord, Liberia lost most of her hinterland including the San Pedro and Cavalla Rivers basins[37] (see Figure 1).

Fiscal Difficulties: The British Loans of 1871 and 1906

The early years of Liberia's independence were a period of relative stability because of the high yields and demand for the coffee and sugar cane crops on which

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[36]Starr, Liberia, p. 116.

[37]Ambassador Henry White to Secretary of State, October 4, 1907, F.R.U.S., Part II, 1907, pp. 830-831.

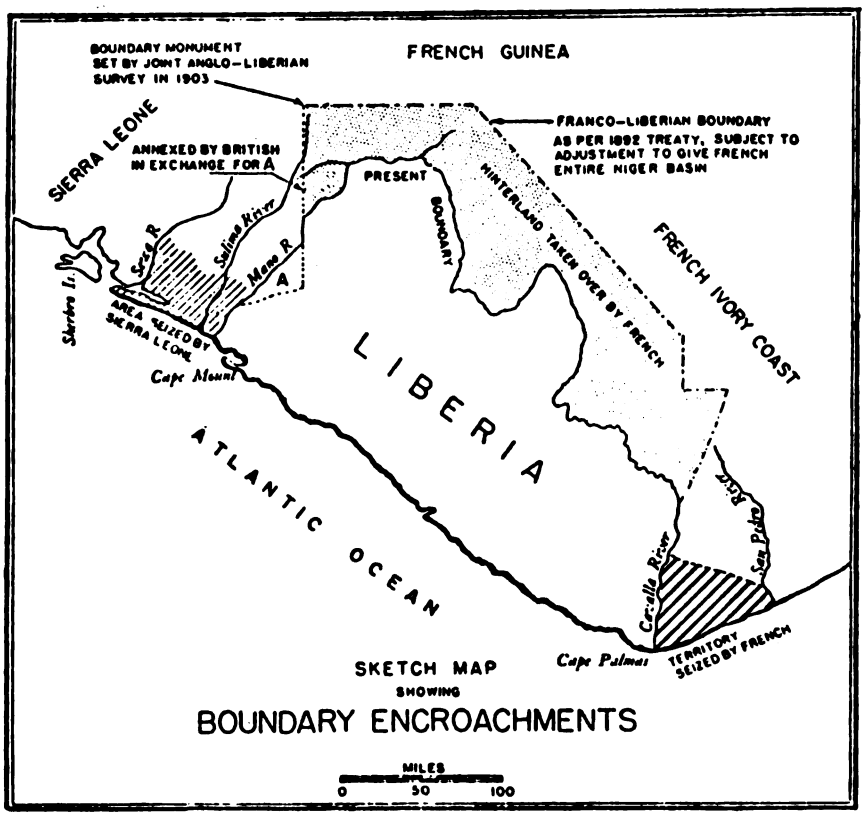

Fig. 1.--Map of Liberia Showing British and French Boundary Encroachments.

Source: Anderson, America's African Friend, p. 89.

the economy depended. In spite of the sporadic warfare between the settlers and the interior peoples, therefore, the country's economic future seemed bright. By the late 1860s, however, the situation began to change as the crops encountered stiff foreign competition. Cane cultivation practically came to a halt in 1865, after the West Indian market again became dominant. This demarche was followed by a sharp decline in the coffee industry, which was undercut by Brazilian traders in the early 1870s and 1880s. Most of the planters left their farms, moved into the towns, and took to politics. These difficulties were later aggravated by a similar problem in the 1890s, when the camwood trade declined in face of a growing synthetic dye industry. These economic disasters were compounded also by Liberia's policy of restricting foreign economic activities to the coastal region, and the lack of necessary capital to improve the facilities for the cultivation, collection, and transportation of crops to the market.[1]

The decline in the cash crop sector resulted in commercial decline and economic chaos. The authorities sought to remedy the crises by seeking new supplies and commodities from the hinterland. But, because such an undertaking required an improved infrastructure and new facilities for which the country lacked the necessary

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[1]Foreign Area Studies of the American University, Area Handbook for Liberia (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 19.

funds, the government resorted to foreign loans, the results of which were to prove disastrous.[2]

Shortly after Mr. Edward Roye became president, the legislature authorized him to negotiate a $500,000 loan at seven percent interest, secured by a lien upon the customs revenue. The loan, which was repayable over a period of fifteen years, was discounted by thirty percent below par, which meant that, of the $500,000 Liberia would receive only about $350,000. From this amount an advance payment for the first three years' interest was also deducted. To make matters worse, President Roye sent an order drawn by his son, Francis E. Roye, who was Secretary of the Treasury, and approved by himself, for at least $50,000 worth of merchandise supposedly for the government.[3] Mr. David Chinery, who forwarded the goods to Monrovia invoiced them at about $70,000, including shipping charges, insurance, freight, etc. In this manner,

> A good deal of the money seems to have disappeared with Roye, and a small sum which was being brought out by W. S. Anderson was further diminished before it reached the Liberian treasury owing to his flight to St. Paul de Loanda, from which place he refused to return to Liberia unless he was guaranteed against prosecution.[4]

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[2]American University, Area Handbook, p. 19.

[3]Johnston, Liberia, pp. 259-262. Starr, Liberia, pp. 199-200.

[4]Johnston, Liberia, p. 262.

Since most of the money did not reach the Liberian Treasury, many Liberians were inclined to repudiate the loan, but Mr. Roberts advised against such a move because "however censurable the wrong-doings by which we have been brought into this financial difficulty . . . we cannot indulge the thought of impairing the public credit."[5] More importantly, Mr. Roberts thought that a repudiation of the loan would place the national honor at stake; he therefore urged restraint in the matter.

Meanwhile, the government took legal actions against the principal negotiators of the loan. It discharged Mr. Chinery from his post as Consul General in London and replaced him by another Englishman, Mr. John Jackson. Then at the insistence of the republic, Mr. Jackson filed a suit against his predecessor, but nothing positive ever resulted from the proceedings. As for Commissioners Anderson and Johnson, the government also brought suit against them, but like the Chinery affair, their prosecution produced no results.[6]

In 1874 Monrovia declined to pay the interest charges on the loan. There followed a long period of negotiation between the English bondholders and the

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[5]"Annual Message of President Roberts," December 9, 1872, African Repository, XLIX, 6 (June 1873), 175.

[6]"Annual Message of President Roberts," December 15, 1873, African Repository, 50, 6 (June 1874), 168-71. Starr, Liberia, p. 201. Johnston, Liberia, pp. 263-264.

republic. Finally, in September 1898, the two sides reached an agreement by which Liberia agreed to pay from $350,000 to $400,000 at a progressive interest rate of three to five percent. Like the previous one, the new arrangement provided for the use of customs revenues, and the plan also established a six cents per pound duty on rubber exports, which the shippers were asked to give directly to the Liberian Consul General in London, who, in turn would give the money to the banks that provided the loan.[7]

From 1898 to the early 1900s Liberia paid her dues without default. Then, as the country's political difficulties with Great Britain and France increased, it became extremely difficult to fulfill the loan obligations. By 1904, the national debt amounted to about $800,000 of which some $48,000 represented payment for the loan of 1871. President Arthur Barclay, who as Secretary of the Treasury, had participated in the 1898 negotiations, now tried to remedy the financial woes by asking the legislature to limit the total general and local government's budgets to $107,000 per annum. But before the legislature could consider his suggestion, Sir Harry Johnston wrote a letter to the president offering to borrow, on behalf of

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[7]George W. Ellis, "Dynamic Factors in the Liberian Situation," The Journal of Race Development, 1, 3 (January 1911), 268. Starr, Liberia, p. 201. Johnston, Liberia, pp. 265-268.

Liberia, the sum of $500,000 from English bankers in order to help the country to pay its domestic and foreign debts, develop a banking system, build roads, and take care of the nation's other problems.[8] It was an attractive tender, which, if accepted, would have perhaps saved the country from the financial quagmire in which it was wallowing, but Liberia refused to subscribe to the plan, at least for the time being.

In 1905, in spite of the nation's financial needs and obligations, the Liberian Senate declined Sir Harry's offer, but it authorized the president to negotiate a $2,000,000 American loan. It would bear a five percent interest, run for sixty years, and be "secured in the general revenue of the state."[9] Since the president was in favor of the Johnston proposition, he reluctantly acquiesced to the senate request which was strongly supported by the public which expressed fears that acceptance of the British scheme might impair the country's independence.[10] Accordingly, the government proceeded with plans for the American loan.

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[8]Sir Harry Johnston to President Barclay, Subject: Proposition for the Investment of $500,000 by the Liberia Development Company, December 17, 1904, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14.

[9]Lyon to Hay, January 25, 1905, and Lyon to Hay, February 14, 1905, Ibid., Nos. 88 and 93, inclosure.

The Loan of 1906

Throughout 1905, the government tried, without success, to negotiate details of the loan with U.S. officials. By early 1906, it became apparent that the government would have to reconsider Johnston's offer. So, with reluctance and hesitancy that subsequent developments would more than justify, the legislature accepted the British loan with some amendments.[11]

According to this arrangement, Mr. Johnston's Company was the agent through which Liberia would receive the loan; for that reason, it was

> charged with the responsibility of returning the loan to (the lender) Messrs. Emil Erlanger and Company by the payment of 50 percent of the net profits derived from the exercise of powers and privileges of the charter of the former company, together with profits from the banking and road schemes to be undertaken in Liberia.[12]

Like the previous loan agreement, this one also had its conditions: it carried a six percent interest that was guaranteed by customs revenue, the collection of which "was to be supervised by two European customs inspectors and financial advisers recommended by the British Government."[13] In this connection, the British insisted that Mr. W. J. Lamont, an Englishman who was already working

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[11]Minister Lyon to Root, January 23, 1906, D.U.S.M.L., January 4, 1904-August 14, 1906, Vol. 14, No. 148.

[12]Ellis, "Dynamic Factors," 269.

[13]Buell, Native Problem, Vol. II, p. 799.

with the Liberian customs service, should not only become Chief Inspector of Customs and financial advisor to the republic, but also "have a seat in the Liberian cabinet with a veto power over the expenditures of the Govern ment."[14] Monrovia refused to accept the last suggestion, and the British did not press the issue further, partly because there was little argument about their control of the country's customs services.

By early 1908, however, the republic began to express dissatisfaction over the British administration of the customs service. Further friction developed when Sir Harry Johnston disclosed that the $163,884 road building fund allocated to his company had been exhausted after constructing fifteen miles of dirt road and purchasing two automobiles and one small launch for use on the St. Paul River. The expenditure of such a large sum for such meager results did not please President Barclay, who promptly asked Sir Harry thoroughly to account for the expenditure. The Englishman refused and the president therefore severed all governmental relations with his company. In explaining his action to the legislature in January 1908, Mr. Barclay claimed,

> I found that every expense of the company was being paid out of the $500,000 borrowed on behalf of the Republic, rents, directors' fees, officers' salaries,

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[14]Ellis, "Dynamic Factors," 271. Azikiwe, Liberia in World Politics, p. 114.

> travelling expenses, and also that the company was sending out prospectors and paying them out of this money.[15]

After the severance, a question arose "regarding the balance of the $350,000 which was entrusted without security to the management of the company."[16] To settle the matter, the government, the Liberian Development Company, and Messrs. Erlanger and Company modified the convention of 1906 and signed a new tripartite pact in 1908. By its terms, Liberia assumed direct responsibility to Messrs. Erlanger and Company for the loan of 1906, and secured from the Liberian Development Company the residue of the loan, amounting to $151,116.[17]

The assumption of responsibility for the loan perhaps underscored Mr. Emmett Scott's observation that "the Liberians have not produced men capable of keeping them out of ruinous financial entanglements."[18] One could hardly argue with this conclusion, since of the 1906 $500,000 loan, "about $200,000 was frittered away on badly managed schemes."[19] Similarly, of the previous $500,000 loan of 1871, the country "received only $350,000 of the principal

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[15]Emmett J. Scott, "The American Commissioners in Liberia," The Independent, 67, 3168 (August 19, 1909), 403.

[16]Ellis, "Dynamic Factors," 270.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Scott, "The American Commissioners," 291-92.

[19]Ibid.

sum in theory; but only $40,000 actually reached her; the bulk of the money went for salaries of British officials who profited by handling the loan."[20] In both cases, the great benefits which were boastfully announced and anticipated from the capital to be derived from the loans did not materialize; instead, partly as a result of the lack of experience on the part of Liberian officials who drew up the accords and also administered the funds, the country found itself fettered by onerous public debts, the acquisition of which deeply involved Great Britain in Liberian affairs and represented an arrogation of the power and right of a suzerain. Also, because of this involvement, the British demanded certain reforms which Liberia could only ignore at the risk of losing her independence. In order to prevent such a fate, the republic decided to ask the United States for assistance. The decision to seek immediate American intervention was a clear realization that the relentless disputes with the British and French neighbors constituted the gravest diplomatic problem facing the country since its independence. Therefore, the best solution to the crises had to be sought through diplomatic means. Accordingly, before the petition was made, Monrovia thought it necessary to make the appeal through Mr. Booker T. Washington because of his friendship with President Roosevelt and some other Washington officials. It was

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[20]Henries, The Liberian Nation, pp. 106-107.

hoped that such contact with the black leader would facilitate as well as expedite a positive American response to the proposed request. And, as it turned out, there could have been no better diplomatic move!

CHAPTER III

LIBERIA APPEALS TO THE UNITED STATES

As we have seen in the preceding chapters, by 1908, Liberia's boundary problems with Great Britain and France were far from being resolved.

> Liberians felt in the spring of 1908 that France was absorbing their territory and Great Britain their Government. The treaty of 1907 with France had been received with dismay. Great Britain had in 1908 indicated to Liberia that unless she put her house in order, introduced an effective frontier police, reformed her finances and her courts, and thus establish a Government which could cope with modern problems, Liberia was likely to disappear as an independent nation, and had vaguely hinted that Great Britain might be the agency through which such a disappearance might be expected to take place.[1]

We have also observed how such a threat induced Liberia to increase the number of British subjects serving in the customs service or internal finances. Indeed, the situation had become so precarious that the republic could no longer delay seeking immediate United States intervention to forestall the continuing British insinuation into her various branches of the administration and the French expropriation of her hinterland. Without American

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[1]Falkner, "The United States and Liberia," 543.

intervention, the country's despoilment would continue unabated.

The Liberian Commission of 1908

In view of the unsettled and desperate financial and political conditions of the republic, the legislature, as suggested by Mr. T. McCants Stewart in January 1908, appointed a commission consisting of former President G. W. Gibson, Vice-President J. J. Dossen, and Counsellor C. B. Dunbar to visit the United States in order to seek America's good offices.[2] The commissioners were instructed to negotiate the following matters:

(1) Arbitration treaties with the U.S. and other governments, particularly France and Great Britain;

(2) U.S. expatriates for service in Liberia;

(3) Subsidies by the Liberian and U.S. Governments for mail steamers;

(4) The preparation of reliable data about Liberia's climate, soil, and products;

(5) A railway concession in Liberia.[3]

On April 17, 1908, the commissioners left Liberia for the United States via Germany. They visited Berlin where they were officially received and festively entertained by the government. As future events proved, this

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[2]T. McCants Stewart to Emmet Scott, December 16, 1909, B.T.W.P., 1910, container #412 (S). Starr, Liberia, p. 221.

[3]John P. Mitchell, "America's Liberian Policy," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1955), pp. 97-98.

cordial reception was the auspicious beginning of what would be a successful mission. From the German capital, the delegation proceeded to America and arrived in New York City in mid-May.[4]

A few months before the commission's arrival in the U.S., Mr. Booker Washington began to attend to the details of the pending visit. In July and August 1907, Minister Lyon had written letters to him emphasizing Liberia's financial, political and boundary difficulties with Britain and France and urged Washington to use his influence with President Roosevelt and the State Department in order to save the republic from imperialism.[5]

In September 1907, shortly after the Franco-Liberian Treaty was concluded, Mr. Washington expressed to President Roosevelt his deep concern about the continuing French and British encroachments on Liberian territory. Fearful that Liberia was destined to lose more land, he asked Mr. Roosevelt to stop the plunder if he could. Six months later, when it was clear that the Liberian Government was sending a delegation to seek American aid, he again wrote the president saying that since it was the first visit of an all-black commission,

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[4]Lyon to Root, April 16, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 694; Starr, Liberia, p. 221.

