

# THE AFRICANIST GATHERING IN GHANA

by Bernard FONLON

Accra, in recent years, has been the scene of many an historic gathering. The first Conference of the Heads of Independent African States and the sixth Pan-African Congress, the first to be held on African soil, are still a vivid memory because they doubled the pace of African countries towards independence.

Another such gathering took place there from the 11th to the 18th of December, 1962 : The First International Congress of Africanists.

I have before me here, as I write, a list of all those who took part in this Congress. I have counted 530, all told, from 60 different countries.

Unlike its predecessors which were gatherings of the representatives of governments or of political parties, this Congress was attended, for the most part, by representatives of universities or other higher institutes of learning or of ministries of education. Originally, invitations were issued to 65 of these, all over the world, to send delegates, but, in the end, those that actually sent representatives far exceeded that number.

Because of limited funds, the Organising Committee could only invite 150 delegates officially, but it threw the door wide open to any scholars who might like to attend as observers ; these, however, had to pay their own expenses themselves. Notwithstanding this, 400 observers poured in from all over the world.

Another thing to mark was the depth of scholarship present at this gathering. On the list, I have counted not less than 60 names with the title of Professor before them and it is to be noted also that, among these professors, were several vice-chancellors of universities and heads of other institutes. I have counted 120 names with the title of Doctor before them ; but there were in fact many more than that, because it is not the custom for persons with doctorates from French universities to put the title before their names ; and there were many such present. It would be difficult to know whom to mention and whom not to mention, but in the gathering were such internationally known figures as Profes-

sor Herskovits of the United States, Professor Ivan Potekin of the Soviet Union, Mr. Alioune Diop of *Présence Africaine*, Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, formerly United Nations representative in the Congo, famous for his controversial book, *To Katanga and Back*, and now Vice-Chancellor of Ghana University. But many an African present was grateful for the singular privilege of meeting that Grand Old Man of Negro Scholarship, famous as the Father of the Pan-African Movement, Dr. William Edward Burghardt DuBois, now in his nineties.

### **The African Share**

A thing which merits to be stressed about the Congress was the African participation. There were about 220 African scholars there, from 35 countries, and representing 30 universities and 16 ministries of education. The importance of the African share is further stressed by the fact that, of the 150 delegates to whom official invitations were sent, 100 were Africans. And the African position was further strengthened by the presence there of such Negro Scholars as the venerable Dr. DuBois whom I have mentioned, Dr. Alpheus Hunton, Secretary of the projected *Encyclopedia Africana*, Dr. Horace Bond of Atlanta University, Dr. Edna Smith of the University of Nigeria and several others.

Consider the numerous, world-wide participation at this Congress in spite of the cost it entailed to many, consider the depth and the breadth of the scholarship present, consider the significant African share, consider the fact that, in spite of the tension in the country, Osagyefo, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the President of Ghana, came, in person, to open it ; consider all this, and you hardly need to be told that this First International Congress of Africanists was not something to be taken lightly.

### **The Genesis**

The idea to create an International Congress of Africanists was born at the 25th meeting of the International Congress of Orientalists held in Moscow in August 1961. This parent body is an organization of experts in various fields interested in *the East*. And, for one reason or other, Africa was lumped together with this *East*. Thus it was that the International Congress of Orientalists contained an African section. But at the Moscow gathering, it became clear that the time was ripe for a separate International Congress of Africanists. A resolution was passed to that effect stipulating further that the initial meeting of the new Congress be held in one of the African Universities, in 1962.

## African Studies

In conversations between members of the Congress, the question sometimes arose, what an Africanist is. The term is used to mean any person, whatever his race, who is interested in African stu-



**Dr. KENNETH ONWUKA DIKE**

Recteur de l'Université d'Ibadan et Président du Congrès International des Africanistes.

Principal of Ibadan University and Chairman of the International Congress of Africanists.

dies, where by African studies is meant studies directly or indirectly concerned with Africa : African History, Archeology, Religions, Philosophy, Languages, Sociology, Literature, Art, Music, Political Institutions ; economic, scientific, technical, psychological and educational problems in relation to the needs of Africa : any expert or researcher in any of these fields is an Africanist.

