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The Organization of African Unity

NORMAN J. PADELFORD

IN the period since the publication of the special number of this journal devoted to Africa and international organization,[1] one development of potentially considerable importance in this connection has transpired within Africa. This is the launching of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its embarcation on the task of forging a measure of peaceful collaboration out of the multitude of mixed aspirations and competing, indeed conflicting, interests of the African states.

The inauguration of this newest venture in regional organization, the first tangible fruit of the dream of Pan-African unity, may bear careful watching as the now 33 independent African countries grope their way in search of a new identity, accelerated economic growth, and increased power and influence both within the continent itself and on the world stage as well.

Whether the signing of the OAU Charter by the leaders of 28 African countries meeting in Addis Ababa on May 25, 1963, will become a stepping stone toward an eventual United States of Africa, as some desire, or remain essentially a skeletal framework for a loose association of sovereign states dependent upon voluntary collaboration, only time can tell. But at the very least the move is significant in that the heads of states were ready to take a step in translating the widely proclaimed goal of African unity into a tangible form of organized cooperation, however weak and divided its organs may remain. In its present

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[1] "Africa and International Organization," special issue of *International Organization*, Spring 1962 (Vol. 16, No. 2).

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form this can be regarded as a regional arrangement in keeping with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

Diverse Paths to Unity

The forces contributing to Pan-Africanism and the forces tending toward economic, political, or social fragmentation have been discussed at some length by Professor Emerson and by Mr. Kloman in the special number of *International Organization*.[2] These are an inherent part of the cultural and political background underlying the Addis Ababa agreement and its subsequent implementation—the search of "an African personality," a sense of "African community."[3] Independence has brought statements from many African leaders of a common aspiration for a "united Africa." The background of colonial status, shared in one way or another by nearly all, gave meaning to the aspiration which had its intellectual birth in the series of Pan-African congresses held at intervals from 1900 on. At the same time this centrally focused ideal has been countered by the centrifugal force of rival personal ambitions and interests as various leaders have grasped political power and felt the urge to stimulate popular support for their regimes or to enhance the position of their states. The various groupings of African states formed since 1958 have served to focus and sharpen these rival interests.

The leaders of Ghana and Guinea, in particular, have urged that a close union of states be formed with a centralized executive, a consultative assembly, planning and development ministries, and an African high command.[4] They also have pressed for an African armed force with power to "intervene" in troubled situations. President Nkrumah has pressed hard along these lines for a number of reasons. Among them are the sense of destiny which he feels as the leader of the first country of tropical Africa to achieve independence, his desire to see progress made along lines consistent with his own terms, his conviction that it is good politics to be in the forefront of such a movement, and Ghana's need for access to the raw materials and markets of other countries.

[2] See articles by Rupert Emerson, "Pan-Africanism," and by Erasmus H. Kloman, Jr., "African Unification Movements," *International Organization*, Spring 1962 (Vol. 16, No. 2), pp. 275–290 and 387–404, respectively.

[3] See Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1963), p. 4.

[4] See text of Charter of Casablanca in *Conference of Heads of African States at Casablanca* (Casablanca, Morocco, January 3–7, 1961). Text also in Ruth C. Lawson (ed.), *International Regional Organization; Constitutional Foundations* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1962), pp. 304–306. The platforms of this and the other groups are discussed at some length in Alex Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound: Reflections of an African Statesman* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1963), pp. 91–97. See also Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1963).

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The case for the centralist approach has been put by Ghanaian Ambassador Alex Quaison-Sackey in this wise:

> If the destiny of Africa as a whole is the common cause of each individual state . . . then we [can] . . . make common cause against the vast economic and social problems confronting the whole continent . . . [and] the African Personality will be realized.[5]

The thirteen countries of West and Equatorial Africa forming the Brazzaville grouping have been disposed to move more slowly toward exclusively African measures. While not rejecting a loose association of states, they have preferred to maintain their ties with France and the European Common Market and to develop the regional African and Malagasy Organization for Economic Cooperation with headquarters at Yaounde in Cameroon.[6] Because of the defense ties which some of these states have retained with France,[7] they have been accused by some of the more radical African leaders as being "victims of neo-colonialism" and not being "genuinely independent." This has produced resentment as have attempts, such as that in Gabon, to overthrow their governments.[8]

The states forming the Monrovia Group, often operating under Nigerian leadership, have strongly favored a gradualist policy on unity and preferred functional cooperation to unification. They have frequently tended to counterweight the more radical elements. Many of the members of this grouping have preferred an emphasis on pluralism, consultative rather than executive organs, and stress upon the forming of a development bank, a private investment guarantee fund, and stepped-up activities in the field of education, labor, and social welfare before political union.[9]

The leaders of the East African countries joined in the regional Pan-African Freedom Movement of East, Central, and South Africa (PAFMECSA) have,

[5] Quaison-Sackey, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[6] See Kloman, *loc. cit.;* Raoul Crabbe, "De l'Union Française de 1946 à la Communauté," *Eurafrica,* June 1961 (5th Year, No. 5), pp. 18–21; Thomas Hodgkin and Ruth Schachter, "French Speaking West Africa in Transition," *International Conciliation,* May 1960 (No. 528), pp. 375–436; Jean Rigotard, "De l'Union Française à la Communauté," *Revue d'Economie Politique,* July–October 1959 (69th Year), pp. 477–540; Virginia M. Thompson and Richard Aloff, *The Emerging States of French Equatorial Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960). The text of the Charter of the African and Malagasy Union, signed September 12, 1961, will be found in Lawson, *op. cit.,* pp. 301–302.

[7] Lawson, *op. cit.,* pp. 298–299.

[8] See Mboya, *op. cit.,* pp. 221–222.

