

Inter-Territorial Migrations of Africans South of the Sahara

Every year very large numbers of Africans leave their tribal territories to seek employment in other parts of the continent. This phenomenon is intimately linked with the rate of economic development of Africa and, in addition, it raises grave social problems since it involves societies at the opposite poles of economic and social evolution—the tribal group from which the migrant comes and the industrial society to which he must adapt himself. It is with these migrations and their social and economic aspects that the present article is concerned.¹

Africa has an area of 11½ million square miles (30 million square kilometres), which corresponds to about one-fifth of the total land surface of the earth. In 1954 the population was estimated at about 210 million, a 5 per cent. error being considered possible, including over 5 million persons of European origin mainly resident in the temperate zones of the southern and northern extremities and in the highlands.

International migrations in the parts of Africa bordering the Mediterranean are characterised by the nearness of Europe and therefore present different features from migrations south of the Sahara desert. This part of the continent accounts for about two-thirds of its total area and contains a population estimated at 142 million in 1954, including over 3.5 million persons of European origin, more than 3 million of whom live in the Union of South Africa and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. African migrations within this area have kept pace with a rapid rate of industrial development, largely primary, which has become increasingly dependent on a constant supply of cheap African labour. Without this source of labour the development of the industrially significant territories would have followed a totally different trend.

The factors that justify a distinction between internal and external migration in more advanced areas are not present to the same degree in Africa, where border crossings by Africans are generally subject to little or no control and where ethnic and cultural zones bear no relation to political frontiers. Much of what is said below regarding the causes and results of inter-territorial movements is therefore equally applicable to the numerically much more important internal migrations. However, inasmuch as geographical and administrative factors have influenced the character and rate of economic development, inter-

¹ See also "The Development of Wage-Earning Employment in Tropical Africa", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXXIV, No. 3, Sep. 1956, p. 239, and P. de BRIEY: "The Productivity of African Labour", *ibid.*, Vol. LXXII, Nos. 2-3, Aug.-Sep. 1955, p. 119.

territorial movements reflect differences of industrial progress, the most highly developed territories absorbing manpower that does not find sufficient opportunities for wage-earning employment in its own territory.

Apart from their economic significance, intra-African migrations generate social problems that are largely absent from migrations between countries of European civilisation. By leaving his tribal environment and engaging in paid employment the African cuts through all the stages of the industrial revolution without the benefit of organised orientation or preparation; the nefarious consequences are only too evident in the urban areas of Africa. A traditional attitude of *laissez-faire* has given way in recent years to increasing public concern with the problems raised by the sudden contact of a pre-industrial society with the life of a modern economy. Measures that have been taken to mitigate the worst effects are designed, on the one hand, to stabilise the African worker at his place of employment by offering more acceptable living conditions and, on the other hand, to make tribal agriculture more productive. As will be seen later these types of measures are mutually complementary; however, they tend to generalise a cultural cleavage which, up to now, has only affected a small African élite.

CAUSES OF MIGRATORY MOVEMENTS

The growing tendency of able-bodied men to leave their tribal lands and to engage in paid employment for periods of varying length is due to factors both of impulsion and of attraction, i.e. conditions in Native agriculture are sufficiently bad to induce many individuals to try their luck elsewhere, and paid employment in industry appears to satisfy a number of their wants.

The underlying causes of this phenomenon can be summarised under three headings: the pressure of population on land resources, the need for money, and psychological considerations that endow the urban environment with certain advantages over tribal life.

Pressure of Population on Land

In the course of European colonisation Africans have been compelled to give up land for white settlers or to live in Native reserves. The amount and the quality of land lost to Africans varies widely from one tribe and territory to another, but in most cases the African population has had to dispense with an important part of its traditional territory or to abandon it entirely. The Chewa tribe of Northern Rhodesia, for instance, lost 75 per cent. of its land, first owing to the invasion of a neighbouring tribe, an indirect result of European settlement; later as a result of the compulsory cession of land to white settlers; and finally through restriction to a Native reserve.

The inevitable result of territorial restriction has been a corresponding reduction in the standard of living of Africans, whose methods of agriculture have remained essentially unchanged. It has been said that, prior to European colonisation, Africans disposed of so much land as to lack inducement for the adoption of more efficient agricultural techniques. While it is true, in general, that Native agriculture is inefficient and wasteful, opportunities for Africans to learn better methods have so far been rare.¹ Moreover, because of the inflexibility

¹ Notable efforts to rehabilitate Native agriculture have, however, been made in Kenya, Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia, the Belgian Congo and Tanganyika.

of primitive cultures the adoption of techniques unrelated to tradition frequently results in serious disorganisation.

However, even if present efforts to instruct Africans in better methods of cultivation are intensified and show favourable results, there are many areas in which the population is already too large to be supported by the soil alone.¹

A further factor aggravates the pressure of population on Native resources. Colonial administrations have reduced inter-tribal warfare and improved general sanitary and medical conditions of the Native population. As a result the African population, after a long period of relative stability, has begun to grow at an alarming rate. It has been estimated, for example, that the African population of the Rhodesias will have doubled within 25 years, i.e. that it grows at an annual rate of over 3 per cent, including net immigration.² This rate of growth corresponds to the highest registered anywhere and considerably exceeds the absorptive capacity of the fastest growing economies.

Coupled with the above-mentioned factors, and partly as their result, the soil under Native cultivation has suffered from increasing exhaustion. It has been estimated that the productivity of the soil cultivated by Natives in the reserves of Kenya has dropped by 50 per cent. since before the war, despite efforts to control soil erosion and to teach the use of fertiliser.

Since one of the results of population pressure on land has been the departure of able-bodied men, it is likely that agricultural productivity has suffered a further drop owing to the poor quality of the available labour force.

