



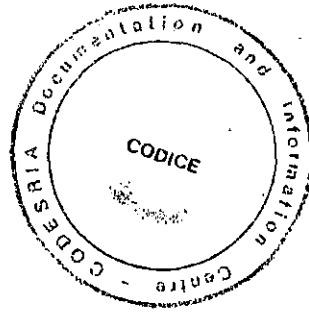
Dissertation By
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Arts of Kenyatta
University.

**KWAME NKRUMAH'S THEORY
AND PRACTICE OF LABOUR AND
THE MANIFESTATION IN THE
KENYAN TRADE UNIONISM TO
1966**

1992

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PETER MWANGI KAGWANJA

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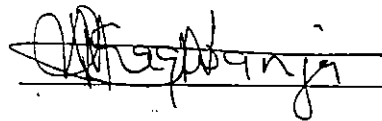
A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master
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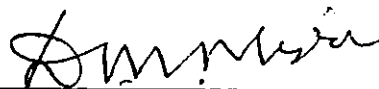
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University



PETER MWANGI KAGWANJA

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor



DR. D. MISRA

DEDICATION

To Njoki and Maina
and
all men and women of
Goodwill.

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CONTENTS

DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	i
CONTENTS.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS	viii
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	2
1.2 Literature Review	4
1.3 Theoretical Framework	10
1.4 Research Premises	20
1.5 Objectives of the Study	21
1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study	22
1.7 Methodology	23
1.8 Limitations of the Study	25
PART ONE	
KWAME NKRUMAH'S CONSOLIDATION OF HIS POSITION IN GHANA AND AFRICAN LABOUR.....	26
CHAPTER 2: NKRUMAH, THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE IN GHANA, 1947-1952	27
2.1 Introduction.....	27
2.2 The Formative Stage	28
2.3 Encounter with Ghanaian Workers.....	30
2.4 Positive Action	35
2.5 The Transition Stage	37
Conclusion.....	43
CHAPTER 3: CENTRALISATION AND AFFILIATION OF GHANA TUC TO NKRUMAH'S CPP 1957-1966.....	45
3.1 Introduction.....	45
3.2 The "New Structure" Proposals	46

3.3	The Industrial Relations Act.....	47
3.4	The 1961 General Strike.....	52
3.5	TUC and Nkrumah's Socialist Policies.....	55
3.6	A Labour Aristocracy?.....	60
	Conclusion.....	63
CHAPTER 4: NKRUMAH AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE PAN-AFRICAN TRADE UNIONISM		64
4.1	Introduction.....	64
4.2	The International Trade Union Organizations and the Penetration of Neo-Colonialism.....	65
	4.2.1 Neo-Colonialism.....	69
4.3	Pan-Africanism and Non-Alignment.....	71
4.4	The Emergence of Pan-African Trade Unionism.....	75
4.5	The AATUF in the Era of Politics of African Unity 1961–1963.....	84
4.6	The AATUF after 1964.....	91
4.7	The Coup.....	100
	Conclusion.....	105
PART TWO		
NKRUMAH AND THE KENYAN LABOUR MOVEMENT.....		105
CHAPTER 5: NKRUMAH AND THE PENETRATION OF REVOLUTIONARY PAN-AFRICANISM IN KENYAN TRADE UNIONISM.....		106
5.1	Introduction.....	106
5.2	Militant Trade Unionism and the Penetration of ICFTU and Western Trade Union Influence in the Kenyan Labour.....	108
5.3	The ICFTU, AFL-CIO and the KFL During the Emergency.....	113
5.4	Nkrumah, Mboya and the Infusion of Pan-African Trade Unionism.....	118
5.5	Impact of the Split in African Labour.....	127
5.6	Labour Conflicts After Kenyatta's Release.....	131
5.7	Further Pan-African Incursions.....	134
5.8	Nkrumah and Kenyatta.....	138
CHAPTER 6: THE NKRUMAH FACTOR IN TRADE UNIONISM AND THE POLITICS OF NEO-COLONIAL TRANSFORMATION IN KENYA		146
6.1	Introduction.....	146
6.2	Formation of the KFPTU.....	147

6.3	The KAWC and the Fall of ICFTU in Kenya	158
6.4	The Move to the Right.....	162
6.5	Bureaucratisation and Government Control Over The Labour Movement.....	164
	CONCLUSION.....	174
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	184
Table I	Wages of Unskilled Workers in Accra 1939–1957	33
Table II	General Elections in Ghana Since 1951.....	54
Figure I	The Ghanaian Masses as the Ultimate Source of Power for the CPP and Ghana TUC	59
Figure II	How the AATUF was Linked to the Ghana TUC Structure .	60
	Maps Showing Regions and Major Towns of Ghana and Kenya	x

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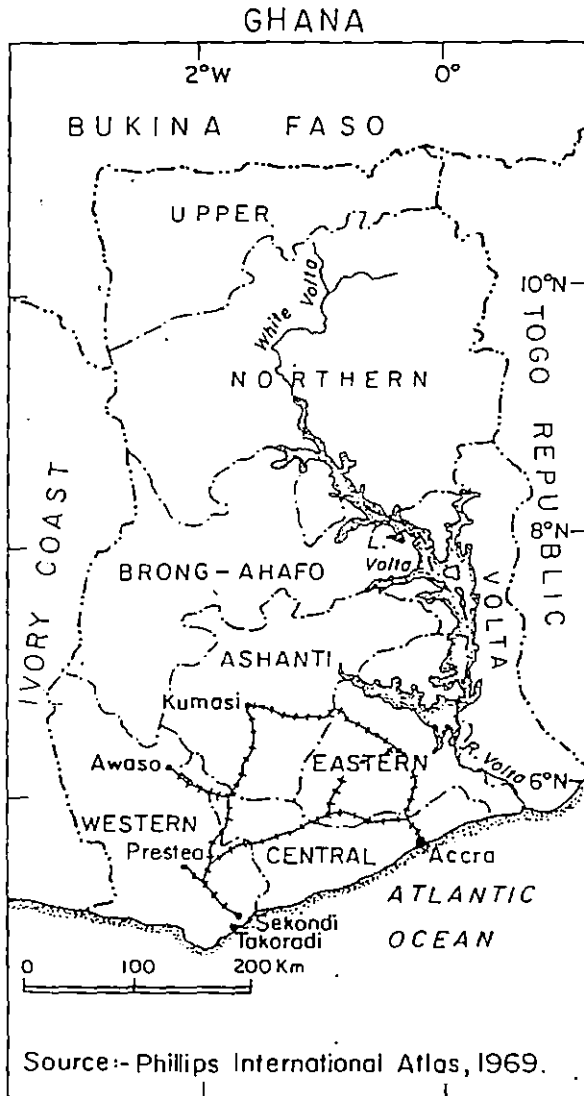
GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAPC	All-African Peoples Conference.
AAPO	All-African Peoples Organization.
AATUF	All-African Trade Union Federation
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organization.
AFRO	African Regional Organization of the I.C.F.T.U.
ATUC	African Trade Union Confederation.
AWF	African Workers Federation (Kenya).
CA	Cotu Archives.
CATC	African Confederation of Believing Workers.
CGTT	Confédération Générale du Travailleurs Tunisiennes, General Confederation of Tunisian Workers.
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (U.S.A.).
COTU	Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya).
CYO	Committee on Youth Organization.
CPP	Convention Peoples Party.
CSL	Confederazione Somalo des Lavora, Somali Confederation of Labour.
EATUC	East African Trades Union Congress.
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (United Nations).
EEC	European Economic Community.
FKE	Federation of Kenyan Employers.
GTUC	Ghanaian Trades Union Congress.
ICATU	International Confederation of Arab Trade Union.
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (S.A.).
IFCTU	International Federation of Christian Trade Unions.

ILO	International Labour Organisation.
ITUCNW	International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers.
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union.
KANU	Kenya African National Union.
KAU	Kenya African Union.
KAWC	Kenyan African Workers Congress.
KFL	Kenya Federation of Labour.
KFPTU	Kenya Federation of Progressive Trade Unions.
KFRTU	Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions.
KNA	Kenya National Archives.
KPU	Kenya Peoples Union.
KTUC	Kenya Trade Union Congress.
KUDHEIHA	Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Health and Allied Workers.
LAB	Labour.
LTUEA	Labour Trade Union of East Africa.
NLC	National Liberation Council.
NPC	Nairobi Peoples Congress.
NLM	National Liberation Movement.
NTUC	Nigeria Trade Union Congress.
NUTA	National Union of Tanzania Workers.
OAS	Organisation of (Latin) American States.
OATUU	Organisation of African Trade Union Unity.
OAU	Organisation of African Unity.
PAFMECA	Pan-African Federation Movement of East and Central Africa.
PDG	Parti Democratique de Guinea, Democratic party of Guinea.
PSI	Public Service International.
PWF	Peace With Freedom.

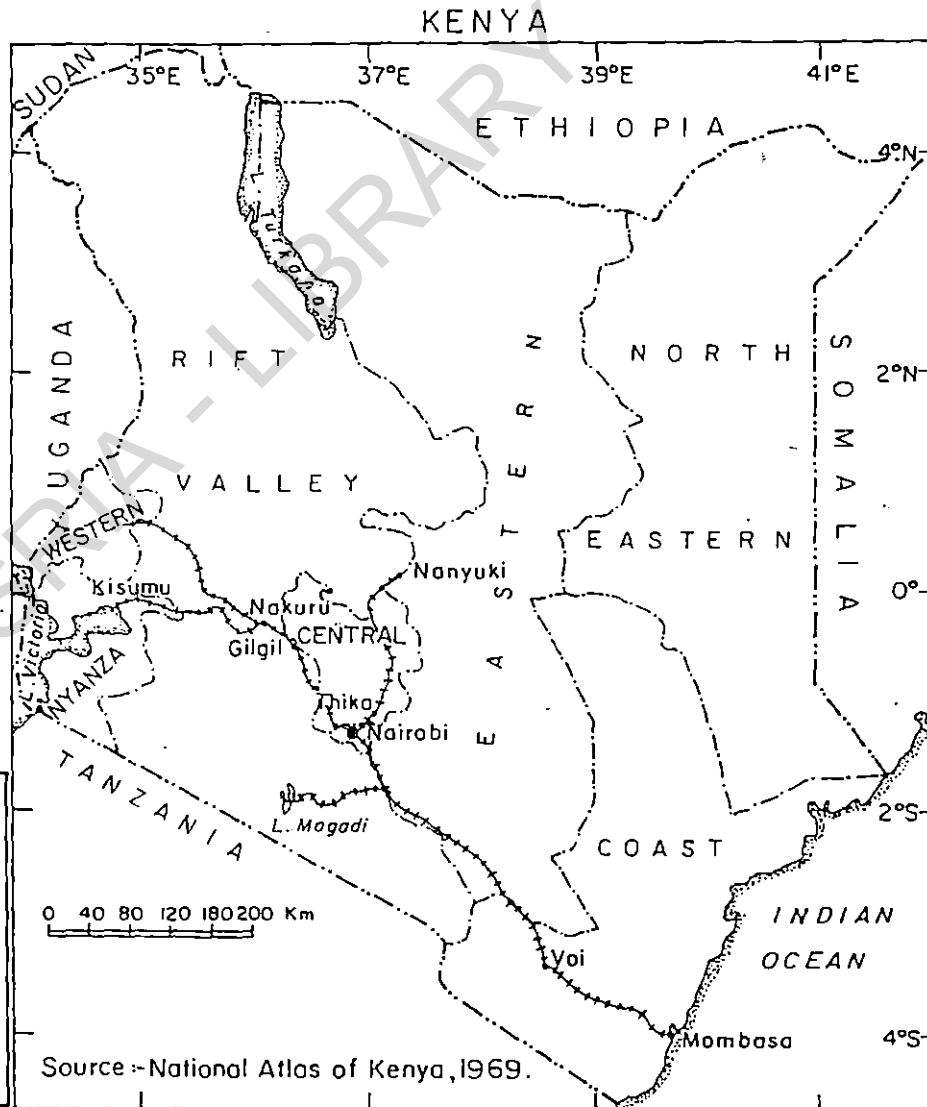
RAU	Railway African Union.
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union.
TUC	Trade Union Congress (U.K.).
UAR	United Arab Republic (Egypt).
UAS	Union of African States (Ghana-Guinea-Mali).
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention (Party).
UGTA	Union Generale des Travailleurs Algerians, General Union of Algerian Workers.
UGTAN	Union Generale des Travailleur d'Afrique Noir, General Union of Workers of Black Africa.
UGTS	Union Generale de Travailleurs Senegalese, General Union of Senegalese Workers.
UGTT	Union Generale des Travailleurs Tunisien, General Union of Tunisian Workers.
ULC	United Labour Congress (Nigeria).
UMT	Union Marocaine du Travail, Moroccan Labour Union.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
UNTM	Union Nationale des Travailleurs Maliens, National Union of Malian Workers.
UP	United Party.
UPC	Union of the Population of Cameroun.
UPTC	Union Pan-Africaine des Travailleurs Coyants, Pan-African Union of Believing Workers.
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions.

MAPS SHOWING REGIONS AND MAJOR TOWNS OF GHANA AND KENYA



- KEY :-
- International Bdy.
 - - - Administrative Bdy.
 - +— Railway Line
 - Towns

INSET MAP: AFRICA



ABSTRACT

The main intent of this study is to trace the influence of Kwame Nkrumah's ideas of labour in Ghanaian, Pan-African and Kenya trade union movements in the 1950s and 1960s. Nationalism and post-independence social-economic reconstruction benefited enormously from the veritable role played by African workers. It is now clear that a sizeable number of leading nationalists were either trade unionists or relied heavily on their respective labour movements to attain their objective. African labour movements continued to serve as crucial instruments of social economic reconstruction and to a large extent, as vehicles of the respective ideological predilections of various countries. This study on Nkrumah, a foremost African nationalist, pan-Africanist and advocate of non-alignment brings out these aspects vividly.

Chapter 1 addresses the methodological and theoretical issues underlying the study, exposes existing epistemological gaps that it attempts to fill and outlines its main contentions and objectives. Chapter 2 and 3 examines Nkrumah's influence upon Ghana's labour movement during the era of nationalist struggle and after independence. Chapter 4 analyzes his contribution to the field of pan-African trade unionism in the light of his views on non-alignment, imperialism and African unity in the Cold War epoch. Chapters 5 and 6 analyse his involvement and impact on the Kenyan labour movement from the late 1950s to about mid 1960s.

The study is an effort to probe with considerable circumspection the ideological underpinnings of Nkrumah's involvement in trade unionism especially his conflict with western labour organisations over the question of affiliation of African trade unions to labour internationals. In Africa, as elsewhere in the Third World, the labour movement was a crucial instrument of imperialist penetration, a system that Nkrumah calls "neo-colonialism".

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It befits an introduction to a study of one aspect of Nkrumah's career to quote from the renowned British parliamentarian Fenner Brockway who, in the mid sixties, observed that: "Long before the end of this century, Dr. Nkrumah's thesis, [that of Africa must unite or perish], will be accepted as the charter of the 'New Africa' (*Pan-Africa*, October 29, 1965). Intellectuals both in Africa and the West are now talking of Nkrumah's rehabilitation as Africa's hero (Birmingham, 1990). In Ghana, his rehabilitation as a national hero has commenced.

Like Simon Bolivar, the liberator of South America, Kwame Nkrumah has become the posthumous hero of a balkanized continent, plagued with famine, starvation, civil wars and increasing domination by external financial and political forces.

Nkrumah had a preference for centralized systems whether in politics or in labour organizations. He is often identified with the one-party system in Africa. This element also permeated through the labour structures in which his influence was felt. The post-Cold War era has been marked by the phenomenal collapse of monolithic systems and a momentous upsurge of liberal and pluralist elements in most African polities. This may appear to cast doubt on the relevance of Nkrumah for this age. It must however, be emphasized that Nkrumah's ideas are as relevant today as they were in the 1950's and 1960's. It is from the achievements, omissions and failures of its patriarchs that Africa must begin the pursuit of solution to its current problems.

This study is an effort to reconstruct Nkrumah's contribution to the field of labour, in Ghana, at the continental level and in Kenya. Politics and labour were two inextricably intertwined aspects of African nationalism. African workers were in the forefront of the struggle for independence in conjunction with the educated

elite. After independence they continued to play pivotal roles in socio-economic development. It is also argued that some trade union bureaucracies in Africa were avenues through which imperialism rear its ugly head in the continent after independence. Thus a focus on the history of labour movement will of necessity reveal important information about nationalist struggles.

Nkrumah as a leading nationalist, Pan-Africanist and advocate of Non-alignment was also concerned with the labour movement. This work has attempted to trace the evolution of his thought in labour, where necessary, and delineated the major influence that shaped them. The thesis is two-pronged; The first part deals with Nkrumah's role in Ghanaian and Pan-African labour movements. Part two focuses on Nkrumah's involvement in Kenyan trade unionism. A study of this nature is likely to pose stylistic problems especially to a historian whose adherence to chronology is paramount. For this reason part one ends with the overthrow of Nkrumah and the consequences of this on the labour edifices he had established both in Ghana and Africa. Part two provides a historical background to Kenyan labour movement, especially its ideological underpinnings. This sets the stage for a thorough-going examination of the nature and penetration of Nkrumah's influence and how it affected the labour terrain. It ends with the emasculation of radicalism by 1966 and draws parallels with what was happening at the continental level. The conclusion sums up the main points and contentions of the thesis and consciously attempts to reconcile the parts by tying the two ends of the work together.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study traces the development of Kwame Nkrumah's ideas of Labour Movement from the earliest days of his intellectual development. These ideas have been analysed within the broader context of the anti-colonial struggle in Ghana and the post-independence efforts towards socio-economic reconstruction.

examination of the evolving relationship between Nkrumah's party (CPP) and organized workers in the Ghana TUC has been carried out. In connection with the evolving relationship between Nkrumah and the workers in the post-independence period, emphasis has been placed on analyzing the emergent structure of the trade union movement. This has enabled us to evaluate its appropriateness as a vehicle of Nkrumah's socio-economic and political policies at home and abroad.

Nkrumah's role in the establishment of pan-African trade union movement and to integrate it in the twin process of founding a movement of non-alignment has also been analyzed. The structure of the AATUF has been analyzed for the purpose of highlighting the following:

- (i) *How the AATUF was linked or built on the structure of the Ghana Trade Union Congress;*
- (ii) *How it worked with other instruments of Nkrumah's African policy such as the Bureau of African Affairs;*
- (iii) *How it was adapted to the implementation of Nkrumah's pan-African objectives*

The case of Kenyan trade unionism has been selected to illustrate the impact of Nkrumah's ideas and activities outside Ghana. Some mitigating factors have also been considered:

- (i) *Jomo Kenyatta, the leader of the Kenyan nationalist movement, was a close friend of Nkrumah's in London, during their early nationalist days. They were both architects of modern pan-Africanism;*
- (ii) *It was in Kenya that Nkrumah's radical stand on pan-African trade unionism met with the strongest resistance. Here Western influence through the ICFTU*

was strongest;

- (iii) After independence, it was in Kenya more than in any other African state, that neo-colonialism made its most determined effort to win the country;*
- (iv) Finally, the widely-discussed ideological clash between Nkrumah and the Kenyan trade union leader, Tom Mboya, took place in the context of the trade union movement.*

An analysis of the Kenyan trade union movement has been done in order to trace the emergence of militant trade unionism and to evaluate the role of Western trade union organization in the emasculation of labour militancy in the movement during the colonial period. Attempts have been made to trace the historical encounter between Nkrumah and the Kenyan trade union leaders (and other nationalist leaders involved in trade unionism). The split over the issue of affiliation to international labour organizations, has been analyzed. Finally, the ramification of these ideological struggles on Kenyan trade unionism has also been highlighted. This has been done within the wider context of the unfolding political terrain in Kenya.

1.2 Literature Review

Major studies have been carried out on Kwame Nkrumah, most of them being macro-studies. Such include biographical studies (Timothy, 1963; Davidson, 1973; Mertin, 1987; Rooney, 1988; Birmingham, 1990), studies on his political career (Omari, 1970; Armah, 1977) and comparative studies on his ideas and those of other African leaders or thinkers (Mazrui, 1972; Agyeman, 1977; Beraki 1979). The major limitation of these studies is that Nkrumah's ideas and practice in labour is treated peripherally. There is therefore, need for a systematic and micro study of this crucial aspect of his career. This study on his ideas and role in the labour movement is a step towards this direction.

Most of these works, focus on a few aspects of Nkrumah's role in the labour movement. Most of these aspects emerge in connection with the wider panoply of

Ghanaian politics or trade unionism. For example Austin (1964), Fitch and Oppenheimer (1966), Gerritsen (1972) or Jeffries (1978) are basically studies on Ghana. For the purpose of this review, these works only serve to illuminate Nkrumah's labour ideas and activities in the context of Ghanaian politics and unionism.

On the other hand, other studies touch on Nkrumah's ideas and role in the context of the wider panorama of pan-African trade union politics. They make no attempt to link Nkrumah's pan-African role with the specific conditions of Ghana. The examples of Legum (1962), Meynaund and Salah-Bey (1968), Beling (1968), Lichtblau (1968) and Nelkin (1968) suffice to illustrate this point.

Finally, other works, primarily centred on the Kenya trade union movement deals some aspects of Nkrumah's involvement in the Kenyan trade unionism, or his association with some leading Kenyan trade union leaders. These works include Davies (1966), Clayton and Savage (1974), Agyeman (1977) and Zeleza (1982;1986). This study has advanced on those peripherally treated aspects by introducing new evidence.

Austin's work (1964), although basically an analysis of the political developments in Ghana during the post-World War II period to 1960, touches on the relationship between Nkrumah and the Ghanaian workers. He points out that Nkrumah's militant approach to nationalism during the late forties found support in the militant section of the workers. These backed his "Positive Action" campaign in 1950. But the campaign ended on a sour note as Nkrumah and the union leaders were arrested. Later Nkrumah was released to become the Head of Government Business during the 1950s. The new moderate stand he adopted alienated him from

his former militant allies in the labour movement. In view of the limited time scope of this study, and its preoccupation with political developments, it fails to offer an indepth analysis of Nkrumah's relationship with the workers and the workers' organizations. Second, it ends pre-maturely at 1960. This study, however, offers a good political framework within which new evidence may be introduced and new questions posed.

Fitch and Oppenheimer (1966) offer a marxist analysis of Ghanaian politics in Nkrumah's era. They employ the labour aristocracy theory to explain the emerging relationship between Nkrumah and the GTUC leadership. They point to the privileged and aristocratic nature of the latter. This labour aristocracy theory forms the context in which the 1961 general strike took place as a reaction to corruption in the political and labour scenes. Empirical studies on the political involvement of the Ghanaian workers (Jeffries, 1975) have effectively refuted the labour aristocracy theory. Perhaps, other factors other than the corruption of the labour leadership and the CPP administration played a central role in the 1961 general strike.

Gerritsen's (1972) reinterpretation of the relationship between the Ghana TUC and the CPP is a forceful study on the underlying factors necessitating the merger of the two. Gerritsen argues that reciprocity rather than use of force on the part of the CPP leadership explains better the evolving relationship between them. We consider this interpretation as crucial in guiding us to the understanding of Nkrumah's role in the evolution of the Ghanaian Trade Union Movement. Gerritsen's attention is on the Ghanaian Unionism. Thus, he does not attempt to show how the emerging union structure articulated with the international edifice in the sphere of trade unionism, especially the AATUF. We consider this work as central to our study especially its style and interpretation or theoretical issues it brings to the fore.

Davidson, the renowned Africanist, in his biographical study of Nkrumah focuses on the latter's earlier ideological prediction. He contends in this study published in 1973, that by 1940s when Nkrumah returned to Ghana to launch his political career, his vision "called for nothing less than a revolution that should lead to socialism, and unite a continent." But the hurdles created by colonialism and its bureaucratism forced him to tone down his militancy and adopt a moderate political stand.

Thus, Nkrumah was unable to sustain the radical demands of the workers following the collapse of the "Positive Action" campaign. The undue emphasis on the "colonial situation" constitutes the Achilles' heel of Davidson's analysis. It inhibits a free analysis of the evolving relationship between Nkrumah and the workers, as well as a fair focus of his achievements and shortcomings as a nationalist, and in relation to the labour movement. Davidson also avoids pointing to the role Nkrumah played in the pan-African labour, a major strand in his political career.

Jeffries study based on the "Railway men of Takoradi" (1978) is a case of an excellent class analysis of the Ghanaian workers and their internal ideological divisions. He uses the railway workers as his yardstick to measure how far Nkrumah's policies deviated from his original militant position. He also used them to show how far he was alienated from the militant workers. He explained the emerging bureaucratism in the trade union movement after 1958 which had given Nkrumah a free sway over the workers. Thus, to Jeffries, the 1961 strike by the railway men is an indication of the latter's rejection of the emerging bureaucratic tendencies in the unions and not a rejection of Nkrumah's rule. Jeffries' concentration on the railway men obscures a thorough-going analysis of the nature of Nkrumah's involvement in trade unionism. There are, however, other factors other than ideological ones that Jeffries overlooked while discussing the strike. These are important in illuminating the relationship between Nkrumah and the workers.

Jeffries' study is, however, of great theoretical inspiration.

Legum's (1962) was among the earliest works that dealt with Nkrumah's involvement in the pan-African trade unionism. He identified the ideological conflict between the moderates and militants over the issue of affiliation as a major cause of the split in the ranks of the African workers. He also attributed this conflict to "struggle" for dominance by the various African capitals. Nkrumah, he argued, was the principle contender for this dominance. He had imposed his ideas on the AATUF. Legum overlooks all the pertinent factors involved. For example, the role of the international trade union organizations in fomenting these ideological conflicts. Also the impact of Cold War between the "East" and the "West", that motivated the African leaders to advocate for non-alignment in labour matters.

Davies (1966) argues that Nkrumah's pan-African trade union activities had a base in the Ghanaian Trade Unionism. The Ghana TUC, he further argues, played a key role in the establishment of AATUF. He further contends that Nkrumah aided splinter unions in other African countries. He gave the example of TUC of Kenya. Davies' treatment of all these cases is peripheral. His study is also limited in terms of time-scope.

Nelkin (1968) observes that in terms of its structure and aims, the AATUF was a reflection of Nkrumah's militant position in pan-African politics. The AATUF was a "dynamic and positive instrument in the realization of a united states of Africa." Nelkin, however, does not delve into the crucial discussion of the structure of the AATUF. Like Davies, Nelkin points out, without elaborating, that AATUF (and thus, Nkrumah) was involved in aiding splinter unions in Kenya, Zambia and Nigeria among other African states. Our focus on Kenya has to a large extent sought to provide a deeper analysis of this aspect.

For Beling (1968) the conflict that Legum discussed at the continental level had its root in a conflict between what he called 'Eurafricanism' or the relationship

between Europe and Africa, and pan-Africanism. Nkrumah equated 'Eurafricanism' with neo-colonialism, and contended that it was inimical to African interests. Thus, the call for non-alignment is a rejection of 'Eurafricanism'. This view is important in finding a balance between Nkrumah's call for non-alignment and his views on the type of relationship that should exist between Europe and Africa, especially at the trade union level.

In his thesis "Pan-Africanism and Pan-African Trade Unionism" (1969), Busch points out that conflicts in the political pan-Africanism had their echo-chambers in the trade union movement. He also briefly touches on the Nkrumah-Mboya differences at the labour level. He further contends that these found their ramifications in the Kenyan trade unionism. He, however, does not marshal evidence to validate this position.

Thompson (1969) studied Ghana's international relations between 1957 and 1966. Like Legum, Thompson uses the theory of power struggle to explain the conflict that existed between Nkrumah and Mboya. He argues that Nkrumah was jealous of Mboya's growing prestige. But a deeper analysis of this conflict is done by Agyeman (1977). Agyeman insists that the Mboya-Nkrumah conflict had strong ideological roots. The issue of affiliation to international labour organizations was also based on these ideological differences. He further mentions the financing of the KTUC by Nkrumah as a way of undermining Mboya's union power base. He, however, is inclined to favour Nkrumah's position without bringing in evidence as well as ignoring evidence that favours Mboya's position. This sensational inclination towards Nkrumah renders his work prejudiced.

Turning to works on Kenya, the study by Clayton and Savage (1974) offers some insights into the cleavages that existed in the Kenyan Trade Unionism. They

traced these cleavages to Western influence through the affiliation of the KFL to ICFTU. Second, they identified Nkrumah's assistance to splinter unions in Kenya as another cause. Third, there was the resurgence of the pre-emergency trade union militancy. There was an alliance between these forces and the pan-African labour movement. This trade union conflict spilt over into the political scene. Clayton's and Savage's study is a macro one which is unable to illuminate the above issues adequately. Nkrumah's impact is peripherally treated. Thus, there is need for deeper analysis, and for more evidence.

Finally, Zeleza (1982) relying on evidence availed by Bentum (1966), concludes that Nkrumah was aiding the various splinter unions in Kenya. He, however, over-dwells on the aspect of financial support that Nkrumah gave to the KTUC and KAWC. There is need to show the role of such other factors as diplomatic and political support, which Nkrumah also provided, in promoting these splinter unions. Zeleza's second study (1986) primarily revolves around the same issues that other authors on pan-African trade unionism have dwelt on.

Apart from filling the gaps that have emerged from our above review of related literature, it is clear that none of the above works can stand by itself in relation to our area of focus. Thus, most of these works' primary role has been to serve as secondary sources for the study.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework which does address itself directly to the questions which this study is concerned with, is to be found in a combination of Karl Marx's analysis of bureaucracy and the labour aristocracy theory. Apparently, the emergence of a class of labour aristocrats especially in the 19th century Europe went

hand in glove with the bureaucratization of the labour movement.

The concept of bureaucracy was a distinctive feature of Marx's writings. One study has summarized this importance of bureaucracy in Marx's writing as follows:

For Marx bureaucracy is central to the understanding of the modern state,[and] it is the political expression of labour. (Avanieri, 1970:49).

Like Max Weber (1970), Marx viewed bureaucracy as a mark of division of functions and hierarchy, but playing a pervasive role in politics. Bureaucracy, Marx further observed, was the greatest obstacle to change. Thus, the degree of bureaucratization of any particular society determined the degree of force required by the workers to bring down the bourgeois order. Marx had seen a chance for a peaceful change by the workers in those bourgeois societies without rigid bureaucracies (Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol.I 1970:33).

Bureaucracy, Marx further argued, is used as an instrument by one class to impose its rule (and values) over another. An all-directing bureaucracy buttressed up by state militarism can be a subtle instrument of control by any class, whatever its interests or background. Marx observes in connection with this:

The governmental power with its standing army, its all directing bureaucracy, its stultifying clergy and its servile tribunal hierarchy had grown so independent of society itself, that a grotesque mediocre adventurer with a hungry band of desperadoes behind him suffice to wield it humbling under its sway even the interests of the ruling class (Quoted in Avanieri, 1970:49).

The gist of Marx's analysis of bureaucracy is that bureaucratic structures do not automatically reflect the prevailing social order; but often distort it by laying claim

to universality. Bureaucracy is the institutional incarnation of political alienation. It is also an expression of the illusion that the state realizes human universality through it. Thus, down the years bureaucracy kept the working class fettered. To a large extent, the emergence of a labour aristocracy was closely associated with the existence of an all-powerful and all-directing bureaucracy. On the other hand, powerful bureaucracies stunted the emergence of strong working class movements. For example, writing in 1868, Marx saw in the bureaucratic traditions of the German working class, a main difficulty which appeared to frustrate the emergence of a revolutionary working class movement in Germany (Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. I 1970:33).

The phenomenon of Labour aristocracy is normally traced from nineteenth century British trade unionism. Marx and Engels had identified the emergence of a section of the English working class whose interests were identifiable with those of the British bourgeoisie. They did not represent the interests of the entire working class but those of the aristocratic minority. Yet through a strong labour bureaucracy, this section was able to control the rank and file of members of the unions.

Marx and Engels attributed the rise of this class to the monopoly position of British capitalism in the nineteenth century which had brought unprecedented riches to the British bourgeoisie. Consequently, the labour aristocracy was also embourgeoisified, privileged and pursued its own sectional interests (Engels, 1892, cited in Kilon, 1976:5). Writing in 1905 on the same labour aristocracy phenomenon among the British workers, Leon Trotsky said that like workers everywhere in the world, the British workers had revolutionary potential. This

potential was, however, blocked by the creation of a trade union bureaucracy which was “drawing closer to, and growing together with the state power”. Trotsky therefore, envisaged the eventual incorporation of trade unionism to the capitalist state as one of the latter’s arms (cited in Hyman, 1971:17).

In his pamphlet, “What is to be Done?” V. I. Lenin (1963) had identified the pervasive influence of the “bourgeoisified English trade unionism” as one of the major pitfalls in the working class revolutionary potential. He argued that the bourgeois ideology is able to spontaneously impose itself upon the working class to a greater degree because it is older and more deeply entrenched in the society than any other ideologies. But most important through its bureaucracy, it was able to emasculate the revolutionary potential of trade unionism and to salvage its institutions (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. I 1963:124).

The emasculation of the workers’ revolutionary potential entailed the establishment of trade union bureaucracy under the control of a group of labour aristocrats. In addition, the ideology of “economism”, that is, the separation of economic struggle from the political struggle in the unions, was encouraged. Lenin asserted that “the economic struggle is inseparable from the political struggle” (*ibid.*: 124). Thus, the emergence of a labour aristocracy is traceable from the presence of a political bureaucracy. Marx’s, Engel’s and Lenin’s arguments lead to the conclusion that although the working class was inherently revolutionary, a combined effort by the political establishment (dominated by the imperialist bourgeoisie) and, related to this, a trade union bureaucracy could emasculate this potential.

It is obvious that such marxist terms as “class” or “class struggle” are treated, in their relation to Africa, with caution. This is because of the extra-ordinary resistance that exists to the idea that there are classes and class struggles in Africa. Some authorities, for example, contend that African working class is not a proletariat in the generic sense of the term because most labourers maintain a foothold in the countryside (Sandbrook, 1975:127). It should however, be pointed out that the conditions in the emergence of a working class either in the 17th century England or in Russia were not very different from those of the Kenyan working class in the twentieth century. As Chege (1988:172) rightly argues, the emergence of a labour force which is totally alienated from land ownership is yet to happen. Whether the African working class is fully or semiproletarianized, the unique realities of its emergence serve to distinguish the historical pattern of proletarianization in Africa. Semi-proletarianization for instance is a function of the pattern of the capitalist penetration of the precapitalist modes of production and social formations on the one hand, and the response of the African workers to the capitalist system on the other.

Africa is an integral part of the international capitalist system. In the words of Munck, this system consists of an international web of exploitation with the centre and periphery forming an integral whole... (1984:106). In the emerging international division of labour the rich industrial countries of the West take the part of the “bourgeois” and the rest of the world (Third World) takes that of the “proletariat”. In this context, the proletariat of the periphery take over the part of their privileged and bourgeoisified brethren in Marx’s context. It is from the workers of the Third World, as Mercuse argues, that the hope of a revolutionary working class has been placed (Mercuse's views are discussed in Woddis, 1972: 279-390; also see Zeleza, 1982:15).

The labour aristocracy debate was dominant in Africa in the sixties and (in the case of Ghana) the seventies.¹ Frantz Fanon (1963) was among the first theorists who identified such a class of labour aristocrats in Africa. Fanon saw the African working class as the “bourgeois fraction of the colonized people” which is pampered by the colonial regime (1963:86). This section of workers, Fanon contended, have interests that are different from those of the rank and file union members. To Fanon, the workers in a colonial setting “represent that fraction of the colonized nation which is necessary and irreplaceable if the colonial machine is to run smoothly” (1963:97). Fanon, however, identified several limitations in this class. As a force, it is numerically weak. Second, its power is only felt in the urban areas where it is concentrated. Third, its leaders make no effort to forge links with the peasantry (*Ibid*: 97) and their approach is elitist. Fanon further contends that owing to their training in the mother country, the trade union leadership concentrates on recruiting the urban workers — the dockers, metallurgists, gas and electricity workers and so on, and ignore the rural workers in the agricultural sector.

To Fanon it is the lumpen-proletariat, “that horde of starving men, uprooted from their tribe and from their clan”, and not the workers, who constitute the most spontaneous and most revolutionary force among the colonial people (*Ibid*: 104).

Amilcar Cabral (1969) carried out a thorough analysis of Fanon’s theory of lumpen-proletariat. He introduced the concept *declassé*. This, he divided into two: first, what Fanon calls lumpen proletariat (the dregs of humanity); and second, the group of young men with both urban and rural links, who live in towns with relatives and who are mostly unemployed. It is the latter group that Cabral saw as having revolutionary potential. Fanon’s lumpen-proletariat, he argued, is not dependable. In the case of his Guinea, they acted as traitors who sold their services to the Portuguese colonialists.

¹See Peter Waterman’s essay (1970) for a thorough review of the different positions that various scholars have taken in this debate.

Fanon's views have been expounded on by Arrighi and Saul (1973). The two see labour aristocracy as a description of a working class "elite" which benefits from neo-colonialism. In this neo-colonial setting, trade unions have become narrowly "economistic". The two contend that:

The proletariat proper of Tropical Africa enjoy incomes three or more times higher than those of unskilled labourers, and together with the elite and sub-elites in bureaucratic employment in civil service and expatriate concerns constitute what we call the labour aristocracy of tropical Africa (*Ibid*, 18-19).

This class owes its rise and consolidation to a pattern of investment in which the international cooperations play a leading role. They have a large stake in the survival of the international capitalist system, however unjust or exploitative it may be (*Ibid*: 141).

Jack Woddis has offered the strongest refutation of the labour aristocracy theory. Using the findings of the various commissions on labour, wages, housing and so on, during the colonial period, he refutes the view that the African worker was "pampered" ... or privileged. The African workers suffered greatly in the hands of imperialism. Many were imprisoned, persecuted and even killed in the course of the struggle against colonialism. They also played a key role in the rise of nationalism. Morgenthau for example, referring to the '66 days' strike in Guinea (Conakry) in 1953 concludes that the workers awakened the consciousness of the whole nationalist movement. She writes:

Previously inactive villages within Guinea became involved ... after the strike the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG) burst to popularity as

an expression of a revolutionary protest in villages (1964: 228-9).

Ronaldo Munck, reacting to Arrighi's and Saul's view contends that African workers tended to be in the vanguard of the class struggle, articulating the most advanced anti-bureaucratic demands. Furthermore, economic differentiation does not automatically lead to political fragmentation of the working class. Giving the example of the Ghanaian workers, he concludes that the organized industrial workers represented the most progressive political force. But he hastens to warn:

This does not ... mean that Third World workers were inherently "revolutionary" in a simple reversed version of the labour aristocracy theory (1984:97).

