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# The Fifth Pan-African Conference, 1945 and the All African Peoples Congress, 1958

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*George Shepperson*  
*St. Clair Drake*

**THE FIFTH PAN-AFRICAN  
CONFERENCE, 1945  
AND THE ALL AFRICAN  
PEOPLE'S CONGRESS, 1958**

**O**N THE EVENING OF May 11, 1987 the Five College community had the extremely good fortune to hear presentations by Professors St. Clair Drake and George Shepperson on the subject of pan-Africanism. As our readers are undoubtedly aware, both Shepperson and Drake have had extensive involvement with, and carried out numerous studies of, pan-African movements and congresses. (Citations of their work may be found in the accompanying footnotes.) The thoughtful idea to bring these two venerable scholars to the Five Colleges came from Professor William Strickland, who served as moderator. The session was a lively and informative one, as anticipated, and could easily have gone into the early hours of the morning had the stamina of speakers and audience allowed. Following St. Clair Drake's presentation, questions and responses were entertained from the floor. The resulting interchange, as the reader will note, was an extremely productive one. In editing the several hours of taped transcripts we have attempted, overall, to remain as true as possible to the words of the participants; occasionally these words had to be put in a more readable form.

GEORGE SHEPPERSON<sup>1</sup>

Professor St. Clair Drake and I have agreed that we shall each speak for 15-20 minutes on and around the topics of the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England, in 1945 and the All-African People's Congress in Accra, Ghana, in 1958; and that we shall then discuss what we have said. I may say that we have not yet heard each other's statement.

"Pan-Africanism" is a word which will soon be celebrating its centenary. It seems to have first been coined towards the end of the nineteenth century by Henry Sylvester Williams, a law student from Trinidad, who organized the Pan-African Conference in London, England, from 23 to 25 July, 1900.

Another Trinidadian, Professor Tony Martin, has provided the basis, I believe, for a workable definition of Pan-Africanism which in the almost ninety years since the 1900 Conference, has acquired various shades of meaning, political, economic and cultural. Professor Martin defines Pan-Africanism as "the attempts by African peoples to link up their struggles for their mutual benefit."<sup>2</sup> I would suggest the addition of "the African Diaspora" to this definition to make it read "Pan-Africanism is the attempts by the peoples of the African Diaspora and of Africa to link up their struggles for their mutual benefit."

If Pan-Africanism in the English-speaking world was started by intellectuals from the Caribbean, Afro-American intellectuals were not far behind them. W.E.B. Du Bois drafted the Address to the Nations of the World at the 1900 conference in which he used for the first time his famous statement "the problem of the twentieth century is the color line." Indeed, later, Du Bois was to acquire the title of "Father of Pan-Africanism." It would, I think, be more accurate to call him, "a Founding Father of Pan-Africanism."

Another founding father of pan-Africanism, with a small "p" to distinguish it from the Du Bois line of Pan-Africanism with a capital "P," was the Jamaican

<sup>1</sup> George Shepperson has published the following book and several articles relevant to a discussion of Pan-Africanism: George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1958; paperback edition, 1987, with a new foreword and supplementary bibliography by Shepperson); Shepperson, "The United States and East Africa," *Phylon*, XIII:1 (1952); "External Factors in the Development of African Nationalism, with Particular Reference to British Central Africa," *Phylon*, vol. XXII:3 (Fall, 1961); "Pan-Africanism and 'Pan-Africanism': Some Historical Notes," *Phylon*, XXIII:4 (Winter, 1962); "Ethiopianism: Past and Present," in C.G. Baeta, ed., *Christianity in Tropical Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); "The Afro-American Contribution to African Studies," *Journal of American Studies*, 8:3 (December, 1974).

<sup>2</sup> Tony Martin, *The Pan-African Connection* (Dover, Mass.: The Majority Press, 1983), vii.

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Marcus Garvey, particularly during his period in the United States, between 1916 and 1924, when his Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League exercised an influence on emerging African nationalism and nationalism within the African Diaspora on a scale which we are only just beginning to measure.

In looking towards the so-called Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England, in 1945, the Du Bois line of descent in Pan-Africanism is important for its nomenclature—although wider, non-Du Boisian elements in its wide-ranging discussions are not difficult to distinguish. The Manchester Congress was called the Fifth Pan-African Congress because of the four other Pan-African Congresses with which Du Bois had been closely associated: a Pan-African Congress in Paris in 1919; one in London and Brussels in 1921; a third in London and Lisbon in 1923; and a fourth in New York in 1927.

In the genesis of this group of four Pan-African Congresses which he initiated, Du Bois was right in emphasizing the importance of the First World War of 1914-1918 in stirring up peoples of African descent about their future. What he appears to have overlooked, however, is that Henry Sylvester Williams' 1900 Pan-African Conference was set in the milieu of the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa at the turn of the century: an event which also stirred up the expectations of peoples of African descent—until, alas, the British sold out to the Afrikaners in South Africa. As reactionary old Rudyard Kipling rightly expressed it, at a time when the international left-wing was weeping over the possible suppression of the nationality of the Boers: "We have put them in a position to exercise their lust for primitive racial domination"—a racial lust which has been a major factor in provoking the responses of persons of African descent through pan-African movements and initiatives ever since.

The Boer War, the First World War, the Italian-Ethiopian struggle of the mid-1930s, and then the Second World War of 1939-45: each has played a role in precipitating pan-African responses but none more than the Second World War. During that War, as a very youthful infantry officer serving with East and Central African soldiers of the King's African Rifles in Kenya, Tanganyika, Ceylon, India and Burma, I had the opportunity of seeing something of the emergence of these responses amongst English-speaking Africans and, on one occasion, amongst French-speaking Africans from the Belgian Congo. I was still overseas when the Fifth Pan-African Congress was held in Manchester; but its calling, its course and its consequences have never surprised me.

Early in 1944, two persons from the British West Indies approached Du Bois about the necessity of a post-War Pan-African meeting. One of them was Mrs. Amy Jacques Garvey, second wife of Marcus Garvey; the other was, I believe, also a Jamaican, a person who is too often overlooked in the promotion of pan-Africanism in the center of the British Empire. I refer to Dr. Harold Moody, a

West Indian doctor, resident in London, whose League of Coloured Peoples in Britain is more important than many students of pan-Africanism realize. I refer you to its periodical, *The Keys*, which has been reprinted in a single volume.<sup>3</sup>

Du Bois, in spite of his distaste for Marcus Garvey's movement, agreed with Mrs. Garvey and Dr. Harold Moody. And, towards the end of the year 1944, they were joined by the singer and actor, Paul Robeson, in calling for a Pan-African Conference after the War as soon as possible. When I had the honor to chair a meeting of Paul Robeson's in Scotland in 1949, his pan-African orientation was made very clear to me. I hope that scholars will recognize Robeson's pan-Africanism. One, at least, has done this. I refer to the chapter on Paul Robeson in Professor Sterling Stuckey's recently published book, *Slave Culture*. This chapter is headed with a statement of Paul Robeson's in 1934: "Meanwhile, in my music, my plays, my films, I want to carry always this central idea—to be African. Multitudes of men have died for less worthy ideals; it is even more eminently worth living for."<sup>4</sup> Although Robeson was not, I believe, at the 1945 Manchester Conference, the spirit of this statement of his was very much in evidence in its deliberations. Indeed, the person who had precipitated Robeson's *Négritude*, Jomo Kenyatta, was joint political secretary at this 1945 Congress. When Robeson appeared in the imperialist British movie, *Sanders of the River*, in the 1930s, Kenyatta—who, incidentally, was an extra in that film—castigated him for lending his talents to such a travesty of Africa; and this was a major factor in bringing Robeson to a pan-African position.

Another factor behind the 1945 Manchester Congress was the international trade union movement and its representatives in the colonial world. The Manchester Pan-African Congress was planned to follow the World Federation of Trade Unions' meeting in Paris from 25 September to 9 October, 1945; and it duly took place between 15 and 19 October, 1945. Perhaps because the Manchester Congress had linkages within the international trade union movement; perhaps also because some of its prime-movers had been left-wing Caribbean intellectuals who had created, a year before in Manchester, the Pan-African Federation, which published some anti-imperialist pamphlets and books before the Congress; there was a more markedly socialist element in the 1945 Pan-African Congress than in any of its predecessors.

W.E.B. Du Bois was the Fifth Congress' so-called "International President"; he chaired some of its sessions; and he presented to the United Nations Secretariat

<sup>3</sup> *The Keys*. *The Official Organ of the League of Colored Peoples*, with an introductory essay by Roderick J. Macdonald (Millwood, NY: Kraus-Thompson Organization, Ltd., 1976), 5-28.

<sup>4</sup> Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 303.

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the Congress' "Memorandum to the United Nations." Whether Du Bois, in the chronicling of half a century of pan-African Congresses in the fourth paragraph of this memorandum, was responsible for leaving out the record of Henry Sylvester Williams' 1900 Conference, is not clear. But Du Bois' chronicle begins with the First Universal Races Congress held at London University in 1911, at which he presented an important paper on the predicament of Afro-Americans.

