

CHAPTER ONE

Methods of Rule (1875–1919)

1 ♦ Making colonialism appear “traditional” (1875)

The cost of rule was always of paramount concern to colonial officials. Having acquired empire in most instances for economic reasons, the colonial powers were not prepared to bear the heavy cost involved in employing large numbers of European administrators or maintaining expensive armies of occupation. Better to get Africans to rule themselves for less money. However, that meant identifying or, as was often the case, inventing “traditional” indigenous institutions through which Europeans could exercise their control.

For the British, the most pressing case in the latter half of the nineteenth century was that of the Zulu in southeastern Africa. Militarily powerful under the early kings, Shaka and Dingane, and capable of inflicting on the British their greatest defeat in a nineteenth-century colonial war (Isandlwana in 1879), the Zulu state remained potentially the most formidable challenge to British might, even after the defeat of King Cetshwayo’s forces in the aftermath of Isandlwana. Natal officials, primarily Theophilus Shepstone, who was in charge of “native affairs” in the colony from 1845 until 1876, fashioned in the mid-1870s an administrative structure that they claimed reflected traditional African practices—a strictly hierarchical system headed by an all-powerful “supreme chief” supposedly modeled on Shaka (in colonial practice the lieutenant governor would act as Shaka)—but improved upon because of the introduction of formal trials (though with no jury). The system would be regulated by European administrators of native law since foreigners were deemed more knowledgeable about African practices than were Africans themselves. The 1877 Natal Native Administration Law, modeled on systems of indirect rule developed in India and itself a model for later systems of indirect rule elsewhere in Africa, was enacted into law by none other than Sir Garnet Wolseley, recently arrived in South Africa as lieutenant governor of Natal after his triumphal campaign against the Asante.¹

Native Administration Law no. 26, December 17, 1875

Law: To make better provision for the Administration of justice among the Native Population of Natal, and for the gradual assimilation of Native Law to the Laws of the Colony . . .

2. It shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor for the time being to appoint persons of European descent, who shall be called Administrators of Native Law, as also [Africans as] Native Chiefs or other Native Officers, to preside and exercise authority over and to administer

1. G. W. Eybers, ed., *Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History, 1795–1910* (New York: Routledge and Sons, 1918), 247–51.

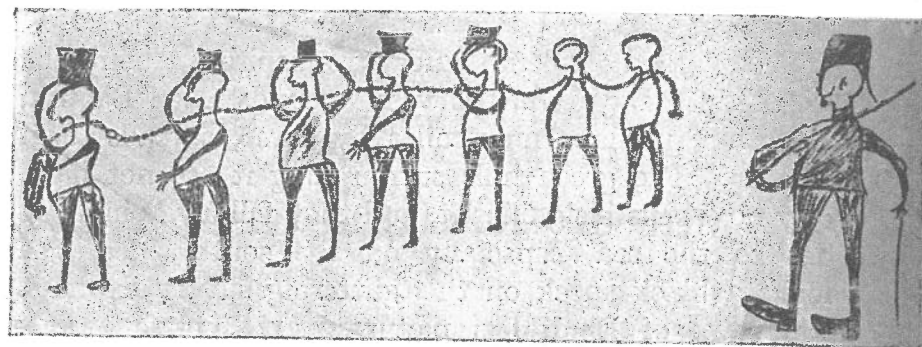


FIGURE 1 This drawing of a colonial chain gang was made by Salim Matola, a seventeen- or eighteen-year-old youth who accompanied German ethnographer Karl Weule on a six-month expedition in German East Africa in 1906. Wherever they traveled, the Maji Maji rebellion still formed the chief topic of conversation among the local people. Karl Weule, *Native Life in East Africa: The Results of an Ethnological Research Expedition*, 1909.

justice among Natives living under Native Law, within such districts as may be hereafter determined, and the Lieutenant-Governor shall have power summarily to remove such Native Chiefs or other Native Officers, so appointed, and to appoint others in their stead.

3. Every Administrator of Native Law, or Native Chief, or other Native Officer so appointed, shall have power to try and decide all civil disputes between native and native in the tribe or community placed under his charge, and within such limits as may from time to time be prescribed by the Lieutenant-Governor, except upon such cases as are hereinafter excepted, or may from time to time be excepted in manner hereinafter provided: Provided, however, that in all cases decided by any Native Chief or other Native Officer, a new trial may be had in conformity with such rules, of procedure as may be framed under the provisions of the 10th Section of this Law, before the Administrator of Native Law appointed over the district in which such Native Chief or other Native Officer resides, and that every such Native Chief or other Native Officer shall within ten days after the decision of any such civil case, communicate to the Administrator of Native Law having jurisdiction, the names of the plaintiff and defendant, the cause of the action, the decision arrived at, and the grounds of such decision; and each such officer is hereby required to record the same.

4. In all such civil cases there shall be an appeal to the Native High Court in this Law specified.

5. All matters and disputes in the nature of civil cases between Natives living under Native Law shall be tried under the provisions of this Law and not otherwise, and according to Native Laws, customs, and usages for the time being prevailing, so far as the same shall not be of a nature to work some manifest injustice, or be repugnant to the settled principles and policy of natural equity; except that all civil cases arising out of transactions in trade, or out of the ownership of or succession to land, shall be adjudicated upon according to the principles laid down by the ordinary Colonial Law in such cases; Provided always, that in the district or districts referred to in the proviso to Section —, of this Law, all matters and things required

to be done and observed by an Administrator of Native Law appointed under this Law, may, and shall be done and observed by an Administrator of Native Law appointed under Ordinance 3, 1849, until appointments under this Law shall have been made therein.

6. Subject to the exceptions in this Law specified, all crimes and offences committed by Natives shall be tried before the ordinary Courts of Law in this Colony in the same manner as if they had been committed by persons of European descent: Provided, however, that the following classes of crime shall be excepted:

(a) All crimes and offences of a political character, which shall be tried at the discretion of the Attorney-General, either before the Supreme Court of the Colony or the Native High Court: Provided that the Native High Court shall not have the power of passing sentence of capital punishment.

(b) All homicides, assaults, or other injury to the person or property of any Native caused by or arising out of riots by Natives or faction fights between Natives, or in which any tribe or section of a tribe or community of Natives may have taken part, and which in the judgment of the Attorney-General may be more conveniently tried according to the provisions of Native Law.

(c) All crimes or offences with respect to which it has been or may hereafter be enacted by any Law that they shall be tried by Native Law or before any special Court. And all crimes and offences so excepted, except those for the trial of which special provision has been made, shall be tried by the Native High Court in this Law specified: Provided, always, that it shall be lawful for the Native High Court to remit the trial of any such assault or injury aforesaid to one or more Administrators of Native Law, and such Administrators of Native Law may thereupon try the case subject to an appeal to the Native High Court, whose decision shall in such case be final.

7. There shall be constituted a Court, to be termed the Native High Court, and such High Court shall be presided over by a judge specially appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, and such judge shall sit as sole judge, or may be assisted, as occasion may require, by Administrators of Native Law, or Native Chiefs, or other Native Officers, as assessors, in manner hereafter to be provided; and such Court shall hear and try all appeal cases from the Courts of the Administrators of Native Law, all civil cases that may be brought before it under the provisions of this Law, and all criminal cases, the trial of which is in this Law specially reserved to such High Court.

8. [Judge to hold office during good behaviour.]

9. All appeals from the Native High Court shall be to a Court of Appeal, which shall be held to be, and shall be a branch of the Supreme Court of the Colony, and shall consist of the Chief Justice or one of the Puisne judges of the said Supreme Court, the Secretary for Native Affairs for the time being, and the judge of the Native High Court established under this Law; and the Court so constituted shall hear and determine all appeals that shall be brought before it under provisions of this Law...

THE SUPREME CHIEF

32. The Supreme Chief for the time being exercises in and over all Natives in the Colony of Natal all political power and authority, subject to the provisions of Section 7 of Law 44 of 1887.

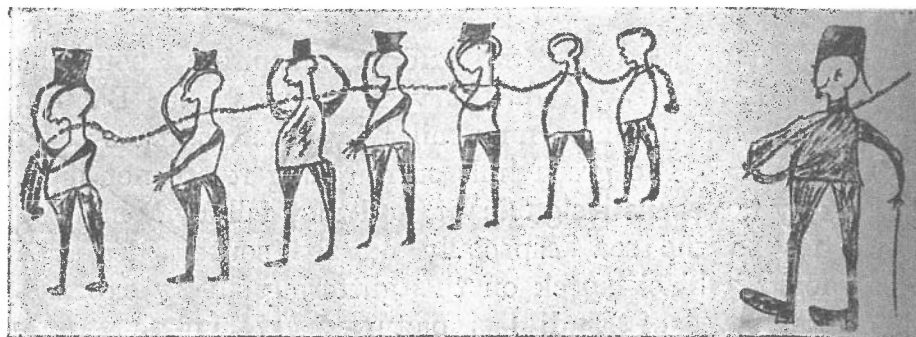


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THE SUPREME CHIEF

32. The Supreme Chief for the time being exercises in and over all Natives in the Colony of Natal all political power and authority, subject to the provisions of Section 7 of Law 44 of 1887.

33. The Supreme Chief appoints all Chiefs to preside over tribes, or sections of tribes; and also divides existing tribes into two or more parts, or amalgamates tribes or parts of tribes into one tribe, as necessity or the good government of the Natives may, in his opinion, require.

34. The Supreme Chief in Council may remove any Chief found guilty of any political offence, or for incompetency or other just cause, from his position as such Chief, and may also order his removal with his family and property, to another part of the Colony.

35. The Supreme Chief has absolute power to call upon Chiefs, District Headmen, and all other Natives, to supply armed men or levies for the defence of the Colony, and for the suppression of disorder and rebellion within its borders, and may call upon such chiefs, District Headmen, and all other Natives to personally render such military and other service.

36. The Supreme Chief has power to call upon all Natives to supply labour for public works, or for the general needs of the colony. This call or command may be transmitted by any person authorised so to do, and each native so called upon is bound to obey such call, and render such service in person, unless lawfully released from such duty.

37. The Supreme Chief, acting in conjunction with the Natal Native Trust, may, when deemed expedient in the general public good, remove any tribe or tribes, or portion thereof, or any native, from any part of the Colony or Location, to any other part of the Colony or Location, upon such terms and conditions and arrangements as he may determine.

38. The orders and directions of the Supreme Chief, or of the Supreme Chief in Council, may be carried into execution by the Secretary for Native Affairs, or by the Administrators of Native Law, or by other officers authorised for the purpose, and in respect of all such acts the various officers so employed shall be regarded as the deputies or representatives of the Supreme Chief, or of the Supreme Chief in Council, as the case may be.

39. The Supreme Chief, in the exercise of the political powers which attach to his office, has authority to punish by fine or imprisonment, or by both, for disobedience of his orders or for disregard of his authority.

40. The Supreme Chief is not subject to the Supreme Court, or to any other court of Law in the Colony of Natal, for, or by reason of, any order or proclamation, or of any other act or matter whatsoever, committed, ordered, permitted, or done either personally or in council.

41. The Supreme Chief is, by virtue of his office, Upper Guardian of all orphans and minors in law.

42. The Supreme Chief has power to regulate and fix from time to time the least number of houses which shall compose a kraal. He may, in his discretion, permit of exceptions to any such general rule in special cases.