The Need for Money

The preceding description has indicated that there are compelling primary needs which African society can no longer satisfy through its own efforts. To this must be added an equally imperative need for money that has arisen among a large part of African society, though not always of its own initiative. The pure tribal economy had no need for money and it is still rare for tribal produce to be exchanged for currency. But the imposition of taxes has largely changed this happy state. Since Native agriculture is not usually capable of supplying the money needs of the tribe, while the tribe is forcibly, though not entirely unwillingly, a participant in a money economy, it becomes essential that some members should sell their services. Moreover, the growing contact of Africans with the commercial sphere of European civilisation has created a certain demand—for textiles, hand tools, matches, and so on—which cannot be satisfied without money. The attitude of the African towards paid employment is therefore described more aptly as “buying money” than as “earning a living”.

Psychological Factors

The foregoing analysis mentioned some compelling reasons why a proportion of Africans are forced to accept wage-earning employ-

¹ In 1946 the Native population of Natal amounted to 1.7 million and had at its disposal 10,800 square miles of land. If all Natives had in fact lived within this area, the average density per square mile would have been 157 persons, a concentration judged excessive for the type of land even under the assumption that advanced agricultural techniques are being used. In the most fertile native reserves of Kenya, the concentration of Native population is even higher, varying between 600 and 1,200 per square mile.

² *Central African Territories: Geographical, Historical and Economic Survey* (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1951), p. 15.

ment in industrial centres. In addition, however, there are less coercive reasons for this trend. They result indirectly from the superior status of the white community in Africa, in so far as Natives are inclined to regard the Europeanised environment as a desirable goal integration into which brings prestige and material benefits. In fact, young Africans are not unresponsive to the appeal of the city, to the scope it offers for entertainment and to the freedom—albeit limited—afforded by anonymity. To exchange the irksome traditions and poverty of the tribe against such apparent advantages must seem an excellent choice indeed to many young Africans.

What are, however, the material advantages the African gains by transplanting himself into an urban environment? Data collected in Native reserves of the Union of South Africa reveal that the average cash value of crops produced by a five-member family amounted to about £17 a year in 1944. In 1940 the annual wages for unskilled industrial employment open to Africans in the Union varied between £46 and £52. Probably this ratio has not changed significantly since. Although a comparison of standards of living in these two types of economic activity is complicated by the fact that the switch from one to the other involves a completely altered way of life, it is evident that industrial employment enables Africans to reach a higher level of individual productivity than tribal agriculture. The wage levels at which African labour participates in the economy are, however, generally too low to satisfy even the elementary needs of a couple, much less of a family. This is the main cause of the temporary character of Native employment; the able-bodied male African avails himself of the opportunity of raising his standard of living by migrating to the city; but since he cannot support a family at his place of employment he is forced to make frequent journeys to his home.

The economic reality in much of Africa is that Native agriculture cannot support the African population, while the principal alternative source of income, i.e. industry, remunerates the African workers on whom its functioning depends at rates that do not support life in the city. African society therefore depends largely on both types of economic activity; subsistence agriculture at the base and industrial employment to raise the income to the vital minimum.

A notable feature of African industry is its extraordinary quantitative demand for unskilled labour. Two inter-related conditions are responsible for this inflation. First, since the low wages paid in industry compel Africans to return to their homes frequently to maintain contact with their families¹, the number of Africans actually employed at a given time is much smaller than the number of those who make part of their living out of wages. According to a United Nations estimate the latter figure is from three to five times the former. This does not seem excessive if it is considered that four teams may be constantly involved in African labour migration: one team working the tribal land, one on its way to the city, one on its way back to the land, and one actually on the job. The second, perhaps even more important, factor causing a disproportionate demand for African labour is in part a result of the first; owing to the short periods they spend at remunerated work and their indiscriminate interchange between different

¹ An indication of African labour mobility is given in a study carried out in Johannesburg; between 1936 and 1944 the average labour turnover among Africans employed in industry was 100 per cent. every 20 months.

types of employment, African workers are extraordinarily unproductive. More will be said on this question further on, but it may be mentioned here that it is a general practice in Africa to use several Natives—sometimes as many as six—for a job that would be done by one worker in a more advanced country.

REGULATION OF MIGRATION

During the early period of European colonisation African workers were not inclined to accept wage-earning employment voluntarily and compulsory recruitment was frequently resorted to in order to supply the needs of white settlers for manpower. Once migration for employment had become an accepted part of the African way of life, the use of direct compulsion in recruitment procedures was generally abandoned and the practice is now restricted to a few little-advertised instances. At present, more variegated pre-occupations inspire official policies with regard to Native migrations.

It has been stated previously that, by and large, African migrants cross territorial frontiers with little or no supervision. This is true despite the large body of relevant legislation, since an effective border control is physically impossible in most areas of Africa and, in view of other direct or indirect checks, is unnecessary. Intra-African migrations of Natives are generally devoid of the political, ethnic and cultural implications characteristic of international movements between more advanced countries. Since Africans generally have few civic responsibilities such as voting or military service, and since their cultural characteristics are not identifiable with political areas, their migrations represent an almost exclusively economic and demographic phenomenon.

Measures at present applied to African migrants are of three main types: (a) those designed to prevent excessive depletion of the Native lands of their most valuable workers and applied at the point of departure of migratory movements; (b) those organising the movements of migrants and protecting them during the journey in either direction; and (c) those applicable at the place of employment, i.e. in urban areas, and intended to ensure a supply of labour and at the same time maintain public order.

The desire to protect the tribal economy against the harmful effects of excessive emigration of able-bodied men finds its legal expression in regulations controlling the activities of recruiters, the registration of Natives (and, by this means, the control of their movements), measures to protect the welfare of family members remaining behind (deferred payment of wages, communications between family and wage earner), and provisions for repatriation after completion of the work contract.