As the grand old man of Pan-Africanism, Du Bois was clearly an important figure at the 1945 Manchester Congress. But at this time he was 73; and leadership of the pan-African movement had passed into younger hands. It had also passed largely into non-Afro-American hands. Two young men from British Guiana (now Guyana) played important parts at the 1945 Congress: Dr. Peter Milliard and T. Ras Makonnen (formerly Thomas Griffiths). Ras Makonnen, after the 1945 Congress, was one of the West Indian intellectuals who went on to become an advisor to the leaders of an independent African government: Kenya. Similarly with George Padmore (formerly Malcolm Nurse from Trinidad), an outstanding figure at the 1945 Congress, on whose very brief history of it we are forced to rely for much of our information about what happened in Manchester in 1945. Padmore was to become a major advisor to Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah who took the Gold Coast to independence as Ghana.

But, if the leadership of the Pan-African Congress of 1945 was passing way from Afro-Americans, it is also clear that, although West Indians were very influential at it, Africans themselves assumed prominent positions of leadership, notably Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta and the South African writer, Peter Abrahams. And, although no French-speaking African country, it appears, was represented at the Congress, more countries from Africa had representatives at it than at any previous Pan-African congress: Liberia, Kenya, Nyasaland, Togoland, Nigeria, the Gold Coast and South Africa.

Looking back at the 1945 Pan-African Congress, it seems evident that some valuable groundwork for independence movements in British Africa was laid in Manchester, England, in the mid-1940s: especially through the work of Kwame Nkrumah for the Gold Coast which became independent in 1957 under the old African name of Ghana; and of Jomo Kenyatta for Kenya which achieved independence in 1963.

The Manchester Congress also attempted to influence the future by creating a journal, *Pan-Africa*, which was published for almost two years from January 1947. This is now an extremely rare periodical. But anyone who wishes to know the spirit and the intent of the 1945 Pan-African Congress should not neglect it. To the best of my knowledge, there are only two full sets of it in existence: one in the Houghton Library at Harvard and one in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. I am happy to note that, under pseudonyms, Professor Drake had two articles in this periodical. I am also happy to note here his pioneer contribu-

tions to the study of peoples of African descent in Britain, a venture which took him to Britain in the 1940s.

Although the great post-World War II emigration of blacks to Britain had not yet taken place in 1945, the Manchester Pan-African Congress showed its ability to notice future trends by devoting the first of its sessions to the problems of persons of African descent in Britain.

The journal *Pan-Africa* bore on its cover a map of the world indicating the major areas of the African Diaspora and on the map of Africa itself appeared the words, "United States of Africa." I do not believe that this topic appears in any of the resolutions of the 1945 Congress<sup>5</sup>; but it was clearly part of Kwame Nkrumah's ideal. It is easy today to look upon it as utopian. But it was, I believe, an ideal of at least one of the younger generation of African nationalists: Julius Nyerere is on record as saying that, if it was necessary to delay the independence of his country, Tanganyika, until it could become part of some wider pan-African grouping, then he would be prepared to see that independence delayed. How far that Charter of the Organization of African Unity, signed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 25 May, 1963, is an effective substitute for this closer form of African unity would take us, in discussion, I feel, far into the small hours of the morning!

Certainly, there was something of the United States of Africa concept about the All-African People's Conference at Accra in 1958. (I put on record that I was invited to it—but couldn't afford the airfare!) This Conference dropped the designation (produced in the African Diaspora and not in Africa) of "Pan-Africanism", as did the Organization of African Unity in 1963. It seemed that pan-Africanism, however designated, had come back to Mother Africa between 1945 and 1958.

And yet, in September 1970, a Congress of African Peoples was held in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1970; and its proceedings call it "the First Modern Pan-African Congress."<sup>6</sup> The leadership of this Congress was largely Afro-American. Earlier this year, between 26 and 28 February, 1987, a pan-African Conference on *Négritude* in honor of the poet from Martinique, Aimé Césaire, was held in Miami, Florida. Here, again, the leadership was from the African Diaspora and not from Africa.

Do these two conferences between 1970 and 1987 represent a reverse of the tendency towards African leadership of the pan-African movement which was

<sup>5</sup> The Congress resolutions can be found in Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism* (New York: Praeger, 1962), 135-37.

<sup>6</sup> *African Congress. A Documentary of the First Modern Pan-African Congress* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1972), edited with an introduction by Imamu Amiri Baraka (Le Roi Jones).

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initiated by the 1945 Manchester Congress? Or are we witnessing a split in the once international pan-African movement into pan-African activism in Africa itself and other forms of pan-African activity outside of Africa, in the African Diaspora?

Perhaps some of the wide and well-informed reflections which we are now going to get from Professor St. Clair Drake will help us in answering this question.

Of one thing, however, I am sure: that pan-African activity, of one sort or another, will not perish from the earth.

**ST. CLAIR DRAKE<sup>7</sup>**

One issue raised by George Shepperson was the question of how much Afro-American participation there was in the Fifth Pan-African Congress. And I think I ought to start by correcting one error which I think you will find in the standard work on the Fifth Pan-African Congress, Geiss' book on Pan-Africanism, in which he states I was there.<sup>8</sup> Well, I wasn't. In 1945 I was finishing up *Black Metropolis* and trying to see how I could shed the uniform I was wearing in the U.S. Maritime Service and get back into the normal routines of American life. I was a captive of the Second World War. However, there was another American there, although many people didn't know that he was an American. The official record of the Congress points out that a speech was made by a representative of the Colonial and Colored People's Association of Cardiff Wales, one Mr. Aaron Mozelle. I went to the United Kingdom in 1947 to try to gather some material for a doctoral dissertation in anthropology<sup>9</sup> and dug in in the port city of Cardiff, Wales. There you had a small segregated community that had Africans, West Indians, Somalis and Arabs, all raising what the British call "half-caste" children, by Irish, Welsh and English women and I was studying the first generation. (By the way, Shirley Bassey, the singer, came out of that group. She was a little girl running around in those days with a Nigerian father and a Welsh mother. She's

<sup>7</sup> St. Clair Drake has published the following essays of relevance to pan-Africanism: "Rise of the Pan-African Movement," *Africa Special Report*, III:4 (1958), 5-9; "Hide My Face? On Pan-Africanism and Negritude," in Herbert Hill, ed., *Soon One Morning* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 78-105; "Negro Americans and 'The African Interest'," in John P. Davis, ed., *The American Negro Reference Book* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 662-705; "Philosophical Consciencism—The Role of Social Philosophy and Political Theory in New Nations," *The Pan-Africanist Review*, I:3 (September 1964), 5-14.

<sup>8</sup> Imanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement: A History of Pan-Africanism in America, Europe, and Africa* (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1974).

<sup>9</sup> St. Clair Drake, "Value Systems, Social Structure and Race Relations in the British Isles," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1954.

carrying on a tradition. I think her husband is the Welsh singer Tom Jones.) Anyway, I ran up on the fact that there was an American in that community who was the leader of this little multi-racial, multi-ethnic, polylingual community and he had been there for many years. If you study these ports you find that many of the people have a story because they've reached a dead end in their lives. Mr. Aaron Mozelle had come from a prominent Philadelphia family—the story can be told now—he's dead and most of the members of the family know all about this and they don't mind this now. (I didn't publish it in the dissertation because I didn't want to embarrass him and the family.) Anyway, he told me that he had taken all the family's money—he had a joint bank account with his brother—and headed off to South Africa because the gold mines and the diamond mines had just opened up. He said Professor Cecil Rhodes got there first. So he was somewhat ashamed to come back home. He was broke and finally ended up in Wales where he spent the rest of his life. He was a very dignified gentleman. When I first saw him I noticed he was wearing a goatee and looked very much like Dr. Du Bois. And I went over to talk to him and I found out he was a graduate of Lincoln University, that Dr. Du Bois had always been one of his role models, and here he was, stuck in this little dock-side community. I wrote him up under an assumed name in my dissertation as an elder statesman. He was at the conference in that first session that was spoken of where they were discussing the plight of colored people in the British Isles. So that's the one Afro-American that I know was there, although most of the people probably didn't think of him as an Afro-American.

When the conference ended there was a sort of an agreement, as I understand it. I began my interviewing around this matter in 1947 when I was in Cardiff, spending part of my time up in London talking to George Padmore and others who had been at the conference two years before. They had an agreement that what they ought to do, now that the conference was over, was to get home as soon as possible and put themselves at the head of the mass movements that were already brewing. Movements were breaking out here and there around the African continent asking for a greater degree of self-government and more humane programs under colonialism. These young people, certainly the young intellectuals, took the position that we've got to go out and convince our people that if you want to get what you want you've got to hit for complete sovereign independence and not just start asking Britain and France to make some reforms. So the idea was that they get home as soon as possible, put themselves at the head of movements that were already there, and give some direction to them.