2 ♦ Africa for the African (1897)

Christianity appealed to many Africans, but often in ways the European missionaries did not intend. It offered a body of thought and attendant language to criticize the ways in which colonialism was imposed and practiced. There was no basis in the Bible for the exclusion of Africans from the higher reaches of church and state as was practiced without exception throughout colonial Africa. There was no basis in the Christian message for the harsh treatment of African workers in the Bel-

gian Congo rubber industry, the South African gold mines, or the tea and coffee plantations of East Africa. Indeed, African converts to Christianity became some of the most powerful critics of colonial hypocrisy.

One of the most notable of these critics was John Chilembwe, born around 1871 in present-day Malawi, the son of a Yao slave trader and a woman initially captured for trade. Chilembwe grew up to become the first convert of Joseph Booth, an Englishman who had become a born-again Christian while living in New Zealand and who then traveled as a missionary to central Africa, following consciously in the footsteps of David Livingstone. Under Booth's sponsorship, Chilembwe traveled to the United States in 1898 and studied at the Virginia Theological Seminary and College in Lynchburg, an institution established in 1890 "to prepare Christian preachers, teachers and workers for work among Negroes." After two years of study, Chilembwe returned to Nyasaland (as Malawi was then called) as a Baptist missionary and worked together with African American missionaries to establish an industrial school at which Africans could learn practical skills. Over time he became a strong critic of the ways in which Europeans treated Africans, particularly of the ways in which African land was forcibly taken and African workers were cruelly treated. Chilembwe aimed his criticism especially at the Bruce Estates, a large cotton and coffee plantation owned by a family that had, with George Mackinnon, founded the British East Africa Company and that was managed by a distant relative of David Livingstone.

In 1915 John Chilembwe, using biblical texts (Acts 20:29–32) to justify forceful action, led an armed uprising against British colonial rule, ordering the beheading of Livingstone's relative and torching European-run mission stations. British retribution was harsh. Chilembwe was hunted down and killed; his body was buried in secret so that a grave would not provide a symbol for further resistance. While overall casualties were small compared with those of the Maji Maji uprising, Chilembwe, too, despite British attempts at cover-up, served as a powerful symbol to later proponents of African independence.

The African Christian Union, first established in 1896 in Natal by Booth, was extended to Nyasaland by Chilembwe, working with his mentor, in 1897. The aim of the mission was to raise funds from local people in order to establish an industrial mission for Africans independent of the organizations run by European mission societies. The chief tenets of the organization were laid out in a broadsheet issued January 14, 1897.²

Objects of the Society:

1. To unite together in the name of Jesus Christ such persons as desire to see full justice done to the African race and are resolved to work towards and pray for the day when the African people shall become an African Christian Nation.

2. To provide capital to equip and develop Industrial Mission Stations worked by competent Native Christians or others of the African race; such stations to be placed on a self-supporting and self-propagating basis.

3. To steadfastly demand by Christian and lawful methods the equal recognition of the African and those having blood relationship, to the rights and privileges accorded to Europeans.

2. George Shepperson and Thomas Price, *Independent African: John Chilembwe and the Origins, Setting, and Significance of the Nyasaland Native Rising of 1915* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1958; paperback ed. 1987), 541–43.

4. To call upon every man, woman and child of the African race, as far as may be practicable, to take part in the redemption of Africa during this generation, by gift, loan, or personal service.

5. To specially call upon the Afro-American Christians, and those of the West Indies to join hearts and hands in the work either by coming in person to take an active part or by generous, systematic contributions.

6. To solicit funds in Great Britain, America and Australia for the purpose of restoring at their own wish carefully selected Christian Negro families, or adults of either sex, back to their fatherland in pursuance of the objects of the Union; and to organize an adequate propaganda to compass the work.

7. To apply such funds in equal parts to the founding of Industrial Mission centres and to the establishing of Christian Negro settlements.

8. To firmly, judiciously and repeatedly place on record by voice and pen for the information of the uninformed, the great wrongs inflicted upon the African race in the past and in the present, and to urge upon those who wish to be clear of African blood in the day of God's judgments, to make restitution for the wrongs of the past and to withstand the appropriation of the African's land in the present.

9. To initiate or develop the culture of Tea, Coffee, Cocoa, Sugar, etc. etc., and to establish profitable mining or other industries or manufactures.

10. To establish such transport agencies by land, river, lakes or ocean as shall give the African free access to the different parts of his great country and people, and to the general commerce of the world.

11. To engage qualified persons to train and teach African learners any department of Commercial, Engineering, nautical, professional or other necessary knowledge.

12. To mould and guide the labor of Africa's millions into channels that shall develop the vast God-given wealth of Africa for the uplifting and commonwealth of the people, rather than for the aggrandisement of a few already rich persons.

13. To promote the formation of Companies on a Christian basis devoted to special aspects of the work; whose liability shall be limited, whose shares shall not be transferable without the society's consent; whose shareholders shall receive a moderate rate of interest only; whose profits shall permanently become the property of the Trustees of the African Christian Union, for the prosecution of the defined objects of the Union.

14. To petition the government of the United States of America to make a substantial monetary grant to each adult Afro-American desiring to be restored to African soil, as some recognition of the 250 years of unpaid slave labor and the violent abduction of millions of Africans from their native land.

15. To petition the British and other European governments holding or claiming African territory to generously restore the same to the African people or at least to make adequate inalienable native reserve lands, such reserves to be convenient to the locality of the different tribes.

16. To petition the British and other European governments occupying portions of Africa to make substantial and free grants of land to expatriated Africans or their descendants desiring restoration to their fatherland, such grants to be made inalienable from the African race.

17. To provide for all representatives, officials or agents of the Union and its auxiliaries, inclusive of the Companies it may promote modest, economical yet efficient and as far as may be, equable, maintenance, together with due provision for periods of sickness, incapacity, widowhood or orphanage.

18. To print and publish literature in the interests of the African race and to furnish periodical accounts of the transactions of the Society and its auxiliary agencies, the same to be certified by recognized auditors and to be open to the fullest scrutiny of the Union's supporters.

19. To vest all funds, properties, products or other sources of income in the hands of Trustees, not less than seven in number, to be held in perpetuity in the distinct interest of the African race and for the accomplishment of the objects herein set forth in 21 clauses.

20. Finally, to pursue steadily and unswervingly the policy:

"AFRICA FOR THE AFRICAN"

and look for and hasten by prayer and united effort the forming of a united

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN NATION

By God's power and blessing and in His own time and way.

[Signed]

JOSEPH BOOTH, English missionary.

JOHN CHILEMBWE, Ajawa Christian Native.

ALEXANDER DICKIE, English missionary.

MORRISON MALINKA, Native Christian Chipeta Tribe.

Dated January 14th, 1897 at Blantyre, Nyassaland, East Central Africa.

3 • West African warfare (1905)

Though quinine and other drugs, as well as better medical treatment in general, reduced the death rate of European troops in Africa, they still got sick and died at a higher rate than did African troops. Local people, moreover, were much cheaper soldiers than were Europeans, and as a result every colonial power depended on African troops for the bulk of their armed forces.

More remarkable, however, in light of the deprecating comments so often made by Europeans about the people they ruled, they made a real exception for those men who served in their armies and police forces and whose endeavors made colonialism possible and profitable for their rulers and employers. The importance of African troops and the admiration with which they could be viewed are captured in a military manual written by C. Braithwaite Wallis, a London lawyer who had formerly served in the Frontier Force and been district commissioner for the Sierra Leone Protectorate.³

It is a fact incontrovertible, that our expansion of Empire has been very largely brought about by the subjugation of the savage and lawless races who were the original inhabitants of the soil. Looked at from this point of view—the point of view of empire building that is to say—the significance and importance of many of our "little wars" can scarcely be over-estimated. And, that being the case, it obviously behooves every officer who is serving or about to serve

3. C. Braithwaite Wallis, *West African Warfare* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1905), 1, 4–6, 13–16.

in any of the far-away corners of the earth, to make himself thoroughly master of the local conditions and of the hundred and one other points of a military nature, a complete knowledge of which is absolutely indispensable for the successful prosecution of a campaign in those lands . . .

In recent times most of the fighting in West Africa has been done by native troops and locally raised levies, commanded by that indispensable factor in the machine of West African warfare—the British officer. With the exception of the Ashanti Expedition of 1896, no large force of white troops has, at least to my knowledge, been employed in West Africa since Lord Wolseley's Expedition to Ashanti in 1874. These native troops, for the most part recruited and trained locally, have, so far, amply justified the confidence that has been placed in them. Their discipline has generally been excellent, and when under fire their bravery, endurance, and dash have been altogether beyond reproach. The employment of white soldiers in a climate so enervating and unhealthy as that of West Africa is certainly a mistake, and entails on those connected with the transport an enormous amount of unnecessary trouble and work, as well as costing the nation a great deal more in money. It must be admitted, however, that the moral effect of using white troops against a savage foe, and in conjunction with native troops, is great, and sometimes even a necessity. At the same time, with the splendid material we have at our disposal in West Africa, and the fine troops we have manufactured therefrom, we ought to be able to overcome any resistance that is likely to be offered against British arms in that part of the world . . .

One of the great advantages of being able to employ native soldiers—men born and bred in the country—is that we are then enabled to a great extent, to play the enemy's own game, to follow him into his fastnesses and favourite haunts, and generally to adopt his own strategy and tactics. We have, moreover, the great advantage of superior discipline and arms; and when a savage foe finds that we are able to strike him in the same way, strategically and tactically, that he is endeavouring to strike us, he at once becomes demoralized and uncertain how to act. It is then that an attack should, whenever possible, be followed up and pressed home. When once a savage foe begins to run, he will, as a rule, continue to do so, and a panic amongst these people is even more contagious than among civilised troops . . .

Native troops when going into action should, so far as it is possible, be led by their own officers, who know and are known by their men. The West African soldier is an excellent fellow when properly handled and understood. He is extraordinarily quick in finding out the stuff his officers are made of, and he has, like every one else, his likes and dislikes, and these in marked degrees. *He has a wonderful sense of justice*; and the officer who treats his men firmly and kindly, looks after their interests, proves himself capable of sustaining privations and undergoing hardships, and of sharing unselfishly the vicissitudes of a campaign with his men, will be beloved, respected, and followed to the death. In a tight corner this makes all the difference in the world.

If the position is serious, and an attack is being made by overwhelming odds against you, never let the men perceive that anything is wrong. These native soldiers watch every action and almost every look of the "Captain"—the white man—and would immediately notice the slightest timidity or hesitation, which might have a grave effect on their morale. A confident front, a few words of encouragement, a smile, a quick and determined order, will act like a spark and will carry them anywhere, even to certain death. During the relief of Kumasi, after

several hours' severe fighting, when nearly every officer was hit, and every man tired and hungry, an order was given to a detachment of Hausa troops to charge and take a stockade with the bayonet in the face of heavy fire. It was one of those crises, lasting for only the fraction of a second, when the best troops in the world are liable to waiver. In this case, seeing the hesitation of the men, a native officer rushed to the front, and waving his sword above his head, and calling in his native language to the men to follow him in the name of Allah, rushed at the stockade. This conduct acted like an electric spark; and enthusiastically shouting their war cry, the men dashed headlong at the stockade, and drove the enemy out of it. And this is only a single example of the moral effect produced, and sometimes by very slight and unexpected causes, upon the minds of soldiers of all races and conditions. It helps to demonstrate the fact that, after all, there is much the same sentiment, more or less deeply rooted, underlying all human nature, whatever the nationality, creed, or colour. But it requires the ascendancy of a superior or enthusiastic mind, or determined will, to awaken this dormant flame, and fan it into noble and heroic action.