About these studies, three questions can be asked : What has been their fate in the past ? What is their present state ? What are their future needs ?

It is fairly obvious that African studies could not thrive under a system which treated the African now as merchandise, now as sub-human, now as an overgrown child who, for two thousand years more to come, must need a guiding hand. For how could such a system allow that the African possessed anything worthy of scientific investigation ? Africa was a museum piece good enough only for the curiosity of the anthropologist. Under the colonial system, therefore, African studies were, for the most part, neglected and despised.

This neglect, however, was not total ; but such attempts as were made were vitiated *a priori* by prejudices centuries deep ; and, almost naturally, these attempts strove, not to unearth the truth, but to confirm pre-conceived, interested notions and, thereby, give a calm conscience to a wrongous enterprise. The results of such attempts could not but be distorted.

Thus, until very lately, African studies were not considered respectable enough to figure even on the curricula of African universities, and efforts to introduce them sometimes encountered fierce antagonism.

However, with the sudden African reawakening, African studies have as suddenly become, I won't say respectable, but worthy of attention. Witness the number of white researchers, mostly American, scouring the African *jungle* on all sorts of errands !

This reawaking has brought home to the Africans themselves the importance of their own studies. You see this especially in the determined efforts that are being undertaken today, especially, as you would expect, in the Universities of Ghana and Nigeria. You saw it also in the large number of young African scholars who participated in the Congress, each a specialist in one or other field of African studies.

The overwhelming importance of these studies to Africa cannot be over-emphasised. There is a twofold task before African scholars today, with regard to African studies, namely, to search for the unknown, and to put the crooked straight.

But the importance and the urgency of these studies are driven home more forcefully still, when you consider the staggering problems of development that Africa has to grapple with today, problems which she must solve for the achievement of complete political, economic, social, cultural and psychological decolonisation.

African historians must dig out and re-establish the African past in order to give the African a true picture of himself.

African scholars of political science must bring home to the African leaders why they must forge a political union of all Africa, as the American States did, as the Soviet Republics have done, lest we fall victim to a new enslavement more inexorable than that from which we have emerged.

African economists must map out the road to that economic independence which we must achieve or be undone for ever.

African scientists must supply the technical know-how absolutely necessary, for the development of the African continent.

### **Leadership to African Scholarship**

In its official composition, as I have already shown, in its speeches and deliberations, the Congress, while paying high tribute to the work that non-African Africanists have accomplished so far, stressed one point with unmistakable clarity, namely, that the initiative and the leadership in African studies, up to this in non-African hands, must now pass to the African.

This is no hidebound chauvinism. The African, at this stage of his development, cannot indulge in the luxury of art for art's sake, science for science's sake. For, African studies, while they must be objective and profound, by any standards, must have a frankly utilitarian end in view, namely, the moral and material advancement of the African peoples. And who else but the African himself should take the initiative and the lead in working out his own salvation ?

As I have said before, the main subjects on which the Congress focussed its attention were History and Archeology, Religion and Philosophy, Languages, Social and Political Institutions, Education and Psychology, Science and Technology in relation to African development. There were plenary sessions during which a scheduled speaker addressed the gathering on one of these subjects or groups of subjects ; there were working sessions during which each section treated its interest more at length.

It would be impossible to give here, even in brief, a complete account of all that was said and done ; for one thing, that would be too long ; for another, in a congress with so many diverse interests, you couldn't be here, there and everywhere. I have chosen, therefore, to give below a summary of three addresses which not only exemplify very typically the sort of work that was done, but contain the main arguments for the principle conclusions at which the Congress arrived. They were : Dr. Dike's address on *The Study of African History*, Professor Ivan Potekin's on *Problems of the Economic Independence of African Countries* and Dr. R. P. Baffour's paper on *Science and Technology in Relation to African Development*.

