

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN SIERRA LEONE
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND
FUNCTIONING OF BARGAINING MACHINERY SINCE 1945

by

Hugh Edward Conway

Being a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
Ph.D. (Economics) degree. University of London.

October 1968



ProQuest Number: 10731660

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10731660

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

ABSTRACT

After the Second World War there was established in Sierra Leone, West Africa, a pattern of industrial wage bargaining involving Joint Industrial Councils and Wages Boards. The early introduction of such machinery was unique in Africa at the time. In studying these institutions primary concern was to uncover the reasons behind their introduction and to analyze their subsequent effect on industrial relations practices in the country. The relevance of the bargaining bodies to the occurrence and pattern of industrial conflict was of special interest. Since no previous research had been undertaken into the country's industrial relations system, or its system of wage determination, the study seemed particularly worthwhile.

Before the central themes are approached the history of labour administration and labour activity in Sierra Leone from the late 19th century is summarized in Part I. Railway strikes after the First World War were important in the formulation of early Government labour policy. In Part II the process of transferring bargaining machinery from Britain and the reasons for the move are reviewed. The various effects of the bargaining arrangements, especially on labour strike activity are summarized in Part IV. From the Administration's point of view industrial bargaining worked

well to 1955. The General Strike in 1955, however, brought considerable changes in the functioning and design of the JICs and Wages Boards.

Some conclusions reached in this study are firstly, that the provision of union organizational stability and leadership security will serve to limit industrial conflict during the early stages of labour-management relations; and secondly, the initial acceptance or rejection by former British West African administrators, of the British philosophy of 'voluntarism' in labour-management affairs, largely explains certain observed differences in trade union structure and bargaining arrangements among English speaking West African states.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the preparation of this thesis generous financial support has been received from the University of London (Postgraduate Travelling Studentship) and the Leopold Schepp Foundation (Fellowship), New York. I am very grateful to both for their very kind and much needed assistance.

Research into this subject was greatly facilitated by the materials held in the following libraries: School of Oriental and African Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science, Fourah Bay College (Freetown), Ibadan University (Ibadan), Royal Commonwealth Society, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Public Records Office and Congress House - TUC library. I wish to thank the staff of these institutions for their cooperation and assistance.

During my twenty month residence in Freetown, assistance was also given by the Central Bank of Sierra Leone, the Central Statistics Office and the Labour Department. My thanks are extended to the many government officials, trade unionists, businessmen and academic people who gave so generously of their time in helping to complete certain aspects of the study.

Finally, my deepest thanks are owed to my Supervisors, Professor E. Penrose for her encouragement during the first year of this study, and to Dr. W. Warren whose suggestions and guidance have been invaluable throughout all aspects of this work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose and Organization of the Study	1
Economic and Political Background to the Country	6
PART I - A SHORT HISTORY OF SIERRA LEONE LABOUR ADMINISTRATION	
Chapter	
I	
THE DEVELOPMENT OF WAGE EMPLOYMENT, WORKER PROTEST, AND SIERRA LEONE GOVERNMENT LABOUR POLICY TO 1926	14
The Growth of Wage Employment After 1880	15
Early Organization During the 19th Century	17
Wages and Early Strikes Prior to 1914	20
The Evolution of Labour Policy to 1926	22
Economic Impact of World War I	26
1919 Railway Strike and Riots	29
Aftermath of the Strike and Riots	37
A Railway Workers' Union and the 1920 Strike	38
1926 Railway Strike	40
The Strike Relief Fund	46
Labour Policy and the 1926 Railway Strike	50
II	
FACTORS INFLUENCING LABOUR ADMINISTRATION TO 1945	53
Forces for Change Prior to World War II	55
External Forces	55
Abolition of Domestic Slavery in 1927	55
ILO Conventions	59
Colonial Office	60
Internal Forces	68
Growth of the Mining Industry During the 1930s	68
Wallace Johnson and the Sierra Leone Youth League	74

Chapter	Page
Forces for Change Prior to World War II (Contd.)	
Labour Regulation During World War II	89
Rising Demand for Labour 1939-1942	89
Legislative Control	93
Administrative Practices in Nigeria, Gold Coast and the Gambia	96
Cost of Living Rises in Sierra Leone	98
The Cost of Living Indices	100
The Cost of Living Bonus	103
The Challenge of Unemployment	110
The Employment Exchange	113
Demobilization and Resettlement in Nigeria, Gold Coast and the Gambia	115
Summary and Conclusion	121
PART II. - THE TRANSFER OF BARGAINING MACHINERY	
III REASONS BEHIND THE SELECTION OF BARGAINING MACHINERY	124
War Time Strikes	124
Recommendations of the Trade Union Advisor	127
The Need for Innovation	128
The Choice of Bargaining Institutions	130
Joint Industrial Councils	130
Transformation of the Joint Industrial Council	132
The Regulatory Function	136
Wages Boards	136
Representation on the Wages Boards	139
Private Employment and the Wages Boards	139
Conclusion	144
IV INTRODUCING CHANGE	147
Trade Union Cooperation	149
Leadership Support	149
Upward Wage Movement	157
Summary	161

Chapter	Page
Trade Union Cooperation (Contd.)	
Methods of Wage Determination in British West Africa	162
The Gambia	162
Gold Coast	164
Nigeria	170
Government and Industrial Relations	176
Common Historical Backgrounds	177
The Role of Government in the British System of Industrial Relations	180
Voluntarism in West Africa	184
Conclusion	186
Other Institutions for Negotiations	189
PART III FUNCTIONING AND EFFECT OF THE BARGAINING MACHINERY	
V EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE TO 1955	191
Intended Effect of the Bargaining Machinery	194
Strike Patterns	194
Economic Factors and the Strike Pattern	194
Changes in the Cost of Living	195
Trade and Government Reserves	199
Unemployment	201
Industry Mix	206
Institutional Factors and Strikes	208
Trade Union Organization	208
Bargaining Machinery and Industrial Unrest	210
Union Stability and Leadership Prestige	210
The Standing Bargaining Machinery	214
Extending Statutory Agreements	214
Conclusion	215
Unintended Effects	217
Mine Strikes	217
DELCO	218
SLST	220
Joint Consultation	221

Chapter	Page
Other Effects	225
Closing Area Differentials	226
Wage Rates	226
Earnings	230
Narrowing Skill Differentials	232
Employer Associations	235
 VI THE 1955 FREETOWN GENERAL STRIKE	 236
The Rising Cost of Living	237
Effect of the Diamond Mining Boom	237
Cost of Living Index	245
JIC Negotiations and the General Strike	249
Events Preceding the Strike	253
Freetown General Strike	254
Factors Which Contributed to the Strike	257
The Commission of Inquiry	260
Conclusion	264
Institutional and Economic Changes After the Strike	 265
Changes in Design	266
Changes in Operation	269
Labour Advances After the Strike	271
Bargaining Leaders	277
Summary	281
Politics and the 1955 General Strike	282
 VII CONSEQUENCES OF 1955 - THE BREAKDOWN IN INDUSTRIAL NEGOTIATIONS	 289
Growing Unemployment	291
Unemployment from 1958	291
Wage Levels	300
Individual Employer Bargaining	307
Conclusion on Independent Negotiations	311
A Final Note	313
Inducements to Private Investment	315
Government Spending and Employment	319
Internal Challenge to the Industrial Bargaining Machinery	 321
Consequences of Restrictions on Organization	 322
ILO and the Freedom of Association Convention	 326
Union Growth and the Bargaining Machinery	329

Chapter	Page
Continued Disunity in the Labour Movement	330
Mine Workers' Union	331
Dock Workers' Union	333
Artisan and Allied Workers' Union	337
Employers Refusal to Bargain	340
Summary	343
PART IV SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	
	346
Appendix 1	362
The Introduction of Labour Legislation to British West Africa	
Appendix 2	366
Cost of Living Changes and Real Wages in West Africa Series I (1939 = 100)	
Series II (1958 = 100)	376
Appendix 3	377
Strike Data for Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ghana from 1949	
Appendix 4	380
Unemployment in Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria	
Appendix 5	382
Trade Union Organization in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ghana from 1949	
Appendix 6	385
Ratios of Skilled Workers Wage Rates to Those of Unskilled Workers October, 1954, October, 1960, and October, 1962	
Appendix 7	386
Daily Wage Rates for Construction and Mining Industries 1949-1963	
Appendix 8	389
Average Weekly Earnings (shillings) and Hours Worked in the Construction and Mining Industries 1949-63	
	391
Appendix 9	394
Craftsmen and Apprentices in Selected Specified Trades	

Appendix 10	Industrial Negotiating Machinery, 1960.	395
Appendix 11	Artisan and Transport JIC Meetings 1947-52	396
Appendix 12	Number of Persons Employed by Industry in Sierra Leone 1960-1966	398
Appendix 13	Index of Employment Changes in Various Sectors for Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone from 1953	399
Appendix 14	Information on Industrial Projects in Sierra Leone 1967	401
Appendix 15	Registered Trade Unions, December 1965	404
BIBLIOGRAPHY		406

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1 Mineral Exports as a Percentage of Total Exports 1933-38	69
2.2 Annual Employment (Non-Agricultural) 1939-45	91
2.3 Freetown Cost of Living Index 1939-45	102
2.4 Average Annual Employment (Non Agricultural) 1945-50	113
2.5 Size and Population of British West African Territories	118
3.1 Major Employers 1947	143
4.1 Sierra Leone Trade Unions	153
4.2 Employees of Public Authorities in Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia	179
4.3 Economic Data on Nigeria, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone, 1950	185
4.4 Hours Worked in the Gold Coast, Dec. 1957	189
5.1 Freetown Cost of Living Changes 1939-52	197
5.2 Central Government Annual Expenditure and Reserve Balances - Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, 1955	199
5.3 Unemployment in Ghana and Sierra Leone	205
5.4 Industrial Structure in Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone - 1956	207
5.5 Artisan Workers JIC Daily Rates	229
5.6 Earnings Ratios Between Colony and Protectorate Workers	231
6.1 Sierra Leone Rice Imports 1950-57	240

Table	Page
6.2 Major Domestic Exports and Total Government Revenue for Selected Years	276
6.3 Wage Rates in Construction and Mining	280
7.1 Status of the Civilian Labour Force in Selected Urban Centres	297
7.2 Annual Returns from the Port Labour Board	306
7.3 Industrial Disputes in Sierra Leone 1961-65	311
7.4 Contribution of Company Taxes to Recurrent Revenue	320
Chart I Registered Unemployment by Occupation (End of September, 1964 -)	299

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Organization of the Study

Attempts have been made to export different institutions of wage regulation. In the case of former African dependencies, official encouragement was usually given to methods of wage fixing which operated in the metropolitan country. In former British African territories the object of labour policy was to encourage a British model of industrial relations.¹ Although the model was never clearly defined collective bargaining was strongly recommended in wage determination.

Partly because the British model was never defined and because of more basic differences between the metropolitan country and the African Colonies, institutions of wage regulation differed substantially from British practices. An exception to this was Sierra Leone. By 1947 Joint Industrial Councils and Wages Boards loosely copied from English models, had been established in each of the major industrial sectors in the country. By contrast to the

1. Joan Davies African Trade Unions (Penguin, 1966)
Chapt. ii.

more centralized, Government administered methods of wage regulation found elsewhere on the continent, practices in Sierra Leone from this period featured the decentralized, 'standing' industrial bargaining machinery. This unique development stimulated investigation into the country's system of industrial relations.

The primary interest in this study was in answering questions of why and how bargaining machinery was transferred to Sierra Leone and to analyze its effect on industrial relations generally, and particularly on labour strike action. The practical aspect of the study was the attempt to define the relationship between a particular pattern of bargaining and labour conflict. The theoretical interest was to test the hypothesis that industrial conflict during the early stages of labour-management relations can be avoided by fostering organizational stability among trade unions and providing personal security for union leaders. (Both of these were by-products of the introduction of bargaining machinery.) The appropriateness and effect in Colonial West Africa of the British philosophy of Government non-intervention in labour relations was also reviewed.

It was discovered that the original intention of the Colonial Administration in introducing the bargaining

machinery was to insure effective but indirect Government influence in all industrial negotiations. In promoting a system of industrial bargaining bodies, the Administration unavoidably rejected the philosophy of 'non interference' advocated by the metropolitan country and Colonial Governments elsewhere.

After the introduction of the machinery in 1945-47 there followed a period of industrial peace which lasted for about a decade. Despite rapid rises in the cost of living, partly related to the diamond mining boom during the early 1950's, strike action was negligible and wage rates were comparable to those paid in other British West African territories.

The industrial peace had the undesirable consequence of encouraging complacency among Government officials concerned with labour matters. The Freetown General Strike, in 1955, emphasized the danger of sole reliance on procedural arrangements in regulating labour-management affairs. After the strike, considerable changes took place in the design and function of the industrial bargaining machinery. These changes mirrored the disillusionment with the attempt to institutionalize labour conflict. However, the industrial negotiating machinery has continued in

existence to the present date. But, pressing economic difficulties now facing the country, endanger the future of industry-wide agreements.

Since no previous analysis has been undertaken of the Sierra Leone industrial relations system, this study attempts to fill the information gap. In addition, it provides a case study for present development planners concerned with the problems and potentialities of incorporating institutions developed elsewhere into their own industrial relations systems.

In research on this subject, an important complication was the difficulty of obtaining, and the scarcity of reliable statistical information about the industrial and commercial sectors of the Sierra Leone economy. Fortunately, newspaper publication in the country had an early origin. Weekly journals appeared from the middle of the last century. These, along with Colonial Office records, and Legislative Council Debates provided source material for the period prior to World War II. Labour Department Reports, economic surveys, parliamentary debates, personal interviews, ILO publications, newspaper files and other documented reports cover more recent developments. The complete Sierra Leone labour department files on the minutes of all Joint

Industrial Council and Wages Board meetings were also searched. However, official statistics covering employment and unemployment are not complete. Due to evasion, bribery and defective methods of inspection it became difficult to determine the effectiveness of statutory wage rates. Industrial productivity statistics are still largely a matter of guesswork, and no study has yet been made of rural-urban migration flows. Analysis of some of these important areas, however, has recently begun.

Organizationally the study is divided into four parts. Part I provides an historical account of the growth of wage labour, the labour movement, and changes in labour policy to World War II. Particular attention is focused on the changes in labour policy in response to labour strike action. In Part II, an attempt is made to answer the questions why and how the Colonial Administration transferred British bargaining machinery to Sierra Leone. The effectiveness of the bargaining machinery is described in Part III. Part IV provides a summary and conclusion on the findings in the study. In each Part comparative data on developments in Nigeria, Ghana and the Gambia are introduced in order to highlight differences or similarities between them and Sierra Leone.

Economic and Political Background to the Country

Sierra Leone is located at the elbow of West Africa before that land mass cuts in sharply above the equator leaving the Gulf of Guinea. The total area of the country covers almost 28,000 square miles, bounded on the north and east by Guinea and on the south by Liberia. A coastline extending some two hundred and ten miles boasts one of the world's finest natural harbours at the capital city of Freetown.¹

Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the country was infrequently touched by European trading vessels. Trading posts had been established by the Portuguese even before formal colonization by the British began in 1787. The decision to colonize the area in the first place, followed the emergence of a hard core of destitute but legally 'free' negroes (as a result of the Mansfield Judgement in 1772) residing in England.

The original band of settlers, sponsored by interested philanthropists, journeyed from England and arrived in the country during 1787. They were followed shortly after by

1. Useful general information on the country is contained in the H.M.S.O. publication Sierra Leone: The Making of a Nation (London 1961) and Barclays Bank DCO. Sierra Leone, An Economic Survey (London 1966).

negro groups from Nova Scotia and Jamaica who had managed to secure freedom and passage back to Africa. In 1808, the settlement became a Crown Colony.

Following the passage of the Slave Trade Act in 1807 the new colony was used as a base from which the Act could be enforced. A Court of Adjudication was established in Freetown for the trial of slave traders. Recaptured slaves were released in the country. Both the negro 'settlers' and the 'liberated' Africans, later collectively called Creoles, settled a peninsula area of twenty square miles, (later known as the Colony area) and became the social 'elite'. The interior of the country was annexed as the Protectorate in 1896 and remained the province of various tribal groups, chief among which were the Mende and Temne.

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the Protectorate supplied the Colony with agricultural and mining products for international trade. Up to the 1930's, agricultural produce dominated export trade totals. Palm kernel and palm oil alone usually accounted for about 75% of the value of exported goods. During the 1930's, iron ore and diamond mining began in the country. The value of mining exports surpassed agricultural export products before the outbreak of World War II, but the fall in diamond trading during

the war reversed the pattern in favour of agricultural produce. Agricultural exports continued to account for the major share of export earnings up to the mid 1950's.