Stedman Jones pushes the argument further when he contends that the theory of labour aristocracy has often been used as if it provided an explanation. He says:

It would be more accurate to say that it pointed towards a vacant area where an explanation should be (Quoted in Munck, 1984:97).

Jack Woddis, despite his strong views against the labour aristocracy theory, concedes that:

In the final phase of direct colonial rule [late 1950s and early sixties] there were usually a group of trade union officials, mostly associated with the ICFTU, who were certainly 'pampered' and privileged but they were in no sense characteristic of the African working class as a whole (1972: 123).

Woddis' is a reference to an emerging group of trade unionists who were drawing

closer to the labour organizations of the Centre. He also, albeit implicitly, discusses a growing concerted effort by metropolitan labour organizations to establish a class of labour aristocrats in the periphery. This process takes root in the early 1950s. With colonialism rapidly receding, and the multi-national corporations coming in to play a central role in the international capitalist system, these labour leaders became crucial in articulating the needs of the centre in the labour organizations of the periphery. For example, they served as anti-communist leaders in the Cold War. They also organized their unions to ensure a constant flow of a pliable work force for the multinationals. This point is well articulated by Lodge, G. C. when he writes:

Government management and the labour [in the centre] [should] perceive more precisely than they have the importance of organizations of workers in the developing world to the fulfilment of the U.S. [and the West] foreign policy. (1962; Also cited in *Pan-Africa*, May 1, 1964).

The concomitant question is: is the affiliation of the African workers organizations to the bureaucratic labour organs of the centre prejudicial or inimical to the African interests? There are two views against such association between the workers of the periphery and those of the metropole. These are:

- (i) *that the movements or labour bureaucracies of the centre do not serve the cause of the workers in the periphery. Instead these bureaucracies serve and enhance the imperialist interests of the centre. In most cases their trade union leaders serve as ambassadors of the centre in the periphery and;*
- (ii) *that the workers of the centre undermine the interests of those in the periphery. (Usually the example of Arthur Deakin of the British TUC, and President of the WFTU after 1945 is often cited in this connection. Deakin had vetoed a Soviet proposal to set up a fund to assist colonial unions. Later he turned down proposals that colonial workers should enjoy working conditions*

equal to those in the industrialized countries).

In refuting these views, it has been contended that to argue that the workers of the centre are not exploited is in itself a fallacy. This would imply that they have ceased to be a source of surplus-value which is at the core of a bourgeois order (Nabudere, 1979:40). Further, the views that the workers of the centre exploit those of the periphery may not be substantiated. Argues Bettelheim on this point:

Since it is not possible to speak on exploitation of the workers of the poor countries by those of the "rich" ones it must be acknowledged that no fundamental contradiction sets the interests of the former against those of the latter (*Monthly Review*, Vol. 32 No. 2, 1970 cited in Munck, 1984: 114).

Thus, according to this line of argument, the affiliation of the trade unions of the periphery to the labour organizations in the centre is not inimical to the interests of the former.

In spite of this, some African leaders and trade unionists in the late 1950s through the 1960s were convinced that continued affiliation of African union organizations was harmful to the interests of the African people. Factors considered were both political and economic. Having newly emerged from colonialism, the Africans were eager to assert their independence in all spheres. They did not expect to have a controlling voice in organizations (Western) which they had played no role in establishing, leave alone in directing the future trends of their development. These organizations were geared towards serving the objectives of the metropole. Their leaders had also come to be identified with the interests of the management and governments of the metropole. In the light of the Cold War between the "East" and "West" the WFTU and ICFTU, representing the

corresponding ideological blocs, had internalized this global conflict. Thus African leaders, in their quest for neutrality, called for disaffiliation of African trade unions from these organizations.

Finally, there was a growing need to break from the economic control of the industrial West. African labour organizations were considered instrumental in leading this struggle. To this end, radical pan-African leaders spearheaded the establishment of an African labour organization along the same lines as the international bureaucratic labour organizations of the "East" and "West". Similarly, those moderate labour leaders who did not favour the idea of separation from the West formed their own organization consisting of the pro-ICFTU union centres. At this juncture, Africa was plunged into the Cold War. This is the theoretical context within which the role of Nkrumah in the establishment of the pan-African trade union organization, his advocacy of disaffiliation of African labour centres from their international counterparts, and the general quest for autonomy and non-alignment should be viewed.

1.4 Research Premises

This study revolves around five interrelated premises:

- (i) *Nkrumah's incorporation of Ghana's organized workers into the Convention Peoples Party during the colonial period led to the bureaucratization of the labour movement, but hastened the pace of decolonization.*
- (ii) *The Ghana TUC's affiliation to the CPP increased Nkrumah's control over the labour movement which served as an instrument of his socio-economic and Pan-African policies.*

- (iii) *Nkrumah's sponsorship of the establishment of AATUF was geared towards the creation of a neutral African labour international organization through which he could articulate his position on the questions of non-alignment, and affiliation to international labour organizations .*
- (iv) *Nkrumah's penetration of the Kenyan labour movement before independence influenced its ideological orientation and led to its split along ideological lines*
- (v) *Nkrumah's support to the radical section of the Kenyan trade union movement exacerbated ideological differences and elicited neo-colonial forces to bureaucratize the movement.*

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, this study has set out to accomplish the following objectives:

- (a) to investigate the specific historical experiences that shaped Nkrumah's ideas and attitudes towards the labour movement;
- (b) to trace the evolution of the Ghanaian trade union movement insofar as Nkrumah was a factor during the colonial and post-independence periods and to explain the mechanisms he used to lay the foundation for his national and pan-African (international) trade union movement;
- (c) to explore the evolution of pan-African trade union movement after independence in order to show how Nkrumah's ideas became dominant in it.
- (d) to trace the origins of Nkrumah's involvement in the Kenyan trade union movement during the colonial period, and to assess the impact of this involvement on the union movement;
- (e) to analyze the internal politics of Kenyan trade unionism in the post-colonial period and analyse its orientation in order to place Nkrumah's influence in perspective.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

This study is aimed to contribute to the historiography of Ghana under Nkrumah and Kenya in the 1950's through the 1960's, and generally to the history of African intellectual thought. Nkrumah was a leading African nationalist who led his country of Ghana to independence in 1957. This greatly inspired many a nationalist in other parts of Africa who were still struggling to throw out the yoke of colonialism. He was also a leading Pan-africanist who organized a series of unity conferences. He was a major force behind the creation of OAU in 1963. It is however, argued that the formation of OAU marked the defeat of his radical view on African unity (Mazrui and Tidy, 1984). Until he was overthrown, Nkrumah was the leader of the radical Pan-African opinion to the left of the OAU.

The above areas have been the subjects of numerous scholarly investigations. But systematic studies on his contribution to the field of labour both at the national and Pan-African levels have not been undertaken. Such a study is crucial given that Nkrumah's nationalist and Pan-African campaign were inextricably linked to his involvement in the field of labour. This forms the crux of this investigation.

Nkrumah died in 1972, six years after he was overthrown from power. It is necessary therefore, to justify the choice of the year 1966, as the terminal date of this study. When he fell from power Nkrumah was deprived of a base for implementing his ideas on labour. He lost his control over the Ghana TUC and consequently could not support his Pan-African labour edifice, the AATUF. Radicalism, especially in labour, was forced to beat a retreat throughout the continent. Nkrumah's fall deprived the radical thrust of his lead. As the case of Kenya has shown, even in individual African countries, radicalism was on the decline after 1966.

Although there is the debate that Nkrumah did not author most of his books

some of which we have heavily used in this study, his contribution to African political and labour thought is not in doubt. This work is an effort to contribute to the knowledge in the field of labour by way of focusing on Nkrumah's involvement in this crucial area.

1.7 Methodology

This study has relied on both primary and secondary sources. All works by Kwame Nkrumah as listed in the bibliography have been regarded and categorized, for the purpose of this study, as primary sources.²

Such works include books, articles, speeches, letters and so on. Works by his labour juniors such as John Tettegah also constitute a primary source. We have also found the work of B.A. Bentum as being very resourceful. Letters and documents that are reprinted in the appendix, from the AATUF, GTUC or Bureau of African Affairs have been used.

Works by Kenyan trade unionists such as Tom Mboya, Clement Lubembe, Makhan Singh and Bildad Kaggia have constituted valuable primary sources. This have been listed separately in the bibliography.

Library research was carried out in Moi Library (Kenyatta University), Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library (University of Nairobi), Macmillan Memorial Library, Kenya National Library, and such specialized research centres as CRELU (attached to the French Cultural Centre) in Nairobi. Journals, books, newspapers and

² My position here is that Nkrumah, for all practical purposes authored all the works attributed to him. It is often contended that Nkrumah did not write most of the works under his name. His personal secretary (Erica Powell), for example is said to have authored Nkrumah's autobiography; his long time friend, Peter Abrahams, is equally linked to the authorship of Nkrumah's powerful book *Conscienceism*. This is not peculiar to Nkrumah. The same is said of Lenin, Nyerere, Kenyatta among others. Joan Wickens, Nyerere's personal secretary is said to have authored the latter's works. Doubts are also cast as to whether Kenyatta really wrote his well known book, *Facing Mount Kenya*. The lynch-pin of this contention is that these leaders are busy in offices and public duties and have no time to write. Their intellectual competence and ability to write is never put to question. Nkrumah for example wrote his book *Towards Colonial Freedom* while in America, and many more books while in exile in Guinea after 1966. There is no evidence to prove that he did not write the rest of his works.

periodicals were extensively used. In the case of Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library, Government publications where available were used. Deposits such as those of the renowned Kenyan trade unionist of Asian descent, Mr. Makhan Singh have also been widely used.

Archival research was carried out principally in the Kenya National Archives and the COTU Archives. In the Kenya National Archives, documents from the Labour Department and the KFL deposits, among others, were used. The wealthy Murumbi collections in the KNA provided a rich and valuable source of writings and speeches by Nkrumah and his labour lieutenants. There are also books and other publications on Dr. Nkrumah and his government.

Dennis Akumu, the former COTU Secretary General and who spent over 12 years as Secretary General of OATUU based in Ghana, was kind to share with this researcher his wealth of experience and knowledge of Ghanaian Trade Unionism, his early personal relationship with Nkrumah and wealth of collections on Ghanaian trade unionism in his private archives. In addition, he granted interview to me on several occasions which went a long way to augment data collected from other sources. Similar kindness was extended to us by Vicky Wachira, Akumu's old associate in KFPTU (KAWC). Wachira gave me rare and valuable letters and others documents relating to the KTUC, KFPTU and KAWC. He also granted us interview on a number of occasions which shed light on these documents, and gave the context in which they came in relation to the tumultuous unionism of the early years of independence.

Other interviews were carried out with such veteran trade unionists as Clement Lubembe, Aggrey Minya, Mainah Macharia, Babu Muhia Kamau, all of whom played key roles in shaping the future of Kenyan trade unionism. Their

information was vital in the process of testing the authenticity of materials gained from the field it also augmented such data collected from newspapers, periodicals and books.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This researcher met with some difficulties in the process of data collection. Owing to the shortage of funds, it was not possible to visit Ghana where vital information, resource materials and so on would have been acquired from the various archives, libraries and personal interviews. Correspondence with Ghanaian trade unionists who played key roles in Nkrumah's administration also proved difficult. Some of them, this researcher was informed, were retired, and following the fall of Nkrumah, others had sunk into oblivion or disappeared from the limelight.

Some materials from the Kenya National Archives was not accessible owing to the 30-year rule. Interviews and other sources were however, carried out in an attempt to correct this shortcoming.

Towards the end of 1990 and early 1991 Mr. O. O. Mak'Anyengo and Mr. Joseph Murumbi passed away respectively. The would-have-been interviewees had inspired the researcher to pursue the study.

This study coincided with the national trade union elections. Some trade unionists earmarked for interview were never available as they were busy with elections. Archival, library and field research was done with these shortcomings in mind.

PART ONE:

**KWAME NKRUMAH'S CONSOLIDATION OF HIS POSITION IN
GHANA AND AFRICA LABOUR**

CODESRIA - LIBRARY

CHAPTER TWO
NKRUMAH, THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE ANTI-COLONIAL
STRUGGLE IN GHANA, 1947-1957.

2.1 Introduction

The history of Ghanaian labour movement in the 1950's through the 1960s may be discussed at three interpenetrated levels. First, its role in the nationalist struggle; second, its participation in the socio-economic and political development of Ghana after independence and; third its involvement in the creation of a pan-African labour movement. The latter is the subject of chapter three. Both in its structure and ideological orientation, the Ghanaian labour movement carried strong imprints of Kwame Nkrumah's ideas during this period. Discussants of the movement's evolution have often focused their attention on the type of relationship that existed between Nkrumah's party, the Convention Peoples Party and the Trade Union Congress. There are two salient positions in the discourse. On the one extreme is the view that the CPP-TUC relationship was a reflection of Nkrumah's desire to gain control of organised labour (Tony Killick, 1978). The second view posits that this relationship was historical and was based on reciprocal interests of both the CPP elite and the TUC sub-elite. The former position has been applied almost exclusively to the interpretation of the CPP-TUC relationship after Ghana's independence. It has as its lynch-pin the 1958 Industrial Relations Act, and subsequent amendments thereof that brought the Ghana TUC under the direct control of the CPP, at least in the legal sense. The latter position was an attempt at a reinterpretation of this relationship by emphasizing the labour's initiative in forging the TUC-CPP link, a process that commenced during the colonial period. The notion of 'reciprocity' advanced by this line of analysis is a clear reaction to the view that Nkrumah's control of the labour movement deprived the latter of its freedom (Gerritsen, 1972)

This chapter analyzes the specific historical circumstances that shaped Nkrumah's (and the CPP's) relationship with the labour movement. Nkrumah's ideas and involvement in labour are traced from the earliest stage of his ideological ascendancy. Both Nkrumah (and the CPP elite) and the TUC leadership had their specific interests which could be served well in the context

of a CPP-TUC alliance, and which were shaped by historical and circumstantial conditions. But the interests of the former tended to eclipse those of the latter owing to Nkrumah's dominating position in both the nationalist movement and post-independence politics. The central position occupied by the TUC in the pantheon of secondary organisations that formed the CPP however, was a reflection of the growing primacy of labour in Nkrumah's political practice, if not theory.

2.2. The Formative Stage

Kwame Nkrumah³ was born in the rural village of Nkroful in western Ghana around september 1909. He acquired his early education in Half-Assini. It was while in the relatively cosmopolitan Achimota Teacher Training College in Accra that Nkrumah initially came into contact with prominent personalities whose ideas and activities shaped his political thought in general, and perception of labour in particular. From the lectures of the renowned West African Scholar, Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey, Nkrumah was introduced to the concept of black identity that was germane to the development of his Pan-African thought. Nkrumah also read intellectually stimulating articles that frequently appeared in the African Morning Post, a paper that was co-edited by Nnamdi Azikiwe, the scholar-cum-politician and later Nigeria's first president, and Wallace Johnson, the famous Sierra Leonean labour organiser (Nkrumah, 1959). Johnson, who established a series of labour organizations in West Africa was probably the first influence on Nkrumah's labour ideas.⁴

According to Scott Thomson (1969) by the time Nkrumah left Ghana for America for further studies in 1935, he was the most radical among his peers. "Although he had these ideas before arriving here", said Professor K.A.B. Jones-Quartey, "his experience in

³ His real name was Francis Nwia Kofie Nkrumah

⁴ Johnson had established a militant Youth League in Ghana that pursued radical anti-imperialist policies in 1936. Before he was banished by the colonial authorities, the league had a total membership of over 7,000. Such radical trade unionists like Pobee Biney were local organisers of the League. Nkrumah does not mention any connection with the league but his close friendship with Johnson has its origins in this activities. After the Second World War they worked together in the West African National Secretariat. On his way home in 1947, Nkrumah called at Freetown to meet his old mentor who arranged for him to address students and people in the town and at Fourah Bay, the famous university of Sierra Leon.

struggle]" (ibid). Such experiences were racism and deprivation that weighed heavily on the Black people in America during this period.

It was while he was in America that Nkrumah read the works of Hannibal, Cromwell, Napoleon, Mazzini and Mahatma Gandhi. The latter in particular bequeathed him the idea of non-violent approach to political liberation. He also came into contact with the pan-African ideas of Marcus Garvey, written in the latter's book *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* published in 1923 (Nkrumah, 1959:37). Nkrumah also came into acquaintance with the works of Hegel, Karl Marx, Engels and V.I. Lenin. "Karl Marx and Lenin particularly", he wrote later, "impressed me as I felt sure that their philosophy was capable of solving these problems [of colonialism and imperialism]" (1959:39). He took up Lenin's thesis that economic exploitation was the motive force behind capitalist imperialism in the colonial territories. But as it shall be shown later in the chapter, Nkrumah did not adopt at this early stage, the marxist class analysis of a dependent territory that placed the working class movement at the forefront of a liberation struggle until in the later stages of his ideological development⁵. Thus the marxist-Leninist notion of a vanguard proletariat was subsumed under the idea of a mass movement composed of all colonial peoples under a powerfully organized nationalist party.

Nkrumah's earliest participation in a workers' organization was in America when he joined the National Maritime Union, an organization affiliated to the then left-wing Congress of Industrial Organization (ICO). He was then working as a waiter in the Shawnee, a ship owned by the Clyde Millory line and which was plying between New York and Vera Cruz in Mexico (Nkrumah, 1962b). In his two and a half years' stay in London (1945-47) Nkrumah was intensely involved in labour side by side with his political activities.

He visited Paris in 1945 when European trade unions were meeting for the first time after the World War II to deliberate on the formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Nkrumah had gone there to discuss the possibilities of forming a Union of West African States with representatives of French West Africa. Nkrumah also played a crucial role in assisting African and Coloured workers who were in great numbers in London after the War, to secure jobs and in the repatriation of others. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the

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In the latter stages of his ideological ascendancy, especially after the coup in 1966, Nkrumah embraced the dialectic of class struggle. He revised his previous position and even wrote to expound on this theme (1970b).

jobs and in the repatriation of others. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Coloured Workers Organization in London. As a result, these workers bitterly protested against his decision to go back to Ghana towards the end of 1947.

The greatest legacy that Nkrumah got from the Pan-African Congress was the need to forge workers unity with other social classes in a common front against domination. With George Padmore, the famous Trinidadian Barister, he co-organized the Fifth Pan-African Conference in Manchester in October 1945, whose mass nature he later described as follows:

The Fifth Pan-African Congress was attended by workers, the trade unions, farmers, co-operative societies and by African and other coloured students. (1959:44)

Henceforth, Nkrumah came to place the role of the working class in a liberation movement within the context of a mass party composed of numerous secondary organizations. "Any worthwhile movement for national liberation must root itself and secure its basis and strength in the labour movement, the farmers [workers and peasants] and the youth". (1962a:41-42). This is the message Nkrumah brought back to Ghana.

2.3 Encounter with Ghanaian Workers

Nkrumah returned to Ghana in November 1947. He immediately took up an appointment as Secretary General of United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), a political organization formed mainly by lawyers, doctors and indirect rule chiefs. The main cause of the breach between him and the UGCC sponsors was not essentially the latter's petty-bourgeois essence, for Nkrumah as a Western educated elite who had spend over a decade in American and European capitals equally qualify for a petty bourgeois. Nor was it sparked off by what Nkrumah himself described as incompatibility of his "revolutionary background and ideas and the conservative ideas of the Ghanaian petty bourgeoisie" (1959:51). It was on the contrary based on his strong faith in mass approach to nationalism.

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2.3 Encounter with Ghanaian Workers

Nkrumah returned to Ghana in November 1947. He immediately took up an appointment as Secretary General of United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), a political organization formed mainly by lawyers, doctors and indirect rule chiefs. The main cause of the breach between him and the UGCC sponsors was not essentially the latter's petty-bourgeois essence, for Nkrumah as a Western educated elite who had spent over a decade in American and European capitals equally qualify for a petty bourgeois. Nor was it sparked off by what Nkrumah himself described as incompatibility of his "revolutionary background and ideas and the conservative ideas of the Ghanaian petty bourgeoisie" (1959:51). It was on the contrary based on his strong faith in mass approach to nationalism.

The UGCC elites were well aware of the volatile nature of Ghanaian politics in the late 1940s and early 1950s. They were thus hesitant to plunge into mass mobilization. Against the backdrop of this, Nkrumah launched a "Plan of Action" in January 1948 seeking to link with the UGCC all existing organisations of workers, co-operative societies, farmers, women and youth in line with his conception of a mass nationalist movement. Soon the UGCC got into trouble with the colonial authorities. Following a month-long boycott of European shops over high prices, which was led by a chief named Nii Kwabena Bonne, the Ex-servicemen's Union of Gold Coast carried a peaceful demonstration to the governor's residence at Christianborg. In the ensuing shooting by the colonial police two servicemen were killed and five wounded. Violence broke out in Ghana's major cities. Nkrumah, J.B. Danquah, Eric Akufo and other UGCC leaders were arrested in connection with the riots. When the Watson Commission published its report on this saga in June, 1948, it placed the blame squarely on Nkrumah: "UGCC did not get down to business until the arrival of Mr. Nkrumah on 16th December 1947." (Editor of Pan of Books, 1977:10). Nkrumah's relationship with the UGCC organisers was damaged beyond repair.

While he served under the UGCC, Nkrumah did not strike the radical section of Ghana's organised workers as a leader of the mould that suited their type of nationalism. They were hesitant to join the UGCC. The difference between these workers and the UGCC was basically ideological. As Lenin observed:

The struggle of the working class [should] not only fight for better terms for the sale of labour - power, but for the abolition of the social system that compels the propertyless to sell themselves to the rich [such a struggle] ... represent the working class not in its relation to a given group of employers alone, but in its relation to all classes of modern society and to the state as an organized political force (Lenin, 1963:133).

Ghanaian workers had opposed colonialism right from the time the system was imposed in Ghana. In 1896 the Cape Coast Canoemen had staged the earliest recorded strike struggle in Ghana. In the same year the first commissioner for the Northern Territories was deploring the formation of "a trade union of a most pernicious kind among carriers from the Coast" (Kimble,

1963:40). By the end of the Second World War these workers had come to perceive their liberation struggle as being directed against both the British colonialists and the effete or alienated Africa elite, whose interests were almost identical with those of the colonizers (Jeffries, 1978:46). This view is brought out by the evidence of J.S. Annan, a member of both the Railway Union and the Trade Union Congress Executive Council. On his return from the WFTU's conference in Paris in 1945, Annan reminded his fellow trade unionists that:

Our struggle is not only against foreign capitalism and merciless exploitation but it is also against unbridled capitalism of our own people, the Africans : we do not intend to remove foreign capitalism that exists to make excessive profit at the expense of African capitalism in black skin: Our fight is directed against capitalism of any description that refuses to give fair and adequate remuneration to our labour. Our slogan must be "Workers of the Gold Coast unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains"
(ibid : 46).

This type of trade union struggle was inextricably meshed with political struggle. As one traveller in Ghana in the early 1950s observed:

Politics was the one topic about which they were most vocal. The drive towards self-government was more agent to them than wage rates. Most of their meetings were taken up with questions of nationalism and political strategy. The standards of living could not be thought of as being separate from their colonial status, and nobody could ever fool them on that fundamental point (Wright, 1954:328).

Militancy among Ghanaian workers was to a large extent based on genuine economic deprivation, which in the late 1940s and early 1950s manifested itself in the form of mass unemployment, low wages and poor working conditions for the employed. P.T. Baur in a personal testimony of what he saw in Ghana during this period has recorded the following account of the unemployment situation:

Notices of "No vacancies" are ubiquitous. A constant stream of applications for employment reaches the mercantile firms and this increases several times over when it becomes known that a definite vacancy has occurred or that an extension of activities can be expected. The inclination to trade even when only a few pence a day can be earned ... all these point in the same direction and suggest a widespread lack of opportunities for unskilled or poorly skilled peoples seeking employment at current wages. (Quoted in Fitch and Oppenheimer, 1966:97-98).

Richard Wright cited above has further captured the poor working conditions of the workers at the Coast who were involved in unloading European freighters as follows:

Coming towards me was an army of men naked [but] for ragged strips of cloth about their hips, dripping wet, their black skins glistening in the pitiless sun, their heads holding pieces of freight-part of machines, wooden crates, sacks of cement - some of which were so heavy that as many as four men

had to put their heads under them to carry them forward...

The wet and glistening black robots would beach their canoes filled with merchandise and without pausing, heave out the freight and hoist it upon their heads: then at breakneck speed rush out of the sea, tamping through soft, wet sand toward a warehouse. They ran in single file, one behind the other, barely glancing at me as they pushed forward their naked feet leaving prints in the soft sand which the next sea wave would wash away, were anchored in the European freighters and between the shore and those ships were scores of black dots canoes filled with rowing men - bobbing and dancing on the heaving water (Wright, 1954:120-121).

Table I below shows that from 1941 real wage had declined drastically reaching its lowest ebb in 1951. The cost of living had also shot up with its peak in the same year,

Table I: Wages of Unskilled Workers in Accra 1939-1957

May 1939 =100

Date	Dairy Wage Rate	Money Wage Index	Cost of Living Index	Real-wage Index
May 1939	1/10	100	100	100
Dec 1941	1/10	122	151	81
Nov 1943	1/10	122	168	73
Nov 1945	2/1	122	186	66
Nov 1946	2/9	139	198	70
Dec 1947	2/9	183	212	86
Dec 1948	3/2	183	227	81
Sep 1949	3/3	211	243	87
Dec 1950	3/3	217	285	76
Dec 1951	4/6	217	333	65
Dec 1952	4/6	300	328	92
Dec 1953	4/6	300	324	93
Dec 1954	4/6	300	324	93
Dec 1955	4/6	300	344	87
April 1956	5/2	344	351	98
Dec 1957	5/2	344	351	98

Source: Adopted from Fitch and Oppenheimer 1966:97.

Thus Ghanaian workers had radical chains to break, and were ready to back any militant nationalist movement. The UGCC's moderate approach to political liberation estranged it from the radical workers and as long as Nkrumah retained his position in its leadership, his relations with them was to remain luke-warm.

Although the majority of this militant section of the workers supported non-violent approach to national liberation, by 1949 there had emerged among them a small group that espoused violence. This group had organised itself into the "Ghana Calling Association." Among the members of the Association were ex-servicemen, some unemployed workers and some officials of Gold Coast TUC. Pobee Biney, for instance, was a member. This group however, did not exceeded thirty members. By the time it was disbanded by the Sekondi police in October 1949, it was seeking to obtain explosives to initiate a campaign of property destruction along similar lines with the contemporary Mau Mau Movement in Kenya. The impact of this violent slant in the labour movement was, however, negligible. (Jeffies, 1978:59-60)

There was on the other extreme a section of Ghanaian workers with no radical chains to break. These comprised of clerical staff who were relatively well-to-do and well-placed in the colonial hierarchy. After the Harragin Commission of 1946 this cadre was awarded a major salary increase which enabled it to overcome the inflationary perils of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Following the 1948 arrest of the UGCC leaders radicals in the Gold Coast TUC had embarked on a campaign aimed at seeking release of the leaders, lifting the ban on newspapers and circulation of pamphlets throughout Gold Coast. Sir Robert Scott, the Colonial Secretary, and the Ghana Government, in response to this threat decided to split and weaken the Gold Coast TUC. After a meeting in the Governor's residence between the TUC executive and the Government the movement was effectively split between the radicals and the conservatives, the former led by Frank Woode and the latter by Tachie-Menson (Gerritsen, 1972:232). The conservatives were opposed to political unionism and espoused economic type of unionism. They advocated slow reform in the colonial bureaucracy and gradual Africanisation of the civil service. They looked to the Labour

Department for education and other forms of assistance. To a large extent, this section of Ghanaian workers fits into Fanon's theory of 'bourgeoisified' colonial workers who formed a stratum of privileged 'labour aristocracy'. This section was allied to the colonial powers, but was numerically weak compared to the radicals.

This ideological polarization of the Ghanaian labour movement accounts for the inherent ambivalent attitude towards Nkrumah's nationalist campaign from the time he launched his own party- the Convention People Party (CPP).

2.4 Positive Action

Nkrumah broke with the UGCC in June 1949 and launched his Convention People Party (CPP) before a crowd of 60,000. The charismatic Nkrumah, determined to bring the workers to his party, came to speak to the railway workers, the thrust of the radicals, in the streets of Sekondi. His militant approach to nationalism based on the concrete political demand for 'self-government now', greatly impressed the radical section of the workers. "We always felt", said Kofi Imbeah, a railway artisan and union official, admiringly, "he [Nkrumah] was simply revealing our own thoughts and needs to us. It was as though he was able to penetrate our consciousness and out of it the feeling of solidarity" (Jeffries, 1978:53). Nkrumah was made the patron of the Trade Union Congress, by then dominated by the militants. This change in attitude by the workers towards Nkrumah can be attributed to three-fold qualities in his approach to political mobilization. First, he demonstrated great courage in acting out boldly the worker's sense of grievance. Second, he carried out an unyielding challenge to the colonial authorities. Third, he demonstrated great charismatic qualities while articulating these grievances.

It is indeed the radical section of the workers that formed the thrust of support for Nkrumah's "Positive Action" campaign in 1950. "Positive Action" as an approach to political mobilization meant two things: First, it entailed the establishment of a strong party with mass following to co-ordinate the struggle. Second, it called for an intensive political education of

the masses. 'Non-violence' as a means of struggle, as pointed out above, was a Gandhian legacy to Nkrumah. He further incorporated trade union activity; strikes, boycotts, as a crucial and most lethal 'moral weapon' in his arsenal. Unsurprisingly, in the light of the CPP's mass composition, the TUC was the single most influential secondary organization in its pantheon. As Dennis Austin observes:

It is difficult to draw clear distinction between the TUC and CPP: H.P. Nyemitei, for example, was President of the Meteorological Workers' Union and Assistant General Secretary of the CPP; Anthony Woode, Pobee Biney and Turkson-Ocran were leading figures in both the TUC and Sekondi branch with the CPP (1964).

Apart from the Committee on Youth Organization (CYO) and the market women, the "Veranda Boys" (also popularly known as Standard VII Boys who were said to sleep on the verandas of their masters or relatives, unable to afford anything) formed the next most important link between the CPP and its mass support. This stratum is reminiscent of Frantz Fanon's and Amilcar Cabral's 'revolutionary' lumpen-proletariat. Nkrumah greatly depended on this cadre although there is no indication that he perceived it as a vanguard of the CPP.

The central place occupied by organized workers in Nkrumah's political strategy is borne out by the fact that it was the TUC section of the CPP that sparked off the strike that culminated in "Positive Action". The Meteorological Workers' Union, led by H.P. Nyemitei spearheaded a campaign demanding a substantial rise in salaries and improved conditions of service. Negotiations with the government failed. 80 workers were dismissed. Mediation by the TUC also failed. The latter called a general strike in January 6, 1950. Nkrumah brought the general strike to its peak on January 8, 1950 when he invoked "Positive Action". "I declared to the people," Nkrumah wrote later:

That apart from the hospital workers, those employed on the water conservancy and other public utilities, and the police, a general strike was called. (1959:117)

The government's response was as swift as it was brutal. A curfew was declared in all

major towns between 11th and 17th January, 1950 . The whole of the TUC leadership was arrested. Nkrumah was arrested on 21st January from the Labachi suburbs of Accra, and sentenced to three years imprisonment. The strike collapsed two weeks after it started.

The strike virtually destroyed the TUC and its radical constituents especially the Railway and Dock-Workers Unions. In its aftermath, it brought to the centre stage the conservative section of the labour movement who seized control of the Gold Coast TUC. Throughout the strike the moderate workers maintained that “it would be undemocratic to stage strike action in support of Nkrumah’s militant nationalist campaign” (Gerritsen, 1972:232).

The Gold Coast TUC was forced to reorganize under the leadership of the conservatives led by Larbi Odam, A. Moffat and Tachie-Mensah, who replace the radicals. The Gold Coast TUC immediately affiliated to the ICFTU in a gesture of acquiescent approval of the policies of the international capitalist order. It also adopted a pattern of industrial relations based on the British industrial unionism and pursued a policy of ‘class collaboration’ between employers, who were predominantly British, and their employees. The labour department come to play the crucial role of advisor and arbiter in any industrial dispute.

2.5 The Transition Stage

By the time Nkrumah came from prison in 1951 the Ghanaian labour terrain was seething with major factional and ideological tussles. The labour militants were released by the end of 1951. They immediately started challenging the colonial state and the conservative leadership of the Gold Coast TUC. Sekondi was the hearth of this rekindled labour militancy. Here, E.C. Turkson-Ocran and I.K. Kumah organised the “Dismissed Workers Assembly” as a forum for campaigning for the reinstatement of those workers dismissed following the “positive Action”. In August 1951, they formed a new labour centre, the Ghana Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) to challenge the Gold Coast TUC, with Kumah as President and Turkson-Ocran as Secretary-General. This was later renamed Ghana Trade Union Congress in November 1951. The Ghana TUC pressed for radical redistribution in the existing wage structure and for the disaffiliation of the Gold Coast TUC from the ICFTU (Jeffries, 1978).

In return for his co-operation with the Government in implementing the Coussey Committee Report, Nkrumah was allowed to participate in the 1951 elections. His CPP won a landslide victory. Nkrumah himself captured a seat in Accra. He soon became the "Head of Government Business" in a limited African government. Why Nkrumah suddenly decided to collaborate with the colonial government is difficult to explain. Of crucial importance to us are the implications of his new moderate and constitutional approach to nationalism on earlier alliances between his CPP and the workers.

From the contents of a letter by Sir Charles Arden-Clark, Governor of Gold Coast, addressed to A.B. Cohen, Head of the Colonial Office, African Division, dated 5 March, 1951, it becomes clear that the British were deeply concerned with the radicals in both the CPP and the labour movement who were likely to exercise negative influence on Nkrumah.

In relation to this Sir Arden-Clark observed in the letter that:

He [Nkrumah] has proved he can give inspiration and I find him susceptible of receiving it but I fear there is a streak of weakness that may be his undoing. A skillful politician, he has, I think, the making of a real statesman and this *he may become if he has the strength to resist the bad counsels of the scallywags by whom he is surrounded [Italics mine].*⁶

Nkrumah's attitude towards the various ideological factions in the labour movement throughout this moderate phase carried three discernible tendencies first a desire to distance himself from his former militant allies in the Ghana TUC, second an attempts to weaken and to undercut the conservertives' influence in the trade union movement and third efforts to prop up and consolidate a pro-CPP trade union section that was amenable to his constitutional approach to liberation.

But between 1951 and 1953 Nkrumah continued to rely on the labour militants to mobilize the CPP and to spread its support in the rural areas. Turkson-Ocran, Pobee Biney and Anthony Woode continued to play pivotal roles in both the CPP hierarchy and the CPP-dominated Parliament. Nkrumah however, anxious to project his image as a 'responsible' partner with the British in the transition period, vied the radicals as source of constant political embarrassment. Anthony Woode, for example, still maintained that "ultimately, it

⁶This quotation is extracted from recently released British documents on the end of Empire Materials edited by Richard Rathbone (Pre-publication report, June, 1992)

' partner with the British in the transition period, vied the radicals as source of constant political embarrassment. Anthony Woode, for example, still maintained that "ultimately, it would be necessary to drive the British out." These militants continued to attack the Gold Coast TUC for what they dubbed 'collaborationist tendencies'. Pobe Biney still felt that a further "Positive Action" was after all necessary. When Nkrumah, in October 1951, criticised the Ghana TUC, for being recalcitrant, the radicals bitterly criticised his "imperialist tactics" (Jeffries, 1978:59)-61). They continued to demand the repeal of all laws that were inimical to workers' interests. By 1954, Biney and Woode were openly criticising the "Tactical Action", a phrase that expressed Nkrumah's moderate policies. They expressed in parliament their objection to the domination of the Volta Hydro-electric project by foreign (Western) capital. Because these militants pressurized the CPP to push for fundamental changes in both the political and economic fields, their ideas gained popularity and support of the back-benchers. Consequently, they posed a major threat to both the CPP leadership and the British colonial authorities (Gerritsen, 1972:234)

It was clear to Nkrumah that the conservatives in the Gold Coast TUC would not support his CPP whose policies they had constantly objected to since the days of 'Positive Action.' With his alliance with the Ghana TUC militants on the verge of collapse Nkrumah's labour policy was as a consequence in disarray. Against the backdrop of this, and in response to the dire need to maintain influence in the labour movement, Nkrumah started grooming a cadre of CPP loyalists in the trade union movement to take the place of the militants. The loyalists were led by John Kofi Tettegah, a young, diligent and fairly ambitious trade unionist from the small G.B. Olivant Employees' Union based in Accra. They pursued a flexible and accommodative style of political unionism that suited Nkrumah's moderate policies of 'Tactical Action'.

Nkrumah's initiative in propping up this group, albeit covertly, is evident. Joe-Fio-Meyer, a principle CPP trade union stalwart recounted the process through which he was recruited to the group of 'loyalists' as follows:

My friend John Tettegah, whom I knew from the Accra CPP meetings asked me to help in the reorganization. This was really a very difficult decision because

I already had a good career in view of my company, but I agreed when Tettegah assured me that Nkrumah had promised him full financial and moral support for our efforts (Jeffries, 1978:218).

Compared to the old-guards in the ranks of the radicals such as Pobe Biney, Anthony Woode or Turkson-Ocran, the 'loyalists' were young, inexperienced in union politics, and belonged to small and relatively young unions and lacked strong ideological alignments. Thus they easily fitted Nkrumah's programme of moderate political unionism. It is in relation to this group and not the entire Ghanaian labour movement that the notion of 'reciprocal interests' in regard to the CPP-TUC alliance has been applied.

The opportunity for entrenching the loyalists in the labour movement was occasioned by a series of unity talks between the militant Ghana TUC and the moderate Gold Coast TUC under the chairmanship of the Minister for Labour Mr. A.E. Ikumsah. The latter had managed to convince the two rival factions to accept the idea of two votes for every union regardless of its size, in an ostensible move to bring in to the labour movement small and unaffiliated unions. The pro-CPP trade unionists comprising of both the radicals, who still held key positions in the party's higher echelons, and the budding group of loyalists massively outnumbered the conservatives. John K. Tettegah was elected the Assistant Secretary General of a united Ghana TUC. This was a major victory for Nkrumah and the loyalists

Although T.E. Tachie-Menson (a moderate) was elected to the crucial seat of president of Ghana TUC, most seats were swept by the radicals. E.C. Turkson-Ocran became the new Secretary General. Ghana TUC immediately disaffiliated from ICFTU, signifying the Congress' new ideological shift in favour of radicalism.

Against the background of escalating radicalism in Ghana's labour and political arena, the British suspended the constitution of Guyana on the ground that its nationalist leader, Dr. Chedid Jagan was a communist. As Basil Davidson has rightly argued, this event, coupled with his desire to restore the confidence of the British Government about his responsible lead, prompted Nkrumah to move against the militants in the CPP and trade union movement (1973).