[9] See Serge-Maffert, "De Yaoundé à Monrovia à la poursuite de l'unité africaine," *Communauté France-Eurafrique,* April 1961 (13th year, No. 120), pp. 5–7; Serge-Maffert, "Les Resolutions de Monrovia et la Charte de Casablanca," *Communauté France-Eurafrique,* May 1961 (13th Year, No. 121), pp. 2–3; "Pan-African First Steps," *The Economist,* April 29, 1961 (Vol. 199, No. 6140), pp. 454–456; "The Monrovia Conference," *Présence Africaine,* 1961 (Vol. 9, No. 37), pp. 193–199. For texts see *Resolutions of the Plenary Sessions, Conference of Heads of African and Malagasy States, Held at Monrovia City Hall, 8th–12th May, 1961* (Monrovia: Liberian Information Service, 1961).

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with the principal exception of Milton Obote of Uganda who has made common cause with Nkrumah, generally favored a relatively loose association of states and functional cooperation while praising the theme of African unity.[10] In forming their Movement in 1962, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, and Milton Obote affirmed their "hope that our action will help to accelerate the efforts already being made by our brothers throughout the continent to achieve African unity."[11] An apparent further step in this direction was taken in the spring of 1964 when the Presidents of Tanganyika and Zanzibar signed articles of union for their countries.[12]

In addition to the differing outlooks of the members of these groupings there are of course other factors, both domestic and external, environmental as well as human, that have influenced the policies of states. These include a reluctance on the part of young leaders who have struggled for freedom to sacrifice independence for an uncertain supranational order in which others might come to dominate their destiny or achieve advantages at the cost of their peoples and resources. Fears of a new African-initiated imperialism have been conjured up. Boundary disputes, such as the Moroccan-Algerian conflict in 1963 and the recurrent fighting on the Ethiopian and Kenyan frontiers of Somalia, have also impeded unity.[13]

Cultural and religious differences have to some extent invaded the sphere of cooperation, but these have on the whole figured less prominently than outsiders had predicted they would, especially along the Arab-Negro and Islam-Christian-Pagan cleavages. The split associated with Israel has been a factor: Arab emissaries have criticized the use of Israeli technical assistance and trade which not a few of the less developed countries have found invaluable in their development. The attitude of some has been expressed by Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika when he said: "We do not want our friends to choose our enemies for us." And Tom Mboya has said:

> We also think we can play a more useful part in trying to remove difficulties and misunderstandings between nations which are our friends, rather than in intensifying hatreds which existed before we came to nationhood. We hope that both Israel and the Arab states will give us an opportunity of helping them resolve this problem. . . . Neither of them should ask us or expect us to hate the other.[14]

No less significant are the weak national regimes in a number of states and the transportation and communication difficulties that beset Africans. The

[10] On PAFMECSA, see Mboya, *op. cit.*, pp. 208–219.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 230.

[12] See *The New York Times*, April 24, 1964.

[13] In this connection one might mention the fears aroused by reports of a $30 million Soviet ruble loan to Somalia to arm a force of 20,000. (*The New York Times*, November 14, 1963.)

[14] Mboya, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

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fact that "it is five hours from Dakar to Paris but a week to Addis Ababa or Nairobi" is a common problem throughout the continent. Compounding the difficulties are the many tongues (over 800) spoken among Africans aside from English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

These are but some of the complications that beset the trail to unity. Others include the unremitting efforts of outside powers to maintain and increase their own national interests in Africa and the effects which the competition and conflicts among these powers have in pulling and hauling the African countries this way and that. Notwithstanding sturdy efforts to avoid being drawn into the Cold War, the African states are continually being pressed in one direction or another by virtue of their friendships and dispositions toward one way of life or the advantages being offered by one power or another. These are unavoidable, but they do affect the strivings for unity.

There is in addition the fact that not a single country, except of course South Africa which is excluded from the African unity movement because of its racial segregation policies, is industrialized. In almost every land over 90 percent of the workers are engaged in agriculture as compared with roughly 20 percent in the United States. Most are single-product economies and thus vulnerable to fluctuations in world market prices. Diversification is beginning in a few places as countries are starting to move up the ladder of economic growth. In all, however, the per capita income is still so low—less than $250 a year—that independent means are lacking to attain much progress in economic development or social advancement without large outside investment capital. And this often has aftereffects that tend to complicate freedom of choice with respect to purely intra-African affairs.

The Foreign Ministers Conference, May 1963

In the winter of 1962–1963 it was agreed that another conference of states should be held. As a prelude to the Summit gathering, the foreign ministers met for ten days in Addis Ababa to discuss the agenda including proposals for a union.

On the convening of the ministers from 31 countries, host Emperor Haile Selassie urged them to speed the emancipation of the yet subject peoples, to raise living standards, and to work out a "universal African Charter."[15] The general sentiment of the ministers was voiced by Congo's Premier Cyrille Adoula who said: "There is much talk about African Unity, but, up till now,

[15] Agence France-Presse, *Africa South of the Sahara,* May 16, 1963 (No. 967), p. 1.