[5]Lyon to Washington, July 15, 1907, B.T.W.P., container #7 (K-Ta); Lyon to Washington, August 10, 1907, Ibid.

he was most anxious that its members be treated with as much courtesy as the custom of the U.S. would permit, even if exceptions had to be made. He further advised Mr. Roosevelt that he was "planning in connection with others, to pay this commission a good deal of attention."[6]

When the Liberians arrived in New York, they were welcomed by Mr. Washington and the Liberian Consul General of Boston, Mr. Charles H. Adams. After spending a few days in the city, the commissioners went on to Washington, D.C., where they officially notified Secretary Root of their arrival in the American capital.[7] Before they began official parleys, Mr. Washington invited them to visit Tuskegee Institute. On May 24, he sent a telegram to his friend, Mr. Thomas J. Calloway, asking him to arrange the envoys' travel to Tuskegee that night.[8]

Upon arrival on the institute campus, the Liberians were joyfully welcomed by Mr. Washington and the Tuskegee community. During the three days spent on the campus, the commissioners fully explained the reasons for their mission, discussed tentative plans for the education of a selected number of Liberian youths at Tuskegee, and offered

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[6]Washington to Roosevelt, September 19, 1907 and March 21, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #7 (K-Ta).

[7]Liberian Commission to Secretary of State, May 22, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 694.

[8]Washington to Calloway, May 24, 1908, and Calloway to Washington (3 telegrams), May 25, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #368 (C).

their host the position of chargé d'affaires for Liberia. Concerning this offer, Mr. Washington commented that his guests,

> . . . seem to be anxious that I should consent to take the position that they have indicated . . . . The official designation I care nothing about . . . . The only element that appeals to me, in favor of accepting the position, is perhaps in the fact that I might speak with some authority in helping the republic.[9]

Before responding to the offer, he discussed the matter with President Roosevelt and Secretary Root. The latter advised against acceptance because such a diplomatic post would tend to detract from the weight of Washington's independent opinion and interest in Liberian affairs.[10] Washington therefore informed his guests that although he was determined to serve the republic, he preferred to act in an unofficial capacity. The commissioners regretfully accepted the refusal and concluded their visit with an inspection tour of the various trades' classrooms of the institute before returning to Washington, D.C.

While the envoys were visiting Tuskegee, President Roosevelt asked Washington to escort the Liberian diplomats to the White House on June 10.[11] When the men visited the

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[9]Washington to Root, June 10, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #41 (G-Mo).

[10]Root to Washington, June 19, 1908, Ibid.

[11]William Loeb, Jr., Secretary to President Roosevelt to Washington, May 28, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #7 (K-Ta).

president's residence, Roosevelt assured them of America's interest and cooperation in helping to safeguard Liberia's independence and progress. The next day, the commissioners interviewed Secretary Root, who was asked to "take the initiative toward inviting Great Britain to join with the United States in an arrangement that will give some definite shape to the deep interest she so generally expressed in the perpetuity of Liberia."[12] The officials also urged the secretary to use the March 1897 communications between U.S. Secretary of State John Sherman and British Ambassador Julian Pauncefote as the basis for any negotiations guaranteeing Liberia's territorial integrity and independence. The secretary agreeably instructed American Ambassador Whitelaw Reid to open discussions with British Minister Edward Grey on the subject.[13]

Mr. Reid officially asked Grey about how Washington and London could best cooperate in promoting Liberia's welfare.[14] The latter commented on the reforms which his government was already carrying out in the Liberian frontier force and in the reorganization of the country's customs service. Furthermore, through Mr. Reid, Grey

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[12]Root to Lyon, June 18, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 695, inclosure 1.

[13]Reid to Root, July 25, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 697.

[14]Reid to Grey, inclosure 1 in Reid to Root, July 25, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 698.

advised the United States to urge Liberia to cooperate with the British in the rehabilitation of its finances. He also mentioned that there was no room for collaboration in the areas in which the British Government was already aiding the republic; but, he indicated that if the United States really wanted to assist, it could do so by "introducing reforms into the judiciary, either by lending the services of an official to act as judicial advisor or in some other manner."[15] Clearly, such a statement indicated that Grey really wanted American acquiescence to London's plans to divide and control Liberia's various governmental departments.

Five days after the envoys' meeting with Root, Mr. Washington informed Roosevelt about the "very frank and valuable advice" which the secretary had given to the Liberians and expressed the hope that such friendly admonition would help Monrovia's cause. One way in which B. T. Washington planned to assist this cause was to launch a newspaper campaign on behalf of the republic. As he said to Mr. Dossen, "we are going to do all we can in this country to create a newspaper campaign that will set Liberia right . . . we will do our best to influence both

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[15]Grey to Reid, inclosure 2 in Reid to Root, July 25, 1908, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 698.

white and colored papers in Liberia's favor."[16] He further indicated that he already had gained the support of several newspapers, among them The New York Age, The Independent, and Outlook, the last then the most powerful weekly U.S. publication. The campaign was also waged in Liberia, where Mr. Washington tried to inform the public about American reactions to Liberia's plight and the visit of the envoys. He accomplished this publicity by sending articles or newspaper clippings to local editors for publication.[17]

The newspaper publicity was successful; it helped to obtain U.S. agreement to send a commission to investigate the Liberian situation, and it informed many Americans about Liberia's problems. Before commenting on this development, let us briefly examine what transpired between the commissioners and Mr. Washington prior to and shortly after the Liberians returned home.

Before the commissioners reached Monrovia, many of their countrymen had already heard about Mr. Washington's commendable work for their country. As a result, Vice President Dossen promised to take up the question of sending Liberian students to study at Tuskegee as soon as the

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[16]Washington to Roosevelt, June 16, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #7 (K-Ta); Washington to Dossen, July 7, 15, 31, 1909, Ibid., container #394 (D).

[17]Washington to Gray, June 15, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #371 (G).

legislature reconvened in October. He also expressed his government's gratitude and the hope that Monrovia would grant some mark of appreciation to Mr. Washington. Two weeks later, the Liberian Government conferred the "Order of African Redemption"[18] upon the American leader.

The Liberian Senate also passed a resolution thanking Mr. Washington for the innumerable services he had rendered the envoys and the republic. Indeed, Mr. Washington's invaluable and continual magnanimity in regard to Liberia made his name well-known in political circles. Perhaps Minister Lyon best evaluated the significance of Washington's association with Liberia when he told him affably, "you have now become diplomatically linked with the future of Liberia . . . . In London and Paris where Liberian matters are discussed . . . your name is mentioned as an important factor."[19] This was no understatement; even in Washington, D.C., the educator was the leading Black American from whom several administrations sought advice not only in dealing with the Liberian crisis, but also with race problems in the United States. One has only to read Roosevelt's letter to President-elect Taft concerning Mr. Washington to understand the high esteem in

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[18]Ellis to Washington, July 15, 1908 and Washington to Ellis, August 11, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #370 (E-F).

[19]Lyon to Washington, September 19, 1908 and Dossen to Washington, August 21, 1908, Ibid.

which the latter was held. Said Roosevelt, "There is not a better or truer friend of his race than Booker T. Washington; and yet he is so sane and reasonable that following his advice never gives cause for just criticism by the white people."[20]

When the commission returned to Liberia in August 1908, President Barclay tendered an official welcoming reception. On that occasion, the envoys made many remarks which clearly demonstrated the influence of Mr. Washington's educational philosophy on them. "In these addresses, more emphasis was laid upon the subject of Negro education in the United States than upon other matters."[21] After much music and refreshments, the president congratulated the honored guests and the crowd dispersed.

Three days thereafter, Dossen informed Mr. Washington that London had launched a propaganda campaign to subvert the commission's accomplishments in the United States. He reported that the British had told the Liberians that Mr. Washington and the U.S. Government had advised the commissioners to submit to Britain's demands as outlined in Consul Wallis' letter earlier in the year; otherwise, the request for American assistance would not be

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[20]Roosevelt to Taft, January 20, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #48 (T-W).

[21]Starr, Liberia, p. 222.

considered.[22] Mr. Dossen's insinuation was later reaffirmed by Minister Lyon, who told B. T. Washington that "the British interest in Liberia resented the going of the Liberian Commission to America,"[23] and that, since then, the British had engaged in groundless accusations and hostile propaganda.

Although Liberian authorities were apprehensive about London's tactics, Mr. Washington was not. However, he tried to allay their fears by inviting British Ambassador James Bryce to visit Tuskegee to discuss the Liberian situation. While at the institute, the envoy disclaimed any selfish designs on the part of his government towards the republic.[24] A few weeks later, Sir Harry Johnston expressed a similar disavowal when he met Washington and Secretaries Root and Bacon at the State Department. Following these encounters, Mr. Washington concluded that there was no reason for alarm since Mr. Bryce and Sir Harry seemed quite emphatic in their statements that the British were "friends of Liberia, and in the highest degree favorable to maintaining its independence as a

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[22]Dossen to Washington, August 21, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma; Liberia; Li-Lz).

[23]Lyon to Washington, January 12, 1909, Ibid.

[24]Washington to Bryce, October 20, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #365 (B).

nation."[25] But in spite of the Englishmen's categoric denial of their country's harboring any ill will toward the republic, the facts clearly demonstrated the contrary. In any case, Mr. Washington sent a letter which temporarily mollified Liberia's worry, while he turned to the question of a U.S. Commission to that country.

The American Commission of 1909

Shortly after the Liberian commissioners left the United States, the American government began to consider an act of reciprocity. It considered a proposal advanced by the former U.S. Consul in the Belgian Congo, Mr. Henry F. Downing, for sending a commission to study and report on Liberia's natural resources and to determine the country's suitability as a home for American Negro emigrants.[1] As early as 1895, he had tried to gain President Grover Cleveland's interest in introducing U.S. capital and business into the country. In 1905 he sought an interview with Mr. Cleveland on the subject, but the latter declined because he was "extremely busy" making plans for his summer vacation.[2]

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[25]Washington to Dossen, December 12, 1908 and Washington to Dossen, January 7, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #369 (D).

[1]Downing to Roosevelt, August 10, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #6 (C-D).

[2]Cleveland to Downing, June 24, 1905, Ibid.

Mr. Downing did not make these suggestions because he loved Liberians; if anything, he acted because he was disgusted with the way in which affairs were being run in the republic. He also despised the Liberian leaders and communicated his disdain to President Roosevelt. He wanted to inject new administrative and financial skills into the country with the hope of encouraging Black American emigration.

Having failed to elicit a quick response from President Roosevelt, Downing appealed to Mr. Washington to help convince the president to send a commission, which he hoped would consist of "botanical and other experts . . . who would study and report on the country's natural resources." The reprehensible part of this request was his accusation that the Liberian envoys (whom Washington had admired greatly) were "corrupt, venal, and otherwise deserving of censure . . . . Mr. Washington, had you been enlightened, your attitude towards the Liberian commissioners would have been not exactly as approving as it was."[3] In spite of these derogatory remarks, B. T. Washington neither relented in his efforts on behalf of Liberia nor did he waver in his support for the U.S. Commission.

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[3]Downing to Washington, August 20, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #6 (A-J; C-D).

Six weeks after Mr. Downing's plea, Washington indicated that his association with the republic was mainly designed "to see Liberia stand for all time on its own feet without being under obligation to any other nation, and whatever I do will be with that in view."[4] In this regard, he attached primary importance to the establishment of a sound industrial education in Liberia; as he saw it, the mere fact that Liberians were politically independent meant nothing "except as they can make themselves of service in the development of the natural resources of the country."[5] But there was also a racial consideration to the Liberian question which prompted Mr. Washington to help the country. Earlier in a welcome address for the Liberian envoys, delivered before the Washington, D.C. Negro Business League, he underscored this aspect of the republic's struggle for existence:

> I am glad to be with you tonight, and help welcome these estimable and lovable men from Africa. They are here in Washington on an official visit, not merely as envoys of their land, but as representatives of the entire Negro race. To a vast degree we are deeply interested in affairs affecting them, as they must necessarily be interested in our welfare and advancement . . . to a large degree their success and their failure is our failure. If their country succeeds, so much in that degree does the

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[4]Washington to Dossen, October 1, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma; Li-Lz).

[5]Washington to Root, June 10, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #41 (G-Mo).

> race succeed. And if their country fails, so much in that degree does the race fail.[6]

In late November 1908, Mr. Washington received word from President-elect Mr. William H. Taft, saying that he would like to consult with him "fully and freely on all racial matters during his administration."[7] Since the Liberian affair was viewed by many Black Americans partly as a racial issue, Washington wasted no time in arranging for a special conference with Mr. Taft about the Liberian situation.[8]

During the meeting, the two men discussed the possibility of sending a commission to Liberia. Two days later Washington wrote to Root urging him to seek congressional support for such a commission. The secretary responded by requesting that Washington come to the capital to discuss the proposed commission in more detail. Meanwhile, he asked Mr. Washington to talk to some of his New York friends and added, "I think now is the time . . . for

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[6] Liberian Bulletin (Monrovia, November 1908), pp. 64-65, cited in Lenwood G. Davis, "Black American Images of Liberia, 1877-1914" (paper presented at the Sixth Annual Liberian Studies Conference held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, April 26-27, 1974), pp. 18-19.

[7] Washington to Taft, November 30, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #6 (C-D; A-J).

[8] Washington to Dossen, December 12, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #369 (D; Do-Dz).

you to direct attention to the question of the personnel of the commission."[9]

Following the meeting which took place in late December 1908, Secretary Root informed President Roosevelt that a commission was justified because "Liberia is an American colony" and therefore entitled to U.S. assistance. He underscored America's obligation by citing several instances in which former U.S. Secretaries of State had provided aid and declared American interest in the independence of the republic. He also pointed out that because

> it has been difficult to determine the precise things which the Government of the United States had better do by way of giving assistance . . . we ought to send to Liberia a commission of three experienced and judicious Americans to examine the situation there and confer with the officers of the Liberian government and with the representatives of other governments actually present in Monrovia, with a view to reporting recommendations as to the specific action on the part of the Government of the United States which will constitute the most effective measures of relief.[10]

He also requested the president to ask Congress for an appropriation of $20,000 expenses for the commission, and suggested that should Congress reply favorably, the navy should be asked to provide suitable transport to and from Liberia. As Mr. Roosevelt was considerably interested in the matter, he did not procrastinate. The day after the

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[9]Root to Washington, December 16, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #369 (D; Do-Dz).

[10]Root to Roosevelt, January 18, 1909, F.R.U.S., 1910, p. 701.

secretary's letter, he wrote to Congress requesting that it quickly approve the Secretary of State's recommendation.[11]

While this arrangement was being made, Mr. Washington, as usual, kept in contact with developments in Liberia through correspondence with Mr. Dossen, President Barclay, and Mr. Lyon, the American Minister. Through them, he learned of the rumors about the American Government's plan to replace Lyon with a white representative. Most Liberian authorities thought that race would preclude working with a white minister; besides, everyone feared that the appointment of a white man would worsen the country's delicate international position because he might sympathize with Liberia's European enemies.[12]

The rumors of Lyon's recall alarmed Monrovia. The authorities did not dismiss them lightly. Vice President Dossen, President Barclay, and Mr. Edgar Allen Forbes, a staff writer for The World's Work of Doubleday Company, wrote letters to Mr. Washington expressing general disapproval of any ministerial change and of the appointment

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[11]"Conditions in Liberia: President Roosevelt to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives," January 19, 1909, U.S. Senate Document, 60 Cong., 2nd Sess., 21, 666 (December 7, 1908-March 4, 1909).