4 • Evidence of colonial atrocities in the Belgian Congo (1903–5)

While conditions for African workers in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa were always harsh, seldom did they reach the horrendous conditions found in King Leopold's Congo. Indeed, the Belgian king's private preserve served as something of a welcome change of focus for other European colonizers, who could condemn Leopold's practices while deflecting attention from, for example, the appalling death rates in South African mines or the brutal treatment meted out to plantation workers in German East Africa. In 1903 Roger Casement, working on behalf of the British government, wrote a powerful exposé of the conditions that African rubber collectors had to endure. His descriptions of the mutilations inflicted by Leopold's employees on Africans to make them produce more rubber shocked the world and forced the king to hand control of his colony over to the Belgian government (which, however, continued to use forced labor). In an ironic postscript to the affair, Casement himself became a victim of imperialism. A fervent supporter of Irish nationalism, he was hanged by the British on August 3, 1916, for having negotiated with Germany for support for an armed uprising in Ireland.

The publication of Casement's report set off a public firestorm, fueled especially by testimony provided and photographs taken by Leopold's critics, particularly missionaries such as Emily Banks, of the hideous effects of the punishments inflicted by the king's troops on the Congolese. These atrocity photographs often circulated without the victims being individually identified (see, for example, Mark Twain's biting satire, *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of His Congo Rule*, 1905). However, E. D. Morel, one of Leopold's most trenchant critics, provided for his readers detailed information on the victims, such as the young boy, Lokota, and the circumstances of their ill treatment. Despite such evidence, the Belgians at the time argued that the atrocities were exceptional cases and likely the result of supposed indigenous practices of maiming, unsupervised African soldiers, or perhaps wild animals.

The debate continues to the present day, with Belgian denials of responsibility throughout the past century, that is, whenever they have admitted to the existence of such events. More common

than denial has been avoidance, as is evidenced in a brief history of the Belgian Congo as taught to African students in missionary-run schools in the 1940s.⁴

A. Casement's report on the Congo submitted to the Marquess of Lansdowne, December 11, 1903

The town of N* consists approximately of seventy-one K* houses and seventy-three occupied by L*. These latter seemed industrious, simple folk, many weaving palm fibre into mats or native cloth; others had smithies, working brass wire into bracelets, chains and anklets; some iron workers making knives. Sitting down in one of these blacksmith's sheds, the five men at work ceased and came over to talk to us. I counted ten women, six grown-up men and eight lads and women in this shed of L*. I then asked them to tell me why they had left their homes. Three of the men sat down in front of me, and told a tale which I cannot think can be true, but it seemed to come straight from their hearts. I repeatedly asked certain parts to be gone over again while I wrote in my note-book. The fact of my writing down and asking for names, etc., seemed to impress them, and they spoke with what certainly impressed me as being great sincerity.

I asked, first, why they had left their homes, and had come to live in a strange, far-off country among the K* where they owned nothing, and were little better than servitors. All, when this question was put, women as well, shouted out: "On account of the rubber tax levied by the Government posts" . . .

I asked, then, how this tax was imposed. One of them, who had been hammering out an iron collar on my arrival, spoke first. He said:—

"I am N.N. These two beside me are O.O. and P.P. all of us Y**. From our country each village had to take twenty loads of rubber. These loads were big; they were as big as this . . ." (Producing an empty basket which came nearly up to the handle of my walking stick). "That was the first size. We had to fill that up, but as rubber got scarcer the white man reduced the amount. We had to take these loads in four times a month."

Q.: "How much pay do you get for this?"

A. (entire audience): "We got no pay. We got nothing."

And then N.N., whom I asked again, said:—

"Our village got cloth and a little salt but not the people who did the work. Our Chiefs ate up the cloth; the workers got nothing. The pay was a fathom of cloth and a little salt for every basket full, but it was given to the Chief, never to the men. It used to take ten days to get the twenty baskets of rubber—we were always in the forest and then when we were late

4. A, *Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Counsel at Boma Respecting the Administration of the Independent State of the Congo*, Cd 1933 [Command Paper no. 1933] (London: Harrison and Sons, 1904), 60–61; B, declaration of Emily Banks in H. Grattan Guinness, *Congo Slavery: A Brief Survey of the Congo Question from the Humanitarian Point of View* (London: R. B. M. U. Publication Department, [1905]), 22; C, photograph of Lokota by Rev. W. D. Armstrong, published in E. D. Morel, *King Leopold's Rule in Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1904), photo facing p. 113; explanation, 377; D, Van Hullebusch, *Some Facts That Took Place in the Congo*, V, lesson 31 (trans. from Lingala, *Botondoli mambi ma nse, Mobu bwa mitano*, Lisala, 1944), 27–29.



FIGURE 2 Roger Casement, an Irish diplomat and poet, gained world renown for his work to expose the labor abuses in the Congo Free State and Peru. He was hanged by the British during World War I for high treason following his involvement with the importation of German arms to support the Irish struggle for freedom from colonial rule; here, he is escorted to the gallows at London's Pentonville Prison. Library of Congress.



FIGURE 3 Congolese forced rubber laborers display the severed hands of two fellow workers, murdered by sentries of the Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Company (ABIR) in 1904. They are flanked by two pith-helmeted American Presbyterian missionaries. Anti-Slavery International.



FIGURE 4 For this formal portrait taken about 1904, the men, who were forced to collect rubber in King Leopold's Congo, were tied together with ropes around their necks. The image, like that drawn by Salim Matola of a chain gang in German East Africa in 1906, harkens back to David Livingstone's drawing of Arab slavers in 1861. Anti-Slavery International.

we were killed. We had to go further and further into the forest to find the rubber vines, to go without food, and our women had to give up cultivating the fields and gardens. Then we starved. Wild beasts—the leopards—killed some of us when we were working away in the forest, and others got lost or died from exposure and starvation and we begged the white men to leave us alone, saying we could get no more rubber, but the white men and their soldiers said: 'Go! You are only beasts yourselves, you are only nyama (meat).' We tried, always going further into the forest, and when we failed and our rubber was short, the soldiers came to our towns and killed us. Many were shot, some had their ears cut off; others were tied up with ropes round their necks and bodies and taken away. The white men sometimes at the posts did not know of the bad things the soldiers did to us, but it was the white men who sent the soldiers to punish us for not bringing in enough rubber."

Here P.P. took up the story from N.N.:—

"We said to the white man: 'We are not enough people now to do what you want of us. Our country has not many people in it and we are dying fast. We are killed by the work you make us do, by the stoppage of our plantations, and the breaking up of our homes.' The white man looked at us and said: 'There are lots of people in Mputu' (Europe, the white man's country). 'If there are lots of people in the white man's country there must be many people in the black man's country.' The white man who said this was the chief white man at F.F *, his name was A.B., he was a very bad man. Other white men of Bula Matadi who had been bad and wicked were B.C., C.D., and D.E. These had killed us often, and killed us by their own hands as well as by their soldiers. Some men were good" . . .

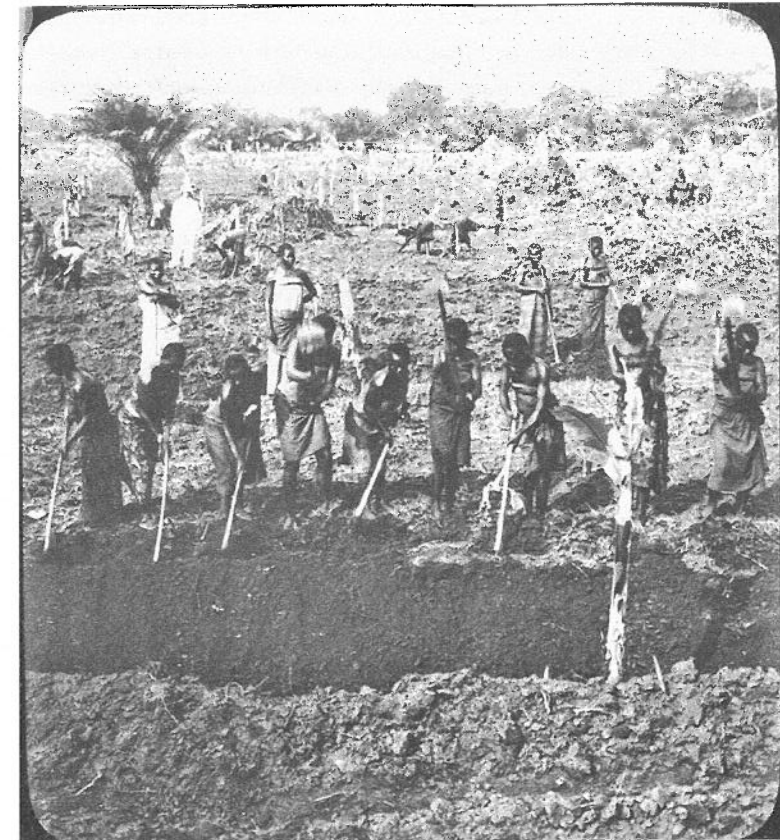


FIGURE 5 A line of female slaves in King Leopold's Congo (1908) dig a trench by hand, while others behind them work in a field overseen by a European supervisor. Anti-Slavery International.

"These ones told them to stay in their homes, and did not hunt and chase them as the others had done, but after what they had suffered they did not trust more any one's word and they had fled from their country and were now going to stay here, far from their homes, in this country where there was no rubber."

Q.: "How long is it since you left your homes, since the big trouble you speak of?"

A.: "It lasted three full seasons, and it is now four seasons since we fled and came into the K * country."

Q.: "How many days is it from N * to your own country?"

A.: "Six days of quick marching. We fled because we could not endure the things done to us. Our Chiefs were hanged and we were killed and starved and worked beyond endurance to get rubber."

Q.: "How do you know it was the white men themselves who ordered these cruel things to be done to you? These things must have been done without the white men's knowledge by the black soldiers."

A. (P.P.): "The white men told their soldiers: 'You kill only women; you cannot kill men. You must prove that you kill men.' So then the soldiers when they killed us" (here he stopped and hesitated, and then pointing to the private parts of my bulldog—it was lying asleep at my feet) he said: "then they cut off those things and took them to the white men, who said: 'It is true, you have killed men.'"

Q.: "You mean to tell me that any white man ordered your bodies to be mutilated like that and those parts of you carried to him?"

P.P., O.O., and all (shouting): "Yes! many white man. D.E. did it."

Q. "You say this is true? Were many of you so treated after being shot?"

All (shouting out): "Nkoto! Nkoto!" (Very many! Very many!)

There was no doubt. Their vehemence, their flashing eyes, their excitement was not simulated. Doubtless they exaggerated the numbers, but they were clearly telling me what they knew and loathed.

B. The affidavit of the American missionary, Emily Banks, relating to events in 1895

I, EMILY BANKS, now residing at Congo Villa, Uppleby Road, Upper Parkstone, in the county of Dorset, Widow, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

1. I resided in the Congo Free State with my late husband, Rev. Charles Blair Banks, as Missionaries under the American Baptist Missionary Union from the year 1887 to the year 1899 save and except two furloughs of eighteen months each. During the first two years we were stationed at Wangata and during the rest of the time at Bolengi both places being in the Equator District.