## Dr. DIKE ON AFRICAN HISTORY

Kenneth Onwuka Dike is Principal of Ibadan University, and Head of the History Department of that University, and in charge of important research projects being carried on on Nigerian History in that country. He is the present Chairman of the International Congress of Africanists.

Dr. Dike began by stating certain facts, namely: that the great majority of the 300 million inhabitants of the continent of Africa have lived on it for several thousand years; that the story of these peoples represents a very considerable part of the history of the human race; that the actions of Africans have not only shaped the pattern of history on the continent but have also played a part in the development of the civilizations of the New World, Europe and Asia; that the scientific study of history can be said to have begun in Africa with the work of the 14th century Tunisian historian, Ibn Khaldun, who emphasized the great importance of sociology to history, describing the past largely by observing the interaction of state and society and by analysing the development of the various elements of society. In spite of all this, the serious study of African history was only just beginning.

In the 19th century, he continued, documentary evidence had become so overwhelmingly important to the European scholar that he tended to equate written documents with history and began to take the absence of documents to mean the absence of history, the absence of events worthy of historical investigation. Colonial prejudice had strengthened this view with such myths as that the Negro race has made no contribution to human progress, that there is no civilization in Africa but can be traced to a Hamite origin.

### Written Source Material

The duty of African historiography, as he saw it, was to explode these myths by tackling seriously the writing of African History in spite of the scantiness of written sources.

His first suggestion, therefore, would be that the bulk of the existing documentary evidence on African History should be accumulated at various centres here in Africa; for in the past, the study of African History had been held back by the quite remarkable dispersal, all over the world, of the relevant source material; it was imperative to relieve African scholars of the enormous trouble and expense involved in so many journeys, from one end of the world to the other, in quest of material for the study of their own land.

It was important too to take into account the fact that many of the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa used Arabic for several centuries

as an official and literary language for many different types of written intercourse ; in African languages, like Hausa and Swahili, for instance, Arabic script was employed for similar purposes. Another fact of importance was that, along the West Coast especially, private African citizens, like the Calabar chief, Antera Duke, had been using European languages, for their private intercourse as far back as the 18th century ; the private papers of such African families were a potential source of historical material which had hardly been investigated.

He would stress, therefore, that the accumulation of source material did not mean merely the recovery of documents at present preserved overseas ; it also meant, and most important, the recovery and the organization of material at present lying disregarded and disorganised in Africa. This, he knew, was a task of frightening immensity.

### **Oral Source Material**

With regard to oral material, he would like to stress that there were many different types of unwritten sources which must be studied for a genuine understanding of the African past ; more attention deserved to be paid to the value of oral traditions and of the social anthropological studies of African countries. To avail himself effectively of this material, the historian needed the help of the expert versed in the religious, political, social and psychological functions of myths in the community under study ; thus the work of the anthropologist would greatly facilitate and enrich that of the historian.

### **Role of Archeology**

In the same way, he could assert that African historiography could not progress much further until Archeology was developed to the point where it could begin to make more substantial contributions. Even at this infant stage of its development, it was quite remarkable what help Archeology had already given to the study of African history as exemplified by the completely new vista of Nigerian history opened by the discovery of the Nok culture by the archeologist, Bernard Fagg.

### **Role of Comparative Linguistics**

On this question of sources, he would like to stress, finally, the primordial importance of linguistic research to historical studies. This research was still in its infancy but, from the results already obtained, it was clear that the comparative study of African languages would provide the historian with considerable information

about the relationship between various ethnic groups and about movements of peoples, not only in prehistoric times, but also in more recent years. However, if this research would contribute more richly to historical studies, it should not limit itself to the study of grammatical forms as hitherto, but should pay attention to the vocabularies of these languages and also to such forms of traditional literature as chants, songs, praise verse, proverbs.