[12]G. W. Ellis, Secretary to the American Legation in Liberia, to Washington, January 8, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma).

of a white minister in particular.[13] Mr. Washington responded to President Barclay stating that he was definitely opposed to a white appointment and that he had spoken very strongly about it whenever the issue had been mentioned in his presence.[14] Meanwhile, he turned to the question of the personnel composition of the U.S. Commission.

One of the first friends he contacted on this matter was General Leonard Wood, whom he asked to help find suitable persons who were interested in helping blacks.[15] The general responded by sending a list of four people, some of whom had worked for the U.S. Government in Cuba and in the Phillippines.[16] Other friends were contacted and recommended to President Taft,[17] but after many changes, some of which involved some well-known individuals who had served in important U.S. civil or military capacities in the Caribbean and Far East, the State Department

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[13]President Barclay to Washington, December 30, 1908; Dossen to Washington, December 31, 1908; and Forbes to Washington, January 17, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma).

[14]Washington to Barclay, February 3, 1909, Ibid.

[15]Washington to Wood, January 5, 1909, Ibid.

[16]Wood to Washington, January 15, 1909, Ibid.

[17]Washington to Taft, March 12, 1909, and Taft to Washington, March 16, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #48 (T-W).

finally decided on Dr. Roland P. Falkner of the U.S. Immigration Commission, chairman; Dr. George Sale, superintendent of schools of the American Baptist Home Mission Society; and Mr. Emmett J. Scott, personal secretary and assistant to Booker T. Washington.[18] Accompanying the three commissioners were Mr. George A. Finch, of the State Department, as secretary; Major Percy M. Ashburn, of the U.S. Medical Corps, as medical attaché; Captain Sydney A. Cloman of the American Embassy in London, as military attaché; and Mr. Frank A. Flower, as civilian aide.

Earlier, Mr. Washington had expressed willingness to participate on the commission, but President Taft refused to let him leave the country because, having recently begun his administration, he needed the black leader's advice on many racial questions.[19] As a result, Washington suggested that his personal secretary and assistant, Mr. Emmett J. Scott, go in his stead. In his recommendation, Washington told the president:

> My only object in suggesting Mr. Scott is that he clearly understands my own views and could more nearly do what I myself would do if I were to go than any other colored man I know, besides, as I told you when I saw you, he knows how to do things--to get results.[20]

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[18]Scott, "The American Commissioners," 403.

[19]Washington to Scott, May 13, 1909, B.T.W.P., 1909, container #398 (S).

[20]Washington to Taft, March 12, 1909, B.T.W.P., 1909, container #48 (T-W).

As would be expected, Taft accepted Mr. Washington's nomination and directed Secretary of State Philander C. Knox to appoint Mr. Scott to the commission.[21] Thus, Mr. Scott came to be the third and only black member of the commission. With the appointment of the delegation, Congress provided the suggested $20,000 expense fund and empowered the commission "to investigate the interests of the United States and its citizens in the Republic of Liberia, with the consent of the authorities of said republic."[22]

Although Mr. Washington was not designated as a commissioner, he received a memorandum from Liberia outlining the ways in which his assistance was desired. He was asked to:

(1) Urge the Secretary of the Navy to permit warships to make annual visits to Monrovia;

(2) Discuss Liberian matters with the Secretary of State in reference to existing American aid and its continuance during the Taft Administration;

(3) Revive the Organization of Friends for Africa as outlined by Tuskegee Institute. Special attention was to be given to the maintenance of Liberian sovereignty as a symbol of the Negro's ability to govern himself;

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[21]Taft to Washington, March 16, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #48 (T-W).

[22]Report of the American Commission of 1909, "Affairs in Liberia," U.S. Senate Document, 61st Cong., 2nd Sess., 60, 457 (March 25, 1910), p. 2. Hereafter cited as "Affairs in Liberia," U.S. Senate Document, 60, 457 (March 25, 1910).

(4) Secure an agricultural expert under Tuskegee Institute's supervision;

(5) Request Mr. Andrew Carnegie to help establish a library in Monrovia;

(6) Secure an educational expert interested in the education of the hand as well as the heart and head;

(7) Educate the sons of two hinterland chiefs at Tuskegee Institute.[23]

By the time the U.S. Commission was appointed, however, Mr. Washington had already attended to some of these requests. As to the question of the Taft Administration's continuance of the policy of assisting Liberia, Mr. Washington told Mr. Dossen that the new president had agreed to carry out the same program which Secretary Root and President Roosevelt had inaugurated in regard to Liberia.[24] From his vantage point, Mr. Washington also outlined the proposed U.S. Commission's work as:

(1) demonstrating to the world that the U.S. has not lost interest in Liberia and that she was determined to reawaken and strengthen her former interest and connection;

(2) serving to suggest improvements and reforms in the Government of Liberia;

(3) helping to strengthen the educational work in Liberia.[25]

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[23]Memorandum: Ways in Which Liberia May be Helped By You, November 16, 1908(?), B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma; Liberia).

[24]Washington to Dossen, February 1, 1909, Ibid.

[25]Washington to Dossen, January 7, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #369 (D).

Again, he indicated that, while he regretted not being able to go to Liberia, he was hopeful that the commission would succeed in its work.[26]

On April 13, 1909, Secretary of State Knox wrote commissioners Sale, Falkner and Scott, instructing them that, on arrival in Liberia, their specific task was to investigate and make recommendations regarding the following subjects;

(1) Liberia's boundary disputes with Great Britain and France;

(2) the organization of the frontier force;

(3) United States Government assistance in the reorganization of the fiscal affairs in order to place Liberia upon a firm and stable financial basis;

(4) United States aid for improving the postal, judicial, educational, and agricultural departments of the Liberian Government;

(5) the colonization of Liberia by Afro-American immigrants.[27]

In addition to these instructions, the secretary told the envoys that they were free to exert their good offices in bringing about a pacific settlement of the differences between Liberia and her European neighbors, provided it did not involve the U.S. Government as an executory or contracting party.

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[26]Washington to Dossen, March 12, 1909, and Washington to Dossen, April 3, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma; Li-Lz).

[27]Knox to the Commissioners of Liberia, April 13, 1909, F.R.U.S., 1910, pp. 705-707.

On April 24, 1909, the commission departed from New York on three cruisers (partly as a show of force to the European powers) and arrived on May 8 in Monrovia, where it was received with great jubilation by the Liberian government and people. On May 11, President Barclay tendered an official reception for the visiting dignitaries, at which the cabinet, Minister Lyon, and his secretary were present. The following afternoon, the president gave a general reception at the Executive Mansion. Meanwhile, following instructions, the ships anchored off Monrovia where, for health reasons, they served as housing and headquarters for the commission.[28]

Upon arrival in Monrovia, the commissioners began their investigations by interviewing the president and vice president of the republic, cabinet members, and supreme court justices. They also consulted leading officials, and foreign and local business representatives.[29]

The Liberian Government presented a formal statement of suggestions to the commission, including the following propositions:

> (1) That the government of the United States guarantee as far as practicable the independence and integrity of Liberia, either alone or in conjunction with European powers;

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[28]Scott, "The American Commissioners," 404-05; Starr, Liberia, pp. 223-224.

[29]Scott, "The American Commissioners," 406.

(2) That Washington advise and counsel Monrovia on international affairs and with respect to reforms;

(3) That the United States liquidate the foreign and local indebtedness of the republic, taking over the control of its finance and customs administrations long enough to effect a reorganization and systematization, while allowing the republic a sufficient sum to pay for governmental administration, internal improvements, and repayment of the debt to Washington;

(4) That the United States Government furnish the republic with expatriates to facilitate and carry out the necessary reforms;

(5) That Washington use its good offices to induce American capitalists to establish a central bank in Liberia to receive the revenues of the republic, to make advances to the government, construct and run railways, and to invest in other projects;

(6) That the State Department negotiate an Arbitration Treaty with Liberia, and use its good offices with interested European Powers to enter into similar engagements with the republic;

(7) That the American government secure the equitable execution of the boundary arrangements entered into between Liberia and Great Britain and France, especially to assist Monrovia to secure possession of the Kailahun and other sections in the north of Liberia now occupied by Great Britain which, by the Anglo-Liberian Boundary Commission, were acknowledged to belong to the republic, and to help obtain the hinterland recognized as Liberian by the conventions concluded between Monrovia and Paris but which had been materially altered to the detriment of Liberia by the Delimitation Commission of 1908-1909;

(8) That Washington undertake a scientific survey of the country to ascertain its resources and to interest American capitalists in investments; and also to aid the Government of Liberia in the establishment of a school for scientific medical research, with particular reference to the study of tropical diseases;

(9) That the Government of Liberia be assisted in establishing industrial schools in one or more of its counties to promote knowledge of trades and

industries, as well as to render the republic self-reliant;

(10) That America aid in establishing developed centers on the frontiers and hinterland in order to accelerate the uplifting and improvement of the natives and to perpetuate the values of the American founders of Liberia;

(11) That the U.S. supervise the organization of a frontier force under American officers;

(12) That the Department of the Navy send warships to visit Liberia annually, or oftener;

(13) That American shippers establish a regular sail or steam service to Liberia;

(14) That the U.S. should construct coaling stations or any other enterprises which it may deem necessary, without subverting existing treaty stipulations with other foreign powers.[30]

After studying the document, the commission received it, and because of the short time at its disposal, divided into two groups in order to accomplish their utmost. Some members chartered a boat and stopped at the agricultural towns along the St. Paul River; others visited a few interior districts and villages and coastal settlements.[31]

Following their brief but extensive excursions along the coast and into the hinterland regions, the parties reassembled in Monrovia and held final discussions with the authorities. The commission concluded its

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[30]Suggestions Submitted to the American Commission by the Government of Liberia, B.T.W.P., container #394 (Liberia; D).

[31]Scott, "The American Commissioners," 406.

investigations by making a short visit to Freetown, in order to observe developments there, before leaving for the United States in mid-June.[32] While in Sierra Leone, the Americans noted that the British had made great improvements in the areas of administration, finance, education, and health.

A few months after they returned, the commissioners reported to the Secretary of State. The report categorized Liberia's internal and external problems under four major headings:

(1) The maintenance of the integrity of Liberia's frontiers in the face of attempted aggression by her neighbors against whose might she could oppose only the justice of her claims;

(2) The effective control of the native tribes, especially along the frontiers, so as to leave no excuse for the occupation of her territory by her neighbors;

(3) The systematization of national finances to meet all foreign obligations and to place the national credit on a firm basis;

(4) The development of the hinterland to increase the volume of trade and thus supply the resources necessary for the increasing wants of a progressive government and at the same time enable the government to offer inducements to desirable emigration from the United States.[33]

Regarding Liberia's relations with Great Britain, the commissioners observed that

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[32] Ibid., 407.

[33] "Affairs in Liberia," U.S. Senate Document, 60, 457 (March 25, 1910), p. 14.

> The British foreign office has protested that Great Britain has no designs on Liberian territory. We find it hard to reconcile this protestation with the acts and attitude of her officials in Sierra Leone and Liberia.[34]

As for France, the commission noted that in spite of her territorial acquisitions by the treaties of 1892 and 1907, she was "preparing new aggressions upon Liberian territory."[35] This menace and the threat of British intimidation convinced the commission that unless the republic received stong support, she would disappear as an independent state. Because of the circumstances under which Liberia was founded, the United States was the logical power to render assistance. However, a review of her relations with Liberia indicated, that "beyond a series of notable [U.S.] expressions of good will and friendship . . . positive results [for Liberia] have been painfully meager."[36]

Having made these observations, the commissioners recommended the following course of action as the most effective measures of relief:

> (1) That the United States extend its aid to Liberia in the prompt settlement of pending boundary disputes;
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> (2) That the United States enable Liberia to refinance its debt by assuming, as a guarantee for the

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[34] Ibid., p. 16.

[35] Ibid., p. 15.

[36] Ibid., p. 31.

payment of obligations under such arrangements, the control and collection of Liberian customs;

(3) That the United States lend its assistance to the reform of Liberia's internal finances;

(4) That the United States provide aid to Liberia in organizing and drilling an adequate constabulary or frontier force;

(5) That the United States should establish and maintain a research station in Liberia;

(6) That the United States reopen the question of establishing a naval coaling station in Liberia.[37]

Upon receiving the report, Secretary of State Knox forwarded it with an accompanying letter to President Taft saying that, after perusal, he thought that positive action on the recommendations was not only expedient but also a duty incumbent upon the United States because of the conditions under which Liberia had been established.[38] Concurring in the views of the secretary, the president accepted and transmitted the report to Congress, asking that body to help "fulfill our national duty to the Liberian people."[39]

For a while after the president's message to Congress, nothing definite was done to implement any of the recommendations. Mr. Washington became concerned

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[37]"Affairs in Liberia," U.S. Senate Document, 60, 457 (March 25, 1910), pp. 31-37.

[38]Report of the Secretary of State to the President Concerning Affairs in Liberia, March 22, 1910, Ibid., pp. 2-12.

[39]President Taft to the Senate and House of Representatives, March 25, 1910, Ibid., p. 1.

about the delay and urged the president at least to settle the financial and boundary problems as soon as possible.[40] Thereafter, the Taft Administration initiated a series of talks with some members of Congress. In the end, "only two of the recommendations were actually implemented," and these were the international loan of 1912 and the sending of three black Army officers, one major and two captains, to organize and train the Liberian frontier force.[41] Although Mr. Washington did not play much part in the selection of the officers who went to Liberia, he had a significant role in the acquisition of the loan; for this reason, it is necessary briefly to explain his activities in the matter.

In 1908, when the Liberian Commissioners were in the United States, Mr. Dossen had asked Washington to put him and the other envoys in touch with Messrs. Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller because they wanted to investigate financial matters. It is not known whether the diplomats ever met the bankers, but judging from the fact that Morgan and Company later contributed part of the money which was advanced as the international loan of 1912, it seems probable that Mr. Washington made some arrangements for his Liberian friends to see

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[40]Scott to Lyon, April 10, 1910, B.T.W.P., container #908 (K-L).

[41]Mitchell, "America's Liberian Policy," p. 104.

the American businessmen.[42] In addition to this assistance, while Congress was considering the commission's findings, Washington also began to search for American bankers who would agree to discharge the republic's domestic and foreign debts. His aim was "to try to get rid of the foreigners who are hampering the country's development by placing the debts elsewhere."[43] In order to realize this objective, he continued his talks with members of the Taft Administration as well as with financiers he thought were most likely to assist.

Following Washington's contacts, the administration initiated a series of negotiations with the British, French, and German governments that once more focused attention on the Liberian financial situation. Secretary Knox sought and received London's support for any U.S. scheme for regulating the republic's finances, provided such reform was not prejudicial to existing British interests.[44] Subsequently, the secretary notified Monrovia that his government had agreed to assist Liberia in matters of finance, boundary settlement, military reorganization, and agriculture. He also said that financial aid would be

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[42]Dossen to Washington, June 19, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #369 (D; Do-Dz).

[43]Washington to Seligman, September 5, 1909, and Washington to Bishop Scott, September 15, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #394 (Liberia).

[44]British Embassy to the Department of State, June 9, 1910, F.R.U.S., 1910, pp. 708-709.

given in the form of an international loan negotiated by American bankers, with French, British, and German nationals serving as associates. The loan would be sufficient enough to liquidate the country's indebtedness, and it would be guaranteed by the customs revenues, the collection of which would be administered by an American general-receiver, assisted by representatives of the European associates.[45]

In June 1910, Secretary Knox asked Liberia to appoint someone who would negotiate with the bankers on its behalf. For the position, he suggested Dr. Roland Falkner, formerly chairman of the American Commission to Liberia. Monrovia accepted the suggestion and commissioned Mr. Falkner as its special agent to negotiate the loan agreement with the participating American and European banking firms.[46] Mr. Falkner's appointment expedited the discussions, and a loan of $1,700,000 was given to the republic to refinance its debts.

By the terms of the agreement, the loan was granted at five per cent interest. The United States, which was to provide the general-receiver, appointed Mr. Reed Clark to the post, while Britain, France, and Germany were

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[45]Knox to Lyon, June 11, 1910, F.R.U.S., 1910, pp. 709-710.