2. On December 14th, 1895, a sentinel passed our station at Bolengi driving before him a poor woman who was carrying a basket of human hands. My husband, now dead, Mr. Sjoblom now dead, and myself went down the road and ordered the sentinel to put the hands on the road that we might see how many there were. We counted eighteen right hands, all of them smoked, and from their size we could judge that they had belonged to men, women and children. The sentinel was very angry with the woman because she had dropped one hand on the way, and there should have been nineteen. Doubtless some of the victims were relations of the poor creature who was forced to carry the basket of hands from her village to the State Commissaire.

The following is a verbatim entry of the event taken from my diary, which entry was made therein on the very day of the recurrence.

December 14th, 1895. The poor people amongst whom we live are sadly treated by the State. Only just now I saw with my husband and his colleague Mr. Sjoblom, 18 hands dried and which had been cut off their victims four days ago by the servants of the State.

A slave caught alive from the same town was made to carry the basket containing the right hands of the people.

This has been the practice of the Commissaire of our district for a long time, but this is the first time I have seen the dried right hands we have heard so much about, and which are carried to the Commissaire so that he may know without doubt how many have been killed, and thus giving his soldiers no chance of letting their fellow country-men off.

If food is wanted and the natives say they have none, they are shot down, their huts burnt, and all their stuff stolen. This is called war, and the stolen goods spoils of war.

O how cruel is man when placed over the weak and ignorant. They call this "Congo Free State!" Alas, never was such bondage known till the "Free State" came turning out the natives of the soil, slaying, burning and capturing them every month of the year.

The Commissaire told Charlie (my husband) he would burn out "Bolengi if we were not here!"

And I make this solemn Declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the Statutory Declarations Act, 1835.

C. The experiences of the boy Lokota, based on his testimony given in 1903

This child—a boy—was brought to the Mission at Bonginda, on September 7, 1903, during the visit of His Majesty's Consul [Casement].

This photograph of the mutilated child was taken by the Rev. W. D. Armstrong, on the occasion of the visit to the Mission.

The village of Mpelengi lies only some three miles away from the Mission of Bonginda. This child was only able to run at the date of his mutilation, which is stated to have occurred under the following circumstances about four and a half or five years ago, at a period when the régime of the rubber blessing was being worked to the utmost in the lower Lulonga:—

Mpelengi was "attacked" for its failure to bring in enough rubber . . . Sentries of the trading organization appointed to the moral and material regeneration of Mpelengi were sent against it, with the usual supply of Government-distributed guns and ammunition.

The sentries, under a leader named Mokwolo, were named Ebomi, Mokuba, and Bomolo. These four well-armed men set out from a neighbouring town named Bolondo, and attacked Mpelengi at dawn. One of the first to fall was a principal chief of the town, a man named Eliba. The people fled to the forest, and the child Lokota toddled after. Mokwolo pursued and knocked the baby down with the butt of his rifle, and cut off its hand.

The hand of Eliba was also cut off and taken away in triumph, to attest that the sentries had done their duty and had punished the "rebel" town, which dared to fail in supplying the fixed quantity of India rubber. These methods of tax-collecting are simplicity itself, and involve no formalities, such as receipt-signing.

They are now so popular that the Congo State is believed to meditate a new Coat of Arms—or Hands.

The design will closely follow that in the Shield of Ulster—where the Red-Hand shines conspicuous; but in the Congo shield, I understand, the hands will be numerous and all black—while the motto to be substituted for the existing "Travail et progress," is, I am informed, to be "HANDS OFF!" Truly an appropriate motto for this poor little State, menaced by the intrigues of perfidious Albion!



FIGURE 6 Mark Twain published this collage of the victims of King Leopold's atrocities in a biting satire that he wrote on the monarch's misrule, *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of His Congo Rule*, published in 1905. "The pictures," Twain wrote, "get sneaked around everywhere." The boy in the top center is Lokota, who was maimed by employees of King Leopold. Mark Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of His Congo Rule*, 1905.

D. A school lesson on the history of the Congo taught originally in Lingala to children in a mission school in 1944

Children, listen to the facts that took place in the Belgian Congo until today

1. In 1489, the Portuguese reached the mouth of the Congo River. They called it Zaire. Since about 415 years, the traders and the priests came close to the mouth. They didn't go up from there. They were afraid of the rapids, the stones, and the mountains.

2. Nearly 100 years later, other Portuguese explored the Congo, to the South and to the East.

3. Those that arrived the first to the Congo, in the heart of Africa, are the next three persons: Livingstone, an Englishman, from 1866 to 1868; he discovered the big lakes Tanganyika, and the other. In 1871, he discovered our river at Nyangwe. He died in Tabora in 1873. At the death of Livingstone, Cameron took the relief. He discovered Tanganyika, Nyangwe and the Indian ocean from 1873 to 1875. Stanley descended the River in 1877 from Nyangwe to Boma during 82 days. There were with him 4 Whites and 356 Blacks. In Boma there were Stanley and 115 Blacks only, the others died on the way because of wars and illnesses.

4. From there Stanley returned to Europe. He remained there during two years. He came back here, accompanied of other Whites. They went back up the river. They concluded some pacts with the chiefs and created stations of the State. In August 1879, Stanley arrived to the port of the river, close to Matadi. There, they looked for people. They had brought sufficient metal sheets to assemble three small crafts. They transported them until Kitambo (Leopoldville). There, they were assembled. Stanley and 4 Whites explored several regions and concluded some alliances with 500 customary chiefs, creating 40 stations of the State. They had spent five years on this work.

5. They had discovered a new country just to make it better. Some sovereigns of Europe chose Leopold II, king of the Belgians, to become also the king of the Congo. Leopold II, is a big civiliser, an intelligent man.

6. In 1885, Leopold II gave to the Congo its first Governor. He was placed in Boma. He also assigned some Whites everywhere. The Katanga submitted to the authority of the State in 1890. To this time the Blacks of the East and the Budja were suffering the cruelties of the Arabs (the Slave trade). The commanders who fought the Arabs are the following: Dhanis, Lippens, Debruyne, Ponthier, Jacques. The Whites could not expulse the Arabs before 1894. Afterwards, they put an end to their depredations.

7. After these wars many priests arrived to civilize the Blacks of the Congo. In the beginning, they travelled on foot from Matadi to Leopoldville. What sufferings! Then a railroad was built. Since 1898, the priests came by train. The train transported men and luggage.

8. Leopold II reigned on the Congo from Europe with great wisdom during 24 years. The whole world congratulated him about it. In 1908, Leopold II offered to its Belgian compatriots the country of the Congo. From then on one calls it the Belgian Congo. That is why all Belgians put their mind on civilizing the Blacks: the body, the intelligence, and the heart.

9. In 1909, Albert, the son of Leopold II, came to visit the Congo. At the end of that year Leopold II died. All wept. Albert was invested as King of the Belgians and of the Congo. Albert also governed us with wisdom during 25 years. He died in 1934. Albert's son went up to the throne: he is Leopold III, our beloved King.

10. Children, if there were no Whites, one would not know of a more prosperous Congo than previously. People do not wage big battles anymore between villages. They don't kill themselves anymore. They put on some clothes. The Whites have constructed beautiful houses. The State created some roads, big paths everywhere for vehicles and bicycles. One doesn't carry any heavy burden anymore. The Whites provide work, and the Blacks help them. To day, many Blacks do the works of the Whites. The priests take care of the soul and of the body. They build hospitals and schools. They also constructed numerous Missions to

teach the people God's true religion. They taught the children all kinds of professions: carpenters, masons, teachers, clerks, etc. The business became profitable. The doctors heal the patients. The judges settle the palavers.

The State governs and orders the country. Now we notice that the country is prosperous! The Church calls people to the prayer. All is in order. Let's return graces to God for these big and numerous kindnesses.

5 • Frederick Lugard instructs his officials on how to implement indirect rule (1913–18)

The most acclaimed theoretician of British colonial rule was Frederick Lugard, the same man who had waxed enthusiastic about the prospects of commercial empire in East Africa and who went on to govern Britain's largest possession by far in West Africa, Nigeria, for most of the first three decades of the twentieth century. Lugard's name has become synonymous with the theory of indirect rule, the process by which a very few Europeans would supposedly use indigenous institutions and practices to rule vast numbers of Africans. Over time, the memoranda that Lugard wrote to his officers regarding their duties became a sort of "bible" of colonial practice. As the following instructions demonstrate, there are clear links to the ideas developed by Shepstone and implemented by Wolseley decades earlier in Natal. As with their system, also, though rule is meant to be indirect, the governor is always given the powers of an autocrat, and, in the final analysis, colonial control rests on a readiness to use armed force to crush all opposition.⁵

Memo. 1. Duties of Political Officers

3. The British rôle here [Nigeria] is to bring to the country all the gains of civilisation by applied science (whether in the development of material resources, or the eradication of disease, &c.), with as little interference as possible with Native customs and modes of thought. Where new ideas are to be presented to the native mind, patient explanation of the objects in view will be well rewarded, and new methods may often be clothed in a familiar garb. Thus the object of Vaccination and its practical results may be sufficiently obvious, while the prejudice which exists among some Moslems may perhaps be removed by pointing out that it is a preventive of disease by contagion, no less than the circumcision enforced by their own law.

4. The term "Resident" implies duties rather of a Political or advisory nature, while the term "Commissioner" connotes names of ranks, functions of a more directly Administrative character. The former is therefore applicable to the Chief Government Officer in a Province of which large areas are under the immediate rule of a Paramount Chief, who, with Native Officials, himself administers a form of Government. The latter is more adapted to Provinces,

5. Frederick Lugard, *Political Memoranda: Revision of Instructions to Political Officers on Subjects Chiefly Political and Administrative, 1913–1918* (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1919, 2d ed.), 9–11, 166–67, 223–26, 254–56).

or parts of Provinces, less advanced in civilisation, where the authority of the Native Chiefs is small, and a large measure of direct Administration must devolve upon the Protectorate Government...

5. It is the duty of Residents to carry out loyally the policy of the Governor, and not to inaugurate policies of their own. The Governor, through the Lieutenant-Governor: is at all times ready and anxious to hear, and to give full and careful consideration to the views of Residents, but, when once a decision has been arrived at, he expects Residents to give effect to it in a thorough and loyal spirit, and to inculcate the same spirit in their juniors. This does not mean a rigid adherence to the letter of a ruling. Among such diverse races in widely varying degrees of advancement, it is inevitable and desirable that there should be diversity in the application of a general policy by the Resident, who knows the local conditions and feelings of his people. It does mean, however, that the principles underlying the policy are to be observed and the Resident in modifying their application will fully inform and obtain the approval of the Governor.

As I have said... we are all working not only with a common object but as parts of one organisation. The Government relies on its Administrative Officers to keep in close touch with Native opinion and feeling and to report for the information of the Governor. It is thus only that we can produce the best results, that the Governor and Lieutenant-Governors can keep in touch and gain information, and the Political Officer can count on support and on recognition of his work.

6. The degree to which a Political Officer may be called upon to act in an administrative capacity, will thus depend upon the influence and ability of the Native Chiefs in each part of the Province, though in every case he will endeavour to rule through the Native Chiefs.