### **The African University and African History**

In conclusion, he would stress that unless African history occupied much the same place and had the same importance attached to it, in African universities, as European history had in the universities of Europe, then all attempts to promote the study of African history, on the scale required, must fail. This particular branch of higher learning could not hope to develop unless African universities, through their teaching provided the necessary training for it. There was great danger that African history might be reduced to the status of a specialisation of marginal importance ; it was the responsibility of African scholars to see to it that this did not happen. He found it necessary to emphasize this because many of the universities in Africa were still influenced mainly by schools of educational thought of non-African origin ; it was the duty of African scholars to see to it that these foreign influences did not hinder the promotion of desirable studies. Organised source material and trained men to study it - these were the basic necessities for future advance in the scientific study and teaching of African history ; it was here that the main burden of responsibility lay solidly on African universities.

The task before the African historian was one of gargantuan proportions. Let him not be daunted ; for there was no enterprise nobler than the reconstruction of the history of this continent, an enterprise that would help to pull down the barriers of prejudice that had, for so long, obstructed the proper assessment of Africa's contribution to the history of the human race.

Thus, Dr. Dike, on the study of African History.

### **PROF. POTEKIN ON ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE**

Professor Ivan Potekin who spoke, as I said before, on : Problems of the Economic Independence of African Countries, is Head of the Africa Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

Stressing the principle that political independence must be accompanied by economic independence, Professor Potekin rejec-



**President NKRUMAH with some of the Delegates.**

**Left to right, front row :** Mr. Mammadou GOLOGO, Mali - H. Exc. Hampaté BA, Mali - Dr. Kwame NKRUMAH - Mr. Alioune DIOP, Présence Africaine, Senegal - Dr. Olumbe BASSIR, Ibadan University, Nigeria - Mr. Ousmane Amadou CISSE, Mali.

**Back row :** Nana Kobina NKETSIA IV, Ghana - Professor KI-ZERBO (Upper Volta), Ghana University - Dr. KARANJA, the Royal College, Nairobi, Kenya - Dr. FONLON, Cameroon - Mr. OGOT, Uganda.

ted the view of those who deny both the possibility and the necessity of economic independence contending that, in the economic sense, absolute independence means absolute isolation.

No one believed that any country could survive in the world today if it broke all economic ties with other countries.

What did the achievement of economic independence mean then? It meant the setting up of a system of economic relations with foreign countries which system would preclude, first, the policy of dictate on the part of any country or group of countries, and which would preclude, secondly, the possible out-flow of some part of the national income without an equivalent capital investment; for the possibility to put an end to imperialist plunder and the possibility to choose one's own way of development, were the two most general criteria of economic independence.

*The situation in every colonial country on the eve of the proclamation of independence, declared Potekin, was as follows: the bulk of the invested capital belonged to one country only, that is, to the monopolies of the respective colonial powers; they owned the mining industry and the key enterprises of the manufacturing industries; the bulk of foreign trade and the credit and banking system were fully controlled by them. This implied firm economic dependence on the metropolitan country and a one-sided economic attachment to it.*

*The proclamation of political independence could not by itself change this picture. The proclamation of political independence means the taking over of state power by the national forces of the former colony and the restoration of national sovereignty. It is a great victory, a historic event, the beginning of a new period in the life of a country, but it does not eliminate the economic dependence on the former metropolitan state. Economic dependence does not disappear automatically at the moment political independence is proclaimed. As a matter of fact, the main branches of the economy, such as industry, plantations, foreign trade, etc. in nearly all the African countries are still owned by European or American monopolies. And they are not just detached companies. All of them are lined with one another through the government machinery of their respective countries. They exercise great influence on the governments of their countries and determine their policies. It is a whole system of state and monopoly capital. This is a tremendous force, and complete national independence is out of the question until its power is undermined, that is, until the dominance of foreign monopolies in the sovereign African states has been done away with.*

## **Treaties no Guarantee**

It was no use pleading that the present day relations with the former metropolitan countries are based on treaties, for if one contracting party, signatory to the treaty, depended economically on the other, it was quite obvious that such a treaty was not between equitable partners ; formally equal negotiations could not be genuinely equal, if one of the partners depended economically on the other.

This was a stern reality that did not depend on the good intentions of people.