2.6 Deradicalization and the Road to Independence

E.C. Turkson- Ocran, a parliamentary secretary of the CPP, personal secretary to Nkrumah and a member of the CPP's Executive Committee was the first to fall in a massive purge that ensued. Turkson, also an ally of the fiery trade unionist, Pobe Biney and the Secretary General of the Ghana TUC, was accused of "being a communist" and of channelling WFTU money into the labour movement. Anthony Woode, another labour militant, was suspended from the CPP for having attended a WFTU meeting in Europe. The Cold War ideological conflict had become a factor in the internal affairs of Ghana's labour. Karankyi Taylor, a vocal critic of the CPP's moderate policies in parliament was also expelled from the party.

Militant opposition to the CPP's and the colonial government's moderate advocacy rather than any confirmed communist involvement by the CPP and TUC radicals was the real reason behind this massive purge. Nkrumah himself had inaugurated the moderate phase by declaring: "I am no communist and have never been one" (*The London Times.*, February 14, 1951).

John Tettegah, the leader of the loyalists replaced Turkson-Ocran as the TUC's Secretary General. In order to enhance an image of responsible trade unionism and partly to avert any further harassment by the State, the Ghana TUC reaffiliated to the ICFTU. Tettegah also became a member of the ICFTU's Executive Board in Brussels. From 1954 Nkrumah came to rely fully on the loyalists as part of his ultimate plan to gain control of labour and to keep away the militants and the moderates. The usage of the phrase "reciprocal interest" in this context is appropriate, although not without further illustration.

The initiative in the reorganization of the trade union movement that followed on the heel of the great purge came from the pro-CPP trade unionists. Although the trade union leaders sought to exploit the good rapport that existed between them and the government in order to strengthen the labour movement there was manifest desire on the part of the new

labour leadership to consolidate and fortify its own position. On ascending to the office of Secretary General in 1954, Tettegah called on the government to consider centralizing the trade union structure. The TUC's organizing committee corroborated this by proposing the creation of ten national industrial unions. There were by this time nearly 60 small and poorly organized unions with a total of about 50,000 members (Davies, 1966:109). The move towards centralization was equally aimed at stemming trade union proliferation which had plagued Ghana's labour field.

Although the number of unions had grown to 130 with a membership of 80,000 by 1957, which constituted a dismal 26 percent of the total labour force in Ghana, there were only five national unions which were created as loose federations. This situation in the labour movement had badly damaged existing negotiation machinery. Some employers often refused to recognize or to meet their workers for negotiation. This mayhem had its corollary in the TUC's weak financial position. In 1954, for example, the TUC received less than \$300 in union dues (Davies, 1966:109). The TUC immediately realised that it did not master enough power by itself to effect meaningful changes or to force reorganization in the movement. Thus it came to depend on the CPP to achieve their objectives.

Faced with a new threat in 1955, TUC leadership was informed of a breakaway movement. Two of the largest unions, the United African Company (UAC), Employees Union and the Dock workers union had formed the Congress of Free Trade Unions (CFTU) based in Sekondi, to challenge the Ghana TUC. The (CFTU) became an auxiliary of The National Liberation Movement (NLM) which was challenging the CPP's hegemony in Ghana's politics. The (CFTU) brought together those trade unionists who detested the idea of the loyalists' domination of Ghana's labour irrespective of their ideological slant. Its formation and alliance with the NLM, solidified the CPP's resolve to back its labour stalwarts and to weaken the position of the CFTU-NLM alliance in the political and labour terrain. Following the CPP's resounding victory over the NLM in the 1956 elections, the CFTU disbanded and some of its members rejoined the Ghana TUC.

In the aftermath of the short-lived CFTU challenge, the Ghana TUC sought to concretize its efforts of centralizing the labour movement with assistance from the CPP. During the 13th annual Congress of the TUC in October 1956, Tettegah observed that:

Despite all efforts there was [sic] still too great multiplicity of trade unions in a small country like Ghana with a population of only 5 million. We must now positively consider the feasibility of merging the various registered Trade unions with the Trade union Congress so that Congress could become a negotiating body. Departments can be created and a centralised Executive to direct our affairs throughout Ghana ... We must turn to something like the General Federation of Jewish Labour in Israel (Histadrut) (Quoted in Jeffries, 1978:66)

He further called for the establishment of a gigantic labour movement:

A gigantic labour organization, coordinated and centralized, with a general staff capable of taking decisions and manoeuvring with monopoly capital in securing for the workers economic independence in Ghana (Cited in Davies, 1966:109).

Tettegah went for a study tour that took him through Germany and Israel. This tour was financed by Nkrumah with the explicit aim of studying the existing relationship between trade unions and political parties in the two countries. He returned in October 1957 effusively espousing the centralized model of the Israeli General Federation of Jewish Labour (Histadrut). The loyalists had not managed to control the entire labour movement nor to centralize it. But tremendous ground work had been laid down towards this direction. This was to form the most crucial agenda in the post colonial era.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing chapter it has been shown that although Nkrumah had been exposed to Marxist thought, and was indeed inspired by materialist interpretation of colonial capitalism and imperialism, in his theory of labour, in the context of anti-colonial struggle, he did not embrace the Marxian notion of "vanguard proletariat", a party led by "a revolutionary" working class. He was greatly enthused by the idea of a mass nationalist movement, a legacy of the Manchester Pan- African Congress. In line with this, he conceptualized the role of the working class in a nationalist movement as that of uniting with other social classes in the dependent territory in forming a powerful mass organization. This is the approach he took when he arrived in Ghana in the late 1940's and formed the CPP.

Soon he realized the potential of the working class and its centrality in a party. It was the labour section of the party that sparked off and to a large extent sustained the "Positive Action" campaign. The trade union leadership also dominated the CPP executive. In the era of "Tactical Action, Nkrumah fell with the radicals, prompting him to rely on a group of CPP loyalists. It was this group that formed the thrust of Nkrumah's supporters in the Ghanaian labour movement and that finally articulated his policies. The contention of this chapter is that the relationship between Nkrumah and the Ghana TUC was forged during the nationalist days. It was this relationship that Nkrumah build on to affiliate the TUC the CPP. The former, however, was the most important organization in the CPP pantheon of organizations.

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CHAPTER THREE
CENTRALIZATION AND AFFILIATION OF GHANA TUC TO
NKRUMAH'S CPP 1957 - 1966

3.1 Introduction

Discourse on the CPP-TUC relationship after independence hedges on two diverse lines of argument: (i) that the CPP controlled the TUC, and from this that Ghana TUC was ineffective in representing its members (Apter, 1964; Fitch and Openheimer, 1966; Bentum, 1966); (ii) that this relationship, which had evolved during the era of nationalist agitation, was based on reciprocal interest between the CPP elite and the TUC leadership (Gerritsen, 1972). The former thesis emphasizes the CPP control over the TUC following the enactment of the Industrial Relations Act of 1958, and the subsequent amendments there of. The TUC occupied a central place in the constellation of organizations that formed the CPP, a point that is ignored by the proponents of this line of analysis. The second thesis over-plays the theme of TUC initiative in the process of centralization of the TUC structure.

The CPP labour stalwarts, after independence, sought to concretize the gains they gains made during the nationalist days by consolidating their hold over the entire labour movement and by drawing closer to the CPP, the new focus of power. On its part the CPP sought to gained control over the former, as a viable instrument of its socio-economic and political policies both at home and abroad. The emerging TUC bureaucracy was a manifestation of these interests as well as of Nkrumah's centrist preference in labour organization.

To be sure, the TUC affiliation to the CPP occurred against a historical background of increasing marginalization of old guards unionist, both radical and conservatives, by what we earlier described as 'loyalists'. The general strike of 1961 is here viewed as an attempt by the former to challenge the loyalist hegemony over the labour movement and the socialist policies of Nkrumah.

Nkrumah's powerful position in Ghana and his desire to draw the labour movement closer to the CPP had the effects of solving most of the perennial and endemic labour problems, but integrated the movement into the monolithic political system over which he presided. The TUC was involved in decision making at high levels, was able to wrung concessions from the government and to negotiate with private employers but these efforts were sometimes checked by the very limitations of monolithism.

3.2 The "New Structure" Proposals

Following his tour of Germany and Israel toward the end of 1957, Tettegah drafted the "New structure" proposals which formed a blue-print for a new centrist trade union structure, meant to replace the federal one that had existed since 1941. He articulately defended and steered them through the TUC Executive Board. The proposal contained three distinct aspects: First, the need to increase the power of the TUC Executive over its affiliated unions; second, the need to create a structure that would undercut labour proliferation and enhance labour unity and; third, need to link the TUC structure with the CPP political bureaucracy.

The TUC leadership carried out an invigorated campaign to seek support for the proposals in the labour movement, the CPP and government circles from early 1958 for a variety of reasons. An explicit support by the CPP and Nkrumah's government was vital if the TUC leadership was to maintain its control over the entire labour movement to the exclusion of the other two factions earlier discussed. A close alliance with the CPP would not only make it simple for the TUC to pursue its industrial interests but also its leadership interests. These interest included the need to merge the small unions into large ones to ensure their ability to maintain a full-time salaried headquarters secretariat.

In a speech to the Annual Conference of GTUC in 1958 Tettegah noted that the union movement could no longer tolerate its officials being on 'slave wage'. Thus by drawing the labour closer to the CPP, the formers leadership envisaged to use the advantage of power to solve its perennial financial and organizational problems.

The proposals were vehemently opposed by the miners, the Railway Union and the United African Company Union during the Ghana TUC's 14th Annual Conference held in Cape Coast in January, 1958. Whether these unions objected more to the issue of affiliation to the CPP than to centralization as a separate issue is difficult to establish. There were on the one hand those unions like the Railway union which, although not opposed to political unionism, were opposed to the enormous power that the CPP loyalists in the TUC were to acquire as a result of these proposals. On the other hand, there were those, due to their opposition to political unionism objected to a kind of association with the CPP that would bring the labour movement under the latter's control.

At the international level, the ICFTU and other Western labour organizations registered their opposition to the style of unionism that would bring the labour movement under the heel of a political party. It should be noted that the 'New Structure' proposals came hot on the heels of a major rupture between the ICFTU and the Ghana TUC after the latter disaffiliated from the former. This had prompted Tettegah to make this rebuff:

We do not want to be bothered with Cambridge essays on imaginary ILO standards with undue emphasis on voluntary association (Ananaba, 1979:9)

The Ghana TUC-ICFTU conflict will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter. The 'New Structure' proposals formed the basis of the Industrial Relations Act of 1958 which gave legal backing to the TUC's affiliation to the CPP.

3.3 The Industrial Relations Act

The Industrial Relations Act of 1958, the most controversial in Ghana's labour history, was a creature of the 'New structure' proposals. Even before the Act was brought to Parliament opposition to it was mounting from within the labour movement and the CPP hierarchy. Around January 1958, when the TUC was discussing the proposals, the Minister for Labour, Mr. N.A. Welbeck, had warned that "the government would be acting wrongly and exceeding its proper function in it attempted to impose these charges [the New Structure] on individual unions by legislative action", (*West Africa*, February 1958: 111). Although Nkrumah may have backed

the TUC covertly in popularizing the proposals he initially remained non-committal and gave no public support to them. According to one source, Nkrumah still believed in the policy of encouraging strong individual unions and a consultative TUC, a policy he had cultivated during the nationalist days (West Africa, February, 1958:111). So long as there was no threat to the CPP-TUC traditional form of alliance outside the precincts of the law Nkrumah did not see the necessity of any legal enactment to back the TUC's affiliation to the CPP. [In any case, no such enactment had been made with other CPP affiliates such as the Farmers Council, the Co-operative Movement, the Ex-servicemen, the Women's Organization or the National Association of Socialist Students Organizations. The CPP constitution drawn in 1949 had clearly spelt out the terms of CPP-Trade Union association. This was stated in its aims and objectives as working "with and in the interest of the Trade Union movement ... in joint political or other actions in harmony with the constitution and standing orders of the Party" (Constitution of the CPP, Article iv). This fitted appropriately into Nkrumah's scheme of a mass movement.

But times were changing and the political environment both in Ghana and abroad after 1958 radically changed Nkrumah's attitude in favour of a centralized labour structure and affiliated to the party within a legal framework. With the 1958 General Elections just around the corner there was need to bring the labour movement closer to the CPP by all possible means including legal enactment. The politically skilled sub-elite of the TUC had proved a dependable section in mobilizing and strategizing for the party in the past elections. There were mounting fears in the CPP hierarchy of a possible take-over of the labour movement by the opposition or at least a split in the movement. It was this fear that later prompted Kojo Botsio, the Minister for External Affairs and Secretary to the Central Committee of the CPP to exhort CPP stalwarts in the unions:

CPP workers must not only join trade unions affiliated to the TUC, but must also organize themselves in a manner to ensure party leadership in the unions. It is ideological heresy for party members to elect a non party worker as the leader of their organisation (Quoted in P. T. Omari, 1970: 61).

Internationally, Nkrumah was spearheading the formation of an All-African Trade Union movement. This called for harmonization and centralization of the TUC to enable it serve as a solid base for the AATUF structure. Nkrumah's political peers at the continental level, Sekou Toure of Guinea and Gamal Nasser of Egypt, with whom he was working intimately towards the establishment of the said Pan-African unionism, had their unions at home centralized and put on an even ideological keel giving them enormous opportunities to pursue their continental and international labour objectives. It is not far-fetched to suggest that, with seething animosity between the pro-Nkrumah TUC leadership and the ICFTU after the formers' disaffiliation from the latter, there was growing fear that the ICFTU and its sponsors might sponsor a rival faction in Ghana to act as a counterpoise to the TUC. This would have greatly undermine Nkrumah's efforts to unify the labour movement as a base for his socio-economic programmes at home and his vibrant participation in the growing constituency of Pan-African labour. Thus, although Tony Killick's (1978) view that Nkrumah was capturing the lobbies (trade unions included) so as to make them dependent on him rather than the vice-versa is to an extent right, it is unrepresentative of the multifarious factors that brought about the CPP-TUC marriage.

From mid 1958 Nkrumah came out openly in defence of the proposals. He further started paving way for the revitalization of the labour movement, a move that made the TUC the most important group in the CPP pantheon and brought to its acme Nkrumah's involvement in the labour movement. He started by replacing N.A. Welbeck in the Ministry of Labour with Ako Adjei, a CPP stalwart with sympathy for the 'New Structure' proposals. With even those ministers like Mr. Gbedemah and Kofi Baako who did not fully support the proposals hushing down their criticism, the CPP was set on an even keel in support of its TUC allies. It gave its full backing to the 1958 Industrial Relations Act when the Bill was tabled in parliament. The TUC's four-years of hard canvassing for a centralized structure (1954-1958) had finally paid dividend.

B.A. Bentum, the Secretary General of a reconstituted GTUC after 1966 wrote in relation to the Industrial Relations Act:

The enactment of the Industrial Relations Act [1958]... set out the way the trade unions should operate, in line to Nkrumah's wishes and took away the most potent force of the working man- the right to withhold labour... Gallant and experienced trade union leaders such as Larbi Odam , Anthony Woode, John Ashun, Pobee Biney and others of the TUC of Ghana opposed Nkrumah very strongly(Bentum, 1966:9-10).

The Act legalized the relationship between the CPP and its stalwarts in the TUC that had already acquired concrete ideological underpinnings. It however, had the incidental effect of shutting the door against any organized opposition in the labour movement either by the old-guard conservatives such as Larbi Odam or the old-guard militants such as Anthony Woode, John Ashun and Pobee Biney. Apart from giving the CPP labour stalwarts total monopoly of power in the labour movement, the Act also integrated the TUC into the CPP bureaucracy.

The Act repealed the 1941 Trade Union Ordinance and created the Trade Union Congress to "act as the representative of the Trade Union movement in Ghana and perform the functions conferred on it by this Act ". It was however, not in the Act but in the TUC constitution that the terms of TUC's affiliation to the CPP were succinctly spelt out. The TUC's aim was stated as that of "upholding the aims of and aspirations of the convention peoples party through financial and organizational support" (*GTUC Constitution*, September 1958)

The Act resulted in the creation of a strong trade union bureaucracy. The sixty-four or so previously existing unions, then affiliated to the TUC, were amalgamated into four constituent unions (these were further reduced to sixteen in 1961, and to ten in 1965). A further amendment to the Act in 1959 prohibited any other union from existing outside the official number (Gerritsen, 1972:236). The legislation, although it was not explicitly stipulated, presupposed TUC's control over individual unions. The certification of each union was to be arranged through the TUC. The latter had the responsibility of maintaining contact with the Ministry of Labour in the event of an industrial dispute on behalf of the affiliated union. Individual unions were to enjoy complete autonomy in collective bargaining

but they were expected to operate subject to an overall policy of the TUC.

The *Mill-Odoi Commission Report on the Structure and Remuneration of the Public Service in Ghana* revealed that between 1960 and 1966 TUC officials succeeded in negotiating substantial wage increase for many private sector employees which reduced the effect of the rapid inflation of living standards on the workers (Jeffries, 1978:68). Although the Act had out-lawed strikes, as one observer has pointed out, Nkrumah was able to control the unions “only to a point, since they [unions] still exerted pressures and wrung concessions” from the government (Killick, 1978:34-5)

The legislation introduced the ‘union shop’ to be conducted through the TUC and a check-off system to ensure a degree of financial self-reliance and to reduce the TUC's reliance on government subsidies and on donations from international labour organizations. The check-off system made it compulsory for all wage earners to become due paying members of the TUC. These dues were standardized to 2 shillings per month by 1961. Forty five per cent of the total amount received from the check-off system went directly to the GTUC; forty per cent to the national union and fifteen per cent to the local branch. Out of the forty-five per cent that went to the GTUC, only five per cent went to the central TUC strike solidarity fund signifying the declined importance of strike as a weapon in Ghana’s industrial relations (Davies, 1966; Gerritsen, 1972).

As a result, the TUC’s income increased rapidly from 1958. From a figure \$497, before the Act the TUC’s income shot to \$79,452 in 1960 and to \$162,599 in 1961 (Zezeza, 1982). Beyond the Act, Nkrumah came out in full support of the TUC. For instance from 1958, the TUC received \$25,000 to enable it carry out the work of effecting affiliation with the CPP. His government further loaned the TUC \$80,000 following Tettegah’s appeal towards the cost of a projected Hall of Trade Unions (Gerritsen, 1972:241). The government also provided an extensive use of TUC loan scheme by the union leadership. This was however, a subject of rivalry between the CPP stalwarts and the TUC leadership (*Ibid*). The TUC was able to meet the cost of its day-to-day operations and to pay salaries for its full-time secretariat.

The TUC's numerical strength also grew by leaps and bounds. From a dismal figure of 100763 members in March, 1959 this figure had doubled to 201901 by March, 1960 and; trebled to 320, 248 by September, 1961. By 1962 the TUC had 500,000 members thus, making it one of the biggest trade union movements in Black Africa and placing it at the same level as the Egyptian and Moroccan union movements.

The growing prestige of the TUC leadership in the CPP, and, by implication, the growing importance of the labour movement to Nkrumah became manifest after the CPP won the 1959 general elections. By 1960, six union officials were given ambassadorial positions. Tettegah, as the Secretary General of the TUC, was given a seat in the Cabinet and for the purpose of international affairs, he was made "ambassador plenipotentiary", union secretaries also attended government cocktail parties as an attempt by the CPP to socialize and maintain close relations between its officials and union leadership. Thus although the Industrial Relations Act brought the labour movement under the CPP, the latter's influence went beyond the letter of the law. But if the CPP trade union stalwarts were comfortable with the new order that ensured their control over the entire labour movement those sections of the labour movement that were marginalized from active trade unionism by the Act were not. It was the bulk of this group that played an active role in the 1961 strike, a major embarrassment if not a challenge, to Nkrumah's labour involvement.

3.4 The General Strike

A general strike broke out on September 4, 1961 first in Sekondi, Takoradi and Kumasi, and later spread to Accra and other major cities, at a time when Nkrumah was out of the country attending the Non-aligned nation's conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The CPP and the TUC immediately denounced the strike, in the characteristic rhetoric, as "counter-revolutionary". A state of emergency was declared in the affected areas and workers were asked to go back to work. After two weeks neither the TUC nor the CPP could bring the strike to an end. Nkrumah arrived home and pleaded with the workers to

go back to their jobs. They ignored the call. Nkrumah then threatened them with sacking. They returned to work.

Although the strike did not pose a major political threat to Nkrumah it caused him great embarrassment because it occurred at a time when he was championing the creation of a pan-African labour movement and trying to popularize Ghana's centrist labour model in Africa. At a time when he was embroiled in an ideological controversy with western labour organizations over the issue of centrism of labour and affiliation of unions to political parties, the strike was a subtle and destabilizing propaganda weapon in the hands of the latter.

It is not possible to single out one factor as the cause of the strike. There were both economic and political factors involved some of which were immediate. Secondly, some causes were long-term, going back to the nationalist days and the rivalry between the CPP and other opposition parties. Fitch and Oppenheimer (1966) argues that the immediate causes of the strike were the harsh conditions spelt out by the contents of the 'Austerity Budget' that Nkrumah introduced in bid to revamp the declining economy and as part of his socialist programme. The budget introduced compulsory savings so as to increase government revenue. The savings were to be derived from a cut of five per cent of workers wages and ten per cent of all other types of accessible income to be taken from the source.

The pertinent question for our analysis is: who were involved in the strike? At the trade union level, the thrust of the striking workers came from two of the oldest unions in Ghana, the United African Company Employees and the Railway Union, representing the historical right and left respectively, and the two most formidable opponents of the Industrial Relations Act. The TUC, comprising of pro-CPP unions and dominated by the loyalists of the nationalist days did not take part, and indeed condemned the strike. Nkrumah himself felt that there were deeper reasons other than those arising from the budget.

If the railway workers disagreed with the policies of their constitutionally - elected government, they had every right to make their views known... through their members of Parliament... or the TUC... But what is the nature of these supposed grievances which have prompted these workers to take this illegal and disgraceful action? They objected to the compulsory savings schemes, to the monthly deduction of income tax, to the Government taxation policy as a whole, in fact to the whole budget (*Ghana Today*, September 27, 1961)

Nkrumah forgot that a CPP-dominated parliament and a TUC controlled by the loyalist's, the railway worker's traditional rivals in union politics, failed to provide the necessary fora for channelling their grievances.

Because they lacked a political ally in the CCP as did the TUC leadership, the railway workers and the UAC employees turned to the United Party, the CPP's rival in the 1959 General Elections. Of the ideological inclination of the UP Jeffries has observed that:

The United Party consisted of an alliance of the major communalistic movements in Ghanaian Society under the leadership of intellectuals who had consistently opposed the CPP since the UGCC days (1978:97).

It consisted of the main political coalition that had been fielded against the CPP in the 1959 elections-the Northern Peoples Party, the Moslem Association Party, NLM, the Togoland Congress, the Anlo Youth Organization and the Gha Shifimo Kpee.

Table II: General Elections in Ghana since 1951

Parties in Parliament	1951	1954	1956	1959
Convention Peoples Party	79	71	71	83
National Liberation Movement	-	-	12	-
Northern Peoples Party	14	12	15	-
United Party	-	-	-	18
Others	11	21	6	1
Total no. of seats	104	104	104	102

Source: Omari P. T. 1970: 62

The United Party astutely exploited the mounting resentment to the Austerity Budget to its own political advantage. Its leaders led by Danquah, its president, had met a group of railway unionists with the explicit aim of converting them to the view that the budget measures were not only unjust but heralded an impending economic crisis (Jeffries, 1978:99) According to one Alice Koomson, she and her husband A.Y. Ankomah, a railway unionist, had developed intimate links with Kwesi-Lampsey, the United Party's representative in Sekondi

- Takoradi. On the eve of the strike, it had been arranged that Lamptey would channel money to the market-women to aid the impending workers' strike efforts. On the strength of their own testimony Ankomah and his wife were by 1961 "committed to spoil the government" (Ibid:99)

Unsurprisingly, as Nkrumah descended on the strikers, J.B. Danquah, Joe Appiah and P.K.K. Quaidoo among other United Party leaders were also arrested in connection with the strike. Also arrested were a number of market-women. To Nkrumah, the strike was political, and was master-minded by his political rivals. This fact, he observed, was borne out by the demands made by the workers:

Our Republican constitution should be abolished and that we should go back to the system of having a Governor General... This clearly exposes the purpose of this strike and those behind the strikers. (*Ghana Today*, September 27, 1961).

The strike was the greatest challenge to the CPP-TUC alliance. It was also the most successful attempt by the opposition to use the labour movement to weaken, if not to bring down Nkrumah's administration. In its aftermath it largely accounted for Nkrumah's move towards political monolithism as a way of containing opposition. It also hardened his belief that a strong labour movement was an important political and economic instrument which could also be misused. Henceforth, he involved himself more deeply in the Ghanaian labour movement to achieve his local and international objectives.

3.5 TUC and Nkrumah's Socialist Policies

Nkrumah's move to the left started in 1961 when he vigorously took to socialist policies. A discussion on the type of socialism Nkrumah chose for Ghana and how it was implemented within the context of one party system has been attempted by Sylwiny (1970). Of note is the point that the introduction of socialism precipitated intra-party ideological schisms which had far-reaching implications for the CPP-TUC relationship. These schisms stemmed from the crucial question of how much socialism was to be introduced and how fast. Three ideological groups emerged. In the right wing was a group which had little sympathy for socialism. This was led by Nkrumah's conservative finance Minister, Gbedemah. The left comprised of a

small but vociferous group that advocated a brand of puritanical socialism led by Tawira Adamafo, the CPP's Secretary General. In the centre was a pragmatic socialistic group which wished to move rapidly towards achieving industrialization and towards elimination of the dominating influence of foreign firms. Nkrumah, and his principled minister for defence, Kofi Baako were in this group (Legum, 1961:6-7). The TUC leadership oscillated between the left wing and the middle group.

Now firmly integrated into the CPP and its leadership already occupying positions in the higher echelons of the political bureaucracy, the TUC fell to the trappings of power jostling that characterised the party. Tettegah, the TUC leader, was constantly accused of harbouring ambitions to displace Nkrumah with his union-based machinery. The left of the CPP targeted him for special attack for the widely held belief that he was earmarked as the possible successor to Nkrumah. His transfer to the workers' Brigade in 1959 and to the AATUF after 1962 was viewed as an attempt to keep him away from the union hierarchy without necessarily getting rid of him.

Following the fall of Tawira Adamafo and most of the CPP left in the wake of the Kulungugu incident, the most formidable rivals of the TUC leaders in 1962 the latter's leadership came to play a crucial role in implementing Nkrumah's socialist policies.⁷

J.K. Tettegah became a key player in the interpretation and implementation of Nkrumah's socialist policies. In a major policy statement entitled, *Towards Nkrumahism: The Role and Task of Trade Unions: Report on Doctrine and Orientation* that he published in 1962, Tettegah defined the goal of TUC as that of creating "a state based upon a socialist pattern of society adapted to suit Ghanaian conditions". He emphasized that the task of the Ghanaian trade union movement was to work.

Consciously for the development and the strengthening of the new socialist sector of the National Economy, raising the level of literacy, helping to establish a national wage policy and "being alert to communicate ideas and programme from one level of movement to another. Trade unions are responsible organisations which must be vigilant and militant in the interest of their own members and the future of Ghanaian socialism (1962:15).

⁷ This had followed the Kulungugu incident where a bomb blast nearly killed Nkrumah while on a trip from Togo. The CPP left led by Tawira Adamafo, Secretary general of CPP was found guilty and purged from the party.

Economic co-operation between the TUC and the government, Tettegah argued in another document, would benefit all classes. This was the basis of the TUC's support for the *Seven Year Development Plan* that Nkrumah launched in 1964. Under this plan the TUC and the CPP government concurred on three points that:

- i) Ghana's economy must be developed so as to be able to assure every Ghanaian who is willing to work employment at a high level of productivity and rising standard of living;
- ii) The colonial structure of production based on exports of primary commodities which largely accounts for the present low level of income must be completely altered;
- iii) Government's participation in the economy must be on such a scale as to enable her to implement her socialist policies with respect to the distribution and utilization of the national income...(Tettegah, Report to AATUF Second Conference, June 1964:19).

The government and the workers entered into partnership in several sectors. A number of state farms for example were jointly owned by the government and the workers. Nkrumah's government further put some industries under workers management (*Ibid*:19). After 1965, Nkrumah gave more and more responsibilities to the GTUC and entrusted it step by step with total running of certain enterprises (*Party Chronicle*, October 6, 1965).

The theoretical underpinnings of the government-workers collaboration in a socialist context was underscored in the Seven-Year Development Plan of 1964 in these words:

In a socialist Ghana, the distribution of the national income can no longer be the chance outcome of a chaotic struggle between antagonistic classes. Rather it should be based on scientific decisions regarding the utilization of the increases in the nation's wealth in such a way as to advance the welfare of the workers and the growth of the economy and to maintain an adequate level of employment within a framework of economic stability (January, 1964:171)

The need to spread, interpret and disseminate Nkrumah's socialist ideas partly explains why there was so much literature targeted to the workers. In no other African country were there so many publications aimed at educating the workers. Such were, for example, *Labour*

and *TUC News Bulletin*. TUC officials also played an enormous role in the publication of *The African Workers*, the bi-monthly of AATUF. Union leaders also frequently wrote articles in the theoretical journal *Spark*. In addition individual unions published occasional journals and public materials. These made the dissemination of information easy and effective.

The role of Tettegah in strategizing and designing the structure of Ghana TUC in the late 1950s has partly been illuminated. That he was responsible for designing this structure to meet the requirements of Nkrumah's policies became evident in 1964. As Nkrumah focused his attention on the creation of a pan-African labour movement it was Tettegah who was directly responsible for facilitating the TUC's external structural link with the Pan-African Trade Union Movement (AATUF).

On June 22 a week after he was elected Secretary-General of AATUF, Tettegah had sent a memorandum to Nkrumah, in it he outlined the major structural and administrative changes that he considered necessary in order to synchronize the TUC structure with the emerging Pan-African labour. Such changes in the TUC were necessary because it was set to play a crucial role at the continental level. The document made the following recommendations:

- (a) **I [Tettegah] shall formally be granted a three-years leave of absence to devote my full time and energy to an apparatus of an international organization which must compare in efficiency and status to the WFTU or the ICFTU.**
- (b) **Responsibility for our national trade union matters must be firmly put in the hands of J. K. Ampah as National Secretary of the Ghana TUC and I must not be bothered with any local matters.**
- (c) **This must only be for national affairs and the international relations must be left in the hands of an underground outfit which must operate in the name of Ghana TUC....This of crucial importance because in my role as an instrument of Osagyefo's African policy, I must be supported underground with an efficient apparatus, which must smash and counteract any intrigue of other African states and neo-colonialist agent for us to always have a majority on the election bureau and AATUF General Council ...**

The National Secretary, who will be too pre-occupied with the prosecution of our 7 - Year Development Plan, must forget about international politics of the TUC and leave that in the hands of the Director of International and Development who will support my Ghanaian underground outfit.

The Director of International Department is the one who replaces me in my absence from Ghana on the African Affairs Committee and other Governmental bodies or party committees where Ghana's African

Policy is formulated and executed. He reports directly to me as the instrument of Osagyefo's African Policy. This position must be made very clear although secret to the new leaders of Ghana TUC to avoid any misunderstanding (Bentum, 1966:28-29).

Figure I is a diagrammatic representation of the place of the TUC vis-a-vis the entire CPP structure. Under this arrangement the TUC was able to articulate the CPP's ideological position and to carry out its socio-economic policies. In return it was well set to pursue Nkrumah's Pan-African objectives.

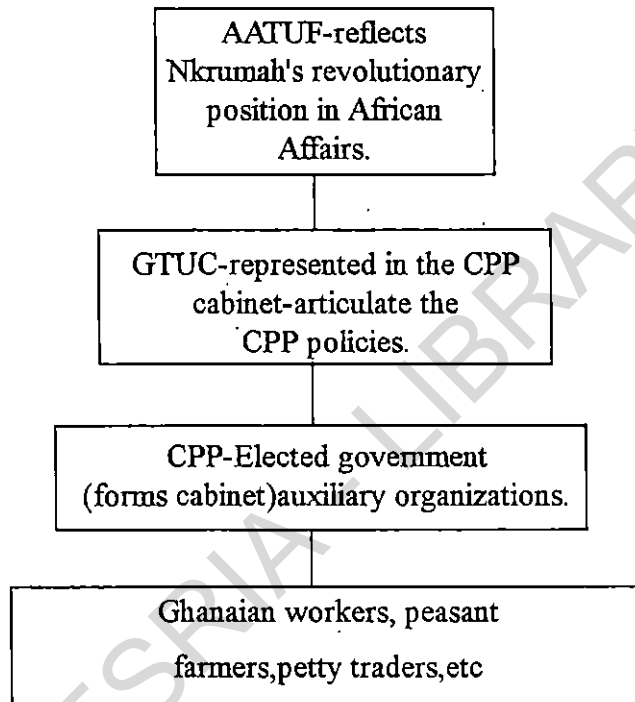


Figure I: The Ghanaian Masses as the ultimate source of power *for the CPP and Ghana TUC*

Tettegah was transferred to the AATUF, although he remained the over-all leader of the Ghanaian labour. This was indicative of the growing importance of the continental constituency in Nkrumah's labour priorities. How the AATUF structure was linked to other instruments of Nkrumah's foreign policy will be dealt with in the next chapter. Figure II below illustrates how the AATUF was built on the back of Ghana TUC. This was a result of the latter's adjustment to meet the challenges of an expanding African labour arena, and Nkrumah's central role in it.

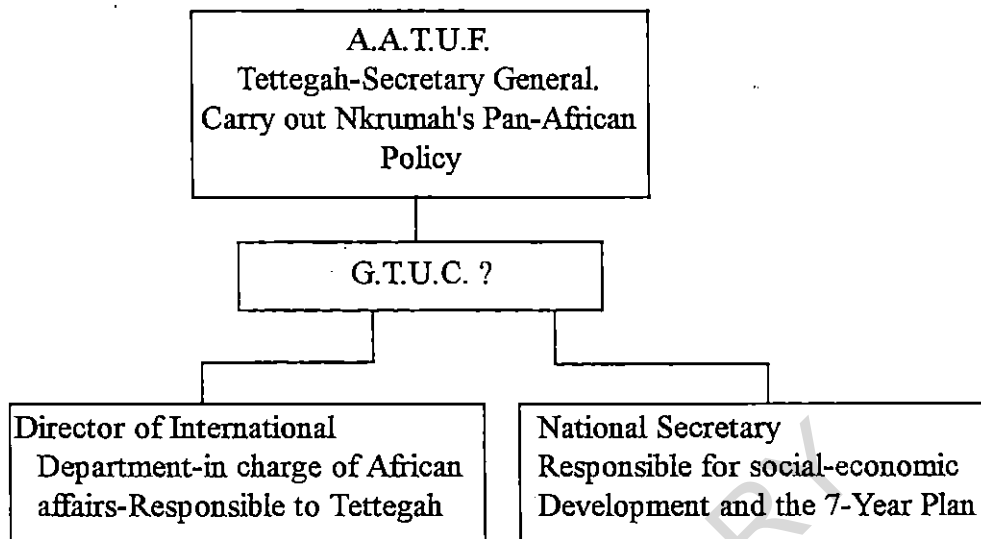


Figure II: How the AATUF was linked to the Ghana TUC Structure

In the light of the power rivalry that plagued the labour movement, Tettegah's model exposes a number of bureaucratic grey areas arising from unco-ordinated power relations. In his recommendations, he did not make explicit the ultimate authority in the TUC bureaucracy. The National Secretary and Tettegah's own representative, the Director of International Department, were poised to conflict. But for all its weaknesses, the GTUC bureaucracy was Nkrumah's greatest asset in articulating this policies both at home and at the continental level.

3.6 A Labour Aristocracy?

At around the same time Tettegah was transferred to the AATUF, rivalry between him and a group of up-coming labour leaders over TUC leadership was intensifying. Cases of corruption among the new leaders were becoming frequent. With Tettegah's transfer to AATUF the Ghana TUC lost one of its brilliant organisers who enjoyed a substantial rank and file support, especially in Accra. Acrimonious exchanges took place between Tettegah and his trade union rivals, G.A. Balogun, Foevie, and J.K. Ampah with the former accusing them of perpetrating corruption in the union movement. It is not clear whether Nkrumah was aware of this corruption and the wrangles in the union movement. From the contents

of the memorandum that Tettegah sent to Nkrumah on 22 June 1964, it becomes clear that Nkrumah must have been aware of the seething problems in the union leadership. In the letter Tettegah appealed to Nkrumah to use his position to salvage the situation:

If I have no role again to play in Ghana as some of the new -comers seem to infer by making me look like a social outcast in my own country, and even amongst the Ghanaian Trade unions who must be my strong collaborators and faithful supporters... I must be taken into confidence and told so... It is indeed sad for me to hear that instructions have been given that I should not enter the Hall of Trade unions according to Foevie and even J.K Ampah, whom I should hand over to, should not see me. How can I carry the burden of AATUF with the Ghana TUC not being by my side? (*Ibid*:30)

There appeared an apparent disjuncture in the link between the AATUF and the Ghana TUC. Thus although the former was built on the back of the Ghana TUC, and Tettegah in all his missions abroad did not discount this, the reality is that as time progressed each of the two sections dealt separately with Nkrumah, with Tettegah running the AATUF office and fronting for Nkrumah at the Pan-African level, and Ampah, Balogun and Foevie running the TUC. With his attention now focused on the more compelling issue of Pan-African trade unionism, the TUC bureaucracy fell to corrupt labour leaders. If Bentum's account is anything to go by, the TUC leaders were using massive public and union funds for their luxurious upkeep. As he observes:

The TUC had two bank accounts, No. 1 and No. 2 Ampah [the] National Secretary opened new accounts with £G 200,000 he got from Nkrumah, called account No.3 and No. 4. Ampah had sole control over 3 and 4 accounts contrary to the constitution of the TUC. Nkrumah gave Ampah £G 100,000 in November 1963 and the rest in December. These accounts 3 and 4 required only one signature - Ampah's - whereas the TUC constitution demanded that any other of the two Finance Board members selected by the Executive Board were to sign cheque to be valid. Out of accounts 3 and 4, Ampah and his Administrative Secretary bought two Mercedes Benz cars, one a 230SNo. WR 9009 and the other a 200, No. 8477 (which) were licensed in their own names(*Ibid*:15).

In regard to the salaries of these leaders, Betum has continued:

Ampah had a salary of £G 1,830 a year which without Executive Board approval he increased to £ 2500 a year. G. A. Balogun, the Administrative Secretary... started at £G 1,206 and in a few months got it raised to £G 1,850. There was neither any paper approving the increase(s) nor records of approval of any kind (*Ibid*:15).