[46]Knox to Lyon, June 18, 1910; American Minister to Secretary of State, June 21, 1910, and Secretary of State to American Minister, June 23, 1910, Ibid.

represented by Messrs. Richard Sharpe, Emile Wolf, and Gustav Lange respectively. On November 26, 1912, Mr. Clark, "in behalf of the Customs Receivership assumed official control and possession of the Liberian Customs Service."[47] For a short time the multiple receivership worked well. Soon, however, there were constant disagreements and problems with Liberian authorities as the latter began to view some activities of the receivership as encroachments on the nation's sovereignty. The situation was aggravated by internal rebellions against the government and by the outbreak of World War I, which greatly disrupted the country's economy and foreign trade.[48] By the end of the war, conditions had so deteriorated that the United States informed France and Britain (Germany having been expelled from the receivership during the war), that it intended to monopolize the receivership to facilitate the introduction of reforms in some other departments of the Liberian Government. It added that the loan plan not only had proved expensive and cumbersome, but that the control system also had failed.[49]

The failure of the loan and the dissolution of the receivership prompted Liberia to ask the United States for

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[47]Bundy to Secretary of State, November 29, 1912, F.R.U.S., 1912, p. 692, inclosures 3 and 4.

[48]Raymond L. Buell, Liberia: A Century of Survival, 1847-1947 (New York, 1969), pp. 25-27.

[49]Ibid.

a new $5,000,000 loan to refund the one of 1912. The failure of the 1912 loan scheme demonstrated the difficulties which constantly plagued the country's development. More important, it marked another fiasco in Mr. Booker T. Washington's struggle to help improve the country's economic, and consequently, political stability. But, as in the case of the abortive program for training Liberian students at Tuskegee Institute, the inefficacy of the loan did not deter Mr. Washington from continuing his efforts on behalf of the republic. However, the setback caused him to deal with Liberian developments more circumspectly than before. In fact, up to the time of his death in 1915, the black leader did not undertake any other Liberian project which was as significant as the loan arrangement. Indeed, even after Washington's death, his successor, Dr. Robert Moton, continued a similar cautious policy and did not embark on or participate in a major program for the republic until the late twenties when Tuskegee joined the Phelps Stokes Fund in constructing the country's first agricultural and industrial institute at Kakata. Thereafter, the institute's interest in Liberian affairs was rekindled gradually and culminated in the establishment of the rural teacher training institutes in the sixties.

CHAPTER IV

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON AND TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE IN LIBERIAN EDUCATION

Liberian Students at Tuskegee Institute

Before considering Mr. Washington and Tuskegee Institute's involvement in Liberian education, it is appropriate to make a brief comment on the nature and development of the country's educational system prior to the negro educator's participation. There are few works written about that period which extended from the 1800s to the early 1900s; the best and most recent account is by Mary A. Brown[1] which succinctly discusses the country's educational process during its first century of existence. Until the 1950s, Brown points out that education was mainly carried on by some American missionary groups whose major aim was to Christianize and "civilize," or, more appropriately at times, substitute Western culture for the African's "superstitious and heathen" beliefs, customs, and practices.

The schools which these missionaries established rarely taught subjects other than reading, writing,

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[1]Mary A. G. Brown, "Education and National Development in Liberian, 1800-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1967).

arithmetic, and those classical courses which were necessary for Christian teachings. The few religious schools generally were placed among the coastal settlements of the immigrants. Thus, only a small number of children received any Western type education. Since there were no technical schools, no attempts were made to educate pupils for economic self-sufficiency. This lack of economic training was equally matched by the absence of effective educational programs in civic and political responsibilities. The vast majority of the children in the interior continued to be trained in their traditional ways.[2]

The failure of the existing schools to meet economic and political exigencies led the government to seek outside aid in dealing with the problem. After considering several alternative solutions, the authorities decided to establish a good industrial school in the republic and to train a few bright students abroad, preferably in the United States. Unfortunately, the government could not implement the plan for building the school because it did not have the necessary funds. In the case of sending the students to America, however, it was decided to appeal to Mr. Booker T. Washington, whose philosophy of agricultural-industrial education as practiced at Tuskegee Institute had by now gained great renown as perhaps the best form of

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[2]George W. Brown, The Economic History of Liberia (Washington, D.C., 1941), pp. 51-55.

education for the Negroes. Accordingly, when the Liberian commissioners visited Tuskegee in June 1908, they asked the American educator to help educate some students at the institute. Shortly thereafter, Washington discussed the Liberian request with a wealthy lady friend, Miss Olivia Phelps Stokes, who thereupon gave Washington a check for $500, of which one-half was to be used for "any Liberian student who is fitted mentally and morally to take a course at Phelps Hall [Tuskegee] or to help [some] deserving Liberian student."[3] Pleased with such a response, Washington quickly began to make arrangements for the Liberian students.

Washington also discussed Liberia's educational needs with Secretary Root, whom he told that political independence meant nothing if the republic could not develop her natural resources. For that reason, he was interested in "training some of Liberia's brightest men at Tuskegee so that they could get hold of our ideas and methods of work, with a view of returning to Liberia and putting them into practice."[4] In addition, he also stated his desire to send some strong Tuskegee graduates to Liberia to help teach people the value of his philosophy of education. He thought that "the Liberians have made a

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[3]Olivia Stokes to Washington, August 16, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #47 (Mu-S).

[4]Washington to Root, June 10, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #41 (G-Mo).

mistake in their educational methods of laying emphasis upon classical or literary training to the exclusion of training in industrial and scientific branches."[5] He decided to help the people to reorient their educational system so that they could develop their own natural resources to secure permanent and reliable income and thus avoid dependence on foreign loans to run the government.

A few months after communicating with Root and Stokes, Washington wrote to Dossen outlining the conditions upon which he would accept Liberian students at the institute; tuition would amount to $175, but he indicated that he might be able to find someone who would help pay the fees for the Liberian students. The student had to be at least sixteen years old, strong, and healthy, and had to matriculate in the night school for the first year, spending two hours on his academic subjects at night and working at his trade during the day. His labor would be compensated with $102 per annum, thus leaving a balance of $73 for the fees. Finally, after the first year, the student would enter the day school and work three days a week on his academic subjects and another three days at his industrial trades.[6]

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[5]Washington to Thompson, February 14, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #896; Washington to Bishop Scott, March 15, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma; Liberia).

[6]Washington to Dossen, November 4, 1908, B.T.W.P., container #396 (D).

By the end of 1908, most of the essential plans for bringing the students to Tuskegee had been completed, and in early 1909, the first two boys arrived.[7] They made such a good record, both socially and academically, that Miss Stokes and Washington were very satisfied with their progress and enrolled two more boys. By the beginning of 1911, there were four Liberians studying at Tuskegee.[8]

As the number of students increased, they began to complain about financial problems and the lack of freedom to visit neighboring towns at will.[9] It seems, however, that the complaints were a manifestation of a culture-clash and of an increasing disinterest in the strict industrial nature of the Tuskegee program. By the middle of 1912, the boys were writing letters to their parents, to Bishop Scott, and Mr. Dossen complaining about alleged difficulties. Meanwhile, they would sometimes leave the campus without permission to visit adjacent towns, and Washington would have to search for them.[10] The situation disturbed the black educator, who asked Mr. Warren Logan,

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[7]Dossen to Washington, May 31, 1909, and June 29, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #394 (D).

[8]Olivia Stokes to Washington, March 13, 1911, and Washington to Olivia Stokes, April 10, 1911, B.T.W.P., container #55 (S-W).

[9]Charles Wardah to Washington, May 13, 1910, B.T.W.P., container #47 (Mu-S).

[10]Washington to Mr. G. W. A. Johnston, October 23, 1913, B.T.W.P., container #65 (L-Mo; Liberian Matters).

Treasurer of the Institute, to try to mediate the students' complaints. Washington told him that he was "very anxious that these boys might finish the course if possible."[11] Unfortunately, however, Mr. Logan's investigations did not settle the issues and the boys continued to be disciplinary problems. By the end of 1913, it was apparent that the experiment was failing, and some Liberian parents began to recall their sons home.[12]

This contretemps caused Mr. Washington to re-evaluate the training program, but he did not consider its non-success as a personal failure; he thought, and many others agreed with him, that he had done his best and would continue to do so. Two Liberian Bishops, Scott and Ferguson, who had been in constant contact with the boys, their parents, and Mr. Washington, did not hesitate to hold the students culpable for their own failure. In November 1913, Bishop Ferguson wrote to Mr. Washington saying:

> I regret that your efforts in behalf of the Liberian boys have been so unsuccessful. The fault, I know, is in them and not in the institution. A child can lead a horse to the water; but ten men cannot make him drink.[13]

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[11]Washington to Logan, August 3, 1912, B.T.W.P., container #47 (Mu-S).

[12]Washington to Nancy Duncan, October 23rd and 31st, 1913, B.T.W.P., container #65 (L-Mo; Liberian Matters).

[13]Bishop Ferguson to Washington, November 4, 1913, Ibid.

Bishop Scott also criticized the students, "I must say that the Americo-Liberian boys have about discouraged me and it seems to me we are accomplishing very little good by sending them."[14]

The bishops' letters induced Washington to consider another approach to educating the Liberian youths. Before embarking upon a new move, however, he informed Miss Stokes about the difficulties he was having with the students and the financial burden their education placed on Tuskegee Institute.[15] He suggested that perhaps it might be better to educate the boys in Liberia. But that, he indicated, would require a large amount of money. Miss Stokes replied that if Washington was interested in starting and running a school similar to Tuskegee in Liberia, she would agree to provide part of the funds for building and maintaining it.[16] With that assurance, Washington began to rehearse some earlier suggestions about establishing a school abroad.

One of the first such pleas had been made by Bishop Scott in June 1907; he wrote and told Mr. Washington that "the greatest need of Liberia is a first-class Industrial

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[14]Bishop Scott to Washington, December 31, 1913, Ibid.

[15]Washington to Olivia Stokes, March 2, 1911, B.T.W.P., container #55 (S-W).

[16]Olivia Stokes to Washington, February 7, 1911, Ibid.

School and a proper supply of books."[17] He urged the black leader to help facilitate the construction of such a school. About two weeks after the bishop's request, American Minister Lyon also wrote to Washington. He asked him to influence the American Colonization Society to use part of its funds to establish an industrial school to train Liberian youths in a manner similar to the work of Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes. He indicated that the country's future not only depended upon industrial-agricultural education, but that conditions were ripe for it because the nation's natural wealth would guarantee success.[18] Shortly thereafter, Washington again received another letter of request from Miss Olivia Stokes, who remained the most persistent of all in urging the black educator to undertake the Liberian project. Following the American Commissioners' return, and before the publication of their report, Stokes told Washington that, while she and her sister Caroline had previously given scholarships to some church schools in Liberia, she now felt that "a school similar to Tuskegee would be a great benefit there."[19] She therefore wanted to know whether Washington would agree to participate in such an enterprise. As

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[17]Bishop Scott to Washington, June 29, 1907, B.T.W.P., container #7 (K-Ta).

[18]Lyon to Washington, July 15, 1907, Ibid.

[19]Olivia Stokes to Washington, August 19, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #47 (Mu-S).

usual, the black leader was cautious about committing himself but promised to send a definite answer regarding the matter "within three or four days."[20]

After discussing the proposal with Bishop Scott and Minister Lyon, both of whom were on furlough from Liberia, Washington wrote Miss Stokes that,

> We feel that to start an industrial school at present might not be a successful thing, taking for the reason that they could not have a proper backing in the way of teachers, who understand the methods and policies to be pursued at an industrial school thoroughly enough to make it a success. In a word, we feel that the five students returned there from here thoroughly indoctrinated with the idea of industrial education would itself prove such a power that it would give the school an impetus which would make it go.[21]

Washington's apparent negative response did not deter Miss Stokes from making another plea. She sent a check for $1000.00 of which about $840.00 was earmarked for maintaining the Liberian students already at Tuskegee, and for bringing two additional ones. As usual, she re-emphasized the political significance of a Tuskegee-affiliated school in Liberia, "a bond of union between the colored people here and in the little state of Liberia."[22] Again Washington promised to discuss the matter with Bishop Scott and Minister Lyon, the latter of whom later

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[20]Washington to Olivia Stokes, October 22, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #47 (Mu-S).

[21]Washington to Olivia Stokes, October 27, 1909, Ibid.

[22]Olivia Stokes to Washington, November 16, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #51 (M-W).

told Washington that his "highest ambition was to so connect Tuskegee with Liberia as to render the bond indissoluble by time."[23] The Bishop agreed with Lyon and urged Washington not to relax his efforts to help Liberia. Afterwards, these friendly pressures or encouragements led the black educator to tell Miss Stokes,

> I very much like your suggestion of a Tuskegee in Liberia, a school to which we can have the same relations as Yale does to the college in China. I believe that through our influence and work at Tuskegee we could develop a school in Liberia that would prove most helpful to the civilization and Christianization of that part of Africa.[24]

Upon receiving this message, Miss Stokes wrote another letter thanking Washington for his willingness to give a "helping hand to Liberia" by establishing the school. She also suggested that once the institute was built, the property should be held by a committee of teachers and graduates and that the school should be self-supporting. While Washington was chary of committing himself and Tuskegee, because of the manpower and financial problems such an involvement might entail, he did not want to reject Miss Stokes' idea. Accordingly, he expressed his willingness to "cooperate as far as possible." He further recommended that a Tuskegeean, Mr. Cornelius B. Hosmer, should go to Liberia in order to purchase and survey the

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[23]Lyon to Washington, November 3, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #895 (K-Ma, Li-Lz).

[24]Washington to Olivia Stokes, December 3, 1909, B.T.W.P., container #51 (M-W).

school site, provided Miss Stokes paid the expenses, which he estimated at $660. The latter sent a check for $500 and asked that the remainder be provided by Tuskegee or other interested parties.[25]

It is not known whether Mr. Hosmer ever made the trip, but Washington began gathering ideas for building the school. He asked Mr. Scott to submit some suggestions for the plan, and thereafter consulted with U.S. Commissioners Sale, Falkner, and Scott, who suggested that he broaden his scope for seeking advice. He therefore appointed a Tuskegee Committee of six headed by Mr. Scott, to work out proposals for starting the school. The group recommended: (a) that Tuskegee should guarantee the continuance of the school when built; (b) that the school should be located near Monrovia, and in an agricultural region on the St. Paul River; (c) that its curricula should include mechanical trades, hygiene and sanitation, and agriculture adapted to the needs of the local people; (d) and that a proper man of practical piety be found, who would make the school his life's work.[26]

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[25]Olivia Stokes to Washington, March 9, 1910, Ibid. Washington to Stokes, May 14, 1910, Ibid. Stokes to Washington, May 23, 1910, B.T.W.P., container #63 (S-W).

[26]The Committee to Washington, B.T.W.P., container #58 (Liberian Matters; F-Mac). Washington to Stokes, February 22, 1911, B.T.W.P., container #55.

While the committee was deliberating, Washington requested Bishop Scott to write up any plans that he might have for building and running the school. The bishop made three recommendations: one, that in order to inaugurate the kind of institution that was contemplated, the management or Miss Stokes had to be prepared to provide funds for practically everything, and he estimated the initial cost to be from $25,000 to $30,000. Two, that instead of starting a new school, he, as the representative of the Board of Foreign Missions of the M.E. Church, was willing to offer the St. Paul River Industrial School, which the church had built but could not afford to operate. The site was about twenty miles from Monrovia and included more than 700 acres of land. Finally, the bishop proposed that as soon as the school was established, its board of trustees should consist of prominent Liberians chosen from the various religious denominations in the country.[27] It was hoped that this move would encourage the people to develop an interest in the school. Mr. Washington forwarded copies of the committees' and the bishop's propositions to Miss Stokes and added that he planned to seek more advice in the matter before making any definite decisions.[28]

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[27]Bishop Scott to Washington, August 2, 1912, B.T.W.P., container #63 (S-W).