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we have not had the same concept of this unity. We must first find a common denominator."[16]

An Ethiopian working plan accepted as the basis for the deliberations listed as its first item the creation of an organization of African states. Other topics included were cooperation on economic and social affairs, education, collective defense, decolonization, *apartheid* and racial discrimination, the consequences of regional groupings, and disarmament.[17]

The question of unity became the most important item. Two proposals for an African charter were submitted by Ethiopia and Ghana respectively, together with a Nigerian proposal that the Monrovia (Group) Charter be accepted as the basis for unity. The Ethiopian plan drew heavily upon the seminal ideas of the Organization of American States (OAS) and was indeed drafted in large measure by Mr. Truco, Chile's representative to the OAS, who was asked to be a consultant for the occasion. This plan recommended the formation of a loose association of states that would not necessarily disturb the existing regional organizations. The Ghanaian plan, forecast by President Nkrumah, proposed the immediate establishment of a continental government including a parliament, a high command, an African army, and centralized economic planning. The Nigerian-Monrovia powers plan visualized an enlargement of the organs provided for in their Charter, namely, a council of ministers, a biennial representative assembly, a permanent secretariat, and a cluster of economic and financial agencies. This latter plan was never pressed to a vote in spite of the numerical majority of the Monrovia Group at the conference. This may have been due to off-stage bargaining that agreed to give the host state the honor of sponsoring the final arrangement.[18]

The Ghanaian plan was rationalized by its Foreign Minister Kojo Batsio in these words: "My delegation is of the opinion that the establishment of a continental government is the only antidote to combat the entrenched forces dividing our continent." Such an instrument was needed, he averred, to protect Africans from neocolonialism and to build powerful, autonomous structures—industrial, economic, and cultural—that would enable the peoples to attain their dream of true unity. This was soon rejected by the Foreign Minister of Congo (Brazzaville), Stephane Tchitchelle, whose view was expressed in these terms:

> Personally, I think all idea of leadership should be brushed aside. . . . We want to keep our personality within the framework of African unity. We've . . . come to lay down the foundations of an overall African democratic union.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[17] Agence France-Presse, *Africa South of the Sahara,* May 20, 1963 (No. 968), p. 1.
[18] See *Africa Diary,* June 1–7, 1963 (Vol. 3, No. 23), p. 1182.

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One East African view was voiced by the Malagasy Foreign Minister: "Africans must obtain equality before unity can be achieved." The Addis Ababa meeting, he claimed, could be fruitful only "if territorial claims and aggressive policies are renounced."

A disturbing note was injected by Somali Foreign Minister Abdullahi Issa who told the gathering that his country wanted a "Greater Somalia" set up within an East and Central African Federation embracing his country, Ethiopia, Kenya, and French Somaliland and built upon a customs union, regional alliance, and common currency. He further suggested that a permanent arbitration commission be established to settle differences between African states.

A somewhat different East African outlook was expressed by Tanganyika's Foreign Minister Oscar Kambona. "Most African leaders," he said, "realize that the time for fragmentation has gone. . . . It is only through unity that Africa can avoid the pitfalls of nationalism which have involved the continent of Europe."[19] This reflected what Julius Nyerere, Tanganyika's Prime Minister, has written elsewhere:

> Most East Africa believes that the way to unity is through regional associations. At least Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, already have a common market, and run many services through the Common Services Organization. This is the nucleus from which a Federation is the natural growth.[20]

The Ministers were thus confronted with a variety of theories on the road that should be taken. These ranged from peaceful gradualism and further regionalization to a frontal assault upon the basic power structure of Africa.

The foreign ministers meeting ended without agreement upon a charter. Many of the ministers, particularly from the African-Malagasy Union, the Maghreb countries, and Sierre Leone, were reported to have pressed for immediate adoption of a "supple and realistic" provisional charter along the lines presented by Ethiopia. But this was resisted by Ghana and some others who eventually proposed postponement when it became obvious that the plan for a federal structure could not succeed.

According to the report of Committee I of the ministers to the Summit Conference, by its rapporteur Mr. Layachi Yaker of Algeria, some delegations recognized that a basic text was necessary to attain unity but stressed the need for a more thorough preliminary examination than they could give the documents submitted in the few days they were at Addis Ababa. Some said they had no mandate from their governments to commit themselves then and there

[19] For reports of speeches by various ministers, see France-Presse, *op. cit.*

[20] Julius Nyerere, "A United States of Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies,* March 1963 (Vol. I, No. 1), p. 6.

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to any text. Accordingly, after intensive efforts the ministers recommended that a provisional African secretariat be set up by Ethiopia and that the several plans be submitted to all the African governments for further study prior to convening a later meeting of the ministers to finally negotiate an agreed charter.[21]

Otherwise, the ministers recommended granting financial and military aid to nationalist movements in the remaining colonies, calling for denuclearization of the Continent, setting a date for the total independence of all African countries, protesting the situations in Angola and South Africa, and adopting a fifteen-point decolonization charter.[22] Taken all told, the ministers' meeting was disappointing, leaving doubts as to the usefulness of the coming Summit.

The Addis Ababa Summit Conference

As the leaders arrived at Addis Ababa for the Summit meeting, a new atmosphere began to manifest itself. The spirit of caution and dispute gave way to a sense of exhilaration and confidence as, one after the other, the heads of state or government, or their deputies, deplaned.

Speaking directly to the main issue in his welcoming address, Emperor Haile Selassie called for immediate action on a charter of African unity. In a bold stroke he appealed for appointment of a special commission to report a draft charter within two days. "The task on which we have embarked," he said, "will not wait. We must act, to shape and mold the future and leave our imprint on events as they slip past into history." Addressing himself to the remaining elements of foreign exploitation, he called for final liberation, saying, "Our liberty is meaningless unless all Africans are free." Acknowledging that differences have developed among Africans on "techniques and tactics" of uniting the nations, he spurred the delegates by asserting that there are, nonetheless, "no insuperable obstacles to the coming-together of people." He added that, while all agree on the ultimate goal of unity, obstacles do exist in the differing circumstances of various countries and in the differing views as to how unity should be attained. If steps are to be delayed until there are agreed answers to all of these questions, he said, generations hence, matters would be little advanced while the debate still raged.

Pointing to experience elsewhere, the Emperor came out forthrightly for the gradualist approach.

[21] *Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States* (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings*), Vol. 1, section 1, Document SCIAS/Plen./3, May 22, 1963 (Addis Ababa, May 1963).