In those parts of Provinces which are under the immediate authority of a Chief of the first or of the second grade, the primary duty and object of a Political Officer will be to educate them in the duties of Rulers according to a civilised standard; to convince them that oppression of the people is not sound policy, or to the eventual benefit of the rulers; to bring home to their intelligence, as far as may be, the evils attendant on a system which holds the lower classes in a state of slavery or serfdom, and so destroys individual responsibility, ambition, and development amongst them; to impress upon them the advantage of delegating the control of districts to subordinate Chiefs, and of trusting and encouraging these subordinates, while keeping a strict supervision over them; to see that there is no favouritism in such appointments; and to inculcate the unspeakable benefit of justice, free from bribery and open to all...

In districts where there is no Chief of the first or second grade, a Political Officer's functions become more largely Administrative, and among uncivilised Pagan tribes he must assume the full onus of Administration, to the extent to which time and opportunity permit. In such communities he will constantly endeavour to support the authority of the Chief, and encourage him to show initiative. If there is no Chief who exercises authority beyond his own village, he will encourage any village Chief of influence and character to control a group of villages, with a view to making him Chief of a district later if he shows ability for the charge. Native Court clerks or scribes, constables or couriers will never be allowed to usurp the authority of the Native Chief or Village Head...

Memo. No. 5. Taxation

4. "Experience (I wrote) seems to point, to the conclusion that in a country so fertile as this, direct taxation is a moral benefit to the people by stimulating industry and production. Hitherto the male population has been largely engaged in tribal war, and the men have depended on the labour of their women and the great fertility of the soil to supply their needs in food. Where taxes were formerly paid and have lapsed, it is stated that large areas have gone out of cultivation and the male population, deprived of the necessity for producing a surplus to pay their taxes, and of the pastime of war, have become indolent and addicted to drinking and quarrelling" . . .

5. [Direct taxation] . . . imposes on the freed slave, on the one hand, the obligation to render to the State, to which he owes his liberty, some portion, however small, of the labour or its equivalent which was formerly the sole property of his master, while the latter, deprived of the forced labour of his slaves, is compelled to lead a more useful life, either by personal effort, or by taking an active part in the labours of administration in return for a salary provided by means of taxation . . .

6. There is no civilised State in the world where direct taxation has not been found to be a necessity, and African communities which aspire to be regarded as civilised must share the common burden of civilisation . . .

7. Apart from the beneficial results of taxation described in the foregoing paragraphs . . . the immediate object of direct taxation is to provide a revenue . . .

Memo. No. 6. Slavery (Forced Labour, etc.)

11. Since slavery . . . stands condemned, why, it may be asked, was it not at once summarily abolished? If, however, slaves had been encouraged to assert their freedom unnecessarily in large numbers, or if those so asserting it, by leaving their masters without some good cause, had been indiscriminately upheld in their action by Political Officers, a state of anarchy and chaos would have resulted, and the whole social system of the Mohammedan States would, as I have said, have been dislocated. It might even have become necessary to legalise the institution under some other name, as was in effect done by the House Rule Proclamation in Southern Nigeria . . .

Such a sudden repudiation of their obligations to their employers by the mass of the slave population would, moreover, have involved equal misery to the slaves and to their masters. The former would have had no immediate means of livelihood, while the latter would have been reduced to beggary, and to detestation of British rule which had brought this result about. The great cities would have been filled with vagrants, criminals, and prostitutes; indeed in the early days of British Administration the large majority of the criminal class consisted of runaway slaves.

Moreover, to abolish prematurely the almost universal form of labour contract, before a better system had been developed to take its place, would not only have been an act of administrative folly, but would have been an injustice to the masters, since domestic slavery is an institution sanctioned by the law of Islam, and property in slaves was as real as any other form of property among the Mohammedan population at the time that the British assumed

the Government, a nullification of which would have amounted to nothing less than wholesale confiscation. This is equally true of either household or farm slaves, and it was very important that the latter should not leave their accustomed employment as agriculturists, and flock into the cities as "free" vagrants without means of subsistence. Residents were therefore instructed to discourage wholesale assertion of freedom, and where, similar circumstances still exist the same course will be pursued . . .

13. The introduction of a coin currency, and the enormous quantity put into circulation by the development of mining and trade, has greatly facilitated the employment of paid labour. Even the Native employer can now pay for his labour in cash. Payment in kind is always to be deprecated and discouraged for the employee so paid is unable to save his wages to purchase when and what he likes, and is dependent on instalments as they become available at arbitrary rates. The conditions in fact approximate to the slavery system, and free labour will not readily engage except for a money wage.

But above all the Government rule that each labourer must be paid up fully in cash, at short intervals, and without the intermediary of any middleman or Chief, has done more than anything else to popularise the system of paid labour, and to create a free labour market . . .

15. These results, so far as they have been achieved, have only been won at the cost of unwearyed patience and sympathetic counsel on the part of the Political Staff—and the task is by no means ended. It is still as necessary as ever, not merely to warn the ruling classes that slavery must eventually cease under British rule, but to explain to them the *practical* advantages of free labour.

One advantage to the master is that he is no longer responsible for the faults committed by his slave, or for his maintenance and that of his family in case of sickness. The labourer can no longer claim a share of the produce of the land, and is entitled to his day's wage and no more. Even the right of the freeman to terminate his contract when he pleases, on giving the agreed notice, produces no more inconvenience than the claim of the slave to run away, now that the master is unable to force him to return.

Another practical advantage of free labour to the master lies in the fact that, whereas the British Courts lend him no assistance in compelling his slave to do his proper day's work, or in punishing him if he runs away—while the legitimate assistance of the Native Courts is also strictly limited—he can, if he employs free labour, obtain the full assistance of the Administration in enforcing the contract, and punishing its breach, and it should be explained to him how he should enter into a contract enforceable at law. That slave owners were quick to recognise the advantage of free labour was shown by the voluntary emancipation of a large number of his slaves by the Sarkin Kwotto . . .

Memo. No. 7. The Use of Armed Force

12. When nearing the village where opposition is expected, the Political Officer will (if he can do so without too great risk to the envoy) send a message ahead, informing the people in unmistakable terms of the object of his visit, and what it is that they are, required to do or to refrain from doing, and which has given rise to the advent of all armed force . . .

If the terms are accepted, he will proceed with the troops to the village and meet the Chiefs there, subsequently withdrawing and awaiting the fulfillment of the pledges to the

limit of the time allowed. He, will, meantime use every effort to get in touch with the Chiefs and people, and reassure them that no hostilities, will take place if the demands are met.

13. If, however, the message is ignored, or the attempt to get into communication has failed, and it is obvious that preparations are being made for resistance, the Civil Officer, after allowing time for the non-combatants to escape, will request the Officer Commanding the Patrol to advance and occupy the village.

Fire will not be opened until the party has been actually fired upon, or is beyond all possibility of doubt about to be attacked in force. Even then, the object will be to occupy the village—which will usually be found to have been deserted with the infliction only of such loss on the opponents as is necessary for the purpose, and firm discipline will be strictly maintained.

14. If the advance has been resisted, sufficient livestock and food will, if possible, be collected in and around the village to pay the fine demanded, and the Political Officer will again endeavour to get into communication with the Chiefs by means of any prisoner captured. He will repeat his ultimatum, and summon the Chiefs and Elders under a promise that their lives will be safe, and that they will not be carried off as prisoners, but will inform them that failure to obey the summons will result in the burning of the principal huts and of the seizure, of food supplies for the troops. The Patrol will pay for its supplies unless it has been wantonly attacked, but will *insist* on having them, and take them by force if necessary.

15. If this second summons is ineffectual, he will proceed to destroy the houses of the Chiefs and those of the persons or faction known to be implicated in the original outrages (if any) and of the ringleaders in the disturbance. If in spite of this resistance is maintained, he will request the Officer Commanding the Patrol to proceed to break down the opposition, and if this is of a determined character it will be necessary to inflict a severe blow, and thoroughly disperse the opponents. The party will remain in possession of the village, the Patrol being fed from local supplies, but no looting will ever be allowed.

This, in most cases, will have the desired effect, and the Chiefs will come in and comply with the demands. If, however, the people prefer to carry on active hostilities, the Officer Commanding the Patrol will search the surrounding bush and attack and destroy the “war-camps.” Before leaving the place, sufficient livestock and food will, if possible, be collected to liquidate an increased fine. This, however, is rarely feasible, for such determined resistance will only be offered by a tribe which has been guilty of repeated crimes, and which has made every preparation for a fight by removing their belongings. In such a case it may be necessary before leaving to burn the entire village and destroy the crops...

17. Experience has shown that where resistance is obstinate the only way to avoid the perpetration of crimes and recurrent expeditions, is to inflict sufficiently deterrent punishment. Uncivilised man regrettably only recognises force, and measures its potency by his own losses.

6 ♦ The French practice direct rule to enforce submission (1908)

In apparent contrast to the British, the French believed in the direct administration of their colonial possessions, that is, ruling without the use of indigenous intermediaries other than the Africans who

composed the bulk of their armies. This policy was clearly expressed by G. L. Angoulvant, governor of French West Africa, in a set of instructions that he wrote for civilian administrators in November 1908. Despite the stress on direct as distinct from indirect management, many of Angoulvant's ideas about colonial rule would have found considerable support among his British contemporaries. Angoulvant argued that before the advent of European rule most Africans had lived in a perpetual state of subjugation and were largely incapable of expressing their political views. For him, a necessary goal of colonial rule was to change completely the “Negro mentality.” Furthermore, a necessary start to such a revolutionary process would be the “suppression of all resistance,” physical and mental, by Africans to their rulers.⁶

General instructions to civilian administrators, November 26, 1908

One of the greatest difficulties we have encountered in establishing our influence lies in the natives' attitude of mind, or in short in the moral condition of the country. I do not refer to the northern regions, whose inhabitants have too many links with the Sudan not to share, from the mental and even intellectual point of view, in the relative but undeniable degree of civilisation of the sudanic peoples. The peoples of these regions have been softened up by forced subjection to the yoke of black conquerors. They do not dispute our supremacy, which for them means an incomparable improvement in their moral and material condition.

Among the natives of the centre of the Colony and the lower Ivory Coast the previous state of anarchy, with the solid advantages it brought to savage peoples, is still all too persistent, and where it has ceased it has left deep traces; its gradual disappearance is causing too many regrets for there to be no after-effects. These are manifested by the survival of internal disputes, feuds and rivalries, which are too often translated into sudden attacks, fights between villages, or individual crimes. Order, which in this country should ideally develop through the sacrifices of particular liberties for the sake of the liberty of all, seems to the masses to mean painful, almost intolerable, interference with all their conscious aspirations... The native is so incapable of reflection that he does not spontaneously compare the present with the past, does not consider that we have brought him peace, the right to circulate freely, to enrich himself by his labour and to enjoy its fruits. We are the masters, and so people whose power must be respected but whose actions, however full of justice and goodwill, arouse no affection.

To make ourselves understood we must totally change the Negro mentality. It is not those who lived through the periods of anarchy who will follow us, welcome us, and love us. If we had any illusions about this they would be destroyed by the way our favourites—those who have been able to serve us and earn our special interests—often hasten to profit from their position at the public expense. Let's face it; at present the native is still hostile to our institutions and indifferent to the efforts we are making to improve his miserable lot.

This is a sad conclusion but we must recognise it; even if it does not modify our aims it should dictate our actions. For a long time yet our subjects must be led to progress despite themselves, as some children are educated despite their reluctance to work. We must play the

6. John D. Hargreaves, ed., *France and West Africa: An Anthology of Historical Documents* (London: Macmillan, 1969), 200–206.

role of strong, strict, parents towards the natives, obtaining through authority what persuasion would not gain.