[28]Washington to Olivia Stokes, August 9, 1912, Ibid.

Sometime later, the Liberian Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. John L. Morris, visited Tuskegee and proposed a 700 acre tract of land along the St. Paul River as a suitable site for the school. The Institute's draftsman made a sketch of the property as described by Mr. Morris, and Washington sent a copy to Miss Stokes.[29]

Not long after Morris's visit, Washington again wrote to Miss Stokes saying that because the European war had greatly affected travel to Liberia, he had decided to "go slow on matters regarding that country." He also indicated that he had learned that conditions were so bad in the country that government employees had not been paid for months and that there was a scarcity of imported foods and goods.[30] Washington's procrastination has been viewed by one writer as an indication that once the school proposal began to take a more definite character, "he grew less enamoured of any official connection between his institution and its namesake in Liberia."[31] While there may be some truth in this statement, it must be pointed out that Washington was merely careful about entertaining an agreement that would legally hold Tuskegee responsible

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[29]Morris to Washington, August 11, 1914, and Morris to Emmett Scott, August 12, 1914, B.T.W.P., container #70 (F-Li).

[30]Washington to Miss Olivia Stokes, November 3, 1914, B.T.W.P., container #73 (St-Tr).

[31]Edward H. Berman, "Tuskegee-in-Africa, Journal of Negro Education, 41, 2 (Spring 1972), 104.

for the Liberian school. At the same time, however, he wanted to give all the assistance he could to Liberia. He continued to assure Miss Stokes that ". . . we would morally be responsible for the conduct of the school." He told her that he would use his influence with the New York Colonization Society, "as I am one of the trustees," to secure an annual grant for the institute.[32]

For nearly a year following this correspondence, Liberian conditions did not change appreciably. So, in May 1915, Mr. Washington wrote a letter to Miss Stokes saying that he had written to Liberia about the possibility of buying land for the school site. He thought that it was an opportune time for the purchase because money was scarce in Liberia and, "I have the idea that a little money would go along way with the people and at the same time get the land at a figure much lower than was formerly asked for."[33] By the time Liberia responded to the letter, Mr. Washington was sick and could not complete the necessary arrangements for the purchase. On November 14, 1915, he died at Tuskegee, and the plan for building the school was temporarily halted.

With the death of Washington, it looked as though the school would never be built. This pessimism increased

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[32]Washington to Olivia Stokes, August 5, 1914, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-O.

[33]Washington to Olivia Stokes, May 10, 1915, B.T.W.P., container #79 (S-Trum).

after Washington's successor, Dr. Robert R. Moton, informed Miss Stokes that he could not do anything about the Liberian project because of the institute's financial problems and the international difficulties created by the war.[34]

For nearly two years, nothing was done about the school, but in early 1918, the issue was revived by Mr. J. F. B. Coleman, of the M.E. Church's Board of Foreign Missions. Having observed the Hampton-Tuskegee mode of education and its practical significance, Mr. Coleman thought that the application of such a system would "furnish the leaders of Africa's millions."[35] Later in the year, Coleman requested Miss Stokes to reactivate the moribund plan for a Tuskegee-in-Liberia. The philanthropist responded favorably and promised to discuss the matter with her nephew, Dr. Anson Stokes. She also suggested that before she and her nephew could do anything, it might be necessary for the Phelps Stokes Fund to undertake a survey of Liberian education. In that connection, Miss Stokes intimated that Mr. Thomas J. Jones, Educational Director of the fund might be asked to do the survey. Jones was a strong believer in industrial education for Negroes, a belief which he unmistakably demonstrated in his

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[34]Moton to Olivia Stokes, September 26, 1916, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-O.

[35]J. F. B. Coleman, "An African Tuskegee," The Southern Voice, 15 (January 1918).

1917 publication, Negro Education, which lauded the superiority of the Hampton-Tuskegee system.[36]

Jones' suggestion for a Liberian survey was a major step towards the eventual implementation of the following objectives: the encouragement of cooperation among the various agencies interested in Liberian development, both in Liberia and in the United States; the development of cooperation between the Missionary and Colonization Societies in maintaining an Educational Advisor in Liberia, whose efforts would be directed towards improving the educational system; the establishment of an agricultural and industrial institute at Kakata, based on the principles of Tuskegee Institute and directed mainly to meeting the needs of the indigenous people in the interior; and the founding of Liberia's first public library.[37] The accomplishment of these aims was a significant part of the program which the Phelps Stokes Fund contemplated for the development of Liberia.

Founded in 1909, in accordance with the wishes of Miss Caroline Phelps Stokes, the fund had been established for the construction and/or improvement of the houses of

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[36]Olivia Stokes to Anson Stokes, January 10, 1919, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-1; Thomas J. Jones (ed.), Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1917).

[37]Thomas J. Jones, Twenty Year Report of the Phelps Stokes Fund, 1911-1931 (New York, 1932), pp. 27-28.

the poor families in New York City, the education of Africans, Black Americans, North American Indians, and needy and deserving white students.[38] The policies of the fund were largely determined by Miss Stokes' ideals which reflected the many kinds of educational and social activities to which the philanthropist had devoted her life. These policies could be categorized under four main headings: (1) the adaptation of all efforts to the needs at hand, involving the combination of Miss Stokes' social and religious ideas with the requirements of the outside world; (2) the origination, stimulation, and encouragement of movements and activities that would assist social betterment, rather than maintaining the status quo; (3) recognition of cooperation between racial and national groups as a fundamental element in human progress; and (4) use of the fund's resources without distinction of class, race, or nationality.[39]

The fund's great success in executing these general policies on both the local and international levels made its director the proper person for undertaking the Liberian survey. Subsequently, the Phelps Stokes Fund authorized an African Education Commission headed by Mr. Jones. In 1920-21, the commission visited Liberia and several other

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[38]Thomas J. Jones, Educational Adaptations: Report of the Ten Years' Work of the Phelps Stokes Fund, 1910-1920 (New York, 1922), pp. 15-22.

[39]Ibid.

countries in West, South, and Central Africa in order to study educational needs. After the commission returned to the United States, Jones reported that Liberia's educational system was exclusively concerned with training for clerical and government services, and that there was very little government effort to educate its citizens for industrial, hygienic, agricultural, and other social needs. He recommended that steps be taken to remedy the situation as quickly as possible.[40]

In accordance with the recommendations, which were supported by Dr. Thomas S. Donohugh of the Methodist Foreign Mission Society, representatives of the Colonization Societies, Mission Boards operating in Liberia, and the Phelps Stokes Fund organized the Advisory Committee on Education in Liberia (A.C.E.L.) in 1924 in order to improve the grim conditions underscored by Jones' assessment.[41]

Before any steps could be taken, the fund appointed Mr. Jones to represent it on the A.C.E.L. Thereafter, the committee interviewed people for the post of Educational Advisor to Liberia. In 1925, it hired Mr. James L. Sibley, a friend of the late Booker T. Washington, who had experience in rural education in the Philippines and in

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[40]Kenneth J. King, "Africa and the Southern States of the U.S.A. Notes on J. H. Oldham and American Negro Education for Africans," Journal of African History, 10, 4 (1969), 663-64.

[41]Thomas J. Jones, Educational Adaptations (New York, 1922), p. 298.

Alabama; he served first as Rural School Agent in the State's Department of Education, and later as County Superintendent for Rural Negro Schools. The committee could not have found a better candidate for the job.

Mr. Sibley proceeded to Liberia in the fall of 1925. A year later, while on leave in the United States to find some suitable assistants for the Liberian project, the Phelps Stokes Fund provided him some funds to hold a two-week seminar at Hampton Institute for the purpose of discussing Liberia's educational needs. The meeting helped to crystallize public opinion in favor of Sibley and the A.C.E.L.'s work in the republic. During the conference, Mr. Sibley hired a secretary-business manager and two advisors in teacher training and agriculture.[42]

After the seminar, Mr. Sibley and Bishop Matthew Clair of the M.E. Church again approached Miss Stokes about her previous financial offer to Mr. Washington for the building of an industrial school in Liberia. She renewed her pledge to provide $25,000 as soon as suitable arrangements were made. In order to expedite the plan, Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes, Chairman of the Phelps Stokes Fund, called a preliminary meeting at his home in Washington, D.C. on July 19, 1927, which was attended by

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[42]"Annual Report of James L. Sibley to the Advisory Committee on Education in Liberia, 1927," Phelps Stokes Fund Minutes, October 20, 1927.

Dr. Robert R. Moton, Principal of Tuskegee Institute, Bishop Clair, and Mr. Sibley.

The men decided that the M.E. Church's St. Paul River Industrial Institute near White Plains, Liberia, should become the basis of the proposed school and continue under the control of the Board of Foreign Missions of the M.E. Church, U.S.A. It was also suggested that the name of the institute should be changed to the "Booker Washington Agricultural and Industrial Institute." Before the meeting adjourned, the three cooperating agencies--the Phelps Stokes Fund, the Board of Foreign Missions of the M.E. Church, and Tuskegee Institute outlined certain endeavors which, if approved by each member's board, were to be put into effect in 1928 and run for a period of five years. Thereafter, if the plan worked satisfactorily, it would be continued subject only to such modifications as the boards deemed necessary. According to the arrangement, Tuskegee undertook: (1) to give B.W.I. its moral support; (2) to pay from time to time the round trip traveling expenses of a graduate or member of the faculty from Tuskegee to Liberia, the purpose and hope being to have always at least one Tuskegee representative on a brief appointment of about two years each at B.W.I.; (3) to give its active cooperation to B.W.I. in securing suitable teachers and other officers sympathetic with Booker Washington's ideals of education, cooperation, and service;

(4) and to give a scholarship covering tuition at Tuskegee to any competent student selected by B.W.I.[43]

After the meeting in Washington, Mr. Sibley returned to Liberia accompanied by some of his new assistants. Shortly afterwards, he informed President King and the Secretary of Public Instruction, Dr. Payne, about his discussions concerning the building of the trades school, and the men expressed great enthusiasm for the project. But before any plans could be undertaken, Miss Stokes suddenly died on December 14, 1927. Thereafter, arrangements for the school were delayed for nearly six months.[44]

In the middle of 1928, Mr. Sibley went back to New York where on August 1, he had another meeting with Dr. Stokes and others in order "to further discuss the tentative plans for developing a Tuskegee in Africa." During their talks Dr. Stokes disclosed that his aunt, Miss Olivia Stokes, had willed $25,000 for the establishment of the industrial school in Liberia. He added, however, that the donation was partly contingent upon the Methodist Board's willingness to raise an equal sum for the proposed institution. In addition, Dr. Stokes mentioned that his aunt had also left $1,000 for use in constructing the boy's

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[43]Anson Phelps Stokes, "Tentative Memorandum Regarding the Development in Liberia of an Agricultural and Industrial Institute Modeled on Tuskegee," Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-3; S-3(6).

[44]Ibid.

dormitory. After these comments, the meeting adjourned, and Mr. Sibley went back to Liberia.[45]

On November 10, President King consented to preside over a meeting called at the Executive Mansion to discuss plans for establishing the school. The conference was attended by several people including American Minister, William T. Francis, Dr. Payne, and the Reverend Thomas S. Donohugh. During the discussions, Mr. Donohugh stated that in addition to the $26,000 which Miss Stokes donated, she also had bequeathed $50,000 to Doctors Moton and Stokes for the school in Liberia. He added that the Methodist Board had agreed to raise $25,000, for a total of $101,000 for the school project. After Mr. Donohugh's comments, the group formed a temporary organization to proceed with the founding of the school. Mr. King suggested, and the members agreed, that the school should be non-denominational and be located at Kakata instead of at the St. Paul River Institute. He also said that the government had consented to provide 1000 acres at the Kakata site and a ten-year $50,000 grant, to be paid in $5,000 annual installments from 1930 on. Before adjourning, the committee appointed Messrs. Francis, King, and Sibley to draw up a charter for the school. It also instructed Mr. Sibley to ask Doctors Moton and Stokes to assist in finding a suitable person for the principalship of the school and to send a member

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[45] Ibid.

of the Tuskegee staff for one or two years in order to take charge of the building program.[46]

About two weeks after the meeting the charter committee completed its work and submitted the draft charter to the legislature for approval and passage. On November 22 and 27 the senate and the house respectively passed a bill creating B.W.I.[47] Following the passage of the bill, Dr. Jones requested Dr. Moton to send his vice-principal, Mr. Robert R. Taylor, to Liberia to supervise the construction of the school buildings and the development of the curricula. Dr. Moton promised to give favorable consideration to the matter.[48]

Meanwhile, at a meeting held in New York, Dr. Moton explained that since the last meeting in July 1927, he and the Tuskegee trustees had considered the situation carefully, and concluded that while they approved, in principle, of the idea of establishing a B.W.I., in Liberia, "the only commitment of Tuskegee Institute is

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[46]Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the Booker Washington Industrial and Agricultural Institute, November 10, 1928, Phelps Stokes Fund File, B.W.I. Historical Data, S-3.

[47]An Act to charter The Booker Washington Industrial and Agricultural Institute of Liberia, B.W.I. Historical Data, S-3; Minister Francis to Secretary of State, n.d., Ibid.

[48]Jones to Moton, January 2, 1929, Phelps Stokes Fund File, B.W.I. General Correspondence (A-Z); S-3(6); "Mr. Taylor will advise Liberia on new school," The Tuskegee Messenger, 5, 6 (March 23, 1929), 1, 8.

that the trustees and officers will give their moral support and good offices to the proposed institute."[49] Dr. Moton also pointed out that, although he did not believe that Tuskegee should raise funds for the school, he thought that the institute might provide one annual scholarship for the education of a competent Liberian at Tuskegee. He further indicated that it might even be possible for one of his staff to take a paid leave-of-absence in order to work in Liberia, but this, he said, would depend upon such a staff member's travel and other expenses being provided from other sources.

Having clarified Tuskegee Institute's position on the question of B.W.I., Dr. Moton began to make arrangements for Mr. Taylor's trip. The plan was hastened by Mr. Sibley's letter reporting that the dedication ceremonies for the new school were held on March 17 and that everyone was "looking forward with a great deal of pleasure to Mr. Taylor's arrival, when he will be able to give us valuable advice and assistance in the layout of our buildings and grounds and in the organization of our work."[50]

Shortly thereafter, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor sailed for Liberia, where they arrived on April 20. The couple

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[49]Minutes of the Meeting of the American Organization Committee, January 25, 1929. Phelps Stokes Fund File, B.W.I. Historical Data, S-3.

[50]Sibley to Moton, March 21, 1929, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-3.

remained in the country for six weeks, during which Mr. Taylor completed his assignment. Upon return to the U.S., he presented a lengthy report to the A.C.E.L., which he later summarized in an address to the Tuskegee Institute community.[51] At that time, Mr. Taylor briefly reviewed Liberia's history and geography, and said that although the country was suitable for agriculture, the people were generally averse to manual labor; the sad result being that most of the urban dwellers were heavily dependent on imported foods. He also indicated that there was a great need for agricultural and industrial technicians who could develop the country's abundant resources. For that reason, he was not only happy to have participated in the construction of the Liberian institute, but also hoped that all blacks, particularly the Tuskegee Institute community, would continue to assist the republic in its new educational venture. Mr. Taylor's work apparently was the culmination of Tuskegee's active participation in B.W.I. After the latter's incorporation in New York in 1931, Tuskegee's involvement in B.W.I. matters was relatively minimal and involved helping to find good instructors and occasionally sending one of its graduates or staff to work at the Liberian school.

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[51]"Report of R. R. Taylor upon B.W.I. at Kakata, Liberia," Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-3(6); R. R. Taylor, "The Outlook in Liberia," The Tuskegee Messenger, 5, 19 October 12, 1929), 1, 8.