[22] These draft resolutions are summarized in the reports of Committees I and II of the ministers and the accompanying texts in the *Proceedings*.

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> The union which we seek can only come gradually, as the day-to-day progress which we achieve carries us slowly but inexorably along this course. We have before us the examples of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. We must remember how long these required to achieve their union. When a solid foundation is laid, if the mason is able and his materials good, a strong house can be built.

Coming to the point of his argument the Emperor urged:

> Let us here and now agree upon the basic instrument that will constitute the foundation for the future growth in peace and harmony and oneness of this continent. . . . Let us not put off, to later consideration and study, the single act, the one decision, which must emerge from this gathering if it is to have real meaning. This conference cannot close without adopting a single African Charter. . . . If we fail in this, we will have shirked our responsibility to Africa and to the peoples we lead.[23]

The appeal caught the imagination of other delegates and swept the initial session to a positive action. Before the first day's meeting was over, a spirit of enthusiasm was widely evinced in the replies of other heads of state. Representatives of several of the previously hesitant states seemed ready to take a step which but a few days before had seemed impossible.

Haile Selassie was apparently moved to take this plunge out of fear that the conference, meeting in the hall which he had built and donated to the cause of African collaboration, might fail if he did not strike swiftly. The prestige of his regime, and of the African unity movement itself, was at stake. Had the Emperor engaged merely in customary pleasantries, the Summit could easily have descended to generalities and postponed perhaps indefinitely the creation of an organization. A sense of the political importance of appealing for immediate action made it apparent that he must move at once. In this the Emperor knew that he had the support of most of the Monrovia Group and possibly others from North and East Africa for a loosely-knit organization incorporating the principles of the United Nations and the spirit of African idealism. That the tactic was soundly conceived was demonstrated by the fact that it worked.

The declarations contained in the subsequent addresses by the heads of state ranged over a broad terrain. President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia expressed support for the gradualist theme.

> In a continent barely emerging from the colonial era, enfeebled and divided, unity has, of necessity, a penetrating resonance and great power of attraction. But it is still an ideal towards which we are tending and for which we must act. Speaking for ourselves, we prefer to see things as they are. We hardly know each other, and we have barely had time to draw up an inventory of the things which bring us

[23] *Proceedings,* Vol. I, section 2, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/3, pp. 1–11.

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> together and those which divide us. . . . For unity, in the final analysis, can only come from the consent—the real, profound, and freely expressed consent—of the people.

Addressing himself to the fears and suspicions that not a few have held, he added:

> It can never be imposed by means of force or subversion, serving a desire for supremacy. . . . When one partner wishes to dominate a group, sooner or later that group will fall apart. . . . We must build solidly on a basis of popular consent, mutual esteem and respect for all sovereignties.[24]

In a speech infused with a deep philosophical spirit, President Leopold Senghor of Senegal aligned himself with the positions of Haile Selassie and Habib Bourguiba.

> What binds Africans together arises from culture—it is that community of culture which I call African-ness. . . . Though its nature is material and technical, it is on spiritual energy that we must call. We must forge together a common soul. That means we must begin by rejecting all fanaticism. . . . The aim we must assign . . . to our action [must be] bringing each and every African to full worth. . . . The important thing . . . is that we make . . . a developed man because he has consciously cultivated in himself, in body and soul, all the virtues of African-ness.

Among other specific steps, Senghor appealed for the creation of an African common market as a means of transforming weakness into strength.[25] Another who spoke for the middle way was Ahmadou Ahidjo of Cameroon.

> The organization that we can give to African Unity has to be a highly flexible one. It seems to us that any rigid form of institution would be premature at this stage. And so, for the moment, let us have neither Federation nor Confederation.[26]

Many speakers stressed the importance of uniting in order to ensure that territories that are still dependent may be given support to realize their ambitions for independence too. Among those emphasizing this point of view was President Fulbert Youlou of the Congo (Brazzaville), who urged that the leaders join in proclaiming a "Monroe Doctrine" for Africa, i.e., that Africa was no longer open for colonization or interference by non-African powers, and that a time limit be fixed for the independence of all territories.[27]

The most anxiously awaited speech was that of President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. His book entitled *Africa Must Unite* had been published shortly before the meeting and was being circulated among the delegates. In keeping

[24] *Ibid.*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/8, pp. 1–7.
[25] *Ibid.*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/9, pp. 1–6.
[26] *Ibid.*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/10, pp. 1–9.
[27] *Ibid.*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/11, pp. 1–8.

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with his beliefs he urged the leaders, in a political phrase used before, to "seek ye first the political kingdom and all things will be added to it."[28] He stressed in the first place the need for unity in the distribution of scarce resources to escape poverty and to develop heavy industry at the same pace as agriculture. Only by achieving a continental economy could there be economic growth and satisfaction of needs. This, he insisted, could be attained only by planning on a continental basis. Secondly, he insisted that economic and social development depended upon political unity and could occur only within it. The United States and the Soviet Union, he argued, "were the political decisions of revolutionary peoples before they became mighty realities of social power and material wealth." Thirdly, he argued the necessity of delivering the progress which the newly nationalistic elites had been led to hope for, lest "the resentment which overthrew colonialism . . . be mobilized against us," possibly a presentiment of the unrest that has been manifest in his own state. Fourthly, he urged the nations to adopt a unified military and defense strategy with an African army. Finally, he emphasized that Africa had to adopt a common foreign policy to give political direction to its efforts to protect and develop the continent.[29]

In presenting his proposals for an African charter, Nkrumah followed the reasoning of his book that "without necessarily sacrificing our sovereignties, we can forge a political union. . . . " This qualified tone perhaps came from Nkrumah's awareness that the tide of opinion was running against him and, he may have employed this as a device for saving what he could. Or possibly the spirit of compromise evoked by Haile Selassie and others made him realize that whatever came from the Conference would have to represent a melding of different viewpoints. Whatever the reason, Nkrumah presented his proposals but did not press them hard. And when the Conference ended with the adoption of essentially the Ethiopian plan, he joined in praising the results.