*Economic dependence, he affirmed, inevitably limits the freedom of action of the government, ties its hands and compels it to comply with the interests of the former metropolitan country. Economic dependence limits the free choice of ways of a country's further development. All this precisely means that political independence cannot be complete if the country remains economically dependent upon one country or on many countries. Hence, to culminate an anticolonial national revolution, it is necessary to do away with economic dependence, that is, to alter the system of foreign economic relations in such a way that no single country could impose its will on another country.*

## **Need for balanced Industrialisation**

For economic independence, industrialisation was a categorical imperative, because, for many reasons, it was now impossible to base a country's national economy on the production of raw materials alone as before. But what did industrialisation mean ?

It meant the development of the mining industry. It meant the development of the consumer-goods industry. But these were not enough.

For, to develop the mining and the consumer-goods industries, machine tools and equipment were necessary. Who would supply them ?

Industrialisation, therefore, could not be complete unless it included the development of industries for the production of equipment and of tools for production ; there could be no economic independence, even for an industrialised Africa, if the monopoly of producing machinery for African industries remained in foreign hands.

But the setting up of industries for the production of machinery, machine tools and other industrial equipment was an almost impossible task for a balkanised Africa to cope with.

African Unity was therefore necessary for balanced industrialisation and, therefore, for economic independence.

## Financial Haemorrhage

Another plague against which war must be waged was the outflow of a part of the national income without a corresponding equivalent brought into the country - what Mr. Mathieu Ekra, an Ivory Coast Minister, very aptly described as *financial haemorrhage*.

The governments of some African countries were already taking measures to close the channels through which national income was leaking out of Africa. These included : nationalisation of enterprises belonging to foreign companies, compulsory reinvestment of a part of foreign companies' profits, higher taxation of profits, establishment of national banks and insurance companies, setting up of their own maritime shipping and air fleet, and state control over exports, imports and foreign exchange transactions.

Taking into account the extreme weakness of private national capital in nearly all the African countries, only the setting up of a state-owned sector in the economy could ensure the achievement of economic independence.

There were many obstacles for the African peoples to overcome on their way to a bright future. The duty of scientists the world over was to help the peoples of Africa to cope with these tasks ; this they could do by their scientific research, in fraternal co-operation with their African colleagues.

Thus Professor Polekin.

## Dr. BAFFOUR ON SCIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Baffour is Vice-Chancellor of Kumasi University, an institution almost entirely consecrated to scientific studies. Speaking on Science and Technology in Relation to African Development, as I have said before, he began by stressing the absolute need for scientific research as a prelude *sine qua non* to all schemes of development in Africa.

Formidable pressure was being brought to bear on the agricultural industry, for example, from quarters inspired by political and economic considerations, to urge forward enormous schemes of mechanised agriculture. But the disastrous East African ground-nut scheme and the dismal failure of the Gambia poultry venture pointed the finger at the fate that awaited large-scale projects of this kind undertaken without adequate preparatory scientific research and investigation. In agriculture, especially, intensive scientific research was required at every stage, in order to avoid mistakes involving considerable sums of money.

It was imperative, for instance, to study African soils and to investigate possibilities of remedying their deficiencies by the production of phosphate and fertilizer compounds from chemical products from African sources.

### **The Threatening Sahara**

Another problem of African agriculture which called for prompt attention and action on a large scale was the threat of aridity brought about by the deforestation of extensive areas. This problem was rendered infinitely graver by the fact that the Sahara Desert is spreading westwards by as much as fifty yards every year and is threatening to engulf the rich forest lands of West Africa — a state of affairs frightful to imagine for the future Africa. This problem needed to be tackled without delay ; the Sahara must be halted by intensive afforestation.

### **Future for Industry**

The mining industry too needed preparatory scientific research and investigation, for, although prospection had been going on for several hundred years, comprehensive geological maps of Africa were yet to be prepared. This was a task of great urgency seeing the vast possibilities of Africa in this field.