As a result of this rampant corruption, from December 31, 1964 to December 31, 1965 the Ghana TUC had accumulated about \$120,000 as its share of dues from check-off; but the

expenditure exceeded the income by almost \$G 5000. By February 1966, when Nkrumah fell from power, the TUC had accumulated a debt of about \$G 200,000 (*Ibid*:18)

In early 1965, the Industrial Relations Act of 1958, which had received the butt of criticism from the opponents of Ghana's centrist model of unionism, was amended to remove the control exercised by the government over the workers. Ampah, the National Secretary of the TUC explained this change as follows:

The Party feels sufficiently convinced that the working people of the country would not misuse their freedom of action to disrupt the speedy implementation of the nation's industrialization programme. (*The Worker*, Accra, January 5, 1965).

There are two views in regard to this. First, that even when it existed, the Act was of no consequence since the TUC-CPP relationship was self-perpetuating. Thus the repeal of the Act did not alter the status quo. Second, that the TUC had gradually fallen under the control of strong CPP loyalists whose interests were closely tied to the nature of relationship that existed between the CPP and the TUC. With or without the Act, this group was prepared to ensure that this relationship continued. Since the entire Ghanaian society was already deeply enmeshed in a monolithic culture under the CPP, the repeal of a single law (the 1958 Act) could certainly not alter the balance of power substantially, especially in the trade union movement.

The government's explanation of this shift was given by the Minister of Labour in his speech to the National Assembly. According to him, the amendment was intended to

enable Ghana to conform to the code of International labour standards adopted by the International Labour Organizations. It is my considered view that the success of the organization of the All African Trade Union Federation is dependent largely on the prestige of the Ghana TUC. This means that the Ghana TUC has to do everything possible to attract as much following and support throughout Africa and organizational machinery built upon a model to be followed by other Trade union movements in Africa. The Ghana TUC must therefore be free from criticism internationally, and the draft bill is aimed at achieving this. (*Ghana, Parliamentary Debates: Official Report* 39:25 May, 1965 as quoted in Jeffries, 1978:105-6)

This was the time that Ghana TUC was spearheading a vigorous campaign to strengthen the AATUF. At the same time it was being criticised for being a labour movement under the control of a political party (CPP). The repeal was therefore, necessary to boost the TUC's credibility as a free trade union organization with something to offer to African labour movements.

CONCLUSION

After independence, the Ghana TUC was gradually centralized. This was an initiative on the part of both the TUC leadership and the CPP elite. Nkrumah, by affiliating the TUC to his CPP envisaged to tap the potential of the TUC sub-elite to pursue his social-economic objectives, to mobilize his party and to assist in the articulation of his Pan-African trade union ideas at the continental level. The TUC leadership hoped to solve its organizational, financial and other problems that had plagued the movement since the colonial days through affiliating to the CPP, the new focus of political power.

In its structure the TUC bureaucracy served as the base on which Nkrumah's pan-African ideas were articulated. The AATUF was well linked to this bureaucracy with the TUC dominating the formers policy including its centralized model. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

NKRUMAH AND THE EVOLUTION OF PAN-AFRICAN TRADE UNIONISM

4.1 Introduction

The afore-going chapter highlighted that Nkrumah helped establish a formidable trade union movement affiliated to his Party the CPP. Nkrumah was, therefore, able to focus his attention on the pan-African trade union movement. Nkrumah hoped to launch this centrist model of unionism exemplified by the Ghana TUC, at the pan-African level and to bequeath Africa with a strong continental labour bureaucracy articulating his radical position. The ascension of Nkrumah's ideas and activities in pan-African trade unionism saw a dramatic and emphatic turn from a preoccupation with the simple idea of neutrality in the politics of the Cold War to a determined effort to undercut the influence of international labour organizations in African trade unions. Thus, Nkrumah's ideas of Pan-African labour movement were inter-woven with his wider theory of African liberation, against colonialism and neo-colonialism, and the establishment of an organic unity of African states.

Although Nkrumah's efforts in establishing pan-African trade union organization were to a great extent successful, it was at this level that he also encountered the most determined and formidable opposition to his radical pan-African position. The controversy at the continental level, that started from the late 1950's, emanated from conflicting interpretations of the concept of non-alignment and the question of affiliation to international labour organizations. The ideological struggle between the ICFTU and WFTU was at the core of this controversy. The former advocated

for continued affiliation of African union to it and its auxiliary organizations like ATUC and AFRO. Although the ensuing ideological battle was fought at the trade union level, its spillovers in the political arena manifested themselves at both the continental level and in the internal politics of most African states as the case of Kenya in the subsequent chapters will seek to show. Nkrumah's own exit from Ghanaian and African political scenes profoundly affected the trend of development of African trade unionism after 1966.

This chapter traces the emergence and evolution of pan-African trade unionism in the post-independence era, insofar as Nkrumah was a factor. A brief discussion of neo-colonialism, pan-Africanism and non-alignment as crucial concepts in the discussion of trade union struggles in the late 1950s through the 1960s is considered as central in illuminating the theoretical underpinnings of this wrangle. As far as possible the structure of the emergent pan-African trade union organization (AATUF) has been analyzed. This is an attempt to show how Nkrumah's ideas and activities were manifested in it, and how the organization itself owed its operational effectiveness to Nkrumah and his labour adherents.

4.2 International Trade Union Organizations and the Penetration of Neo-colonialism

The end of the Second World War witnessed the declining prestige of the old imperialist powers such as Britain, France and Belgium, and the rise of the United States of America and USSR as super-powers in the emerging bi-polar international order. A temporary rapprochement between the capitalist powers of the West and the socialist East at the trade union level led to the creation of the WFTU in 1945, encompassing all trade unions in the two blocs except the virulently anti-communist American Federation of Labour (AFL). For a while, and for different reasons,

the USA and the USSR spearheaded the call for decolonization of Africa within the ranks of WFTU. By 1949, Western trade unions broke from the ranks of the WFTU and formed the ICFTU, as the Cold War politics were internalized in the trade unions of the respective blocks.

Underlying this split were deep-seated ideological as well as imperialist motives on the part of both the USA and USSR. The Soviets in the WFTU, for instance, supported every proposal and every effort in favour of decolonization in Africa with the hope of providing succor to the African nationalists and, in consequence, to undercut the colonial support for Western imperialism. Indeed, the Soviets spared no energy in their effort to supplant Britain's hegemony in Africa and to become the latter's trading partner, partly in order, to replenish its own war-drained coffers. The U.S. which, on the other hand, was nursing hopes of becoming heir to the British Empire (Dutt, 1949:42), was anxious to sponsor a managed decolonization program that would open up the bilateral colonial markets for her expanding multinational corporations in line with the multilateral system of trade that it was advocating in the world. To this end, the Soviet interests ran counter to those of the U.S., as the Cold War in Africa acquired the economic factor as the most predominant force.

This was at a time when the term neo-colonialism had not acquired the notoriety that it did after 1960 in Africa. While co-operating with the imperialist powers in ensuring that no link was maintained between the various African nationalists and trade union movements and the communist bloc, America was spontaneously laying the foundation for the future neo-colonial relationship with African States. American trade unionists played a crucial role in articulating this course and exemplified the pervasive role played by the workers in the centre, in collaboration with their government and business interests, to implement the latter's designs in

the periphery (Morris, 1967; *Recent History*; 1979). Stanley Ruttenberg, the head of the AFL-CIO Research Department had written in the early 1950s: "Revolutions [in Africa] are under way, the question becomes what kind of the revolution and why?" (*Recent History*; 1979:415). William Green, the AFL President, writing in 1952, had suggested that the kind of revolution needed was "constitutional development.. provided the natives will get responsible representation" (Morris; 1967: 100). The trade unionists of the centre at this critical period played the dual role of ideologists and implementors of the policy of managed decolonization whose logical product was the forging of a neo-colonial relationship between the industrial West and the African periphery.

After the 1956-57 Suez crisis, American trade union leaders insisted on assuming a leading role in the ICFTU⁸. Both the American leaders and trade unionists minced no words in pronouncing the primacy of American interests in Africa above those of European powers. Vice-President, Richard Nixon, for instance, in his Report to the Foreign Relations Committee following his 1957 African tour said on this point:

American interests in the future are so great as to justify us in not hesitating even to assist the departure of the colonial powers from Africa (Schechter *et al.*, 1980:58).

In 1959, the American labour leaders rose to the helm of the ICFTU. In conjunction with such American-sponsored affiliated secretariats as the Public Service International (PSI), the ICFTU became an instrument of American foreign policy which in the late 1950s carried a novel concoction of anti-communism, anti-colonialism and pro-imperialism.

⁸Following an all-out war against Nasser's Egypt by a combined Israeli, British and French force, in November 1956, the Americans demonstrated their dominating influence over France and Britain (and Europe) when they imposed a ceasefire after only two days of fighting. This was an indication of how the American dollar, through the Marshall Plan, had entrenched American hegemony in Europe by 1956. They were prepared to extend this hegemony to the colonies.

There is no doubt that the Americans over-played the anti-communist role of the ICFTU. So much was this done so that Omer-Becu, the ICFTU Secretary-General was compelled to retort: "there is no doubt that we [ICFTU] are against communism, but we were not created solely for this reason" (quoted in Davies, 1966:208).

This anti-communist crusade was indiscriminately waged against the communist WFTU as well as against radical African trade unionist and nationalist leaders who opposed the hegemonic role that the West was playing in African economic and political affairs. Nkrumah viewed up this anti-communist crusade as a subterfuge used to conceal the enormous and plunderous economic exploitation of African resources by the West. As Professor Walter Rodney (1978) later observed, Nkrumah was convinced that just as it was an economic beneficiary of the older slave militarism, America was also a beneficiary of colonial militarism in Africa. Nkrumah summed up this American exploitation of Africa in this paragraph quoted from the diligently researched book, *Neo-Colonialism*, which was to a great extent an indictment against American imperialism:

Direct private American investment in Africa increased between 1945 and 1958 from \$110 m. to \$789m., most of it drawn from profits from these investments, including reinvestment of surpluses, being estimated at US \$704m. As a result African countries sustained losses of US \$555m. If allowance is made for grants for "non-military" purposes, estimated then by U.S. Congress at \$136m. Africa's net total losses still reached US \$419m. Official American statistics put the gross profits made by US Monopolies in Africa between 1946-59 at US \$1,234m, though other estimates place them at US \$500m., (1965:6162).

Nkrumah was convinced that Africa trade unions were being used to perpetuate this exploitation of Africa by the West. On the other hand, Western trade union organizations such as the ICFTU were being used to entrench the West's economic

interests in Africa. Disaffiliation from these organizations, and adoption of non-aligned and militant stand in relation to the question of imperialism was the prophylaxis that Nkrumah recommended for African trade union movement. When the American reliance on the ICFTU was receding and the African-American Labour Centre (AALC) was established in New York to take its place, Nkrumah deciphered some sinister aims in this new organization. The aim of the AALC was stated as that of maintaining a “stable climate for American business — particularly in mining and agriculture” (Nkrumah, 1965:24). One of the Centre’s bulletins gave credence to Nkrumah’s economic analysis of the aims of American trade union involvement in Africa. The aims of this centre were summed up as follows:

Mobilizing capital resources for investment in workers’ Education, vocational Training, Co-operatives, Health Clinics and Housing, the Centre will work with both private and public institutions. *It will also encourage Labour-Management Co-operation to expand American Capital investment in the African Nations* [Emphasis in the original] (cited in Nkrumah, 1965:245)

How did Nkrumah pose the problem of 'Neo-colonialism'? Was it a real threat or was it a figment of his imagination or mere rhetoric?

4.2.1 Neo-colonialism

The seeds of neo-colonialism in Africa were sown in the era of decolonization in the late 1950s. But the term did not come into current use in Africa until 1960, declared by the UN the year of Africa (Leys, 1975). The term was given pre-eminence by the All-African Peoples’ Conference held in Cairo in 1960. In a lengthy resolution the Conference defined neocolonialism as:

The survival of the colonial system in spite of the formal acquisition of political independence in emerging countries which became victims of an indirect and subtle form of domination by political, economic, social, military or technical means" (Reprinted in Legum, 1962:255).

This realization followed in the heels of disillusionment and humiliation precipitated by the formal political independence. That it was the AAPC, itself a brain-child of Nkrumah and George Padmore in the pan- African political front, which identified neo-colonialism as a menace to the emerging African states reveals Nkrumah's own experience and disillusionment with neo-colonialism in his own state of Ghana. It also exemplified his singular determination not only to popularize the term but also to promote it into a crucial agendum in the wider African struggle against imperialism. This was to prove a difficult undertaking for, until the 1970s when neo-colonialism was indubitably recognized as a real power that enthralled Africa, most of Nkrumah's contemporaries and foreign detractors denounced his exposition of the phenomenon as a figment of his imaginations (Birmingham 1990:112). It is hardly possible today to dismiss Nkrumah's exposition as a mere figment as the manifestations of neo-colonialism in Africa abound.

In analyzing the practice of neo-colonialism, Nkrumah wrote of "neocolonial states" and their rulers who derive their authority to rule, not from the will of the people, but from the support they get from the neo-colonialist masters (1965:xv). Neo-colonialism, as a system of exploitation, thrives on an explicit alliance between the local class of compradors and the international bourgeoisie. As Jack Woddis observed:

If the old system of colonial rule was, in essence, an alliance between external imperialism and local pre-capitalist forces, then neo-colonialism generally represents a new alliance, one between external imperialism and section of the local bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie (1967:56).

Nkrumah's theoretical approach to the question of neo-colonialism consisted in an analysis of the 'class composition' of the leadership of African states. He further categorized them as either "revolutionary" states or 'neo-colonial' states. In practice he targeted the latter for penetration by the forces of Pan-African trade unionism. He strongly believed that a strong trade union movement espousing militant position would successfully influence the ideological orientation in favour of the pan-African position that he espoused. Through the AATUF and Ghana TUC he gave financial and material support to militant unions and splinter groups in a number of African countries in order to strengthen them between the ruling compradorial class and external imperialism. This is what came to be widely seen as Nkrumah's 'subversion' or 'Ghana's black imperialism' as it was dubbed in the conservative circles in Kenya.

Ironically, the West, especially the U.S benefited immensely from Nkrumah's militant position. They exploited it not only to denigrate him as they intensified the exploitation of Ghana, but also to penetrate other radical African Countries such as the UAR and Guinea. This point is aptly articulated by one analyst as follows:

America gained enormously from the Nkrumah years. It learned invaluable lessons in how to manipulate Third World politicians and extract wealth through neo-colonial structures [which Nkrumah, despite his radicalism, retained]. Nkrumah's love-hate relationship with America provided the United States with its first entree into independent Africa. This entree was followed up not only in conservative Zaire and Kenya, but also in left-leaning Guinea and Egypt and most surprisingly of all in the Soviet satellite of Angola (Birmingham, 1990: 91-8)

4.3 Pan-Africanism and Non-alignment

Kwame Nkrumah's ideas of pan-Africanism⁹ were deeply embedded in his experience in America and his acquaintance with the works of the African-American progenitors of this movement, and the engulfing legacy of George Padmore on his political thought. His ideas were, to all intents and purposes, a clear reflection of the last two stages in the evolution of pan-Africanism. The first stage, which had begun roughly with Padmore's break with the communists (Comintern) in 1935 and which had its apogee in the convening of the Fifth Pan-African Conference in Manchester in 1945 was the period of synthesis (Padmore, 1956:21). In the second stage pan-Africanism acquired its ideological shape, and absorbed the notion of non-alignment as a guiding principle in Africa's global relations. It was during the latter stage, in which Nkrumah played an enormous and pivotal role, that the traditional Du Boisian intellectualism and the Garveyite mass movement were merged (Nkrumah, 1959). Pan-Africanism henceforth came to incorporate into its ranks, the workers, trade unionists, farmers, co-operatives, women and youth groups and so on, in its emerging plebeian character (Nkrumah, 1959:44).

The quest for non-alignment and African autonomy can be rightly traced from the Congress. Padmore and Nkrumah as joint secretaries to the International Conference Secretariat (ICS), charged with the role of organizing this conference, had arranged for the Pan-African Congress to take place at the same time as the WFTU conference in London, scheduled to occur in early 1945, so that the African

⁹Owing to the nature of its beginnings and developments in the liberation struggles of African-Americans against oppression, exploitation and racism, in the New World, pan-Africanism was inherently and ideologically a revolutionary movement with cultural, economical and political dimensions, and opposed to imperialism and all forms of exploitation and domination. This categorical interpretation of pan-Africanism logically does not include the conservative advocacy of co-operation among African states which was floated by some conservative leaders as Houphouet Boigny in the early 1960s ostensibly to arrest the proliferation of radical political pan-Africanism espoused by Nkrumah, Toure and Nasser among others.

workers (and those of African-descent from West Indies) invited by the British labour movement could participate in the Conference. The underlying aim was to divert the workers from the purpose for which they had come and turn them to address themselves to the more pertinent issues of pan-Africanism and African liberation (Thompson V.B. 1969:57). Concomitant with the aforementioned emergence of the plebeian character of pan-Africanism, was the rise of a desire by the pan-Africanists for autonomy and self-determination in setting up their own independent organizations and taking up independent positions in global affairs.

This became more exigent in the light of the Cold War. Padmore promulgated pan-Africanism as the third ideological road apart from communism and capitalism that was a must for the Africans, and which both the East and the West, for mutual good, and for genuine world peace, were bound to respect. He posed Pan-Africanism as an ideological and a historical alternative to communism (1956: 21) Placed in the context of the Cold War and imperialist interests in Africa, revolutionary and pan-Africanism was perceived as an obstacle in the path of the West's hegemony-building in Africa. It was lumped together with communism; those African leaders who supported militancy at both the national and continental levels were branded communists. In this context, the African struggle for autonomy and non-alignment became an uphill battle (Nelkin, 1968).

Suffice it to say that Padmore had enormous influence on Nkrumah. He was also instrumental in shaping the future trend of Ghana's ideological predilection and the notion of nonalignment that Nkrumah vehemently expounded in Africa. C.L.R. James, an associate of both Padmore and Nkrumah in his unpublished study on Padmore, entitled "Notes on the life of George Padmore" succinctly, summarized the above role of Padmore as follows:

One of the great political achievements of our time (is Padmore's) working out the theory which shaped the revolution of Gold Coast.... We aimed at preserving the marxist approach, keeping far away from the reformism of the Second International, but at the same time fighting

and warning against the Communist International. This determination never to submit himself or his ideas to any European-dominated organization was in reality George's refusal to be in any way caught by what happened to him in the Kremlin [with which he had broken in 1935] (cited in Thompson W.S. 1969:22).

The Pan-African quest for non-alignment from the 1950's through the 1960's became an integral part of a wider Third World desire for positive neutrality in global conflicts. From the time of the Afro-Asian conference held in Bandung in 1956 the desire for unity among the countries of the South gained momentum and widespread acclaim. It culminated in the formation of the non-aligned movement in the early 1960's through the efforts of Premier Nehru of India, Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia and Gamal Nasser of Egypt among others. Nkrumah argued that, positive neutrality neither meant a policy which takes up no fundamental position in global affairs nor did it advocate isolationism (Legum, 1968:456;). On the contrary, this interpretation of non-alignment entailed an examination of the pros and cons of the issues involved and then attempting to find a solution or compromise.

During the mature stage of his ideological ascendancy, Nkrumah came to espouse the idea of creating, not a non-aligned bloc in Africa, but a continental unity within the non-aligned movement corresponding to his views on union government in Africa. Even then, he defended African economic co-operation with both the East and the West. But Nkrumah was clear in his mind that non-alignment was incompatible with neocolonialism. A state under the influence of neo-colonialism - he argued cannot determine its own destiny leave alone being no-aligned (1965:X)

In spite of these strong views in defence of non-alignment in Africa, Nkrumah's complex love-hate relationship with the West was manifested by his close relationship with Britain. After Ghana gained independence from Britain in 1957, it remained within the Commonwealth of former British colonies. Nkrumah

himself became a member of British Queens Privy Council. As the hero and inspiration of African nationalism, whose towering figure mustered enormous influence among other African nationalists, Nkrumah's pro-Commonwealth stand was emulated by many African leaders in the former British Empire. That the Commonwealth tied the former British colonies in Africa to Britain, itself a prominent member of the Western bloc, constituted the Achilles' heel of Nkrumah's advocacy of non-alignment. Nkrumah's association with Britain through the commonwealth and the Queens's Privy Council bequeathed a hypocritical tinge and rendered contradictory his analysis of "neo-colonialism" and discredited his call for disaffiliation of African trade union organizations from the ICFTU (Mboya, 1962:244-275; Mazrui, 1967: 72).

This was possible because the African militants were essentially not seeking a fundamental change in the structures inherited from colonialism and on which neo-colonialism thrived after independence. Instead, they were seeking economic justice and amelioration of their grievances within the context of global economic order virtually dominated by the rich capitalist countries. They were not seeking Africa's withdrawal or isolation from the international capitalist system but for equal opportunity by all countries within the existing system. This was the predicament of the advocacy of non-alignment which was aggravated by the ideological differences between the East and the West.

4.4 The Emergence of Pan-African Trade Unionism

“ Our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent” (Nkrumah, 1973:120). These are words from Nkrumah's declaration during his mid-night pronouncement of independence for Ghana from Britain on March 6, 1957. It did not only mark the ushering in of the

second stage of his pan-African career, but was revealing about his own apprehension of the immense inspirational and participatory role he (and Ghana) was to play in the liberation of other African states. This view was passionately shared by the Ghanaian workers: "We cannot forget that Ghana is the first independent black African state," said John K. Tettegah, the Secretary-General of Ghana TUC, "and that we have a duty to assist those who are travelling that same path to freedom" (*Labour* Vol II No 10 April 1961).

Nkrumah had high hopes about the inspirational role that the Ghana TUC was to play in Africa. "By the industry and example of the Ghana labour movement, we hope to inspire other Africans still fighting colonialism" (Nkrumah, 1963: 127). The Ghana labour movement was in the forefront in articulating Nkrumah's pan-African policy; it also espoused his revolutionary position on pan-African trade unionism.

The emergence of militant pan-African trade unionism took place in the context of escalating Western involvement in African trade union affairs, especially through the ICFTU. Ghana's emergence as the spearhead of militancy in Africa after 1957 rendered a staggering blow to the hopes of ICFTU, and trade union organizations of the West. From 1953 Western labour organizations had earmarked Ghana as the *entree* point in tropical Africa. These hopes had momentarily appeared to pay dividends when Nkrumah and the Ghana TUC helped organize and hosted the First Regional Conference of the ICFTU in Accra in March, 1957. Tettegah himself continued to serve as a member of ICFTU's Executive Board in Brussels. The ICFTU had hoped to use the Ghana TUC, with its pan-African orientation and appeal to undercut the proliferating and nationalistic labour militancy spearheaded by Sekou Toure (Guinea) and Gamal Nasser (Egypt).

The tide changed in favour of the militant opinion from December, 1958, both at the political and labour fronts, following the convening of the All African People's Conference in Accra. This Conference occurred against the background of an alliance of the Generale des Travailleur d'Afrique Noir (UGTAN), the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU) under Guinea and Egypt respectively, and the Ghana TUC. It was the delegates from these trade union organizations who, in a trade union meeting that took place under the aegis, and simultaneous with the above conference, had proposed the establishment of a Pan-African Trade Union Federation paying "allegiance to none but mother Africa" (Busch, 1969:94). Conservative national centres like the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL) did not welcome this proposal that ostensibly required it to distance itself from the ICFTU (Mboya, 1970:156). From the outset, this ideological difference was as much a symptom of the emerging coalition of the progressive forces in the continent as it was heraldic of the tumult and up-hill walk that was to punctuate the road towards the creation of the Pan-African Trade Union Organization.

The earliest attempts to establish a pan-African trade union organization followed closely in the heels of the formation of the Ghana-Guinea Union, as a "nucleus for a union of African states" by Nkrumah and Sekou Toure in November, 1958. The idea also found expression in the All-African Peoples' Conference (Zartman, 1966:17;). It was Sekou Toure through the UGTAN, and not Nkrumah, who provided the initial driving force towards Pan-African Trade Unionism. In January 1959, Tettegah affiliated the Ghana TUC to UGTAN, and following the latter's first Congress in Conakry, he was appointed one of its vice-presidents. The UGTAN prepared itself to "bring about Pan-African conference of all-African trade union organizations as a preliminary step to the creation of the envisaged Pan-

African trade union body," (Meynaund and Salah-Bey, 1967:124).

During the Conakry conference, Sekou Toure set the ideological tone of this body. He emphasized the need for African trade unions to steer clear of European central organizations and to avoid 'marxist', 'socialist' and 'idealist' international organizations (*Ibid*: 124). The conference also extolled political unionism, and co-operation between progressive trade unions and political associations sharing the same ideas and aims (*Ghanaian Worker*, May 14, 1959, *ibid*). The conference offered the earliest defence of the centrist structure that was to characterize the emerging continental labour body and its quest for ideological neutrality. The ICFTU was profoundly alarmed by this realignment within the ranks of Africa alarmed by the militant unions. This was especially so after the first Pan-African Trade Union Conference held in Casablanca, Morocco in September, 1959 to discuss issues pertaining to the launching of the All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF). The ICFTU hastily scheduled its Second Regional Conference to take place in Lagos, Nigeria in November, 1959. The underlying purpose of the scheduled conference was to launch the ICFTU's African Regional Organization (AFRO). Consequently, to forestall the formation of AATUF. It was hoped that AFRO would arrest the escalation of labour militancy, forestall the formation of AATUF and ensure ICFTU's hegemony in African labour. The ICFTU was prepared to go to any length in order to salvage its prestige, that was endangered by the impending formation of AATUF.

The sponsors of AATUF interpreted the creation of the proposed ICFTU African Regional Organization as blatant interference by a foreign organization in African internal affairs. Nkrumah in effect invoked the doctrine of non-alignment:

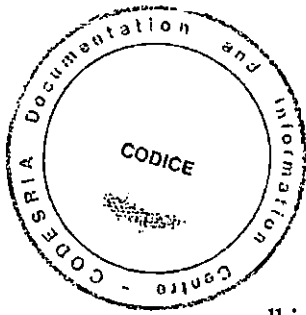
Imperialism having been forced out through the door by African nationalism, is attempting to return by the other back-door means.

African workers, as the likeliest victims of these infiltrations must be on their guard. There is a constant endeavour to use the African trade union movement as a protagonist in the Cold War conflict and some of the leaders, through flattery and acceptance of financial assistance for their unions, have allowed themselves to be suborned. This is a dangerous situation as it can drag Africa into active participation in the Cold War politics and deprive us of our safeguarding weapons of independent non-alignment.... The African trade union movement must promote the independence and welfare of African workers; it cannot run the risk of subordinating the safety of African development to the other non-African influence (Nkrumah 1963:127-128).

The Ghana TUC immediately withdrew its affiliation from the ICFTU. In conjunction with other radical centres, it announced an impending pan-African trade union conference, to coincide with ICFTU's second regional conference. Nkrumah declared that membership of both the ICFTU and AATUF by African unions was mutually incompatible and rebuffed the conveners of the Lagos Conference (Meynaund and Salah-Bey, 1967:126). With this statement the ideological polarization of African trade unions over the issue of affiliation to international labour organizations became open. The ICFTU was at the centre of this wrangle because, unlike the WFTU which had lost virtually all its African affiliates in the late 1950's, it had many affiliates in Africa that it was determined to keep.

The issue of independence and positive neutrality by African unions vis-a-vis the ICFTU and WFTU formed the thrust of the Accra Conference. In his address to the conference on November 5, 1959, Nkrumah outlined these characteristics of the envisaged Federation in the following words:

We see in an All African Trade Union Federation an independent and united African organization not affiliated to either the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) or the International [Con] federation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), a positive neutral federation, friendly to



all international organizations, *but holding allegiance to none, except to Mother Africa.* [italics mine].

Nkrumah further, exhorted the Federation's designate leaders to seek consultative status with the United Nations and its specialized agencies so that the Federation could become "an African Trade Union International that will speak for the workers of Africa in the manner that the workers of Africa wish their voices heard" (*ibid*: 3). In this context, Nkrumah's conception of the role and structure of the AATUF did not deviate much from other international labour bodies such as the ICFTU or WFTU whose activities, and effectiveness in articulating the goals of their respective blocs must have inspired him. Nkrumah's suggestion that the AATUF should seek consultative status as a specialized agency of the UN was no doubt, revolutionary. But it signified his deep sense of dissatisfaction with the international order whose institutions Africa had played no part in establishing. It also signified that he did not seek Africa's break with this order, but sought for justice and amelioration of Africa's problems within its framework.

The ICFTU conference in Lagos, on the other hand, made all efforts possible not to distance or estrange the AFRO from the irresistible appeal of Pan-Africanism: "We see no conflict between this attitude (support for pan-Africanism) and our continued support of the ICFTU. On the contrary, we see this as an opportunity to project the African personality" (cited in Meynaund and Salah-Bey, 1967: 126). It also addressed itself to the African quest for autonomy and self-determination. A statement made by Tom Mboya, the leader of the Kenya Federation of Labour, who had also emerged as the spokesman for the Lagos Conference revealed that the ICFTU was prepared to compromise on some key principles of its control over

it's, regional organizations in other parts of the world and give maximum autonomy to AFRO if this was what was needed to forestall the formation of AATUF.

According to this statement, the permanent African secretariat of AFRO would have maximum autonomy from the ICFTU; it would be led by an elected Secretary-General; and that its decisions would not be submitted to the ICFTU Executive Committee for any approval. In addition, African representation in the ICFTU's Executive Committee was to be increased; In fact one of the Confederation's vice-presidential seats, and the post of Deputy Secretary General were to be reserved for Africans or, in the case of the latter post, to a person 'acceptable' to Africa. Finally, the ICFTU's aid to African unions would be channelled through the AFRO (*West Africa*, 19.12.59).

In spite of this seemingly generous and bold step by the ICFTU the radicals were not prepared to give up the idea of AATUF. "We will create the Federation," declared one trade unionist from Guinea, "even if there are only two of us to do so, and future generations in other countries will follow us" (cited in Meynaund and Salah Bey, 1967:216). This is a verdict that the ICFTU was not prepared to accept without a fight. Its intransigence in ensuring that African unions remained within its fold, and the AATUF's sponsors determination to establish the Federation on the other, resulted in a major hullabaloo and ideological wrangle that characterised the Pan-African labour movement in the 1960's.

Accusations were levelled against the ICFTU that it was applying pressure on the AATUF's sponsors in a bid to compel them to give up the idea of forming the Federation and masterminded and financed splits in some national trade union centres. Imoudou, the leader of Nigeria TUC, and a member of the AATUF preparatory committee commenting on the ICFTU's activities in Nigeria in April, 1960 lamented that:

In 1959, in Nigeria, we had a single union; and an international organization divided us. The International [Organization] even pay for the upkeep of Ministers, they spend dollars to get us to affiliate. They are opposed to our independence... (speech reprinted in *ibid*: 216).

When it became certain that the AATUF was going to be formed, the ICFTU changed its approach. It started seeking ways of penetrating the ranks of its sponsors with the hope of weakening the influence of the radicals and influencing the federations ideological orientation in its favour. A denigrating campaign was carried in its publications and western media against the trade union centres of Ghana and Guinea in an attempt to whittle their overwhelming influence in African trade unionism (Bush, 1969:97). A committee meeting of AFRO, held in November, 1960 in Tunis observed in this connection, that:

There is a reason to be concerned that unless the free trade unions participate in its creation [AATUF] and direction, it may quite easily fall into the hands of other forces and be used for political ends by certain African states, [Ghana and Guinea] and thereby cause a split in the African labour front (*ibid*: 97).

The slander campaign carried out by the ICFTU and its affiliates in Africa against Ghanaian and Guinean unions consisted in making out that the centralized model of trade unionism that the two had promulgated at home, and which, to a large extent, they sought to bequeath the AATUF was undemocratic and authoritarian. The two national centres were accused of converting trade unions into "arms of government administration" (Legum, 1962:86). But there was a glaring ambiguity in the ICFTU's own position. As one analyst has rightly observed, the AFL-CIO and the British TUC, the main sponsors of the ICFTU consisted of the most bureaucratic and the "most centralized" unions in the world (Davies, 1966:201). The case of American labour movement is by far the most revealing about this

ambiguity. In 1955, the AFL and the CIO had merged in a move ostensibly objectified towards harnessing and tightening the labour bureaucracy and putting the American labour on an even ideological keel. The movement came to serve as an instrument of American foreign policy, and had its operations abroad effectively subjoined with the elaborate bureaucracies of the Department of State and espionage (the Central Intelligence Agency), in a grand strategy of entrenching American global hegemony (Cohen, 1980:70-79). This ambiguity hardly escaped the judicious notice of Nkrumah:

Within the capitalist states, the trade unions play the role of watch-dogs for labour against the employers. Even so, they are by no means "free". Their leaders are bought off by the sweets of office and often have their secret arrangements with employers. More than that, they have for the most part accepted the ideology of their capitalist class and through its exposition, their extensive forums and witch-hunting of those who do not conform, have openly identified themselves with the ideology (1962:126).

Furthermore, most of the ICFTU's affiliates in Africa, in so far as their relations with their governments was concerned, were no better than the unions of Ghana, Guinea or Egypt. Davies, cited above, has noted the following concerning this:

Although the African Regional Organization included one or two unions which are not directly linked with governments, the majority of its affiliates were firmly tied to political parties and the administration of labour as in AATUF (1966:204).

Nkrumah concluded that by talking of "free and democratic" trade unionism in reference to what it was advocating in Africa the KFTU was simply being hypocritical and insincere:

They [workers of Ghana, Guinea and Egypt] have no need to hide this association behind hypocritical sophistries. They are in fact, drawing the workers into the implementation of government plans by setting up workers councils, outside the public enterprises, to give effective expression to their national consciousness (1962b: 126).

By mid 1961, when Africa trade unions gathered to launch the AATUF, the KFTU had virtually failed to influence either the preparations for the conference or the ideological predilection of its principal founders and its future in Africa was pretty dismal.

4.5 The AATUF in the Era of Politics of African Unity 1961-1963

The AATUF's inaugural conference was convened in Casablanca, Morocco from 25th to 30th May, 1961. It was attended by over 2,675,000 (AFRO put the figure at 1,663,087) trade unionists and 45 trade union organizations from 38 countries, signifying the largest trade union gathering ever to take place in Africa (Davies, 1966: 206).

The ICFTU sent a strong delegation to the AATUF Casablanca conference led by Irving Brown of the AFL-CIO with an explicit aim of ensuring that the anticipated proposal for disaffiliation by African trade unions from international trade union bodies did not succeed. (*Recent History*: 1979:417). The WFTU was also represented, symbolizing the centrality of AATUF in the politics of international trade unionism.

Apprehensive of the ICFTU's aim of hijacking the federation the radical centres gave each of the sponsoring unions six delegates to the conference, and only one delegate to non-sponsoring national centres. Equal status was accorded to the conservative unions, irrespective of their strength, and the emerging splinter

unions, such as the KTUC (Kenya), Mogadishu TUC, Nigeria TUC, SWTUF of Sudan, the LLC (Liberia) and UFWE (Ethiopia) and UDA (Angola) (Ananaba, 1979:125). Thus, the proposal for disaffiliation was passed with relative ease, in spite of bitter opposition by conservative centres.

National unions still affiliated to either the WFTU or the ICFTU were given ten months within which they should have severed this relation (*AATUF Charter*, Chapter III, reprinted in Legum, 1962). The ICFTU and most of its affiliated unions walked out of the conference, embittered by the fact that they were unable to penetrate and influence the embryonic African Labour Federation. They accused the conference organizers of undemocratic and authoritarian practice. They also charged that disaffiliation as advocated by the AATUF was tantamount to isolationism.

The AATUF's stand on affiliation was an expression of a growing desire among African workers and political elite for justice and to assert themselves in the international political and economic system. The African revolutionaries were seeking "a common solidarity" with "the vast crushing weight of humanity represented in Bandung" in the 1956 conference by invoking the doctrine of non-alignment. Theirs was part of the universal and historic struggle against all forces that held man in thrall. The AATUF's charter aptly captured this perspective as follows:

Our struggle is that of liberty over slavery, prosperity over misery and of progress over feudal and reactionary system ... [these] are the aims of all the world and henceforth these aims ignore frontiers of, continent, sex or colour. Likewise there are forces of oppression and exploitation which make a point of ignoring frontiers and nations (cited in Meynaund and Salah Bey, 1967:9).

Having failed to influence the ideological predisposition of the AATUF the ICFTU and its African affiliates resolved to form a rival pan-African labour organization, the African Trade Union Confederation (ATUC). Following a series of canvassing

for this idea during the Geneva session of ILO in 1961; and during the KFL's Annual Conference in the same year, the African Trade Union Confederation (ATUC) was finally launched in January 19th, 1962 in Dakar, Senegal, by the affiliates of ICFTU, IFCTU, CATC and several unaffiliated organizations. Salient in ATUC's constitution was the fact that affiliated unions were left free to determine their international relationship (reprinted in *ibid.*: 225-230). Most of the ATUC's affiliates were unions with strong ties with the West. None had links with the WFTU, leave alone being affiliated to it.

The ATUC-AATUF's differences, although ideological, were peripheral for the ATUC was nothing but a labour silhouette of the ICFTU. The unity of the ATUC affiliates was based on their common desire to maintain strong links with the ICFTU and their common opposition to the AATUF's position on the issue of affiliation. That it lacked equivalent support from the political elites of the Monrovia bloc as the AATUF did from Nkrumah; and that it was rivalled by the AFRO as a channel of ICFTU's financial and material assistance to African trade unions to a large extent, explain the Confederation's organizational ineffectiveness. It never offered any effective challenge to the AATUF. Like the ICFTU, the ATUC's fortunes in Africa started waning after 1964 when the AATUF started consolidating its position.

In spite of the manifest unity among the Casablanca powers during the inaugural conference of the AATUF, they did not bequeath the Federation with a powerful bureaucracy. The conference left the crucial issue of the AATUF Secretariat unresolved. Such a secretariat was germane if the Federation was to be organizationally effective in its operations. There was also the ironical situation where some of the leading revolutionary centres such as the UMT of Morocco, whose leader Mahjoub Ben Seddik was elected the Federation's President, was still affiliated to the ICFTU. As a result Ghana trade union leaders feared that

“Mahjoub [Seddick] would be briefed by Americans and ICFTU influence to keep the AATUF in the cold storage” (Bentum, 1966:41).