Almost after the start, B.W.I. was plagued by some major problems. First of all, most of the students and some of their parents did not like the curricula and preferred the old literary form of education.[52] Second, financial difficulties greatly constrained the operations of the school. The third, and perhaps the most important problem of all, was the continuing disagreement between the A.C.E.L. and the Phelps Stokes Fund on the one hand, and the Liberian Government on the other over how the school should be operated. The fund and the A.C.E.L.'s personnel ran the school like a private institution, while the Liberian President expressed his desire for a Negro principal. But the A.C.E.L. trustees and the Phelps Stokes Fund disregarded his wishes.

The president therefore felt that the "Liberian point of view has been ignored" and unless the American sponsors stopped looking "upon Liberia as they would upon a Negro community in the southern United States,"[53] he would take very little interest in B.W.I. In spite of his warning, the school continued under white principalship for many more years. The American philanthropists seemed to be following blindly what Howard Oxley, Sibley's

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[52]Fred Leasure to Jones, May 4, 1933, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-1(5); Paul Rupel to Jones, May 27, 1939, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-1(9).

[53]Edwin Barclay to Anson Stokes, July 8, 1943, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-2(1).

successor, said in 1931: "We must always have an adequate white staff to hold the Institute [B.W.I.] to a steady course . . . . The efficiency of the Negro is increased many fold under the leadership of a white man."[54] But while the Liberians appreciated and wanted the fund and the A.C.E.L.'s educational assistance, they were unwilling to accept the implication of Oxley's idea that whites should continue to run B.W.I. until such time the Liberians were capable of assuming control. During the 1940s, when the war made it difficult to obtain both additional funds and enough qualified personnel to operate the school successfully, some Liberians thought that perhaps these problems would induce the A.C.E.L. and the fund to transfer the institute to the government, but the philanthropists continued to administer the school without any significant Liberian participation, much to the chagrin of President Barclay. The debate over who should run the school and how it should be operated continued throughout the war years.

Finally, in response to Liberia's demands, the New York trustees of B.W.I. amended their charter in 1950 and created a Board of Trustees in Liberia to manage the affairs of the school. The next year, they resolved to have the Monrovia Government integrate the school into the

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[54]Oxley to Jones, March 2, 1931, Phelps Stokes Fund File, S-1(4).

University of Liberia.[55] The university amended its charter for the incorporation, after which B.W.I. was renamed the Booker Washington Agricultural and Industrial College of the University of Liberia.[56]

Up to 1951, when B.W.I. came under Liberian government control, it was administered "by Foreign philanthropists and clergymen who felt that they knew what the Liberians needed more than the Liberians themselves."[57] With the exception of Tuskegee Institute, B.W.I. was planned by white philanthropists "and brought to fruition after only token consultation with the blacks [Liberians] concerned."[58] Then, too, there was the contemptuous and patronizing attitude which some of these philanthropists displayed towards the Liberians, a fact which induced the latter to reject the school until its operations were turned over to them. Liberia's resistance to the general and often paternalistic policies adopted by some members of the fund and the A.C.E.L. in constructing and administering B.W.I., was clearly in conformity with President Barclay's earlier warning that Liberians could not be treated like Black Americans. It also demonstrated the difficulty, indeed,

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[55] Berman, "Tuskegee-in-Africa," 104.

[56] Bulletin of B.W.I., 1 (August 1956), 14. (Mimeographed.) Berman, "Tuskegee-in-Africa," 112.

[57] Berman, "Tuskegee-in-Africa," 112.

[58] Ibid.

the dilemma in implementing Jones' and the Phelps Stokes Fund's philosophy of insisting upon initial white administrative control of the programs or institutions which the fund sometimes designed to spread the Hampton-Tuskegee system of education.

If Tuskegee Institute's participation in the establishment and operation of B.W.I. was minimal, the same cannot be said of its development of Liberia's first teacher training schools in the early sixties. While the change to active involvement in Liberian developments may have been partly in response to current black power pronouncements of unity and brotherhood, it seems that the main reason for the change in performance was that, unlike the B.W.I. affair in which Tuskegee Institute was expected to provide some technical and financial assistance (even though the school did not have the funds), in the case of the teacher education program, the institute's major obligation was to render technical and administrative support. Since Tuskegee Institute had the qualified personnel for the undertaking, the authorities did not hesitate to embark on the Liberian project.

Tuskegee Institute and Liberian Teacher Education, 1960-1969

Background

For nearly a century after the declaration of independence, Liberia had no effective organized program for

teacher training. The government could not establish normal schools because it did not have adequate funds. Most instructors were barely literate, with only primary training in reading, writing, and arithmetic. "An adequate training in these subjects and in simple methods of instruction were regarded as sufficient qualification for teachers."[1] In order to improve the situation, some philanthropists and missionaries established a few institutes which taught unstandardized courses with very low standards. But these efforts did not change the conditions appreciably; the assistance merely resulted in the production of teachers with different levels of preparation.[2]

In 1900 a major step was taken towards systematizing teacher education when the Bureau of Public Instruction was organized within the Department of the Interior and placed under Mr. J. C. Stevens as its first superintendent. One of Stevens' first acts was to initiate an in-service training program for elementary school teachers by having them attend annual lectures given by the County Commissioners of Education. These programs continued until 1912, when the Bureau was raised to departmental status within the president's cabinet. The new

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[1]Special Committee, N.T.A., Education in Liberia, Monrovia (June 1954), 110. (Mimeographed.)

[2]Lydia Z. Caine, "History of the Teachers Vacation School in Liberia," Liberian Education Review, 2, 1 (March 1963), 9-10.

Secretary of Education, Mr. B. W. Payne, replaced the annual lectures at various centers in the counties with two-week teachers' institutes which were conducted during the long school vacation in December and January. At the close of each institute, the teachers were examined in the subjects taught, such as agriculture, language arts, health, and arithmetic.

When Mr. Sibley went to Liberia in 1926, he decided to continue the institutes. However, after his death in 1929, lack of leadership coupled with chronic financial problems, made it difficult to hold any other institutes for almost a decade. Then in 1937, after the government passed an educational act providing for the classification of elementary school teachers according to their qualifications, the Department of Education revived the two-week teachers' institutes which, thereafter, were held intermittently until 1952, when they were replaced by the four-week annual vacation school.[3]

In 1956 an attempt was made to vary the curriculum by offering, when qualified instructors were available, such subjects as psychology, arts, school administration, and teaching methods. Most of the teachers and principals who participated in these courses indicated that the program was helpful but regretted that the vacation school was not

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[3]Special Committee, N.T.A., Education in Liberia, 114-122.

long enough. In 1959, therefore, the four-week period was extended to six weeks in order to prolong the teachers' training.[4]

In addition to the vacation school, the Department of Education also began in-service extension classes in 1954 to prepare teachers to help school dropouts and conduct adult education classes. Regular attendance with good passing grades exempted the participants from attending the vacation school. The extension program graduated its first trainees in 1956, after completion of the requirements for high school. While hundreds of teachers later participated in the plan, many others were unable to do so because of limited resources and communication difficulties.[5]

By the late forties and early fifties, it became apparent that the teacher education system was not producing enough trained personnel to meet the nation's expanding educational programs. In order to cope with this problem, the government, in 1947, working in cooperation with the Methodist and Protestant Episcopal Missions, established the first degree granting teacher training college within the College of West Africa (C.W.A.). Until 1950, the college provided a two-year program and was supported

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[4]Arthur J. K. Coleman, "A Survey of the Status of Teachers in Elementary and Secondary Schools of Liberia and a Suggested Plan for Improving Teacher Education" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1959), pp. 67-69.

[5]Ibid., pp. 71-73.

cooperatively. In that year, it was separated from C.W.A., and the government assumed complete responsibility for its operations. Thereafter, its program was extended to four years, and in 1951 it became the W.V.S. Tubman's Teachers College of the University of Liberia, its main function being the training of elementary and secondary school teachers.[6]

In 1948 and 1953 the Episcopal Church and the Catholic Mission established Cuttington College and Our Lady of Fatima College respectively. Both colleges offered teacher education programs similar to that given by Teachers College. But almost from the start, the three institutions were faced with two major problems. They not only failed to secure and hold the necessary instructors, but because of the small number of high school graduates who enrolled in them, they also could not meet the demand for teachers. Between 1950 and 1960, their combined teacher education graduates was about 136. In fact, for almost two decades, the number of graduates did not reach 250.[7] The failure of the colleges and the in-service

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[6]A. G. Nelson and C. C. Hughes, "Report of a Survey of the University of Liberia" (Ithaca, New York, 1960), pp. 38-39. (Mimeographed.)

[7]Mary A. Brown, "Educational Aspirations in Liberia," West African Journal of Education, 7, 2 (June 1963), 79-82. "William V. S. Tubman Teachers College, University of Liberia Graduates Over the Period 1950-1967" (Monrovia, 1968(?)). (Typewritten.) "Cuttington College & Divinity School Roster of Alumni, 1952-1964" (Suacoco: Cuttington College, June 1968). (Mimeographed.)

programs to meet the teacher supply demand created an acute problem, particularly in the elementary schools, where, according to the Secretary of Education, "eighty-five percent of the teachers were not qualified to teach."[8]

As the teacher shortage continued unabated, so did the increase in the school enrollment. From 1950 to 1960, it rose by some 130 percent, or from 24,500 to 53,900. In order to cope with the deteriorating situation, the legislature passed a bill providing for the establishment of elementary school teacher training centers.[9] At first it was hoped that the centers would be attached to high schools so that the prospective teachers would take both the regular secondary school courses in addition to the teacher education subjects. However, the government's inability to implement the program led to the initiation of a new plan which called for the establishment of a separate school for training rural primary teachers.[10]

The need for a rural training institute was first discussed by Liberian and U.S. officials in 1956, but it

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[8]Nathaniel V. Massaquoi, "Report of the Secretary of Public Instruction for September 1, 1958 to October 31, 1959" (Monrovia: Dept. of Public Instruction, 1960(?)), p. 53. (Mimeographed.) Charles C. Briggs, "Liberia's Rural Education Program," School and Society, 86, 2127 (March 1, 1958), 108-110.

[9]A. Doris Banks Henries, "An Act to Create Training Centers for Elementary School Teachers, Approved March 10, 1958," Education Laws of Liberia, 1826-1967 (Monrovia, 1968), pp. 28-29.

[10]Ibid., pp. 29-30.

was not until June 1958, that the two sides reached an agreement on the matter.[11] In order to expedite the program, the Department of Public Instruction was reorganized in early 1959 and a Division of Teacher Education was created under the control of a special Director of Teacher Education. The creation of the division clearly demonstrated the realization that the securing of competent teachers in sufficient numbers for the nation's expanding school system meant that the government was now ready to face its "number one problem in education."[12]

In order to give a rural character to the proposed school, it was suggested that it be located in the hinterland and near the town of Fissebu, some four miles from the district headquarters of Zorzor. Final selection of the site was made when the government acquired one thousand acres from the local inhabitants of the district.[13]

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[11]Charles C. Briggs and J. D. Hayes, "Preliminary Survey of Educational Facilities for the Purpose of Establishing a Rural Teacher Education Program in the Republic of Liberia" (Monrovia: USOM, July 1956). (Typewritten.) "Huge Teacher Training Center for Hinterland," The Listener, 9, 43 (July 4, 1958), 1+.

[12]Nathaniel V. Massaquoi, "The Fifth Annual Report of the Dept. of Public Instruction for the Period October 1, 1959 to September 30, 1960" (Monrovia, 1960 (?)), pp. 65-66. (Mimeographed.)

[13]William C. Nutting, "Liberia's First Teacher Education Institution," The Journal of Teacher Education, 10, 4 (December, 1959), 439-442; W. C. Nutting, "Inspection of Proposed Campus Sites in Zorzor Area" (Monrovia: USOM, July 1958). (Typewritten.)

After selecting the campus site the scope of the institute's work was expanded to "include both pre- and in-service training as well as curriculum design and syllabi development."[14] In order to accomplish these objectives, a joint United States Overseas Mission (USOM) and a Liberian Commission suggested that an American institution be contracted to provide the necessary training personnel. In the summer of 1959, the Secretary of Education and the Assistant Director of the U.S. Overseas Mission visited several American institutions including Berea College, Atlanta University, the University of Puerto Rico, and Tuskegee Institute. Following the tour, Tuskegee Institute was selected because of its philosophy of dedication and service to rural communities; its comprehensive program of training in the vocational, technical, and scientific skills; and because of its great success in executing a previous USOM contract to improve Indonesian teacher education.[15]

In May 1960, the U.S. Overseas Mission and Liberia finally concluded an agreement by which they contracted Tuskegee Institute to staff and train rural teachers at

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[14]Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program," p. 7.

[15]Author's interview with Dr. Luther H. Foster, President of Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Tuesday, December 18, 1973. E. E. Neal and N. V. Massaquoi, "A Report on Visits to Selected Institutions in the U.S.A., July 20 to August 5, 1959" (Monrovia: USOM, 1959). (Mimeographed.)

the Zorzor Institute. Shortly afterwards, a Tuskegee survey team consisting of Messrs. Pollard and Bearden undertook "a preliminary study of the Liberian rural elementary teacher education program before the Institute would undertake the project."[16]

Following the Pollard-Bearden survey, Tuskegee Institute and the International Corporation Administration (ICA) formally signed a contract on October 6, 1960, which called for the former to render technical assistance to Liberia in improving and strengthening its educational programs and in selecting Liberians for training in the United States. More specifically, Tuskegee Institute was to provide personnel in advisory and/or operational roles as required for assisting Liberians in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to operate the institutes; to train in-service and pre-service rural teachers; to develop textbooks and other instructional materials for use in the institutes, subject to the approval of the Department of Education; and to develop a program of education for rural school teachers in Liberia based on the needs of the students and their communities.[17]

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[16]W. B. Pollard and W. W. Bearden, "Report of a Survey of Rural Elementary Teacher Education in Liberia Conducted by the School of Education, Tuskegee Institute, Under ICA Contract, ICAc-1268" (Tuskegee, Alabama: Tuskegee Institute, June 10, 1960). (Mimeographed.)

[17]F. T. McQueen, "Final Report RTTI, Tuskegee-Liberia Project, December 1, 1960 to August 31, 1969" (Monrovia, 1969), pp. 8-25. (Mimeographed.)

Just as Tuskegee Institute had specific responsibilities to execute, so too, did ICA (later USAID) and the Liberian Government have their obligations delineated. ICA was to finance the purchase of non-local building materials for the schools and to pay the skilled laborers for the construction work. It was also to provide technical assistance for training Liberian counterparts and for developing educational materials. In addition, it was to supply permanent equipment and items such as the power and water plants.[18]

As for her part, Liberia promised to select and recruit teachers who would work as counterparts to the Tuskegee personnel; pay the salaries and operating expenses of the Liberian staff; provide the land for the campus sites; give the expendable materials and supplies for the institutes; and maintain the physical plant after its completion.[19]

In November 1960, the first group of Tuskegee Contract staff and their families appeared in Liberia. Although the initial construction work was nearing completion when they arrived, the team helped to supervise and prepare the physical plant for immediate occupation

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[18]Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program," p. 14; "Definitive Contract and Amendments, Number AIDc-1731, Tuskegee-Liberia Project" (Tuskegee, Alabama: Tuskegee Institute, 1964(?)). (Typewritten.)

[19]Ibid.

and use. These included classroom buildings, dormitories, power plant, and the water supply system. Then, in conjunction with some representatives of the Department of Education, the men conducted admission/placement examinations throughout the country between January and March 1961 (see Figure 2).

Following the evaluation of the tests, classes were officially begun in mid-April, with an enrollment of about eighty. For a while, the school operated on a two-year temporary course of study recommended by a Special Committee appointed by the Secretary of Education. Although the program was slightly different from the one proposed by the Pollard-Bearden survey in 1960, Tuskegee Institute accepted and executed it as well as possible (see Appendices A & B).