The migratory movements are sometimes carried out under bilateral arrangements between the territory of origin on the one hand and the territory of destination or a recruiting organisation on the other. Such arrangements may include the provision of mechanised transport, of shelter and food during the journey and of medical examinations. Bilateral agreements have also been concluded whose provisions go beyond the protection of migrants during their journeys and include the regulation of recruitment, conditions of work, and the like.

At his place of employment the African is usually subject to a body of local police regulations varying considerably in severity and complexity. Registration and the carrying of identity papers is compulsory in most cases. Other regulations often restrict Africans to certain zones

and impose a curfew on them. As a rule there is little attempt by the authorities to co-ordinate the influx of African workers to the cities with known manpower requirements, firstly because the requirements experienced by individual employers are not centrally collated, and secondly because the presence of Africans in the cities is mainly treated as a matter of public order and hygiene rather than as a manpower problem.¹ With few exceptions, where a limited network of Native employment offices has been established, the relationship between labour demand and supply has been given free play through the relative elasticity of the market and the effect of reports filtering back to the sources of Native labour.

A summary of the principal known laws and regulations relating to inter-territorial migrations is given in the following pages. This considerable amount of legislative material should not lead to the misconception that all, or even an important part, of inter-territorial migrations proceed under formal control. The overwhelming majority of African migrants leave their tribal lands on their own impulse, follow the tracks and by-roads towards the centres of employment, little knowing nor caring what illusory confines they happen to cross in the course of their progress, and are only caught in the network of administrative curbs when at or near their place of employment.

A number of international labour Conventions and Recommendations have a more or less direct bearing on the subject of migrations within or between non-metropolitan or underdeveloped territories. Some of these international instruments have had a considerable influence on recent legislation and practices in Africa and their importance may be expected to continue to grow. This section will therefore deal in turn with the pertinent international instruments adopted by the International Labour Conference, bilateral and multilateral agreements, and territorial regulations.

International Labour Conventions and Recommendations

International labour Conventions dealing with various aspects of migration and recruitment include the Unemployment Convention, 1919, which contains a provision for the establishment of free public employment agencies; the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949, which provides for the progressive abolition of agencies conducted for profit; the Employment Service Convention, 1948; the Inspection of Emigrants Convention, 1926, which regulates the inspection and protection of emigrants on board ship; and the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949, which deals in great detail with the subject of workers' migration. In addition, the last three Conventions are supplemented by Recommendations; but in view of the particular conditions prevailing in non-metropolitan territories—a circumstance recognised in the constitutional provisions of the International Labour Organisation adopted in 1946 regarding the obligation of governments to extend the application of ratified Conventions to their non-metropolitan territories—the influence of general Conventions and Recommendations in these areas has remained small.

In order to meet this problem the International Labour Conference has adopted a number of instruments since 1946 which have a specific

¹ A network of Native Labour Bureaux has been in existence in the Union of South Africa since 1952.

bearing on the migration of workers in non-metropolitan territories. These include the Social Policy (Non-Metropolitan Territories) Convention, 1947; the Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1947, and the Protection of Migrant Workers (Underdeveloped Countries) Recommendation, 1955. Pertinent Conventions adopted prior to 1946 include the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936, and the Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1939.

These instruments have the advantage that, by being more restricted in their area of application, they squarely tackle the problems besetting the populations for which they have been designed. In particular they take account of the fact that indigenous workers need more complete protection than the workers covered by the general Conventions mentioned, since the former often have a confused or wrong impression of industrial life and may have no understanding of the employment contract; the activities of recruiting agents also call for special supervision.

The Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936, has the additional advantage, unlike the Migration for Employment Convention and Recommendation (Revised), 1949, of covering internal as well as international migratory movements. This is of particular relevance to Africa where, as has been implied before, the political aspects of migration dwindle before the needs for the economic, social and physical protection of migrants. This Convention therefore sets out the general policy to be followed in order to avoid the adverse effects of excessive recruitment; provides for the control of permission to recruit; forbids recruiting by chiefs or government officials; and calls for a system of recruiting licences, examination of recruited workers by a public officer, their medical examination and transportation, their free repatriation under certain conditions, etc. However, the Convention is limited to "indigenous" workers as defined in the text and its provisions, with the exception of those regarding repatriation, apply only until the moment of the migrant's arrival and acceptance of employment.

The Protection of Migrant Workers (Underdeveloped Countries) Recommendation, 1955, particularly aims at reducing the adjustment difficulties encountered by workers after acceptance of employment and, as its name indicates, applies to a wider range of workers than the aforementioned Convention. It consists mainly of two parts concerning the protection of workers and two dealing with the broader economic and social aspects of migration. One of the parts dealing with protection refers to the period of employment, the other to the outward and return journeys and to the period prior to employment. The protection of workers during their employment is dealt with under the headings of general policy, housing, wages, admission to skilled jobs without discrimination, trade union activities, supply of consumer goods, social security, industrial safety and hygiene, relations with the areas of origin, and material, intellectual and moral welfare. The other part relating to protection deals with the organisation of transport and rest facilities, medical examinations, period of acclimatisation, repatriation (also in the case of workers not brought to the place of employment by the employer and in the event of the death of the worker), and similar questions. The two parts dealing with the wider economic and social aspects of the problem concern, on the one hand, measures to discourage migratory movements considered undesirable in the interest of the migrants and their areas of origin and, on the other, measures to be

taken with a view to stabilising the migrants at their places of employment. It can be seen that this Recommendation has extremely far-reaching provisions and covers all the problems encountered in this type of migration.