The most urgent task is to check every sign of insubordination or ill-will . . .

I was quickly struck, when talking with administrators or reading their reports, by the false ideas which natives have about our occupation. In many parts of the Colony they regard it as temporary, and do not hesitate to say so. Again, when making contact with certain tribes I was greatly astonished by the lack of deference in their chief's attitude towards us, and by the independence of character which even led them to try to discuss with us the advisability of our best-justified measures.

Henceforth I wish there to be no hesitation about the political attitude to be adopted. Our line of conduct must be uniform throughout the Colony, even though, in its present immaturity, the Colony is in a state of continuous evolution and may present, within a single region, radically different situations requiring different forms of action in matters of detail. Even if the exact methods of action cannot be defined, since they must follow the development of the country and adapt themselves to circumstances, they must nevertheless share one invariable inspiration, one fixed principle, namely the principle of authority.

This principle is derived from the purposes we pursue, purposes—which I have already clearly stated in special instructions addressed to certain administrators, and which may be defined as follows. To subdue all hostile elements; to win over the waverers; to encourage the masses, who can always be drawn to our side by self-interest until one day they are drawn there by sympathy; in short, to establish our authority beyond dispute; and finally to express these results in such tangible ways as the full collection of taxes, the rendering of assistance by the natives in the creation of public fixed capital, and economic and social progress . . .

What I want us to avoid, in this country where minds have still to be conquered, is making a display of fruitless sentimentalism. We ought not to start off by seeming to set great value on the natives' wishes; the essential thing is to follow, without weakening, the only road capable of leading us to our goal. Make no mistake, these wishes of the natives are essentially unproductive, and hindrances to progress. To respect them would mean deferring indefinitely the establishment of order.

In a new country where the natives have hitherto been guided almost exclusively by instinct, order cannot be secured without provoking misunderstandings and clashes. These originate with the bad elements, that is to say with the tiny minority which unfortunately commonly has the gift of leading the masses astray. The masses are then the first to deplore the consequences of these errors, and to repudiate the real authors.

The native policy to be followed in this country must therefore be, literally, benevolent but firm; its firmness will be shown by the suppression of all resistance (which does not mean that we may depart for a moment from the humane principles by which our colonial policy is inspired). If it is important to avoid abuses and excesses by individuals, to aim always to appeal to the native's reason and to win his goodwill, to use patience, diplomacy and forbearance, it is as dangerous to show weakness as it is unwise. It is desirable to avoid the use of force, but if it is used against us we must not be afraid to use it in our turn; I am determined to teach the natives a very sharp lesson whenever, wearying of our gentleness, they think they can flout our authority.

Although our policy is a benevolent one, it does not follow that this should mean exaggerated condescension towards the native or excessive respect for the interests of a few privileged ones, mostly chiefs. These are usually unworthy of respect since they owe their prestige to excesses at the expense of the masses, of whom they all too often lead us to lose sight.

It is futile to suppose that at the present time native policy can be based solely upon reciprocal sympathies. To believe this is to risk placing blind trust in people who will abuse it. The administrator must never drop his vigilance; in fact he will do well to be mistrustful for the most trifling symptoms may conceal broad and deep movements.

In short, I cannot repeat too often that the first condition for achieving anything practical and useful in our Colony is to establish our authority on unshakeable foundations. If there is the slightest crack, all our work will be at risk; hence we must not tolerate even the slightest breach in security. In native countries events may have extraordinary reverberations and the slightest incident, especially if troublesome for us, is at once blown up and misrepresented. Administrators must thus keep an attentive watch, and even eavesdrop. Demonstrations of impatience or disrespect for our authority, or any deliberate lack of goodwill must be suppressed without delay. Populations must be kept in suspense, held on the right lines by repeated visits from those whose mission it is to command them. It is essential that bad characters, who are generally the only instigators of disorders, should be isolated and eliminated.

Now I have indicated the attitude to be adopted towards the populations [at large] I can raise the question of native administration . . . We may consider our purpose as almost fulfilled when we can administer with the help of native elements, instead of finding them in our way. This result has been achieved in the Northern districts. We must now bring it about in the forest zone and in Baoulé . . .

Not that I have the slightest notion of attempting here any experiment in indirect administration. Except in a few northern districts the Ivory Coast does not have, among its own natives, any subjects capable of even roughly discharging the role of native official, of holding even the slightest fragment of public authority. Long years will be needed before we can find individuals who are at once relatively well educated, energetic, active, honest, loyal, ready to face the dangers involved for a native in exercising of power in his own country, and sufficiently disinterested to serve us as administrative auxiliaries, even at the price of close and continuing control.

We must thus confine ourselves to practising direct administration, which is in any case the most moral system in Negro countries, for it involves far fewer of those excesses which are the undeniable consequence of any participation by natives in public affairs . . .

Some will doubtless think that innovations of the sort which I have outlined and will enlarge on later would gravely jeopardise an existing social order for which they do not believe we can safely substitute an organisation made out of nothing.

On the contrary, I believe that we are in this country precisely in order to change the social order of the people now submitted to our laws. What this social order amounts to, among the forest-dwellers and the Baoulé, is permanent and general anarchy, resulting from the absence of any authority and obstructing the realisation of any useful reform . . . It is our mission to bring civilisation, moral and social progress, economic prosperity. We shall never succeed in this if we think ourselves obliged to preserve a deplorable situation where the weight of the

past prevents any reform; or if we do succeed it will be at a speed out of keeping with the importance of the sacrifices we have made and the interests which are involved.

In colonial politics nothing is more dangerous than a conservative policy. Why make firm resolutions if they are to weaken in the face of a situation which it was their very purpose to bring to an end? Why make such efforts if we doom them to failure in advance, condemning them to remain platonic on the pretext of respecting the customs and instincts of the natives?

7 • A German school examination for African children (1909)

In the 1860s Edward Blyden proposed a new university for Africa based on the teaching of classical languages, literature, and history (he was referring to Greece and Rome), combined with study of the Arab world, as well as the history and culture of African societies. Although the imperialists of the late nineteenth century argued that one of their chief goals in extending direct rule over Africans peoples was to "civilize" them, the following school examination, administered to fifty-five pupils at Catholic and Protestant mission stations in German Togo in November 1909, illustrates the limits of colonial education in practice.⁷

Saturday, November 20, 1909

10-10.30 A.M. *Calligraphy*. A passage was written on the blackboard and the pupils had to copy it.

10.30-11 A.M. *Spelling*. The chairman of the commission dictated a simple passage from a short story, with which none of them were acquainted.

11-12 A.M. *Geography*. The following questions had been set as a task:

- (a) The large states of Europe and their capitals.
- (b) What are the names of Germany's most important mountains?
- (c) What are the names of the most important rivers in Germany and in what direction do they run?

The last question was intended to show whether the pupils could not only reproduce the names mechanically, but could also visualize a map.

3-4.30 P.M. *An Essay*. The subject set was: "What good things have the Europeans brought us?"

5.30-6 P.M. *Reading*. In addition to passages known to the pupils, they had to read aloud an unfamiliar article from a little book, called "Drei Kaiserbüchlein," out of the bookshop of the North German Mission.

Monday, November 22, 1909

7.30-9 A.M. *Oral Arithmetic*. The questions were asked by the teachers themselves.

10-11 A.M. *Written Arithmetic*. One question each was chosen from amongst those proposed by the school associations:

7. Bruce Fetter, ed., *Colonial Rule in Africa: Readings from Primary Sources* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), 128-29.

- (1) Multiply 118.92 by $67\frac{1}{4}$ and then divide the number obtained by 3,964.
- (2) In 1906 Togo exported copra worth 8,000 marks. In 1907 11,000 marks' worth. What was the increase per cent on the export of 1907?
- (3) A labourer drinks brandy worth 0.25 marks a day. (a) How much does he pay for the brandy in a year? (b) How many days must he work for the brandy, if he earns 2 marks a day? (c) How many kgs of pork could he have bought with this sum, if pork costs 65 pfennige a kg?

From 11-12 and from 3-6 in the afternoon, *useful knowledge, grammar and translation* were examined.

Tuesday, November 23, 1909

7-8 A.M. *History*. The task set was: The reign of emperor William I and the wars he had waged. Name those men who had specially supported his government.

From 8-11.30 A.M. the examinations in translation were completed.

8 • The Natives Land Act, South Africa (1913)

After the formal establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, under a constitution that in practice guaranteed that whites would remain in control of the state, the new government led by Boers but working in league with the English-speaking owners of the gold-mining industry, implemented legislation to protect their respective economic interests. The Mines and Works Act of 1911 formally introduced a legal color bar into the mining industry by preventing Africans from having jobs beyond the level of manual laborer and thereby helping ensure that labor costs would remain low. The Natives Land Act of 1913, discussed in draft form for several years before its passage, was much more far reaching. It would set up the mechanism to allocate land in South Africa on the basis of race. An official government body, known popularly as the Beaumont Commission, determined the exact proportions of this allocation. Ninety-three percent of the land in South Africa—the best land, as well the most—went to 20 percent of the population (the whites); the balance went to the Africans, who comprised 80 percent of the country's population. Africans were prohibited from owning or acquiring land in areas designated for whites. Nor could they legally lease or farm on shares on white land. Their only occupation, at least as recognized by law, would be as laborers. The introduction of the legislation spurred the formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), a body that aimed to represent the concerns of all Africans in South Africa. In this resolution, dated October 2, 1916, the leaders of the SANNC express their objections to the new legislation.⁸

Having heard the main features of the Report of the Natives Land Commission on the Natives Land Act of 1913, and having learnt its principal recommendations, this meeting of the

8. Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter, *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), vol. 1, *Protest and Hope, 1882-1934*, ed. Sheridan Johns, 86-88.

South African Native National Congress held at Pietermaritzburg, Natal, this 2nd day of October 1916, resolves:

THAT looking to the interests and welfare of the Bantu people within the Union, the Report of the Natives Land Commission presented to Parliament is disappointing and unsatisfactory, and fails to carry out the alleged principal of territorial separation of the races on an equitable basis for the following reasons:

THAT it confirms all our previous apprehensions prior to the passing of the Act: That it offers no alternative for the restriction of the free right to acquire land or interest in land: It recommends no practical or equitable remedy for the removal of the manifold objectionable disabilities imposed on the Natives by the Natives Land Act.

THAT it has failed to fulfill the official promises made to the Natives and also to satisfy their anticipations that the Report of the Commission would provide more land sufficient for occupation for themselves and their stock.

WHEREAS the land now demarcated or recommended by the Commission is inadequate for permanent settlement or occupation in proportion to the needs of the present and future Native population: And Whereas the said land is, in most parts, unsuitable for human habitation as also for agricultural or pastoral requirements, seeing that it has been studiously selected on the barren, marshy and malarial districts more especially in the Provinces of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State:

AND WHEREAS according to the evidence given before the Commission there is conflict of opinion amongst the whites as to the approval or disapproval of the principle of the Natives Land Act—the majority of the whites in the Northern Provinces are opposed to the Natives having the right to purchase land or acquire any interest in land in their own names: Nor are they in favour of any large tracts of land being granted to Natives for occupation or settlement except in the unsuitable districts as aforesaid.

BY REASON of these facts the Report of the Commission as presented for consideration by Parliament cannot be acceptable as a basis for the alleged intended territorial separation of the races or as a fair application of the alleged principles of the Act, on just and equitable lines.