Today, the Central Statistics Office estimates that about 70% of the total Sierra Leone labour force works in the agricultural sector of the economy. Produce for domestic consumption includes rice, the staple food of the population, cassava, yams, sweet potatoes and beans. Farm exports are still led by palm kernel, which annually accounts for over 50% of agricultural export value. Cocoa and coffee are also produced for trade. Since 1949, the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board has been responsible for the marketing and export of agricultural produce and for promoting agricultural development.

While agriculture accounts for the largest proportion of labour, mining products once again dominate export trade. Diamonds, iron ore, bauxite and rutile account for about 80% of total export value. Diamonds alone usually comprise 60% of export trade value; about 10% of the GDP; and 20% of current Government revenue. Diamonds from Sierra Leone today account for about 10% of total sales of the international Central Selling Organization.

In recent years, manufacturing and processing, largely to meet local demand have grown steadily. About twenty factories were established between 1961 and 1966.

Government has been particularly active in promoting manufacturing, both through investment and generous tax allowances. Government operates a printing plant, a furniture factory, rice and palm oil mills and is part-owner of enterprises producing cement, plastic sandals, alcoholic beverages and processed diamonds. Foreign owned factories produce canned fish, beer, cigarettes, umbrellas, soft drinks, oxygen and paints. Private companies owned jointly by foreigners and Sierra Leoneans have started production of knitted fabrics, nails and retreaded tyres.

In November, 1966 an I.M.F. agreement was signed to allow the country to borrow necessary funds to cover current and development expenditure commitments following a series of large budget deficits. As a result of the economic crises, spending on development projects has been curtailed, while the wisdom of generous company tax allowances and the policy of contractor finance have been questioned. The situation has led to a reduction in wage employment since 1965, after a steady increase in the number of wage earners in major establishments during the

previous five years (47,925 workers were engaged by employers employing six or more in 1960, while the number increased to 69,223 in 1965).

In 1963 an official census recorded the total population of Sierra Leone to be just under 2.2 million, with about 128,000 inhabitants in Freetown. The total labour force in the country was estimated to be 908,000. Of this number 102,000 were wage earners while family workers accounted for 421,000, self employed 382,000, employers 3,000 and unemployed 30,000.¹ Government employed 36% of the total number of wage earners, although Government and public corporations together employ over 60% of the workers in major establishments (six or more employers).² By industrial classification, Services (19,790) ranked first in the number of wage employees, followed by Construction (11,286), Transport, Storage and Communication (10,452), Mining and Quarrying (7,445), Commerce (5,710), Manufacturing (5,450), Agriculture, forestry and fishing (5,208) and Electricity, Water and Sanitary Services (1,815).

-
1. Not working but available for work. Can be interpreted as referring to the civilian labour force above 10 years not working and seeking wage employment.
 2. Employees in major establishments were of primary interest to this study, as it was assumed that such workers were the most likely to be unionized and therefore involved in the labour-management relationship herein reviewed.

National Accounts first published for the country in November, 1966, estimated the gross domestic product at factor cost to be Le 221.5 millions (one leone = ten shillings) in 1964 or Le 90. per capita GDP. According to this source approximately one-third of the gross domestic product originates in agriculture, while mining contributes one-fifth and commerce about 15%.

Politically, Sierra Leone gained Independence from Great Britain in April, 1961, after a colonial attachment which began when the territory was annexed as a Crown Colony in 1808. During the 19th century, constitutional reform in 1863 resulted in the creation of an Executive Council to supplement the existing Legislative Council.

Constitutional changes during the 20th century extended the jurisdiction and membership of both Legislative and Executive Councils. The jurisdiction of both covered the Protectorate after 1924, while Protectorate tribal interests from that year were represented on the Legislative Council. Successive constitutional reforms in 1951 and 1957 expanded the representation and political influence of Protectorate leaders on legislative bodies. However, the constitutional reforms of 1938 and 1943, increased the political representation of middle-class Creoles from the Colony area.

From 1924, the nature of constitutional reforms seemed to conform to a pattern which prompted one observer to conclude "that as the process of Colonial development required constitutional reform, the colonial authorities granted such reform in a manner disproportionately favourable to those African elements which at any given period were likely to exert a moderating influence".¹ Thus, following the identification of the Colony Creole with the emerging National Congress in West Africa after 1920, constitutional reform favoured more moderate subjects among the Protectorate tribal groups. In 1938, after the establishment of the radical Sierra Leone Youth League among the Colony's lower class Creoles and urban wage earners, political reform increased the representation rights of the less radical middle class Creole community. By the 1950's, growing nationalist sentiment among educated Colony based Creoles resulted in representational favouritism in 1951 and 1957 reforms to more traditional Paramount leaders from the Protectorate.² In support of the changes, Government

1. Martin Kilson, Political Change in a West African State (Boston, 1966) p. 145.

2. Kilson, passim.

officials argued that the changes reflected more fairly the population distribution within the country.

After the Constitutional reform of 1951, popular elections to the new Legislative Council were held and the Sierra Leone People's Party, led by Dr. M. Margai, gained the majority of the seats. The party which claimed its support primarily from Protectorate areas remained the majority and governing party following elections in 1957. After Independence in 1961, the SLPP formed the Government with Dr. Milton Margai as Prime Minister.

In the March, 1967 General Election, the opposition All Peoples' Congress headed by Mr. Siaka Stevens, challenged the supremacy of the SLPP. A very close election result appeared to indicate victory for the APC. Before the party could assume office, however, a military coup placed political control of the country in the hands of Army officers. In April of 1968 a military counter-coup was followed by the return of a civilian coalition Government under the leadership of Mr. Stevens.

CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WAGE EMPLOYMENT, WORKER PROTEST, AND SIERRA LEONE GOVERNMENT LABOUR POLICY TO 1926.

The Growth of Wage Employment After 1880

Wage employment in Sierra Leone resulting in a more or less stable and sizeable body of wage earners emerged by the 1880's. The trading activity of the Colony had for some time earlier required the services of maritime and dock labour for loading and unloading cargo ships. Many of the labourers employed in Freetown for this type of work were migrants from Liberia's Kru tribe. Vessels would engage Kru labour at Freetown or Monrovia for the work of loading and unloading as they travelled along the West African coast. During most of the nineteenth century the Kru dockworker or deckhand remained a transient in the Freetown community. After accumulating a small sum he would return to his family in Liberia. It was not until the 1880's that this group began to settle in the city with their families.

*Along with the stabilization of maritime workers, came the decision to fortify the port of Freetown for use as a British military and naval base. Although the city was not officially designated an Imperial Naval Base until after the outbreak of the First World War, the excellent natural

harbour of Freetown made it an obvious choice for such a base on the West Coast. From the 1880's improvements on the port, fortification work which included the construction of a military garrison, and the establishment of a coaling station, the only one of its kind in West Africa for refueling naval vessels, all provided opportunities for wage employment. Between 1860 and 1901 the population of the Colony area almost doubled (from 40,000 to over 76,000).¹

By the 1890's construction work had begun on the Sierra Leone Railway and in 1899 the first British West African Railway was officially opened for traffic.² The Railway connected the interior palm growing regions with the most important shipping centre in the country. By 1921 the Census Report for the year reported over 5,200 'mechanics and handicraftsmen' in the Colony.³ In addition, 7,755 'grumettal, labourers and house servants' were recorded.

-
1. R.R. Kucyinski Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire Vol.1 (Oxford, 1948). pp. 154-160.
 2. S.D.M. Robertson "The Sierra Leone Railway" Corona XIII, (March, 1961) p. 109. From an original strip of $32\frac{1}{2}$ miles out of Freetown, the Railway's mainline was subsequently extended eastward for $227\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
 3. Report and Summary of the Censuses of 1921 (London, 1922) p. 12. The category included blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, shipwrights, coopers, printers, shoemakers, etc.

Early Organization During the 19th Century

Almost simultaneous with the increase in wage employment was the appearance, in 1884, of the first worker organization among skilled craftsmen, known as the Mechanics Alliance.

Its first meeting witnessed the coming together of some one hundred and twenty artisans, carpenters, coopers, printers, painters, masons, etc., for the purpose of forming a Society of Mechanics similar to a trades union in England.¹

In the official organ of the new organization, known as The Artisan, objectives and programmes of the new group were outlined. It became apparent that the Mechanics' Alliance functioned as a guild rather than as a trade union.

In editorials and at meetings primary attention was focussed upon the standard of workmanship among artisans in the Colony. Accounts of inferior workmanship were related to poor wages and the undermining of the trained craftsman's position. It was suggested that legal penalties be enforced for poor workmanship.²

In addition to regulations for apprenticeship training, plans were also laid for the creation of a fund, "...for the

1. The Artisan 30 July, 1884, pp. 2-3. This paper as well as the Alliance itself was largely the creation of M.R. S.H.A. Case.

2. Ibid. p. 2.

relief of members in sickness; for assisting members in distressed circumstances; and for improving the moral and social condition of the members..."¹ At the second meeting of the Mechanics Alliance, held on 6 August, 1885, one hundred and seventy-six names were enrolled and one hundred and eleven subscriptions paid, amounting to £13. 10. 0.

Probably the most impressive feature of this early organization was its short-livedness. On its first anniversary the Alliance was more or less defunct. Editorials in The Artisan attempted to rally confidence but revival failed. Despite the threat to job security and skill standards posed by untrained labour coming into Freetown, Creole craftsmen became selfconscious about drawing attention to their manual occupations which were accorded little social prestige in the community. In calling for renewed organizational vigour, leaders were encouraged "not (to) rest till they have brought the Alliance to the front, and answered the sneers of cavillers that we are men of sense and judgment, and honest enough to labour in our respective callings regardless of the social inferiority implied by our being Artisans".²

1. Ibid., January 28, 1885.

2. Ibid., July 29, 1885.

The membership failed to respond to such exhortations and before the end of 1886 the Alliance had been dissolved.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, long established 'benefit societies' were also affected by the increase in wage employment.¹ While most societies were organized on a religious or ethnic basis, after 1880 an increasing number of societies, combined workers in the same occupation. Following the passage of the Savings Bank Ordinance of 1886, these 'friendly' or 'benefit' societies were encouraged to register the name and accounts of their group. Soon after, a Carpenter's Defensive Union registered, followed by a Shipwright Union Society.² After the turn of the century a Fisherman's Society, Launderer's Society, Seamen's Union and the Kroo Tribe Seamen's Union Friendly Society were also counted among the benefit societies with an occupational base.³ (As late as 1946 legislation

According to

1. /Christopher Fyfe A History of Sierra Leone (Oxford, 1962) a co-operative trading society had been formed in the Colony by 1811, p. 113. By 1824 benefit societies were functioning among disbanded soldiers in the Colony. On the relationship between 'benefit societies' and trade unions in England see the Webbs History of Trade Unionism (London, 1920) p. 24. Note 1.
2. Blue Book, 1917, p. H.H. 3.
3. By the middle of the 1950's, some fifteen occupationally based benefit societies still remained registered under the 1886 Ordinance.

was passed authorizing deductions from seamen's pay to be placed in the bank account of the Kruo Tribal Fund.)

Wages and Early Strikes Prior to 1914.

Wages paid to unskilled Colony labour during the late 1800's and early years of the present century fluctuated around nine pence per day.¹ Daily rates for artisans ranged from two to five shillings.² Among the factors which affected rates paid, were regularity and permanence of employment. Labour for permanent employment could be attracted at less than standard rates. In addition, the personality of the employer was deemed a determining factor. The Colonial Report of 1908 noted that the Roads Department "owing to the special gifts of its European officers constantly employed over 1,000 labourers at 5d. a day... while applicants are turned away daily".

Rates paid Kru labour at this time averaged about one shilling a day. Following annexation of the Protectorate in 1896, labour in wage employment there received rates

1. Labour made little gain over the forty year period preceding the Second World War. In 1939, unskilled labour in Freetown received a one shilling daily wage rate, though fluctuations of 3d. had taken place either way during the intervening period.

2. Colonial Report 1907, p. 44.

below those paid workers in the Colony.¹

Although it was claimed at the time that a labourer's needs were probably satisfied on four pence a day² certain sections of the labour force occasionally disagreed.³

In 1892 labourers at the construction site of the military barracks struck work, following a reduction in wage rates from one shilling to nine pence. The strikers were joined by workers throughout the city but, when the Governor enlisted strike leaders into a force of special constables at one shilling and three pence a day,⁴ the strike ended.

Fyfe noted that during the Protectorate fighting of 1898, a strike among railway labourers for higher pay was mistakenly interpreted as part of the disturbances.⁵

-
1. Slavery existed in the Protectorate until 1928 and communal labour for community projects was still being enlisted up to the 1950's.
 2. Colonial Report 1907, p. 44.
 3. One of the earliest reported strikes in Africa among the Kru seamen was illustrated by an artist for the Illustrated London News January 10, 1874, p. 32.
 4. Sierra Leone Archives Executive Council Minutes 1890-94 19/XI/92 and Fyfe op. cit., p. 513.
 5. Fyfe, op. cit., p. 586.

On the 1st day of June, 1911, about three hundred Railway workers struck work over dissatisfaction with the existing wage rate of nine pence per day. Railway officials using firearms managed to disperse a large crowd of protesting workers after seriously wounding two.¹ After the Governor censured the action of the Railway officials, the strike was brought to an end on the same day it had started.

The Evolution of Labour Policy to 1926

Labour to the Colonial Administration was essentially a commodity to be recruited when demand required; controlled and regulated while it remained in the Colony area; and dispersed following retrenchments. The labour policy which was developed during this early period attempted to satisfy each of these functions with minimum direct Government intervention. This preference resulted in indirect administration of labour through urban based tribal headmen.

1. P.R.O. Colonial Office Paper (C.O.) 267/532,
30 June, 1911 Governor's despatch to the Secretary
of State for the Colonies.

The appeal of indirect supervision was the administrative simplicity involved in utilizing existing social roles. For example, reliance on the Mende as carriers and labourers led to certain recruitment problems. The solution to the problem resulted in the selection of a "...suitable intermediary who would find men for this work".¹ The one chosen for this task was the recognized leader of the Mende residing in Freetown.

In addition to finding and recruiting labourers the problem of relocating labourers once major construction works in Freetown were completed also presented itself. Unemployment was particularly severe during the rainy season when many building operations shut down. To remedy the situation the Colonial Administration in 1905 enacted an Ordinance To Promote a System of Administration by Tribal Authority among the Tribes Settled in Freetown. The Ordinance gave official recognition to tribal authorities in the City. Under a Vagrancy Law passed shortly after, tribal headmen had the authority to investigate members of

1. Michael Banton West African City: A Study of Tribal Life in Freetown (Oxford, 1957) p. 11. Occasionally Government also dealt directly with labour groups. As early as 1816 a Kroe reservation was established outside Freetown though a similar scheme for Mende labourers failed during the early 1900's. See Ibid., p. 16.

their tribe living in the city. "If they were without employment for three weeks or more the Tribal Ruler could bring them before the Police Magistrate, have them declared 'idle and disorderly persons', and send them back to their chiefdoms".¹ Under the 1908 Manual Labour Ordinance, Tribal Rulers were empowered to investigate any complaint made by a member of his tribe against an employer.

This early system had at least two important consequences on future social developments. Firstly, it provided an excuse for Government to frustrate organization among early trade unions. In 1921 the Colonial Administration refused to recognize a trade union claiming:²

A tribal ruler is elected for each tribe in Freetown by the members of the tribe themselves. These tribal rulers are recognized by law and form the intermediaries between the members of the tribe and the Government and it is not possible for the Government to deal with or recognize any rival authority introduced by strangers to the Colony.

Another criticism claimed that the rise of tribal administration had the effect of maintaining and exacerbating

1. Ibid. p. 15.

2. Macaulay Papers Vol. V. No. 11 'Miscellaneous Documents Concerning Trade Unionism' Ibadan University Library quoted in Imanuel Geiss "Some Remarks on the Development of African Trade Unions" Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria 111, No. 2, (December, 1965), p. 368.

Creole-Tribal divisions. "A latent function of this parallel system of administration was that it structured the situation and militated against any rapid integration of the groups in the city..."¹ However valid this observation, the system of tribal administration persisted, despite periodic reviews by Commissions of Inquiries into alleged corrupt practices. It was not until 1947, that tribal administration and recruitment of labour in the maritime industry were finally superseded by the Labour Department's Port Labour Pool.