It should also be mentioned that the subject of discrimination in the field of employment and occupation (on account of race, colour and other criteria) was considered by the 40th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1957, when Conclusions aimed at the adoption of a Convention and Recommendation on the subject were adopted for final discussion in 1958. Instruments such as these would have a direct bearing on the access of African workers to training and employment.

Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements

In 1928 the Governments of the Union of South Africa and of the Republic of Portugal concluded a bilateral agreement (then known as a Convention) with the object of establishing rules regarding the entry of African workers into Transvaal Province from Mozambique. In its modified form of 1934 this agreement authorised the recruitment of a maximum of 80,000 Mozambique Natives for work in the mines of the Union; it also regulated recruitment conditions, the duration of contracts, re-engagement, deferred pay, and the like.

A provisional agreement relating to migrant workers was concluded between the authorities of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1938. It was superseded by a Convention signed in 1942 and by another agreement signed in 1947, which came into effect in 1949. According to this last agreement the three signatories undertake to adopt reciprocal arrangements for: (a) the identification and control of migrant workers; (b) their repatriation after an agreed period; (c) the maintenance of families and dependants of migrant workers during their absence from their homes; (d) a system of deferred pay for migrant workers; (e) the provision of adequate medical services, housing and feeding (to include the provision of a pure water supply); and (f) the provision of adequate migrant labour inspectorate staff. The signatories agreed that each may take such steps as may be necessary to retain within its territory a sufficient number of adult able-bodied male Africans to meet its own economic requirements and to maintain the social structure of the Native groups.

Other agreements are in force regulating migrations between Nigeria and Fernando Po (1942) and Spanish Guinea (1951), and between Nigeria and French Equatorial Africa.

In 1936 an agreement was signed between the administration of Nyasaland and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, a large organisation set up by industry to secure Native labour, for the engagement of Nyasalanders for work in the Rand mines.

Territorial Regulations

Union of South Africa.

The Union of South Africa is exclusively an importer of Native labour, and the most important one in Africa. Its legislation relating to migration concerns the African at his place of employment and pursues the objectives of supplying industry with labour, applying the official segregation (apartheid) policy and ensuring public order. In this intent

it applies equally to migrants from inside or outside the territory of the Union. This legislation consists of the Pass Laws, the Group Areas Act, the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, 1945, and the Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, 1952. Restrictions on the entry of Africans into urban areas are the responsibility of the local authorities.

The establishment of Native Labour Bureaux through the Native Laws Amendment Act, 1952, affects extra-territorial migrants only indirectly. This Act is designed to guide labour into given areas, both by providing Africans with information and by preventing them from leaving an area affected by a manpower shortage for an area with a known surplus.

Bechuanaland.

There is no legislative control of migrant labour in Bechuanaland despite the fact that an estimated 50 to 60 per cent. of the fit adult men in the Protectorate are constantly away from their home country. In order to take account of the legal requirements in the Union of South Africa, however, the authorities issue passes to workers travelling to the Union.

Basutoland.

There is no migration legislation in Basutoland, but the authorities issue passes as in the case of Bechuanaland.

Southern Rhodesia.

Southern Rhodesia constitutes both an important centre of immigration and a source of labour supply for the Union of South Africa. Its legislation consists partly of measures taken under the tripartite agreement with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland already mentioned and partly of special provisions concerning employment contracts and recruitment. Free transport is furnished for Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland Natives and their families into the territory and back to their homes at the end of their employment, providing they have worked at least nine months in the territory.

The movement and residence of migrant workers is regulated in Southern Rhodesia by the same type of legislation as in the Union of South Africa, including the Pass Laws, the Native Registration Act and the Natives (Urban Areas) Accommodation and Registration Act.

Northern Rhodesia.

This territory supplies labour to Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa. Its legislation consists of the Ordinance implementing the tripartite Migrant Labour Agreement concluded with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and of the Employment of Natives Ordinance, some of the provisions of which follow or reproduce the provisions of the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936.

There are also laws and regulations regarding the registration and identification of Natives within the territory, which concern the relatively small immigration of Natives from Portuguese territories and from Nyasaland and Tanganyika.

Nyasaland.

The situation in Nyasaland is similar to that in Northern Rhodesia. Emigration, which is the only significant form of inter-territorial movement, is controlled by regulations conforming to the provisions of the tripartite agreement with Southern and Northern Rhodesia and by recruiting regulations which follow the provisions of the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936.

Tanganyika.

This territory is a centre of both immigration and emigration. As regards recruitment, the Tanganyika Government has adopted legislation closely following the provisions of the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936. There are no pass regulations, but travel permits are issued free of charge to Africans who apply for them for use as identity documents. A system of employment offices has been set up and rest camps and transit centres are in operation along the main migration routes.

Kenya.

Kenya has employment legislation, an employment office organisation and compulsory registration. The only known inter-territorial movement is a small immigration of Tanganyikans.

Uganda.

A considerable amount of immigration from Ruanda-Urundi and from Tanganyika is absorbed by Uganda. Employment legislation includes provisions concerning recruitment in conformity with the terms of the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936. The territory has an employment office system which is reported as not being fully operative because workers have no difficulty in finding employment. Transit camps have been set up by the administration on the main migration routes. A fairly large number of migrant workers are transported by bus or truck.

Ruanda-Urundi.

A series of important migratory movements starts from Ruanda-Urundi in the direction of the neighbouring territories of Uganda, the Belgian Congo and Tanganyika. Legislation includes provisions on recruitment, largely conforming to the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936. The movement of Africans out of the territory is regulated by a Decree of 1926 and an Ordinance of 1941, which make the acquisition of an exit pass compulsory. This pass is not required of persons living within ten kilometres of the frontier travelling for personal reasons and for a period of less than ten days.

Belgian Congo.