ON THE OTHER HAND, while the ostensible aim of the Natives Land Act is that of territorial separation of the races, the evidence in the Report of the Commission shows that the ulterior object of the Government as well as the real desire of the white population of the country is:

To deprive the Natives as a people of their freedom to acquire more land in their own right: To restrict or limit their right to bargain mutually on even terms for the occupation of or settlement on land: To reduce by gradual process and by artificial means the Bantu people as a race to a status of permanent labourers or subordinates for all purposes and for all times with little or no freedom to sell their labour by bargaining on even terms with employers in the open markets of labour either in the agricultural or industrial centres: To limit all opportunities for their economic improvement and independence: To lessen their chances as a people of competing freely and fairly in all commercial enterprises.

THEREFORE this Congress, representing all the tribes of the Bantu Races within the Union, earnestly prays that Parliament unhesitatingly reject the Report of the Natives Land Commission and instantly withdraw the Natives Land Act 1913 from operation as a statute.

II

With regard to ZULULAND it can only be pointed out as an acknowledged historical fact that the parcelling out of this territory into private farms for whites by the successive Colonial Governments was a breach of the Royal proclamation especially making this territory of Zululand a permanent reserve for the original owners. Having regard to the breaches of the aforesaid Royal proclamations and apart from the Natives Land Act 1913, this Congress urges Parliament to take the bold step of restoring the status quo in Zululand by proclaiming it a territory and a permanent place for the original owners thus securing an act of justice where it is due.

III

FINALLY, this Congress begs to point out that the great bulk of the Native population in South Africa has no protection or any privilege under the Constitution of the Union, no legal safeguard of their interest and vested rights as subjects of the British Empire, no channel for any other intervention on their behalf in the redress of their just grievances, no recognised means whereby they can effectively make their legitimate objections felt on any proposed legislation in the Union Parliament; and that as things stand the Executive for the time being in its own initiative and their interest and that of their supporters may (without any previous consultation with the Natives and their Chiefs) impose any law on the Native people without let or hindrance and regardless of the principles of that law and its effects on the people concerned. Guided by these facts and by the light of political experiences in the past we cannot accept the projected solution of the land question. We regard the Natives Land Act as one-sided and as inconsistent with the ideals of fair Government by reason of the disabilities it imposes on the Native people of the Union, while the Report of the Lands Commission is based on the objections of the European people only. Consequently, instead of establishing good relationship it is creating friction and racial antipathies between the blacks and the whites.

That the welfare of this country depends upon its economic development while this Act is calculated to retard the law of supply and demand. The Act as designed is wrong in principle as violating the laws of nature that every man is a free agent and has a right to live where he chooses according to his circumstances and his inclinations. Any system therefore of settlement on land to be lasting and beneficial without the least injury to any section of the community can only be on natural lines, and not by means of artificial legislation. Further that partial territorial separation of the races already obtains in every sphere of life in the urban and rural places: and therefore this cannot effectively be met by retaining the Natives Land Act on the statute Book. We submit there should be no interference with the existing conditions and vested rights of the Natives, and there should be no removal or ejection of *them* from their ancestral lands or from lands they have occupied for generations past: but they should have unrestricted liberty in every Province to acquire land wherever and whenever opportunity permits.

For these and diverse reasons this Congress consisting of delegates representing the various Native tribes of South Africa in declaring its unshakable opposition to the Natives Land Act 1913 reiterated all its former resolutions with respect thereto and hereby further resolves to employ all means within its power to secure the repeal of this mischievous Act and the nonenforcement of the Commission's Report.

In spite of our previous promises to desist from agitation in connection with the Natives Land Act 1913, and recognising the Act is still in operation with detrimental effects to our people, the Executive Committee is instructed to immediately inaugurate a campaign for the collection of funds for the purposes of this resolution and to educate the Bantu people by directing their attention towards this iniquitous law.

That this resolution be sent to the Governor-General, the Missionary Societies and other interested bodies, and to the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society. That the Chief Executive appoint a deputation of three to place this resolution before the Union Government at the earliest opportunity and also to lay same before the Union Parliament next session.

9 • The African National Congress in South Africa (1919)

While colonial administrators such as Lugard and Angoulvant argued for continuing European guardianship until such time—usually viewed as being several centuries in the future—as Africans would be capable of ruling themselves, many Africans pushed for a much more accelerated process of change. In South Africa, people distressed by the post-South African war failure of the British to oppose the racially discriminatory policies of local officials and settlers established a number of political organizations, the most significant of which was the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), formed in 1912 and renamed the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923. The principal founder of this organization was Pixley Seme, who grew up at an American mission station in Natal and, through the assistance of a Congregationalist missionary, traveled to the United States to attend high school in Massachusetts. Seme went on to obtain a BA from Columbia University in 1906 and then, after moving to Britain, studied law at Oxford University and was admitted to the London bar in 1910. He then returned to South Africa to practice as an attorney.

The first president of the organization was John L. Dube, a Zulu educated by American missionaries in the 1870s and 1880s, who in 1887 traveled to the United States to enroll at Oberlin College. In the late 1890s Dube spent another three years in America, studying theology at a seminary in Brooklyn, New York. On his return to South Africa he established a vocational school based on the model of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute and later helped launch Natal's first African newspaper.

Under the influence of Seme and Dube, the SANNC aimed to represent the concerns of all Africans in South Africa but did not call for an immediate end to British colonial rule. Its leaders praised the benefits of British civilization, while arguing that Africans should not be deprived of all of the rights and privileges of citizenship simply because of their color. The organization's constitution, drawn up in 1919, stressed the importance of mutual understanding among civilized peoples.⁹

1. To form a National Vigilant Association and a deliberative Assembly or Council, without legislative pretensions.

2. To unite, absorb, consolidate and preserve under its aegis existing political and educational Associations, Vigilance Committees and other public and private bodies whose aims are the promotion and safeguarding of the interests of the aboriginal races.

9. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/const/constitution_sannc.html.

3. To be the medium of expression of representative opinion and to formulate a standard policy on Native Affairs for the benefit and guidance of the Union Government and Parliament.

4. To educate Parliament and Provincial Councils, Municipalities, other bodies and the public generally regarding the requirements and aspirations of the native people; and to enlist the sympathy and support of such European Societies, Leagues or Unions as might be willing to espouse the cause of right and fair treatment of coloured races.

5. To educate Bantu people on their rights, duties and obligations to the state and to themselves individually and collectively; and to promote mutual help, feeling of fellowship and a spirit of brotherhood among them.

6. To encourage mutual understanding and to bring together into common action as one political people all tribes and clans of various tribes or races and by means of combined effort and united political organisation to defend their freedom, rights and privileges.

7. To discourage and contend against racialism and tribal feuds or to secure the elimination of racialism and tribal feuds; jealousy and petty quarrels by economic combination, education, goodwill and by other means.

8. To recommend, propose and lay before the Government for consideration and adoption laws for the benefit and protection of the Native races. And also to watch Bills introduced in Parliament for proposed legislation as well as in other bodies for legislation affecting Natives and to draft and present amendments thereto.

9. To agitate and advocate by just means for the removal of the "Colour Bar" in political education and industrial fields and for equitable representation of Natives in Parliament or in those public bodies that are vested with legislative powers or in those charged with the duty of administering matters affecting the Coloured races.

10. To promote and advocate the establishment in Parliament and other public bodies of representatives to be under the control of and for the purpose of the Association.

11. To record all grievances and wants of native peoples and to seek by constitutional means the redress thereof, and to obtain legal advice and assistance for members of the Association and its branches and to render financial [aid] where necessary with the objects hereof.

12. To encourage and promote union of Churches free from all sectarian and denominational anomalies.

13. To establish or assist the establishment of national Colleges or Public Institutions free from denominationalism or State control.

14. To originate and expound the right system of education in all schools and colleges and to advocate for its adoption by State and Churches and by all other independent bodies in respect thereto.

15. To encourage inculcation and practice of habits of industry, thrift and cleanliness among the people and propagate the gospel of the dignity of labour.

16. To acquire land by purchase, lease, exchange, gift or otherwise for erection of halls and other public buildings for the use and purposes of the Association.

17. To sell, dispose, manage, develop, let and deal in any way with all or any part of the property of the Association.

18. To borrow or raise money by mortgage or charge of all or any part of the property of the Association; and also to grant loans on security of mortgages in the manner hereinafter provided.

19. To establish a National Fund for the purposes of the Association either by means of voluntary contributions, periodical subscriptions, levies, contributions, charges or other payments; and to hold and manage all funds raised for the objects of the Association.

20. To [do] all and everything directly or indirectly to maintain and uplift the standard of the race morally and spiritually, mentally and materially, socially and politically.

21. AND GENERALLY, to do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

10 ♦ W. E. B. Du Bois describes an Atlantic world bounded by racial exploitation (1915)

*As with the African American missionaries who joined people like John Chilembwe in working to ameliorate the worst excesses of European rule in Africa, other African American critics of colonialism called attention to the economic exploitation of black people on both sides of the Atlantic. Perhaps the most prominent of these individuals was W. E. B. Du Bois, the first African American to earn a PhD in the United States (from Harvard University). His book *The Souls of Black Folk*, a powerful indictment of the discrimination that African Americans faced in the South, had found sympathetic readers throughout the world. In *The Negro*, published during the First World War, Du Bois tackled the history of Africans in Africa, using the same written sources as European historians of the continent did but focusing critically on the economic exploitation and political repression that he considered integral features of colonialism. Du Bois argued that black people everywhere should join together to resist the oppression to which they were subjected solely on the basis of their race.*¹⁰

It is impossible to separate the population of the world accurately by race, since that is no scientific criterion by which to divide races. If we divide the world, however, roughly into African Negroes and Negroids, European whites, and Asiatic and American brown and yellow peoples, we have approximately 150,000,000 Negroes, 500,000,000 whites, and 900,000,000 yellow and brown peoples. Of the 150,000,000 Negroes, 121,000,000 live in Africa, 27,000,000 in the new world, and 9,000,000 in Asia.

What is to be the future relation of the Negro race to the rest of the world? The visitor from Altruria might see here no peculiar problem. He would expect the Negro race to develop along the lines of other human races. In Africa his economic and political development would restore and eventually outrun the ancient glories of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Yoruba; overseas the West Indies would become a new and nobler Africa, built in the very pathway of the new highway of commerce between East and West—the real sea route to India; while in the United States a large part of its citizenship (showing for perhaps centuries their dark descent, but nevertheless equal sharers of and contributors to the civilization of the West) would be the descendants of the wretched victims of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century slave trade.

10. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro* (New York: Henry Holt, 1915), 232–42.

This natural assumption of a stranger finds, however, lodging in the minds of few present-day thinkers. On the contrary, such an outcome is usually dismissed summarily. Most persons have accepted that tacit but clear modern philosophy which assigns to the white race alone the hegemony of the world and assumes that other races, and particularly the Negro race, will either be content to serve the interests of the whites or die out before their all-conquering march. This philosophy is the child of the African slave trade and of the expansion of Europe during the nineteenth century.

The Negro slave trade was the first step in modern world commerce, followed by the modern theory of colonial expansion. Slaves as an article of commerce were shipped as long as the traffic paid. When the Americas had enough black laborers for their immediate demand, the moral action of the eighteenth century had a chance to make its faint voice heard.

The moral repugnance was powerfully reinforced by the revolt of the slaves in the West Indies and South America, and by the fact that North America early began to regard itself as the seat of advanced ideas in politics, religion, and humanity.