Recognizing that different regimes "cannot but serve to enrich Africa . . . in the realm of doctrines and methods," President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast nevertheless warned that there must be "absolute tolerance, scrupulously and religiously observed by all in their dealings with one another" and an end of "subversive intrigues originating in third African states" if unity were to be attained.[30]

Stressing the need for discovering the "highest common denominator" among the states, which he believed was represented in the specific proposals referred to the ministers, Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika emphasized that the

[28] Kwame Nkrumah, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
[29] *Proceedings*, Vol. 1, section 2, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/36, pp. 1–14.
[30] *Ibid.*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/31, pp. 1–13.

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duty of the Conference was to act "without waiting till tomorrow." Also aligning himself with the moderates he said:

> There will be some who will say that this charter does not go far enough or is not revolutionary enough. This may be so. But what is going far enough? No good mason would complain that his first brick did not go far enough. He knows that a first brick will go as far as it can go and will go no farther. He will go on laying brick after brick before the edifice is complete.[31]

In one of the key speeches of the Conference, Premier Abubakar Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria declared:

> My country stands for the practical approach to the unity of the African continent. We feel that, if this unity is to last . . . we must agree to certain essential things: the first is that African states must respect one another.

Reflecting the misgivings still felt by numerous leaders about the conduct of some others, Mr. Balewa added: "To my mind we cannot achieve this African unity as long as some African countries continue to carry on subversive activities in other African countries." Stressing the great importance of economic development, the Nigerian leader pleaded for caution in the acceptance of outside investment capital lest "colonialism in a different form" be fastened upon the young nations. Finally, he urged as a "most practical" step the formation of an African common market embracing all countries but based on "certain groupings," indicating thereby Nigeria's desire to see the Monrovia Group retained in any new system, at least for economic purposes.[32]

The peaceful tone of the meetings was shattered when the President of Somalia rose to attack Ethiopia for refusing to grant a plebiscite to the Somali people on its borders. Asserting his belief that the problem of Africa's "misdrawn" boundaries was a proper subject for debate at the Conference, he said there could be no unity as long as these problems remained. For a moment the fate of the Conference hung in the balance as the Emperor arose, indignant over this slur. The Chairman Houphouet-Boigny quickly intervened, however, to save the situation. Sharply criticizing the Somali action, he expressed regret that a matter had been mentioned in public which should have been brought up in private. His action was warmly applauded, demonstrating the general feeling that such quarrels should be settled "within the family" and that a united front should be presented to the world.

After the commission, which had been appointed on the opening day, presented its draft Charter of the Organization of African Unity, there was never much doubt about where the Conference would terminate. Delegate after dele-

[31] *Ibid.*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/34, pp. 1–4.
[32] "Record Speech," *Proceedings*, Document CIAS/GEN/INF/35, pp. 1–6.

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gate rose to praise the moderate plan represented in this blend of the original Ethiopian plan and the Monrovia Group Charter. With surprising rapidity the heads of state were able to reach agreement and the Charter was signed on May 25.[33]

In the special commission report, the chairman affirmed that the initiative for the Summit Conference was due to "the total demand of the Continent that all Africa stand united" in order to liquidate the remnants of colonialism and "provide a better life to the peoples of Africa." He acknowledged that the recommended draft Charter had been worked out "by long discussions and compromises," but added that in the end there was "complete identity of views on all essentials." Differences were limited to "questions of procedure, approach, or tactic, but never on substance or the destiny of our peoples." The heads of state were urged, "in the name of all our peoples," to adopt the arrangement, lest history "never forgive us for it shall not give us another occasion."[34]

Although Morocco was not represented at the Conference, a place was left for her signature which was added shortly thereafter.

The Charter of the OAU

The instrument signed at Addis Ababa is a melange of the ideas and provisions found in the Charters of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the Monrovia Group. The Preamble reaffirms the principles of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To promote the unity of the African states, eradicate colonialism, and provide a solid foundation for "peaceful and positive cooperation among states," the signatory powers agree to harmonize and coordinate their general policies in certain fields.

The membership of the Organization is to comprise each independent African state adhering to the Charter. All are to enjoy equal rights and duties. Among the principles to which the members agree to adhere are respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each member, noninterference in the internal affairs of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, unreserved condemnation of political assassination and subversion, dedication to the total

[33] For the text of the Charter, see the report of the special commission of the foreign ministers of the Summit Conference in *Proceedings,* Vol. 1, section 1, Document SCIAS/Plen./1, May 30, 1963; and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "The Addis Ababa Charter," *International Conciliation,* January 1964 (No. 546), Appendix, pp. 53–62.

[34] Reservations were made to the report on the question of languages by the United Arab Republic, Tunisia, Libya, and a few other delegations. But these were resolved in the final phraseology of Article XXIX.

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emancipation of the dependent African territories, and affirmation of a policy of nonalignment.

For principal organs are provided for by the Charter. These are: 1) an Assembly of heads of state and government, 2) a Council of Ministers, 3) a General Secretariat, and 4) a Commission of Mediation, Conciliation, and Arbitration.

The Charter provides that "the supreme organ" of the Organization shall be the Assembly. This is to be composed of the heads of all member states or governments, meeting at least once a year and in extraordinary session when approved by a majority. As in the UN, each state has one vote and resolutions require a two-thirds majority save for procedural matters. Among its functions, the Assembly is expected to harmonize policies and to review the acts of all other organs or agencies.