Various movements take place between the Belgian Congo and other territories, apparently resulting in a positive balance for the Congo. Legislation includes provisions on recruitment which follow the terms of the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936, and there are also legal provisions enabling recruitment and spontaneous engagement of Natives to be stopped in areas where the demographic position gives rise to anxiety.

French Equatorial Africa.

Apart from a small number of Nigerian workers transferred under the bilateral agreement mentioned previously, no inter-territorial movements are known to take place from or toward French Equatorial Africa.

Cameroons.

There appear to be no inter-territorial movements of labour to or from the Cameroons.

French West Africa and Togo.

A large number of Natives from Upper Volta and the Ivory Coast in French West Africa and from Togo enter Ghana (the former Gold Coast) seasonally to work on farms and in mines. The only supervision of this migration on French territory is that provided by the filter stations set up by the mobile hygiene service on the frontier.

There are no regulations concerning recruitment and an Order respecting the establishment of placement offices has remained a dead letter.

Nigeria.

In addition to the previously mentioned bilateral agreements between Nigeria and French Equatorial Africa, Fernando Po and Spanish Guinea, the Labour Code Ordinance, 1945, regulates recruitment along the lines of the Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936. There is also a system of placement offices.

Sierra Leone.

There is little industrial development in Sierra Leone and migrant labour is practically non-existent.

Gambia.

Although there is known to be some immigration into Gambia from the neighbouring Portuguese and French territories, no legislative provisions appear to exist.

Ghana (Gold Coast).

There is an important immigration to Ghana from Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Togo and Nigeria. No information is available on the pertinent legislation.

Mozambique and Angola.

Emigration from Mozambique and Angola is important and is directed mainly towards the Union of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and, to a smaller extent, Northern Rhodesia, Tanganyika and the Belgian Congo. Apart from the bilateral agreement concluded between Mozambique and the Union of South Africa, the restrictive character of which has been indicated earlier, the Portuguese authorities attempt to check or halt emigration by legislation which goes back to 1917 in the case of Mozambique, and to 1921 and 1948 for Angola. Under these regulations, Natives require travel documents and are obliged to report to the authorities before and after travelling.

The recruitment of workers is strictly controlled by a Decree of 1928, which is part of the Labour Code.

MIGRATION TRENDS

The factors which determine the volume and direction of inter-territorial migrations of Africans are by far less complex than those which come into play between nation States. Apart from legislative restrictions mentioned above controlling departure from their homes, Natives move towards the centres of wage-earning employment in response to the interaction of demographic pressure and economic opportunity, modified by the influence of geographic distance and a relatively brief tradition. This does not mean that direct recruiting efforts have not been influential in attracting a larger number of Natives towards particular destinations, but, in the final analysis, recruitment in Africa can be interpreted as a means of attenuating the obstacle of great distances and lack of communication.

As in other international migratory movements, three types of territories can be distinguished: those of origin, those of reception, and those which, owing to their geographic position and intermediate degree of economic development, absorb foreign labour from less developed areas and at the same time supply more highly developed territories with workers who respond to the attraction of higher wages. The latter phenomenon is not absent from the international migratory scene in the countries of European civilisation but, whereas there it is generally the result of governmental policies restricting the entry of certain nationalities for social, economic or political reasons, in Africa this migration "in stages" is solely due to geographic distance. The fact that most intra-African migrations are temporary gives particular weight to the problem of distance. Increasing stabilisation of workers at their places of employment would probably render the attraction of the highest wages in Africa more directly operative even in distant territories and would tend to diminish the importance as centres of immigration of areas offering less than the most favourable conditions.

The differential stages of development of the economies in adjoining territories have led to a constellation in which three zones have assumed the role of principal immigration foci; these zones are located in southern, eastern and western Africa. As a rule the inter-territorial migrations arising from inequalities in economic tone have been preceded and are accompanied by numerically more important movements within the focal territories, but these movements are no longer of sufficiently large a scale to satisfy the growing labour requirements.

Before proceeding with a more specific analysis of migration trends, a sobering word is necessary regarding the availability of migration statistics. Their notoriously poor quality in even the most advanced countries is due in no small part to the variety of forms assumed by the migration phenomenon. In general quantitative data on international migratory movements can be obtained directly by categorising travellers at the time of their border-crossing, by obtaining registration data at their point of arrival, or, with a considerably wider margin of error, by using transportation data; they can be obtained indirectly through information on the issue of travel documents, i.e. usually passports, or from a comparison of consecutive census data if the magnitude of natural population movements (excess of births over deaths) is known. Although the migration of Natives in Africa does not, as has been stated, assume the refined and distinctive characteristics of migratory movements between more developed countries, its statistical comprehension creates other even less tractable problems. As a rule there are only

two possible sources of data: the issue of travel documents and the registration of Natives at their places of employment. Apart from the budgetary and technical difficulties encountered by African administrations in the compilation and publication of statistics, both sources of data are always likely to be incomplete and unreliable owing to the absence of regulations or their insufficient enforcement, the evasion by migrants of controls, and the difficulties inherent in following the vagaries of temporary migrants, a problem that is far from solved in European countries.

The following paragraphs lay no claim to being a comprehensive analysis. They present the main trends as they can be derived from fragmentary statistics and from observations.