At the end of 1963, the Zorzor Institute graduated its first trained teachers. The next year, partly because of the increase in the enrollment, the Tuskegee team, which had provided the initial staffing, assisted by some Liberians and Peace Corps Volunteers, increased its instructional personnel and opened a second institute at Kakata. With that expansion, the project director also developed a new operational plan, and in conjunction with the government

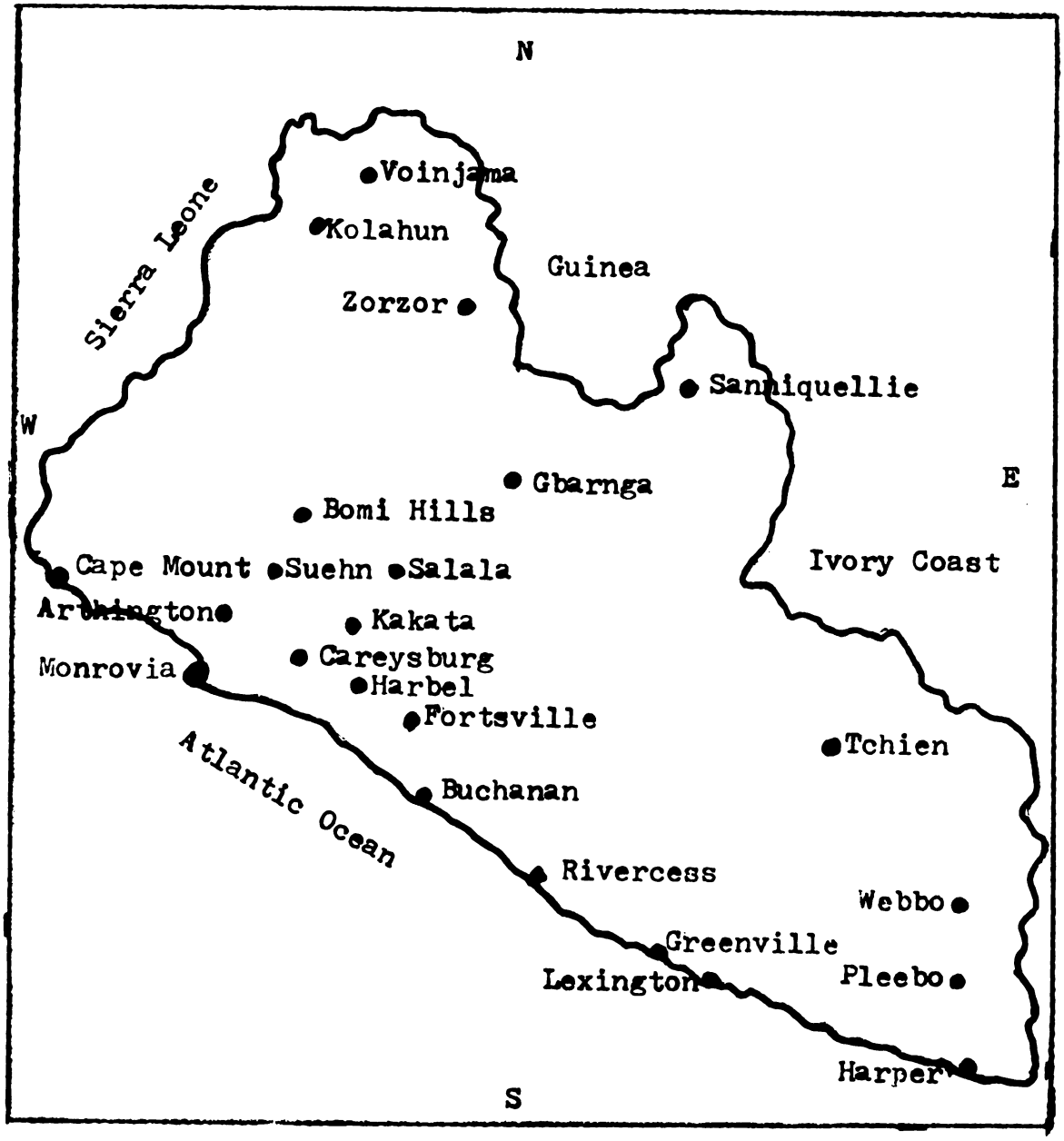

Fig. 2.--Map of Liberia Showing the Testing Centers.

Source: F. T. McQueen, "Final Report," p. 15.

and USAID established an administrative-organizational structure for the two institutes[20] (see Figure 3).

The rapid growth of the program required some academic changes too. Accordingly, the curriculum was revised several times, with each modification somewhat altering the main purpose of the institutes. These changes continued until, by 1969, the curriculum had "become part of a regular academic school with few concessions to either community development or teacher training"[21] (see Appendices C & D).

In addition to the difficulties posed by curricular alterations, the institutes were also plagued by student attrition which became relatively acute after 1965 (see Table 1). Although little information exists as to its causes, the students' varied academic background, levels of maturity, and the institutes' efforts to raise the academic standard all seemed to have contributed to the attrition. In spite of these and curricular problems, student enrollment and academic performance continued to improve and the schools operated well.

In 1967, because of the general improvement in the training program, USAID, the Liberian Government and

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[20]F. T. McQueen, "Work Plan: Tuskegee Contract" (Kakata: Kakata Rural Training Institute, October 1964). (Mimeographed.)

[21]Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program," p. 27.

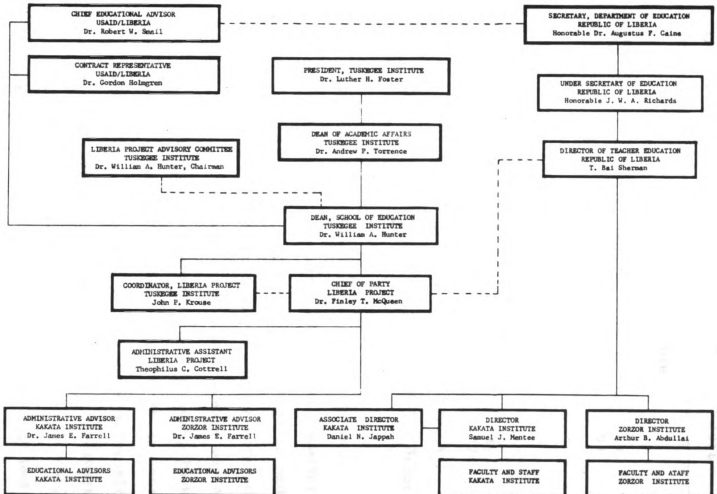

Fig. 3.--Organizational Chart, RTTI Project.

Source: Mr. John P. Krouse, formerly Campus Director of the Tuskegee-Liberia Teacher Training Project, Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama.

Table 1.--Student Attrition, Rural Teacher Training Institutes, 1965-1969.

Year	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
			Zorzor Institute		
10th	30	49	63	--	--
11th	--	37	60	57	--
12th	--	--	30	54	58
					7.4%
			Kakata Institute		
10th	10	40	91	--	--
11th	--	18	36	45	--
12th	--	--	13	27	34
				32.5%	62.7%

Source: Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program" (Monrovia, 1970), p. 17.

Tuskegee Institute worked out a plan by which the latter was to phase out in December 1968. Later, however, that withdrawal date was extended to August 1969 in order to permit some Tuskegee technicians to render more service to the institutes. At the end of the extension period, the contract was officially terminated. By then, Tuskegee had some "twenty-one people [who], at one time or another were full, regular staff members . . . supported by eleven short-term visitors" from the Institute in Alabama.[22]

With the termination of the contract, it might be necessary to consider how well the contractor and the

[22]F. T. McQueen, "Final Report," p. 7.

Liberian Government thought the training program was executed. In doing so, we shall begin by first reviewing what Tuskegee viewed as its achievements; then, we shall turn to Liberia's own evaluation of the project.

In considering Tuskegee Institute's performance, we shall concentrate on its failure and/or accomplishment of the main contract objectives which we outlined above. First, in the area of training Liberian counterparts for administrative and instructional roles, the contract team viewed its achievement to be commendable, and perhaps rightly so. Under Tuskegee's auspices, at least thirty-five Liberians received training at American institutions. On the basis of their certification, the institutes' staff was well qualified; most of them had university training or advanced degrees (see Table 2).

Table 2.--Academic Qualifications of RTTI Faculty and Staff.

	Certification		Degree	
	Pre-Sec. with Some Specific Training	Post Sec.	Bachelor's	Masters
Kakata	2	5	2	8
Zorzor	-	5	3	8
Total	2	10	5	16

Source: Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program" (Monrovia, 1970), p. 18.

Towards the end of 1965, an increasing number of Liberian trainees began to return home from their studies. In accordance with the terms of the contract, Tuskegee Institute also began to relinquish its administrative and instructional roles to them. By late 1966, Liberians were holding positions as administrators, registrars, deans, and business/plant and cafeteria managers.

The second objective for which Tuskegee evaluated its work was the preparation of textual and instructional materials for the institutes. In this, as in the training of the faculty and staff, the team thought that it had much success. It prepared course outlines for all subjects of the curriculum. For example, it produced syllabi for reading, literature, social studies, health education, and in-service education. In addition, it developed handbooks for business/plant management, student teaching, teacher attitude scale, teaching supervisors, cataloging films, cooking, and how to organize a small school library.[23]

The third and final objective for which Tuskegee's performance should be judged is teacher training. As in the case of the other goals, the team was also quite productive in this regard. During its operation of the institutes, Tuskegee trained nearly five hundred teachers (see Table 3). The number of graduates indicated in Table 3 assumes great significance when one considers that the

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[23] Ibid., pp. 24-28.

Table 3.--RTTI Enrollment/Graduates.

Year	7th Grade		8th Grade		9th Grade		10th Grade		11th Grade		12th Grade		Grand Total			Graduates		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Both	M	F	Both
Zorzor Rural Teacher Training Institute																		
1961							78	2					73	2	75			
1962			20	0			14 10	1 0	51	2			95	3	98			
1963							80	0	12	1	51	1	143	2	145	51	1	52
1964							128	6	12	1			140	7	147	12	1	13
1965	39	2	24	0			29	1	68	5	49	3	209	11	220	51	3	54
1966			43	2	23	1	43	6	36	1	32	0	177	10	187	32	0	32
1967					74	12	58	5	54	6	29	1	215	24	239	30	0	30
1968							115	40	50	5	55	3	220	48	268	55	3	58
1969	—	—	—	—	—	—	85	36	79	23	46	4	210	63	273	46	4	60
Total	39	2	87	2	97	13	640	97	362	46	262	12	1482	170	1652	277	12	299
Kakata Rural Teacher Training Institute																		
1964							26	7	44	1			70	8	78			
1965			14	2	0	0	9	1	25	6	29	1	77	10	87	26	1	27
1966					7	3	33	7	17	1	26	1	83	12	95	27	3	30
1967							65	26	31	5	12	1	108	32	140	12	1	13
1968							31	18	35	9	31	6	97	33	130	31	6	37
1969			—	—	—	—	40	15	30	15	32	5	102	35	139	32	5	37
Total			14	2	7	3	204	74	182	37	130	14	557	130	669	128	16	144

Source: F. T. McQueen, "Final Report," p. 41.

annual number of graduates represents twice the total produced by Cuttington College and the William V. S. Tubman Teachers College at that time. In other words, the number of graduates for the seven-year period is nearly five times the education degree holders who matriculated from the University of Liberia between 1866 and 1960.[24] Based on this achievement and on the ones mentioned for the previous objectives, it seems clear that in terms of fulfilling the contract obligations, Tuskegee Institute performed a generally satisfactory job. The question is, did the Liberian Government think so?

Following the departure of the Tuskegee team, the government and USAID appointed a commission to review the RTTI program from its inception to 1970. After a thorough investigation of every phase of the institutes' operations, the committee made a report[25] which expressed some reservations about the effectiveness of the Tuskegee team in certain respects. It criticized the team for not providing effective on-the-job training for counterparts; for creating a network of committees and positions in which people worked with little understanding and appreciation of the

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[24]"Cuttington College and Divinity School Roster of Alumni, 1952-1964" (Suacoco: Cuttington College, June 1968). (Mimeographed.) "University of Liberia Register of Graduates, Centennial Issue" (Monrovia, 1962(?)), pp. 47-55. (Mimeographed.) "W.V.S. Tubman Teachers College, University of Liberia Graduates Over the Period 1950-1967" (Monrovia, 1968(?)). (Typewritten.)

[25]Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program."

importance of their tasks; for developing social studies syllabi and materials that were irrelevant to the Liberian situation; for reliance on American textbooks; and for its choice of some of the U.S. institutions for training Liberian participants. The committee felt that some of the schools did not provide the necessary training.[26] Commenting on the rural training aspect of the Tuskegee program, the evaluation team said,

> We believe that Tuskegee Institute has done significantly little to prepare the Rural Training Institutes for their role in the area of community development . . . . The failure of the institutes to develop skill teaching in such activities as simple building construction, well-drilling, sealing and maintenance, latrine construction, basic poultry and garden production, the rudiments of health care and appreciation of local culture, detract from any contribution the program can make to rural development.[27]

After these criticisms, the report proposed certain changes in the institutes' programs. Among other things, it recommended that the schools should emphasize agriculture, open off-campus extension centers for evening and weekend instruction, coordinate all educational research, and develop a sense of community development in the faculty, staff, and students by encouraging them to spend part of the long vacation working on village projects. The study also suggested that the institutes should be incorporated into an Institute of Education "based upon

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[26]Miller and Brown, "Evaluation of the Program," pp. 34-43.

[27]Ibid., p. 21.

the administrative and professional model of teacher training found in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria."[28] In spite of the criticisms, however, the committee concluded its findings with high praise for Tuskegee Institute and rated its performance "on a level of good and better."[29]

Before and since the evaluations by both Tuskegee Institute and the Liberian Government, one fact still remains: despite the increasing number of new teachers that graduate annually from the training schools, the country has been unable to alleviate the teacher shortage. Why? Perhaps we can understand some of the reasons for the continuing teacher crisis by examining what two Liberian educators, Amachree and Carlon have discovered in dealing with the question. In a recent study, they found that, although the increase in student enrollment has contributed to the teacher shortage, one of the greatest obstacles to the recruitment, training, retaining, and hiring of qualified teachers is the small salary which such instructors receive compared to the salaries of the civil servants and employees of the mining and rubber concessionaires. They also found that more than one-third of the teachers they interviewed for the study chose the teaching profession because it was the only job they could

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[28] Ibid., p. 42.

[29] F. T. McQueen, "Administrators' Appraisal of the RTTI Graduates, Kakata and Zorzor" (Monrovia, June 1969), p. 92. (Mimeographed.)

easily get (see Table 4). Amachree and Carlon also men tioned that the lack of sufficiently qualified candidates for the training institutes and colleges was a serious hindrance to meeting the teacher supply demand. This view was confirmed by the Educational Secretariat's study which called the lack of capable applicants "the main problem in the teacher training program."[30]

In a subsequent study by Dr. Amachree, he found that

> prestige given to the teacher and the value imputed to teaching . . . have potential implications for participative or non-participative behavior in terms of the teacher's desire either to withdraw from or continue in teaching.[31]

When the teacher perceives that his profession is valued and that he is respected in the school or community, he will persist in teaching. On the other hand, if he sees disrespect for himself and his work, he is likely to terminate his services and seek employment elsewhere. Obviously, then, the prestige or value and respect which the teacher receives on the one hand, and his desire to teach on the other, have strong correlations which "can offset to a large extent, the inadequacies in purely monetary rewards

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[30]Liberian Educational Secretariat, "A Critical Analysis of the Present Situation in Education in Liberia" (Monrovia, June 21, 1966), p. 25. (Typewritten.)

[31]Amachree, "Social Prestige and Persistence," p. 16.

Table 4.--Reasons Why Some People Become or Refuse to Be Teachers.