A final note on labour policy was the implementation of certain social welfare reforms by the turn of the century. The growing city population during the last part of the nineteenth century brought distinct social dangers. Probably the most vigorous reform carried out was the anti-malarial campaign. A group from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine was in charge of the operation which drained nearly all of the most pestilential parts of the city.²

1. Arthur T. Porter Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society, (Oxford, 1963) pp. 62-63.

2. CO 267/465 , 15 May, 1902 'Report'.

Economic Impact of World War I

While efforts to regulate labour supply through indirect means characterized early government labour policy, economic changes during the First World War and serious industrial unrest on the railways necessitated more direct official action.

Economic changes during the War materially affected virtually all sections of the population. The loss of the German palm kernel market¹ and the halt in the shipment of imported goods, brought trade to a standstill. But while trade was being depressed Imperial spending within the Colony created mounting demand for goods and services.

Its location on the West Coast and the excellent harbour recommended Freetown as a refuelling port for naval transport ships.² There was spending on the construction of a military barracks at Wilberforce, payments and allowances for troops and civilian carriers, as well as the maintenance of a coaling station. Refuelling naval

-
1. In 1913 Germany imported over 87% (in both volume and value) of exported palm kernel, which item alone accounted for well over 60% of the total value of all exports.
 2. The Freetown port is the third largest natural harbour in the world behind Rio de Janeiro and Sydney. It provides safe anchorage for more than two hundred vessels of unrestricted draught.

and merchant vessels also added to the internal spending boom by purchases of food supplies and other necessities in the Colony. In 1915 alone the War Office spent £175,000 in the Colony.¹ The internal market failed to satisfy the growing demand and an inflationary spiral was set in motion.²

The impact of the inflation on prices was emphasized in a 'Memorial' sent by the Civil Service Association (Native)³ to the Colonial Office after the War. In their petition for salary increases, an enclosure to the 'Memorial' noted:

-
1. Sir Charles P. Lucas The Empire at War Vol. IV pp. 18-19 as cited by N.A. Cox-George Finance and Development in West Africa: The Sierra Leone Experience (London, 1961), p. 182.
 2. Adverse weather conditions in 1914 affected rice production, the country's staple food product, while an influenza epidemic in 1918 considerably reduced farm man power and output during that year.
 3. This Association reportedly dates from 1909 and held membership open to those African Civil Servants occupying high Government positions. There seems to be evidence that the formation of the Nigerian Civil Service Union in 1912 was in part the work of a transferred Sierra Leonean who had participated in the formation of the Sierra Leone body three years earlier. See T.M. Yesufu "Problems of Industrial Relations in Nigeria With Special Reference to the Administration of Workmen's Compensation" (University of London, Ph.D. thesis, 1960), pp. 53-54.

A comparative schedule of local prices of some of the indispensable requisites for the upkeep and maintenance of ourselves and dependents for the years 1913 and 1920...shows an average increase of over 300% on cost of living in the pre-war days.¹

The high prices near the end of the War were soon matched by a high level of unemployment. The end of the War brought a halt to Imperial War spending and retrenchment left unemployed casual labourers who had worked while Freetown served as a naval base. This combination (inflation and unemployment) which had proved explosive throughout the pre-industrial period in Europe produced a like result in Sierra Leone.² Again paralleling European experience, once the protest became manifest it focused upon markets and successful dealers as "its obvious and almost invariable targets".³

1. CO 267/587 , 'Memorial', 8 September, 1920. The enclosures to the 'Memorial' gave an itemized listing of price increases for both imported and locally produced goods and a cost of living schedule for the lowest class of African employees.
2. The Sierra Leone 1919 Strike and Riots parallels mob activity in pre-twentieth century European urban centres. See E. J. Hobsbawm Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the 19th and 20th Centuries (Manchester, 1959), Chapt. vii.
3. Ibid., p. 111.

1919 Railway Strike and Riots

The strike of Sierra Leone railway workers during 1919, is important firstly because it brings to light the relationship between the Colonial Administration and the Colonial Office and the influence of the latter in colonial labour matters. Also, official reaction to the strike both in Sierra Leone and in the metropolitan country had a decisive effect on labour policy. Government response to industrial strikes right up to the Second World War, was largely conditioned by the 1919 railway strike and subsequent riots.

The dispute arose between Railway officials and daily wage employees,¹ over the latter's failure to receive the War bonus. This wage supplement had been given to other classes of workers on the Railway as well as daily wage men in the Medical Department, Police, Court Messengers and soldiers in the West African Frontier Force.²

The grievance gained increasing importance in the face of rising food costs. It was reported at the time that rice

1. Those workers whose wages were reckoned on the exact number of days they actually worked, as opposed to monthly paid salaried employees. Daily wage workers were employed principally in the Locomotive and Maintenance Branches as drivers, guards, pointsmen, etc.
2. CO 267/583 and The Colonial and Provincial Reporter July 19, 1919, p. 6.

had risen to five pence a cup (from one penny), "...and the ordinary quantity consumed by one labourer per day was three cups, whilst his average earnings are 1/- a day."¹ Workers appealed without satisfaction for payment of the bonus over a six month period. Finally, one department head assured representatives of the daily wage men that on the 15 July the bonus would be paid.² When payment failed to materialize the men struck. Almost immediately the railway men were joined by labourers in the Public Works Department. The General Manager of the Railway reported that the clerical grades on the Railway were intimidated and prevented from working. "Engines were stopped and an attempt was made to stop Europeans attending the offices".³ At the time there were no reports of an organized trade union among the railway employees.

From the beginning the strikers' cause was championed in the local press. One editorial noted "that the strike of our local government workmen was not a mere freak, but

-
1. CO 267/582 13 September, 1919. Wages for daily paid railway workers ranged from 1/- to 5/-, payments made on a monthly basis.
 2. Sierra Leone Weekly News July 26, 1919, p. 8.
 3. Sierra Leone Railway General Managers' Report on the Accounts and Working for the Year 1919, p. 4.

had, underlying it, sheer and black necessity, which those who had the power apparently had not the will to alleviate in the least".¹

Responding to the discontent the Executive Council on the 17th July recommended an increase of threepence dated from the first of the year for the daily paid labourers. The need for Colonial Office approval of the award delayed its official announcement until the 22 July. This delay proved a tragic one. By the night of the 18 July reports were increasing of attacks on the property of Syrian merchants. Crowds looted the property of Syrians who allegedly were hoarding rice for profiteering. Police were inadequate in coping with the disturbances and military forces were called in. By the 19th July one Syrian had been killed and over two hundred arrests had been made. Official statements reported that the disturbances were not immediately connected with the strike though the strikers might have participated.³

-
1. Weekly News July 19, 1919, p. 8.
 2. Syrian migration to Sierra Leone began in the late nineteenth century. By 1921 there were about three hundred in the country primarily engaged in trading.
 3. CO 267/582 July 19, 1919 Telegram from the Ag. Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

By the end of July, even after the strike had ended on the 23rd July, rioting and looting of the property of Syrian merchants had spread through the Protectorate. Officials noted that the attacks were directed solely against Syrians and not against European or Creole traders. Damage in most cases was against property and not personal. Before the disturbances ended, rioting had been reported in Freetown, Bonthe, Moyamba, Mano, Bo, Pujehun, Makeni, Port Loko and Waterloo. Koinadugu District in the north, an area where no Syrians resided, reported no disturbances.¹

The popular nature of the disturbances was illustrated in a number of separate instances. On the 26 July, members of the West African Frontier Force at Makeni joined with the rioters in the looting.² While unemployed Protectorate natives were believed to constitute the bulk of the rioters, despatches received from District Commissioners emphasized that the rioting was inspired and controlled by Creoles.

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., August 7, 1919 Reports from District Commissioners to the Colonial Secretary.

This was supported by the fact that after the arrest of some two hundred Creoles who came down from Freetown to Bo by train, Protectorate disorders practically ceased.¹

Throughout the disturbances the Acting Governor assumed an equivocal position (the Governor was on vacation leave in Britain)². While attempting to control disturbances, he apparently believed that the anti-Syrian sentiment had a good deal of foundation. In addition to the alleged hoarding of rice, Syrian merchants had managed to displace Creoles not only in trade but also in the affections of the Creole women.³ Rather than invoke martial law and military intervention the Acting Governor chose instead to protect the Syrians by keeping them together under police protection. Some two hundred and thirteen were housed and fed at Wilberforce Hall at Government expense following the Freetown riots.⁴

-
1. Ibid, 19 August, 1919.
 2. The Ag. Governor's actions during the strike were severely criticized in London. If it had not been for the intervention of the Governor the officer in question might have lost his pension rights.
 3. CO 267/582, 31 July, 1919, Ag. Governor's despatch to Secretary of State.
 4. Syrians did not resume trading activity until the end of October.

After the rioting had ended, of the two hundred and forty-five persons originally charged with law breaking, one hundred and ninety-one were dealt with summarily and fined small sums and/or were imprisoned for a few days. Fifty-four were tried by the Supreme Court and the majority were sentenced to terms of from one to three years.¹

The Colonial Office reacted strongly to the Acting Governor's handling of the crisis. Telegrams were sent recommending military intervention and proclamation of martial law "to restore the authority of the law and to mark the distinction between the civilization of the British and the Ottomon Empire".² Action was initiated in London to obtain military assistance from adjoining Colonies if Sierra Leone troops were inadequate.³ Even after the disturbances ended, trained European police officers were despatched to the Colony to assist in investigations.⁴

-
1. CO 267/582 Commissioner of Police to the Colonial Secretary.
 2. Ibid, Despatch from Messrs. Read and Amery at the Colonial Office to Evelyn, Ag. Governor.
 3. Ibid, July 31, 1919.
 4. CO 267/585 13 February, 1920.

District Commissioner reports on the rioting led to greater criticism of the Acting Governor. The District Commissioner of Sherbro accused Government of not taking a definite stand against the rioters and thus encouraging the law breakers.¹

In further criticism of top official action, the Colonial Office commented upon the penalties meted out to convicted rioters. One Whitehall representative noted: "Statutory riot after the Riot Act has been read is punishable with penal servitude for life and I think it would have had a good effect if, in the worst cases, the maximum penalty had been awarded".²

Official Colonial Office sanction came early in 1920 in the 'Report' of the Governor on the strike and riots. Governor Wilkinson who had remained in England throughout the disturbances had had ample time to be forewarned of the Colonial Office's impression of the Sierra Leone Administration's handling of the disturbances. For the

1. CO 267/582 3 August, 1919, District Commissioner, Sherbro District to Colonial Secretary.

3. Ibid, Colonial Office comment on the Evelyn despatch of August 19, 1919.

most part, his 'Report' was a reiteration of London's condemnation.

The Report first brought attention to, "a focus of disloyalty in the Colony...", which it was believed, "...is inspired from outside the Empire and has money and organization behind it".¹ His personal evaluation of the Acting Governor reflected the popular Whitehall opinion:²

In my opinion (he) was not equal to the position of Acting Governor. He was dilatory in the matter of the war bonus, inert in the famine, unwilling to face responsibility when the strike broke out, timid in face of the strikers, half hearted in his precautions and hesitating when the need for military help had to be faced.

Regardless of the validity of these charges³ the Acting Governor's official disgrace exercised a powerful influence in the Administration's treatment of labour unrest from 1920 to the late 1930's. The railway strikes of 1920 and

1. CO 267/585 Governor's 'Report' p. 28. Subsequent investigations apparently failed to uncover the source of this outside influence.
2. Ibid., p. 23.
3. Evidently there were some thirty-two tons of undistributed rice in Government custom sheds from the 30 June. Also the Executive Council had authorized the purchase of an additional £5,000 worth on the 14th April. If administrative attention had been given to the rice supply problem before the strike, the extent of the rioting might well have been contained. CO 267/583, Governor's comment on Evelyn's despatch of July 22, 1919.

1926 met with a radically different Government response from that to the 1919 strike.

Aftermath of the Strike and Riots.

From the Railway Workers point of view, their strike, which lasted from the 15th to 22nd July, was a financial success. After Colonial Office authorization they received the three pence a day war bonus payment. This success inspired a series of strikes among workers of the Harbour Works, Customs Department, Army Service Corporation, Elder Dempster Lines and the Sanitary Department.¹ These stoppages were settled quickly after demands were wholly or partially met. Soon after the strike, the railway workers organized themselves into one of West Africa's earliest trade unions among manual workers.

As a result of the rioting, Government made an assessment of damages and awarded compensation of thirty-seven thousand pounds to the Syrians. It further obliged the Freetown City Council to pay towards this sum an indemnity of ten thousand pounds, spread over ten annual payments. City Council petitions against the Riot Damages

1. The Colonial and Provincial Reporter August 9, 1919, p. 7.

Bill¹ were in part responsible for the reduction of the indemnity to five thousand pounds.

A Railway Workers Union and the 1920 Strike

Almost immediately following the 1919 Strike, railway workers in the maintenance branch organized a union: "To act as a medium between employers and employees, and to protect all its members".² The union was known as the Railway Skilled Artisan Union or the Skilled Workmen Mutual Aid Union.³ Foundation membership totalled thirty and leadership included a fitter and head blacksmith, both skilled workers. When the railway workers again struck work in September, 1920, the union abided by its stated policy objective.

The railway strike of the 8th September was apparently in response to wage issues (rates of pay, back pay and wage deductions) and the treatment of daily paid workers during times of sickness.⁴ Strikers marched from the Cline Town railway repair yard to the wharf pulling all men off their

-
1. CO 267/588 13 November, 1920.
 2. J. Ralph Best A History of the Sierra Leone Railway 1899-1949 (Fourah Bay College Library) n.d. p. 48.
 3. CO 267/587 20 October, 1920 despatch on the 1920 rail strike.
 4. IBID, Despatch 20 September, 1920.

jobs and derailling one train. The Union at first attempted to mediate between the workers and management, but gave up in the face of growing labour hostility. The Railway General Manager commended the loyalty of the Unionists but noted that "...they were afraid of the larger body of non-unionists and made no attempt to return to work on September 8th, but contented themselves with writing to me and asking for protection during the afternoon".¹

Government reacted swiftly to the strike. The Governor attributed the dispute to intimidation and misrepresentation on the part of a vocal minority.² The police and military were immediately placed on duty in the Cline Town area and by the end of the first day of strike action sixteen alleged ringleaders were dismissed.³ On the following day strikers resumed work.

Commenting upon the dismissals, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, complimented the prompt action and noted further:⁴

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., 22 October, 1920.

3. Most of whom were skilled (carpenters, blacksmiths, fitters) or semi-skilled (drivers, firemen) workers.

4. CO 267/587 22 October, 1920, Secretary of State to Governor Wilkinson.

I approve of your action in dismissing the ringleaders; and I presume that you have also consulted the Attorney-General as to whether criminal proceedings can be taken against them in respect of unlawful assembly, or riot, or of any offence under the Railway Ordinance or any other law of the Colony.

If the developing official reaction to labour unrest gave signs of severity during the 1920 stoppage, the impact of the 1919 Strike and Riots had reached maturity by the third rail strike of January and February, 1926.

1926 Railway Strike¹

By the middle of the 1920's official statistics were made available for government employment. Of some 4,920 employees just over 1,500 were engaged in the engineering, locomotive and carriage branches of the government railway.² The high unemployment level which existed in the Colony area after the War had been brought down either through expanding job opportunities or through voluntary dispersal of Protectorate people back to their farms. The economy as a whole was experiencing no particular problems affecting

1. For earlier contrasting interpretations of this strike see George Padmore How Britain Rules Africa (London, 1936) pp. 351-52 and Raymond Leslie Buell The Native Problem in Africa (London, 1928) I pp. 888-90.
2. Blue Book 1925 p. 312. Remaining employees in management, traffic, stores and accounts sections totalled 187.

agricultural production or government revenue. During this period wage rates paid to the majority of Government unskilled workers remained at one shilling.

Partly as a protest against their static economic position, railway workers for the third time in seven years took strike action against the Railway management. On this third occasion, a reconstituted Railway Workers Union¹ was to provide active direction and leadership of the rank and file.

The Railway Workers Union, from its inaugural meetings in 1925, sought organization of all staff grades working for the government railway. In a message sent to the Governor during the 1926 Strike, the president of the Union announced:²

Our union is formed for the improvement of the conditions of all members of the Railway Department and includes clerks, artisans, and others who have enrolled as members, and we function under the principle of collective responsibility and as members represent and make our concern the grievances of any section of our body.

-
1. The earlier union of skilled workers disbanded after the death of its president in 1923.
 2. Weekly News February 6, 1926, p. 8. The President, E.A. Richards was a fitter on the railway.