There was also mutual suspicion and distrust among the AATUF sponsors. In a letter that Tettegah, the First Secretary of AATUF, sent to President Nkrumah dated March 10, 1962, it becomes clear that the Ghanaians had wanted the AATUF Headquarters to be situated in black Africa, preferably in Accra: “Casablanca was chosen despite our opposition as the Headquarters of AATUF” (Bentum, 1966:40). Tettegah had blamed this failure on “the ICFTU’s influence and Arab interests” and on the “unreliability of our Guinean trade union colleagues” (*ibid*: 41). In the aforementioned letter, Tettegah revealed that the Ghanaian labour was prepared to provide a temporary underground secretariat to the AATUF in order to facilitate its operations. The letter said *inter alia* on this:

The point I want to make here is that we did not achieve any agreement in Casablanca as to a Secretariat and we had to resort to underground manoeuvres until the expiration of the ten-months period, June 31st March, 1962 when Mahjoub himself should make his position clear about disaffiliating from ICFTU and our knowing the real number of African trade unions who will adhere to the AATUF respecting the principle of neutrality and disaffiliation from all existing international trade union bodies (Bentum, 1966:41).

Nkrumah approved this proposal by the Ghana TUC to set up an underground working secretariat based in Accra, to operate within the confines of the African Affairs Division of the Congress. Nkrumah also set aside a generous annual subvention of £G.30,000 to cover the operational costs of the 'Secretariat' (Tettegah’s letter, 15.7.65). This arrangement continued until July, 1964 when the AATUF acquired a permanent secretariat. This underground 'secretariat' published a bi-monthly journal of the AATUF.

From 1962 African leaders made bold steps to forge unity at both the political

and labour fronts. If unity at the political front was largely attained with the formation of OAU in May 1963, unity at the labour level continued to be elusive. The extremist view in Africa interpreted these efforts towards unity as attempts by imperialism and its allies to create hollow bureaucratic structures in whose sophistries and trappings revolutionary pan-Africanism would be ensnared, emasculated and finally obliterated (Elenga M'buinga, 1975).

Be that as it may, a series of negotiations aimed at forging unity between the AATUF and ATUC took place (Tettegah 15.8.63; Ben Seddick 26.7.63).¹¹ In October, 1963 amidst the euphoria of this unity in the political front, a meeting of fourteen representatives of AATUF and ATUC resolved to join together into a continent wide labour organization "independent of any trade union organization".

They also resolved that:

The new movement will maintain friendly relations with all national and international organizations on the basis of equality and mutual non-interference (*Tanganyika Standard*, 22.10.1963:3 cited in Busch, 1969:151).

This communique was signed by Ahmed Tili and John Tettegah for ATUC and AATUF respectively. Another unity meeting was scheduled for January 1964 to arrange for the founding congress of the proposed pan-African labour organisation. This apparent victory for the revolutionary trade unionism turned out to be only temporary, for AFRO was not prepared to allow the forging of any unity among African workers that would undermine the hegemony of the West in African-trade unionism. This fact was brought out by a report of AFRO's Executive Board meeting held in Tunis at the end of 1963. The report said *inter alia*:

Despite the fact that the workers of Africa, organized in the two labour fronts, ATUC and AATUF, want to unite, it must not be forgotten that the underlying factor that has been dividing them is not the issue of international affiliation but ideology (Busch, 1969:150).

AFRO dismissed this unity as "forced" and in a characteristic manner blamed it on

¹¹These two letters were obtained from Wachira's private collections.

communism. Tlili, whose position in his own UGTT at home was already vulnerable, was prevailed upon to revoke the communique. The proposed meeting of 14 representatives, set for January, 1964 was also postponed to March without sufficient reason.

The road to the formation of the OAU had been rough and difficult for Nkrumah who, unlike his colleagues in the Casablanca bloc, Toure and Nasser, was unprepared to compromise on his revolutionary stand in African affairs. Sekou Toure, Nkrumah's strongest ally started criticising Nkrumah's views on African unity. In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly in October 9, 1962, Toure made the following indictment against the centrist views of Nkrumah which he had all along shared. He said that Africa had no need of:

Philosophical formulae or doctrinal theories; it needs honest co-operation...unity cannot mean uniform institutions... still less can it mean the creation of a single African Party or single African super-state. One of the major obstacles to (unity) has, in the past, been widespread conception that it had to be formed around a single state or a single man. (Thompson W.S. 1969:307).

Together with Nasser, Sekou Toure made a rapprochement with the political elites of the Monrovia camp and took an active part in drafting the charter of the OAU (M'buyinga, 1975:53). He worked with Emperor Haile Selassie to secure a loose association of all African states in line with the Organization of American states (OAS) that encompasses all the Latin American states.

In his book, *Africa Must Unite* published just before the May 1963 Addis Ababa Conference, Nkrumah was explicit and categorical in his defence of organic African unity. His views on African unity can be summarized as follows:

African unity must necessarily take the form of a continent-wide political unification. There will have to be a continental Government

charged with the management of all essential functions, notably the economy, defence and foreign affairs (M'buyinga, 1975:50).

Thus, the formation of the OAU as a loose federation of African states signified a defeat for Nkrumah's revolutionary position on African unity. It also signified the process of internal bureaucratization of pan-Africanism, and a gradual shift to the right. Despite his strong convictions on the idea of continental government, and his determination to stand for this idea, even when all his friends deserted him during the 1963 Addis Ababa Conference, Nkrumah in what appeared as a pragmatic gesture, agreed to sign the OAU charter. By so doing, he deviated from the extremist line taken by such revolutionary parties as the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC). Which equated the creating of the OAU with neo-colonialism. In one of its pamphlets dated May 30, 1962, a year before the Casablanca Conference UPC, had said *inter alia* on this point:

In Africa, the imperialists now intend to bring a union between the Africa of the Casablanca Charter and the reformist Africa comprising the U.A.M. and the Monrovia Group States. Their hope is that their lackeys within such a body will enable them to orient the whole union towards acceptance of subordination and neo-colonialist oppression...imperialist lackeys will enter the union with the aim of turning it into a counter revolutionary organisation. (*ibid*: 51).

Nkrumah had initially considered the formation of the OAU as a giant step towards the realization of his dream of a United States of Africa. Bureaucracies have a way of safeguarding and penetrating themselves. Nkrumah soon realized it was difficult to pursue his dream within the confines of the OAU. He gradually drifted to the UPC's position in his attitude to the OAU. Soon he became the leader of the militant forces to the left of the organization. Infact, some analysts identified him with anti-OAU sentiments in the continental (Mazrui & Tidy, 1984: 346). Nkrumah came to

forces to the left of the organization. Infact, some analysts identified him with anti-OAU sentiments in the continental (Mazrui & Tidy, 1984: 346). Nkrumah came to decisively rely on the AATUF as a vehicle of his revolutionary Pan-African opinion.

4.6 The AATUF after 1964

Nkrumah's attitude towards the AATUF after 1964 emerges clearly from his address to a crowd of 30,000 Guinean members of DPG on May Day, 1966, shortly after the coup that removed him from power in Ghana:

The unity of African workers is essential to the achievement of unity and for the combat which will make it possible to establish a continental union government in Africa. It is towards this that AATUF has been set up with headquarters in Accra in order to serve as the haven of unity and as the spearhead for all the movements of workers in Africa (Quoted in Bentum, 1966:26).

From mid 1964 Nkrumah moved swiftly in his efforts to control the AATUF and to mesh it's structure with his organs of foreign policy: the Bureau of African Affairs and diplomatic missions abroad. As early as April, 1964 plans were under way to achieve these objectives. John Tettegah, in a letter addressed to Nkrumah dated April 14, 1964 assured Nkrumah:

We are just about to convene the second conference of the AATUF at Bamako where Ghana is making a definite bid to get the headquarters transferred from Casablanca to Accra and also the position of Secretary General (reprinted in *ibid*).

In preparation for the Bamako conference Nkrumah formed a powerful trio-committee comprising of his confidants and strategic personalities in his administration, Mr. Kojo Botsio (CPP), Mr. Dei Annan (B.A.A) and John Tettegah (TUC), to look into the financing of the conference by Ghana. This signified the growing importance of the AATUF in his political and labour schemata. Nkrumah spent over \$G.7,000 by the conclusion of the conference that lasted between 10 and 14 June 1964. This figure accrued from expenses incurred on lodging, entertainment and airlifting of delegates from Accra to Bamako and their entertainment before and after the Conference.

Tettegah was elected to the powerful post of Secretary-General created by the conference, and the AATUF's headquarters were transferred to Accra, a great victory to Nkrumah. Michael Kamaliza of the newly constituted National Union of Tanganyika Workers (NUTA) was elected one of the seven posts of vice-presidents. Ochola Mak' Anyengo, the secretary general of the newly formed militant Kenya Federation of Progressive Trade Unions (KFPTU) became one of the five secretaries. Against the background of the Bamako Conference was the phenomenal escalation of labour militancy throughout the continent. This manifested itself in form of numerous splitter unions that attended the conference and national unions, like that of Tanganyika, that joined the radical camp after independence. The election of Kamaliza to the AATUF's executive signified the growing importance of East Africa to Nkrumah, as well as the success of the rapprochement between Tettegah and Kamaliza following that meeting in Dar-es-Salaam in April 29, 1964.

Ghana's (Nkrumah's) attitude towards the OAU was summarized by Tettegah in a 28-page Report to the Bamako Conference. Tettegah declared that: "We do not want fake unity which will serve as the cover for neo-colonialist exploitation" (*Report to the Bamako conference. 10.6.64:3*). He continued:

A document alone cannot unite a continent of 250 million people. Only the inspiration and the organizational means provided by the charter could have done it and contents of the document would have become a reality only if the masses of Africa were mobilized into action (*ibid*: 3).

Nkrumah captured the ideological mood of the AATUF in this era of rekindled militancy in his address to the delegates to the Bamako Conference during a luncheon he had hosted in the famous Ideological Hut in the Flagstaff House. Nkrumah had warned them that

the struggle is not ended with the launching of the AATUF, but we are just about to start. The imperialists and their agents in Africa are not going to accept our victory without resistance and we must be vigilant (see Tettegah 19.6.64, 22.6.64 reprinted in Bentum).

The AATUF, through its charter, committed itself to revolutionary political unionism: "our role is first of all political, no worker is in a position to consider liberty as of no account nor democracy as sinecure", (*AATUF Charter*, 1964:5)¹². The AATUF charter divided Africa countries into two categories based on their corresponding ideological orientations: those that were following a "revolutionary road" and those under "neo-colonial and reactionary regimes." The first group consisted of the radical union centres that formed the AATUF. These were encouraged to rally behind political parties heading their governments, and to seek important place in economic planning in order to increase economic productivity and promote revolutionary consciousness. They were advised to:

Strive to rally all the democrats and patriots of the country around an authentic revolutionary political party whose politics correctly corresponds to the demands of the movement and to the concerns and feelings of the mass movement of the people at each stage (*ibid*: Chapter , IV:7).

¹²A copy of the AATUF Charter was obtained from Vicky Wachira's private collection.

In the latter case, the charter, among other steps proposed to raise high the workers' revolutionary consciousness "in the face of attempts at mystification, demagoguery and intimidation which were traditionally pursued by reactionary regimes in collaboration with imperialist and neo-colonialist forces." (*ibid*: Chapter IV:3b). The AATUF advocated the use of trade union strike action ...in order to exert pressure on the "national governments to adopt and follow revolutionary programmes for African independence and unity". The AATUF attitude toward the so called "reactionary regimes" stood at variance with the spirit and provisions of the OAU charter especially on the question of non-interference in the affairs of Other African States (Article ii). It symbolized Nkrumah's own attitude toward the OAU charter and the basis of the general question of African unity which he believed could not be achieved through the charter. In consequence, it increased the AATUF's unpopularity in the conservative circles as a 'subversive' labour organization, and indeed a representation of Nkrumah's own "subversive" activities in regard to other African states.

The AATUF had emerged from the Bamako conference with a highly centralized structure, a powerful secretariate and internally bureaucratized. Immediately after the conference Nkrumah, the CPP stalwarts and TUC leadership began to plan for a massive reinforcement of the AATUF structure by meshing it up with other instruments of Nkrumah's foreign policy, namely, diplomatic missions abroad, labour attaches and the powerful Bureau of African Affairs (BAA). According to a memorandum that Tettegah sent to Nkrumah dated 22 June 1964 entitled "**The Strategy of Work for the AATUF**" the underlying aim of this massive revitalization of the Federation was to transform it into an international organization which was to compare with such governmental organizations as FAO or UNESCO.

Mr. K.A Barden, the Director of the Bureau of African Affairs and widely

viewed as the overall co-ordinator of Nkrumah's African affairs forcefully argued for the meshing up of AATUF's structure with that of the Bureau. In a document entitled "All-African Trade Union Federation" he further argued that by integrating its work with that of the Bureau, the AATUF was likely to benefit from the intimate relations that the Bureau had established abroad with other African states and nationalist movements. Secondly, the bureau would provide the federation with invaluable information and supportive materials to facilitate its work. He further suggested that the AATUF's work should be organized according to geographical zones and in view of the importance of each zone.

Each zone was to be headed by a seasoned labour attaché. Zone organizers, he went on, would make periodical tours abroad and would submit a report on these tours to the AATUF Secretary General who in return would submit his recommendations to Nkrumah. During its operations, the posting of specific Labour Attaches in Africa came to depend on the strategic importance of the area. Such seasoned Labour Attaches as Inter-Kudzie and J.B. Ferguson were put in charge of zones. The latter for instance was in charge of East Africa Zone.

This combined effort by activists, and experts and the organizational effectiveness of the AATUF largely account for its success over a short span. The Federation was able to infiltrate unions in other parts of Africa and to entrench the radical opinion as we have shown in the case of Kenya.

The AATUF constitution stipulated that the federation should seek recognition and consultative status at the OAU, the United Nations and other specialized international institutions competent in economic and social fields (chapter vi, article 32:7-8). Accordingly, the federation applied for, and was granted "observer status" in the OAU meeting in Cairo in July, 1964 (Pan-Africa 11.12.64). It was during this meeting that Nkrumah came out defiantly in defence of his "Unions government" thesis. Nkrumah concluded his address to the meeting in

these defiant words:

Those of us who are ready to do so [accept the idea of union government] could go away from Cairo having agreed to the establishment of a union government in Africa (*ibid*: 35) . The federation also sought consultative status in ILO and the ECOSOC by December, 1964. Explaining the advantage of this consultative status in the ILO Tettegah argued that: under the auspices of ILO, we shall be promoting the interests of the workers of the continent of Africa (*Pan-Africa*, 11. 12. 64). Through this association with ILO the AATUF leadership hoped to project a distinct African personality in the organization. Secondly, through its participation in the ILO conferences the AATUF was able to articulate its position. At one stage Tettegah warned the ILO against being used as an instrument of imperialist policy. This was characteristic of the AATUF's general view of the international political economy in which imperialism was dominant (Busch, 1969:202).

From 1964 the AATUF was highly successful in its struggle against the ICFTU. While the Federation's prestige and influence in African labour confederation was rising the ICFTU's was on the decline. From 30 centres affiliated in 1962, hardly a year after the creation of AATUF, this figure had declined to fourteen by 1964. This was a far cry from the over thirty-three affiliates of the AATUF by 1965. The Confederations' membership in Africa had equally declined from 2,287,000 to 905,000 during the same period. (*ICFTU Eighth World Congress Report July, 1965* cited in Nelkin 1968:125)

By the end of 1964, the ICFTU lost its most celebrated national centre and AATUF's most formidable enemy, the KFL. Although this was a result of a conjuncture of many factors, AATUF's assistance to the KAWC, a splinter federation from the KFL was pivotal in forcing the KFL, to disaffiliate from the ICFTU, and its later disbandment by the Kenyatta Government by 1965. Against the backdrop

of declining ICFTU prestige the African-American Labour Centre (AALC) was formed by the AFL-CIO as a labour organization that would supersede the post-war role of the ICFTU and to ensure Washington's control of U.S labour activities in Africa, and to assert its hegemony in African labour against the threat of the AATUF. The formation of AALC signified a realignment in metropolitan labour after independence (Cohen, 1980:73).

Who financed the AATUF and its operations? It has been contended that the AATUF was dependent on the communist WFTU for its subventions, and by implication, that it was communist directed. Although assistance to the AATUF by WFTU and other communist organizations cannot be totally ruled out, this is often overplayed (Bentum, 1966; Ananaba, 1979). Suffice it to say that from the outset Nkrumah and his lieutenants were apprehensive of the enormous financial responsibilities that the work of the AATUF bequeathed Ghana. The Ghanaian labour leaders, as Tettegah noted in a memorandum dated 15 July, 1965, and quoted in part here below, had no illusions about this heavy burden:

At this initial stage the financing of AATUF's work has become the burden for Ghana alone since we are now in total control of the administrative machinery of the AATUF in furtherance of our African policy in mobilizing the African workers and educating them on the ideals and imperatives of African unity and the establishment of a continental union government. (Tettegah, 15.7.65, reprinted in Bentum, 1966, appendix).

There was, however, a limit in the extent to which Ghana could ably finance AATUF's operations. For instance, following the financial squeeze by the West on Nkrumah's Government in response to the disenchanting revolutionary policy that he pursued, it became very difficult for him to subsidize the operations of the AATUF fully. This became even more strenuous following the assassination of J.F. Kennedy in America, and the drastic cut in the American aid to Third World

countries by the (Lyndon) Johnson Administration after 1965. Coupled with this is the fact that none of the Western labour organizations was prepared to offer any assistance to the Federation, leave alone an olive branch. These problems notwithstanding, the fact that most of the AATUF's operations were meshed with the general Ghanaian African policy eased its financial woes substantially.

It is erroneous to assume that the WFTU's aid to the AATUF was easily forthcoming. Surprisingly, in the reality of the Cold War politics, the Soviet Union was no more enchanted by Nkrumah's stand on positive neutrality than the West. From an ideological perspective, the Soviets still considered Nkrumah as a bourgeois reformist. One Russian correspondent in Accra is quoted to have remarked: "If Nkrumah succeeds in convincing Ghanaians that what he is doing in this country is communism, our own cause [in Africa] will be doomed forever" (quoted in *Daily Nation*, 9.10.61). At the labour level, AATUF's relationship with the WFTU reached its lowest ebb in October, 1965 when the Ghana TUC failed to take a delegation to the former's World Congress in Warsaw, Poland.

This is not to say that the AATUF did not receive material assistance, or otherwise from the WFTU. In fact, the WFTU was the only international labour body that welcomed the AATUF's operations, perhaps because, unlike the ICFTU which had a longer history of involvement in African labour movement, the AATUF's policy of non-alignment did not hurt it much. Second, given the realities of the Cold War politics, it was morally justifiable and politically fashionable and expedient that when one poor Third World state or organization failed to secure amelioration of its financial problems by one bloc, it could seek for the same help from the rival bloc without necessarily compromising its stand on neutrality. Thus, Nkrumah and the AATUF could turn to the East for the assistance that the West was

not ready to give.

A sober appraisal of the truth underlying the AATUF-WFTU link is often marred by propaganda, falsehood and deliberate distortions characteristic of the Cold War politics. This is the framework in which Bentum's views on the 1965 AATUF's Provisional budget should be viewed. Unfortunately, Bentum's erratic and exaggerated statistics have been adopted unquestionably by some scholars to authenticate the case of communist patronage of the AATUF (Ananaba, 1979; Zeleza, 1982). In brief, Bentum's summary of the above-mentioned budget entailed the balancing of the Federation's commitments (£G 246,540) against its assumed income (£G 54,000). This left a balance of £G 192,540. According to Bentum, an anonymous member of the AATUF Executive Bureau had explained to him that Tettegah was given mandate by the Bureau to try to obtain the 192,540 pounds from "friendly socialist governments" and "friendly socialist organizations" (1966:32-33).

Bentum's budget summary fails to note some basic anomalies in the AATUF 1965 budget. The figure £G54,000 dollars was not a true indication of the federation's income from its affiliates. Contributors to the AATUF coffers are given as 11 union centres. Yet elsewhere in his book, Bentum has indicated that there were 17 independent African countries in which AATUF's affiliates were most dependable, 8 where they were not so dependable and eight 'committed' splinter unions in the formerly ICFTU-dominated areas. This brings the total of all due paying unions affiliated to the AATUF to thirty-three. Second, contributions by some union centres is misrepresented. For example, Ghana's contribution is given as £G10,000 per annum, but again elsewhere Bentum has indicated that Ghanaian contribution to the AATUF coffers from as early as 1961 had stood at £G 30,000 per year.¹³

¹³In a post-Nkrumah press conference on March 10, 1966, Tettegah had much to the disbelief of the attending journalists, put this figure at 20,000 Ghana pounds a year.

Finally, some commitments listed by the budget were long-term. For example, the Triennial Congress of the AATUF which was not to take place until mid 1967 was allocated £G 31,110 a sizeable proposition of the total. Bentum himself was not an innocent commentator. This book, carrying the sensational title *Trade Unions in Chains* was part of the literature that was churned out as part of a grand design by the NLC administration to demigrate Nkrumah. In fact, Bentum was the leader of the Ghana TUC that now supported the NLC regime.

4.7 The Coup

Nkrumah's government was overthrown in a coup d'état on February 24, 1966. The new regime of the "National Liberation Council" composed of a section of the coup and the police started a campaign that has been dubbed 'de-Nkrumization', a process of wiping out Nkrumah's influence in Ghana and possibly Africa. This process greatly affected the labour movement.

Tettegah was arrested and detained for over eight hours. he was later released, but not before he publicly denounced Nkrumah as "a political rascal, a trickster and a rogue". He was replaced as the Ghana TUC leader by Benjamin A. Bentum, a former minister in Nkrumah's cabinet. The new labour leadership was determined to wipe out Nkrumah's influence in the TUC. In an Extra-ordinary congress of the TUC on June 4, 1966, the new leadership reconstituted the TUC by introducing a number of changes in its constitution. All phrases in the constitution that linked the TUC with the CPP or Nkrumah's socialist policies were scrapped off. The leadership expressed the need to build a "trade union movement that really do stand for the workers of this country, and not as under the previous regime where trade unions became passive instruments for the dictates of the political party." The word 'democratic' replaced "socialist" throughout the

constitution signifying the moderate ideological orientation of the new leadership.

The fall of Nkrumah had far-reaching implications on the AATUF. By 1966, the Federation appeared to be heading towards the apex of its organizational effectiveness, and on the threshold of victory against the ICFTU. The coup dealt a staggering blow to the AATUF. A proposed plan to establish a labour college by the federation, parallel to the ICFTU's college in Kampala had to be shelved. Nkrumah had also been making plans to buy the ICFTU's Kampala college from the Obote government which had announced its decision to take it over. Finally, plans to launch an AATUF journal in Accra came to naught. Thus the Federation had cause to lament Nkrumah's fall. This was well exemplified by the AATUF's statement dated March 14, 1966 and signed by its president Mahjoub ben Seddick. The statement had dismissed the coup as "pro-imperialist" and the new leaders as "stooges of imperialism". It further called on the workers of Ghana "to give all indispensable support to Ghanaian workers and the people and the great leader, President Kwame Nkrumah, in their struggle to free Ghana from the grip of reactionaries, neo-colonialism and imperialism"(Bentum, 1966:25).

On its part the NLM regime hoped to use Tettegah to gain control over the AATUF and to undercut Nkrumah's influence in it. This became manifest from the outset. The regime extended its hand of friendship to Tettegah, and allowed him to retain his post in the AATUF's secretariat. The Federation's Headquarter in Accra continued to function normally. Tettegah was allowed to attend the AATUF's Board meeting in Dar-es-Salaam between April 4 and 8, 1966. While he was here he reiterated his earlier denunciation of Nkrumah in a message that indicated his position as an emissary of the NLC. Tettegah assured the AATUF that the new regime would allow it to function in Ghana.

The AATUF Executive Board refused to believe this. Tettegah was replaced by Tanzania's Michael Kamaliza, and the Federation's Secretariat was moved to Dar-es-Salaam, the emerging home of militancy in Africa. With its plans thus frustrated the NLC turned hostile to the AATUF. Tettegah was himself forced into exile when he visited Nkrumah in the Guinea exile home. If it was easy to wipe out Nkrumah's influence in the labour movement at home by taking over the TUC it was a difficult task to accomplish at the continental level.

What were the causes of the coup? Not everybody in Ghana, at least in the Army and the police, was at home with Nkrumah's socialist policies. There is also the theory of his high-handedness which the coup-makers detested. But it is usually doubted as to whether the coup-makers would have mastered the necessary courage to carry out the coup leave alone to sustain it sustain it after it occurred had they not enjoyed external support. Nkrumah claimed that the 'police and the military bourgeoisie' who carried out the coup were "aided by the imperialist forces". He specifically blamed the U.S Embassy in Accra for the prior preparation of the banners and posters that were pushed into the hands of "unwilling demonstrators" (1968:30).

What evidence is there to link the coup with an imperialist intrigue? Reading from the signs of the time, a keen political observer could not have failed to see a silhouette of imperialist hand in the fomentation and sustaining of the coup. "The enemies of Africa in Salisbury and Johannesburg are jubilant," said President Nyerere, commenting on the reaction to the coup in the West, "even a fool must begin to wonder if these revolutions are any good if they make our enemies jubilant." Nyerere went further to suggest why the imperialist camp may have had interest in the coup: "Not a single leader in Africa was more committed to the liberation of Africa than Kwame" (*The Reporter*, Vol.V.No. 154 11.3.66).

There appears to be further evidence to buttress this theory of Western involvement in the conspiracy against Nkrumah. This is drawn from the findings of Seymour Hersh, an investigative correspondent for the American *New York Times* in an article entitled "CIA Said to Have Aided Plotters who Overthrew Nkrumah in Ghana," first published in the paper on May 9, 1978. Hersh contends that "the Central Intelligence Agency advised and supported a group of dissident army officers who overthrew the regime of President Nkrumah" (1980:133). Hersh based his conclusions on the evidence of such CIA operatives as John Stockwell who in his book *In search of Enemies* wrote that the CIA station in Accra was encouraged by the CIA headquarters to maintain contact with dissidents of the Ghanaian army for the purpose of maintaining intelligence on the activities... it was given a generous budget and maintained intimate contact with the plotters as the coup was hatched. So close was the station's involvement that it was able to coordinate the recovery of some classified Soviet military equipment by the United States as the coup took place (*ibid*: 134).

There was also an incredible growth of the CIA station in Accra at the height of the operation in Ghana. It grew to include as many as 10 officers, some of them on temporary duty and operating under cover. According to Hersh's source, money was not a factor for those officers who were planning the coup: "We didn't have to pay them £5 million," the source said, "it was in their interest to take over the country" (*ibid*: 35). Hersh also cited the manner in which changes in the CIA itself occurred in the aftermath of the coup to buttress the view that the Agency had put a prize on the success of the coup in Ghana. Howard T. Banes, the station chief in Accra at the time of the coup was quickly promoted to a senior position in the Agency's hierarchy. He was immediately transferred from the Accra Station to Washington, where he became chief of operations for the African desk (*ibid*). This

leaves one with no doubt that it was not only in the interest of the West to have Nkrumah removed from power in Accra, but they participated actively in the actual preparations for and execution of the coup.

Conclusion.

In the foregoing chapter it has been demonstrated that the AATUF was a brainchild of Nkrumah's and was built on the back of Ghana TUC. It signified the radical position identified with Nkrumah at the continental level. Its centralized and highly bureaucratized model was a manifestation of Nkrumah's influence in its structure. Clearly the AATUF was an extension of Nkrumah's control over the Ghana TUC: its Secretary General was also the latter's leader and had its headquarters in Accra. It also depended on Nkrumah's instruments of foreign policy to spread its influence in other African countries. It was Nkrumah and Ghana who largely financed the organization. This dependence by the AATUF on Nkrumah was to prove dangerous when he was overthrown. With the rapid decline of radicalism on the continent, the AATUF also lost its grip on African labour. Indeed, the fall of Nkrumah was a great blow to radicalism but a great victory for imperialism in Africa.

PART TWO:
NKRUMAH AND THE KENYAN LABOUR MOVEMENT

"Imperialism knows no law beyond its own interests"
Dr. Kwame Nkrumah

CHAPTER 5

NKRUMAH AND THE PENETRATION OF REVOLUTIONARY PAN- AFRICANISM IN KENYAN TRADE UNIONISM

5.1 Introduction

The militant pan-African opinion identified with Nkrumah started making inroads into Kenyan trade union movement from 1957. By this time the Kenyan labour movement had just emerged from the dark emergency days when it was persecuted, and its freedom suppressed. In its ideological orientation it had drawn closer to the ICFTU which provided its leaders with financial and material support and protection when there was no other external assistance. Radicalism which had been suppressed during the emergency days was beginning to resurface.

The entry of Pan-Africanism into the scene precipitated an ideological clash that was to continually split the Kenyan trade union movement. At issue was the question of affiliation to international labour organisations, in the case of Kenya, the ICFTU. Against this background Nkrumah and the pan-African labour movement, which he greatly influenced, came to play a central role in the ensuing ideological struggle. Before independence, ICFTU's influence in Kenya continued to be strong. The Pan-Africanists did not come out quite strongly to support their allies in the struggle. Conflicts at the labour level found expression in politics in the context of complex client-patron relationships between labour and political elites. There was also the manifest interpenetratedness between forces at the local and international levels.

This chapter traces the infiltration of western labour influence into

Kenya from the late 1940's through the 1950's. It further analyses the resultant brand of trade unionism in the light of its ideological underpinnings. This sets the base for an indepth analysis of the nature and impact of Pan-African trade unionism in Kenya after 1957. The struggle at the labour level was an integral part of the general struggle by African workers for freedom and self-determination in the unfolding realities of rapidly decolonizing Africa.

5.2 Militant Trade Unionism and the Penetration of ICFTU and Western Trade Union Influence.

The rise of spontaneous militant trade unionism in Kenya during the colonial period manifested two salient tendencies. First, the inseparableness of socio-economic and political grievances and second, an overlap of trade union and nationalist agenda and leadership (Singh, 1969: 3). This is as true of the causes and leadership of the numerous localized strikes that occurred before the First World War, as it is explanatory of the general strike in the inter-war period that was sparked off by the arrest of Harry Thuku in 1922. Underlying the call of the strike by Thuku's East African Association (EAA) were both economic and political grievances. Thuku had agitated against increased poll-tax, reduction of wages, the notorious kipande (pass) System and the failure of the colonial government to pay compensations to the dependents of a hundred thousand African workers who served as 'Carrier Corps' in the First World War (Thuku, 1970:33).

In its international relations, besides projecting the same internal tendency towards an overlap of trade union and nationalist leadership and programmes, the Kenya trade union movement sought association with and participation in, trade union and political activities that enhanced its militant predilections. Salient here is the evident free determination of its international relationships. In 1939, for instance, the Labour Trade Union of East Africa (LTUEA), that had been established by the militant Kenyan trade unionist of Indian descent, Makhan Singh,

in 1937, played an active role in the International Conference on the Problems of Democracy, Peace and Humanity, which had been organized by the World Committee Against War and Fascism based in Brussels, Belgium. Characteristically the LTUEA was represented by Jomo Kenyatta, a nationalist leader, and Khrishna Menon a trade unionist (Singh, 1969:95-96). Such contacts were, however, extremely limited during the inter-war period. The inter-war period did not experience much of the phenomenal clash between trade union movement and the colonial capitalist state as the case was after 1945.

The policy of colonial capitalist state after 1945 consisted of an ardent desire to intervene and manage the development of the spontaneous Kenyan trade unionism and to separate nationalism or politics from economic and industrial grievances, and emphasize on the economic role of unions. Britain emerged from the war economically devastated, and immensely dependent on the colonies for economic replenishment. Second, there was a phenomenal penetration of multinational corporations and emergence of industrial enterprises that had taken root during the war. These two factors brought to the fore the need for a pliable and abundant labour force (Amsden, 1972; Van Zwanenberg, 1975; Kaplinsky, 1978). In international relations the colonial government discouraged Kenyan unions from associating with the Eastern (communist) trade union organizations and horse-bridled them towards a policy of acquiescence to the mute policies espoused by Western labour organizations. The implementation of these policies engendered a bitter struggle between the colonial administration and the militant trade union leaders. This struggle was accentuated by the escalating labour militancy that manifested itself in the numerous strikes and lock-outs during the post-World War II era. These reached their organizational apogee with the creation of African Workers Congress (AWC) led by Chege Kibachia in 1947 and the East Africa Trades Union Congress (EATUC) by Makhan Singh and Fred Kubai in May, 1949.

In January, 1947 Chege led 1500 workers in strike in Mombasa, that virtually paralysed the docks, railways, offices and banks. The colonial militarist

state wielded a heavy club against the strikers. The AWC was banned and Chege detained in Kabarnet, Baringo District of Kenya. The British were wary of the mass nature of the AWC and its colony-wide appeal to the Kenyan workers. Thus, it was necessary to check the proliferation of such mass unionism.

The colonial administration, albeit half-heartedly, allowed the creation of the EATUC, in the hope that it could provide a bureaucratic and non-political alternative to the AWC style of unionism. Coincidentally, the EATUC was formed at a time when the short-lived rapprochement between the East and the West at the trade union level had ruptured. The colonial administration in Kenya decided to massively intervene in colonial trade unions in order to forestall any eventuality of communist penetration. Besides, a pliant labour movement was considered a vital hub in enhancing productivity of the colonial economy, to prop up the war-torn metropolitan economies.

Affiliation to the ICFTU by colonial unions was considered central if their militancy and ideological disposition were to be contained. In other words, it was necessary to prevent colonial unions from coming into contact with pro-communist WFTU. Richard Luyt, the Kenyan Labour Commissioner in the 1950s, in his book, *Trade Unions in African Colonies*, published in 1949, discussed the dangers inherent in international contacts between colonial unions and non-Western (communist) labour organisations. He wrote:

Trade unionism in African colonies will have increasing contact with the trade union movement in the outside world and in adjacent territories. The union conferences will be sorting houses for ideas and contact points for leaders. They can have good effects but also dangerous ones (quoted in Woddis, 1961: 138).

This paranoia of harmful external influence on African trade unions engendered the curtailment of the latter's freedom to determine its international policy and association. The leaders of the EATUC had opted to be aligned to neither the

WFTU nor to ICFTU (Singh, 1969;206). They were highly suspicious that such an affiliation to the ICFTU would compel them to abandon the revolutionary cause and pursue mute policies or would drag them into the politics of the Cold War. But the colonial state categorically informed the Congress that its survival and fortunes would only be guaranteed by the colonial administration if it was affiliated to the ICFTU. E. Parry, the Assistant Labour Advisor to the Secretary of State to the Colonies, who visited Kenya in 1949, explicitly informed the EATUC officials that the attitude of the colonial state towards the Congress would largely depend on the latter's attitude to the ICFTU(*ibid*: 227).

The colonial labour structure was massively reorganised to cater for the demand of its new role of deradicalizing colonial unions. Numerous legal enactments were introduced to buttress this structure. Of this barrage of labour legislation; one analyst has observed:

Modern history surely knows no example of such an avalanche of laws and actions against a colonial trade union movement as that which hurtled down on the heads of the workers of Kenya in the short period of 1948-52 (Woddis, 1961;83).

The Sessional Paper no. 5 of 1949 changed the face of the whole colonial labour administrative structure. It increased its administrative powers and enabled it to check the escalating militancy in unions. The Labour Department was given more powers and a seat was reserved for the Labour Commissioner in the Legislative Council who became an Ex-Official. The paper hardly concealed the paternalism of the new era; it emphasized the need for "guiding incipient trade unions along the right lines". To this end, the paper recommended the creation of a hitherto non-existent post of a trade union advisor. J.S. Patrick arrived in Kenya in April, 1949 as the new trade union movement Advisor. (*East African Standard*, 9.11.49). His publications and public lectures were bitterly opposed by trade unionists and workers for their bias towards economism and anti-radicalism.(*ibid*: 27.4.50).

In May, 1950, the colonial government moved against the EATUC. It was banned and its leaders jailed on the charges of being officials of an unregistered organisation. The riots that ensued were crushed with unequalled callousness that epitomized the inherent violent predisposition of the colonial militarist state. Jack Woddis has satirized this excessive brutality by the state against the Kenyan workers in the following words.

Unprecedented armed force was used against the workers. One would have thought a war had broken out. Not content with baton charges and tear-gas, the (colonial) government employed Auster 'spotters' aircraft, RAF planes, Bren gun carriers, armoured cars and armoured tanks (1961: 120).

What had necessitated this brutality against the Congress and the Kenyan workers? In the few months before the ban was slammed on the EATUC the settler press started carrying out a strong propaganda campaign against the Congress (*Kenya Weekly News*, 24.2.50). They argued that the Congress was communist-inspired and led. This was indicative of the growing paranoia of the colonial capitalist state towards communism and its fear of the manifest strength and organizational effectiveness of the EATUC rather than an indication of the real impact of WFTU's close links with the former or the depth of communist penetration of Kenyan.

The Congress had intractably pursued political unionism and allied itself with the nationalist movement (KAU). Its incessant call for the release of Chege Kibachia, its recalcitrance and the meteoric rise in its membership worried the colonial administration. From a membership of 5,000 in May 1949, this figure had doubled to 10,000 by the end of the year, giving the Congress its manifest numerical prowess. Towards the end of 1949 the Congress successfully supported a 16-day strike by 2000 Transport workers in Nairobi (Minya, 6/4/91). In a word, the EATUC had brought labour militancy to its apex.

The collapse of the EATUC marked the commencement of a temporary retreat of militancy in trade unionism. Until the militant labour leaders were detained following the declaration of a State of Emergency in October 1952, labour activism infiltrated and dominated the nationalist movement. This injected militancy in the KAU which had hitherto concentrated on constitutionalism in its struggle for independence. The take-over of the Nairobi branch of KAU, by among other trade unionists, Bildad Kaggia and Fred Kubai irreversibly changed the trend of Kenya's nationalist and trade union struggle. They rejected the constitutionalism pursued by the political elites in KAU. They carried out a massive recruitment of members to the Party and trade unions. They demanded independence within three years and covertly gave oath to the people in preparation for the armed struggle that culminated in the outbreak of the Mau Mau movement (Singh, 1969:229-300, Kaggia, 1975).

Having banned the EATUC the colonial government paved the way for the penetration of ICFTU and other labour organisations into Kenya. From November 1951, the ICFTU and the AFL-CIO kept constant communication with Mr. Aggrey Minya, The leader of the Transport and Allied Workers Union, and briefed him to organize a pro-West moderate Trade Union Federation that would exclude such militants as Kubai and Kaggia (Minya, 6.5.91; Singh, 1969). This culminated in the formation of the Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions (KFRTU) led by Minya. The Federation, was immediately recognized by the British TUC and the ICFTU signifying its new ideological leaning to the West, a view that was reinforced by the fact that the Federation did not inform the WFTU of its formation. This ideological shift was vehemently criticized by the radicals who called on the KFRTU to rededicate itself to non-alignment and militant political unionism. This was the genesis of a major ideological split in the Kenya labour movement between the moderates and the militants, the former allied to the ICFTU, the British TUC and the AFL-CIO. The fall of EATUC and the rise of KFRTU marked the end of an era

and the rise of another, the era of collaboration between these western organisations and the Kenya labour movement.