Prospects for industrialisation in Africa were very promising because of the great potentialities for the production of power from her great rivers as shown already by schemes like the Kariba, the Aswan and the Volta dams. Africa's possibilities with regard to power were greatly enhanced by the fact that the use of solar energy held enormous possibilities for a continent with large areas of perennially clear and cloudless skies. However not enough work was being done in this field ; the blessings which power from this source could bring to even the remotest parts of the continent urged that its study should be intensified.

### **Science and Social Welfare**

With industrialisation, difficulties of town planning would become very serious. The problem was to seek ways and means of producing good houses cheaply. Unfortunately, very little study had been made for the exploitation of Africa's great resources in low cost material to make low cost building projects a worthwhile proposition.

The problem of water supply was closely linked with that of housing and its solution must transcend national boundaries ; it

would be to the advantage of all nations in Africa to combine studies in this field, irrespective of their territorial interests, so that water supply sources might be exploited for the good of all.

Of all fields of scientific research, it was perhaps, the medical which presented the greatest challenge to African scientists. He believed that Africa abounds in resources containing all the efficacious medicaments for diseases peculiar to the continent. Efforts were being made here and there to study the therapeutic and medical uses of Africa's herbs and plants, but such efforts required to be co-ordinated and concerted; let the scientists and chemists working in this field keep in touch with one another.

One other factor which for centuries had bedevilled Africa's development was the sad lack of communication facilities. Although strenuous efforts were being made, standards, however, remained very low because of the enormous difficulties. It was therefore incumbent on scientists, engineers and technologists to turn their attention to means of transport which would side-step or over-ride these problems. The possibilities of the hovercraft in the development of communications in Africa and the bridging of desert wastes and forest lands by a net-work of ferry plane services, were worthy of intensive study.

### Future for the Fishing Industry

He would not conclude this account without mentioning the great resources and potentialities of our surrounding oceans, the Indian and the Atlantic. It was well established that the Atlantic has the richest concentration of planktons of all the oceans of the world and hence is teeming with fish. The abundant shoals of tuna in the Atlantic lay unexploited and it was known that trawlers today were coming from as far as Japan to fish tuna in the Atlantic and still made enormous profits. It was claimed that schools of tuna in the Atlantic could provide enough proteins for the entire world population for the next 500 years. Was not this a wonderful opportunity for the future of the fishing industry in Africa?

The formidable list of assignments and tasks for African engineers, scientists and technologists stressed the crying need for these categories of men. Unfortunately, today, they were in very short supply. Giant efforts must be made to produce them. For this, it was necessary that a predominantly scientific emphasis be given to the African system of education right from the elementary school. The whole future of the continent hung upon this.

Thus Dr. Baffour on Science and Technology in relation to African development.

## On the Threshold of a New Era

As I sat through the sessions of the Congress and listened to speaker after speaker, I was confirmed in the conviction which I drew from the African Writer's Conference, last June, in Kampala, namely, that we are indeed entering a new stage in the struggle for African freedom.

The first was that of destruction, when angry African nationalists rose up, like the prophet Jeremy of old, to batter down the colonial stronghold ; the second, into which we are entering, is that of reconstruction.

The consecrated institutions and the sacred rites of the first were the stump, the soap-box, the street, the banner-bearing demonstration and, often, armed revolt ; those of the second, the university chair, the laboratory, the salutary silence of the scholar's study.

The virtues of the first were the *saeva indignatio* that drives to arms, rabble-rousing oratory, martial fearlessness ; those of the second, unflagging, dauntless research, deep reflection, and cold, inflexible, objective scholarship.

The standard-bearer of the first was the politician ; the high priest of the second, the scientific scholar. Where the first stood fulminating and shouting, the second must bend down and dig, must sit down and think.

Not that the former's role is now over ; far from it. Not that the man of action should now surrender active leadership to the thinker who, more often than not, is not made for such leadership. But that the two should complete each other, should work hand in hand ; that, today, the African scholar's thought should be the spring-board and the momentum of African political action.