To a great extent, organizational success and the alignment of white collar clerks and manual grades during the strike itself were facilitated by management decisions at the time affecting pensionable African employees. With an aim to improving efficiency on the railway, African clerks were required to take an examination before qualifying for salary increments.¹ The clerks protested against this measure, claiming that such examinations were not required of European staff. They also demanded that a larger number of Africans be given permanent appointments.² Although initial protests had been tendered independently, by December, 1925, the Railway Workers Union had become the spokesman for this group.³

-
1. Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1926 'Correspondence Regarding Complaints of Certain members of Staff of the Sierra Leone Government Railway'. Circular from the General Manager, 12 August, 1925, p. 10-11. In addition to inefficiency, Government officials also claimed that bribery and extortion were practised. Address by the Governor, Legislative Council Debates, 1925-26. p. November 24 1925 pp. 94-95.
 2. Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1926 p. 16.
 3. The Railway General Manager could give no explanation for this development "The staff have no reason to fear that their petitions would not be duly forwarded if submitted in the proper and usual manner."
Ibid., p. 21.

Artisans in the Union had petitioned the Railway management from early March, 1925 for a grading system. Neither the artisans nor clerks received any satisfaction after submitting their demands. The reaction of these two important groups in the Railway Union resulted in what has been described as the "...first industrial disturbance in Central Africa patterned on a European model".¹

When the strike did take place on the 14th January, 1926, official sanction was immediately registered against its unofficial and 'lightning' character.² While a written strike declaration was not given until the day the strike took place, there is ample evidence to indicate that the authorities had been forewarned of the union's intention to strike. In a 'Notice' to all Railway staff, dated 12 January, the General Manager noted:³

1. I have been informed that certain members of the staff contemplate ceasing duty without warning and permission.

1. R.A. Buell, op. cit., p. 888.

2. Sierra Leone Royal Gazette "Extraordinary" 16 January, 1926.

3. The West African Mail and Trade Gazette January 23, 1926, p. 8. Henceforth noted as WAMTG.

2. It is hoped that no such ill advised action will be taken but I must warn the Staff that anyone so ceasing duty will be regarded as dismissed, and as having broken his service, and if subsequently again employed will be regarded as a new entrant at such rates of pay and on such conditions of service as Government may decide.

(Union control over the strike was evident not only in the forewarning and timing but also by the fact that the dispute itself lasted a full six weeks. In both cases this strike contrasts with the 1919 stoppage, and illustrates the institutionalization of this protest form after the emergence of the workers' union.¹)

From the first day of the strike, Government adopted a predictable course. By proclamation the city of Freetown was placed under police and military surveillance. A notice was issued prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors.² In an "Extraordinary" edition of the Royal Gazette, the provisions of the 1924 Railway Ordinance covering corporal and penal punishment for damage to railway property were cited.³ Dismissals were issued to pensionable employees who joined the strike.

-
1. Cf. William H. Friedland "The Institutionalization of Labour Protest in Tanganyika and Some Resultant Problems" Sociologus (November, 1961) II., pp. 132-146.
 2. Weekly News January 23, 1926, p. 12.
 3. Despite these measures a certain amount of violence did take place outside Freetown during the first days of the strike. See Legislative Council Debates April 9, 1926. p. 24.

The Governor viewed the strike as a revolt against civil authority, likening it to the English policeman's strike after the War.¹ From the beginning he assumed an uncompromising and adamant stand, refusing any suggestion for mediation in the dispute. Terms laid down to the strikers were: those dismissed would not be re-employed, and there would be reductions in grade and increments for pensionable staff, who upon their return would have to take the required examination. For daily paid employees reductions in pay awaited all returning employees in addition to extra working hours.²

The reaction back in England was similarly hostile to the struck workers. Reports on the strike, which involved approximately one thousand workers, blamed constitutional reforms in 1924 which had "...rather gone to the heads of certain sections of the community".³ The Secretary of State for the Colonies in a telegraph stated: "The strikers

1. There was no police strike and subsequent dismissals in Sierra Leone during this period as reported in Buell op. cit. p. 888 and Charles A. Orr "Trade Unionism in Colonial Africa" The Journal of Modern African Studies. 4,1 (1966). p. 78.
2. Governor's 'Message to the Strikers' 27 January WAMTG, February 6, 1926, p. 3.
3. The Times 26 March, 1926 "Railway Strike in Sierra Leone." In 1924 constitutional change allowed for the election of three members to the Legislative Council. Franchise was restricted to literate citizens in the Colony area.

must realize that as Government servants who have left their work without leave, they are liable to the penalty of instant dismissal".¹

The Strike Relief Fund

This official stance stimulated a reaction among the entire Freetown community. Spurred on by the press, which gave the strikers complete support while condemning official action,² a Citizens' Committee called a 'Support the Strikers Meeting' on the 8th February. At the meeting a pledge was taken to raise £1,000 within ten days for the strikers. While this goal proved far too ambitious, the demonstration of solidarity was the first link in a movement which drew together members of the Creole community dispersed throughout West Africa. (This development was probably also a cause and effect of the growth of the National Congress in West Africa during the 1920's.)

By mid-March the Strike Relief Fund had received £336 from the Sierra Leone Friendly Society in Lagos. A further contribution of £79 to the Fund was received from Nigeria bringing the total contribution to £415 by the end of March.³

-
1. Legislative Council Debates April 9, 1926.
 2. See for example the editorial in the Weekly News February 6, 1926 p. 8.
 3. WAMTG April 3, 1926, p. 9.

A draft for £15 was forwarded by Sierra Leoneans residing in Sekondi, Gold Coast, and Creoles in Kumasi added an additional £12.8.0.¹ A lead article in the Gold Coast Leader commented upon the implications of the Freetown railway dispute: "An outstanding lesson of the strike is the importance of unity and combined effort on the part of West Africans politically and economically at the present stage of our history".²

The Strike Committee received £10 from Sierra Leoneans in Monrovia while the committee established in Bathurst to solicit aid for dismissed railway men transmitted a sum of £20. By the end of March the Strike Committee had supplied strikers and those dismissed with nearly £500.³

This demonstration of solidarity during the 1926 Railway Strike was particularly unusual for the highly individualistic Creole. While imitation and adoption of English norms were accepted as the preferred social goals, the incremental test and the uncompromising position of Government during the strike must have offended a Creole

1. Ibid., April 24, 1926, p. 10-11.

2. Quoted in Ibid.

3. Ibid. April 3, 1926 p. 10.

expectation for equal treatment from the Colonial Administration.¹

The Creole alignment was supplemented by the temporary bridging of Creole-Native antipathies. The organizer of the Strike Relief Fund viewed with satisfaction the new cause for union:²

Let us emulate the example of the Mende man who amid roaring applause on the day we were going to send our first cablegram to the Secretary of State walked up to the platform and put in the plate for the purpose a ten shilling currency note as a reply to those ill-wishers who want the aborigines to dissociate themselves from the Creoles.

For the strikers, the creation of and contributions to the Strike Fund came too late to save their cause. After six weeks, strikers returned to work on 26 February on terms laid down by the Governor. Of the approximately two hundred workers dismissed during the strike, thirty-seven were pensionable employees, some with twenty years' work experience. Dismissals included the Secretary of the Railway Workers' Union, the President of the Bo branch and a high number of

1. Michael Banton "Social Alignment and Identity in a West African City". Paper presented at the Burg Wartenstein Symposium (1964) p. 28 poses the question of what 'sorts of incidents' stimulated Creole solidarity. The above discussion illustrates one incident in response to Colonial Government authoritarianism.

2. WAMTG 20 March, 1926, p. 9.

Protectorate labourers. The President of the Union was reassigned to a post up-country and subsequently resigned from the Department. Protest against the dismissals claimed they were an attempt to break the Railway Workers' Union and secondly a punishment to natives for joining with the Creoles in the strike.¹ These charges were denied by the Government.

The strikers felt even greater resentment against the dismissals since a telegram sent from the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 20th February and published in the local press seemed to indicate that all returning strikers would be re-employed. The Governor qualified this offer, in a return despatch noting that those names already gazetted would not be rehired. Before the House of Commons the Secretary of State acknowledged and approved this action.²

The places of the dismissed strikers were filled by West Indians and local labourers. Three months after the strike ended, all daily paid men were returned to their pre-strike wage rates and salaried staff were placed at their old incremental rates, deferred and reduced increments

1. Legislative Council Debates April 9, 1926 passim

2. Great Britain Parliamentary Debates (Commons) 193
March 22, 1926, pp. 879-80.

being replaced by direct fines.¹ The Railway Workers' Union, suffering from an absence of leadership, ceased to exist shortly after the strike ended. One source claimed that new apprentices had to pledge not to join the union before being admitted to the Department.² In its place a Railway Staff Committee was organized by management to discuss problems of common interest.³

Labour Policy and the 1926 Railway Strike

Despite the fact that the Sierra Leone Governor was roundly condemned by the Freetown community⁴ for his unwillingness to accept mediation in the dispute and for the severe punishments meted out to the strikers, he had successfully broken the strike. He had adopted an uncompromising stance and had forced the strikers to submit to his terms. With the aid of police and military surveillance, civil disorder had been kept in check. Whatever confidence had been experienced by the Colony and Protectorate workers after the 1919 Strike and Riots, their inability to influence

1. WAMTG June 19, 1926 pp. 9, 11.

2. Padmore op. cit. p. 351.

3. WAMTG June 19, 1926 p. 11.

4. For a thorough going reproach of the Governor's actions see the speech of the second urban member of the Legislative Council in the Debates April 9, 1926. passim.

Government during the 1926 strike testified to where the real power in the country resided.

Throughout the strike, the Governor's action was supported by the Colonial Office. In his report on the affairs of the Colony, the Under-Secretary of State concluded:¹

Happily the strike which had tended to become political rather than industrial in character, failed completely, and the action of the Governor with regard to all matters in connection therewith has already received our commendation, and it would, therefore, be superfluous for me to add anything on the subject.

The Colonial Government labour policy, designed to frustrate and contain labour unrest, became defined after the 1919 railway strike and riots. Official reaction after this disturbance was influenced and shaped at least as much from London's Colonial Office as it was by administrators in Sierra Leone. During this post-war period a Government which could enlist police and military support had little need of adopting other than a suppressive policy towards

1. Report by the Honourable W.G.A. Ormsby-Gore, M.P. (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies) on his visit to West Africa during the year 1926 Cmd 2747 (London HMSO) p. 57. By mid year 1926 the General Manager of the Railway was awarded the O.B.E. The reference to the political nature of the Strike was undoubtedly inspired by the inter-territorial support given to the Strikers' Relief Fund.

labour unrest. The effectiveness of this resistance was demonstrated during the 1920 and 1926 Strikes. Unions in the context were not encouraged, but tolerated so long as their aims and activities remained passive. When more ambitious programmes, particularly strike actions, were pursued, organizational security was jeopardized. This basic approach characterized labour policy in the country until the 1930's. Forces by that time acting within and outside the Colony conspired to alter Government attitude towards the activities of employed labour.

CHAPTER II

FACTORS INFLUENCING
LABOUR ADMINISTRATION
TO 1945

CHAPTER II

FACTORS INFLUENCING LABOUR ADMINISTRATION TO 1945

From the early 1930s a variety of internal and external factors brought about changes in the Sierra Leone Government's labour policy. Pressure for reforms over a broad field of labour issues made increasing demands upon the legislative and administrative functions of the Colonial Government. The nature of suggested reforms made it evident that an authoritarian labour policy was no longer appropriate. In addition, the influence of the International Labour Office was important in the encouragement of more humane labour practices.

By the late 1930s the Colonial Office, itself influenced by serious labour disturbances in other parts of the Commonwealth, came to the conclusion that legal provisions insuring the right to organize trade unions were necessary in Colonial territories. It was believed that more subversive industrial and political activity would result in the absence of such legislation. By insuring the right to organize, the first step was taken towards institutionalizing and controlling labour activity.

Forces For Change Prior to World War II

External Forces

As early as 1923, recommendations and conventions of the League of Nations International Labour Office were being transmitted to Sierra Leone via the Colonial Office. Negative decisions were given to workmen's compensation and the right of combination for agricultural workers since it was felt neither was applicable to the country at the time.¹ Greater success was had four years later when legislation was passed abolishing the legal status of slavery in the Protectorate. In this case an inquiry conducted by the League of Nations and the reaction of the British public to a court decision on slavery were deciding factors in the change.

Abolition of Domestic Slavery in 1927

While slave trading in the Protectorate had been outlawed under Ordinance 33 of 1901, slave holding remained a recognized practice. Subsequent legislation (Ordinance 6 of 1903 and Ordinance 16 of 1905) insured the rights of slave owners by disallowing slave claims in Protectorate

1. CO 368 'Note' in Index volume 19375, December, 1923.

courts and by declaring prohibitions against harbouring or assisting a native who journeyed from his chiefdom without authorization.

Support for the continuance of domestic slavery came from two sources. In the first instance was official desire not to antagonize tribal chiefs. It was claimed that one of the causes behind the 1898 Protectorate rising had been tribal leadership reaction to Government interference with slave trafficking.¹ A second reason for maintaining the system was the uncertain economic consequences of its removal. Uncertainty was partly related to the scarcity of labour in the Protectorate. As early as 1910 this prompted the Sierra Leone Administration to reject the South African East Rand Prop. Mines proposal of a recruitment scheme for the country.² Manpower supply to produce the country's palm kernel and palm oil might have been jeopardised by an outright prohibition of slave holding. Uncertainty also

-
1. Chalmers Report on Insurrection in Sierra Leone (1899) as quoted in Correspondence Relating to Domestic Slavery in the Sierra Leone Protectorate (London: HMSO, 1928) White Paper presented by the Secretary of State to Parliament, January, 1928, p. 8.
 2. CO 368, Index 18398, 13 August, 1910. According to the 1931 Census Report 1,672,058 people were scattered widely over the country's Protectorate area of approximately 28,000 square miles.

surrounded the productivity gains of the system. District Commissioners in the country disagreed among themselves on the benefits to be gained from emancipation. On the one side were those who felt that the slaves only contributed an absolute minimum of effort. Personal freedom would provide the incentive for releasing additional productive energy. Others took the opposite view, finding no significant production differences between tribes among which servitude existed and those where it did not. It was concluded that the "removal of domestic slaves would mean less work not more being accomplished".¹

This conflict caused the administration to lag behind sister colonies in West Africa in the passage of legislation outlawing slavery.² Real pressure for change came in 1924 during an inquiry into slavery undertaken by the League of Nations. At this point the British Colonial Office requested information on the extent of slavery in Sierra Leone.

-
1. Correspondence Relating to Domestic Slavery op.cit. passim. Cf. A.G. Hopkins "The Lagos Strike of 1897: An Exploration in Nigerian History" Past and Present (December, 1966) pp. 138-144.
 2. Prohibitive legislation had been passed in the Gold Coast in 1874, in Nigeria in 1916, and in the Gambia in 1906. The extent of emancipation differed among the three territories (as well as the effectiveness of enforcement). Each, however, had surpassed Sierra Leone in the abolition of slavery.

Administrative attention given this topic gradually increased, resulting finally in an Ordinance passed in 1926 declaring all persons born or brought into the Protectorate to be free. The law, based on a similar statute in the Gambia, still remained silent on the position of slaves already held in bondage. The year after the passage of the Ordinance, the Supreme Court of the Colony by a 2-1 margin acted favourably on an appeal by two slaveowners in the Protectorate against their conviction for conspiracy and assault in recapturing runaway slaves.

The case received widespread publicity in the English press,¹ and brought pressure to bear on the Secretary of State. In a telegram to the Colony he noted: "The judgment reveals deficiency in Sierra Leone Law which I should find impossible to defend".² Immediate action in framing a new Ordinance was called for and by the end of 1927, Ordinance 24 abolished the legal status of slavery in the country. Henceforth the owning of slaves was forbidden although communal labour supplied to chiefs during certain times of the year remained legal until 1956.

-
1. The full text of the Court proceedings was published in The Times. August 27, 1927.
 2. Correspondence Relating to Domestic Slavery op. cit. p.70.