5.3 The ICFTU, AFL-CIO and the KFL during the emergency.

The ideological schisms that emerged in the Kenyan trade union movement from the early 1950s had their genesis in the intervention by the colonial capitalist state and its international allies in the affairs of the movement for reasons already highlighted. This interventionism had diversionary and distorting effects on the subsequent involvement of the trade union movement in the Kenyan nationalist struggle. The intrusion of the ICFTU in Kenya trade unionism marked the beginning of a series of activities that were responsible for the wrangle that rocked the movement and the continental trade union unity from the late 1950s through the 60s (Zezeza, 1982;559).

The declaration of the State of Emergency on October 20th, 1952 created conducive conditions for the ICFTU to assert and entrench itself in the KFRTU. It also provided a subterfuge for the British Government to crush and destroy all the legacies of militant trade unionism. As the KFRTU was affiliated to the ICFTU (C.A. KFRTU/ICFTU, file 10) virtually all known militant labour leaders such as Kubai and Kaggia were arrested and either jailed or detained. The whole system of financial self-reliance by the unions was dismantled as union due collectors were arrested and detained *en mass* as Mau Mau sympathizers. The various union offices became haunted places. The heroic trade union movement that Chege Kibachia, Makhan Singh, Fred Kubai and Bildad Kaggia, among others, had built was reduced to a moribund union movement, that was saddled with stringent emergency restrictions.

During the dark Emergency days the ICFTU's role in Kenya was mystified and messianized. When the trade union leaders were harassed by the 'devil' of colonial

authorities, they sought refuge and redress of their grievances in the ICFTU 'haven'. It was only in the ICFTU conferences, as Minya came to realize when he attended the Third World Congress of ICFTU in Brussels in 1953, that an oppressed, humiliated Kenyan workers' leader could get a rostrum to address his afflictions, could get a sympathetic audience, and could momentarily regain his lost dignity. Minya was given an ovation for his moving speech. He concluded the speech with this stirring plea: "please come and see for yourselves the conditions which exist in my country. I would ask you from the bottom of my heart to send a delegation to Kenya. We need the help of the ICFTU. We ask you not to fail us" (Quoted in Goldsworthy, 1982:23).

With the mass of the Kenyan workers, who used to give authority and support to such leaders as Kibachia, Kubai or Singh, either incarcerated in detention camps or cowed to silence and subservience, the ICFTU and the Labour Department filled this vacuum and assumed the role of king-makers in the unions, with implicit powers to hire and fire. Following the above-mentioned trip, Minya had become Kenya's best-known trade unionist abroad overnight (*ibid*: 23). It is also during this trip, owing to the strong indictment he made against the colonial administration in Kenya, that he found his exit from the helm of the KFRTU (Minya, 6.4.91.).

Soon, Minya was to be replaced by Thomas Joseph Mboya as the head of KFRTU. The exit of Minya from the KFRTU leadership is partly attributed to a connivance among the ICFTU, the Labour Department, and Mboya himself, and partly to Minya's own dismal leadership qualities vis-a-vis those of Mboya, (Akumu, 1.5.91; Lubembe, 23.4.91; Singh, 1980:46). Mboya was a beneficiary rather than the author of this coup d'état which, to a great extent, involved the Labour Department and the ICFTU. When Jim Bury, the first ICFTU permanent representative to Kenya was dispatched to Nairobi, at the end of 1953, he was

briefed “to investigate particularly and with considerable circumspection the relationship between Minya, Mboya and other members of the General Council of KFRTU” ostensibly to determine the best of the leader among them (Kiloh, 1976: 309).

Compared to Minya Mboya was more brilliant, eloquent, and diplomatic. But Mboya's most outstanding advantage was that he, was a thorough economic conservative and ideologically polished in favour of the West; his political predisposition was antithetical to anything marxist or overly radical. Dennis Akumu, once a Mboya protege and later the latter's arch-rival summarized this ideological quality as follows:

Mboya distanced himself from extreme leftwingism of the WFTU (pro-communist) group. That endeared him to the ICFTU, the British TUC and AFL-CIO. Even those that thought that his demands were too radical somehow liked his distancing himself from anything that was Marxist-Leninist (Akumu, 1.5.91).

The ICFTU's policy carried with it a heavy dose of anti-communism internationally, and was a key player in the effort to get the Kenyan trade union movement on an even ideological keel. Mboya automatically became the west's best choice. The exit of Minya ushered in an era in which the ICFTU and other Western labour organizations came to play a pivotal role in financing and directing the policies of the KFRTU (later renamed Kenya Federation of Labour).

In view of the disrupted finances during the Emergency period, coupled with the absence of a check-off system, the KFL was rendered virtually dependent on external subsidies. For example, the total KFL income from dues collected from its affiliates in the 1954/55 fiscal year is estimated to have been a dismal 30 pounds. This is a far cry from a total of 1000 pounds that the Federation received from the

ICFTU during the same period (Kiloh, 1976:313). In addition to this, a report by Jim Bury to the ICFTU on the financial position of Kenyan unions dated January 14, 1955 reveals that a total of 7600 shillings was given by the ICFTU to specified national unions, 7700 shillings for the Weekend Schools, and a total of 1,752 shillings per-month for a KFL newsletter, office expenses and a union car (*ibid*). In exchange for the generous donations, the KFL, its affiliated unions attuned themselves to the anti-radical stance of the ICFTU internally, and later, its anti-communist advocacy abroad.

Foreign subsidies had a negative impact on the quality of KFL leadership, its organizational structure and the overall vitality of the labour movement. Most of its leaders were corrupt and self-centred. On this point, Jim Bury wrote to the ICFTU on October 6, 1954 saying: “to many of the Africans here [Kenya] in the unions it is not a matter of need, it is [a question of how much we can get out of [the] ICFTU” (Kiloh, 1976:313). Second, labour leaders grew lethargic, lazy and overlooked the dire need to mobilize the rank and file membership. One critic has made the following indictment against the Federation’s leadership:

One effect of regular ICFTU subsidies was to make union organizers lazy; they didn’t go out to organize the workers but waited at their office desks for cheques to arrive (Odinga, 1967:309).

In order to salvage its declined popularity and credibility in the eyes of its external financiers, the KFL bureaucrats over-publicised the greatness” with which it came to be associated. This did not please the ICFTU,s representatives in Nairobi. Newman, in a letter to the ICFTU dated August 27, 1956, did not only make a strong indictment against the KFL but also recommended the abolition of this bureaucracy and its replacement with a mass organization suitable for semi-urbanised migrant workers:

The number of trade union members had been greatly exaggerated and that the trade union structure which had been imposed was unsuitable

for semi-urbanized migrant workers. Instead of the hierarchical structure of the federation, national unions and branches, we believe that a single mass organization to which all workers could belong was "the only way to progress" (cited in Kiloh, 1976; 318).

Although it is debatable as to whether there was a labour aristocracy within the Kenyan wage labour force by the second half of the 1950s, the KFL carried strong elements of Fanon's paradigm of a monolithic labour aristocracy that stalked the African labour scene during the colonial period. Its leadership made negligible efforts to incorporate the rank and file members into the union, owed no allegiance to them and allowed an astonishing gap to exist between it and its lower echelons. It remained largely urban. It looked and owed allegiance to the ICFTU and Western labour organizations from which came generous subsidies. Thus, the relationship between the KFL bureaucracy and the mass of the rank and file workers on the one hand, and between it and the ICFTU (and the West) on the other, laid the foundation for the future neocolonial relationship. It also indicated the centrality of the labour movement in facilitating the infiltration of neo-colonialism.

As long as the KFL continued to adhere to conservative policies, to check the ascendancy of radical unionism, to keep the number of strikes to their minimal level and to ensure a constant supply of pliable labour force for the expanding colonial economy, the KFTU was prepared to continue subsidizing and propping it.

This support was intensified by the end of 1958 when the forces of revolutionary pan-Africanism and pan-African trade unionism began to pose a major threat to Western hegemony in African labour. The easing of the colonial restrictions on politics and trade unionism after 1957 triggered the resurgence of the and heightened opposition to ICFTU's involvement in Kenya. Third, American labour leaders, in anticipation of the imminent decolonization of Kenya, started forging close alliance with labour leaders in the hope that "the obscure trade unionist of today may well be the President or Prime Minister of tomorrow" (Schechter

1980:59). In other words, they started grooming a compradorial class which would become the future allies of neo-colonialism in the Kenyan periphery.

To a large extent, it is against this historical background that Mboya's meteoric rise in both the Kenyan labour and nationalist movements and in the pan-African trade unionism can be explained. Mboya was identified as a credible nationalist and an economic conservative, a fact that made him a beneficiary of American policy of "selective liberation" explained as the policy of supporting a few 'credible' leaders to take over the reigns of power from colonialism (*ibid*: 59). Mboya became a beneficiary of massive assistance from, numerous western organizations. Soon, he became a virulent anti-communist crusader and the ICFTU's man in Africa. The KFL became a formidable front against the mounting tide of revolutionary pan-Africanism (*ibid*: 59)

By 1957, when pan-Africanism started making inroads into Kenya, Mboya was simultaneously extending the horizons of his hegemony in Kenyan politics and in the ICFTU, as the Chairman of regional organisation in East and Central Africa, and in the politics of pan-Africanism.

5.4 Nkrumah Mboya and the infusion of Pan-African Trade Unionism

From 1957 when Nkrumah's policies in Ghana became increasingly extroverted and externalized, he focused his attention on Kenya. Two reasons are germane to the explanation of Nkrumah's interest in Kenya: the Mau Mau uprising and his friendship with Kenyatta. "The 'Mau Mau' uprising in Kenya," he wrote in a foreword to Oginga Odinga's autobiography, "brought even closer Ghana's attention to the struggle of our brothers in Kenya" (1967:xiv). The need to secure the release of Jomo Kenyatta, Nkrumah's colleague and compatriot in the nascent stages of their nationalist struggle back in London and the acclaimed leader of the Kenyan nationalist movement formed, to a great extent, the *prima facie* reason for

his involvement in the Kenyan nationalist and trade union movements. This is the context in which Nkrumah's encounter with such Kenyan nationalist leaders as Mbiyu Koinange, Joseph Murumbi and the nationalist-cum-trade union leader, Tom Mboya took place.

Even before Nkrumah invited Mboya, among other prominent African nationalists such as Nyerere, Azikiwe, Apithy and Murumbi, to attend the festivities marking the first anniversary of Ghana's independence, in July 3, 1957, Mboya's popularity as a prominent trade unionist was manifest in Africa. (KNA, LAB 8/154; Thompson, W.S. 1969:31). There were correspondences between him and the Ghana TUC leaders which occurred within the framework, and under the aegis, of the ICFTU (C.A, KFRTU/KFL file 17; C.A, KFL/Ghana TUC, file 186; KNA, LAB 16/36/4). Nkrumah himself was under the impression that Mboya was not only going to push for Kenyatta's release in Kenya, but was going to play a pivotal role in consolidating revolutionary pan-Africanism, in both the political and trade union movements.

During the above mentioned festivities, Nkrumah effusively exhorted Mboya on the approach to political mobilization. He cautioned him against the tendency towards elitist politics with emphasis on finesse in parliamentary debates. Nkrumah was naturally alluding to the elitist approach that Mboya had been pursuing since his election to the Legislative Council in March, 1957. Nkrumah advised Mboya to organize a disciplined mass movement, a party machine and a party paper. Enthused by this advice, Mboya wrote to Dennis Akumu, the Organizational Secretary of his Nairobi Peoples' Congress (NPC) back at home saying that he had found "more determination than ever to carry forward the struggle for freedom" (Akumu, 1.5.91; Goldsworthy 1982:99).

On Kenyatta, considered a villain by the Kenyan Government and languishing in detention, Nkrumah exhorted Mboya to exploit Kenyatta's suffering to mobilize

and unite the Kenyan nationalist movement. He said:

You must have your political martyr, and the less acceptable he is to the existing government, the better (*The Reporter*, 29.4.61).

Mboya arrived home to excitedly unfurl a banner depicting Nkrumah, Ghana's flag and the magical date of Ghana's independence before a mammoth crowd (Goldsworthy, 1982:100). In his address to this crowd, Mboya recalled the great tribute that the Ghanaian people had paid to Kenyatta whose name in Kenya was already a stigma:

When I rose to address a public meeting in Ghana, the crowd burst out saying "Jomo Kenyatta's body lies a rotting in the prison X3 but his soul matches on". You can imagine my feelings as I stood on the platform looking at thousands of Ghanaian people paying tribute to one of our people (*ibid*: 103)

Despite the alacrity with which Mboya received Nkrumah's advice, the Kenyatta issue was to remain a difficult one. Mboya for example, was not prepared to incur the wrath of the colonial government and settlers by declaring Kenyatta a martyr as Nkrumah had advised. Kenyatta was a 'devil' and a 'communist' in the eyes of the latter. The furthest Mboya was prepared to go was to call for Kenyatta's release. "We shall have failed in our duty if we do not demand his freedom", he told the aforementioned crowd (*ibid*: 103).

An irreparable breach between Nkrumah and Mboya followed on the heel of All-African Peoples' Conference in 1958. According to some analysts the main reason of this breach was Nkrumah's jealousy of Mboya's growing prestige in Pan-African politics. He was for instance, the chairman of AAPC and was to be the chairman of its second conference due to take place in Tunis in 1960. (Thompson W.S, 1969, Busch, 1969). But it will be recalled that it was Nkrumah and Padmore who proposed and canvassed for Mboya to be elected to the two posts. The

ideological gap between Mboya and Nkrumah had widened after 1958. This gap became unbridgeably wide when Mboya rejected the proposal by the militants to establish an autonomous Pan-African Labour Federation owing "allegiance to mother Africa" only (Busch, 1969:94). While Nkrumah spearheaded the move to create an autonomous Pan-African labour organisation and not affiliated to either the ICFTU or WFTU Mboya embarked on consolidating the ICFTU's hold in Africa. He established the first, and the only, ICFTU's Regional Office in Africa, that is, the Area Office of East, Central and Southern Africa under his chairmanship. This ideological drift to the West reached its apex when, in his widely televised American tour in May, 1959 in which he was received by Vice-President Richard Nixon Mboya started crying the wolf of communism. In fact he challenged the U.S not to take the issue of communist penetration in Africa lightly. He said in part:

Africa will soon be the area of major world consequences. The West must realize that it cannot fight communism successfully by negative measures, short-term plan and emergency reactions. As I see it, the West must cease waiting until the communists strike. The West should sell international democracy just as they [the Russians] try to peddle international communism (Melady, 1962:56).

This fact possibly led the Pan-Africanists to the conclusion that Mboya, as the Chairman of AAPO, might be used by the Americans to undermine them and perhaps to keep AAPO in cold storage.

This ideological conflict between Mboya and the sponsors of the revolutionary Pan-African opinion was transposed into the emerging conflicts between him and a section of trade union and political elites in Kenya. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga a powerful member of the African Elected Members Organization (AEMO) emerged as the leader of the left of the nationalist movement and an ideological rival to Mboya. Second, Arthur Ochwada, Mboya's deputy in the KFL and "a slow-speaking intellectual, (with) unquestioned ability and manifest ambition" had put up

a spirited challenge to Mboya's trade union hegemony from 1957 (Goldsworthy, 1982:154). When he failed to dislodge Mboya Ochwada launched the Kenya Trade Union Congress(KTUC) as a haven for anti-Mboya elements in the labour movement and later as the ideological counterpoise to the KFL. From the Lancaster House Conference, Ochwada and Odinga drew closer as the latter sought to establish a trade union clientele in the KTUC with the aim of undercutting Mboya's trade union power-base.

If we may interpose a few comments at this stage in relation to the KFL-KTUC conflict, this did not acquire ideological overtones until the encounter between Ochwada and the sponsors of radical Pan-African trade unionism after 1959. Hitherto sought recognition and material support from the ICFTU with no avail (Cohen, 1980:72). This led some observers to the conclusion that the Mboya-Ochwada conflict was a manifestation of the tribalistic tendencies and personality rivalries then rampant in the higher echelons of the KFL leadership (Lubembe, 1968:116). Thus, to a great extent, it was the dire need for material support rather than a spontaneous ideological impulse on the part of the KTUC leadership that initially led it to embrace Pan-African militancy. But that subsequent events compelled the KTUC to remain faithful and even serve as a bulwark for Pan-Africanism in the Kenya trade unionism cannot be denied.

With his earlier plans of forging an alliance with Mboya in this attempt to infiltrate Kenya thwarted by the aforementioned ideological differences, Nkrumah set out to establish fresh links with Odinga, Ochwada and other leaders of the emerging radical front. To this end, Nkrumah and the AAPC organizers invited both Odinga and Ochwada, (although the former was not a trade unionist), to attend the tempestuous trade union conference to launch the AATUF held in Accra in

November, 1959. The position of this conference vis-a-vis that of Mboya and the simultaneous ICFTU conference in Lagos was discussed in the previous chapter. Suffice it say that Ochwada's and Odinga's attendance at the Accra AATUF conference marked the re-launching of internal ideological and personality conflicts in Kenya at the continental arena. It also epitomized the coalition of trade union and political forces in the radical and conservative camps respectively in the unfolding clientelist politics at both the internal and continental levels.

During the conference, Nkrumah and Odinga registered their mutual concern with the continued incarceration of Kenyatta. Nkrumah's conflict with Mboya from the late 1958 also featured prominently. Odinga has documented, *inter alia*, his discussions with Nkrumah on these issues in his autobiography:

Nkrumah felt about Kenyatta's release the same way as I did (Sic): that the government was keeping the genuine leadership of Kenyan African struggle in indefinite detention until it had found a substitute leadership of men who would gently, flatteringly, but given a modicum of participation in government but only as much and the pace, as the government decreed (1967:165).

Nkrumah also informed Odinga that his differences with Mboya were sparked off by their different views on non-alignment and continued affiliation of African labour movement to international labour organizations. Thus, Nkrumah and Odinga were able to strike a common ideological cord and to synchronize their programmes at both the Pan-African and internal levels in relation to their aim of influencing the process of decolonization in Kenya.

While it was relatively easy for Nkrumah to manoeuvre Mboya out of the Pan-African politics and the AAPC leadership after the AAPC's second conference in Tunis in 1960, it proved an uphill battle to wipe out Mboya's influence in the Pan-African trade unionism. After the Tunis Conference, Nkrumah moved against Mboya with the aim of wiping out his trade union influence at the continental level.

In relation to Kenya, Nkrumah was intent on penetrating the pro-Mboya trade union bureaucracy and supplanting it with a labour clientele that would be amenable to the ideal of revolutionary Pan-Africanism abroad, and radical nationalism at home. Henceforth, the AAPC, coupled with the Bureau of African Affairs and the Ghanaian press, became a suitable weapon in Nkrumah's ideological war with Mboya.¹⁴

Some scholars have documented how Ochwada was put in the pay-roll of the Bureau and effectively co-opted into the colossal and multi-faceted machine that Nkrumah had built to prop up revolutionary opinion (Busch, 1969:94). In this context Ochwada and Mamadou Jallow of Gambia were sponsored for a trip to America and the Scandinavian countries to solicit support for the envisaged launching of an autonomous African Trade Union Federation around May 1960. In the wake of a visit made by Mboya to Nkrumah in April, 1960, Ochwada who had just returned from this trip explained the objectives of the trip and attempted to place Mboya's own visit to Nkrumah in the context. In a letter to the American Committee on Africa, dated April 4, 1960 and sent from Accra, Ochwada had said:

We look to America and the Scandinavian countries to be neutral towards the establishment of the Africa's trade unionism and that is why the African trade unionists have chosen me and Mr. Jallow to come to

¹⁴Mboya did not attend AAPC conference, although he was its Chairman. The conference had coincided with the Lancaster House Conference which he considered germane in determining his own political future and that of Kenya. He had, however, sent Dr. Njoroge Mungai to the AAPC conference, and Dennis Akumu to the "Preparatory committee meeting for the AATUF". In his absence, Mboya was replaced by Kojo Botsio, Ghana's Foreign Minister, as the AAPC's Chairman without much haranguing or acrimony. A tape that Mboya had sent to be played at the beginning of the conference was delayed until two days later, and even then, it was played inaudibly in an ostensible move to wipe out his influence in the AAPC. Akumu who, unlike his mentor, had a radical tinge from this point drew closer to radical Pan-African trade union opinion. Although he did not render a powerful hand in the onslaught against Mboya's KFL during the colonial period, Akumu was to turn tables against Mboya immediately after 1963 and pave the way for the demise of the KFL and usher in a temporary victory for the AATUF (Akumu, 1.5.91).

America and Scandinavia to explain to you of the Africa's stand on trade unionism. The African people are frankly and openly against the so called mastership of the metropolitan cities of Brussels and London-Paris which control the ICFTU. We are determined to break away from it and build our own Trade unionism independent of any ties with colonial cities and communism... we have defeated Tom Mboya everywhere in Africa and he has just come to our leader Dr. Kwame Nkrumah to whom he has apologized his mistakes of trying to divide Africa (quoted in *ibid*: 94).

Although there is no evidence linking Ochwada's contention with what transpired between Nkrumah and Mboya in their April 1960 meeting, it can be extrapolated that Mboya was greatly concerned about the damaging campaign waged against him in the Ghanaian press and the increasing diplomatic and material support that the Ghanaians were giving to Mboya's opponents at home. Little, in terms of agreement between Nkrumah and Mboya was achieved in their meeting. Soon, Nkrumah postponed the AATUF's inaugural conference. In a letter dated May 17, 1960 that Mboya sent to the American Committee on Africa he bitterly castigated Nkrumah for counselling the conference(*ibid*).

A barrage of anti-Mboya campaign ensued in the Ghanaian press. Mboya was branded an "imperialist stooge, under the thumb of the Americans" (Mboya, 1963:250). Subsequent developments in this conflict displayed two inter-related trends in the Kenyan trade unionism. First, a tendency by the radical political elites to establish a labour clientele parallel to that of Mboya in a bid to undercut the latter's power-base. Second, the closing of ranks between radical trade unionist and these political elites. For a while, at least up to 1961, the Pan-African opinion did not play a major role in these internal dynamics. The Ghanaian's new strategy was to woo Mboya to accept their position on the issue of international affiliation.

Odinga had organized the Sugar Plantation Workers and the Tea Plantation

workers' unions and used them against Mboya in the KFL. He had also resisted efforts by Mboya to organize his workers at the Ramogi Press in Kisumu into the KFL affiliated Printing and Kindred Unions. Mboya's retaliation to these efforts by Odinga was to foment a strike among the workers at Odinga's own Ramogi Press. Thus, political battles were fought in the trade union arena (Goldsworthy, 1982).

On the other hand the inter-penetratedness of forces in the trade union and political spheres was vividly expressed by the generous subsidies that Odinga gave to the KTUC and Ochwada. When KANU was formed in June 1960, Mboya and Ochwada were pitted together in their struggle to get the coveted seat of Secretary-General. Ochwada, whose KTUC could not provide him with a trade union power-base comparable in strength to that provided by the KFL to Mboya, came to rely on the political backing by Odinga, Kodhek and other members of the radical front. Mboya defeated Ochwada with only one, but crucial vote. Ochwada settled for the post of Assistant Secretary General. With the formation of KANU, the conflict between the two rival ideological factions was internalized within the party. As a result numerous perennial intra-party ideological squabbles and schisms trailed the party through the first half of the 1960s.¹⁵

At the same time there emerged within KANU a small but vociferous Ginger Group. This group comprised, among other trade unionists, Dennis Akumu, Ochoia Mak'Anyengo from the KFL and Vicky Wachira among others from the KTUC. This group favoured the revolutionary Pan-African opinion identifiable with Nkrumah. They also took a radical stand on such specific issues as land allocation and Kenyatta's release (Akumu, 16.9.91).

¹⁵For a detailed discussion on unions and clientelist policies in Kenya see Richard Sandbrook, 1975 Chapter 6.

That membership to the Ginger Group transversed the divides of membership of either the KFL or the KTUC, and that it enabled even members of the conservative KFL to pursue radical policies in politics, partly explains why it was easy for members of the Ginger Group to reach a *modus vivendi* after independence and to challenge the KFL.

The Ginger Group supported the KANU left in politics at this early stage to ensure that the party did not form a government without Kenyatta (*ibid.*: 16.9.91). Thus, even when KANU won election in May 1961, it refused to form a government. As it shall be shown in the next chapter, after independence, this group drifted to the radical section of KANU, and established its trade union clientele.

5.6 Impact Of The Split In Pan-African Labour

Prior to the AATUF'S inaugural conference in May 1961, two occurrences widened the rift between Mboya and the sponsors of AATUF. First, was the breach of the Nairobi Declaration that was signed between Tettegah and Mboya and second, the publication of the "Great Conspiracy" pamphlet that aligned Mboya with a conspiracy with the West to permanently keep Africa in thrall. Tettegah visited Nairobi in November 1960 with the aim of convincing Mboya to accept the position of the militant Pan-Africanists on the issue of affiliation. For a while, Tettegah's venture proved successful. A joint declaration was signed by the two trade union leaders on behalf of their respective labour organizations. The declaration had said *inter alia*:

Both organizations subscribe to the policy of positive independence and non-alignment as between the power blocs, East and West, and warn against any country, political policy, or trade unionism being used as pawns in the struggle. The establishment of AATUF will help to guard against this possibility. It is agreed that AATUF should not be affiliated to any of the international labour organizations we find nothing in the present position that would make it difficult for both centres to participate fully in the formation of the AATUF (quoted in Legum, 1962:84-5).

Mboya's acceptance to sign this Declaration revealed his own ambivalence on this issue of international affiliation. But it appears that Mboya's aim in signing the Declaration was to extract a tacit promise from the Ghanaians that they would cease to subsidize Ochwada and that the latter would be made to reaffiliate to Mboya's KFL. Lack of commitment to the idea of disaffiliation on the part of Mboya, and the unwillingness by the Ghanaians to stop assisting Ochwada prejudiced any attempt to implement the Nairobi Declaration. Instead, hatred, acrimony and distrust between the two sides were intensified. The Ghanaians accused Mboya of being a liar and an insincere man (Busch, 1969:100).

The apogee of these haranguing and acrimonious exchanges, came in December 1960. A secret paper entitled "The Great Conspiracy Against Africa"¹⁶ was being circulated in Africa. The paper was said to have been an annex to the Cabinet papers on the British policy in Africa. But its publication in Africa was attributed to the AATUF, and carried a preface by Gogo Chu Nziribe of the Pro-AATUF Nigeria Trade Union Congress. The paper identified Mboya with a grand American design to undercut British hegemony in Africa. The paper complained that America, a "special ally" of the British was taking "advantage of the difficult situation in which the United Kingdom and other European powers find themselves [after the war] to replace their influence and interests by direct American machinery of the ICFTU and American contacts that had been built up with the American leaders for this purpose" (Schechter *et al.*, 1980:60). On Mboya's role in this conspiracy the paper said in part:

¹⁶The original paper was marked "UK EYES ONLY" and was dated December 21, 1959. It had previously been published in an extensive summary by the Soviet Paper, *Trud* in January, 1960. The British spokesman in the Moscow Embassy had asked the Soviet Government to repudiate it claiming it was forgery but his request was rejected (Morris: 1967: 105-6). Perhaps, it had reached Africa via the East, in the communists' attempt to discredit the activities of the American unions in Africa.

In agreement with the State Department and the CIA, the Americans have provided secret undercover support for such leaders as Tom Mboya, the general secretary of the Kenya Federation of Labour and the Chairman of the ICFTU Area Committee for East, Central and Southern Africa (Quoted in Morris, 1967:109-110).

The paper went on to assert that:

We have reasons to believe there is an understanding between him [Mboya] and the Americans and the whole emphasis on the plan for autonomy of Africa Regional Organizations is indeed to be used by the Americans as an indirect means for spreading their influence in Africa (*ibid.*: 110).

Mboya complained, in a letter that he wrote to Tettegah, about the contents and distribution of the pamphlet. Tettegah, on behalf of Ghana TUC and AATUF, denied any responsibility and attached a press release of December 13, 1960 to his letter of reply to Mboya. He further gave the alibi that the AATUF had not been formed nor had there been held any conference to discuss the paper.

The ascription of the document to the AATUF was possibly meant to enhance its image and credibility as a genuine anti-imperialist organisation. Second, it cast the ICFTU as an imperialist labour front in Africa. At this time when the AATUF was all set to call for disaffiliation from all international labour bodies, this link with the paper was a subtle propaganda weapon in its arsenal. Tettegah's denial of the AATU's involvement in the publication and circulation of this pamphlet on the other hand was necessary in order not to alienate or antagonize Mboya. Yet it signified the hypocrisy that was the hallmark of the relationship between the two. This conflict was transposed into the internal politics in Kenya with the radicals discrediting Mboya as an imperialist stooge and calling for the disaffiliation of the KFL from the ICFTU.

This victory of the adherents of revolutionary Pan-Africanism in Kenya and at the continental level was crowned by the inauguration of the AATUF in May, 1961. That the combined Kenyan delegation from the KTUC and the KFL was the largest in Casablanca, attests to the growing importance of Pan-African unionism in the Kenyan labour politics. The conference was apparently, a diplomatic victory for KTUC which was accorded equal status with the KFL. Although Mboya served in the prestigious capacity of Chairman of the Conference's constitutional committee he was "unable to direct the conduct of the conference" (*The Reporter*, 10.6.61:21). Thus, while the KTUC was quickly affiliated to the AATUF, Mboya's KFL refused to affiliate for what the KFL leadership called "undemocratic and authoritarian" character of the formed Federation (*ibid*).

The defeat of Mboya and the conservatives at the Pan-African trade union level created fear and uncertainty in the KFL of a revitalized AATUF. This fear was based on the fact that the AATUF would finance the KTUC to fight the KFL. Mboya articulated this fear in the terse question:

One question that many leaders still ask is who will finance the AATUF, especially now that there is emerging two political blocs among the African states? If financed by either bloc will the AATUF be used as a political weapon against some states in Africa? (*The Reporter*, 10.6.61:21).

In response to Mboya's question John Tettegah, the newly elected AATUF's First Secretary, confirmed Mboya's fears when he issued the famous threat:

We shall isolate them, break them, enter their countries and form AATUF unions there. It's as simple as that: total War (Mboya,

In the embattled KFL in fear of a revitalized AATUF, the former came to play a crucial role in the establishment of the African Trade Union Confederation (ATUC) discussed in the previous chapter, as an ideological counterpoise to the AATUF. With the inability of the ATUC to give an effective challenge to the AATUF, on the one hand, and the diminishing fortunes of the KFL in Kenya, Mboya now concentrated on consolidating the KFL as a powerful force to the right of the KTUC.

5.6 Labour Conflict After Kenyatta's Release

By mid 1961 virtually all restrictions that had been imposed on trade unions during the emergency had been lifted. Most of political prisoners including the Kapenguria men were released. This engendered a resurgence of radicalism in the labour and political movements. The entry of the Kapenguria prisoners, Fred Kubai, Bildad Kaggia, Kung'u Karumba, Paul Ngei, Achieng' Oneko and Jomo Kenyatta around whom a strong political cult had evolved changed, radically and the equation of political and trade union alliances. (Clayton and Savage, 1974:436-37).

Realizing this, Mboya, fronting for the conservatives, sought to co-opt these leaders into his trade union bureaucracy, and to identify with the "Kenyatta cult". Underlying these moves was the need on the part of Mboya, to prevent his rivals in the KTUC and the KANU left from identifying with these heroes and, second, by incorporating the pre-emergency trade union leaders into the KFL, he hoped to prop up the waning prestige and popularity of the KFL bureaucracy. This was particularly crucial at this time when Mboya was using the KFL and his labour clientele to undercut the influence of his opponents in KANU. Kubai and Makhan Singh were successfully lured into the KFL in which they became key officials. A totally new post of a Director of Organizations was created for Kubai who was

Mboya further, sought to identify with the 'Kenyatta cult' to not only outmanoeuvre his rivals in KANU but to bring about the dissolution of the KTUC. Moves to this end started in early October, 1961 when Mboya announced that October 20, 1961, the day Kenyatta and the Kapenguria heroes were arrested, would be celebrated by the KFL as Labour Day. This was bitterly contested by the KTUC leadership. Ochwada however, fell to Mboya's trap when the latter announced that a rally, to be addressed by Kenyatta, the Kapenguria prisoners and himself, would take place that day. In this fray, Ochwada announced the dissolution of the KTUC (Clayton and Savage, 1974:437). However, the KTUC Executive did not only deny this but went ahead to suspend Ochwada from its leadership of the KTUC (Wachira: 9.5.91). Finally, he resigned. The new KTUC leadership set the Congress on the warpath against the KFL.

The KTUC on its part did not fail to appreciate the advantage that accrued from identifying with Kenyatta and the Kapenguria men. In fact, they had attempted from the outset to recruit Kubai in their ranks. They launched a 'Kubai Fund' with the object of building a house and buying a car for him as the government had done for Kenyatta¹⁷ (Wachira, 9.5.91). But they were outdone in this by Mboya. The KTUC called on Kenyatta to maintain a magisterial position and desist from partisanship in political and trade union affairs. "Kenyatta knows very well that there are two labour central organizations and if he is to ally himself to one that means he does not actually know what he means by [the] unity he calls for" (KTUC, *Press Release* 13.10.61)¹⁸. Thus, the release of Kenyatta and his colleagues, far from solving the differences between the KTUC and the KFL exacerbated them.

¹⁷This appears to have been an attempt to lure and co-opt Kenyatta to moderate policies and accept the government-propelled and managed decolonization programme.

¹⁸All the KTUC documents to be cited here and after in this study have been obtained from the private collections of Vicky Wachira.

13.10.61)¹⁸. Thus, the release of Kenyatta and his colleagues, far from solving the differences between the KTUC and the KFL exacerbated them.

The rapprochement between Mboya and the KFL on the one hand, and Kenyatta and his fellow ex-detainees on the other was shortlived. Kenyatta gradually became suspicious of Mboya's intentions. This was given impetus by the fact that Mboya continued to receive massive subsidies from the West (*The Reporter*, 15.9.62). Kenyatta also believed that such "foreign monies which was given to individuals for the purpose of helping them corrupt leaders and people in an attempt to build themselves politically" was behind the disintegration of such countries as Congo (Zaire) and the "elimination of the best nationalist leaders like Patrice Lumumba" (*Daily Nation*, 17.8.62). Indubitably, Kenyatta perceived Western subsidies to Mboya as a threat to himself and his political future. This increasingly estranged him from Mboya and drove him closer to the KANU left led by Odinga.

In one public rally in Nairobi, Mboya's 'fiefdom', accompanied by Odinga and Julius Kiano, Kenyatta referred to Mboya and his supporters as 'insects' for accepting funds from imperialists. (*The Reporter*, 1.9.62). This ushered in a political show-down and muscle-flexing by Mboya and Kenyatta. Mboya, who enjoyed the support of a strong labour clientele was better armed for the ensuing battle. The rumour that the KFL was planning to transform itself into a labour party was allowed to float unabated (*East African Standard*, 22, 23, 24, August 1962).

Kenyatta was keenly apprehensive of the divisive ramifications of such an eventuality on the already fragile political front. Kenyatta convened an emergency KANU governing council in a desperate move to get things under control. Mboya moved in decisively and ruthlessly. He

instigated a KFL conference at the Solidarity Building headquarters to take place simultaneously with the KANU one. Kenyatta and the radicals were outwitted. Mboya told the KANU meeting that a labour breakaway was not out of question. He further threatened: "If you want me to resign, I shall resign. I can help the country in other ways than by being a member of KANU" (Goldsworthy, 1982:210).

Kenyatta shamefacedly denied any differences with Mboya and went on to rule the discussion on secessionist movements out of order. A triumphant Mboya rushed to the KFL conference, and talked it out of the idea of a labour party. Instead a "non-partisan watchdog political committee" under the chairmanship of Ochola Mak'Anyengo was formed (*Times*, 27.8.62). Kenyatta came to realize that a labour movement in which he did not have control was as great a threat to him as foreign subsidies. Henceforth, he began to see sense in Odinga's and Kubai's attempts to establish a labour clientele and began to covertly back them.

In this, Kenyatta was walking a tight rope between giving this covert support to radical trade unionists to destroy Mboya's trade union clientele and not appearing to be doing so in the eyes of Mboya. But Kenyatta did not set out to build a clientele in the Kenyan labour movement, instead he sought to abolish the KFL and to bring the entire labour movement under his control.

5.7 Further Pan-African Incursions

Conflicts in the continental labour movement temporarily lull after 1962. This was the time when some members of the Casablanca group were engaged in diplomatic activities with the Monrovia powers which culminated in the formation of the OAU in (1963). In this euphoria, African trade unionists had also sought to unite the ATUC and AATUF into a single African labour organisation. Thus, the AATUF and Ghanaian involvement in Kenya subsided.

But, contacts between the KTUC and the Ghanaian Trade union movement were maintained. From September when the breach between Mboya and Kenyatta

became open, fear of an all-out Ghanaian penetration of the Kenyan labour movement was rife. Colin Gibson, a reporter for the *East African Standard* in Nairobi had made this forecast in connection with this:

Ghanaian politicians and trade union leaders (...) have long been attempting to infiltrate the unions of Eastern Africa, which are almost solidly affiliated to the Western backed ICFTU.... Emissaries have been sent to East Africa from [Ghana].... Now it seems likely that the new attempt will seek the support of politicians. Trade union affiliation is likely to become a political issue and tangling the two life could be made very uncomfortable for Mboya, and who in this aspect could be seriously embarrassed as a result of his political appointment by Kenyatta as Minister for Labour (cited in *The Reporter*, 1.9.62).

This was, no doubt, an apt prediction of the road that Kenyan trade unionism was to take vis-a-vis the Ghanaian factor. For example, by the time Gibson's prediction was published, signs of an impending all-out Ghanaian infiltration were manifest. Rapprochement between the radicals in both the KTUC and the KFL started taking shape. Simultaneously, links with Ghana were becoming very frequent. Finally, anti-ICFTU sentiments were being expressed even within the KFL itself.

The first step in this rapprochement was made by Kubai, the KFL's Director of Organizations, in July, 1962. Kubai made an "extensive study tour" that took him through the Eastern countries, the UAR and Ghana (*KTUC Press Release*, 13.8.62). This trip had been arranged for Kubai by the KTUC. During his visit to Ghana, Kubai did not only establish strong friendship with Ghanaian labour leaders and the AATUF officials but there followed a chain of correspondence between him, the KTUC and the Ghanaians. With his tremendous influence in the Kenyan unionism, and his new-found international links, Kubai was prepared to challenge Mboya's trade union hegemony and to take over the KFL. The ICFTU did not take Kubai's threat lightly, especially that he was considered close to Kenyatta. He also held a crucial office in the KFL.