Southern Africa

The two chief centres of immigration for African labour are the Union of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Northern Rhodesia also absorbs some extra-territorial labour, but the high degree of mechanisation of its copper industry and the relatively ample supply of intra-territorial labour have kept immigration small. The relative power of attraction of these three territories appears to follow an order of progressive diminution from south to north. The Union of South Africa disposes of the largest field of attraction, reaching as far north as Tanganyika and including all territories between, i.e. Nyasaland, Angola, Mozambique, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, and the British Protectorates of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. High wage levels in the Union appear to compete effectively against the enormous demand for Native labour in neighbouring Southern Rhodesia as witnessed by the fact that an appreciable part of extra-territorial labour in the Union originates in that territory. Going north, a process of progressive elimination appears to occur with Southern Rhodesia drawing its manpower from the same territories as the Union, with the exception of those lying to the south (i.e. excluding the Union and the three British Protectorates), and Northern Rhodesia exerting attraction mainly on neighbouring Nyasaland, Mozambique, Angola and Tanganyika. The bulk of inter-territorial migrations in southern Africa are thus directed exclusively in a southward direction; certain small cross-currents in other directions are the result of local variations in economic conditions, but their proportion to the preponderant movement remains insignificant.

Both in the Union of South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia the largest contingent of extra-territorial workers comes from Mozambique; their number in Southern Rhodesia was 156,735 in December 1953, whereas 163,964 were reported as working in the Union at the same time.¹ The number of Southern Rhodesian workers in the Union in 1951 was given as 16,500 in the Southern Rhodesian census of the same year. Turning to Northern Rhodesia, figures for 1953 indicate that 25,741 Native taxpayers from this territory were at work for wages in Southern Rhodesia and 9,120 in the Union.² Figures for 1955 show

¹ *Anuário Estatístico, 1953; Província de Moçambique* (Lourenço Marques, 1954), p. 117.

² Labour and Mines Department, Northern Rhodesia: *Annual Report for the Year 1953* (Lusaka, 1954), Appendix III. During 1955 the number of Northern Rhodesians who entered Southern Rhodesia was 12,274 (*Northern Rhodesia, 1955*. Colonial Reports (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1956), p. 13).

that immigration to Northern Rhodesia is also significant; out of a total of 20,186 extra-territorial workers employed during the year, 6,992 came from Nyasaland, 5,768 from Tanganyika and 4,226 from Mozambique and Angola.¹

The importance of Nyasaland as a Native labour reservoir is reflected in an estimate for 1954 which places the number of Nyasalanders at work outside their home territory at 160,000 distributed as follows: 100,000 in Southern Rhodesia, 42,000 in the Union (including nearly 10,000 recruited by the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association in accordance with the previously mentioned agreement), 10,000 in Northern Rhodesia and some 8,000 in other territories; in the same period the total number of Nyasalanders employed in their own territory amounted to 106,900 at times of peak employment.²

As regards the British Protectorates, whose emigration appears to be directed exclusively towards the Union of South Africa, figures for 1954 indicate that 19,000 Bechuanaland Natives went on contract to Union mines during that year and a further 2,000 departed independently to take up various other forms of employment.³ It was estimated that between 50 and 60 per cent. of all fit adult men are constantly away from this protectorate.⁴ For Swaziland this percentage is estimated at between 25 and 30; an estimate published in 1955 puts the total number of Swaziland workers in the Union at 9,000 of which 6,000 were at work in the Witwatersrand mines.⁵

Turning to the northern extremity of the southern African migration zone, it was reported in 1951 that 15,000 Natives of Tanganyika were employed in the Union and in the Rhodesias while an unknown number had moved to Uganda and Kenya (see below).⁶

The real volume of migrations in the southern African zone is, in all likelihood, considerably greater than the above figures would indicate, particularly if account is taken of family members who accompany or join the wage earner, an aspect on which few figures are available.

Eastern Africa

Tanganyika constitutes the northern extremity of the southern African migration zone, which has its centre of attraction in the Union of South Africa. At the same time the territory participates both as an active and a passive partner in the eastern African employment market area, which has Uganda as its main and Tanganyika as a secondary centre. The position of Tanganyika is unique in so far as it appears to be the only African territory which contributes migrant labour to two different centres of attraction while at the same time employing workers from surrounding territories.

The eastern African migration zone includes the northern part of Mozambique, Tanganyika, the eastern part of the Belgian Congo, Ruanda-Urundi, Uganda and, to a minor extent, southern Kenya,

¹ *Northern Rhodesia*, 1955, op. cit., p. 13.

² *Nyasaland*, 1954. Colonial Reports (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1955), pp. 22-23.

³ *Bechuanaland Protectorate*, 1954. Colonial Reports (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1955), p. 9.

⁴ *Migrant Workers (Underdeveloped Countries)*, Report V (1), International Labour Conference, 37th Session, Geneva, 1954 (Geneva, I.L.O., 1953), p. 16.

⁵ *Swaziland* (Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1955), p. 27.

⁶ *Migrant Workers (Underdeveloped Countries)*, op. cit., p. 20.

Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The predominant movement is concentric, i.e. the outer territories with a high degree of population pressure supply labour to Uganda and Tanganyika, whose employment markets are not satisfied by internal labour resources, but the Belgian Congo and Kenya constitute subsidiary foci of attraction.

An estimate for 1955 places the immigration to Uganda of workers and their dependants from surrounding territories at 74,000 for the year; the great majority originated in Ruanda-Urundi, but other contingents arrived from Tanganyika, Kenya, the Belgian Congo and the Sudan.¹ In 1955 there were 49,470 extra-territorial workers engaged in Tanganyika, excluding domestic servants and workers in establishments employing less than five persons, coming mainly from Ruanda-Urundi and Mozambique, but also from Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Kenya.²

An appreciable emigration from Ruanda-Urundi is also directed to the Belgian Congo, partly clandestine, partly for permanent settlement or under long-term contracts. The Belgian authorities have inaugurated a number of projects for the permanent settlement in the Congo of Native farmers from Ruanda-Urundi.