I.L.O. Conventions

The administration's labour policy became increasingly responsive to outside influence throughout the 1930's. Legislation incorporating ILO Conventions transmitted through the Colonial Office, was particularly affected. Ordinance 50 of 1932 established the conditions restricting the use of communal labour, adopted by the International Labour Conference of 1930. Effect was given to the 1919 convention covering the Employment of Women during the night by Ordinance 30 of 1934 and 13 of 1938; Convention No. 5 (Minimum Age for Employment in Industry) was supplied by Ordinance 30 of 1934 amended in 1939; Convention No. 6 (Night Work of Young People) and No. 7 (Minimum Age for Employment at Sea) were both incorporated into Ordinance 30 of 1934. Finally, the convention recommending minimum wage fixing machinery was implemented in Ordinance 30 of 1934 and Ordinance 6 of 1938.¹ This last Ordinance gave the Governor power to fix a minimum wage for any occupation in any district in which he was satisfied that the wage for

1. Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers (Commons) 1940-41, IV, Cmd. 6277; Major G. St. John Orde-Browne Labour Conditions in West Africa (London, 1941), p.132.

that occupation was unreasonably low.¹ (By the end of 1934 a minimum daily rate of six-pence was established for labourers engaged in road maintenance in the Protectorate.² By the end of the following year, however, no payments had been made and the continuation of forced labour, supplied through the chiefs, was blamed for the failure to introduce a procedure for paying workers.³)

Colonial Office⁴

The prime mover behind changes in the Sierra Leone Administration's labour policy during the 1930's was the British Colonial Office. The Colonial Office's growing concern with labour in the Commonwealth was itself the product of labour disturbances in important territories, including India;⁵ the establishment of the International Labour Office (called the International Labour Organization after 1945); and a growing concern in Britain with social

-
1. 'Minutes' Executive Council, April 30, 1932 in CO 270/74.
 2. Ibid., 19 February, 1934.
 3. Address by the Governor, Legislative Council Debates, 1935-1936, November 4, 1935, p.35
 4. For the best account of Colonial Office activity during this period see B.C. Roberts Labour in the Tropical Territories of the Commonwealth. (London 1964) Chapter vii.
 5. The railway strikes of 1919 and 1926 in Sierra Leone were duplicated in the Gold Coast and Nigeria in the early 1920's and by 1930 serious strikes had erupted among the Gold Coast miners and the dockers at Bathurst, Gambia.

responsibility generally reflected in the election of a Labour Government in 1929.

The influence of the Office was exerted through despatches sent by Secretaries of State, model draft ordinances concerning labour, conferences in London designed to provoke discussion and direct attention to labour matters in the Colonies, and the Colonial Welfare and Development Acts. Changes in organizational structure attended the stepped-up activity of the Colonial Office. In 1930 a Colonial Office Labour Committee consisting of Colonial Office personnel and men from the Ministry of Labour was established to consider "the basic formulation of Colonial Office labour policy".¹ The same year a second conference of colonial administrators and governors from the colonies also met to discuss labour questions.² At this Conference, the Under-Secretary of State, Dr. Drummond Shiels, stressed the dangers of a low wage policy, and exhorted colonial administrators to "show sympathy with the increased tendency

1. B.C. Roberts Labour in the Tropical Territories of the Commonwealth (London, 1964) p. 176.

2. At this 1930 Conference past, present and future Governors of Sierra Leone were in attendance; Sir A.R. Slater, Governor during the 1926 Railway Strike; Brig. Gen. Sir J.A. Byrne, Governor of Sierra Leone at the time; and Mr. D.J. Jardine, then Chief Secretary, Tanganyika Territory, later appointed Governor of Sierra Leone. Proceedings Colonial Office Conference 1930, June 23, 1930, iv.

for workers' organizations to be formed".¹

In the wake of this conference, Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, circulated a despatch in September, 1930, urging the adoption of trade union legislation. Draft bills covering trade unions and conspiracy and protection of property were sent out by the Colonial Office immediately afterwards.

The Sierra Leone Executive Council, after reviewing the draft bills, advised the Secretary of State that the time was not ripe for their enactment, "as they drew attention in an undesirable manner to the possibility of trade union activities being diverted to improper and mischievous ends..."² In West Africa, only the Gambian Administration enacted trade union legislation during the early 1930's.

The Colonial Development Act passed in 1929, gave the Colonial Office more leverage in effecting changes in colonial labour policy. Under the Development Act, funds were made available on condition that fair treatment of labour

1. B.C. Roberts, op. cit., p. 177.

2. 'Minutes' Executive Council 12 April, 1933, p. 2.

be observed in the receiving territories. When the Sierra Leone Development Company (DELECO) was formed in 1930 to exploit iron ore deposits it was necessary for the company to borrow one half of the initial capital outlay of one million pounds from the Development Fund. In a 1930 despatch from Lord Passfield, the Sierra Leone Government was reminded that:¹

Under the terms of the Colonial Development Act, it will be necessary for us to be satisfied that fair conditions of labour will be observed in constructing the Railway and Port and in working the mines and suggest that you should consider the Enactment of an Ordinance on the lines of the Gold Coast Mining Health Areas Ordinance.

Under the Sierra Leone Minerals Ordinance 1932 (amended by Ordinance 10 of 1936) a Mining Benefits Fund was created from levies on the mining enterprises from which grants were made ~~and~~ for the construction of schools, hospitals and minor sanitary works.² Standard requirements for the housing of miners were incorporated under Part III of the Schedule of Employers and Employed Ordinance 1934.

1. Despatch 17 February, 1930, quoted in the Weekly News February 5, 1938, p. 14.
2. CO 270/76 (Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1939).

Following inspections, correspondence from the Sierra Leone Government to the Managing Director of DELCO in London stipulated that labour 'lines' sufficient to house one half of the labour force be constructed during the 1937-38 dry season.¹ By 1939, it was calculated that of the estimated 13,000 labourers employed in the mining of diamond, gold, iron ore and chromite about 5,500 were housed by their employers.² Some progress was made by the larger mining companies,³ but even here it was reported that the houses built were of "an unusually simple and primitive type, and the situation...far from having been adequately cleared up".⁴

*Apart from the limited social improvements introduced by the larger mining concerns, few changes took place on other substantive labour issues. In addition to the failure of the trade union and conspiracy ordinances to gain

-
1. Colonial Report 1938 p. 37. Houses for the remainder were to be completed the following year.
 2. Medical and Health Services Annual Report 1939, p. 9.
 3. Health and housing accommodation among the tributers employed by small alluvial gold mining concerns remained poorer throughout the period than conditions at the iron-ore and diamond mining companies.
 4. W.M. MacMillan "African Development" in C.K. Meek et al. Europe and West Africa: Some Problems and Adjustments (London, 1940) Part II, p. 53.

acceptance, a draft ordinance to provide workman's compensation met with official resistance. An original draft model ordinance was sent out in September, 1930. Various difficulties, including the inability or unwillingness of insurance companies to grant insurance under the draft ordinance, necessitated the re-issue of a second draft bill in 1933. Still lacking an enthusiastic response, a sub-committee of the Colonial Labour Committee produced a third and final workman's compensation draft ordinance in 1937. The bill was discussed and amendments suggested by a Sierra Leone Legislative Council Committee the following year.¹ It was not until 1941, however, that a Workmen's Compensation Ordinance was finally given effect.² (Even when passed, important groups such as domestic servants, agricultural workers, fishermen, clerical workers, etc. were left uncovered by the Act.)

-
1. Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider Workmen's Compensation Legislation in the Colony (Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1938).
 2. One reason for the delay in passing this Ordinance was the need for uniform provisions throughout British West Africa, a condition stipulated by the principal insurance companies. Legislative Council Debates November 20, 1934, p. 7.

Lack of response among Colonial Administrations, coupled with increasing demonstrations of labour unrest throughout the Commonwealth (i.e. in India, Northern Rhodesia and Trinidad), initiated a more vigorous line of action on the part of the Colonial Office from the mid 1930's. Despatches couched in more urgent terms were sent out with greater frequency after 1935. In 1938 the Secretary of State appointed his first permanent labour advisor, Granville St. John Orde-Browne, a former Provincial Commissioner in Tanganyika.¹ From 1938 the Colonial Office was prepared to insist upon the introduction of labour legislation, creation of labour departments, and the establishment of industrial disputes machinery. Within four years labour departments had been established in most of the African colonies, and legislation covering working conditions and industrial relations had been introduced. The passage of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act 1940, provided the ultimate economic sanction to uncooperating territorial administrations:

1. A Social Service Department within the Colonial Office was established at the same time.

No territory might receive aid under its provisions unless it had in force legislation protecting the rights of trade unions and unless the works for which the aid was to be used were carried out under a contract which embodied a fair wages clause and which forbade the employment of children under the age of 14.

Sierra Leone, like most other colonies,¹ was not slow in responding to this more determined reformist effort of the Colonial Office. During 1939, legislation was enacted legalizing the position of registered trade unions. The same year saw the passage of an Arbitration Ordinance governing the procedure to be followed in the event of a trade dispute. (A comparative analysis of labour legislation and trade union growth in British West Africa is given in Appendix 1.)

Despite its undoubted importance, the pressure emanating from the Colonial Office does not alone explain the sudden willingness to experiment and reform on the part of Sierra Leone administrators. The growth of the mining industry during the years of the depression and the organisation of a nationalist political movement which was successful in organizing trade unions and other groups in protest

1. Cf. Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire 1937-43
(London: H.M.S.O. 1943) CO.1 No. 185.

demonstrations were the internal factors underlying changes in the Administration's labour policy.

Internal Forces

Growth of the Mining Industry During the 1930's

The depression years 1929-35 seriously affected Sierra Leone's trading position. By 1933, exports had fallen by more than 50% of their pre-depression level. Imports showed a similar decline. The drop in Government revenue resulted in wide scale retrenchment in the Public Works Department.¹ The Railway Department found it necessary to place its daily wage staff on short time.² The depression and fall in wage employment, however, coincided with the opening of the mining industry in the country. To some extent this development offset the downward trend of economic activity.

The profitability of mining was first indicated after a survey in 1926 located large deposits of solid hematite iron ore near Marampa. Explorations soon after uncovered deposits of gold, platinum, diamonds and later chrome.³

-
1. Legislative Council Debates, November 4, 1930. No figures were given.
 2. Cox-George op. cit. p. 272.
 3. Roy Lewis Sierra Leone: a Modern Portrait (London: HMSO, 1954) p. 194.

While in 1931 practically all exports were agricultural products (palm kernel accounting for 73%) from 1935 minerals¹ gained ascendancy.

TABLE 2.1

Mineral Export as a Percentage of Total Exports
1933-38

1933 - 21	1936 - 57
1934 - 44	1937 - 60
1935 - 53	1938 - 73

SOURCE: O.P. Bagai A Statistical Study of Exports of Sierra Leone 1920-64 TABLE 1 and P.R. Kaim-Caudle "Review of Economic Changes in Sierra Leone 1930-55" Durham University Journal (December, 1957), p. 36.

Employment opportunities in the Protectorate mushroomed along with the expansion of mining activity. In 1930 the Sierra Leone Development Company (DELCO) was formed for the purpose of exploiting iron ore deposits. During the year some three to four thousand men were employed.² In addition to mining the Development Company employed labour for the building of a railway and a sea port to link the mine with ocean going transport.

-
1. The trend was reversed during the Second World War following the discontinuation of diamond exports. By 1960, minerals again dominated export value totals.
 2. Trade Report 1930; CO 270/661.

Employment grew apace in the diamond mining company, Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST). Two thousand employees had been hired by the mid thirties. In addition, small gold mining concerns, usually owned by expatriates (Lebanese) offered employment to about 6,000 miners.¹ By 1938, "an average number of 13,534 Africans was employed in mining and prospecting throughout the year and additional numbers were engaged in such accessory services as police work, building and construction, etc."²

The economic and social consequences of this rapid increase of wage employment were many. During 1934 skilled workers at DELCO were receiving from 2/3 - 7/6 daily wages, highest wages being received by skilled masons. Fitters, however, were paid as low as one shilling per diem while general labour was employed at a wage of six to nine pence daily.³ Despite the low pay there was a ready response among the native population. During 1938, an eye witness

1. In return for mining licences these workers received only a very small fraction of the value of the gold they mined.

2. Colonial Report, 1938 p. 35.

3. Legislative Council Debates November 20, 1934 p. 7
and Report of the Geological Survey and Mines Department 1933-34, (Freetown, 1935) p. 10.

report commented upon the over-abundance of labour.

The conclusion reached was: "Without any suspicion of undue pressure from any source this company, 'Delco' was able to get all the labour it wanted".¹ At the same time the withdrawal of between thirteen and fourteen thousand workers and their families from farming was blamed for a shortage of rice during 1937.²

Poor housing and living conditions were features of the early mining sites and surrounding towns which expanded greatly during the period. Lunsar in the region of the Marampa iron mines grew from thirty inhabitants in 1929 to about ten thousand in the late thirties.³ Of the three hundred and fifty four houses counted in Lunsar during 1938, "...though in appearance rather large African huts of a common rectangular pattern, (they) differ from the normal in containing from eight or ten up to fourteen small, dark, airless cubicles".⁴ These it was claimed were rented to African workers at five to eight shillings per month.

1. W. M. MacMillan, op. cit., p. 48.

2. Colonial Report 1938, p. 36.

3. Kenneth Little West African Urbanization (London, 1965) p. 19.

4. W. M. MacMillan, op. cit. p. 53.

In addition, water supplies and other basic social amenities were not provided. Subsidized or free rice rations distributed by the larger companies (SLST and DELCO respectively) marginally improved the squalid conditions. Protesting against their living and work conditions the miners adopted the means traditionally associated with their occupation. They struck work.

A strike took place at the Marampa iron mines in 1935. At the end of 1937, workers at the Pepel site of the Development Company, stopped work for over two weeks (26 December, 1937 to 10 January, 1938). A list of grievances submitted at the time included:¹

1. Low rates of pay and long hours (twelve hours per day inclusive of travel)
2. Indecent treatment
3. Lack of and unsuitable accommodation
4. Lack of roads
5. Poor medical attention
6. Compulsory overtime at pro-rata remuneration

At the same time as the Pepel strike, the miners at Marampa struck. Return to work followed a promise from officials

1. Weekly News February 5, 1938 p. 4.

that worker grievances would be investigated. In September, 1938, the Governor reported to the Colonial Office on labour and work conditions at the iron mines following questions raised in the House of Commons. His despatch outlined steps taken by the Development Company to remedy conditions and introduce grievance machinery. The mine management reported that the object of the machinery was "to educate the labourers to come forward with any complaint they may have in an open manner..."¹

On the important topic of wages, the Governor's communication noted:²

There is no difficulty in getting labour at the rate of 9d a day plus two cups of rice, without any sort of pressure. Even at this rate the labourers do not work every day so that they presumably find that they can manage well enough according to their lights on approximately twenty days pay a month for 15/- plus the rice.

When this observation on the miners' economic needs was printed, a storm of public protest and indignation was raised. In the forefront leading the protest was an organization formed earlier in the year "to provide a united body to

1. Despatch from the Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in The Weekly News September 10, 1938, p. 12.
2. Ibid.

watch carefully and sincerely affairs, political, educational and economical that may be to the interest of the masses of people..."¹ The name of the organization was the Sierra Leone Youth League and its leadership was under the direction of I.T.A. Wallace Johnson. This body became the most important medium for the expression of social and political grievances in the territory, before the outbreak of war.

Wallace Johnson and the Sierra Leone Youth League

Wallace Johnson, a Sierra Leonean by birth, returned to his native country from the Gold Coast and wasted little time in organizing the Youth League during the early months of 1938. (Johnson, as a journalist in the Gold Coast, was tried under the 1934 Seditious Ordinance for his political commentary in The African Morning Post (Accra). Fortunately for Johnson his case was championed by influential British intellectuals organized in the National Council for Civil Liberties.² This group raised funds which allowed him to appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London, the highest

1. Organizers speech at an inaugural meeting of the Sierra Leone Youth League. Later reprinted in The Weekly News April 1, 1939.

2. This group included Lord Oliver, former Governor of Jamaica, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., Mr. A. Creech Jones, M.P., Dr. Henry W. Nevinson, President of the National Council for Civil Liberties.

tribunal in the Commonwealth at the time. During the proceedings he was deported from the Gold Coast.)