The Council of Ministers is to be composed of the foreign ministers or such other ministers as may be designated by the states. It is expected to meet at least twice each year and in special session when requested and approved by two-thirds of the members. It is responsible, among other things, for preparing the agenda for the annual Assembly, executing decisions of the latter, and coordinating intra-African cooperation under the guidance of the Assembly. This is a reversal of the roles envisioned in the scheme advanced by Mr. Nkrumah. Resolutions are passed by a simple majority and there is no veto.

The Secretary-General is to be appointed as in the United Nations by the Assembly on recommendation of the Council of Ministers. Beyond indicating that he shall be "an administrative Secretary-General," the Charter does not spell out his powers or functions. In other words, these will be actions requested by the Assembly or Council and actions taken by the Secretary-General on his own which he may be able to persuade others to accept. At the present juncture when parties cannot agree upon a full-fledged Secretary-General and when experience is still lacking, it is premature to compare the role of this office with its counterparts in either the Organization of American States (OAS), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), or the UN. Basically, the design appears to have been drawn upon a more limited blueprint than the provisions of Chapter XV of the United Nations Charter. A comparison may possibly be made to the office of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations as conceived under the regime of Sir Eric Drummond—an international office of a high-level civil-servant type to carry out instructions rather than a guiding hand for the Organization as Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld came to visualize his role in the UN.

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The member states pledge themselves to settle all disputes among themselves by peaceful means. To facilitate this a commission is to be formed under the direction and authorization of the Assembly. Provision is also made for other commissions as on economic and social affairs, education and cultural matters, health, sanitation and nutrition, defense, and scientific development and research. It is interesting to note that the parties did not provide for an African court of justice. This might tend to suggest that the concept of law is not advanced sufficiently to warrant the establishment of such an organ. It may be recalled, however, that neither the OAS nor most other regional arrangements, excepting the European Communities, have provided for such an institution. If a court of justice is deemed desirable in the future, this can of course be added through the amendment procedure provided that a majority of the member states are prepared to do so.

The budget is to be prepared by the Secretary-General and aproved by the Council of Ministers and contributions are to be apportioned in accordance with the scale of the United Nations. Finally, provision was made for the instrument to enter into force when ratifications from two-thirds of the states had been deposited with the Government of Ethiopia, a step already achieved.

The Organization depends upon the willing cooperation of the member states. There are no sanctions to threaten them if they do not give this. There is no organ with disciplinary powers. No international force is provided for, to intervene in their territories if they do not fulfill the purposes of the Charter or comply with the resolutions of the Assembly or the Council of Ministers. The institutions are designed to promote cooperation, not to exact it; to urge collaboration, not to punish for its refusal.

The effectiveness of the Organization will obviously depend, as in the United Nations, on the measure of harmony that can be developed among the states. The only power implicit in the system is that of the opinion of the other states. This could become a force to compel recalcitrant or aggressive members to pause. As we shall see presently, this has already manifested itself in the criticism of the East African states for having invited British troops to help put down army mutinies, and in pressures upon the African and Malagasy Union (UAM) states to dissolve their political bloc.

There is a strong desire among the African states to keep their quarrels to themselves and not to allow situations to be used to advance the Cold War interests of outside nations. This may be an asset. But on the other hand the jealousies that still remain, as graphically illustrated in the complex attitudes associated with proposals to replace the UN force in the Congo with a purely African force, leave unresolved doubts as to what extent the African states can

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insulate the continent from the forces of world politics and keep their own disputes within limits.

One of the deep-seated apprehensions in Africa today is that some leader or combination of states will try to impose its will upon others in a new imperialism. This concern is expressed in the terms of Article 3 and again in the pledge exacted of members in Article 6 that they will carry out "scrupulously" the principles of noninterference and of respect for one another's territory.

One may be pardoned for raising a question about the ability of the OAU to hold its head above water financially in the light of the difficulties the UN has had. Payment of contributions is voluntary. There is no sanction comparable to Article 19 of the United Nations Charter providing for the loss of the right to vote if payments fall into arrears. If the bills do not become too onerous the Organization may have no trouble. But given the strong desires of some members for an active institution, there will be a tendency for the costs to creep up as they have elsewhere. So this will have to be watched with care.

Since the OAU is essentially a coordinating body, its principal organs will have to be supplemented by specific agencies in designated fields. It may perhaps be in these agencies that the foundation will be laid for an eventual further advance toward the politically powerful central organs which the Nkrumah plan envisioned but which the states were not ready to adopt in 1963.

Resolutions Adopted by the Addis Ababa Conference

Although the Charter can be seen as a product of the moderate forces at work within the Conference, the resolutions adopted were of a more radical nature. These covered such matters as decolonization, *apartheid* and racial discrimination, Africa and the United Nations, economic problems, disarmament, social and labor matters, education and culture, health, sanitation, and nutrition. Space does not permit us to go into the details of these. They will be found textually in the special issue of the *Ethiopia Observer* devoted to the Conference.[35] A few points only can be touched upon.

The resolution on decolonization reiterates the evils of the colonial system, appeals to the powers to grant independence to the remaining possessions, invites the British not to transfer power in Southern Rhodesia to the white community there, calls for the breaking of diplomatic and consular relations with Portugal and South Africa, asks for a boycott of trade and communications with these countries, and sets up a coordination commission to harmonize policies toward the liberation movements and to receive and administer funds for

[35] *Ethiopia Observer*, 1963 (Vol. 8, No. 1).

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their assistance. In the resolution on disarmament the leaders called for the removal of foreign military bases, the elimination of mutual assistance ties with non-African states, and the declaration of Africa as a denuclearized zone. On economic matters the Conference called for the creation of a free trade area, a payments and clearing union, and a Pan-African monetary zone.