Finally European capital began to find better investments than slave shipping and flew to them. These better investments were the fruit of the new industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, with its factory system; they were also in part the result of the cheapened price of gold and silver, brought about by slavery and the slave trade to the new world. Commodities other than gold, and commodities capable of manufacture and exploitation in Europe out of materials furnishable by America, became enhanced in value; the bottom fell out of the commercial slave trade and its suppression became possible.

The middle of the nineteenth century saw the beginning of the rise of the modern working class. By means of political power the laborers slowly but surely began to demand a larger share in the profiting industry. In the United States their demand bade fair to be halted by the competition of slave labor. The labor vote, therefore, first confined slavery to limits in which it could not live, and when the slave power sought to exceed these territorial limits, it was suddenly and unintentionally abolished.

As the emancipation of millions of dark workers took place in the West Indies, North and South America, and parts of Africa at this time, it was natural to assume that the uplift of this working class lay along the same paths with that of European and American whites. This was the *first* suggested solution of the Negro problem. Consequently these Negroes received partial enfranchisement, the beginnings of education, and some of the elementary rights of wage earners and property holders, while the independence of Liberia and Hayti was recognized. However, long before they were strong enough to assert the rights thus granted or to gather intelligence enough for proper group leadership, the new colonialism of the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries began to dawn. The new colonial theory transferred the reign of commercial privilege and extraordinary profit from the exploitation of the European working class to the exploitation of backward races under the political domination of Europe. For the purpose of carrying out this idea the European and white American working class was practically invited to share in this new exploitation, and particularly were flattered by popular appeals to their inherent superiority to “Dagoes,” “Chinks,” “Japs,” and “Niggers.”

This tendency was strengthened by the fact that the new colonial expansion centered in Africa. Thus in 1875 something less than one-tenth of Africa was under nominal European control, but the Franco-Prussian War and the exploration of the Congo led to new and fateful

things. Germany desired economic expansion and, being shut out from America by the Monroe Doctrine, turned to Africa. France, humiliated in war, dreamed of an African empire from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. Italy became ambitious for Tripoli and Abyssinia. Great Britain began to take new interest in her African realm, but found herself largely checkmated by the jealousy of all Europe. Portugal sought to make good her ancient claim to the larger part of the whole southern peninsula. It was Leopold of Belgium who started to make the exploration and civilization of Africa an international movement. This project failed, and the Congo Free State became in time simply a Belgian colony. While the project was under discussion, the international scramble for Africa began. As a result the Berlin Conference and subsequent wars and treaties gave Great Britain control of 2,101,411 square miles of African territory, in addition to Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan with 1,600,000 square miles. This includes South Africa, Bechuanaland and Rhodesia, East Africa, Uganda and Zanzibar, Nigeria, and British West Africa. The French hold 4,106,950 square miles, including nearly all North Africa (except Tripoli) west of the Niger valley and Libyan Desert, and touching the Atlantic at four points. To this is added the Island of Madagascar. The Germans have 910,150 square miles, principally in Southeast and Southwest Africa and the Kamerun. The Portuguese retain 787,500 square miles in Southeast and Southwest Africa. The Belgians have 900,000 square miles, while Liberia (43,000 square miles) and Abyssinia (350,000 square miles) are independent. The Italians have about 600,000 square miles and the Spanish less than 100,000 square miles.

This partition of Africa brought revision of the ideas of Negro uplift. Why was it necessary, the European investors argued, to push a continent of black workers along the paths of social uplift by education, trades-unionism, property holding, and the electoral franchise when the workers desired no change, and the rate of European profit would suffer?

There quickly arose then the *second* suggestion for settling the Negro problem. It called for the virtual enslavement of natives in certain industries, as rubber and ivory collecting in the Belgian Congo, cocoa raising in Portuguese Angola, and diamond mining in South Africa. This new slavery or "forced" labor was stoutly defended as a necessary foundation for implanting modern industry in a barbarous land; but its likeness to slavery was too clear and it has been modified, but not wholly abolished.

The *third* attempted solution of the Negro sought the result of the *second* by less direct methods. Negroes in Africa, the West Indies, and America were to be forced to work by land monopoly, taxation, and little or no education. In this way a docile industrial class working for low wages, and not intelligent enough to unite in labor unions, was to be developed. The peonage systems in parts of the United States and the labor systems of many of the African colonies of Great Britain and Germany illustrate this phase of solution. (footnote text: The South African natives, in an appeal to the English Parliament, show in an astonishing way the confiscation of their land by the English. They say that in the Union of South Africa 1,250,000 whites own 264,000,000 acres of land, while the 4,500,000 natives have only 21,000,000 acres. On top of this the Union Parliament has passed a law making even the future purchase of land by Negroes illegal save in restricted areas!) It is also illustrated in many of the West Indian islands where we have a predominant Negro population, and this population freed from slavery and partially enfranchised. Land and capital, however, have for the most part been so managed and monopolized that the black peasantry have been reduced to straits to earn a living

in one of the richest parts of the world. The problem is now going to be intensified when the world's commerce begins to sweep through the Panama Canal.

All these solutions and methods, however, run directly counter to modern philanthropy, and have to be carried on with a certain concealment and half-hypocrisy which is not only distasteful in itself, but always liable to be discovered and exposed by some liberal or religious movement of the masses of men and suddenly overthrown. These solutions are, therefore, gradually merging into a *fourth* solution, which is to-day very popular. This solution says: Negroes differ from whites in their inherent genius and stage of development. Their development must not, therefore, be sought along European lines, but along their own native lines. Consequently the effort is made to-day in British Nigeria, in the French Congo and Sudan, in Uganda and Rhodesia to leave so far as possible the outward structure of native life intact; the king or chief reigns, the popular assemblies meet and act, the native courts adjudicate, and native social and family life and religion prevail. All this, however, is subject to the veto and command of a European magistracy supported by a native army with European officers. The advantage of this method is that on its face it carries no clue to its real working. Indeed it can always point to certain undoubted advantages: the abolition of the slave trade, the suppression of war and feud, the encouragement of peaceful industry. On the other hand, back of practically all these experiments stands the economic motive—the determination to use the organization, the land, and the people, not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of white Europe. For this reason education is seldom encouraged, modern religious ideas are carefully limited, sound political development is sternly frowned upon, and industry is degraded and changed to the demands of European markets. The most ruthless class of white mercantile exploiters is allowed large liberty, if not a free hand, and protected by a concerted attempt to deify white men as such in the eyes of the native and in their own imagination. (footnote text: The traveler Glave writes . . . "Formerly [in the Congo Free State] an ordinary white man was merely called 'bwana' or 'Mzungu'; now the merest insect of a pale face earns the title of 'bwana Mkubwa' [big master].")

White missionary societies are spending perhaps as much as five million dollars a year in Africa and accomplishing much good, but at the same time white merchants are sending at least twenty million dollars' worth of European liquor into Africa each year, and the debauchery of the almost unrestricted rum traffic goes far to neutralize missionary effort.

Under this last mentioned solution of the Negro problems we may put the attempts at the segregation of Negroes and mulattoes in the United States and to some extent in the West Indies. Ostensibly this is "separation" of the races in society, civil rights, etc. In practice it is the subordination of colored people of all grades under white tutelage, and their separation as far as possible from contact with civilization in dwelling place, in education, and in public life.

On the other hand the economic significance of the Negro to-day is tremendous. Black Africa to-day exports annually nearly two hundred million dollars' worth of goods, and its economic development has scarcely begun. The black West Indies export nearly one hundred million dollars' worth of goods; to this must be added the labor value of Negroes in South Africa, Egypt, the West Indies, North, Central, and South America, where the result is blended in the common output of many races. The economic foundation of the Negro problem can easily be seen to be a matter of many hundreds of millions to-day, and ready to rise to the billions tomorrow.

Such figures and facts give some slight idea of the economic meaning of the Negro today as a worker and industrial factor . . .

What do Negroes themselves think of these their problems and the attitude of the world toward them? First and most significant, they are thinking. There is as yet no great single centralizing of thought or unification of opinion, but there are centers which are growing larger and larger and touching edges. The most significant centers of this new thinking are, perhaps naturally, outside Africa and in America: in the United States and in the West Indies; this is followed by South Africa and West Africa and then, more vaguely, by South America, with faint beginnings in East Central Africa, Nigeria, and the Sudan.

The Pan-African movement when it comes will not, however, be merely a narrow racial propaganda. Already the more far-seeing Negroes sense the coming unities: a unity of the working classes everywhere, a unity of the colored races, a new unity of men. The proposed economic solution of the Negro problem in Africa and America has turned the thoughts of Negroes toward a realization of the fact that the modern white laborer of Europe and America has the key to the serfdom of black folk, in his support of militarism and colonial expansion. He is beginning to say to these workingmen that, so long as black laborers are slaves, white laborers cannot be free. Already there are signs in South Africa and the United States of the beginning of understanding between the two classes.

In a conscious sense of unity among colored races there is to-day only a growing interest. There is slowly arising not only a curiously strong brotherhood of Negro blood throughout the world, but the common cause of the darker races against the intolerable assumptions and insults of Europeans has already found expression. Most men in this world are colored. A belief in humanity means a belief in colored men. The future world will, in all reasonable probability, be what colored men make it. In order for this colored world to come into its heritage, must the earth again be drenched in the blood of fighting, snarling human beasts, or will Reason and Good Will prevail? That such may be true, the character of the Negro race is the best and greatest hope; for in its normal condition it is at once the strongest and gentlest of the races of men: "Semper novi quid ex Africa!"

CHAPTER TWO

The Interwar Years

Supporting the Metropoles (1919-36)

11 • An appeal for the equal treatment of Africans and people of African descent (1919)

Joined by other black leaders from the United States, the Caribbean, and Africa, W. E. B. Du Bois attended the peace treaty negotiations held in Versailles in 1919 at the conclusion of World War I. None of the European powers present (including the United States) accepted the arguments of Du Bois and his colleagues that representatives of colonized people should officially participate in the negotiations, nor did they agree to the request that the former colonies of Germany be turned over to an international organization rather than divided up among the other colonial powers. Germany's colonial possessions were apportioned between Britain and France. Du Bois and his colleagues, however, passed a series of resolutions that likely influenced the establishment by the newly formed League of Nations of the Mandate Commission, an international body responsible for overseeing the treatment of the former colonial subjects of Germany. Their presence at the negotiations and their unity in speaking on behalf of oppressed people of color on both sides of the Atlantic demonstrated the potential for the development of a pan-African movement, evident especially in the resolutions that their Pan-African Congress passed in Paris in February 1919.¹

The resolutions of the Congress asked in part:

A. That the Allied and Associated Powers establish a code of law for the international protection of the natives of Africa, similar to the proposed international code for labor.

B. That the League of Nations establish a permanent Bureau charged with the special duty of overseeing the application of these laws to the political, social, and economic welfare of the natives.

C. The Negroes of the world demand that hereafter the natives of Africa and the peoples of African descent be governed according to the following principles:

1. *The land*: the land and its natural resources shall be held in trust for the natives and at all times they shall have effective ownership of as much land as they can profitably develop.
2. *Capital*: the investment of capital and granting of concessions shall be so regulated as to prevent the exploitation of the natives and the exhaustion of the natural wealth of

1. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa: An Inquiry into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History* (New York: International Publishers, 1965), 11-12.