From the beginning Johnson injected a radical strain into the new organization. As noted by Professor Arthur T. Porter, the Youth League orientation was essentially socialist and anti-colonial. Writing in The African Standard, the official newspaper of the group, was not limited "to sedate constitutional language, but employed the tone of the radical and the revolutionary..." when launching attacks against the Administration.¹

The Youth League enjoyed immediate popularity in the Colony and later in the Protectorate. By July, 1938, it reported a membership of over 4,000.² One year later the League claimed a following of 25,000 in the Colony and 17,000 in the Protectorate.³ The new organization held membership open to all and by so doing attempted to bridge traditional ethnic divisions. Reports on processions of Youth League members remarked on the mixture of Temnes,

1. Arthur T. Porter op. cit. p. 128.

2. Sierra Leone Daily Mail July 28 p. 3.

3. The Weekly News July 15, 1939 p. 12.

Kurankoes and other aborigines along with some Creoles. One of the first elected officers of the League was a Creole, Mr. F. A. Miller, a leading civil servant and charter member of the African Civil Service Association.¹ (An account on the early organizational success noted that, "Creole leaders, not uninfluenced by the ideologies of the new age, are coming into their own as the natural leaders of discontent wherever it may happen to show itself".²)

While the League directed its activity to many issues of political and social import including constitutional reform, education, housing and sanitary conditions in the Colony, special attention was reserved for the labour movement. Stimulated by Youth League encouragement, labour in the country entered a period of organization and, later, increased reliance on strike action. The idea of 'collective security' was preached by the League in its organization drives. In September, 1938 the All Seamen's Union was formed. The seamen "having realized the need for a concerted action to defend their rights and protect their lives and limbs

1. Miller later dissociated himself from the Youth League when top administrators began to sanction its activities.

2. W. M. MacMillan, op. cit. p. 76.

while executing their arduous duties as sea goers".¹
Employer recognition was its immediate objective.

By the end of 1939 the Youth League had organized unions among War Department workers (War Department Workers' Union), the seamen (All Seamen's Union), general labour (Amalgamated Worker's Union), Public Works Department employees (P.W.D. Workers' Union), coaling station labourers (Mabella Workers' Union) and transport workers (The Motor Drivers' Union).² The League established a T.U.C. as a coordinating body of the labour movement.³

In promoting worker interests, representations were forwarded to the Secretary of State requesting information about and investigations into labour conditions in the country. Following the mine strikes early in 1938 at Pepel and Marampa, Johnson journeyed to the area, addressed the miners and advised them, "...to strike if they wished to strike".⁴

-
1. The Weekly News September 3, 1938, p. 7. The secretary of this new union was Mr. M. C. Grant, a leading trade unionist during the post-war period and a chief figure in the 1955 General Strike.
 2. Daily Mail December, 18, 1939, p. 3.
 3. Ibid., December 19, 1939, p. 3.
 4. Governor's despatch on labour conditions at DELCO. The Weekly News September 10, 1938 p. 12.

Initially, Government responded to the threat posed by this organizing activity in a novel manner. Attempting to counter the influence of the more radically oriented Youth League, an organization known as the Liberated African Co-operative Labour Union was promoted. Public notification was given in July 1938 that a Sierra Leone Trade Union was to be formed, and membership open to all.¹

The new organization aligned itself with established institutions outside as well as within the Colony. Affiliation with the British TUC was sought and in a return message the General Secretary of that body informed the new grouping that while direct affiliation was not possible, trade union information and guidance would be forthcoming.² Within the Colony, the Union espoused Christian ideals for the guidance and regulation of a worker's conduct. "Never imagine that you are deprived of your rights; never fight for them, not even in thought, as it is by far easier to earn your rights than by fighting for them".³ Among the natural rights

1. Among the groups invited to join were workers, industrialists, seamen, the Sierra Leone Commercial League, produce dealers, farmers, fishers, and individual and collective enterprise on all arts and crafts. Daily Mail July 6, 1938, p. 5.
2. Letter from Walter Citrine regarding the request for affiliation, Ibid., August 6, 1938 p. 3.
3. Ibid., August 30, 1938, p. 3.

conceded to all workers were 'the right to faith in God and man'; 'the right to health such as comes from obedience to God's law'; and 'the right to work after the manner of the one who was brought up as a Carpenter's Son'.¹

In October, 1938 the Liberated African Union (also called the Trade Union General Congress) put forward a number of topics for consideration at its opening session. Included for discussion were the proposed workmen's compensation bill, the advisability of recommending the revocation of the quota system and protection duty, abolition of the two pence postage and return to the one penny postage, industrial schemes and agricultural development.²

Early activities of the Congress included lectures on the constructive functions of trade unions. In February, 1939, the Congress announced plans for the establishment of a Labour Bureau where information on employment would be available. Unemployment cards were to be issued and unemployed adults, seamen and youths were invited to register.³

1. Ibid., September 7, 1936, p. 2. The probability here is that the promotion of Christian teaching by the Union leadership inadvertently alienated aborigine labourers. See Banton op. cit., on the socializing influence of religion in Freetown society.

2. Ibid., October 13, 1938, p. 1.

3. Ibid., February 9, 1939, p. 4.

Official Government backing to the new organization was given through the person of Dr. Bankole Bright, a member of the Legislative Council. In addresses before the Railway Workers' Union, the Carpenters' Defensive Union (two groups which did not align with the Youth League) and the Ratepayers' Association he lauded the work of the Trade Union General Congress. At the same time his audiences were cautioned against the activities of the Youth League and its 'Communist tendencies'.¹

For its part the Youth League dismissed the competing group as a 'mythical organization'.² By this time Johnson's activity was gaining support from the International Service Bureau, based in London. The Bureau acted as a pressure group upon the Colonial Office in promoting social reform. Whether through this organization³ or high placed officials in the Sierra Leone Administration, Johnson managed to intercept despatches concerning labour conditions in Sierra

1. Ibid., September 7, 1938, p. 2.
2. Since membership figures were not presented by the Congress and the poor attendance at its meetings in Wilberforce Hall was chronicled in newspaper reports at the time, it is difficult to disprove the League's allegation.
3. Two members of the International Service Bureau were Parliamentarians.

Leone sent by the Governor to the Secretary of State.

One observation on labour in the mining industry, (alluded to earlier), contained in the printed despatches, particularly incited public anti-government feeling.

During the first year of its existence, the Youth League was also helped by a 'liberal' news coverage policy adopted by the Freetown newspapers. In addition to publishing intercepted despatches, widespread coverage was given to labour disturbances in other parts of the Commonwealth (i.e. Trinidad, Jamaica and British Guiana during 1937-38). Following the lead given by these articles, Johnson's exhortations for 'collective security' through trade unionism impressed literate sections in the Freetown community.¹

Early in 1939, the new spirit engendered in the labour force was given expression. On January, 30 a strike was called by the Youth League's Amalgamated Workers' Union among the mechanics and labourers at the military works, Murray Town and Wilkinson Road. Claims submitted by the workers noted discrepancies in efficiency rates, the method of payment,

1. Another measure of Wallace Johnson's effectiveness in impressing the Freetown community was the electoral successes of the Youth League in municipal elections of November, 1938, and Legislative Council elections in 1939. See Edward W. Blyden III "Sierra Leone: The Pattern of Constitutional Change (1924-1951)" (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Harvard University, 1959), p. 172-177.

and the rights of redundant workers. On the first day of the strike police guards were called in to control onlookers. (A number of these guards joined in the strike evidently to demonstrate approval. The incident, which ended in court martials and prison terms of up to fifteen years for those involved, paralleled a similar episode during the 1919 Protectorate riots.)

By its second day the strike had become more serious. Strikers prevented other workers from attending work. One hundred constables had to be sworn in to augment the police staff and the Riot Act was proclaimed. On February 2 a second strike broke out at the Mabella Coaling Company. Dissatisfaction over pay rates and sympathy for the strikers at the military projects were listed as reasons for the second dispute which affected some three hundred men. Even after 1,300 strikers involved in the first stoppage returned to work following the military authority concession to introduce daily work payment, coaling station workers stayed out. Rioting took place on the fourth day of this strike resulting in twenty arrests. By the beginning of April a number of strikers had refused to resume work until arrested workers were released.²

1. Daily Mail, February 2, 1939, p. 1.

2. Ibid., April 4, 1939, p. 3.

By May another strike was called at the Marampa Union Mine involving about three thousand employees.¹ Demands included an increase in wages as well as payment during work absences due to injury. Men returned after twenty days out, following management's concession of a minimum ten pence per day rate. Information on the proposed Workmen's Compensation bill quieted demands on the second grievance.

The Governor before the Legislative Council near the end of 1939 noted that "the labouring class were being taught the lessons that their services were indispensable to their employers, who were alleged to have been robbing them of their legitimate earnings..." Indeed, the Sierra Leone Administration at the time found itself in an unenviable position. Pressure from the Colonial Office for labour reform prompted the introduction of legislation legitimizing trade union growth. (Trade Union Ordinance, 1939) The Arbitration and Disputes Ordinance, also passed in 1939, while setting down a procedure to be followed in processing labour grievances implicitly recognized labour's right to strike. When the labour movement responded to the

1. Great Britain Parliamentary Debates (Commons)
1938-39, 348, pp. 2250-2251.

anti-government attacks of the Youth League, officials were limited in the type of preventative measures they could employ. At the same time, the imminence of war and the strategic military importance of Freetown as a naval base, demanded action to insure industrial harmony. Government's solution to the dilemma was the introduction of additional legislation placing severe restrictions on civil liberties. The legislation was designed specifically to contain the activities of the Sierra Leone Youth League and those of its leader, Wallace Johnson. Control of this organization, it was hoped, would insure industrial quiescence.

As early as July, 1938, a Government order barred officers "from membership in any committee or society which has a political character..."¹ Participation in demonstrations or processions identified with political propaganda was similarly forbidden. Any breach of the regulations made the officer concerned liable to dismissal.

Early the following year legislation of a more serious and general character was introduced. In May, three bills, originally sent out in draft form from the Colonial Office

1. Royal Gazette July 28, 1938, p. 407.

were tabled by the Legislative Council. By the middle of May a public assembly was held to protest against the bills covering Incitement to Disaffection, Sedition and Undesireable Publications Ordinance and a Deportation Ordinance. The first bill defined penalties to be imposed for aiding or abetting military personnel in disobeying orders or leaving their post. The Sedition Ordinance prohibited publication or importation of material with seditious words or seditious intention (i.e. excite disaffection against the Crown or between classes). The most serious of the three bills was the Deportation of Aliens bill. In its original form this ordinance provided for the suspension of the right of Habeas Corpus.¹ Under the original draft, undesirable immigrant British subjects or British protected persons were liable to deportation and any native of Sierra Leone could be placed under restriction in any part of the country.²

Protest against the bills was voiced at public assemblies and expressed in the Executive Council.³ As a result,

-
1. Right of the accused to appear before a court for a decision regarding the justification of his detention.
 2. 'Minutes' of an Extraordinary Meeting of the City Council, 22 May, 1939; and Daily Mail July 28, 1939, p. 2.
 3. 'Minutes' Executive Council, 5 April, 1939; CO 270/74.

alterations were made in the original drafts. The Deportation Ordinance (officially labelled the Undesirable British Subjects' Ordinance, 1939) was modified to provide immunity under the bill for any native born Sierra Leonean. In addition the clause restricting Habeas Corpus was dropped and the grounds justifying expulsion more narrowly defined.

In defence of the bills the Governor related that they were first sent out by the Colonial Office in 1934, and that recent developments in Sierra Leone warranted their enactment. Recent developments included, "the rise in our midst of an organization whose methods are definitely subversive of law and order"¹. In the House of Commons the Secretary of State stood by the Sierra Leone Government in its decision to introduce legislation which limited civil rights in the country. The military importance of Freetown and the need to safeguard peace justified the action. (In the House of Commons the Colonial Office spokesman was unsure as to whether or not the draft bills sent to the Colony had

1. Statement by the Governor Regarding Certain Bills
Daily Mail May 22, 1939, pp. 1-3.

sanctioned the suspension of the right to 'habeas corpus'.¹)

With this support from the metropolitan country, the three bills became law in June, 1939. No sooner were the ordinances placed on the statute books than Wallace Johnson was called before the court on a charge under the sedition bill. The criminal libel charge was subsequently dropped, but when the declaration of war was read early in September, Johnson once again was brought up on charges for his writings in African Standard. Defence Regulations were introduced after the war declaration and it was under its provisions that Johnson was sentenced to imprisonment without hard labour. The leader of the Youth League and prime mover behind the working class 'revolts' remained in detention for the entire period of the war. The war defined the seriousness of the threat posed by Johnson and the Youth League and at the same time provided justification for the suppressive measures taken to deal with the problem. To some extent the War postponed additional reform measures. Efforts to produce such measures had resulted in the appointment of a Labour Secretary to the country early in 1939.²

1. Great Britain Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 1938-39, 349, pp. 1293-1294.

2. Mr. H. A. Nisbet, formerly a labour officer in Kenya.

The Labour Secretary was directed to advise Government on labour conditions and to act as a conciliator in labour disputes. After functioning in this capacity for a one year period, the Labour Secretary was to advise the Governor as to the feasibility of establishing a separate Labour Department.¹ In 1941 this Department was created. However, inquiries into the other areas under the province of the Labour Secretary had to be delayed following the outbreak of War and the more immediate labour problems attendant upon it.

An inquiry into conditions of intermittent labour employed in the Colony had also been sponsored by the Governor under the Trades Dispute (Arbitration and Inquiry) Ordinance passed earlier in the year. The overwhelming impact of the War likewise rendered this study redundant and it was quietly abandoned.

1. Cf. Orde-Browne Report op. cit. p. 131.

Labour Regulations During World War II

During World War II Colonial Administration efforts to regulate wage labour were intensified. From 1939 with the passage of the Trade Union and Arbitration Ordinances, Government's influence exercised either through legislation or other means was extensive.

Rising Demand for Labour 1939-42

The war brought about economic changes in the country mainly as a consequence of the strategic military importance of Freetown as a naval repair base and refuelling station. At the time the Freetown harbour was the only significant natural harbour on the entire west coast. It soon became the main stopping-off point for military and merchant vessels travelling across the Atlantic or down around the Cape of Good Hope. A particularly dramatic side effect of its military importance was the change in wage employment.

Before the war, average wage employment in the country was estimated at 20,000. A conservative employment policy followed by mining companies after the declaration of war temporarily reduced this number. This conservatism was prompted by expectations of serious curtailment of exports. The close of trade via the German Woermann Line and the loss of the Holland Africa Line early in the war supported this

decision. By 1940, the Sierra Leone Development Corporation had made reductions totalling 3,800 employees.

Such reductions, however, were soon more than compensated for by Government employment opportunities. The need for labour in the construction of military fortification projects began shortly after the Munich Truce of 1938 when the decision was made to repair the defences of the Colony for modern warfare.¹ As a result of refortification work, employment was made available to artisans and general labourers, as well as military and naval personnel. With the fall of France in mid-1940 recruitment of labour to this work was intensified.

Over the first half of the year 1940, demand for labour in the Colony among larger employers averaged about 10,000. Following the French collapse a marked change took place and by December, 1940, some 25,700 workers were employed in the Colony.² Impressive as this rise was it was overshadowed by the employment trend of the next two years.

1. The reasons for allowing the defences established during the First World War to fall into disrepair are traceable to the economic position of the Colony during the Great Depression and possibly the work of the League of Nations Disarmament Conference. See N.A. Cox-George op. cit., p. 223.

2. Sierra Leone Labour Report 1939-40, p. 1.

By 1942 the average totalled 68,216 with a high point of 81,600 reached in November, 1942.¹

TABLE 2.2

Annual Employment (Non-Agricultural) 1939-45

	Colony	Protectorate	Total	Artisans
1939	10,000	10,000	20,000	700
1940	14,833	-	-	
1941	28,841	-	-	4,500 (est.)
1942	45,041	23,175	68,216	18,000 "
1943	35,558	14,900	50,458	-
1944	26,091	11,325	37,416	-
1945	22,451	11,673	35,770	-

Source: N.A. Cox-George, op. cit. p. 224 and Sierra Leone Archives 'Deputations' to the Rt. Hon. Secretary of State 1943 "Labour Statistics".

For the most part the rapid increase in demand for unskilled labour was met with a voluntary response. No professional recruiters were employed by Government although some private employers undertook recruiting by tribal headmen. By August, 1942 this private recruitment was

1. Report of the Labour Department 1941-42, p. 3.
While some doubt exists as to the exactitude of these figures they reflect the general employment trend at the time.

forbidden so as not to endanger rice crop production.¹ The vast rise in employment was attended by an increasing need for skilled labour on construction and defence works. There arose an unprecedented demand for artisans of all types and by the close of 1940, the unavailability of such labour created a critical manpower need. Pre-war training facilities consisted only of those offered at the Railway workshop, Public Works Department and the large mining companies. Among the results of the skill demand was the considerable loss of skilled workers to the Railway due to poaching practices², a sharp rise in artisan wage rates³, and considerable skill dilution.