There hardly ever was a political movement but had its back-room boys, its thinkers, its theorists : the ancients were privileged with such great minds as Plato and Aristotle ; in later ages, princes with a thirst of despotism could draw from Machiavelli ; the Communists have Marx ; and there was much in Hitler that recalled Hegel and Nietzsche.

Whether action led to weal or to woe depended on whether the thinking was healthy or diseased.

The liberation and the reconstruction of Africa cannot be the work of groping chance, nor should this task of life and death be left at the mercy of interested expediency ; it must be solidly based on principle, on scientific thought.

And the Congress stressed that, from henceforth, this scientific thinking must be African ; the African scholar, the African

University must, from this day on, take a leading part in the shaping of Africa's destiny.

Under the colonial system universities either did not exist or were completely under non-African influence and control and were therefore more calculated to perpetuate the African's intellectual enslavement than to work his salvation.

The Congress therefore declared that, in independent Africa, every African University must have an institute of African studies.

If African scholarship was to play its new role effectively, - the Congress stressed again and again - it must be profound, dispassionate, objective ; Africa had no need for special-pleading, no need for a gilded history ; the African historian, Dr. Dike stressed, must be able to look the past squarely in the face and admit that while it was decked with glorious empires, it was also marred by human sacrifices.

### **No Salvation save in Unity**

In his address, Dr. Dike, as you have seen, brought out very cogently and conclusively a principle which was the very *raison d'être* of the Africanist gathering, namely, that the African historian, cannot work in isolation and hope to reach the highest success ; he sorely needs the findings of the social anthropologist, the archeologist, the expert in comparative linguistics, the student of traditional literature.

Inter-disciplinary co-operation was, therefore, not merely highly desirable, but absolutely necessary. And since this co-operation and co-ordination could be realized most effectively only at the university level, it was imperative that African universities should work hand in hand.

Co-operation between disciplines and universities was however not enough. Dr. Baffour conclusively showed, as we have seen, that there are certain scientific projects, like the halting of the Sahara, for instance, which cannot be accomplished without inter-state co-operation.

And, as you may recall, Professor Potekin went further still and asserted that the complete and balanced industrialisation without which there can be no economic independence — the absolute condition for genuine political independence — cannot be accomplished by a balkanised Africa, can only be accomplished by a unified Africa.

African Scholars, African institutes of higher learning, African states, have but one common destiny : the liberation and the deve-

lopment of the entire Continent. The call therefore, as Dr. Baffour stressed, before the memorable gathering in Accra, is to get together, to think together, to plan together, to toil side by side. There is no room for competitive rivalry in present day Africa, nor is there hope of salvation except Africans, to a man, are prepared to pool their resources, to pool their energies and their talents together, in one tremendous effort, to lift up the entire continent.

It was to take a decisive step towards this co-operation, towards this co-ordination, towards this oneness that these eminent scholars, from all over the world, met in Ghana to set up the permanent organization that I have been introducing to you — The International Congress of Africanists.

Let me say in conclusion that I am confident that the bilingual Republic of Cameroon will not fail to play, to the full, within this organization, the role that is rightly due to it by virtue of the special position it occupies, among the countries of the African continent.

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## Rencontre des Africanistes au Ghana

*par Bernard FONLON*

Au cours des dernières années, Accra a constitué un lieu de multiples rencontres historiques. La première conférence des Chefs d'Etats indépendants d'Afrique et le sixième congrès pan-africain, pour la première fois tenue en terre d'Afrique, sont les plus mémorables d'entre elles parce qu'elles ont accéléré la marche des pays africains vers l'indépendance.

Une autre rencontre du même ordre a eu lieu récemment dans cette ville, du 11 au 18 décembre 1962 ; il s'agit du Premier Congrès International d'Africanistes.

Pendant que je rédige ces lignes, j'ai sous les yeux la liste des participants à ce Congrès : ils sont en tout 530, venant de 60 pays différents.

Contrairement aux autres rencontres de ce genre auxquelles participaient des représentants des gouvernements ou des partis politiques, ce Congrès a réuni presque uniquement des représentants des universités, des établissements d'enseignement supérieur ou des représentants des

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