Emigration from Tanganyika supplies, in its southward direction, the Union of South Africa, Southern and Northern Rhodesia (see above), and, towards the north, Uganda and Kenya. Figures published for Kenya indicate that 14,498 male African workers from outside the territory were employed there in 1954.³

Western Africa

Most inter-territorial migrations in this area are directed to Ghana (the former Gold Coast), whose mining enterprise and Native agriculture are largely dependent on extra-territorial labour. The 1948 census recorded 53,000 persons from other British territories and 122,000 of other foreign origin in the Gold Coast. The total number of persons to enter the territory increased from 108,000 in 1938 to 392,000 in 1953.⁴ This high rate of immigration reflects the temporary character of the movements; in the mining industry 85 per cent. of the work force employed in 1949 was replaced during the year and the figure for underground workers was 100 per cent. (this calculation is based on the total work force and therefore includes internal migrants whose rate of mobility may be higher).

Extra-territorial workers originate mainly in the neighbouring French territories of Upper Volta, Ivory Coast and Togo, but a considerable immigration also comes from Nigeria.

Other Migrations

In addition to emigration to Uganda and immigration from Ruanda-Urundi described in connection with the eastern African migration zone, the Belgian Congo also receives extra-territorial workers from its western

¹ *Annual Report of the Labour Department . . . 1955*, Uganda Protectorate (Kampala, 1956), pp. 5-6.

² *Annual Report of the Labour Department, 1955*, Tanganyika (Dar Es Salaam, 1956), p. 47.

³ *Labour Department Annual Report, 1955*, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya (Nairobi, 1956), p. 35.

⁴ Labour Department, Gold Coast: *Migratory Labour* (renewed).

and southern neighbours, i.e. French Equatorial Africa, the Portuguese territories of Cabinda and Angola, and Northern Rhodesia¹; some emigration from the Congo is reported to take place to Angola and to French Equatorial Africa, but in both cases the net movement is reported to be in favour of the Congo. For 1953 it was estimated that the net result of all migrations to and from the Congo was a population gain for the Congo of between 45,000 and 65,000.²

Nigeria receives some immigration from French West Africa and sends a small number of workers to Gaboon and to the Island of Fernando Po under bilateral agreements concluded with the French and Spanish authorities.

Finally the small British colony of Gambia receives some seasonal immigration from the neighbouring French territory of Senegal and from Portuguese Guinea.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF MIGRATORY MOVEMENTS

Three outstanding features of African labour, i.e. its low output, low wages, and instability, are intimately related. To break this vicious circle, wages and living conditions would have to be sufficiently improved to permit Africans to establish permanent homes in the cities. The resulting increased stability of the labour force would tend to improve its productivity through the direct effect of greater vocational experience and, indirectly, by making investment in training a more economic proposition. The instability of Native labour is thus at the same time the cause and the result of its unfavourable conditions.

Traditionally there has been an over-supply of Native labour since the appeal of the money economy has taken hold of African society. Recent shortages in certain territories, e.g. the Union of South Africa and the Rhodesias, have done little to raise wages since large reservoirs of unutilised Native labour can still be tapped farther afield, though at greater expense.

Since industrial employment is to most Africans the only means of improving their economic situation, they are generally opposed to measures designed to raise productivity, whether through the use of machinery or through a more efficient utilisation of available labour. It is evident that serious attempts to put African industry on a Western productivity basis would severely curtail employment for Native labour.

However, it is by no means as a result of Native wishes that African industrial development continues to depend on labour-intensive methods. This is rather the consequence of the mixture of legislation, regulations and traditions commonly known as the "colour bar" which exists in many African territories. Its implicit purpose is to safeguard the superior status of the white settlers and it is found in its most extreme forms in those sectors of the economy where African and white interests enter into direct competition. This is notably the case at the intermediate levels of skill in industrial employment. The actual form the colour bar assumes varies from one territory and economic sector to another. In the Union of South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia legislation excludes Natives from the definition of "employee" and therefore deprives them

¹ In 1953, 7,406 Northern Rhodesian workers were reported employed in the Congo (Labour and Mines Department, Northern Rhodesia, op. cit.).

² Secrétariat général, Congo belge: *Bulletin mensuel des Statistiques générales du Congo belge et du Ruanda-Urundi* (Feb. 1955), p. 77.

of the rights and protection granted to European workers.¹ By virtue of this interpretation Natives cannot be represented on works councils and are debarred from forming recognised trade unions.² Other legislative provisions restrict the occupational and residential choice of Natives and set unattainable conditions for their accession to vocational training and apprenticeship. However, the colour bar finds its most powerful and general expression in social conventions which severely limit the types and conditions of work which a European employer may offer a Native.

The wage structure in African industry is profoundly unbalanced, for the skilled group, which is composed almost entirely of workers of European origin, enjoys high wages and virtually complete freedom from competition, while the majority of the labour force, made up of unskilled African workers, work for very low incomes.³ Industry does not effectively compensate the high cost of skilled workers by the low wages for unskilled work since the latter group of workers are expensive in relation to their output. Moreover, the low living standard of the great mass of the working population severely restricts the market for consumer goods, thereby limiting the growth of the economy and keeping production costs high.

The progress of Native trade union organisation has been slow also in territories where no legal obstacles stand in its way and even where policies have favoured their development. This is due in part to the negative attitude of Africans towards impersonal social groups. While co-operation and social responsibility are highly developed within the tribal society, there is no tradition among Africans that would lead them to identify their interests with those of a wider secondary group created for exclusively economic motives.

In addition to the interrelated factors of excessive mobility and low wages, the generally lamentable health condition of Natives is undoubtedly a further reason for their low productivity. Medical investigations have shown that lack of food in the reserves has had a debilitating effect on African workers before their arrival in the cities, where their low wages combined with insufficient knowledge of nutritional requirements further deteriorate their physical stamina.