	Percent of People Surveyed
Reasons Why Some People Become Teachers	
(1) Only job they can find	35.0
(2) Love for teaching	22.5
(3) To help humanity	18.1
(4) As a step to a better job	11.9
(5) Easy job to get	7.5
(6) Others	5.0
	100.0%
Reasons Why Some People Do Not Become Teachers	
(1) Low salary	56.0
(2) Lack of prestige	27.0
(3) No prospects (for better salary)	6.5
(4) No interest	4.5
(5) Heavy teaching load	2.0
(6) Others	4.0
	100.0%

Source: Igolima T. D. Amachree, "Social Prestige and Persistence in Teaching in Liberia" (Monrovia: University of Liberia, 1969(?)). (Typewritten.)

and thus have the potential of inducing the teacher to persist either in teaching or withdraw from it."[32]

Amachree and Carlon's observations were affirmed by Dr. Bernard Blamo who noted that,

> teaching enjoys low public respect in Liberian society. There is an absence of public recognition of the status to which the importance of a teacher's social role entitles him . . . . The Liberian teacher has been awarded a somewhat lower social status than other professionals. The lowly position of the Liberian teacher is reflected in the low scales of remuneration for teachers, the relative ease with which applicants are employed and the rather condescending attitude of some Liberians toward teachers and/or the teaching profession.[33]

If, therefore, progress in meeting the teacher supply demand has been stymied in spite of the work of the institutes, these are some of the main reasons. The Ministry of Education has tried to alleviate the chronic teacher shortage through such measures as employing many expatriate teachers, including Peace Corps Volunteers and direct-hire personnel; awarding scholarships to in-service teachers to obtain college education either at Cuttington college or at the University of Liberia; permitting qualified teachers to teach at two different schools operating at different times of the day; employing teachers with less than the prescribed qualifications; and inaugurating

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[32] Ibid., p. 17.

[33] J. Bernard Blamo, "The Quality of our Education," an Address to the College Students' Conference held at Cuttington College & Divinity School, Suacoco, Bong County, Liberia, July 19, 1969, pp. 10-11. (Typewritten.)

a program by which 6th grade graduates may pursue a three-year Grade D Teachers Certificate course at the rural training institutes, thus enabling them to teach in the elementary schools.[34] These efforts have been supported and augmented by the president who has declared that teachers' salaries should be increased, in most cases, from fifty to one hundred percent.[35] Unfortunately, these declarations have not been fully implemented due to the lack of funds. Clearly, then, the teacher shortage is far from over. Perhaps the best way to mitigate the problem is for the government to establish and support a salary scale which provides an income commensurate with the teachers' qualifications and social roles, encourage the public to respect teachers and their profession, and assist the Ministry of Education in enforcing some minimum professional requirements in the recruitment of teachers.

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[34]Augustus F. Caine, "Annual Report of the Department of Education for the Year October 1, 1966 to September 30, 1967" (Monrovia: Department of Education, 1968(?)), p. 16. (Mimeographed.)

[35]Liberia: Ministry of Education, "Towards Higher Heights in Liberian Education: Major Pronouncements and Measures by the President" (Monrovia, July 1972); Liberia: Bureau of Planning and Research; Ministry of Education, "The Impact of the Free Tuition Policy for Liberian Public Secondary Schools in 1972 and Implications for Educational Planning" (Monrovia, April 1973), p. 3. (Mimeographed.)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was conducted to determine the part played by Booker Washington and Tuskegee Institute in Liberian developments from 1908 to 1969. In order to do so, the writer reviewed Liberia's relations with Great Britain and France up to 1908 as a background to the republic's dispatch of a mission to seek assistance from the United States Government in the spring of 1908.

After the request, Mr. Washington, who was the most powerful black leader at the time and had acted as the unofficial host to the Liberian delegation, urged the Roosevelt Administration to send a commission to investigate the Liberian situation and suggest the best form of aid to be rendered the Negro state. Before the commission departed, William H. Taft succeeded to the presidency in 1909. Fortunately, the change in administrations did not adversely affect the proposal for the commission. However, instead of Mr. Washington going as a member of the delegation, Taft asked him to send a substitute because he needed the Negro leader's advice on southern and black affairs in America; Washington appointed his secretary and

some other persons to serve as envoys and the State Department selected two of his nominees.

The commissioners left for Liberia in the spring of 1909 and spent about two months investigating the country's problems. Upon returning to the United States, they recommended six measures of relief to the Secretary of State and the president. The latter forwarded the recommendations to Congress for the body's consideration. Of the proposals, only two were implemented: the sending of three Negro U.S. Army officers, two captains and one major, to train the Liberian frontier force; and the granting of a $1.7 million international loan to refund the republic's domestic and foreign debts. Again, B. T. Washington played an important part in the acquisition of the loan. He encouraged a member of the Tuskegee Board of Trustees, who was also a partner of the banking firm, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, to participate in the loan plan. Although the loan was later refunded by a new and larger one, it provided a temporary rescue measure which prevented the country from internal fiscal collapse.

When arrangements for the loan were going forward, Mr. Washington sought, with the financial assistance of Miss Olivia Stokes, indirectly to train a new leadership for the troubled republic by having some of its brightest young men educated at Tuskegee and returned to work in Liberia. Unfortunately, the project failed because the

students were unable to adjust culturally and would not reconcile their literary views of education with the strong industrial orientation of the Tuskegee Institute program.

After the failure of the plan to train students at Tuskegee, Mr. Washington, on the request of the Liberian Government and on the advice of the American Minister to Liberia and some missionary friends, decided to establish a "little Tuskegee" in the African republic. But before definite plans could be made, he died in 1915. Thereafter, all arrangements for the school were left in abeyance for nearly a decade.

In the mid-twenties, the Phelps Stokes Fund informed Tuskegee and representatives of the mission groups operating in Liberia that Miss Stokes, who had died in 1927, had willed some money for the establishment of the Liberian school as a memorial to Mr. Washington. Shortly thereafter, agents of these bodies met to discuss plans for construction of the school. Later Tuskegee Institute provided the surveyor and construction-engineer who built the first edifices. From this point, however, the institute elected to play a secondary role in the operation of the school, leaving sole responsibility to the Phelps Stokes Fund and the Advisory Committee on Education in Liberia. Tuskegee President Moton indicated that, although financial problems had made it necessary for him to give only moral

support for the African school, he would try to assist by occasionally sending Tuskegee instructors on sabbatical leave to teach at the Liberian institution, provided someone paid the travel expenses for these teachers. While many such instructors did teach at the institute, Tuskegee was never again active in Liberian education until the sixties.

In 1960, partly as a result of its previous success in training elementary and secondary school teachers for Indonesia, and as a result of its renown in rural education, Tuskegee Institute was contracted by ICA (and its successor, USAID) and Liberia to establish rural elementary teacher training institutes. Up to that time, the country's teacher education had been done rather haphazardly and had been carried on by various missions providing diverse methods of teacher education. The Tuskegee project systematized teacher training in Liberia and, for the first time in the nation's history, provided a regular source of rural elementary school teachers.

From the foregoing statements, and on the basis of an analysis of the data collected, the following conclusions can be made in regards to the role of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute in Liberian affairs: (1) by virtue of his zeal and ability, aided by the operative social and political forces at the time, Mr. Washington enlisted American support in behalf of Liberia at a most critical

moment and thereby helped to save the country from being absorbed by her British and French neighbors. Without that assistance and subsequent U.S. intervention, it is doubtful whether the republic could have survived as an independent state. (2) All other endeavors by Washington to introduce practical advance and changes in Liberia were foiled in his lifetime. His plan to educate Liberian students at Tuskegee failed because the boys could not adjust culturally and also sought a literary rather than an industrial education. (3) Economically, Washington's efforts were not quite successful. The international loan which he helped bring about was a rescue measure that did not solve the nation's domestic and foreign financial obligations. Additionally, his attempts to encourage American businessmen to invest in the republic did not succeed because the men were skeptical about the success of such undertakings and therefore responded unfavorably. (4) Up to 1960, Liberia had no organized teacher training program for rural elementary schools. Since then, however, Tuskegee Institute has helped to establish two training institutes at Zorzor and Kakata which now produce the majority of the country's elementary school teachers. (5) Finally, this study indicates that the initiative for Mr. Washington and Tuskegee Institute's endeavors for Liberian development did not originate with the black leader and the institute.

In the case of the education of the Liberian youths at Tuskegee, it was the Liberian Commissioners and Miss Olivia Phelps Stokes who suggested the plan. Likewise, in the establishment of the Liberian industrial school, it was Minister Lyon and Bishop Scott who initiated the plan and urged Mr. Washington to undertake it; the latter, somewhat hesitatingly decided to embark upon the project only after much encouragement and a promise of some future financial support for the school from Miss Stokes. Even after Washington consented to assist in the establishment of the school, he remained cautious almost to the point of disinterest in the matter up to his death in 1915. The main credit for the construction of the Liberian school therefore, goes to the Phelps Stokes Fund which provided the initial funds and personnel for running the institute for nearly thirty years. Similarly, during the boundary crisis, it was Bishop Scott and Minister Lyon, who acting as unofficial spokesmen for the republic, requested Mr. Washington to seek American intervention on behalf of the Negro state. Lastly, the request for assistance in teacher education came from the Liberian Government and I.C.A. Clearly, then, with all deference to Mr. Washington and Tuskegee's endeavors for Liberian development, at no time did they initiate a plan to assist Liberia. In every major program for assistance, they acted only as little more than intermediaries, through whom a few individual American

officials, missionaries, and philanthropists assisted the African state. Indeed, Mr. Washington's and Tuskegee Institute's willingness to assume that intermediary position at a critical time in the country's history not only demonstrated their desire to help the republic in the interest of racial cooperation and harmony, but also constituted a significant contribution to the continuing existence of Liberia as a free nation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

POLLARD-BEARDEN CURRICULAR PLAN, 1960

APPENDIX A

POLLARD-BEARDEN CURRICULAR PLAN, 1960

First Year

Language Arts	7**	Language Arts	6
Social Studies	5	Cultural Geo. of Africa	4
General Math	6	General Math	7
General Science	4	General Science	4
Cultural Appreciation	1	Cultural Appreciation	1
Health Education	3	Community Dev. & Health	2
Physical Education	1	Physical Education	2
Agriculture	3	Agricultural & Home Eco	4
	30		30

Second Year

Language Arts	6	Cultural Appreciation & Theory	4
General Math	6	Curriculum Dev. & Teach	12
Arts & Crafts	9	Child Growth & Dev	5
In-Service Community Development	9	Music	3
	30	Community Development	5
		Physical Education	1
			30

Third Year

Observation & Practice Teaching	18	Apprentice Teaching	30
Workshop in Practical Problems of Teaching	6		
	24		

Source: W. B. Pollard and W. W. Bearden, "A Proposed Plan for Developing Rural Training Institutes in Liberia" (Monrovia, May 1959), pp. 20-21.

**Arabic numerals indicate the number of 45-minute class periods per week.

APPENDIX B

SPECIAL COMMITTEE PROPOSED COURSE OF STUDY

APPENDIX B

SPECIAL COMMITTEE PROPOSED COURSE OF STUDY

First Year

First Semester		Second Semester	
English	5**	English	5
General Math	5	General Math	5
General Science	6	General Science (including Agriculture and Home Economics)	6
Liberian History	4	Intro. to Education	5
Intro. to Psychology	5	Health & Phys. Ed.	4
Health & Phys. Ed.	2	African Geography	4
	27		27

Second Year

First Semester		Second Semester	
English	5	Observation & Practice Teaching	20
World History	4	Workshop in Practical Problems of Teaching	5
Child Study	4		25
General Methods	5		
Music	2		
Economic Geography	3		
Arts & Crafts	4		
	27		

Source: McQueen, "Final Report," p. 32.

**Arabic numerals indicate the number of 45-minute class periods per week.

APPENDIX C

CURRICULUM OF THE RURAL TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTES, 1968

APPENDIX C

CURRICULUM OF THE RURAL TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTES, 1968

Subjects	Number of Clock Hours by Year			
	First	Second	Third	Total
English & Literature	300	150	75	525
Children's Literature	--	60	--	60
Social Studies	150	150	225	525
General Mathematics	75	--	--	75
Algebra	75	150	--	225
Geometry	--	--	225	225
Biology	150	--	--	150
Chemistry	--	150	--	150
Physics	--	--	225	225
Music	30	30	30	90
French	120	120	60	300
Agriculture	60	60	--	120
Arts & Crafts	--	60	--	60
Bible	30	15	--	45
Health & Phys. Education	60	60	90	210
History of Education	--	75	--	75
Educational Psychology	--	75	--	75
Methods of Teaching	--	--	150	150
Educational Materials	--	--	30	30
Supervised Teaching (8 wks.)	--	--	225	225
Total	1,050	1,155	1,335	3,540

Source: Bertha B. Azango, "The Present Social-Economic Situation in Liberia and Its Implication for the Educational System" (a paper presented at the National Conference on Curriculum Review, Monrovia, Liberia, November 11-13, 1970), p. 20. (Mimeographed.)

APPENDIX D

RTTI CURRICULUM, 1969

APPENDIX D

RTTI CURRICULUM, 1969

First Year

English	5**	English	5
Literature	5	Literature	5
World History	5	World History	5
General Math	5	Algebra	5
Biology	5	Biology	5
French	4	French	4
Health & Phys Ed	2	Health & Phys Ed	2
Agriculture	2	Agriculture	1
Bible	1	Bible	1
	34		34

Second Year

English & Literature	5	Speech	5
World History	5	World History	5
Algebra	5	Algebra	5
Chemistry	5	Chemistry	5
French	4	French	4
History of Education	5	Educational Psychology	5
Agriculture	2	Arts & Crafts	2
Music	1	Music	1
Arts & Crafts	2	Health & Phys Ed	2
Health & Phys Ed	2	Agriculture	2
Bible	1		36
	37		

Third Year

English & Literature	5	Geometry	5
Economics	5	Physics	5
Geometry	5	Government (Liberia)	5
French	4	Methods of Teaching	5
General Methods of Teaching	5	School Administration	1
Physics	5	Practice Teaching	15
Educational Materials	2		36
Health & Phys Ed	2		
Music	2		
	35		

Source: "Faculty Handbook," Zorzor: Zorzor Rural Teacher Institute, March 1969, p. 22. (Mimeographed.)

**Arabic numerals indicate the number of 45-minute class periods per week.

APPENDIX E

PRINCIPALS OF B.W.I., 1929-1959

APPENDIX E

PRINCIPALS OF B.W.I., 1929-1959

1.	Professor James L. Sibley	1929
2.	Rev. Lewis Clinton (Acting)	1929-1931
3.	Mr. Charleston	1931-1932
4.	Mr. Fred G. Leassure	1932-1934
5.	Mr. Harold Bare (Acting)	1934-1936
6.	Mr. Paul Rupel	1936-1939
7.	Mr. Claude Rupel (Acting)	1939-1941
8.	Mr. B. B. Coefield (Acting)	1941-1942
9.	Mr. R. L. Embree	1942-1946
10.	Mr. Walter C. Wynn	1946-1952
11.	Mr. William A. Hill (Acting)	1952-1953
12.	Mr. Bernard F. Coleman (Acting)	1953-1955
13.	Dr. George L. Smith	1955-1957
14.	Dr. Advertus A. Hoff (Assistant)	1956-1957
15.	Mr. Moses K. Weefur	1957-1959(?)

Source: "Thirtieth Founder's Day Program, Booker Washington Agricultural and Industrial Institute, 1929-1959," Kakata, Liberia, June 29, 1959. (Mimeographed.)

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Mrs. Elizabeth R. Benson, Foreign Students Advisor, Tuskegee Institute, Wednesday, December 12, 1973.

Mr. Philip Brown, Instructor at Tuskegee Institute, Friday, December 14, 1973.

Mr. Theophilus C. Cottrell, Administrative Assistant, Tuskegee Institute, Thursday, December 13, 1973.

Dr. Luther H. Foster, President of Tuskegee Institute, Tuesday, December 18, 1973.

Dr. Finley T. McQueen, formerly Director of the Tuskegee-Liberia Teacher Training Project in Liberia, and now Tuskegee Institute Federal Relations Administrator in Washington, D.C., Thursday, January 17, 1974.

Dr. Frederick R. Patterson, former President of Tuskegee Institute and now President of the Robert R. Moton Institute, New York, New York, Monday, January 28, 1974.