Nkrumah in his autobiography tells us how he went to London after the Fifth Pan-African Congress and participated in the organization of the West African Nationalist Secretariat devoted to bringing a union of socialist nations into being

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in West Africa.<sup>10</sup> And Nkrumah insists that he went over to France to talk with the young French intellectuals who were around Paris; that some of them came back over to London and they discussed how this could be done; and that he was mandated by them to go out and start laying the groundwork for a West African national socialist state. Incidentally, when he got arrested after he got home, the British Commission depicted his program as one advocating a “Union of Soviet Socialist states” in West Africa. A bit later the “soviet” was not in there, but they had to have a good excuse to put him in jail. Nkrumah left for home in 1957 to begin maneuvering toward such a goal, mandated, he claims, by French West Indian leaders as well as his Anglophone compatriots.

Kenyatta was already at home, having left England in 1946. He got out quite soon and started on back to Kenya. His problem was how to lead the recently organized Kenya African Union in achieving constitutional advances toward self-government in the face of intransigent white settlers who insisted that under no conditions were Africans going to be given the right to vote in Kenya. The settlers had taken the best land, called it the White Highlands, and Africans were supposed to stay out of it. And so Kenyatta got home and his problem was how do you deal with white settlers. Nkrumah got home and his problem was somewhat different: how do you negotiate with English people who claim to be liberal and claim to be advancing people toward self-government? So they get home facing quite different positions. Du Bois went home to continue his work with the NAACP until the inevitable break came and political re-orientation began in his life. Makonnen stayed in Manchester, as we have been told. (By the way, he had several restaurants and a bookstore. He was a very good businessman, managing his restaurants and bookstore and editing the journal *Pan-Africa*. I was told that one of the reasons they had the conference in Manchester instead of down in London in 1945 was because they could eat out of Makonnen’s restaurant.) Makonnen’s story has been written up in a book called *Pan-Africanism from Within*<sup>11</sup>; one of Shepperson’s students, Kenneth King, got Makonnen to sit down and talk his life into a tape recorder, and that ultimately helped him to edit it into a saleable volume, which you might enjoy looking at and reading.

Makonnen’s original name, as was mentioned, was Tom Griffiths, and I might, when we get to the question period if anybody’s interested, indicate what the stories are about how he became Makonnen instead of Griffiths. The story of Makonnen’s attempt to keep the Pan-African Federation alive and active has

<sup>10</sup> *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1959), chapter 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Pan-Africanism from Within; As Recorded and Edited by Kenneth King* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973)

been told in his autobiography. During winter, 1948 I visited Makonnen for a few days in Manchester. He was then winding down the affairs of the Federation and the journal, and we had some long discussions about both the successes and difficulties he was experiencing as he tried to implement the goals set by the Fifth Pan-African Congress. And, by the way, one of the things he had attempted to do was to see if the Pan-African Federation could not take up the legal cases of Africans and West Indians who were being mistreated. And one of the most interesting ones that he told me about, and one that they won, was about a group of West African seamen who were firemen on a boat; they were mistreated by the captain and chief engineer, so they raked out all the fires. No more steam, and the boat was drifting around out in the Atlantic ocean. They're being ordered to get the fires going for fear of drifting all the way down to the South Pole, and their position was: "we'll all go down there together." So finally the radio message went out and a British naval vessel came down and took them in tow. They were brought in and charged with mutiny on the high seas. Makonnen managed to get a lawyer to take this case. They won it, arguing that this was not a mutiny but a kind of trade union action on the high seas. So, of course, the men were all free. I once had in my possession a very interesting picture of Makonnen and all these rather tough seamen that was taken just after they had won the victory. There were other cases of this sort that arose, and he felt that this was one way that he could be useful in carrying on the sentiments unleashed at the Fifth Congress.

I had read that Padmore moved to Ghana soon after the country received its independence in March 1957. Nkrumah got home in 1948 and by Spring of '48 he and five other Africans were in jail on the grounds that they had staged a demonstration for another constitutional advance. I remember this rather vividly because it was very cold in England that winter and I, Padmore, and others used to hang out at the headquarters of League of Colored People because they had a stove. (By the way, Kenneth Little, the Englishman, used to hang out there too sometime.)<sup>12</sup> George Padmore came running in one evening waving a sheet of paper saying that Nkrumah, Danquah, and the others had just been arrested. "I have this cable," said Padmore, "and the cable says they have asked the government to convene a constituent assembly." (They had also been accused of throwing rocks at the police.) Padmore had once been a revolutionary, and he slipped back into his old communist way of thinking and began pantomiming: "White man make a revolution, he shoot; 'darker' make a revolution, he throw rocks at police. White man make a revolution, he proclaim the soviets; black man make a revolution, he say 'Mr. Governor, suh, will you please convene a constituent assembly'." So we were all laughing at this, but in addition to the kind

<sup>12</sup> Kenneth Little, anthropologist and author of *The Mende of Sierra Leone* (London, 1951).

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of cynical humor streak that Padmore had, he was also a very effective and dedicated worker. His position was, we've got to have a demonstration next Sunday down in Trafalgar Square, and he immediately got to work. And for the first time in British history something happened, a big demonstration in Trafalgar Square—the students were there, but suddenly the black dock workers came marching up from the docks as a group, and you had a joint student and dockworker's demonstration right under Lord Nelson's statue. I was on the platform taking pictures because, since I was there on a visa, I was told that I shouldn't make any speeches, but just get up and take pictures on the platform and act as though I was a photographer from the press.

Nkrumah had gone home. By 1951 he'd organized his own political party, the Convention People's Party, which had a slogan: "Self-government now." That's one slogan. He had studied for ten years in the U.S. and got a degree down at Lincoln University in Divinity as well as in Arts. As he says in his autobiography, he raised a part of his fees to get through school by preaching in black churches in Philadelphia. And so Nkrumah said, "Self-government now. Seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things shall be added onto it." And all the school boys who had studied in mission schools could pick up on that biblical expression. And so he pulled a Gandhian-type sit down strike around the country, what he was calling "Non-violent positive action." They tied things up so well the British decided they'd better have an election; they put up their own candidate, and Nkrumah's party could run their own candidate too, but he was in jail. (He told me once when I was interviewing him that he was sustained all the time he was in jail by his young men who marched around the jail singing a version of the song that he learned in America. What were they singing?: "Kwame Nkrumah's body lies a' mouldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on.") While he was in there his party won the election hands down. The British were a beauty to watch in this kind of thing. Nkrumah was released immediately. An announcement was made that they had made a mistake originally, that he had had a Communist Party card on him but that it was unsigned. Nkrumah then stated, "I come out of jail with hatred for nobody. We fight against systems not races. The places I know in Europe are London and Paris not Moscow and Prague. I am a Marxist socialist and a non-denominational Christian." He was then made leader of government business and Ghana was given internal self-government—this was in 1950.

One of the first things that happened was that in 1951 he invited his friend George Padmore—he and George Padmore had been joint organizing secretaries of the Fifth Pan-African Congress—to come on down now that they had internal self-government. Nkrumah made this a test of whether the British really meant it because Padmore had been barred from going to part of British Africa. He was considered an agitator but they didn't dare to bar him this time. He came and

stayed about six months and wrote a book when he left called *The Gold Coast Revolution*.<sup>13</sup> And at the time he and Nkrumah agreed that he was to write another book which would be the manifesto of what the revolution was going to be. You'll find that in your library under the title, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?*, by George Padmore.<sup>14</sup> The original edition had on the front, "Toward a Marshall Plan for Africa." But the Americans were sort of puzzled by what was going on here. There was an ex-communist, Padmore, now writing a book, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?* So in '55 this book came out, in 1957 Ghana got its complete independence, and the first thing that Nkrumah did was to invite both Padmore and Makonnen to come to Ghana to live. Padmore was made Advisor to the Prime Minister on African Affairs; Makonnen, the business man, opened the Star Bakery and was looking around as to see where he could be useful next. The irony in all this is that Nkrumah, Padmore, and Makonnen could now practice Pan-Africanism in an African nation. But the chairman of that conference had been Jomo Kenyatta and Jomo was in exile in the northern frontier district of his country, sentenced to six years in prison for allegedly organizing a terrorist group called Mau-Mau. So he's out of commission.

In the fall of 1958 I found myself catapulted into the midst of the preparations for the historic All-Africa People's Conference to be held in Accra, Ghana in December. They had a country now that they could operate in, rather than Manchester—they had the whole nation of Ghana. A conference being organized by George Padmore in his role of Advisor to the Prime Minister on African Affairs. I had just accepted a post in the Sociology Department of Ghana's University College. Soon after my arrival I went down to see George Padmore at his impressive office and later visited him and Dorothy Padmore at their even more impressive house. His wife or consort, I don't know which, was a British-Jewish girl—very, very energetic—who wore Ghanaian clothing all the time.