In the post-Conference assessments a variety of opinions were expressed. The Ghana Radio, for example, hailed the results as "a positive victory for the forces of radical African nationalism."[36] The London *Times,* on the other hand, concluded that it fell "far short of Ghana's concept of a Union Government of Africa." The *Spectator* saw it as a "considerable victory for the gradualists." There was thus something to which each side could rally and enough to satisfy the need for a common denominator. Although the majority rejected a strong union, one should not underestimate the logic of those who wanted to go further.

The OAU in Operation

Among the various commissions which have been formed, possibly the most significant is the Commission on Liberation Movements. This is composed of the following nine states: Tanganyika, Algeria, Ethiopia, the United Arab Republic, Uganda, Congo (Leopoldville), Guinea, Senegal, and Nigeria. The principal role of the Commission to date has been to collect approximately $500,000 with which to aid the "freedom fighters" of Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa[37] and to propose that the states contribute $1,500,000 a year to aid the independence movements.

At the meeting of the Council of Ministers in Dakar in August 1963, a resolution was pressed by Ghana, Guinea, and Mali calling for the "immediate dissolution" of regional groupings. This was directed chiefly at the members of the Africa and Malagasy Union (UAM) and was resisted stoutly by them. Their spokesmen said that while they were ready to "harmonize" their policies with those of the OAU and even to merge gradually, they were not willing to disband until there was more evidence that the Organization was able to meet their needs. After a bitter debate the Ministers dropped the resolution and limited themselves to expressing a "wish" to see regional groupings "melt gradually" into the OAU.[38] A news item some months later reported that

[36] *Africa Report,* June 1963 (Vol. 8, No. 6).

[37] *The New York Times,* March 3, 1964. On other commissions see *Africa Diary,* November 16–22, 1963 (Vol. 3, No. 47), p. 1454. The OAU members agreed to create by July 1965 an African development bank with an initial capitalization of $300 million. (*The Christian Science Monitor,* August 7 and 21, 1963.)

[38] *Africa Diary,* September 7–13, 1963 (Vol. 3, No. 37), p. 1336. For a summary of the meeting of the Council of Ministers in August 1963, see *International Organization,* Winter 1964 (Vol. 18, No. 1), p. 209.

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UAM members had decided to transform the Union into an economic association, abandoning most of its political objectives for the sake of African unity.[39] Thus, the pressure of the activists was not without result. Nothing was said about the abandonment of the defense provisions of the UAM, although it can be presumed that others may regard these as being incompatible with membership in the larger association and so press for their termination.

At an extraordinary meeting called in November 1963 to deal with the conflict between Algeria and Morocco over the boundary area in the western Sahara, the Ministers assembled after Emperor Haile Selassie had mediated a cease-fire arrangement which also provided for a four-power commission to set up a neutral demilitarized zone between the principals to be supervised by Mali and Ethiopia. The Ministers named a seven-member commission to help the contestants find a permanent solution and obtained from them promises to "cooperate" with the commission and to refrain from any action that might jeopardize the fulfillment of its mandate.[40] Such arrangements may possibly form a pattern for adjustment of other border issues. Given its lack of power, the commission must depend upon its ability to persuade the disputants to avoid further hostilities and to come forward with an acceptable solution.

The army mutinies in Tanganyika, Kenya, and Uganda following the Zanzibar coup in January 1964, coupled with the appeals from the three countries for British forces to restore order, and the French intervention in Gabon when President Léon Mba was temporarily unseated, placed a bundle of heated issues before a second emergency meeting of Ministers summoned to meet at Dar es Salaam by President Nyerere to deal with the "grave danger" to the continent's unity. Using the meeting as a device to cloak his retreat from his awkward political position, President Nyerere indirectly appealed to the OAU to help find some way by which the British troops could be replaced. Their continued presence, he said, would compromise Tanganyika's independence and African nonalignment. Stepping delicately among thorns, Nyerere never directly mentioned a joint military force, but his comment that "it may well be that Africa can find from Africa a means of assisting Tanganyika in the task of maintaining law and order" seemed to imply this. In a maneuver that would have been embarrassing to others, Nyerere won applause when he declared that "problems arising from the mutiny of Tanganyika troops should be dealt with in a way which will foster and not harm the common objective

[39] *The New York Times,* March 11, 1964.

[40] *Africa Diary,* November 16–22, 1963 (Vol. 3, No. 47), p. 1444. For reports on the Addis Ababa meeting of Ministers, see *The New York Times,* October 23, 25, 26, 28, and 31, 1963; and *Le Monde,* November 6, 16, 19, and 20, 1963. For the report of settlement, see *The New York Times,* November 15, 1963, and February 21, 1964.

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of African unity." Although Uganda and Kenya were reported to be intent on handling the aftermath of their mutinies without the intervention of an African force, the conference was reported to have closed with the appointment of a twelve-nation committee to consider the training of an African force.[41]

Representatives of 33 nations were present at the second regular meeting of the Ministers held in Lagos shortly after the emergency session. A large agenda resulted in more than twenty resolutions recommended to the next heads of state Assembly. These included appeals for barring ships and planes en route to or from South Africa from the ports and air space of African nations, cessation of foreign investment and commercial relations so long as South Africa pursued its *apartheid* policies, and an appeal to Britain not to hand Southern Rhodesia over to its white community.

At this meeting Ghana and Guinea again strongly urged the creation of an African army and high command, arguing that only such a force could have "properly intervened" in the rash of border disputes, mutinies, and coups. But such wide differences developed as to who would pay for the force, what country would command it, and under what circumstances it would act and on whose request, that no decision could be reached other than to pass the matter on for consideration to the ensuing heads of state conference. Among the various proposals on this subject, one that seemed more likely to commend itself to the gradualists at this stage was that such a force should consist of regional contingents or arrangements rather than a centralized body. Fear of what an alien, or international, command might do under some circumstances is latent in African minds—as it is elsewhere.