During the war the most important movement of labour was from the Protectorate and Colony rural area to Freetown. "In 1939 the population of Freetown was about 60,000. By the end of 1942 it probably exceeded 90,000".⁴ Organization among new entrants to the wage labour force was also taking

-
1. In 1942 rice production dropped 15% over the previous year's total (from 200,000 tons in 1941 to 170,000 tons in 1942).
 2. J. Ralph Best op. cit. p. 93.
 3. Sierra Leone Labour Report 1939-40, p. 1.
 4. Michael Banton op. cit. p. 34.

place and before the end of 1940 seven trade unions had registered under the 1939 Act.¹

Legislative Control

To cope with new responsibilities Government drafted the Emergency Powers Ordinance in 1939. This Ordinance was designed to provide Government with the same authority as the United Kingdom's Defence (General) Regulation, 1939. Rules enacted under the Sierra Leone legislation paralleled the British Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order, (1940), and the Essential Works Orders (1941). In the House of Commons at the time, the passing of these legal measures by the Sierra Leone Government was defended by Sir T. Inskip, Secretary of State for the Colonies. Referring to the restrictions on civil liberties he noted that: "The introduction of such legislation was considered all the more desirable in view of the increasing strategic importance of Freetown and of the presence of a garrison there".²

-
1. These included the All Seamen's Union of Sierra Leone, the Freetown Maritime Workers' Union, the Mining Employees Union, the African Commercial Clerks' Union, the Yengema Diamond Workers' Union, Building and Construction Workers' Union and the Sierra Leone Masons' Union.
 2. Great Britain Parliamentary Debates (Commons) 1938-39, 348, p. 2251.

Through the emergency powers granted, the Sierra Leone Government attempted to regulate and control the Freetown labouring class. Under the Employers and Employed (Registration of Employees) Rules, 1940, the Labour Secretary was given the power to request all employers of ten or more workers to submit returns on employees. The following year this Rule was extended to cover Protectorate employers. A Compulsory Service Ordinance was passed in 1941 introducing compulsory service into Sierra Leone and requiring the registration of all males between 18-55 years. (Under the Compulsory Service Ordinance men were not only conscripted into the African Auxiliary Pioneer Companies but were also conscripted for use as dock labour in the Docks Operating Units.) By December, 1942, 100,800 males were registered, thus completing the registration of the Colony Peninsula area.¹ During 1942 finger printing of new registrants was required. Duplication of registration or mutilation of registration certificates resulted in 1,011 court cases in 1944 alone.

1. Report on the Labour Department 1941-42, p. 5.

The Defence (Essential Works) (General Provisions) Order, 1941, made provision for Government control of essential works. Under a second version of this Order passed the following year, workers suspected of idleness or inefficiency were to be charged in court. Protest against this provision was voiced in the Legislative Council in 1942.¹ Nevertheless, the Order remained effective throughout the war and covered such important employment centres as the Royal Navy Defence Depot, Waterworks Department of the City Council and the Government Rice Mill.

Finally, trade disputes were outlawed and compulsory arbitration introduced under the Defence (Amendment) Regulations 1941, and the Defence (Settlement of Labour Disputes) Order 1941. The latter provided for an Arbitration Tribunal consisting of a chairman and two members (one employer and one employee representative) appointed by the Governor. Strikes and lockouts were prohibited unless the dispute was referred to the Labour Officer and he, through negligence, failed to refer it for settlement.

1. Legislative Council Debates 3 November, 1942, p. 58.

One side effect of the increased legislative control of labour, was the need to increase personnel concerned with labour matters. In July, 1940 the Secretary of State for the Colonies approved the establishment of a Labour Department and the 1941 Estimates made provision for the post of Chief Labour Officer, one Labour Officer and two clerks.

Administrative Practices in Nigeria, Gold Coast and the Gambia

The Sierra Leone Administration was not unique among West African territories in the imposition of war time controls on labour. The extent of control varied among the four British territories and reflected to a great extent the military importance of the Colony and the need to contain civil unrest. Each of the British West African colonies was called upon during the war to make a contribution in manpower. Colonial Office Information quoted a total 160,000 conscripted into the armed forces from West Africa. The relative share was approximately, Nigeria 100,000, Gold Coast 40,000, Sierra Leone 18,000 and the Gambia 2,000.¹

1. An approximation based upon Employment Exchange registrations of ex-servicemen in 1947, would place the total at 180,000. Faulty registration procedure may have been responsible for the discrepancy.

In Nigeria the Colonial Administration implemented compulsory labour legislation similar to Sierra Leone Orders under the Emergency Powers Ordinance. After the Japanese capture of Malaya early in the war, Nigeria became an important source of essential minerals, especially tin. There were large increases in the labour force (normally 45,000) employed at the Jos Plateau mines. By February, 1942, it became necessary to conscript 10,000 men for mine work under the Nigeria Defence Regulation. The conscripted labourer was expected to work for a period of four months and was guaranteed a minimum wage rate. In 1942, 16,000 of the total 75,669 tin miners were compulsorily recruited. Between August, 1942 and April, 1944 92,703 men served compulsory national service in the mines.¹ In the Gambia and Gold Coast there is no record of similar wartime measures.

Also in Nigeria restrictions on the right to strike under Essential Service and Compulsory Arbitration Orders were enforced. The Gold Coast 'Avoidance of Trade Disputes'

1. Annual Report on the Labour Department (Lagos) 1944.
 p. 2. A. R. Prest War Economics of Primary Producing Countries (Cambridge, 1948) maintained that this number "...was larger than originally planned for the reason that many did not complete the authorized 16 - weeks period of service." p. 241.

Orders of 1941 and 1942 provided machinery designed to prevent labour strikes and lock-outs.

Extensive as these legal measures were, additional government intervention in labour matters soon became necessary in each British West African Colony. The reason why was traceable firstly to a rapid rise in living costs. This rise eroded living standards (as it did during World War I) for many West African wage earners. In addition, reductions in wage employment after 1942 threatened to create mass urban unemployment. Pressures to check these developments required extra legal initiative on the part of the Colonial Administrations. This initiative took the form of commissions of inquiry, cost of living allowances, and the introduction of employment exchanges.

Cost of Living Rises in Sierra Leone

Military spending reflected in the increased demand for wage labour in Freetown was accompanied by a sharp drop in exports and an increase in imports to the Colony. Even though the export value of goods dropped more than 58% in 1943 over 1938, the value of imported goods increased by nearly 275%.¹ Volume statistics indicate the same general

1. Percentages are based upon Trade Reports for the respective years. To some extent the loss of Germany and the Netherlands as trade partners resulted in the export trade decline. Before the war exports to these countries totalled approximately 30% of total export trade.

trends. The cost of the imports was, therefore, not funded by the sale of export materials. Rather, the increased demand for imports was brought about primarily by the Imperial spending taking place. In 1938 the net inflow of specie and currency notes to Sierra Leone was £110,274. In 1942 the Trade Reports recorded £952,670 and £641,899 in 1943.

Nor was the effect of this spending limited to new Government employees:¹

Contracts were given out for supplies of foodstuffs, fish, etc., for the forces. There were contracts galore for the supply of local building materials such as granite, sand and local timber. Overnight a number of laundries sprang up like mushrooms to undertake the contracts for cleaning the uniforms and other clothing of services personnel. Numerous canteens and restaurants emerged in response to the demand for these services. And in all these ways the primary employment gave rise to other activities, so that the multiplier effect of that employment, was considerable.

The increase in imported articles (food, tobacco and manufactures all rose in volume²) failed to keep pace with the level of consumer demand and prices moved upward. Not only were prices of imported goods appreciating, but local produce prices likewise increased. For example, in 1939 the market price for upland rice (the staple food of

1. Cox-George, op. cit., pp. 226-227.

2. Ibid., p. 218.

the Sierra Leone people) was 4/8 per bushel. By September, 1941 the controlled price of this brand of rice was set at 8/6 per bushel (84 lbs.).¹ If the rice was cleaned at the Government mill even higher prices were charged.

Government made some attempt to control price increases during the War through the creation of a Food Control (Advisory) Committee and the appointment of a Food Controller. By 1940 the prices of essential foodstuffs including rice were placed under control. From June, 1943 comprehensive control of all merchandise, including import goods was attempted. Lack of success with such measures was soon apparent. Black marketing increased during the war with a high point of ninety-five convictions in November, 1942.² A second measure of the failure of the control prices was the official cost-of-living index which recorded an increase of 1149% in 1944 over the pre-war level.

The Cost-of-Living Indices.

An attempt to measure cost-of-living changes was first made in 1941, when a survey was undertaken of daily paid

1. Royal Gazette 4 September, 1941, p. 437.

2. Ibid., 31 December, 1942, pp. 519-20.

unskilled workers earning not more than £3 per month. The results of the survey indicated a rise in living costs of 75%.¹ Shortly after its introduction, this survey was judged administratively and methodologically defective and a second survey was begun in 1942. On the first survey, the Governor criticized the Labour Department's use of 1939 as base year, since food prices for that year had been unusually low. (The average price of rice being 4/9 per bushel as opposed to 5/11 per bushel averaged over the year 1931-1939."²) Others, however, took a different line of criticism and "it was pointed out that the prices used were based on wholesale prices obtained from untrustworthy sources, whereas the class surveyed procured their goods from the retail market and even from the 'black market'."³ For different reasons the initial survey pleased nobody.

In the second survey two hundred and twenty households were included with an average monthly income of £8/2/3. The higher income group also reflected a different skill

-
1. Report on the Cost of Living Survey held in Freetown during February, 1941. (Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1941)
 2. Governor's Despatch No. 330, 30 October, 1941 in Sessional Paper No. 12 of 1941.
 3. African Standard, October 24, 1941, p. 3. as cited by Cox-George op. cit. p. 229.

category from the first budget survey. The 1942 review was concerned with the consumption pattern of clerks and artisans. Its results published in 1944 showed a cost of living rise even greater than that indicated in the earlier survey.

TABLE 2.3

Freetown Cost of Living Index 1939-45

1939	=	100
1940	=	n. a ³
1941	=	175.57 ¹
1942	=	234 ²
1943	=	242
1944	=	249
1945	=	233.7

1. Budget Survey of 1941
2. Figures from 1942 to 1945 based on the 1942 Survey.

SOURCE: Labour Department Reports

The effect of this rapid price increase on the welfare of the working class was noted in the report of the 1941

Survey Committee. In a memorandum forwarded to the Governor the deprivation of low income groups was stressed. The Committee observed:¹

1. That ninety per cent. of the working class households find it extremely difficult to live on the wages they earn.
2. That over eighty per cent. live well over their incomes incurring huge and almost perpetual debts in so doing.
3. That over seventy-five per cent. of the households are definitely underfed.
4. That fifty per cent. of the children are physically unfit owing to the fact they are forced to become breadwinners of the household, some having to go out to sell foo-foo and kerosene in order to get a few pennies to pay their school fees.
5. That owing to the high cost of living over 50 per cent. of the working class householders who have been in certain well established employments are forced to seek more remunerative jobs.

The Cost of Living Bonus

Following receipt of the memorandum Government awarded a cost of living bonus of 5d to all daily paid workers receiving up to 5/- per day. Even before the bonus was officially declared in November, a temporary award of 2d.

1. Report on the Cost of Living Survey 1941 op. cit.

had been made in May, 1941. For those earning above 5/1 the bonus was graduated downwards. By June, 1942 an award of 3d was made to Protectorate labourers on a daily wage of 8d.¹ Although there was no official index to cover Protectorate workers the rise in their living costs was estimated to be eighty per cent. of the Freetown figure.

At the same time, recommendations covering rates of pay for skilled workers were also being made. A recently appointed Labour Advisory Board² (which included five representatives of the newly organized trade unions) suggested classifying artisans in three groups according to skill. The highest grade was to receive from 6/3 to 10/- per day.

In 1944 the cost of living allowance was revised upwards from 5d to 9d per day for Government employees earning between 3/- to 16/- per day with five or more years of service. This was later increased to 1/6 in 1945. Increases were also given to salaried workers earning from £54 to £250

1. The awards were calculated to cover fifty per cent. of the estimated cost of living rise of seventy five per cent. indicated by the first budget survey. Taking 1939 as base year and 1/0 as the basic rate, a seventy five per cent. increase in cost would have required a new wage of 1/9 in order to maintain real income. Instead only fifty per cent. i.e. 4½d rounded to 5d was paid.

2. Royal Gazette LXXII No. 3541, August 21, 1941, p. 411.

per annum.¹ Following petitions made by trade unions and a series of war time strikes a revised cost of living allowance for work people receiving less than 3/- per day was enacted in 1945. The increase was 4d per day making the total allowance 9d for Colony workers. Protectorate labourers received an additional 2d, bringing their bonus to 5d per day.

In view of the magnitude ~~and~~ the timing of the cost of living allowances they could have done but very little to alleviate the conditions described in the 1941 memorandum. After the first increase of 5d to Colony labourers earning 3/- or less there was no additional increase for this group until 1945. In the meantime the Freetown cost of living index indicated a rise of 149% by 1944. Taking 1/- as the rate paid unskilled labour in 1939 the wartime rate of 1/5 fell far short in maintaining real income. By 1944, the unskilled labourer's real wage was approximately one-half of its pre-war level.²

1. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1944, p. 2.

2. In fact the real wage index for this year was 56. The basis for this calculation being 1/- wage rate (1939) = 100 and cost of living (1939) = 100. By 1944 the wage index was 140 and cost of living index 249.

One source has suggested that the cost-of-living bonus granted in 1941 contributed to the farther increase in living costs. It "had the function of underpinning the growth of the inflation itself and, incidentally the rise in the cost of living".¹ If this impression was also held by administrators at the time it may partially explain why bonuses were not substantially increased before 1945.² However, there is no reason to feel that this had to be the relationship between wages and prices. While the price increase between 1939 and 1941 might have been caused in part by the 2d bonus granted in May, 1941, the great increase recorded in 1942 could be related to the more rigorous methodology employed (observations on price changes were secured at the retail level and not from the wholesale distributors as in the 1941 survey) in constructing the second cost of living index.

Another argument against any strong causal relationship between the bonus allowance and price changes was the

1. Cox-George op. cit., p. 230.
2. Another factor which might explain the delay in granting increased allowances was that Government only received the report of the 1942 Survey Committee in 1944. However it most certainly had some knowledge of living cost increases throughout the period.

movement of the cost-of-living index after the bonus of 4d was granted in 1945. In 1946 the index dropped twenty-four points over the previous year (from 243 down to 219. See Appendix 2). An alternative analysis suggests that the inflation resulted from ineffectual distribution of goods available to the Freetown labouring groups.

During the period of rapid rise in wage employment, conscription of Protectorate manpower into the Armed Forces was also taking place. One estimate placed the number of young men removed from the Protectorate at about 20-25 per cent.¹

In order to maintain food production of staple commodities Government imposed a quota to be met by remaining farmers. One effect of this quota was an increase in per capita productivity by more than 30 per cent. above pre-war levels.² But, owing to poor administration in the rural districts "much of this increased production of foodstuffs was allowed to rot in the up-country railway stations and

1. K. L. Little The Mende Upland Rice Farmer. (n.p., 1948) p. 21.

2. Cox George, op. cit., p. 244.

elsewhere".¹ Transportation difficulties especially on the Government railway further complicated the problem. In 1942 the average age of the thirty eight locomotives in the country was 22 years, with fifteen over 25 years. During the year there were 220 engine failures compared with 27 in 1938.

Although the quantity of imports rose considerably during the War², the absence of planning in wholesale and retail distribution led to what was described as "contrived scarcity and the psychological atmosphere of scarcity".³ The result was black marketing and price increases. These administrative defects, coupled with the hoarding together of thousands of labourers for fortification projects effected the steep climb in living costs.

The Nigerian experience provides an interesting contrast to Sierra Leone on this point. A sub-committee was set up there during 1941 to investigate changes in the cost of living for urban wage earners.

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 218. For example, the volume increase in imported rice was over 93% (1938 = 100), while butter increased by over 85%, wheaten flour 65%, milk 93%, boots and shoes 25% and shirts by over 100%.

3. Ibid., p. 23~~0~~.

The poverty of the labouring class was apparent and the sub-committee proposed remedial action:¹

Merely in order to enable the labourer to live as he was living at the outbreak of the war (excluding for the moment any regard for the adequacy of that standard of living) such percentage increase as may have been found in the cost of living of his class should be offset by an equivalent percentage increase in wages.

By the end of 1942 a recommended minimum rate of two shillings per day was accepted by Government for unskilled workers in Lagos.² Slightly lower increases were made to this group in other parts of the country. Principal private employers awarded rises in line with Government increases.