The ICFTU dispatched a special mission to Kenya in an attempt to forestall such a move by Kubai. The ICFTU gave the KFL two options: either to “expel Mr. Kubai or ICFTU to stop giving financial assistance to the KFL” (*ibid*). Kubai was sacked from his post of Director of Organizations. Kubai’s letter of expulsion cited three grounds: desertion (having been away to the East for three months) and disloyalty to the KFL leadership and working against the principles (ideological?) of KFL.

It is necessary here to mention that Kubai’s sins as well as those of the other radicals in the KFL in the eyes of the conservatives were more than this letter attempted to enumerate. For example, the differences between the radicals and the KFL could be traced back to May 1962, in the wake of the wave of strikes that swept the country. Kubai himself had supported striking teachers who were demanding 400 shillings minimum salary, despite Mboya’s appeal to the teachers to go back to work (*The Reporter*, 29.9.62). On the other hand Kubai’s old compatriot, Makhan Singh had in June 1962 led a newspapers strike with the incidental effect that *Mfanyikazi*,¹⁹ the KFL’s own newly launched weekly paper was shut down. Finally, Kubai incessantly criticized the ICFTU’s subsidies to the KFL and called for the latter’s disaffiliation from the ICFTU. (CA/KFL file 255; CA/KFL file 322; *Daily Nation*, 2.10.62).

To an extent, Kubai’s differences with the KFL signified a revival of the pre-emergency militancy, and a rejection of the bureaucratic and conservative tendencies of the KFL. The ICFTU’s reaction to Kubai, on the other hand, epitomized the determination of the metropolitan labour organizations to keep the union movement

¹⁹This paper had been financed by an American Organization, Peace with Freedom (P.W.F.) that had contributed 40,000 shillings towards its establishment (see Schechter *et al.*, 1980:63).

pliant and free of radicalism.

The closing of ranks between Kubai and the forces of revolutionary Pan-Africanism signified the process of harmonization of the pre-emergency and post-emergency radicalism on the one hand, and revolutionary forces continent-wide on the other. In justifying his support for the KTUC, Kubai had said that "since it [KTUC] is organized on a Pan-African basis... it merits support" (*Daily Nation*, 2.10.62). With his idea of changing the KFL from within, the frustrated Kubai started advocating for the dissolution of the Federation and the establishment of a mass oriented labour movement (C.A/KFL, file 322). Further, he called for the KFL's disaffiliation from the ICFTU. On these two points, he concurred with Kenyatta at home, and Nkrumah and the revolutionary opinion abroad. On foreign subsidies, Kubai argued that the 600,000, or so, Kenyan workers could finance the entire labour movement and eliminate the dependency of the Kenyan labour on Western Labour Organizations, (C.A/KFL file 255). It can be inferred that Kubai, and the militants were rejecting the entire edifice of the labour structure that had emerged after 1952 with all its internal and international alignments. Second, they were in search of autonomy from international labour organizations such as the ICFTU.

The KTUC was banned in November 1962 on the ground that it had failed to have two or more affiliates. But it is clear that the fear of a revitalized KTUC led to its banning with a possible connivance of Mboya, then the Minister for Labour and KFL's leader on the one hand and the colonial government and the ICFTU on the other. The KTUC, however, continued to operate underground, and to receive assistance from the KANU left, the AATUF and the Ghanaian trade unionists in its war against the KFL. It continued to receive support from numerous individual trade unionists as well as splits or sections in some national trade unions already

for the spread of the AATUF'S influence in East Africa.

Reciprocally Nkrumah's importance to Kenyatta was in helping the latter to destroy Mboya's trade union machine. Kenyatta's impulse towards supra-national politics, especially his attitude towards Pan-Africanism and Pan-African trade unionism, it should be interposed, remained as ambivalent as did his position on militant nationalist politics in Kenya. It would appear that, for a while, Kenyatta allied himself with Nkrumah in order to consolidate his precarious political position at home.

In this light, contacts between Kenyatta and his trade union supporters and those of Nkrumah increased tremendously. Contacts between the AATUF leaders and the leaders of the defunct KTUC escalated. Kenyatta himself encouraged his close allies like Babu Muhia Kamau²⁰ not only to join and establish trade unions but also to intensify their involvement in the national and Pan-African trade union politics (Kamau, 4.6.91).

Kamau became the Secretary-General of the Kenya Plantation Workers Union and a member of the underground KTUC Executive. Besides, visiting Ghana by the end of 1962, he also communicated frequently with the leaders of the Ghana TUC and the AATUF.

John Tettegah, Nkrumah's foremost trade union aide, and AATUF's First Secretary visited Kenyatta on December 18, 1962 to deliver a "special message" to Kenyatta from President Nkrumah. In the ensuing discussions between Tettegah and Kenyatta, the latter paid a glowing tribute to Nkrumah as "my old friend and colleague with whom I started the struggle for independence many years ago".

²⁰Kamau who like Kenyatta hailed from Kiambu District, was a Kenyatta admirer and friend. He informed this researcher that from the late 1940s, he was a confidant of Kenyatta and frequently acted as his Kiswahili interpreter in the latter's political rallies after his return from Britain in 1947. Kamau was, like Kenyatta, detained after the declaration of Emergency. Following his release in late 1961, Kenyatta organized for Kamau to study trade unionism and political science in Guinea, in the former's apparent attempt to have a foothold in the labour movement then dominated by the Luo and Luhya communities.

affiliated to the KFL. This is the situation that obtained until independence when the officials (underground) of the KTUC and the militants in the KFL fronted an onslaught against the KFL (Wachira, 10.5.91). This KTUC's underground edifice was able to survive because state interventionism in the union's affairs had eased. The KTUC also received explicit support from powerful figures in the nationalist movement such as Odinga (and Kenyatta, albeit covertly). In the subsequent discussions operations of the KTUC will be referred to, for rather than dying after its banning, the KTUC continued to have enormous impact on Kenya's trade union scene up to March, 1964 when it was replaced by the KFPTU.

5.8 Nkrumah and Kenyatta.

In his article entitled "The Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah in East Africa" Professor Ali Mazrui summarized the relation between Kenyatta and Nkrumah in the following words:

In relation to Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta's importance was partly "spiritual" and partly historical. The two leaders' younger days as nationalists in exile provided occasions for cooperation abroad (1977: 1).

After 1962 Nkrumah had begun eyeing Kenya as a strategic launching-pad for spreading the influence of the force of revolutionary Pan-Africanism. It was also envisaged that Kenya would serve the role of a strong bulwark against the influence of imperialism and against the entrenchment of neo-colonialism. In the past, Mboya had posed a great obstacle towards these efforts. With Kenyatta now at the helm of the nationalist movement, the possibility of success was envisioned with rekindled optimism. Jomo Kenyatta's importance to Nkrumah was twofold: that of aiding the spread of political Pan-Africanism and creating an enabling environment for the spread of the AATUF'S influence in East Africa.

appreciated outside the context of the massive and denigrating campaign, being waged against Nkrumah in a section of the Kenya press. In spite of Tettegah's earlier assurance that he did not have trade unionism as his agenda, the KFL leaders were compelled to warn him: "We in the KFL have no objection to Mr. Tettegah's visit to Kenya so long as he recognizes that there is only one organization linking all workers together in Kenya". The KFL was alluding to the possibility of the Ghanaians and the AATUF attempts to finance and revive the defunct KTUC (*ibid*). Although Tettegah visited the KFL headquarters in Solidarity House, and denied any trade union agenda, he went on to hold a lengthy talk with leaders of the defunct KTUC (*Daily Nation*, 20.12.62).

Evidently, co-operation in all spheres between Nkrumah and Kenyatta was intensifying after 1962. There were manifest moves by Nkrumah to exploit Kenyatta's position in Kenya in order to entrench the cause of revolutionary Pan-African trade unionism. A classic example is when Nkrumah ingeniously converted the Pan-Africa Press²¹ to serve the ends of radical Pan-Africanism. The Pan-African press published three newspapers, the *Nyanza Times* in Dholuo, *Sauti Ya Mwafrica* in Kiswahili and a fortnightly journal *Pan-Africa* in English. In spite of the virtual dearth of evidence to support the view that Nkrumah financed this press, doubtlessly he had tremendous influence on its editorial policy. In fact, *Pan-Africa* did not only publish his articles, publish reviews of his books and carried articles and interviews by Nkrumah's aides but also spearheaded the cause of revolutionary Pan-Africanism. In a bid to promote the influence of the AATUF and to undercut that of the ICFTU and other Western labour organizations, the press frequently carried articles in

²¹The press owed its existence and success to Pio Gama Pinto, the revolutionary Kenyan nationalist of Indian descent, who served as its Chairman. The press was started with a huge donation that Premier Nehru of India had given Pinto in 1961. The press brought together all the radicals in Kenya and was one of the strongest beacons of revolutionary anti-imperialism in Kenya. Kenyatta and Odinga were its joint-Patrons while Kenyatta's daughter, Margaret was one of its Directors.

by African workers against imperialism and placed it in the trajectory of the historic African resistance to slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

The ideological struggle between the AATUF and the ICFTU also found articulation in the fiery reviews of the activities of the ICFTU in Africa in the pages of the journal. One article that appeared in the April 27, 1964 issue under the banner, "ICFTU: The Facts about Dollar Trade Unionism," castigated the role of the ICFTU in subsidizing African trade unions and their leadership with the intentions of ensuring that they remained subservient and acquiescent to exploitation by imperialism. Said the article *inter alia*:

Anyone who has followed the trade union situation in Africa in the past decade cannot help but be struck by the constant and quite blatant interference by U.S Agencies in African trade union matters. The open use of dollars to buy African trade union leaders became so much of a scandal that the US has had to find more indirect ways of carrying on this activity....

When, Nkrumah became pre-occupied with the problem of neo-colonialism, the Pan-African Press served as his mouth-piece and forum through which the concept was analyzed and information about its dangers disseminated in Kenya. An example to this end is a review of George Lodge's famous book *Spearheads of Democracy* (1962) in another article bearing the sensational banner, "Exposure ICFTU; Confessions of An American Agent". The article had made the following indictment against Lodge's book;

Mr. Lodge shows complete contempt for workers in whom he is apparently too interested. He treats them as pawns in his cold war game, and it never seems to cross his mind that the workers may have other views, let alone that they may get to know of the contents of his book and strongly resent his open admission of US interference in overseas trade union organizations.... Sponsored by a tie-up of big business, the military and espionage, the book openly explains the aims and tactics of US neo-colonialism...it is one more warning that behind its mask of

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This leaves us with no doubt that, the Pan-African press played a pivotal role in shaping public opinion against the ICFTU in Kenya. In fact, it aided the Kenyan radicals in the trade union movement in their struggle with the ICFTU and the KFL. It also led to the stigmatization of ICFTU'S subsidies to the KFL. Towards the end of 1963, the ICFTU's influence was waning at an astonishing rate, thanks to the activities of the Ghanaians, the AATUF and the Pan-African Press in Kenya.

Simultaneously, forces of revolutionary Pan-Africanism were gaining a firm ground in the Kenyan labour movement. During the General Elections of May 1963, in which KANU won, a sizeable number of supporters of revolutionary trade unionism were elected to Parliament. These included such officials of the defunct KTUC as Gideon Mutiso, Jesse Gachago and Muchohi. Some politicians sympathetic to the Pan-African cause, like Mbiyu Koinange, Achieng Oneko and Joseph Murumbi were appointed to the Cabinet (Koinange and Murumbi had lived in exile in Ghana during the dark Emergency days. Koinange had even served in the Bureau of African Affairs). Concomitantly, trouble within the KFL was brewing. Mr. Peter Kibisu had resigned as KFL's Acting Secretary-General under curious circumstances in July 1963. (*Daily Nation*, 9/7/63). Mboya himself had announced his intentions to step down as the Federation's leader and the KFL elections were set for August, 17 and 18, 1963.

In a letter addressed to John Tettegah²², dated July 18, 1963, Vicky Wachira, the Secretary General of the KTUC (still out-lawed) had exhilaratedly

²²I am indebted to Wachira for allowing me to use this letter from his private collections.

reviewed these radical changes and outlined the KTUC's strategies. He said that the KTUC was preparing to hijack the KFL elections by sponsoring candidates within it to fight for elections. Said the letter in part:

At the present time negotiations are going ahead between us and the progressive elements within the KFL, and they have agreed in principle that as soon as the elections are over then there is a chance of re-uniting the labour movement in Kenya, which is our, as well as your wish, but this is only if we have our people returned in KFL elections. They have as well given an undertaking that if they are returned, they shall disaffiliate from ICFTU forthwith. This will give us a very great victory for our many years of struggle.

Wachira requested Tettegah and the AATUF for financial assistance to enable the KTUC and the revolutionaries to counteract the efforts of the US consul in Nairobi and the ICFTU who were trying to ensure that their men were elected during the (KFL) elections by providing them with money:

I received your recent letter of July 2nd [1963], and noted the contents with satisfaction, but I wish to point out that due to this current issue I hope that after you give it your consideration, something should be done at least to help us during this campaign as much depends on how we can help our candidates financially. If we [are to] have good results, it will depend mostly on what we can do between now and that date, and if our position remains the same it [is] very hard to imagine very good results. So I appeal to you sincerely to give this matter your urgent attention (*ibid*).

Wachira's evidence suggests that the Ghanaian financial assistance to the KTUC was pivotal in ensuring its own survival as well as enabling it to pursue its programmes. Similarly, the reciprocal relationship between the KTUC and the Ghanaian labour leaders was based on their mutual concern over the ICFTU involvement in the Kenyan (and African) trade unionism.

In the above cited letter by Wachira, it was not clear who the progressive

KFL and attempting to establish a counter-clientele within the KFL. Suspecting the two of disloyalty, Mboya threw his support behind Clement Lubembe and against Akumu during the KFL elections. This had greatly infuriated the latter and his compatriot, Mak'Anyengo. Akumu, was defeated narrowly by Lubembe. By supporting Lubembe, Mboya estranged himself further from the radicals. As KANU Secretary-General, Mboya had earlier denied Akumu and Mak'Anyengo clearance to vie for seats on a KANU ticket in the May 1963 General Elections the two became irresolutely anti-Mboyaist's.

If Wachira's evidence is anything to go by, the Akumu-Mak'Anyengo faction had already made overt moves to unite with the KTUC leaders in order to take over the KFL (Wachira, 10.5.91). Further, they had promised to disaffiliate from the ICFTU. A kind of an alliance between the former members of the KANU "Ginger Group" was forming up. The initial strategy by the militants in the KTUC and the KFL was to change the KFL leadership and policies from within. Mak'Anyengo, the KFL's Director of Organizations and Walter Ottenyo, the Deputy Secretary General, for instance, were vehemently calling on the KFL to set a specific date for disaffiliating the KFL from the ICFTU. The KFL remained impervious to change. Mboya and Lubembe said and reiterated that KFL's affiliation to the ICFTU did not conflict with the idea of positive neutrality (*Pan-Africa*, No. 47, 11.6.65).

Mr. Geoffrey Mugayi Egessa, the Acting General Secretary of the KTUC (Wachira was on a tour in Ghana) issued the threat that the militants in both the KTUC and KFL were preparing to take over the KFL by December 12, 1963, the day of Kenya's Independence. Egessa further stated that a preparatory committee that would draw up policy statements" in similar form like that of the Pan-African Labour Movement (AATUF)" had been formed (*The Reporter*, 23.11.63). Egessa's threat occurred against the backdrop of intensifying ideological schisms within the KFL, on the one hand, and a regroupment of revolutionary forces internally and externally on the other. Thus, this threat in view of the fact that the quality of

leadership in the KFL had deteriorated, could not be taken lightly. The Editor of the *Reporter* had, *inter alia*, summarized the declined position of the KFL vis-a-vis the rekindled threat by the radicals in these words:

The threat could be more real today than it could have been when KFL was led by union men of the calibre of Tom Mboya and Peter Kibisu (23.1 1.63).

By the end of 1963, the KFL was under seige. This was a consequence of determined challenge by a combined force of pre-emergency and post-emergency militants allied to the progressive forces of Pan-Africanism. This ascendancy of radicalism and mass trade unionism symbolized the high degree of political freedom that was enjoyed by the labour movement in the immediate pre-independent years. This freedom was greater than it had before or since. After independence, the Kenyatta government moved to control the labour movement through repression, co-optation and internal bureaucratisation.

CHAPTER 6

THE NKRUMAH FACTOR IN TRADE UNIONISM AND THE POLITICS OF NEO-COLONIAL TRANSFORMATION IN KENYA 1964-1966

Neo-colonialism is the worst form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility, and those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress.

Kwame Nkrumah

6.1 Introduction

The Kenyatta government that took the reins of power from the British colonisers inherited intact the state institutions (and the power relations inherent in the system) from the colonial regime. These included a constitution, parliament, judiciary and the executive. The infant administration faced a two-pronged political challenge: (1) political differences and power wrangles within the ranks of the compradorial class²³ and; (2) escalating radicalism among the peasants, workers, the unemployed and the lumpenproletariat in urban areas, with nationalism and anti-imperialism forming the thrust of its ideology. This radicalism was fuelled by mounting unemployment, low wages, landlessness among the peasants and the land policies of the Kenyatta government which adversely affected the process of accumulation among the peasants.

²³The process of compradorization is closely linked with the development of dependent capitalism in Kenya. Owing to the fact that, like the 17th century England, capitalism in the twentieth century Kenya was built on the pre-capitalist social formations, the phenomenon of peasantry and peasant agriculture and its link with the question of industrialization have been pertinent issues. Discussions of development of capitalism in Kenya (Africa) identified a class of people who own means of production, employ wage labour and appropriate surplus labour so as to accumulate more capital. This capitalist class emerges in the periphery of the global capitalist system. It is therefore a comprador bourgeoisie, for although it exhibits all characteristics of a bourgeoisie, it is not fully fledged: it lacks sufficient capital and it is to a large extent controlled by forces generated by the capitalist system which it is incapable of determining. See the great debate on this subject by such scholars as Ng'ang'a, Anyang' Nyong'o, Appolo Njonjo, S.B.O. Gutto, John Mulaa and Michael Cowen in *Review of African Political Economy* No. 20, 1981.

The government's response to these problems consisted largely in consolidating immense amount of power in the hands of the executive and strengthening the bureaucracy. Unlike in Tanzania where the process of concentration of power by the executive was effected by means of strengthening the party, in Kenya the party was allowed to decline, and its auxiliary organisations like trade unions increasingly brought under political and economic control. Imperialism whose interest was to control militancy among the workers, keep wages low and to create a stable investment market for its expanding multinational interests vindicated the efforts of centralisation by the government. Not until the petty-bourgeoisie within KADU and KANU united against the radicals that the government was able to assert its control over the party and the trade union movement. Up to mid 1966 radicalism continued to flourish within the political and labour fronts. Kwame Nkrumah and his trade union edifice was as much an influence in the consolidation of radicalism in the Kenyan labour movement as imperialism was a major force in the process of internal bureaucratisation, co-optation, and suppression of the movement by the government. His defeat, and indeed that of radicalism at the pan-African level had its corollary in the marginalisation of radicalism in Kenya after 1966. It is therefore necessary to examine this role of Nkrumah within the wider panoply of neo-colonial transformation in Kenya with all its concomitant political conflicts.

6.2 Formation of KFPTU

Immediately after independence the Kenyatta government set out to establish a market economy, but operating within the context of a centralised political system. It moved to control all organisations that had the potential of offering rivalry to the executive and the bureaucracy (the latter under the former's control) as an alternative focus of power. The implications this had on the labour movement is aptly summarised by Swainson as follows:

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The nationalist movement under the leadership of the KAU from the 1940s had involved a broad alliance between those indigenous classes oppressed by colonial capitalism, which included workers, peasants and capitalist farmers. This alliance was a temporary expedient to wrest power from the British and when the indigenous bourgeoisie came to dominate the post-colonial state the labour movement was immediately curtailed. The new African government confined the labour movement by bringing the trade unions under the direct control of the government. After 1965, the Confederation of Trade Unions COTU[sic] replaced the Kenya Federation of labour. The Joint Dispute Committee became the Industrial Court in 1964, the purpose of which was to enforce a style of industrial relations which would regulate discussion within the existing free enterprise system, and provide the means of the restraining wage demands. With the radical potential of the unions curbed, the government proceeded to tame the labour, a process which culminated in 1974, with a presidential ban on strikes. Since then the industrial action has been mute and covert (1980:184-5)

In January 1964, a month after independence, the desire by the government to establish a stable investment climate especially in agriculture by keeping wages low and curbing the unions' radical potential manifested itself in the Tripartite Agreement. This involved the Federation of Kenyan Employers (FKE), the KFL and the government.²⁴ The terms of the Agreement required private employers to increase their workforce by 10 per cent and the Central and local Government by 15 per cent in response to escalating unemployment. It also required the government to put an end to illegal squatting on private land in the Rift Valley, and the KFL to ensure that cat-strikes in the agricultural sector ceased. Unions were expected to declare a moratorium of retrenchment for twelve months and desist from strikes for the same period of time. 40,000 jobs would be created in the process. The

²⁴There has occurred a series of "Tripartite Agreements" since independence. With the collapse of the 1964 agreement, it was followed by a second one in 1973 and a third in December, 1978. "Tripartite agreement" is an aspect of state control over the trade union movement. Critics have rightly argued that the main beneficiaries of such agreements have been the employers who have enjoyed frozen wage costs without hiring any more additional employees than they would otherwise have. See for example Chege's (1988: 169-198) analysis of this aspect.

Agreement since its inception received the butt of criticism from radicals in the KANU left and the trade union movement. It argued that the Agreement had arrested advances when wages were still low and when the government could have made employers absorb more workers without recourse to wage restraint. This ran counter to the principle of a high wage economy and proved the government too soft with the employers.(Odinga, 1967:306-7). Tom Mboya, the minister for labour and whose influence in the KFL and the government was immense was blamed for this Agreement.

Kenya's approval of the terms of the Agreement, and moderate policies in general, manifested itself in his conflict with Bildad Kaggia, a former radical trade Unionist and a junior minister in Kenya's government. Kaggia resigned from his position after he failed to generate favourable opinion within KANU on behalf of former workers or squatters on settler farms who were being evicted(Leys, 1975:291). He further appointed Mboya to the strategic portfolio of Economic and Planning Minister.

In spite of this ideological concord between him and Mboya, Kenya remained relentlessly opposed to the independent existence of the KFL which he feared could be used as leverage by Mboya to undermine his power. Linked to this was the KFL'S continued link with the ICFTU and the latter's enormous subsidies to Mboya's trade union activities. Thus Kenya did not hesitate to ally himself with forces that sought to destroy the KFL.

This largely explains his tacit approval of anti-KFL campaign by trade union militants from 1964. Continued American support for Mboya accounts for Kenya's rapprochement with the KANU left and his inclination towards the radical pan-

African opinion identified with Nkrumah. Kenyatta supported a group of militants within the KFL led by messrs Dennis Akumu and Ochola Mak' Anyengo in its efforts to wrest the leadership of the KFL from pro-Mboya leaders. These were Working closely with former leaders of the defunct KTUC such as vick Wachira.

Kenyatta also encouraged his friends like Babu Mahia Kamau²⁵ to play an active role in this trade union activism(Kamau, 12:4.91). The KFL militants enunciated radical nationalism and anti-imperialism, advocated fundamental and just changes in land allocation, and a strong policy in favour of radical pan-Africanism (Akumu; 1.9.91). They were also opposed to some aspects of the Tripartite Agreement (*Daily Nation*, 17.3.64). Akumu, Mak'Anyengo and Walter Ottenyo, all of them KFL officials, were suspended from the KFL. Their supporters seized and locked the Solidarity House offices of the federation. Finally, the three were expelled in a highly manipulated KFL general meeting. Together with other militants outside of the KFL, they formed a rival trade union centre, the Kenya Federation of Progressive Trade unions.(KFPTU) in march, 1964.

The formation of the KFPTU was the first major challenge to the KFL since the demise of KTUC back in 1962. According to Senator Clement Lubembe, the Secretary General of KFL, by the time of its formation the KFPTU had more than 48 percent of the workers in its support (*Daily Nation*, 21.4.1964)

According to some sources, the KFPTU had the support of 15 trade unions out of a total of 27 unions.(*The Reporter*, 24.4.64). Sen. Lubembe however, put this figure at 8 unions out of 27. Among these were the three giant unions: the Dock Workers, the Petroleum and Oil Workers and Engineering workers unions.

Right from the beginning the KFPTU had the support of the KANU left and

²⁵

Kamau helped build the Coffee Plantation Workers Union among the coffee pickers in Kiambu and Thika areas, and served as it's General Secretary. In the year preceeding independence, Kamau came to play an active role in the formation of the KFPTU and toured Eastern countries and established strong links with Ghana, and other African countries that espoused the revolutionary pan-African opinion (Kamau, 12:4.91)

a number of cabinet ministers opposed to Mboya's continued influence in the unions. The KFL and its supporters in the government made a violent onslaught on the KFPTU. They accused the federation of being communist-mentored and financed. They contended, for instance that it was receiving financial support from certain embassies of socialist countries in Nairobi. There was evidence linking some KFPTU leaders with socialist countries during the material period. Babu Kamau, the KFPTU organising secretary had made a tour of Eastern Europe where he had attended the 5th Congress of Yugoslavia Trade Unions held between 20th and 25th April, 1964. There is no evidence, however, to validate the claim of communist sponsorship of the KFPTU (*Daily Nation* 20.5.64; Kamau, 12.4.91)

The most valid accusation was that the KFPTU was being supported by Ghana. the KFPTU did not conceal This association with Ghana and the radical thrust spearheaded by Nkrumah. In the guidelines to its constitution immediately after it was launched, the federation called for rededication to the spirit of Pan-Africanism. Its designate officials were instructed to consult with the All African Trade Union Federation with a view to joining it, and with a possibility of opening an East African Regional Office parallel to the ICFTU Regional Office in Nairobi that was operated by the KFL.

As it was pointed out in chapter 4 the AATUF's work in other African countries after 1964 was meshed with Nkrumah's instruments of foreign policy. Ghana opened the first diplomatic mission by an African State in Kenya. Nkrumah dispatched the distinguished diplomat, Busumtwi-Sam from Uganda to Ghana's High Commission in Nairobi. Busumtwi-Sam and the Ghanaian Mission played a crucial role in linking the KFPTU with the AATUF and Ghana TUC. It also kept relations between Kenyatta and Nkrumah warm. Nkrumah's aides started coming

to Kenya frequently to give encouragement and support to the KFPTU and to intercede with the government on its behalf.²⁶

Towards the end of April 1964, Tettegah wrote a letter to Vicky Wachira, Deputy Secretary General of KFPTU. This letter was a response to discussions that Tettegah had with Wachira when the latter visited Ghana to attend the Second International Trade Union Conference for Solidarity With the Workers and Peoples of South Africa, held between March 9 and 11, 1964 (Wachira, 9.5.91). In the above letter, Tettegah pointed out that he was to make a two weeks visit to Zanzibar, and that he would stop in Nairobi for two days. He asked Wachira to convey the information of his impending visit to the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Oginga Odinga, Minister for Information, Mr Achieng Oneko and the Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Internal Security and Defence, Dr. Munyua Waiyaki. He further informed Wachira that the financial assistance he had requested previously "would be produced on the spot on my arrival" (Bentum, 1966:50).

On his arrival, Tettegah met with the aforementioned government ministers. In addition, he met with Mr. Joseph Murumbi, Minister of State in the Office of the President at his Gilgil home (Akumu, 1.5.91). According to this informant, Tettegah also met and had discussions with Kenyatta. It is in this context that Babu Kamau came to organize for Tettegah to meet and address trade unionists, most of them non-members of KFPTU, with the intention of winning them to the radical opinion. A major meeting took place in Ruiru on the outskirts of Nairobi, and along the way to Kenyatta's Gatundu home.

The purpose of this meeting that was heavily attended was to solicit for

²⁶ Nkrumah had requested Kenyatta for a piece of land in the exclusive residential area of Muthaiga on which to build the High Commission which was granted (Akumu, 1.5.91). If Vicky Wachira's evidence can be taken as a proof, Kenyatta himself benefited enormously from Nkrumah's assistance. Wachira informed this researcher that during the May 1963 General Elections, Nkrumah had sent money worth 40 vehicles requested to assist Kenyatta and his allies in his campaign. These were sent. (Wachira, 9.5.90).

general support for KFPTU from all trade unionists irrespective of their unions. Mr. Mainah Macharia, by then not a member of KFPTU, and who attended the Ruiru meeting, outlined its aims in the following words:

The aim of these talks was to mobilize the workers to come to their side (KFPTU and AATUF) and to destroy the KFL (Interview with him, 6.4.91).

Perhaps, the meeting took place in Ruiru to avoid press attacks by the KFL whose embarrassment would have boomeranged on Kenyatta. But that this meeting took place in Kamau's home is indicative of the veiled support that the KFPTU activities received from Kenyatta (Kamau, 12.4.91).

On his departure, Tettegah gave to the KFPTU 80 motorcycles, 6 typewriters, 4 duplicating machines, Rent (already paid in advance) for eight offices at £120 pounds per month (Bentum, 1966:50). Little as it may appear especially when compared with the ICFTU's huge subsidies to the KFL, this assistance was crucial in the light of the weak financial situation of the KFPTU. By giving such subsidies, the Ghanaians hoped that the elimination of KFL and ICFTU influence in Kenya would automatically lead to their replacement by a trade union organization amenable to the ideals of revolutionary trade unionism.

That Tettegah chose to intercede with the radical ministers in Kenyatta's government as such on behalf of the KFPTU is quite revealing about the Ghanaians theoretical analysis of Kenya's power alignment and ideological orientation of the government, for example, the Kenyan government could not be placed in the category of those countries following a "revolutionary road" nor was it completely under "neo-colonial" domination. In a letter addressed to Nkrumah dated April 14, 1964 Tettegah made the following observation

about Kenya:

Although African nationalists (in Kenya) are in control of the independent state, the whole economy is still in the hands of white settlers and Indian minorities. In these areas we cannot ask for trade union collaboration with governments and national parties which are not guided by any clear ideology. (Reprinted in Bentum, 1966)).

Tettegah's visit and activities in Kenya greatly assisted in popularizing the KFPTU. Tettegah, elicited the support of some members of parliament sympathetic to the radical opinion who brought the issue of KFPTU's registration to the parliament (*Daily Nation* 28.10.64). The government was chastised for refusing registration to the KFPTU. It was also contended that the KFPTU had the majority of the workers in its favour. They further expressed disapproval for the KFL's continued affiliation to the ICFTU. In his reply, Mboya had argued that the KFPTU was a "society" rather than a union. Thus, it could not be registered. This reply was telling about his role in the denial of registration to the KFPTU.

What the KFPTU lost at home, it regained at the Pan-African level. The Federation did not only receive recognition from the AATUF but Mak'Anyengo, its Secretary-General designate, was elected one of its secretaries, during the June, 1964 Bamako Conference (*Pan-Africa*, 12.6.64). The conference also made a strong indictment against the Kenya government for its refusal to register the KFPTU:

The [ICFTU and western forces] are now able to infiltrate some African National governments to intimidate the trade unions by telling them that they cannot register outside an organisation which is affiliated to the ICFTU. If only the ministers in our national governments will know the facts and the sinister motive behind ICFTU overtures we shall be saved a lot of clashes and bitter struggles for the future of Africa. (*Tettegah's Report to the AATUF* 4.64:17).

Sen. Lubembe's attempt to accuse the AATUF of having invited "individual splinters", in reference to the KFPTU's representation in the Bamako Conference met with bitter rebuttal from the radical section in Africa (*letter to the Editor, The Reporter*, 19.6.64). In reply to this letter, S.M. Amri the officer in charge of publicity in the National Union of Tanganyika Workers (NUTA) asserted, *inter alia*, that:

We all know that in Kenya there are two organizations, i.e. the KFL and Federation of Progressive Trade Unions. Had both the KFL and KFPTU been present at this important conference their differences would probably have been solved (*The Reporter* 17.7.64).

In its bid to dethrone and supplant the KFL, the KFPTU concentrated its struggle on two fronts, that is, consolidating its position in the AATUF and trying to win Kenyatta's support by pointing to the dangers of the KFL's continued affiliation to the ICFTU. From the Bamako conference, Nkrumah and AATUF continued to subsidize the KFPTU. A letter from the Principal Secretary dated August 27, 1964 and addressed to Mr. Tettegah of the All-African Trade Union Federation stated as follows:

Reference your minute as of 26/8/64 concerning financial assistance to the Progressive Trade Union Organization of Kenya. Osagyefo has agreed the sum of £2,000 should be transferred to (Mr. X)... I have accordingly issued instructions for this transfer to (Mr. X) (Reprinted in Bentum, 1966:51).

The role played by Mr. X above signified the centrality of the Ghanaian High Commission in Nairobi and the Labour Attache in helping to keep the communication between Ghana, the AATUF and the KFPTU smooth.

The KFPTU made an all-out effort to convince Kenyatta that the ICFTU;

it's activities in Kenya, and indeed the whole of East Africa was sinister. Thus, they sought documentary proof to back their claim that the ICFTU's role in Kenya was subversive and inimical to the stability and well-being of Kenya. By late June, the KFPTU leaders had managed to raid the ICFTU Area Offices and to smuggle out confidential documents which they used to prove their case (Wachira, 1.6.91). Mak'Anyengo announced that the KFPTU was in possession of documents from the ICFTU Regional Office in Nairobi which contained budgets worked out for disruptive purposes and monthly remittance ranging between Ksh.4,500 and Ksh.16,000. The KFPTU used these documents in a series of letters to the Kenyatta calling on him to intervene and to ban the KFL. An example of these letters is fully cited here below. Mak'Anyengo sent a confidential letter to Prime Minister, Jomo Kenyatta dated 25th June 1964. It stated thus:

Please refer to our letter of June, 1964 addressed to you in which we enclosed a document dealing with the above subject.

As citizens of Kenya and as Africans and nationalists we consider it our duty to safeguard and consolidate our HARD WON INDEPENDENCE. In the course of this duty we are aware of the intrigues of colonialists and neo-colonialists and their agents. It is our sincere belief that mutual co-operation between the working class and our Governments will be able to uproot the evils and intrigues of neo-colonialism. Sir, although the imperialists and colonialists are being forced out of Africa by the nationalist wind of change, it is true that they are unwilling to leave us alone and for this reason they are coming through various agents. We who support the unity of workers in Africa under the All Africa Trade Union Federation know for certain that ICFTU is a neo-colonialist agent and its operation (ICFTU's) in Africa is to the detriment of our people. Sir, we would be considered propagandists if we fail to substantiate our belief and allegations. In order to prove our allegation to be true we have been all out to prove this by documentary proof. We therefore close herewith some of the documentary evidence of ICFTU activities in East Africa carried through their so called Area Office in Nairobi on Victoria street, Rajab Mansion.

The documents are self evident and self explanatory and show quite clearly what their activities have been. You will also notice that in their

budget there are big amounts allocated for special missions. As far as we know these special Missions are meant to infiltrate into Governments to change their policies or where they cannot do so they have special plans to disrupt the running of such Governments as you can clearly see in the letter dated 11th September, 1963 what special plans they had for Tanganyika Government. We are sure that a lot of money is being poured into East Africa and particularly Kenya by ICFTU, not to help organize workers but to build up certain individuals for the purpose of carrying on their plans and aims. We must say that it's difficult to get these documents. But from them you can conclude straight away that there are others which we could not get which are even more dangerous.

We feel we have done our national duty by bringing to the attention of our Government the dangers we face by allowing ICFTU office to be in Nairobi. As people who would like Kenya and Africa as a whole, for that matter, to prosper and manage its own affairs without interference from outside, and in this interest and in the interest of all Kenyans we ask you kindly to use your good offices to close ICFTU offices and all offices of it in Nairobi. 27

Simultaneous with the KFPTU'S efforts to win Kenyatta's support in it's struggle against the KFL and the ICFTU the Ghananians were moving all-out to win him to the radical pan-African opinion. In October 1964 for example, Kenyatta was the principal guest in the festivity celebrating Nkrumah's 55th birthday which was extra-ordinarily attended by a high-powered Ghanaian entourage led by Nkrumah's most trusted Minister, Kojo Botsio. In his speech, Commissioner Busumtwi-Sam contended that it was the sharing of the Pan-African ideas of Nkrumah by the kith and kin in Kenya "that has forged an intimate bond of brotherhood between Kenya and the Republic of Ghana". (*Pan-Africa*, October 16, 1964). Following in the heels of these diplomatic measures, Kenyatta was 'enstooled' in November 1964 as a Ghanaian Chief by a visiting Ghanaian delegation led by two prominent Ghanaian leaders, Krobo Edusei and Mr. N.A. Welbeck, the Executive Secretary of the CPP (*Daily Nation*, 20.11.64).

²⁷ I am thankful to Mr. Vicky Wachira who allowed me to use this letter from his private collections.

The above diplomatic measures, coupled with the internal campaign by the KFPTU, appeared to be making headway in the Kenyan political circles. There were strong indications that Kenya's international policy was now favourably disposed towards revolutionary Pan-Africanism. Towards the end of 1964, there were all signs that Kenya would become a pillar of the radical thrust in East and Central Africa. Senior government ministers began to come out in defence of Ghana and the AATUF in the wake of escalating anti-AATUF campaign fronted by the KFL. Joseph Murumbi, for instance, in November 1964 rebuked the KFL leadership for its "unwarranted and altogether malicious" attack on Ghana (and AATUF), a country whose relations with the Government and people of Kenya were cordial and brotherly. Murumbi further expressed the attitude of the Government of Kenya on the role of Ghana in the AATUF as follows:

It must be made clear that the Government of Kenya believes that whatever attitudes the Government of Ghana has towards AATUF emanates from the general vowed African policy as positive non-alignment and the desire to see Africa solidly united an attitude which is equally shared by the Government and all progressive governments in Africa (*Daily Nation*. 20. 11.64)

While these remarks by Murumbi, a Senior Cabinet Minister, revealed a strong inclination by the Kenyan government towards revolutionary pan-Africanism and trade unionism, they also signified the declining prestige and power of the KFL and the concomitant spiralling of the AATUF influence in Kenya.

6.3 The KAWC and The Fall Of ICFTU In Kenya

From 1964, U.S trade unions began to withdraw their support for the ICFTU's activities in Africa. In spite of the launching of AFRO and ATUC the ICFTU's invisibility was not ensured, and it increasingly came under sharp scrutiny in the national circles. The KFPTU campaign had irreversibly damaged its image

in Kenya and continued U.S reliance on it as a vehicle of its policies would have badly compromised its interests. Thus the U.S came to rely on the AALC as its new instrument of penetrating trade unions in Kenya. It even started giving support to the crackdown on the ICFTU and KFL by the KANU government.