With regard to the Ethiopia-Somali border fighting, the Ministers congratulated the states on seeking a cease-fire but did not go so far as to call for a demilitarized zone or authorize the stationing of a patrol by neutral observers.

The meeting also approved a draft protocol to establish the Permanent Commission of Mediation, Conciliation, and Arbitration envisioned by the Charter. As in other instances this body was placed on a voluntary basis so that no state could be compelled to accept its offer of assistance. It may, nonetheless, serve as a useful buffer between feuding states and contribute to peaceful settlement. It will not be easy for warring parties to reject its good offices or mediation though they may turn down arbitration.[42]

[41] *The New York Times,* February 13 and 15, 1964. According to the journal *East Africa and Rhodesia,* February 20, 1964, Algeria, Ethiopia, and Nigeria were asked to supply forces for Tanganyika for six months with Tanganyika having control over their deployment. *The New York Times* reported March 3, 1964, that British forces had already left Uganda and were to be replaced shortly by Nigerian forces in Tanganyika. It was stated that they would remain longer, however, in Kenya and that they had been given staging and training rights.

[42] *The New York Times,* March 2 and 3, 1964.

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The divisions that have emerged at meetings of the Ministers indicate that national and ideological differences run deeply beneath the surface of African collaboration. Although the more radical elements have aroused a good deal of opposition, it must be acknowledged, nonetheless, that persistence has gotten some results. Step by step others have softened their resistance to the point that an increased measure of "African-ness" has begun to manifest itself. There is still a long way to go on the road toward anything resembling a United States of Africa. But it is possible to see movement away from old patterns. The continuing conflicts among the Ministers are a matter of concern. Will the heads of states and of governments continue to find acceptable compromises as they did at Addis Ababa? Or will they too fall into the same kind of bickering as have their ministers? These are among the unresolved questions.

An Interim Assessment

Over the years Pan-Africanism has shown a tendency to move from the general to the specific; from amorphous protest to the fashioning of organized cooperation.

Notwithstanding differences over the type of institution that should be developed and the powers that should be given to its organs, there has been a universally voiced desire to have some kind of arrangement that will help harmonize policies and achieve cooperative measures, and which will reflect favorably upon Africa. The practical problem facing the members is whether the national differences and suspicions which have arisen along with their independent status can be composed sufficiently to enable them to give substantive and positive meaning to the diffuse provisions agreed upon in the Charter.

Federation of the states of Africa is still far off. The present arrangement is but one step on a long road. But it is not without point that the leaders have been willing to agree, within three years of the gaining of independence by many African states, to take almost as large a step as the American republics were able to achieve one hundred and thirty years after Simon Bolivar had proclaimed his vision of unity in the Americas. This is no small feat considering the gap that has separated the radicals from the gradualists. If the African states are able to move beyond the present loose form of continental association toward something more nearly approaching a United States of Africa, with a central constitution, there may then arise the question as to whether there will emerge from among their number, as happened in North America at the time of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, a modern Thomas Jefferson or James Madison with sufficient breadth of view and wisdom to be able to

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weld the disparate positions into a harmonious union. It is not yet clear whether or when the majority of African leaders will be willing to "form a more perfect Union," to quote the opening words of the Constitution of the United States of America.

Africans are "cutting new trails" through the forest of relationships with the OAU. Though their goal is "to share the blessings of a richly endowed continent among all its inhabitants; to make a reality of the brotherhood of the 'extended family' in a United States of Africa," there are still forests of doubts and ranges of differences that must be encompassed en route.[43]

The record of the Organization of American States, which has in its background impediments of a no less serious nature, has shown that over time results can be achieved with a relatively weak institution. Much has depended in this instance upon the willingness of the most powerful member to use its means and influence to help others progress, to promote pacific settlement of disputes by collective action, and to avoid intervening with arms in internal crises of the weaker states. In this respect the position of the United States in the OAS is unique. There is no comparable great and economically advanced power in the African Organization. By comparison, this may make a good deal of difference in the strength and stability of the OAU. It is clear that no less than a cooperative and forbearing spirit and willingness to compromise differences will have to characterize the relationships between the African countries, and between them and their neighbors, if the OAU is to achieve the objectives of its founders. Whether this can occur without the presence of a strong and prosperous power is open to question. However, African cooperation to end racial discrimination and the remaining vestiges of colonialism could perhaps help pave the way for the evolution of a larger synthesis at the level of political community.

It is too early to tell whether the lack of sanctions will prevent the Organization from becoming much more than a debating society. Other regional and international cooperative systems like the Nordic Council movement in Scandinavia, the Commonwealth, the Arab League, the Organization of American States, and the Organization of Central American States, to mention but a few, have gotten along without a police power. And they too have had to rely upon member states for voluntary financial contributions. Their achievements have arisen chiefly from forging closer ties, evolving common standards of law and in some instances of social security, developing a common market or joint research undertakings, and improving conciliation and peaceful settlement procedures. These and other arrangements, including the European Common

[43] Mboya, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

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Market, the Coal and Steel Community, and the Council of Europe, provide a valuable body of experience and knowledge on which the Africans can draw if they choose to do so. At the same time they have their own unique contribution to make, growing out of their own experience and ideals. The Africans will probably be unable to find any short cut to a United States of Africa. But whatever their rate of progress in this direction, the lessons learned from regional and functional collaboration in other parts of the world can be helpful to them on the way.

UN Secretary-General U Thant has described the political difficulties of some of the newer states as the "growing pains" young people often experience. The spirit of cooperation and compromise engendered in the formation of the Organization of African Unity should be helpful, insofar as it can be maintained, in assisting the African countries to walk together along a friendly path toward improved social and economic conditions, political stability and peaceful settlement of disputes, and a higher dignity for man.

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