I had not seen them for three years, when they were then in their small London apartment. George's office in those days was a bit of space at the headquarters of the League of Coloured Peoples; he told me at the time of a visit he had made to Nkrumah in '51 after which he wrote *The Gold Coast Revolution*. I had seen a vituperative article in the opposition party newsheet to that visit of his in 1951 that ridiculed Padmore as a "vagabond-like adventurer, whose clothes hung loosely on him until he prepared to leave; the chickens, eggs and other gifts of food that he and Nkrumah had extracted from the peasantry as they toured the country, had made him so plump his clothes were bursting at the seams." This

<sup>13</sup> George Padmore, *The Gold Coast Revolution: The Struggle of an African People from Slavery to Freedom* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1953).

<sup>14</sup> George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?: The Coming Struggle for Africa* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1956).

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is the way politics was fought out there, here we fight about who you've been womanizing; they were fighting in terms of the man going around and eating everything in sight. Padmore had told me too that he and Dorothy had urged Richard Wright to make the visit out of which the book, *Black Power*, emerged and you may want to take a look at it. Dick Wright went down in 1953 and he wrote *Black Power*.<sup>15</sup> It has an introduction, incidentally, by George Padmore, if I recall correctly. Padmore took me to the Parliament building one day in London in 1955 to listen to hearings in the committee room on Ghana's readiness for full independence. I'll admit I was impressed when the presiding member of Parliament asked George to take the chair as he rushed out to vote when the revision bell rang. I was negatively impressed later, however, when trade union leader John Tettegah<sup>16</sup> and I were left standing on the curb as Padmore rushed to climb into an official limousine with the Gold Coast High Commissioner. It was obvious that George was enjoying his participation as a close associate of the representatives of the new black power but I had detected the eagerness and the rudeness of a *parvenu* in some of his actions. George let me know that summer that he was writing a new book, but I wasn't sure what it was about. The regular Christmas card he sent us had a new wrinkle in 1955—a slogan that he wrote at the bottom: Mau-Mau! Kenyatta had denied any connection with that violent movement, but George had no such inhibitions; he wrote on his postcard, "Mau-Mau," indicating his approval of it.

When we met again in 1958 my momentary revulsion at the limousine episode had long since disappeared. Here we were meeting this time in an independent Ghana where he was a high official. We were both enthusiastic at meeting again and he drafted me immediately for some Pan-African activity. Padmore had told me that a call had gone out to all known nationalist organizations, women's groups, trade union groups, and youth groups all over Africa to come to Ghana in December discuss the final overthrow of colonialism and imperialism. The printed brochure bore the imprint of Nkrumah, Padmore, and Makonnen intellectually. It was called the *Plan of the Liberation of Africa by Gandhian Non-Violence*. I noted that that was certainly Nkrumah's emphasis, not that of the other two comrades. Nkrumah was in what I call the "post-Indian independence" re-interpretation of the Fifth Pan-African Congress mood. They had written that, "we want our independence, and although we believe in peace, if necessary we will use violence even if it brings down the world on all of us." Now here was Dr. Nkrumah sending out a call for Gandhian non-violence. But

<sup>15</sup> Richard Wright, *Black Power* (New York: 1954).

<sup>16</sup> For information on John Tettegah, see St. Clair Drake and Leslie Alexander Lacy, "Government Versus the Unions: the Sekondi-Takoradi Strike, 1961" in Gwendolyn M. Carter (ed.) *Politics in Africa: 7 Cases* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966).

you see, after the Fifth Congress was over, within two years, India got its independence, summer of 1947, and they had gotten it through the Gandhian theme. So the Fifth Pan-African people, at least Nkrumah, took up the Gandhian theme and they called this conference in the Gandhian idiom. Nkrumah felt quite comfortable in combining Gandhism and Marxism. Makonnen rejected both. Padmore's pragmatism could accept non-violence as a tactic, much as the SNCC leaders went along with Martin Luther King. Their general position was that they didn't take this as a religious commitment, but thought that in this situation it was a good tactic. Padmore could accept that. Makonnen was quite cynical about it. I accepted the task of preparing a working paper on racism as my contribution to the preparatory work, and this involved me in a few planning sessions—although I was trying to keep my participation as low-key as possible since I was on the University College faculty. This college had not yet cut itself loose from a special relationship with the University of London in order to become autonomous.

One such meeting stands out in my mind. Ghana's ambassador to Moscow brought a message from Khrushchev offering assistance to the conference in the form of a simultaneous translation system and proposing a soccer match between a Ghanaian team and a Soviet team. I remember Padmore saying, "We'll turn down the translation offer and find some way of doing that ourselves. We aren't going to let them infiltrate our operations. I know them. I used to run a part of their show." Padmore at one point had been head of the international communist operations for Negroes worldwide. He had a newspaper called the *Negro Worker*, and then he had had a break with the Soviet Union in 1934. He never was openly critical, and I can say a bit about this in the question period if you want.

This leads me to comment briefly on Guinea. One result of Ghana's first year of independence was to cause questioning in France's colonies. It was mentioned that the French-speaking Africans weren't at the all-African People's conference. But once Ghana became independent and De Gaulle was trying to persuade all the French colonials that they didn't need independence but should stay in the French union, the young people on the French side were beginning to want to know that if Ghana could be independent, why couldn't they. The pressure became so great that De Gaulle was impelled much against his will to announce the famous "Non-Oui" elections in each French West African and French Equatorial territory. And all the territories except Guinea voted "oui"—that is to stay in the French union rather than to get out. The slogan, however, in Guinea with Sékou Touré's party was "Better independence with poverty than servitude with plenty." And then De Gaulle took reprisals. They took away all the typewriters from the office, unscrewed the electric light bulbs and took them; took all the rifles from the army and said, "Now you have your independence and you have your poverty too." At which point Sékou Touré went down to Ghana and into conference with Nkrumah and Padmore. And Ghana had a lot of money

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in those days—a half billion dollars in cocoa marketing board reserves. They immediately lent Guinea 23 million dollars to hold them temporarily and then, as Padmore phrases it, “handed him the paper.” The paper was a proposal to start a union of African states in which each would put in its constitution that they’d give up their sovereignty as soon as they could become a part of a United States of Africa. Sékou signed and now the Guinea-Ghana unity came into existence. Anyway, when the All-African People’s Conference came up in December you now had Guinea’s representatives. Sékou Touré didn’t come but his wife came down to represent him at the conference. They now had broken across the French-British barrier. This is the first time that kind of breach had been made in Africa—a French colony and a British colony now cooperating together.

Previous to this in April, Padmore and Nkrumah had organized the first Conference of Independent African States—there were only eight. There were only two that were indubitably black: Liberia and Ghana. Four considered themselves either white or a non-black color: Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Two were ambivalent and certainly weren’t sure if they wanted to be called black—that’s Ethiopia and the Sudan. So Padmore and Nkrumah did not try to hold that conference together around the Négritude concept; they coined a new concept: “the African personality.” And they were ready for this because in Padmore’s 1955 book he had proposed a new definition of African: anybody who believes in one man one vote; economic, political and social equality irrespective of race, creed, color or tribe. I had said to Padmore—I looked at his book and the first whole part of it was about Marcus Garvey—“Look, you’re talking about blackness through the whole first part of the book and now you’re saying that an African is anybody who believes in ‘one man one vote’.” He said, “Look, we’re the dominant group of people on this continent and if that should set just underline the word *social* because we’ll ‘brown’ the continent out in one generation.”

It was organizing the two conferences that led Nkrumah and Padmore to a new Pan-African perspective. In the 1955 book regional federations had been visualized as first steps toward All-African unity, but organizing a conference that had people coming from Ethiopia as well as North Africa as well as other parts of Africa led to the proclamation of another slogan: “The Sahara no longer divides us, it unites us.” By the way, most of the actions that were going on at this time also had symbolic implications. After claiming that “the Sahara no longer divides us, it unites us,” Nkrumah married an Egyptian woman. They had the experience of dealing with Africa, not in Manchester, but in dealing with Africa in Africa. By the time Guinea became independent Nkrumah and Padmore were visualizing any differences, any talking about small federations, as a continuation of colonial balkanization—the separation between French and British areas

being a major threat to united continental action. They began to talk about a United States of Africa, which incidentally I hadn't noticed but Shepperson says that the *Pan-African* journal had it in there.<sup>17</sup> They now were talking about a united political entity as large as the U.S.A., the Soviet Union, or China. And their general feeling was, you weren't going to get anywhere if you were trying to project "African personality" or "Black Power" if you didn't have something that big. Today there are over fifty African states. The perspective at this Pan-African conference and its aftermath was not fifty African states, it was continental government of the continent. At the back of the hall at the conference there was a big map of Africa and Padmore and others had taken a picture from this magazine, *Pan-Africa*, of a very strong black man breaking his chains, and they had superimposed this on a map of Africa. Underneath it they had paraphrased Marx and Engels, "You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a continent to regain." And that was sort of the spirit of this particular conference. The opening day of the conference was very, very important, symbolically. Nkrumah got up and said, "I am so happy to see so many of our brothers and sisters from the New World here today. Before many of us were conscious of our own degradation it was they who raised the banner of African freedom in the New World, and I must mention Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois." Not all of the Africans liked that part of the speech at all. One said to me, "I know Padmore wrote that part. The man talking about 'before we were conscious of our own degradation,' what does it mean?"

