LEADERS of the NEW AFRICA

by LEONARD S. KENWORTHY

THE STORY of the new Africa can be told briefly through the biographies of a dozen or so men, for this small group of leaders is responsible to a remarkable degree for the new and emerging nations of that continent.

So closely are they identified with their nations' histories that Nkrumah called his recent book *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah.* In other parts of the world this would have been considered blatant conceit; in Ghana there was almost no criticism because nearly everyone agrees that the story of Ghana is largely the story of Nkrumah. In a similar way Tunisia is the creation of Habib Bourguiba, while Morocco today mainly means Mohammed V. To a lesser degree the story of the Sudan's independence can be told in capsule form through the lives of Azhuri and Khalil, while that of Libya is focused primarily on King Idris.

In the nations struggling now to attain a similar status a few names stand out; they are the voices of the inarticulate masses. In Kenya it is Tom Mboya, in Tanganyika Julius Nyerere, in Uganda the Kabaka of the Buganda, and in Nigeria Awolowo, Azikiwe, Balewa, and the Sardauna of Sokoto.

During the past four months I have met most of these leaders and talked with people who knew the others intimately. Individually they are varied and colorful; collectively they represent the aspirations and demands of Africa's movements for independence, nationalism, higher standards of living, and a better future for youth.

Bourguiba struck me as the most astute, Nkrumah as the most appealing, Mohammed V as the best balancer of the various elements in a nation, Mboya as the most promising of the younger men, and Balewa as the dark horse whose star is rising most rapidly. Most of these men started their careers as teachers and journalists because in these professions they could be free to criticize their foreign rulers. Thus Nkrumah, Balewa, and Nyerere have been teachers, and Azikiwe and Awolowo journalists. Mboya has been and still is a labor leader; Bourguiba and Awolowo were trained as lawyers. Mohammed V, King Idris, and the Sardauna of Sokoto have been religious as well as political leaders. Khalil has been an army officer most of his life.

Most of the men in power today in the nations which have won their independence are around 50; one needs to remember that they started out as potential leaders in their twenties or early thirties. The leaders of the independence movements in the emerging nations are in their late twenties or thirties; Nyerere is 35 and Mboya is 27.

Among the older men there seem to be two general types as to methods or strategy. One is the foreign-trained person who tends to be more radical, is in a greater hurry to bring about changes, and is a man who has a strong emotional appeal to the masses who have supported him for years. Azikiwe, Bourguiba, and Nkrumah represent this type. Azikiwe and Nkrumah obtained most of their higher education in the United States and Bourguiba in France. The other type has been educated solely or primarily at home, is more cautious in bringing about radical changes, and has not been the leader of any great mass movement. Azhuri, Balewa, Idris, Khalil, and Mohammed V fit best into this category.

Exile or imprisonment has been the lot of most of these men and has helped to make them heroes in their homelands. Bourguiba probably underwent the most strenuous period of exile and imprisonment. King Idris, Mohammed V, and the Kubaka were in exile many years, but this was not a great hardship physically. Nkrumah was imprisoned for only a short time, emerging from prison to lead the new government of Ghana. No leaders of Nigeria have been exiled or imprisoned, and one can only wonder if they would have won more popular support if they had been. Nyerere and Mboya have so far escaped this fate and probably will continue to if the British can prevent it, for they know by now what it means to potential leaders of new nations in terms of popular support.

As one reads accounts of these men in the newspapers, the question naturally arises, "What are they like?" A short sketch of each of the six leaders of the New Africa I have recently interviewed may help the reader to picture them.

Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia is a short, stocky man with a high forehead and thinning grey hair, a square jaw and strong chin. He sits and stands like a ramrod, his blue eyes fixed intensely on the visitor. He exudes charm and personal magnetism. He has a brilliant mind, a fantastic memory, and great oratorical skill. He is a master of the French language and a great admirer of French philosophy and literature. His greatest ability is probably his cleverness in developing strategy, coupled with his uncanny sense of "timing." This and his incredible knowledge of French politics and politicians made it possible for him to win independence for Tunisia and may enable him to achieve his

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next two great goals—Algerian independence and a North African Federation.