The social consequences of the massive influx of an unstable Native population into the cities are evident in overcrowding, housing unworthy of the name, insufficient water supply, inflated prices, and the evils of a society composed overwhelmingly of men. In fact, many Africans do not consider the cities a suitable place in which to live with a family. In a study carried out by the Dunlop factory in Durban, Native workers were asked their opinions regarding this problem; 6 per cent. indicated that their wives were with them, 14 per cent. declared that they would wish to bring their wives, given better housing and living conditions, but the

¹ A Bill has been submitted to the legislature of Southern Rhodesia with a view to changing the Industrial Conciliation Act in such a manner as to put Africans on the same footing as other workers.

² The European trade unions in Southern Rhodesia have recently been consulted and have agreed almost unanimously to admit African workers into the existing unions.

³ There are signs that this situation is changing in a number of territories. Most of the governments have expanded the vocational training given to Natives and several are working towards the establishment of a single wage scale for skilled European and African workers. This tendency is particularly marked in Southern Rhodesia and in the public administrations of British East Africa and the Belgian Congo. It is perhaps even more pronounced in recent legislation and collective agreements in the French overseas territories.

majority (76 per cent.) were opposed to establishing their homes in Durban and many even reacted angrily against the suggestion. Since the conditions offered to Natives by Dunlop are above the average, it is likely that the attitudes of Africans in general are even more opposed to their stabilisation in the cities.

Isolation due to low wages, insecurity of employment and unsatisfactory living conditions are undoubtedly largely responsible for the migratory character of African workers. Lack of provision for old age is another factor. Since African workers do not receive retirement benefits and are unable to save from their meagre wages, their self interest demands that they keep open a line of retreat to the tribe, be it only for sustenance during the few years left after their working lives.

Social policies strive towards two mutually complementary goals. One series of measures is designed to enable Native agriculture to become self-supporting. This is done through the teaching of better techniques of cultivation, more rational selection of crops to be raised, animal husbandry, and the provision of fertiliser, seeds, saplings, etc. Immeasurable progress could be made in this direction as is shown by the much higher productivity of agriculture in certain tropical zones in Asia and the agricultural surplus produced by European farming methods in Africa. An improvement in the nutritional situation of the tribes would certainly remove one of the main causes of impulsion towards the cities, but it is likely that young Africans would continue to respond to the attraction of wages, very much like the rural populations in more advanced areas.

At the same time measures have been taken to enable African workers to establish themselves definitively in the cities with their families and to renounce the wasteful journeys back and forth between their places of employment and their tribal homes. Such measures have taken the form of subsidised housing, family allowances (in the Belgian Congo the allocation of food to family members), longer work contracts, and increased rates of remuneration, particularly through the introduction of periodic increments for length of service. There are, however, inexorable upper limits beyond which many employers cannot afford to go. Burdened with the high cost of skilled labour and of industrial equipment, they cannot increase the pay of unskilled workers, the majority of their work force, beyond a low ceiling without pricing themselves out of the market. It would therefore seem that the long-term interests of all communities in Africa would be served best by gradually admitting Natives to semi-skilled and skilled jobs at higher rates of pay, while introducing labour-saving equipment. This policy would have to be accompanied by sufficient improvements of tribal agriculture to avoid the establishment of a pool of unemployable Natives who cannot be supported by the tribal economy. The economic and social consequences of this policy would be very far-reaching indeed and would raise a number of new problems. For instance, the establishment of an African urban society with a life of its own would deprive the tribal sector of an important part of its money income, which would have to be made up in some other way. Moreover the goal of making tribal agriculture self-supporting is no longer feasible where tribal land has become too limited or too exhausted to support a growing population even with the best methods of cultivation.

At present, however, the application of enlightened social policies towards Natives is of too recent a date for an appraisal to be made. Whether an improvement is being achieved or whether a rapidly worsen-

ing situation is being contained will depend on a number of economic, demographic, social and cultural factors and can only be judged in the light of future events.

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps the most notable feature of intra-African migrations is their high and ever growing numerical importance, which is out of all proportion with their effects on production and earnings. In fact, viewed in their widest economic significance, a large portion of these migrations are not only unnecessary but actually harmful to economic progress and social welfare.

The manifold policies adopted in various parts of Africa with a view to interrupting the vicious circle of low wages, instability and low productivity show recognition of the damage that is being inflicted on African and European society by making the same workers participate simultaneously in both economies, wage-earning employment and tribal agriculture. However, a diminution of migrations is not likely to occur in the near future; it may be expected, on the contrary, that the slow progress of social measures as compared to the rapid industrial development of the continent will lead to a further increase in migratory movements. In this case, unless intra-territorial manpower resources can increase at the same rate, the share of inter-territorial movements in total migration will necessarily become even larger.

If the measures designed to regularise the position of Natives in the African economy are to prove effective and the increasing stabilisation of the workers at their places of employment is to lead to a gradual reduction in the volume of temporary migrations, more vigorous measures for the organisation of the employment market will be essential. The authorities will have to take in hand the operation of employment information programmes and the systematic referral of Natives to job vacancies. The operating procedures of this type of service do not have to conform to the standards set for employment service organisation in industrialised countries; the almost complete absence of specialisation, the great distances involved, the need for a high degree of protection and welfare and the relative elasticity of the labour demand set a very different series of requirements, whose satisfaction will be a matter of considerable administrative ingenuity.

Native migrations are one of the most important and also an intrinsic aspect of the current African evolution; they constitute an early stage in the necessarily slow and hazardous assimilation of the continent into the mainstream of the Western technological, economic and political reality. This process, as all historical processes, is irreversible; an easy solution to the problems besetting all sectors of African society cannot be sought by retracing steps. The orderly and peaceful progress of Africa will depend on the foresight and disinterestedness of its administrators.