As soon as that part of the session was over and the plenary sessions began, I had left, my wife stayed there and she came back and told me that a light-skinned man who looked like an American Negro or West Indian made a speech in French denouncing the whole conference call about non-violence, saying that this was a betrayal of his brothers who were dying for African freedom here today. Turned out this was Frantz Fanon.<sup>18</sup> He was the Algerian delegate. His denunciation of non-violence set a conference theme that ran through the whole week: "What are we going to do about violence?," and they made a compromise. They didn't repudiate Nkrumah's call for non-violent positive action but they passed a resolution saying whenever colonialism forces violence upon us, we are justified in using violence to try to free ourselves.

One of the high points of the conference was that while they were having that

<sup>17</sup> Also see Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (1963).

<sup>18</sup> Best known for his *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1966), Fanon, a psychiatrist, was an active participant in the Algerian revolution. His other works include *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), *Toward the African Revolution* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967), and *Studies in a Dying Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1965).

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debate, a floor demonstration suddenly arose calling for the freeing of Kenyatta from detention. Up to that point, all over the continent, African leaders had not even been discussing Kenyatta and Mau-Mau because they thought that maybe he'd organized it and they didn't want anybody saying they approved of it. Now here's the floor demonstration being led by two young Kenyans who had always been wary of supporting Kenyatta. What happened? Kenyatta's lawyer, Dennis Pritt, the great left-wing jurist from Britain, had been able to get the star witness at his trial to now confess that he had perjured himself when he swore that Kenyatta had recruited him into being a terrorist; and now with this document of the star witness who seven or eight years ago had perjured himself, the government decided that they were going to let Kenyatta out—gradually. So this conference represents the first time that the Africans had expressed solidarity with Kenyatta. One of the other high spots was that there was a young man who was going around handing out cards from a beer company he worked for—Patrice Lumumba, beer salesman. The conference politicized Patrice Lumumba and was the beginning of a working relationship between Nkrumah and Patrice in which Patrice became his *protégé*, so to speak.

On the last day, Nkrumah got up and made a speech that sounded very much like that of a Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal church charging his preachers at the quadrennial convention, when they've all been given their assignments here and there, to go forth. And Nkrumah's telling them, "Now you've seen an independent state, we've had this big conference, now go on and free your part of Africa." And sitting here at that time was Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere, and a number of the other people who would soon "free their part." Banda was there from Malawi, and when he got home he got off the plane and said his place should be in prison like Kwame Nkrumah. This just fired up the whole continent which said, "Let's get moving." And they set a goal: "the year 1960 is going to be Africa's year—this is '58 now—we're going to try to be free."

Let me end by saying this was the high point of influence of the Pan-African group and particularly of Nkrumah, and there are many reasons why it never reached this particular peak again. I would say it probably went down. One of the major reasons was that the biggest African colony, Nigeria, with at least 60 million people at that time, became independent in October 1960, and I think it was impossible after Nigeria became independent for Ghana and its leaders to have the predominant weight in Pan-African activities.

### QUESTION/ANSWER PERIOD

**Shepperson:** Could I put one or two questions to Professor Drake? I think we've all appreciated this memoir and we wish you'd put it down in more formal sequence. You didn't say anything about the participation at the conference of Horace Mann Bond. He was there, wasn't he?

**Drake:** Not for this one.

**Shepperson:** Which one was he there for?

**E. Jefferson Murphy**<sup>19</sup>: Bond came to the December conference.<sup>20</sup>

**Drake:** I was putting all my attention on another Afro-American at the time, Claude Barnett of the Associated Negro Press. Thanks for that correction, "Pat" [Murphy], because I shouldn't make that kind of mistake.

**Shepperson:** Could I make what I think is also a relatively small correction? You said there was a picture of a black man breaking the chains and it came from the cover of *Pan-Africa*. I don't think it came from the cover of *Pan-Africa*. I think it came from the cover of a magazine that Nkrumah was distributing across the world around this time or afterwards called the *Voice of Africa*.

**Drake:** That was afterwards.<sup>21</sup>

**Shepperson:** That must have been the illustration that he got ready for the cover because I used to get this, and I can always remember this very melodramatic black man with the chains coming off. And incidentally, having mentioned the importance of *Pan-Africa* that came out of the '45 conference, I don't think there is any doubt that that magazine that Nkrumah circulated around the world to all sorts of people, the *Voice of Africa*, is also important, but it was produced on an extremely inferior type of paper and unless some really effective organization like the Schomburg is taking it up and has started to bind it, it's going to fall apart.

Could I also raise, Mr. Chairman, one other point with Mr. St. Clair Drake, this is about George Padmore. I was interested to hear, not surprised, that

<sup>19</sup> E. Jefferson Murphy, author of *Creative Philanthropy: The Carnegie Corporation and Africa, 1953-1973* (Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1976); *History of African Civilization* (New York: Delta Press, 1972).

<sup>20</sup> The All-African-People's Conference, 1958.

<sup>21</sup> According to J. Ayodele Langley, *Pan-Africanism in West Africa, 1900-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 365, *Pan-Africa* began publication in 1947.

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Padmore said, “we don’t want Khrushchev’s offer about the system, I’ve worked with these characters and I know what they are.” And I dare suggest that Padmore had moved quite a distance from his original Communist Party position, but he still carried a certain sympathy for the Soviet Union because in the days when the Pan-African group was formed in Manchester that led up to the 1945 conference, Padmore published a book that seems to be forgotten about nowadays called, *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire*.<sup>22</sup> And I remember as an impecunious student at the University of Cambridge in England that one reason why I took out a subscription to the *Pan-Africa* journal was that they gave you either a free copy of Eric Williams’ *The Negro in the Caribbean*<sup>23</sup> or a free copy of Padmore’s *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire*. And I was very anxious to have the latter book and I took out the subscription.

Having said that, could I also try and get out of you a comment which I think you are moving toward about the possible influence, if any, of Richard Wright’s book *Black Power*, that came out of his 1953 visit to the Gold Coast? When Hamilton and Carmichael wrote *Black Power*<sup>24</sup> they didn’t mention that book and many speculated that this is where the title came from. Do you think that the Richard Wright book, *Black Power*, was quite as influential as it sometimes appears to be?

**Drake:** Let me take the first question about the relationship of Padmore to the Soviet Union. They published *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire* because in the midst of the war we were trying to make the point that Britain ought to make some drastic changes. And don’t forget that during the war we were all marching against fascism on the same side: the British, the French, the Americans. And there is a story, and you can tell me whether this is true or not. This was embarrassing to the British because when they were playing national anthems, when they got to playing the Russian national anthem, they played “Arise Ye Prisoners of Starvation, Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth,”<sup>25</sup> and all the English workers were chiming in, singing it lustily. Churchill brought the hint to Stalin that maybe they ought to have another anthem. And they had an anthem contest and came up with the one, “Long Live the Soviet Motherland Built By the People’s Mighty Hand” and they didn’t have to sing “Rise Ye Prisoners of

<sup>22</sup> George Padmore, *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1946).

<sup>23</sup> Eric Williams, *The Negro in the Caribbean* (1945).

<sup>24</sup> Charles Hamilton and Stokely Carmichael, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (New York: 1967).

<sup>25</sup> These are the words of the “International,” composed by Eugène Pottier at the time of the 1871 Paris Commune and subsequently adopted by the Communist International as one of its anthems.

Starvation” anymore.

So, I’ll make a statement on Padmore and then we’ll ask questions. How many people know who Padmore was? Are we throwing around a name that nobody knows? You may want to read the book, *Black Revolutionary*.<sup>26</sup> George Padmore was a Trinidadian who came to this country to go to school at Fisk University. And he got dropped from Fisk—he had this kind of rebellious manner—and he went on up to Howard and got dropped from there. So then he went on to Moscow—this was back in the late ’20s—and entered the School of the Toilers of the East, then got elected to the Moscow Soviet and did considerable writing. But he was always accused of having a “black nationalist-deviationist” point of view concerning issues involving Africa and the West Indies that the Party line didn’t favor. For instance, he would defend Liberia, which the Party line said was a corrupt capitalist state, and so forth. George’s general position was “We ain’t got but three states: Ethiopia, Liberia and Haiti, and no matter how bad they are you defend them anyhow.” These kinds of differences meant that a clash was bound to come eventually and I’m not going to go into details about how it came about. In 1934 it came, although George Padmore had been running this magazine called the *Negro Worker*. He was out of the Communist movement then, went on to London, got deported from Germany (where he had been deported from Denmark), and when he got to London he found Jomo Kenyatta, Makonnen, whom I mentioned, Peter Avery, and some others. And they all found they were compatible. Then Ethiopia was attacked by Italy and this gave them something to do. They organized the International Friends of Abyssinia, started making speeches in Hyde Park, raising money, and so forth. And then when the emperor went into exile in Britain they attempted to form a delegation, incidentally, to go down and meet him. Now, the emperor was a guest of Britain—not a guest of the Pan-African group, who are the Blacks—and he wouldn’t receive their delegation. (I’ll tell this story and then stop.)