Simultaneously, the U.S was wearing a complex political strategy that would not only ensure its control of trade unions but would put the entire political establishment on an even ideological keel and ensure its monopoly influence in Kenya. The transfer of Ambassador William Attwood from the 'red' Guinea to Kenya was seen to be important in the light of the new American strategy in the country. Kenya had two-fold importance. First was the country's geopolitical significance in the U.S Indian Ocean interests. Second, the growing importance of Kenya as an area of expanding US investment. Dan Schechter and his co-authors have captured these ingredients of American policy towards Kenya and the decision to intervene in Kenyan politics as follows:

By 1964, American investment which would reach \$100 million by 1967 were becoming significant, and some of the Kenya union demands began to lose their charm. But even more important, 1964 also brought dangers of "political instability" serious enough to make radio communications with the Nairobi Embassy eighth highest on the State Department roster for the year. Zanzibar revolted and Tanzania's Nyerere was nearly overthrown. Rebellion was spreading through the North-East Congo, and Kenya lay astride the natural supply route... a new approach was in order. Mboya had all along been supported as a force to the right of Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta, but an accommodation with Kenyatta was now seen as necessary, particularly to ensure that he did not support the Congolese rebels, and more generally to get him to close ranks against the agitating Kenyan left.... In June 1964, U.S. ambassador to Kenya William Attwood met with Kenyatta and agreed that Western labour groups would stop subsidizing Mboya and the KFL; for balance aid to the leftist leader, Vice-President Odinga, would also end (1980:61).

In the light of the mounting pressure from radical Pan-Africanism abroad and labour militancy at home, and this new perspective of the re-organization in the strategies of neo-colonialism, the ICFTU factor in the Kenyan trade unionism found its

demise. In Kenya Tom Mboya, the undisputed mercurial leader of the conservatives in KANU quickly attuned his own approach to the reality of a declining ICFTU. By the end of October, 1964, Mboya was admonishing the ICFTU "to face some of the realities of Africa" (*Daily Nation*, 28.10.64). Apprehensive of the changing tide, the KFL painlessly disaffiliated from the ICFTU in November 1964. By 30th November the ICFTU wound up its activities in Kenya, closed its office and transferred its activities to the African Regional Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria. As Davies aptly remarks, the disaffiliation of the KFL marked the end of ICFTU decade in Africa (1966:207). Apart from the UGTT, the ULC of Nigeria and TUC of Uganda no other major trade union organization remained affiliated.

But the KFL, refused to affiliate to the AATUF on the ground that the latter was fundamentally a Ghanaian organization and "aligned to the WFTU". (*The Reporter*, 20.11.64). Although the latter claim was part and parcel of the general anti-AATUF propaganda campaign that the KFL was carrying out its choice not to affiliate to the Federation was justified. Was it not the same AATUF and the radical thrust that had undermined the ICFTU, KFL's main financier? The refusal by the KFL to embrace the radical opinion, signified the continuing struggle between it and the radical section of the Kenyan labour movement. But in spite of the detente between Kenyatta and Attwood it was not until after 1965 that both parties moved to honour the deal.

The Americans continued to finance the KFL, These subsidies were channelled through an organisation called Peace With Freedom (PWF). We should interpose here that whereas the ICFTU served as the instrument of American imperialism in the restrictive colonial era, the all-encompassing PWF replaced it in the same role after the declaration of political independence in most of the African states.³²

On his part, Kenyatta continued to give support to the KANU left and to assist them in consolidating their position. Kenyatta was instrumental in the establishment

of the Lumumba Institute which, like the Winneba Ideological Institute in Ghana, was meant not only to educate and socialize the party cadres on socialist ideals but was envisioned to play a crucial pan-African role by educating students from all over Africa (*Pan-Africa*, 25.12.64; Orwenyo, 1977). The institute was the only one that remained free of the all encompassing influence of the PWF. (Schetcher *et al.*, 1980:62). The board of the institute, which comprised Kenyatta and Odinga as trustees, consisted of all the radical leaders represented in the KANU left Kaggia, Ngei, Kubai and Pinto. Mboya and Gichuru were notably omitted.

Concomitant with the rise of the Lumumba Institute, the militant KANU Parliamentary Group, whose driving force was Pio Gama Pinto, the militant Kenyan nationalist of Indian descent became the radicals parliamentary. By January 1965, the Kenya African Workers Congress (KAWC) was launched. The Congress, like its progenitor, the KFPTU, continued to enjoy support from Kenyatta, the KANU left Ghana TUC and the AATUF. Correspondence between the Ghanaian High Commission in Nairobi and the Office of the President (Ghana) for example, reveals that the AATUF continued to give financial assistance to KAWC as part of its efforts to consolidate itself in East Africa (see letter February 6, 1965 in Bentum, 1966:52). The Congress was allied to the aforementioned KANU Parliamentary Group led by Pio-Gama Pinto, the shrewd strategist for the KANU left, as the latter's labour clientele. (Odinga, 1967:287). From the out-set it was a foregone conclusion that the KAWC, unlike the KFPTU, was going to obtain registration from the government.

The KAWC organised numerous workers' rallies in Kenya's major towns to demonstrate its numerical strength publicly. In the process it distinguished itself as a non-bureaucratic labour organisation (Akumu, 1.5.91). In the past labour organizations opposed to the KFL were often refused registration on the ground that

they did not garner enough support from the unions. Even Colin Campbell, the President of the FKE was compelled to acknowledge that "KFL is no longer able to speak for the trade union movement" (*Daily Nation*, 1.3.65). Soon, the Tripartite Agreement, which rested on the theory that the KFL represented all the workers, collapsed in April 1965 at the time the KAWC was registered.

6.4 The Move To The Right

The immense power that the radicals in the KANU left and the labour movement had accumulated profoundly shook the conservatives in both KANU and KADU. They henceforth started drawing closer against the KANU left and its labour clientele. The predominantly conservative KADU painlessly wound itself up and joined the ranks of the conservatives in KANU in December 1964. This realignment in the moderate camp irreversibly changed the ideological equation in their favour, and the days of the radicals in the helm of KANU and the labour movement were diminished. Commenting later on this historic event Odinga, the undisputed leader of the radicals, observed that:

I had not foreseen that these same forces absorbed by KANU would strengthen that wing of our own party that had shown tendencies in the past to waver and to compromise on the issue of pan-African advance and real independence (1967:284).

Kenyatta himself began to make retractions on the issues of his support to the radicals, Pan-Africanism and radical trade unionism. His ideological inclination gradually drifted towards the right wing in KANU. From mid 1965, he moved to honour the deal made between him and Attwood in June 1964. Until 1966 when the breach between him and the KANU left became open, he maintained a magisterial position in the ideological conflict between the two KANU factions. But the influence of Mboya, the undisputed leader of the conservatives, and its strategist in this ideological war was unmistakable.

The entire process of deradicalisation commenced with the assassination of Pio Gama Pinto in February 1965, once described by Odinga as “the life and soul of the KANU Parliamentary Group, of the pressure for federation, of the attempts to build a KANU Press and the Lumumba Institute to train grassroots organizers (1967:287). Pinto was Odinga's tactical advisor. He was instrumental in the emergence of the KAWC as a labour clientele for the radicals and as a powerful counterpoise to the KFL (Wachira, 10.5.91; *Daily Nation*. 18.12.64). Second, there occurred a purge of the militants in the KANU Parliamentary Group and a barrage of anti-communist campaign was directed towards the radicals.

These measures paved the way for the tabling of the controversial Sessional Paper No 10 in May 1965. This paper entitled *African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya*, in the words of Colin Leys “was a pure statement of bourgeois Socialism”. Rather than recommending fundamental changes on such issues as land, agriculture and unemployment, the paper focused on “redressing social grievances in order to ensure the continued existence of bourgeois society” (1975:221). It adopted and entrenched the interests of the comprador elements who were neo-colonialism's allies in the Kenyan periphery. The gist of the paper was an emphasis on private investments and rejection of marxism. "African Socialism" as propounded in the paper has been dubbed "obscurantist ideology" by some of its critics (Aseka, 1989:326). In essence the document was a rejection of the 19th century capitalism and 20th century communism as models for emergent Africa Societies. Instead, it pointed to a mixed economy like that of Sweden, representing neither communism nor capitalism, but an African blend which also drew on indigenous traditions. (Mohiddin, 1973: 196-223) . Because of its emphasis on free-market economy, the document as opposed to the Arusha Declaration in Tanzania, endeared Kenya to the West.

Besides the aforementioned pre-emptive measures that the compradors in KANU had carried out to deradicalize the party and parliament, the timing and speed of the presentation of the sessional Paper No.10 in Parliament did not give ample time to the radicals to prepare their defence. Kenyatta dissolved the board of Directors of the Lumumba Institute by an executive decree when its Students challenged "African socialism". There followed the "official" take over of the institute by the government. Mboya declared in parliament that Kenyatta's original plans for the Institute had been "completely distorted" and that "we want to remove this impression that it is an ideological institute, because it is not". (*Time*, Vol. 85, No. 19 7/5/65:47).

Kenya's African policy, in contradistinction to that of its neighbours, Uganda and Tanzania was becoming pro-West and inward-looking in relation to the question of Pan-Africanism or supra-nationalism. As Odinga observes:

Kenya's foreign policy began to be sharply reversed from this time. Uganda and Tanzania's foreign policies was based on the strengthening of Pan-Africanism and aiding anti-Tshombe forces, for revolutionary Pan-Africanism is the strongest bulwark against imperialist pressures of independent African states. Kenya's policy by contrast, was to copy British and American foreign policies in Africa and to undermine African Unity. (1967:294).

6.5 Bureaucratization and Government Control Over the Labour Movement.

The struggle between the KAWC and the KFL was a clear reflection of the ideological struggles in KANU itself. It should be pointed out here, for clarity's sake that Kenyatta had not discarded his aim of destroying the KFL, and in this he was determined to use the Congress. However, he was not prepared to see either the KANU right or the left maintain a clientele in the labour movement that might be

used against him. Thus, as he moved against the KFL, he also moved against the KAWC. It is in this perspective that Kenyatta's move against the labour movement from July 1965 should be viewed. The government banned meetings by both the KAWC and KFL and appointed a Ministerial Commission of Inquiry. (*Pan-Africa*, 9.7.65). Kenyatta's disregard for pan-African sentiments is attested by the fact that he had initially appointed only pro-KFL ministers to this Commission. In fact it took a threat by the KAWC that its leaders would abstain from taking part in the inquiry unless some ministers known for their Pan-African outlook were appointed into the commission for Kenyatta to correct this anomaly. As a result Murumbi and Achieng Oneko were included in the Commission.

The impending emasculation and bureaucratization of the Kenyan labour movement by the Kenyatta regime occurred against the backdrop of escalating labour violence. In early September a clash between supporters of KFL and KAWC in Mombasa resulted in the deaths of three people and nearly a hundred injured. This provided the all-important moral subterfuge for the draconian recommendations of the Ministerial Report. Simultaneous with the Report, Kenyatta made a presidential statement where he stated emphatically and categorically that the Report was not an issue for the purpose of debate and further argument. (*The Reporter*, 10.9.65). This smacked of authoritarianism!

In brief, the Report recommended the immediate de-registration of both the KAWC and KFL and the freezing of their funds. In their place, a new body, the Central Organization of Trade Unions (Kenya) (COTU) was formed. All registered trade unions were expected to affiliate to this body. COTU's constitution was to be drawn by the Attorney-General, himself a conservative government appointee, Charles M. Njonjo. In order to ameliorate the endemic and perennial financial problems of the unions and to make them self-reliant the Report provided for a

check-off system. The Report (and the COTU Constitution drawn later) did not only subject the Kenyan labour movement to a rigid bureaucracy, but it also subsumed it under the bureaucratic rigors of the Ministry of Labour and the Labour Department, and brought it under the thumb of the institution of the presidency. This was especially so in relation to the election of the Secretary General of COTU. The Report stated that the Republic's President in consultation with the Ministry of Labour would appoint the Secretary-General from a panel of three names submitted to him by COTU's governing council. Further, the activities of the Secretary General were put under the supervision, if necessary, of the Ministry of Labour. The President of the Republic was empowered to suspend him and appoint a new officer from a further list of three names (*Ministerial Commission's Report*, Government Publishers, 1965)

This excessive state control of the labour movement was opposed by some leaders and the radical section of the press. For example, John Keen, KANU's Organizing Secretary described it as undemocratic and liable to deprive the workers of their rights. Wrote the Editor of *Pan-Africa*, the mouthpiece of the radicals.

This latter proposal [above] is, unprecedented in Kenya Trade Union history and at first sight would appear to give the Government exceptional power to intervene in purely trade union affairs (3.9.65).

The Report, more than any other document associated with Kenyatta, revealed the waning status of revolutionary Pan-Africanism and the diminished fortunes of supra-nationalism in the unfolding Kenyan politics. The report proposed that both KFL and KAWC should disaffiliate from all "outside" bodies. Only the KAWC was affiliated to the AATUF. Second, to have grouped the AATUF in the same category of 'outside' bodies such as ATUC and ICFTU was indicative of the introversion of

Kenyan African policy and her retraction from Pan-Africanism. The failure of the commission to recommend that COTU should affiliate to the AATUF like Tanzania's NUTA, was a great victory for the KANU compradors, and a defeat of militancy through the trappings of bureaucracy. This bureaucratization was a blessing in disguise for neo-colonialism, which would not only find it easy to manipulate the labour movement but would bring pressure on the dependent government to check labour recalcitrance, strikes and lock-outs which would endanger the process of providing cheap and constant labour force for its multinational corporations.

Members of the conservative section at the pan-African level lamented the demise of the KFL. Such was the ICFTU-mentored ATUC. The leaders of ATUC viewed the demise of KFL in the perspective of their perennial struggles with the AATUF. This is aptly captured by Lawrence Borha of the TUC of Nigeria, who during the ATUC's Triennial Congress bemoaned the fall of KFL in these words:

We need only to look eastward to Kenya to see how strife, recrimination and dissension, plotted and hatched by the AATUF, led to unhappy results. There, with AATUF and foreign support, a breakaway splinter trade union centre was set up by some misguided men. They fought the great National Centre, the KFL of Tom Mboya, and of Clement Lubembe. Innocent workers died. The Government stepped in, the heroic KFL ceased to be, just as the mischievous outfit of AATUF there was dismantled. This sort of mischief makes unity difficult. (Quoted in Busch, 1969:207).

By blaming the demise of the KFL wholly on the AATUF and its affiliate, the KAWC, the ATUC failed to take cognizance of the fact that imperialism was trying to adjust and overcome the challenge posed by Pan-Africanism and nationalism. This readjustment had seen the declining prestige of the ICFTU and its appendages, such as the ATUC and AFRO, in the new all-embracing imperial strategy to arrest radicalism. In Kenya, this imperial strategy in regard to trade unionism consisted of a complex and sophisticated political process of bolstering Kenyatta

and his administration in its efforts to gain control of the entire labour movement by cracking down on the labour apparatuses of the West and those allied to hard-core nationalist and Pan-African movement. Consequently, the emergent COTU would not only be state-controlled but would be gradually influenced, and manoeuvred to adhere to Western model of trade unionism. Second, through the COTU bureaucracy, under the control of a conservative government, radicalism was emasculated.

In spite of the heavy government control over the labour movement, Nkrumah still hoped that the radicals could gain control of the COTU bureaucracy and use it as a stepping stone towards moulding opinion in favour of pan-Africanism. Simultaneously, he was trying to take over the OAU bureaucracy during the October 1965 OAU Summit in Accra to adopt the revolutionary Pan-African path that he promulgated. This is evident from the contents of a memo sent by the AATUF Secretariat to the African Affairs Committee entitled "The Role of the All-African Trade Union Federation at the Coming OAU Summit Meeting." Nkrumah had not found out that Kenyatta had drifted to the right. He moved to assist the former leaders of the then defunct pro-AATUF-KAWC to capture COTU's leadership and to prevent it from falling into the hands of the leaders of the then defunct KFL. A letter by Tettegah addressed to Nkrumah and dated October 1965 symbolised the Ghanaian optimism in their hope to capture COTU.

Please urgently contact African Secretariat for report on elections [in Kenya]. Happy to report that KAWU (KAWC) has won ten repeat ten out of fifteen repeat fifteen national union elections today Monday 27th September. [Dennis] Akumu elected Secretary-General of Customs Union control over dock union still continues. Grateful appeal to Osagyefo for further funds (stated in my letter No SCRTIU/NRE of 24th September) to complete National election and also COTU elections. Our enemies have been rudely shaken by fighting desperately, treat matters as extremely urgent. Standing by, it is recommended that we give this assistance and hold Kenya. (Reprinted in Bentum, 1966:50-51).

The imperialists were equally busy laying out strategies and aiding the former KFL leaders for the same elections. Akumu was defeated by Clement Lubembe (KFL). According to Akumu, Kioni, the leader of the Teachers Union, who was close to the KAWC in his ideological orientation, was nudged to stand as a third contestant for the post of COTU's Secretary General. The result was that the vote of the pro-KAWC unions was split in favour of Lubembe (Akumu, 1.5.91). Kenyatta, anxious to ensure harmony in Cotu, by not appearing to alienate the radicals from the bureaucracy appointed Akumu to the post of Cotu's Deputy Secretary General to that of Assistant Secretary General. Rather than abating the perennial KFL-KAWC ideological wrangles, this move transposed and internalized them in COTU.

In the wake of the highly manipulated Limuru KANU Conference of March 1966 Odinga and the hard-core nationalists were manoeuvred out of KANU. In the whole process, Mboya emerged as the tactician and ideologist of the compradors. There were also insinuations that foreign money (Western) was used for the purpose of manipulating the conference (Gertzel, 1970; Odinga, 1967).

The labour clientele of KANU left in COTU, mostly from the defunct KAWC came out in defence of their allies. When Odinga left KANU to launch the Kenya Peoples Union, 13 trade unionists among them, Akumu, the COTU Deputy Secretary General, O.O. Mak'Anyengo, Secretary-General of the Kenya Petroleum Oil Workers Union and former Secretary of the AATUF, Patrick Ooko, General Secretary of the East African Common Services African Civil Servants Union and Vicky Wachira, Secretary General of the Game and Hunting Workers Union and former Deputy Secretary General of the KAWC followed him. These were among the key proponents of revolutionary Pan-Africanism. Justifying their resignation from KANU, these trade union militants charged that KANU whose platform was that of a mass party had become an elitist party that drew its support from the

compradors, the rich political elite and the business tycoons, who were allied to imperialism (Akumu, 16.6.91). On the workers, they charged that KANU no longer served the ideal of a welfare state, had no wage policies and made no attempt to find a permanent solution to the unemployment crisis. Instead it was prepared to defend the interests of the employer or the potential employers rather than those of the workers. In short, these trade union leaders had refused to co-operate with the emerging bourgeois society in establishing a labour aristocracy as its corollary.

These recalcitrant unionists were all expelled from COTU for their "anti-KANU" stand. (*Daily Nation*: 2.5.66). This had that COTU had not only become an arm of the Government but of KANU, dominated by the compradors. The expulsion of the radicals from COTU paved the way for its conversion into a labour aristocracy allied to and serving the interests of the comprador bourgeoisie at home and the international capitalist system abroad.

The KPU elections (Little Elections) were highly manipulated and the party was reduced into a moribund opposition. With a weak parliamentary voice, the radical trade unionists stepped in to fill the vacuum and became the Party's most articulate defenders and strategists. Akumu became the KPU's Administrative Secretary, and Vicky Wachira its Nairobi branch Secretary. These workers' leaders articulated the ideological difference between KANU and KPU, not as that between communists (as they were ^{damned}) and capitalists but that between nationalists calling for fundamental solutions to the basic problems of landlessness, agriculture and unemployment, and the elitist comprador bourgeoisie who were drifting from the masses and championing their own cause and that of global capitalism. They denounced Sessional Paper No. 10 which they contended, used the phrase "African Socialism" as a cloak for capitalism. They called for rededication by all parties in Kenya to the universal principles of socialism such as social and

economic justice in distribution of the means of production and fruits of labour. In an article that appeared in *Kenya Weekly News*, Dennis Akumu wrote, *inter alia*, on these points:

If anything, the difference between our party and KANU Government is that the latter is now basically conservative and right-wing, our party is interested in transforming socialism to suit African conditions without distorting the universal tenets of socialism.... KANU puts the emphasis on the private sector and no attempt is made to bring into public sector the basic essentials for production and distribution (10.6.66).

Thus, the difference between KANU and its trade union clientele in COTU on the one hand, and KPU and its radical labour wing on the other, had absolutely nothing to do with the communists bogey. The KPU capitalized on the general weaknesses of KANU on such issues as unemployment, low wages and landlessness to build a case of KANU's betrayal of the nationalist ideals that had triggered the Mau Mau War in the 1940's through the 1950's.

The rest of the story of the KPU is one of persecution, molestation and intimidation by the Kenyatta Government aimed at making it impossible for the party to articulate, disseminate and propagate its militant nationalist goals. To this end, in August 1966, all pro-KPU radical trade unionists - Akumu, Mak'Anyengo, Wachira and Ooko - among other key KPU leaders were arrested and detained. Void of a strong parliamentary following and now with all its able field organisers incarcerated, the KPU was relegated to the status of a moribund and ineffective opposition to KANU. For the last time, the retreating forces of Pan-Africanism raised a weak voice in defence of their allies now on the verge of being liquidated in Kenya. *The Nationalist* issue of August 11, 1966 published in Dar-es-Salaam, the new citadel of militant Pan-Africanism and home of AATUF, charged that the Government of Kenya sought not only to "destroy the KPU, but also had a certain

interest in weakening the rights and powers of the trade union movement in Kenya". Odinga's and Oneko's detentions were soon to follow.

The exit of the radicals cannot be regarded as a result of domestic political conflict alone. The west, especially the U.S was a central player, and indeed had interests in the out-come of this seemingly internal conflict. Dan Schechter and his co-authors have attempted to outline the pervasive role that was played by PWF in deradicalizing and tailoring the Kenya social, political and economic institutions to acquiesce in the imperatives of neo-colonial domination. They have written in part:

While the left [in KANU and COTU] was being destroyed, PWF's cultural-political complex was operating to keep the nation on an even keel, providing stable mechanisms for what could be misinterpreted as constructive dissent and in effect defining the limits of legitimate social and political debate. One man working with PWF in Kenya, Heinz Berger described the significance of his program to us saying it "existence means there is no gap which some other ideology could fill" (1980:62).

When Ambassador Attwood left Kenya by the end of April 1966, he was full of satisfaction with what had been accomplished in turning Kenya. Attwood boasted of the role he had played in isolating Kenya from the armed struggle then going on in the Congo, and ensuring that political system in Kenya was manned by pro-west moderators. The above mentioned authors have quoted Attwood as having said in this connection:

White fears of Blacks power in Kenya had proved to be unfounded; a white Kenyan was still Minister of Agriculture and 1700 English-men still worked in various branches of the Kenya Government; Odinga and the demagogues were out of office. The men moving up, like Moi, Ngala, Mwai Kibaki and James Nyamweya, were unemotional, hardworking and practical-minded. When they talk about Kenya's agricultural revolution they sound like Walt Rostow; they spoke of available credit, for prices, technical assistance and the cash purchase of tools and consumer goods (*ibid*:62-63).

From his exile home in Conakry, Guinea, Nkrumah wrote a melancholic, but defiant foreword to Odinga's political autobiography, *Not Yet Uhuru* on June 14, 1966. He wrote in part :

I find it gratifying indeed that Oginga Odinga has given me this opportunity to write a foreword for his autobiography. The story that my friend and fellow freedom-fighter... has told in this book is reminiscent of many a biography in Africa. For the African nationalist who nourishes genuine feelings for his people and for Africa is bound to be the victim of oppression and persecution ...

He went on:

It is my hope and belief that those who read this book will see even more clearly the need for peoples of Africa to come together in a closely knit political union in pursuit of their common aspirations and common objectives.

The position of embattled Odinga in Kenya and Nkrumah's tribulations in exile in Guinea were as striking in their parallelism as they were symbolic of the marginality of radicalism in Kenya and Africa by the end of 1966.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to examine Nkrumah's involvement in the labour movement in the context of his struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism. In the early stages of the development of his ideas about the African working class and its role in liberation from imperialism, Nkrumah viewed it in the light of the mass movement incorporating all classes under colonialism. Nkrumah, perhaps found no difficulties in conceptualizing this model for at this early stage, he was not keen on the theme of class struggle in Africa. He even nursed hopes of uniting the mass of the Ghanaian workers, peasants and petty traders with the Ghanaian petty-bourgeoisie. But he found it difficult to convince the radical workers on this point; in fact this conceptualization served to alienate him from the compradors in the UGCC whose elitist politics was a far cry from his populist nationalism.

The analysis of the political consciousness of the Ghanaian workers in Chapter Two served to illustrate their deep perception of the operation of colonial imperialism. They perceived the old system of colonial rule as being essentially "an alliance between external imperialism, the local precapitalist forces" and local bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie. They also perceived their own plight as a class as being deeply rooted in the exploitative and oppressive colonial imperialism. They refused to join Nkrumah in the UGCC. But Nkrumah, albeit reluctantly, overcame this theoretical contradiction and formed his own party encompassing a wide spectrum of social classes and strata. Only then was he able to draw the mass of the workers into the Party. This alliance between the revolutionary elite in the CPP, the militant workers and the lumpen-proletariate brought nationalism to its

height. In 1950, it was possible to stage the "Positive Action" a militant advocacy "of self-government now."

In response to labour militancy imperialism underwent a concomitant recomposition and readjustment. The strategies of co-option of trade union leaders and dividing the nationalist movement were exploited to the full. The creation of a non-political labour bureaucracy to supplant or to rival militant workers precipitated an ideological polarization of the labour movement into radicals and conservatives. Nkrumah's own collaboration with the colonial regime in the process of decolonization led to his estrangement from his former militant allies in the labour movement.

With this deteriorating relationship with the militant workers, and the suspicion by the conservatives of his militant background, Nkrumah was gradually compelled to rely on a small but ambitious group of CPP loyalists in the labour movement. The clientelist relationship between Nkrumah and this group during the colonial period was based essentially on reciprocal interests between the two sides. The inability of the colonial system to emasculate labour militancy in the Ghanaian labour movement coupled with the growing strength of the pro-CPP trade unionists who also extolled political unionism rendered the British efforts to establish a labour aristocracy in Ghana during the colonial period fruitless. The clientelist relationship between Nkrumah and the Ghana TUC leadership was intensified after independence. This also took the form of bureaucratization of the entire movement. In Chapter three, it was emphasized that the initiative for bureaucratization came from the pro-CPP workers. It was Nkrumah's realization of the viability of such a bureaucracy in promoting his socio-economic policies that led him to support his erstwhile allies in the TUC leadership. The TUC leaders on their part drew closer to the CPP in order to ameliorate its perennial financial and

organizational problems. They also wanted to play a central role in the policy-making apparatus of the Nkrumah administration.

The bureaucratization of Ghana TUC took place within the context of a neo-colonial Ghana which was making efforts to break from the grip of the international capitalist system. Its socialist (professed) orientation was by and large, a reflection of Nkrumah's radical policies in Ghana after 1961. But internal inconsistencies such as corruption and self-aggrandizement by the TUC leadership rendered this bureaucracy ineffective. Rather than ensuring that this labour movement strictly adhered to the socialist policies on which it was bed-rocked, Nkrumah merely continued to subsidize it thus providing the opportunity for corruption. These flaws notwithstanding, the Ghana TUC bureaucracy was a model of political unionism in post-colonial Africa.

Nkrumah's involvement in the Pan-African Labour Movement was analyzed in the light of the theory of proletarian internationalism. In the context of the reality of neo-colonialism, the validity and justification of Nkrumah's advocacy of disaffiliation of African labour organizations from their international counterparts were analyzed. This advocacy went hand in hand with the general spirit of non-alignment that was sweeping through Africa and the Third World, in reaction to the ideological tension between the 'East' and the 'West'. It was contended in the study that the Cold War had strong economic (or imperial) overtones. Each of the protagonists was craving to entrench its economic hegemony in Africa. To the extent that Nkrumah's promulgation of the theory of a non-aligned pan-Africa trade unionism was geared towards securing Africa from economic enslavement by the international capitalist system, it was plausible and nationalistic. The accusation that his advocacy was isolationistic and less pan-proletarian fell short of recognizing these pertinent issues.

Nkrumah's call for a united African labour front against imperialism was based on his belief that imperialism operated on a global scale and that African countries should operate as a block. Nkrumah strongly believed that the workers of the centre were used by imperialism to entrench itself in Africa. In this context he largely concurred with the views of such dependency scholars as Samir Amin and Mandel. According to Amin,

in relative terms, the proletariat of the periphery suffers an increasing degree of exploitation as compared with the proletariat of the centre (1974:25).

Mandel, on the other hand contends that imperialism creates:

the possibility, on the basis of its monopoly productivity, of ensuring the workers of the metropolitan countries standards of living higher than those of the colonies (1971:479).

Nkrumah further recognized the process of "bourgeoisification" of the proletariat in the centre through corruption and bribery by the metropolitan bourgeoisie in order to win their leadership to its imperialist cause. In Chapter Four evidence was provided to show that the labour leaders of the centre worked hand in hand with their governments to ensure that the latter's hegemony in the periphery was maintained. This was as true of the workers in the East as it was of those in the West.

Nkrumah spearheaded the creation of AATUF as a labour front for his revolutionary Pan-African ideas. The AATUF, like the ICFTU or WFTU, was a labour bureaucracy. The AATUF was closely linked to the Ghana TUC, a clear indication of the fact that Nkrumah was the driving force behind revolutionary Pan-African trade unionism. By setting up the AATUF, Nkrumah showed awareness

of the potency of such bureaucracies in conveying ideological precepts. It was the use of this strong bureaucracy that enabled the AATUF to undercut the influence of the ICFTU by 1965. The division at the Pan-African labour front between the AATUF and the ATUC symbolized the division at the political level. In this context the AATUF was identified with Nkrumah's radical position. Although the WFTU gave financial assistance to the AATUF, the latter was not under its control; the Soviets were no more comfortable with Nkrumah's neutral position than the West was.

In relation to Kenya, Nkrumah's involvement has been analyzed in the light of his wider attempt to bring together all African trade unions under the revolutionary AATUF. But our analysis of the Kenyan labour movement before 1957 reveals a concerted effort by the colonial capitalist state in Kenya and its international allies to deradicalize and bureaucratize the labour movement in Kenya. These efforts had led to the incarceration of militant trade union leaders and the setting up of a strong labour bureaucracy affiliated to the ICFTU and espousing its ideological position. This explains the context of the bitter struggle between Mboya and Nkrumah. The contention of the study was that these struggles at the continental level were transposed into the local scene and exacerbated internal struggles that were not necessarily ideological, but either tribal or personal.

At the same time, struggles at the trade union level had their spill overs in the political arena. The emerging inter-dependence between the political elites and the trade union leadership engendered a clientelist political relationship which found its ramifications in the Pan-African arena. Thus, Nkrumah's advocacy of non-alignment and disaffiliation of African unions from the Western or Eastern labour organizations were taken up by the radical section of the Kenyan labour movement in their struggle against their conservative rivals. Nkrumah's old friendship with

Kenyatta also intensified the ideological struggle at the two levels, at least during the colonial period and the early 1960's.

Chapter Six has analyzed the fierce ideological battle between the forces of neo-colonialism and those of the revolutionary pan-African opinion in their bid to establish their hegemony in Kenya. While it was political and strategic reasons that propelled Nkrumah to focus on Kenya, the forces of neo-colonialism had in addition the economic, and geo-political factors as the predominant motives. By 1965, the imperialist influence in the Kenyan trade unionism was waning, thanks to the concerted efforts of AATUF and its affiliate (KAWC) in Kenya. The ICFTU found its demise in Kenya; and the KFL was dissolved by mid 1960s. Instead, Kenyatta replaced the KFL with COTU, a government controlled labour bureaucracy. By this time, imperialism had reorganized its forces at the political front and was preparing to deradicalize the labour and political establishments in Kenya.

Evidence drawn from Schechter has pointed to the fact that the embattled neo-colonialism and its internal allies masterminded the establishment of a monolithic system at the political level that espoused conservative economic policies and promised security to the neo-colonial interests in Kenya. After 1966, the radical section was defeated at the political front and its labour clientele ejected out of COTU. When it attempted to re-organize and challenge the conservative thrust now in power, militarism, characteristic of a neo-colonial state was unleashed against them. This monolithic system was not the sole work of neo-colonialism, it was also a product of the efforts of the local comprador bourgeois class in its attempt to entrench its own interests in Kenya.

Concomitant with the defeat and retreat of radicalism in Kenya and the erection of monolithic political system was the defeat of revolutionary pan-Africanism at the continental level. After the fall of Nkrumah, neo-colonialism had its greatest victory; Pan-Africanism, its most formidable enemy was now on the defensive. This paved the way for the consolidation of neo-colonialism, a process that would reach its apogee in the mid 1970s through the 1980s. Monolithic systems in Cold War Africa served a dual role. In those countries pursuing moderate policies they were largely veritable beacons of neo-colonialism. Together with labour bureaucracies in these countries. But in countries such as Guinea under Sekou Toure, Ghana under Nkrumah, or Tanzania, one party regimes ensured uniformity in ideology. They were others like Ethiopia, which were greatly influenced by the Soviet Union.

Some brief remarks on the phenomenon of labour aristocracy should be made here. Most discussants on the subject of labour aristocracy have dismissed the view that the African working class formed a labour aristocracy. Michael Chege, for example, reacting to Arrighi and Saul's view of the economic differentiation of the African working class, argued that such economic differentiation does not automatically lead to political fragmentation of the workers (1988: 172). Further, M.P. Cowen and Kabiru Kinyanjui (1982) have pointed out that the high income brackets of labour in Kenya suffered great erosion of real income and a devaluation of labour. They continue to argue that the position of labour aristocracy is difficult to support from a logical deduction of the Marxist law of value in general and of exploitation in particular. Arthur Hazlewood has cryptically said that any proposition that labourers, even skilled ones, are fairly well-off "would have to be believed by someone without experience of the way they live or with his nose buried in the figure" (1979: 194).

The limitation of all these views and which forms the Achilles' heel of the general criticism of the labour aristocracy theory is that rather than exploring the

various facets and contexts within which this phenomena took place, they limit the criticism to Arrighi and Saul's theory of economic differentiation among workers. The strength and Saul's contentions lies in the fact that both are able to place the phenomenon of labour aristocracy in the context of the exploitation of neo-colonial set up and its ramification on the class composition in the periphery of the international capitalist system. Not to view the labour aristocracy in Africa in the light of the exploitative web of the global capitalist system, or simply to deny its existence is to miss the point.

The theoretical contention of this study was that two factors are germane to the understanding of the essence and character of the presence of labour aristocracy in Africa. First is the intervention by imperialism in the spontaneous development of militant labour unionism in African. Second, the erection of conservative bureaucracies both at national and continent (international) levels. In fact the development of labour aristocracies in the history of the working class was closely linked, as the study has pointed out, to the process of bureaucratization. As the case of Kenya, and to an extent Ghana has shown, the process of bureaucratization of the labour movement in Africa was preceded by brutal suppression of militant unionism by the colonial capitalist system. They also looked to the colonial state and it's external supporters for financial subsidies and educational opportunities acquiescent and pliant to the demands of the colonial capitalist system were encouraged to set up conservative labour bureaucracies. Fanon's notion of pampered and privileged workers in Africa, in reference to these labour leaders, is appropriate.

It is not the high salaries or better terms of service as Arrighi and Saul contended that should be used as pointers to the existence of labour aristocracy in Africa; in fact such opulent labour leaders as Tom Mboya received only a fifth as much as his European counterpart doing the same job of Sanitary Inspector in the Nairobi City Council (Goldworthy, 1982:13). Privileges accrued from the generous

subsidies that came from the centre, to the labour organizations in the periphery. The figures given by Kiloh (1976), Makhan Singh (1980) and Goldsworthy (1982) leave one with no doubt that the West (especially through its labour organisations) consciously and deliberately created and financed this rich privileged class of labour leaders in Kenya. It was this relationship during the colonial period that laid the foundations for the future neo-colonial relationship.

In the era of colonial imperialism as well as in that of neo-colonial imperialism, this labour aristocracy articulated the economic and political objectives of the centre in the periphery. Besides ensuring an incessant flow of cheap labour force, they also articulated the anti-communist crusade against the East in the era of the Cold War. They were equally pivotal in the deradicalization of the nationalist and labour movements.

In the post-independence Africa, such conservative bureaucracies form strong beacons of neo-colonialism. In its present form, the labour aristocracy in Africa is a logical consequence of the development of dependent capitalism. Like its comprador bourgeois counterpart in politics, the labour aristocracy forms neocolonialism's allies in the former colonial territories. But unlike the labour aristocracies in the metropole, this stratum of African workers is not fully-fledged; it occupies an inferior position in relation to its counterparts in the centre. Parallel to the web of global capitalist system which they subserve, the labour aristocrats in Africa are linked to the labour organizations of the centre. Finally, just like the survival and operational effectiveness of the comprador bourgeoisie in politics is insured by the presence of a monolithic party and administrative system, the survival of the labour aristocracy is insured by a strong and rigid labour bureaucracy attached to the political apparatuses of the neo-colonial state.

Nkrumah, an accomplished student of the West, sought to establish parallel

bureaucracies in the African labour and political scenes. In his opposition to neo-colonialism, he sought to undermine the links between the labour organizations in Africa and those in the centre. He spearheaded the formation of AATUF to which all labour organizations in Africa were to affiliate. To buttress this, he advocated a centrist approach to African unity as a way of asserting Africa's independence from the manipulation of the world capitalist system. This view would appear to conflict with our earlier contention that monolithic systems were beacons of neo-colonialism. Thus, distinction must be drawn between the nature of bureaucratization of the labour movement in those African states that pursued revolutionary policies and in those that were under neo-colonial influence. While labour bureaucracies in the latter were pillars of neo-colonialism and imperialism those in the latter were pillars of Pan-Africanism. The victory of neo-colonialism in Africa after 1966 adversely affected the future of the revolutionary labour movements while labour aristocracies were strengthened.

27

In principle, monolithic systems, whether of the conservative or radical, military or one party types, served as instruments of legitimization and preservation of their corresponding ideological precepts. Thus one can delineate three categories of monolithic systems in Africa: There are those with socialist orientation such as Ratsiraka's regime in Madagascar, kerekou's in Benin, and Mengistu's in Ethiopia. There are those that are inclined to the west for example Mobutu's in Zaire and Amin's in Uganda in the 70s. One, however, can clearly identify one party regimes such as that of Nkrumah in Ghana, Sekou Toure's in Guinea, Nasser's in Egypt or Nyerere's in Tanzania where the ideas of the leader were dominant and a strong assertion of independence and non-alignment in relation to the West and the East was manifest. Reading through the pages of John Stockwell's book, *In Search of Enemies*, one does not need further illustration to see the pervasive role played by the West to prop up monolithic regimes of western orientation as beacons of neo-colonialism during the Cold War era.

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