In personality, Nkrumah of Ghana is probably the most appealing of the leaders of New Africa. He is a tall, slender, good-looking man who looks much younger than his 48 years. In talking with him I was struck by his high idealism, his loneliness as a man living between the African and American worlds, and his desire to accomplish so much in so short a time. He has already clashed with the chiefs and with the cocoa farmers of the Ashanti territory, but he still commands the admiration and devotion of the masses of Ghana who attribute independence to him. His big dream is a huge dam on the Volta River which would provide water for irrigation, power for an aluminum plant, and electricity for homes and factories in a large part of the country. He is driven by a desire to attack the evils of ignorance, poverty, illiteracy, and disease. He is vitally concerned with the creation of a West African Federation; this is a dream but he has already begun to work to make it a reality.

Mohammed V of Morocco was wearing his white djellaba (robe with a white turban) when I met him in Rabat, and he looked much older than when dressed in Western clothes. Selected by the British to succeed his father as ruler because they thought he would be more pliable than others, Mohammed V has proved in recent years how much they misjudged him. When he was exiled first to Corsica and then to Madagascar, he came into his own as a hero of most Moroccans, a symbol of their fight for freedom. Largely self-educated, he gives the impression of a wise and quiet ruler who can weld the divergent elements of his country together and bring about changes slowly and with less resistance than in other countries. Today he bears the title of King, but to most Moroccans he is still the Sultan, their religious as well as political leader.

Nigeria is now partially free, with independence in the eastern and western provinces and independence tentatively scheduled for the north in 1960. Its political life revolves around these three areas, each of which has its own political leader. In the east, Nmamdi Azikiwe, popularly known as "Zik," rules supreme, with a large and enthusiastic following in other parts of the country, built in part through his chain of newspapers and partly through his ability to speak to the masses. In the west, Obafemi Awolowo has organized the Yoruba tribe into a strong political power and serves as premier. In the north the Sardauna of Sokoto is the dominant person and a force throughout Nigeria.

Each of these three men has concentrated on regional leadership to date. This fact, together with the intense personal rivalry between them, has meant that a compromise candidate had to be found for the new post of Prime Minister of Nigeria. The man selected for that role is Tafawa Balewa, the dark horse of Nigerian politics. He is a northerner who has lived many years in the south and is known there (few northerners are known outside their own region). He is a Moslem and therefore acceptable to the large group of Moslems in Nigeria; yet he is not a religious leader and is acceptable to the non-Moslems. He is a good speaker, a hard worker, and a quiet, effective force.

When I met Balewa in Lagos, I was struck first by his appearance. He is tall, with a gaunt face, a high forehead, and the thick lips characteristic of many Africans. Then I was impressed by his composure and caginess in answering questions. Throughout our conversation he stressed the ideal of unity, accenting the importance of improved transportation and communication, more schools, and more travel between the different regions as means to that end. He talked about tribal, linguistic, and religious differences and asserted with conviction, "We expect to face these realities with courage, very confident that we can build a Nigerian state." It may well be that this unobtrusive northerner, with his good common sense, his political sagacity, his wide reading and travel background, and his quiet charm may play a predominant role in the months ahead in transforming Nigeria from a geographical expression to a political reality.

Tom Mboya is the boy wonder of Kenya. Born on a plantation, of illiterate parents, he attended mission schools and continued his education through correspondence courses until he obtained a scholarship for a year's study in Ruskin College in England. Twenty-eight and single, he has stepped into or been pushed into the vacuum created by the removal of Kenyetta and other Kikuyu leaders since the Mau Mau troubles. He comes from the Luo tribe, the second largest in Kenya, and is secretary of the Kenya Federation of Labor, after having served as a sanitary health inspector and as secretary of the Kenya Local Government Workers' Union.

Mboya has a keen mind and a quiet manner; he is articulate in English and a spell-binder in Swahili. He is a rapid reader, and his office bulges with books on labor, politics, and cooperatives. So far he has not condoned violence or pleaded for an African racist society. But he may be driven to either of these positions if the "Europeans" or whites of Kenya do not move faster in the next few months than they are now moving. When I asked him if he proposed a race policy in reverse, he replied, "That is not necessarily the ultimate result of my policy. We envisage Kenya as a society in which all racial groups, and I do not mean as separate units, shall enjoy equal rights and equal opportunities." Just what he meant by the phrase "not necessarily the ultimate result of my policy" may have been clear to him; it may also

have left an opening for a more radical approach if events of the future warrant or justify it in his mind and in the minds of his restless followers. The political picture in Kenya is not clear now and may not be for some time, but this young man will play a large part in it.

Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika is another young man who has suddenly risen as the leader of the independence movement in that nation of eight million people and is well worth watching. The son of a chief of the Zanaki tribe, he taught school until he left teaching to devote full time to the Tanganyika African National Union, with its 150,000 to 200,000 members. He faces an uphill fight, for Tanganyika has 120 tribes, widespread illiteracy, a woeful lack of economic and social development, and an absence of trained personnel even for local government positions. But Nyerere is confident and eager to attain independence. When I asked him about the timing of independence, he answered: "Five years ago the idea of Tanganyika becoming independent in 20 years was revolutionary. Today the idea of Tanganyika becoming independent in ten years is reactionary." Such words may seem overly optimistic but they appeal to his ardent followers when he stands on the public platform and unleashes all his oratorical power, and one remembers that it was the same with other men, like Bourguiba and Nkrumah, in years past. This small, thin, wiry little man is nobody's fool and he is already a force in Tanganyika.

These are six of the leaders of the New Africa. They have made history in the last few years and will keep on making it in this turbulent continent. Alongside them are others of similar caliber who are well-known in their own lands. Others will emerge in the coming months and years as other parts of this vast continent become more and more restless to join the independent states of the world and to attain more freedom, more economic and social justice, and higher standards of living for themselves and their children. They and their colleagues are the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, the Adamses, and the Hamiltons of the New Africa which is being born.

Gauguin's Freedom

by ALFRED WERNER

AT AN AUCTION in Paris last summer, an oil by Paul Gauguin, *Still Life with Apples,* was sold to a Greek shipping magnate for the not inconsequential sum of 104 million francs, $297,000, with taxes bringing the tab up to $340,000. As was to be expected, consternation raged among the art lovers. One little Gauguin—only 26 by 30 inches—for the price of two fairly large Rembrandts? Had works of art become commodities like stocks and bonds, to rise and fall in price according to "laws" having little to do with the ups and downs of human values? Would such fantastic prices drive collectors to buy the work of young, living artists for sums often less than one-thousandth of the price reached at the Galerie Charpentier auction—or would the mad rush for Post-Impressionist art increase even for mediocre left-overs ennobled by names like Gauguin or Van Gogh?

Paul Gauguin would be the most surprised of all by this news: he might muse, "That little still-life? I can barely remember it. Must have painted it in 1901. I was then sick with influenza most of the time on Tahiti, and was about to leave the place for the Marquesas where I might live more cheaply. One hundred and four million francs! There were days when I did not have even one franc to buy food!"

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Among dealers and collectors alike, one often finds those proverbial cynics who know the price of everything and the value of nothing. Yet a new and deeper appreciation by the public of all the real values offered by what has been termed Post-Impressionism is long overdue. The exclamations called forth by astronomical prices are no substitute for an appreciation of the true aesthetic qualities in Gauguin's now so fashionable work. And the melodramatic retelling of his life-story by the Hansons, a fast-writing team of biographers, in *Noble Savage* (1954) must have had as restrictive an effect upon the expansion of America's aesthetic frontiers as that perennial best-seller about Van Gogh, Irving Stone's *Lust for Life.*

"When will the time come when we need speak of nothing but Art?" So Gauguin ended a letter from Tahiti to his close friend in Paris, Georges Daniel de Monfreid. The communications to his wife and his friends move one to admiration: amid all the repetitive complaints about poverty, sickness, the treachery of dealers, and the hostility of critics, the genuine artist breaks through. The prophet is still worth listening to after fifty-odd years:

"In painting one must search rather for suggestion than for description, as is done in music."

"It is better to paint from memory, for thus your work will be your own: your sensation, your intelligence, and your soul will triumph over the eye of the amateur."

In the informal notes from Tahiti, known as his *Intimate Journals,* Gauguin wrote:

"Do not finish your work too much.