The question is, how did a Guyanese named Thomas Griffiths change his name to Makonnen? Makonnen is the family name of Haile Selassie. Padmore’s story to me was that when they went down to meet the emperor, Marcus Garvey was with them, and a man now who teaches at Princeton and who is a Noble Prize winner, Sir Arthur Lewis,<sup>27</sup> West Indian from St. Lucia—he was a student then—also was with them, and they’re all going down to meet the emperor and the

<sup>26</sup> James R. Hooker, *Black Revolutionary: George Padmore's Path from Pan-Africanism to Communism* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1967).

<sup>27</sup> Sir William Arthur Lewis is the author of numerous books and pamphlets concerning the question of industrialization and development. Among his most recent works is *Racial Conflict and Economic Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).

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emperor won't accept them. Griffiths, who became Makonnen, had a little African girl dressed in African clothes, with roses, and Padmore's story is that Griffiths pushed the little girl up to the front. The emperor, being very gracious, reached over to get the roses, and Makonnen talked himself into an interview with the emperor the next day. And I'll use the idiom that all the West Indians were using in those days: Padmore said, "He went on in to see Selassie—that 'darky' went in Thomas Griffiths and came out T. Ras Makonnen. He came out and said he had been offered honorary Ethiopian citizenship." Well Padmore shouldn't have been making fun of him. Padmore's name wasn't Padmore either, it was Nurse.

So to make a long story short, in answering this question about who Padmore was—having broken with the Communists the problem was, what was his line? And he and all these people formed something called the International African Service Bureau—spreading propaganda on freedom in the colonies and so forth, living from hand to mouth half the time—and they kept it alive for ten years. And it was that group that Nkrumah joined when he went over in 1944, and that sort of got the Fifth Pan-African Congress going. When I interviewed Padmore at great length in 1947 and '48 he gave me his line, which was this: "Yes, I ran the Communist movement for a while and I found out the Soviet Union was more interested in protecting itself than it was in freeing colonies, and if I had been Stalin I would do the same thing. If I had one sixth of the earth in my possession I'd cut my grandmother's throat to keep it. But I'm not Stalin, I am just a West Indian 'darky' out trying to help organize my brothers."

So he gets expelled from the movement. Now, his position to me was this: "I tell all the young Africans, read Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and all of them, to see what you can learn from them about freeing your country. And because they're white don't dismiss them 'cause ideas don't know any color line. Study the way the Communist Party organizes, they are great organizers. You are here in London; if necessary get a blank card, go in and see how they do things, 'cause you got to organize parties too. But don't ever sign anything and don't join the First, Second, Third, Fourth or 'Fifth' International. If you need an international, organize a 'black international.' Next, study the Soviet Union, because you're going to have to develop your country. Those people learned how to develop a country so fast that they stood up to Hitler—find out how they did it. But your job is to deal with Africa and don't let them lead you astray by saying someday the European proletariat is going to lay down its tools in order to free colonials—they ain't going to do it. But I'll tell what could happen—someday you may get strong enough so that if you pull Africa out of the imperial structure you'll force those workers up there to go left and build socialism in their own country." And I often thought that when the Portuguese, Angola and Mozambique and Guinea Bissau, when they hammered the Portuguese army they forced a revolution in

Portugal. This was always Padmore's kind of prediction: "You've got a chance to drive them to the left but they ain't going to put down their tools to free you." The last time I saw Padmore was in 1959, just before he died, and he was still handling this same line. I think he died with this line. I think his wife changed later because she felt that Khrushchev had mellowed the Soviet Union. If you read *Pan-Africanism or Communism?* he's still carrying a kind of anti-Soviet line in that book, but what he's saying is he thinks you can be a Marxist-Socialist without necessarily carrying the line of any European or Asian Communist Party.

**John H. Bracey, Jr.:** Since we're correcting everybody let me respond to Professor Shepperson. The first Mrs. Garvey, Amy Ashwood Garvey, is the co-president of the Fifth Pan-African Congress. And it always kind of slips in the literature about that. Amy Ashwood is the one who went to Liberia and had the relationship with the Liberian government and so forth.

**Shepperson:** I hear that it was the second wife, though, that raised with Dr. Du Bois the question . . .

**Bracey:** But the first one was the co-president.

**Drake:** What happened is something curious. While they were setting up the Fifth Pan-African Congress, if you look at the Du Bois correspondence, the second Mrs. Garvey, the one that edited *Philosophy and Opinions*,<sup>28</sup> Amy Jacques, was writing Dr. Du Bois asking him to get a conference called to vindicate her husband. This is interesting, given the conflict between Dr. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. Amy Jacques is asking Du Bois to call a conference that will help vindicate the ideas that her husband stood for. Du Bois is responding favorably and they're corresponding. The other Mrs. Garvey (Amy Ashwood), is in London working with Padmore and his people—so both Mrs. Garvey's have a hand in the Pan-African movement at that point.

**Bracey:** And the second point that Prof. Shepperson raised about Richard Wright's *Black Power*: in '65 Adam Clayton Powell gives a speech in the U.S. Congress where he calls for "black power" and there is an organization in Chicago called the Organization for Black Power that is formed in the summer of 1965.<sup>29</sup> And it is a full year before Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton come out with the word. The word is out among the masses of black people a year

<sup>28</sup> *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, 2 vols. (New York: 1923, 1925).

<sup>29</sup> See John H. Bracey, Jr., August Meier, Elliot Rudwick, eds., *Black Nationalism in America* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1970).

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before Stokely and Chuck write the book. And it's not in writing because nobody paid much attention to writing. It comes out of a growing kind of thing in the black community. It might have been Powell's influence although there is no particular evidence for that.

**Drake:** On this question of the reaction in Africa which I think Shepperson asked about, I found a uniformly negative reaction to Richard Wright's book *Black Power* from everybody I talked to around Ghana, except Nkrumah. And there is only one part that Nkrumah liked. You may recall in the end there is an open letter to Kwame Nkrumah from Richard Wright in which he's saying, "You need to get rough and militarize your country and bring it into the 20th century." And I asked Nkrumah, right after the book came out, what did you think about that and all he said was, "Sometimes I think that Dick Wright is right."

**Bracey:** Let me ask my question now. What happened to C.L.R. James in all this? Everybody's talking all around C.L.R. and at some point you ought to bring him in.

**Drake:** Let's dispose of the myths first. C.L.R. was not at the Fifth Pan-African Congress; people say he was, often, just like the ones who say that I was there. C.L.R. James had been in that original group which in 1934 formed the International African Service Bureau which was the predecessor of the Pan-African Federation. He came to the U.S. in 1938 and he got stuck here. He got put on Ellis Island at one point and they were thinking about deporting him, so he wasn't available for the Fifth Congress.

**Bracey:** There's a letter he mentions all the time stating that he sent Nkrumah to Padmore.<sup>30</sup>

**Drake:** Well, incidentally, my father is a West Indian from Barbados, and I don't know how many West Indians there are in the audience, but I feel that I have the license to make the statement that I'm going to make. I think in dealing with Africans and with Afro-Americans there has been, among those old-timers way back, a bit of what I call West Indian arrogance, and for all of C.L.R. James' great qualities he has a bit of this too. And he published this letter which he says he sent to Padmore that I'm now sending this African student on to you from Lincoln University as sort of—he doesn't have much on the ball but maybe you can make

<sup>30</sup> The views of C.L.R. James can be found in *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill, 1977) and "Notes on the Life of George Padmore" (unpublished ms., Northwestern University Library).

something out of him—kind of thing. That letter went ahead, but Nkrumah's statement is that he had written the letter himself to Padmore and that Padmore met him at the station, took him home, and so forth and so on. But I think the letter is quite authentic. It sounds like James.

I recall the story of another Trinidadian, Oliver Cromwell Cox.<sup>31</sup> While I was teaching in Ghana in 1960, Cox came by to visit and now two Trinidadians had met each other. They had known each other in passing, but now they were out in Africa. Padmore decided to set up a meeting so that Cox could address Nkrumah's little group of vanguard activists. Cox came with a prepared statement and the first thing he said was, you talk about building socialism, Ghana is too small an area in which to build socialism. At which point Nkrumah tensed up like this and he went on and on on this theme so finally when he got through Nkrumah bellowed at him, "Nonsense, professor! What about Yugoslavia?" And Cox's answer was, "You may call it socialism but I call them beggars. The only way they survive is with 2 billion dollars from the USA." At which the chairman of the meeting, Kojo, reared up and said, "But we are not beggars!" And Nkrumah then asked, "Have you ever heard of the N.E.P. in Russia?" Cox finally bellowed out, "Yes I've heard of N.E.P. but they had a revolution in Russia first, before Lenin instituted N.E.P." The meeting was a disaster and Padmore closed it down real quick.

**Musila Mutisya:** Could you please comment on the parallel between Pan-Africanism and the O.A.U. and where they're both headed, if Pan-Africanism is still continuing and where the O.A.U. is headed today?

**Drake:** Do you want to say a word about that?

**Shepperson:** Well, the O.A.U.'s been going for about 12 years hasn't it?

**Drake:** Yes.

**Shepperson:** And it hasn't been very successful, has it? I think that's all we need to say. That doesn't mean to say, of course, that maybe it can't be made more successful. Surely the one very sad thing—and this is why in a way I'm slightly sad to see so many titters about Nkrumah amongst the group—it's not the first time I've heard it in an Afro-American audience. I'm not an out-and-out admirer of Nkrumah—he did a lot of things wrong—but I think he did see, much more clearly than some people recognize, that one of Africa's great problems is its

<sup>31</sup> The sociologist Oliver Cromwell Cox was perhaps best known as the author of *Race, Caste and Class* (New York: Monthly Review, 1970), among other works.

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having been transferred to the old colonial boundaries and its resulting balkanization. Surely that is one of the great problems, and I raised at the end of my little piece this question: Is Pan-Africanism going to split into two parts? It never used to be two parts, it used to be one thing. And it got to be Pan-Africanist activity in the African diaspora and then other forms of Pan-African activity in Africa itself. At the moment in Africa itself, Pan-African activity is at a low ebb but I don't think it's lost all together. I think at the moment it may well be that the old spirit of Pan-Africanism is being carried in the African diaspora, but the original question I think was about the O.A.U. and it's not doing very well. And you keep nodding your head so you obviously agree with what I'm saying. Over to Professor Drake.

**Drake:** The splits in Pan-Africanism have been of several varieties. I would argue that the first big split came in April of 1957 at the first Conference of Independent African States in which you had to decide, when you said Pan-Africanism, whether you were talking about continental Pan-Africanism, uniting all Africans in Africa, or talking about the original thing, uniting all black people everywhere, what I call racial Pan-Africanism.<sup>32</sup> And therefore I think these two things have been going along side by side and interacting with each other. And they can cause some pain. At the Sixth Pan-African Congress in 1974 (were you there, Bracey, in Tanzania?) the Afro-American contingent got very disturbed concerning the emphasis that the conference was putting on unifying everybody in Africa. And I think even Julius Nyerere said we can't have skin color politics. And also the socialist orientation, the left-wing orientation—a lot of the American delegates were very put off by that, I think. Now I think the first split between racial and continental Pan-Africanism came early. I would say that by the middle of 1960 there is another split between revolutionary Pan-Africanism and conservative Pan-Africanism, and the thing that precipitated that was the Congo crisis—Patrice Lumumba and the Congo crisis. Because once the decision had been made that the USA—and I think I'm justified in saying this—was not going to tolerate Lumumba and Nkrumah playing a socialistic kind of Pan-Africanism game in the Congo with all that wealth and so forth, the conservative forces then began to mobilize and you had a split into two groups: the Casablanca group, what I call the revolutionary Pan-Africanists, which was U.A.R., Egypt, Ghana, Morocco (I don't know how it got in there), and Libya; and the more conservative states, Liberia, Nigeria, and others. When 1960 came Nigeria threw its weight to the conservative side. So now, we've got a split between Pan-African radicals on one hand, of which there are about five states, and eleven or so on the other.

The O.A.U. was a compromise. When the O.A.U. was founded they agreed

<sup>32</sup> See St. Clair Drake, "Negro Americans and the African Interest."

to disband competing blocks and try to get unity. And Nkrumah had put on everybody's desk a copy of his book, *Africa Must Unite*,<sup>33</sup> and he's there pumping for the "United States of Africa," but the decision is made that the boundaries needed to be kept as they were, and what was needed was what I call a conservative Pan-African orientation. And I think that split, in a sense, is still there. I think the O.A.U.-kind of administrative structure has had some successes but to me it is now Angola and Mozambique, Ethiopia and the Congo trying to look for some kind of left-wing unification of the continent plus all the rest. Now where this goes, who knows? It may end up with the kind of conflict that Nigeria found itself in at one point—a kind of civil war within a single nation. After all, we don't have thirty years yet of independence in these African states. A thirty-year run is short. The USA had a civil war long long after it got started so why would we expect Africa won't have similar kinds of conflicts. And I think there's a division between the radical left-wing Pan-Africanism and the O.A.U. kind. Where it goes, who'd want to guess?

**Jan Carew:** I wanted to pose two questions, one for each of you. The first question has a preface. I was interested in your comments on the League of Coloured Peoples and Dr. Moody and I think it's an area in scholarship that is completely neglected here in the United States: looking at the different linkages in the Pan-African movement and the future of the Pan-African movement. A very important case that we know of in London which was taken up by the League of Colored Peoples during World War II was when a black American serviceman was condemned to death for rape. A lawyer from the League of Coloured Peoples, John Carter, defended this serviceman and had him set free under English law, stating that the American law had no jurisdiction in England. I wanted to ask you whether any studies had been done about the follow-ups that took place from the League of Colored Peoples in England when some of the people went back to their colonial homelands. Because I know, for example, Guyana played a very important role in giving fuel to the nascent anti-colonial movement in the post-World War II era. And the next question I was going to ask St. Clair about the point at which Nkrumah had proposed to Lumumba a union between the Congo and Ghana in which they would have one leadership, one country, at a time when the crisis had really gotten to a boiling point.

**Shepperson:** On the Moody one, I don't think that anybody is doing the kind of study that Mr. Carew mentioned. I could be wrong on this. My impression is that relatively little has been done on the League of Coloured Peoples at all. Dr. Roderick Macdonald at Syracuse University wrote a piece on the League of

<sup>33</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (New York: Praeger, 1963).

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Coloured Peoples and Harold Moody in a very early issue of the British periodical, *Race*, and Roderick Macdonald did a preface, quite an interesting one, to the publication in one volume of *The Keys*. I think the kind of influence that you're mentioning is not being looked at, and indeed the whole field of the League of Coloured Peoples hasn't been looked at. Perhaps because, and I say this very tentatively, and with not too much assurance, that amongst some students of Pan-African affairs, African history, and blacks in Britain today, whether they are white or black, Moody is often looked upon as a "Booker T. Washington" figure, which seems to me a rather unfortunate approach historically.

**Question:** Could you comment on the union that Nkrumah proposed between the Congo and Ghana?

**Drake:** Let me state this on the Congo thing. (Incidentally, Padmore died the year before the Congo crisis broke but Padmore and Nkrumah had a line—I always refer to the Padmore-Nkrumah line and don't talk about just the Nkrumah line, which is the one that we've got to move toward this "United States of Africa" business.) And I say they gambled four times and lost all four—that is, Nkrumah and others. The first one was the Ghana-Guinea union, and I mentioned what Padmore had to say about that. Ghana was able to make the loan, they formed the union—ultimately another state came in and it became the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union—but it never really went anywhere. Now the next maneuver comes in 1960 when Patrice and Nkrumah had their understandings. Nkrumah wrote a book about this after he was overthrown on the Congo case and it has some documents in it.<sup>34</sup> Apparently, Lumumba was promising to bring the Congo into the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union—that's what I meant when I said the U.S. and the West did not intend to have the Congo come into some kind of union dominated by Sékou Touré and Nkrumah, saying we're going to build socialism in the Congo. A whole lot of effort was invested by Nkrumah in that Congo business. A tremendous amount of emotional and monetary effort. By February 1961 Lumumba is dead. Later the CIA admitted that they had prepared the snake venom to kill him but didn't have to use it because Tshombe's forces killed him and they just threw the snake venom in the river and that was it. Those were the days when assassination was a permitted tool, now it's illegal for the CIA to assassinate anybody. [Voice from audience: Frank Carlucci, Frank Carlucci—don't forget him.] O.K.

Now they lost that Congo gamble and I would argue that Nkrumah gambled another time. If you lost that most highly industrialized area which you wanted to hook on to the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union, why not go after the biggest

<sup>34</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo* (New York: International Publishers, 1967).

population base—Nigeria? Nigeria had 80 million people or so. Now the leader of the opposition party in Nigeria in the early '60s came over to Ghana, this was Awolowo, and if you look at Colin Legum's little book, *Pan-Africanism*, he has the speech that Awolowo made after his six-day visit to Ghana.<sup>35</sup> Awolowo stated that if he were prime minister of Nigeria, he would do more than bring Nigeria into the Ghana-Guinea-Mali-Upper Volta union. He went home and the Action Party starting running on that ticket. Incidentally, within a year or so, he had been sentenced to twelve years in prison for colluding with Ghana to overthrow the government of Nigeria. Later he got out of prison following a second coup in Nigeria, and lived to play a very prominent role in Nigerian life. (We hear that he just died.) He never raised the point about union anymore. That was the end, I think, for the maneuvers that Nkrumah had with regard to this.

Let me say my final word now and then we can go on and let you and Shepperson say the rest. When I made that statement about looking at this union question—Pan-African question—as a Nkrumah-Padmores thing I remember I was visiting with Padmore one night, and his position was, Ghana is like this book. It's a base on which you stand, on which to mobilize your forces, to free and unify the rest of this continent. Ghana has to become a part of something bigger. If it doesn't we'll be just like those Central American republics he mentioned. And he said, "You have a man that wrote a book about the 'takeoff'.<sup>36</sup> There isn't going to be any 'takeoff' in thirty different little pieces. What self-respecting capitalists are going to invest in Burundi. No. The issue is not 'takeoff', the issue is 'take it!' That the 'takeoff' has been made in two places: in the Congo and in South Africa. The African problem is how do you take these two industrialized pieces and fit them into a whole. It isn't 'takeoff', it's 'take it'." These ideas Nkrumah bought and may ultimately have been his own downfall. When the coup came in Ghana, Nkrumah was the only leader on the whole continent who was talking about any continental government. Sékou Touré and nobody else was, and Nkrumah was still putting money and still putting his emotion into it. And, I think, one understands this better if one realizes something.

I just want to read a little: "On October the 4th, 1959, Padmore's ashes were flown down from London—he died in London—to be buried. And a ceremony was held in which Padmore's ashes were put in a wall of Christiansborg castle with a little sign: "George Padmore, born in Trinidad, died in London, he loved

<sup>35</sup> Hon. Obafemi Awolowo, "Statement on African Affairs," in Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism: A Short Political Guide* (Praeger Books, 1962), 266-71.

<sup>36</sup> Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960 [2nd ed., 1971]); and Rostow, ed., *The Economics of Take-off into Sustained Growth* (London: Macmillan, 1963).

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Africa more than life, *requiescat in pace*.” The “s” was left out in *requiescat*, but we forgive thee. I was invited to this particular ceremony along with some others. Nkrumah had the ceremony on a parapet at the Christiansborg castle, with the slave pens down below us where they used to hold the slaves before they sent them on across the Gulf of Guinea. Nkrumah had once been a preacher and he began his oration with these words: “I am the resurrection and the life.” And then he pointed out that he had met George Padmore and so forth, and I’m just going to read this little part that’s in the autobiography. I remember vividly when Nkrumah said this: “When I first met George Padmore in London, some fifteen years ago, we both realized from the very beginning that we thought along the same lines and talked the same language. There existed between us that rare affinity for which one searches for so long but seldom finds in another human being. We became friends at the moment of our meeting and our friendship developed into that indescribable relationship that exists only between two brothers.” And having got through with that very emotional statement he then looked out where the surf was beating in against the walls of the slave castle and he said, “Who knows, but from this very spot, his ancestors were carried out across the ocean there, while the kinsmen stood weeping here as silent sentinel. We’ve brought his ashes home to rest.” And he slammed them up in the wall, got his handkerchief and started crying.

In 1963 the other Pan-African leader, Dr. Du Bois, died in Ghana. His state funeral was held and he was buried thence beside the castle wall. I have no doubt at all that Nkrumah had the feeling that ultimately he would be buried somewhere near those two and you would have then, Africa and the Diaspora symbolically represented in the Pan-African movement. Nkrumah died in exile, up in Guinea, and for a while it was thought his body would not be brought home. But there was a kind of groundswell. He’s an African, they said, he has the right to be buried in his home even if politically we ran him out. So when they brought the body back, they didn’t bury it with the other two. It’s a couple of hundred miles off some where. I have a prediction that eventually Nkrumah’s body will be back up there with Du Bois’ and Padmore’s ashes completing the symbolism of Africa and the Diaspora as part of the Pan-African movement.<sup>37</sup>

What does all this mean? Ideas don’t know any time spans. They cross space and they cross time. That question you asked I have no doubt at all that somewhere down the line this whole idea of the United States of Africa gets

<sup>37</sup> In August, 1986, the remains of Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, along with those of Shirley Graham Du Bois were reinterred in the W.E.B. Du Bois Memorial Centre for Pan African Culture in Accra. See “The Reinterment of Shirley Graham Du Bois and W.E.B. Du Bois” in this issue of *Contributions in Black Studies*; also, Charles Whitaker, “W.E.B. Du Bois: A Final Resting Place for an Afro-American Giant,” *Ebony*, 62:1 (November, 1986), 172-78.

revived and this kind of Pan-Africanism becomes fruitful. But we don't know when and we don't know how long. And when I say ideas leap time and space, I just finished reading *My Odyssey*, the biography of the Nigerian leader, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe.<sup>38</sup> Zeke says, "My idea of wanting to go to America and study came when somebody told me that there was a man named Marcus Garvey there who had started a movement to free black people everywhere and I made up my mind that I was going to that country where Marcus Garvey was." Nkrumah in his autobiography says, "It was Garvey who fired my spirit of nationalism."<sup>39</sup> Garvey, you know, had been put in prison here and deported back to Jamaica. But here were these people years later, saying we're doing what we're doing because we heard about Garvey and the Garvey thing inspired us. And one day I know that Ghana had a steam ship line called the Black Star Line, and Garvey's Black Star Line as you may know had failed—he had been put in jail because of the Black Star Line financing and so forth—and I asked Dr. Nkrumah "Why do you call it the Black Star Line?," and he said, "That's obvious. We're vindicating Mr. Garvey." And then with that sense of humor which he and Padmore and these guys had about serious things he said, "Well Garvey's ship never got over here, but ours will get back over there." But he's vindicating Garvey, so what I'm saying is I think we both have been talking about what are relatively small events—the Fifth Pan-African Congress, the All African People's Congress—you can't measure what ultimately will flow from anything. I think they were important historical events.

**Murphy:** Right after that magnificent summation I have an anti-climatic point, but one I'd like to add to Carew's question concerning the Nkrumah-Lumumba conversation about Ghana and the Congo.

**Drake:** You were out there at the time too.

**Murphy:** Yes, but I didn't know anything about their conversations. I was passing through Accra in '67, I believe, and I had a long series of visits with Ako Adjei, who had been a close personal friend of mine. He had been in prison for quite a few years and had obviously fallen out with Nkrumah. We had some correspondence for a while after that and one of the points he made was that he was trying to come to this country and spend a couple of years in order to do some serious thinking. One of the points he made was that he was present during most of the conversations between Nkrumah and Lumumba—he was foreign minister

<sup>38</sup> Nnamdi Azikiwe, *My Odyssey: An Autobiography* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970).

<sup>39</sup> *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: Nelson, 1957).

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at the time. And he said, "The story has not been fully revealed. I know a number of things that were said that are not quite what Nkrumah has said." But he never told what he was talking about, so all I can do is add to the mystery.

**Drake:** Or write him and ask him to get it down on paper.

**Asa Davis:** Portuguese-speaking blacks were the first to talk about a United States of Africa in the 1870's. For example, the Angolan poet Esteves Perreira was saying since the 1870s our motherland shall be united as the United States of Africa. From Brazil as a matter of fact, Andre Rebouças, who was a proto-Pan-Africanist, went to Africa in the 1890's. I think in the history of the Pan-African movement we also have to take a more of a comparative view because, as I said to Michael Crowder, somebody should also do Blaise Diagne, because in the first Pan-African movement Diagne was the one who raised the issue of whether or not Pan-Africanism meant just *French* Africans uniting.

**Shepperson:** There was a Portuguese Liga Africana and it is not at all accidental that one of Du Bois' conferences met in Lisbon.

**Drake:** Yes. Shepperson also makes his point strongly, you see, that we talk about Pan-Africanism with a capital "P," but there's a pan-africanism with a small "p." And that capital "P" is really applied to the Du Bois-Padmore-Nkrumah line of action, and I think it's quite good to have this note thrown in that there were other streams of action other than that particular one. There is a great tendency for some of us just to dwell on the Du Bois-Padmore-Nkrumah stream when things were going on, or had been going on, in other places.

**Shepperson:** Could I, Mr. Chairman, respond to Dr. Davis' comment? He raises the name of Blaise Diagne which should certainly be worked on. And another relatively forgotten name today—which is not too much forgotten since Dr. Martin published his book, *The Pan-African Connection*—is the Haitian, Benito Sylvain.<sup>40</sup> And Benito Sylvain is very important indeed. There is a brief book on him, published in Haiti, but there is really no large scale work on him for the English-speaking world. And as one who has looked at his Paris thesis, he is no doubt a very important figure.

<sup>40</sup> Tony Martin, *The Pan-African Connection: From Slavery to Garvey and Beyond* (Dover, MA: The Majority Press, 1984), 201-16.

**Drake:** May I throw just one last word in? In the book, *African Patriots*,<sup>41</sup> by Mary Benson, she includes a part of the charter of the African National Congress when it got founded in 1912, and it used the word “Pan-African,” stating that the formation of the ANC, the African National Congress, was looking forward to Pan-African unity. So even the ANC, which is so much discussed today, had this kind of perspective in its 1912 original statement.

<sup>41</sup> Mary Benson, *African Patriots: The Story of the African National Congress of South Africa* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963).