In contrast to Sierra Leone, the real wage position of the Nigerian unskilled labourer was considerably improved following the 1942 award. The bonus lifted real wages above the pre war level. (Appendix 2). The position was achieved not only as a result of the bonus award but was also due to successful price control on local foodstuffs.

1. Report of the Cost of Living Committee (Lagos, 1942) p. 96.

2. This high rate was also related to the advance in unionization among Nigerian labour. See W.M. Warren "Urban Real Wages and the Nigerian Trade Union Movement 1939-60". Economic Development and Cultural Change 15, (October, 1966) p. 27.

A commission appointed in 1943 proposed measures to check the increase in the cost-of-living which included bulk purchases of supplies by Government and their resale to market women. The scheme was not designed to satisfy needs of the total Lagos population but was to put enough food on the market to act as a stabilizer by forcing other traders to lower their prices in order to compete with the Government traders.¹ The success of the scheme was reflected in a stable cost of living index during the mid-war years.

The failure of the Sierra Leone Administration to grant adequate compensation to wage earners to cover cost of living rises, and to effectively administer the distribution and sale of available goods, resulted in the lowest real wage level for workers in British West Africa at the time.³ (See Appendix 2.)

The Challenge of Unemployment

In addition to rising living costs in Sierra Leone

-
1. Annual Report on the Department of Labour, Lagos, 1943, p. 16.
 2. The control scheme broke down in 1945 when Government was unable to provide enough food to its retailers. This failure was a contributing factor to the General Strike.
 3. In both the Gold Coast and the Gambia statutory war bonuses were granted to offset the wartime price inflation. In the Gold Coast one award was made in 1943 and then another in 1945 following the proposal of the Stanley Advisory Committee.

during the War years unemployment after 1942 became a major problem. Following the Allied capture of North Africa in 1942, the strategic importance of Freetown rapidly declined. By 1943 there was a considerable decline in the demand for labour, a decline attributed to the completion of certain defence projects, to the closing of a number of service works and to restrictions on the number of Africans under the charge of a single European supervisor.¹ By December, 1943 the Admiralty employed 8,212 African artisans and labourers and the War Department 4,826, compared with 14,577 and 29,974 respectively for the corresponding month a year earlier. Conscription of labour into the Army Auxiliary Pioneer Corps was also suspended in 1943 due to the satisfactory flow of volunteers. At any large-scale discharge of labour during the year Labour Department representatives were on hand and advised all natives to return to the Protectorate if they were unable to find work. Persuasion was supplemented by regulation under the Emergency Powers Ordinance as well as by the establishment of an Employment Exchange.

1. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1943 p. 1.

The Defence (Repatriation of Unemployed Protectorate Natives) Regulation, 1943, provided for repatriation from the Police District of Freetown and the Headquarters Judicial District of any unemployed Protectorate native. The repatriation was justified on the grounds that the majority of the Protectorate labourers in the Colony were drawn from peasant farming and village handicraft work. Since such employment was still open to them, repatriation was considered desirable.

Introduction of the repatriation regulation led to considerable voluntary dispersal since those repatriated at Government expense were forbidden to return to the Colony for six months. During 1944, 520 unemployed labourers were repatriated by Court order. During the following year 1,540 were repatriated including a fair number of Foulahs from French Guinea.¹ While plans had been made to absorb some of the repatriated labour into public works projects, a shortage of qualified supervisory staff led to their abandonment.

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1945 p. 2.

TABLE 2.4

Average Annual Employment (Non-Agricultural)¹
1945-50

Year	Colony	Protectorate	Total
(1942 Nov.	50,500	31,100	81,600)
1945	22,451	11,671	35,770
1946	16,743	13,971	30,714
1947	16,334	15,396	31,730
1948	16,105	19,375	35,480
1949	17,774	21,120	38,894
1950	18,153	22,327	40,480

SOURCE: Labour Department Reports: The data for 1945-47 was based on returns from employers of ten or more workers. After 1947 returns were submitted by employers of six or more employees.

The Employment Exchange

In response to the unemployment problem an Employment Exchange modelled on the English institution, was introduced under Labour Department supervision in February, 1943.

-
1. While these figures exclude smaller employers and some larger employers who failed to submit returns under the Employers and Employed (Registration of Employees) Rules, 1940, they do provide a fair approximation of employment trends.

Originally it catered for demobilized military personnel, charged no fees for its services, and expanded the role of the Central Registration Bureau in its record keeping functions.¹

The most important challenge of the new Employment Exchange, presented itself with the discharge of servicemen from H.M. Forces before the end of 1944. To insure the placement of demobilized servicemen, an Ordinance was drafted in 1945 providing preferential employment treatment for this group. Under the Ordinance a ten per cent. quota of ex-servicemen by all employers of ten or more was introduced.² Since all major employers of ten or more workers were required by legislation to recruit through the Employment Exchange, the institution enjoyed the necessary power to place demobilized personnel.

A further legal measure to insure labour control was the extension of compulsory registration of males after the War. Following a temporary repeal the Employers and Employees (Registration and Identification of Servants)

-
1. The Central Registration Bureau of the Labour Department was responsible for the registration of all male workers 18-55 under the Compulsory Registration Regulation 1941.
 2. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1945 p. 3.
This provision was introduced under the Employment of Ex-Servicemen (Percentage Quota) Rules 1946.

Rule 1946, imposed registration requirements on all those seeking employment in the Colony.¹ This compulsory requirement greatly facilitated control of labour through the Employment Exchange.² Failure to register when entering the Colony made the worker liable to court action.

The success of the Employment Exchange operations may be judged from ex-servicemen placement statistics for the three immediate post-war years. By 1948, of the 19,554 discharged men, 6,904 were placed in employment under the Exchange facilities. Taking account on the one hand of rural resettlement and on the other of a single ex-serviceman being placed more than once, this total represented a significant accomplishment. Of the total registered unemployed at the end of 1948 only 731 were ex-servicemen.³

Demobilization and Resettlement in Nigeria, Gold Coast and the Gambia

Demobilization and resettlement problems met with a similar degree of Government intervention elsewhere in West

-
1. By the end of 1946, 202,686 persons had been registered under wartime and post war requirements.
 2. Control was also facilitated by the establishment of a Trade Test Board in 1944. Skill certificates were issued. Employers could be reasonably confident that labour supplied through the Exchange had their certificates authenticated.
 3. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1945, p. 5.

Africa. In Ghana a recorded 50,000 men had been demobilized by March, 1947. Of this total 21,029 had sought work through twenty-three Resettlement Advice Centres located throughout the country. Of those who sought employment over fifty-one per cent. were placed. Though an employment exchange had been operating in Kumasi even before the war, servicemen resettlement was primarily the work of the 'ad hoc' Advice Centres. During this period no registration scheme nor quota system for ex-servicemen was operative.

In November, 1946 an unsuccessful move to introduce a registration system was made. A sharp rise in strikes during 1948 was followed by a Commission of Enquiry recommendation that registration of employees be undertaken in all areas of the country.¹ From June, 1948 a central registration bureau was set up in Kumasi and six teams operated in major employment centres.

In the Gambia, preferential treatment to ex-servicemen was provided by law in 1945.² A one hundred per cent. ex-servicemen quota was established for vacancies in certain skilled trades, motor drivers and messengers. (In Sierra

1. Annual Report for the Labour Department 1948-49 Accra p. 5.

2. Employment of Ex-Servicemen Ordinance 1945.

Leone the ex-servicemen's quota was only ten per cent.) But, in the Gambia no employment exchange existed until 1952 and no record of the actual number of ex-servicemen employed after the war could be obtained.

Nigerian demobilization provided the closest parallel to activities in Sierra Leone. The decision to introduce an employment exchange and registration scheme was made in 1943. The following year the Exchange at Lagos recorded an average of 7,272 on the 'live register' seeking employment.¹ This number was felt to be high and posed serious administrative problems. Further, in contrast to Sierra Leone the wide geographical scope of the country resulted in several pockets of unemployment in other urban communities.

1. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1944 (Lagos) p. 5. A special country wide unemployment survey in 1935, counted 3,944 as seeking work. The figure nine years later for Lagos alone gives some indication of the impact of the war in attracting labour to wage employment and the unwillingness of labour to return to the countryside after retrenchment.

TABLE 2.5

Size and Population of British West African
Territories - 1950

<u>Country</u>	<u>Area</u> (Square miles)	<u>Population</u>
The Gambia	4,030	276,000 (Estimate)
Sierra Leone	27,985	1,858,275 (Approx. 1948)
Gold Coast	91,843 (includes Togoland)	4,111,680 (African 1948)
Nigeria	372,674	24,330,000 (Includes Cameroons)

SOURCE: An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories 1951
Vol. III The West African Territories
COL. No. 281-3 (London: HMSO, 1952) passim.

Before the close of the war, registration was refused to men who came into Lagos in search of work and who had not been resident for as long as six months.¹

In March, 1944 an ex-servicemen's branch was opened under the Employment Exchange for resettling demobilized troops. By 1947, of the reported 113,027 demobilized personnel, 75,934 had registered at the branch for employment and approximately 40% were placed.

1. The difficulty in enforcing this regulation was the necessity to rely on a man's word regarding his length of residence.

The growing problems of urban unemployment near the end of the War brought closer regulation and control of wage employment. Orders in Council 1944 and 1945 closed registration of industrial workers in certain trades and occupations, in the Lagos township and prohibited the employment of unregistered workers. The Employment of Ex-Servicemen Ordinance 1945 gave Government legal authority to enforce demobilization plans. Under the law, ex-servicemen who voluntarily left service to join the forces or who were conscripted were to be given priority in job vacancies. A five per cent. quota was set for private employers for hiring both disabled and able-bodied ex-servicemen.¹ The supervision of placements was undertaken by registration centres at all Divisional Offices. From October, 1946, the quota for private employers was raised to ten per cent. with a special fifty per cent. ex-servicemen quota for motor drivers.²

Like Sierra Leone, the policy of the Nigerian administration was to encourage resettlement back on the land.

-
1. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1945 Lagos p.18.
 2. The object of the legislation was to require employers of not less than ten employees to register and employ ex-servicemen as vacancies arose, until ten per cent. of the normal establishment consisted of ex-servicemen.

Threatened food shortages lent additional support to the policy. Petitions were forwarded to the War Office near the end of 1945, "...to impress on the minds of serving negro troops the correct state of affairs in order to eliminate from their minds any false impression that there was sufficient employment for all".¹ Nevertheless, it was the Government which set the example in absorbing ex-servicemen into wage earning employment. By 1946 ninety-per cent. of all Government employees were ex-servicemen while less than three per cent. of non Government employees had served in the armed forces.²

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1945 Lagos p. 22

2. Ibid., 1946 p. 25.

Summary and Conclusion

During the 1930's a variety of internal and external factors were at work causing changes in the character of the Sierra Leone Government's labour policy. Foremost among the external factors were the International Labour Organization and the Colonial Office. As a result of pressures from them, legislation was passed protecting certain worker interests. The nature of the legal reforms indicated that their object was to prevent labour unrest through the improvements in the conditions of employment and through institutions and procedures proscribing labour activity. (See for example the features of the Trade Union Ordinance and Trade Disputes Ordinance outlined in Appendix I.)

Complementing these external forces, the Sierra Leone Youth League had by the late 1930's, secured widescale popular support for its demands for social and economic improvements in the country. Tactically the Youth League organized trade unions among wage earners and through strike activity indicated the sincerity of its intentions to achieve reforms. Not unaware of the political potential of the Youth League, Government became increasingly concerned with controlling the activities of wage labour.

At the very time that the move towards labour policy reform was taking place, however, the Second World War began. The War presented the Sierra Leone Administration with a problem. Labour legislation had been passed ensuring the right to organize and an Arbitration Ordinance implicitly recognized the right to strike. While guaranteeing certain rights both measures were designed to institutionalize labour activity. Yet the military importance of the Freetown harbour, reflected in the fast rise in wage employment during the early war years, gave priority to industrial quiescence. In the circumstances the adequacy of existing legislation was questioned. In attempting to solve the problem heavy reliance was placed on additional legal controls. With Colonial Office approval, legal restrictions on civil liberties were enforced from 1939, and during the same year the leader of the Youth League was placed in detention under provisions of the Emergency Powers Ordinance.

During the war compulsory arbitration of labour disputes was enforced and registration of all labour in Freetown was facilitated after the creation of an Employment Exchange in 1943. The work of the exchange became increasingly important near the end of the war when demobilized ex-servicemen sought wage employment.

One major threat during the period to the effectiveness of these measures, was the rise in living costs which continually eroded real wages among Freetown wage earners. Government responded to this problem by granting a war bonus to supplement incomes and attempting to control retail prices. The inadequacy of these measures was indicated by the study of similar steps taken in Nigeria.

Comparative data for other British West African states during the war generally indicated that Sierra Leone was not alone in the problems she faced, nor in the measures she adopted to solve them. Each resorted to varying degrees of Government intervention in the form of labour legislation, statutory war bonuses and the establishment of employment exchanges. The effort in each case was to provide adequate regulation and control over the activities of employed and unemployed labourers.

CHAPTER III

REASONS BEHIND THE SELECTION OF BARGAINING
MACHINERY

The transfer of Joint Industrial Councils and Wages Boards to Sierra Leone after World War II was an experiment designed to control labour-management relations through institutional means. One specific aim of the experiment was to limit Government's direct regulation of labour even though Government was the major employer in the economy. The reason why the experiment was attempted in the first place was related to two developments. Firstly was the rise of labour radicalism before and during the War and secondly was the arrival in Sierra Leone of a Trade Union Advisor sent out under the auspices of the Colonial Office in 1942. The first produced the climate for experimentation and indicated the need for reforms. The second was instrumental in formulating the particular changes introduced. The promotion of industrial bargaining bodies to regulate labour-management relations was the idea of the Trade Union Advisor.

War Time Strikes

The seriousness with which the Sierra Leone Colonial Government viewed the threat posed by the Youth League

resulted in the imprisonment of its leader, Wallace Johnson, for the duration of the War. The pre-war activities of this group, in particular its success in promoting a "strike fever" among workers had awakened administrators to the relative ease of inciting dissatisfaction in the country.

Although Youth League activity declined after Johnson's arrest, the underlying cause of discontent, namely low living standards, gave rise to a series of wartime strikes. In each case stoppages were called in violation of the Compulsory Arbitration Order. During the war strike frequency reached a peak of thirteen in 1942. A strike at the DELCO mining company during that year, involving over 4,000 workers and 21,750 man days lost, required military intervention before settlement was reached. An arbitration tribunal appointed after the strike awarded a 2d. per day pay increase to employees earning up to 2/- a day. In 1944, 2,000 workers at the Yengema diamond mines stopped work over a pay dispute. The following year major strikes took place at the Forestry Department, Kenema (1,830 man days lost), the Coaling Station (two strikes during the year resulting in over 1,000 man days lost) and the Selection Trust Diamond Mines (again two strikes resulting in 8,800 man days lost). Between 1940 and 1945 a total of thirty-four stoppages took place. Except for two during 1945 (over retrenchments) all were in respect of wage demands.

The war-time strikes indicated to concerned administrators the inadequacy of legal controls on labour. It was during the highest strike year that Mr. Edgar Parry, a British trade unionist, was sent to Sierra Leone to act as Trade Union Advisor. Impressed with the general discontent, it was Parry who began at that time to fashion innovations to remedy the situation.

Recommendations of the Trade Union Adviser

Edgar Parry joined the staff of the newly established Sierra Leone Labour Department in 1942. His appointment as Trade Union advisor was part of a plan devised by the Colonial Labour Advisory Committee to have experienced British trade unionists guide the development of colonial organisation.¹ Parry was one of six trade unionists appointed in 1942, (three of whom were sent to West Africa). Before assignment, each of the six underwent briefing courses administered by the Colonial Office. Given the military importance of West Africa, the need for industrial peace must inevitably have been reviewed.

1. As Professor B.C.Roberts has noted, this programme was not altogether successful. Labour in the Tropical Territories op. cit. p.215. The trade union advisors were given the very difficult task of serving the interests and maintaining the respect of the Colonial Administration and at the same time gaining the confidence of trade union leaders. Also, while these trade unionists were knowledgeable in the affairs of their own unions in Britain, they were for the most part ignorant of the Colonial situation and of the problems facing newly organised trade unions there. In the case of Sierra Leone, Parry operated successfully after winning the confidence of both the administration and trade union leaders.

During his first tour in Sierra Leone Parry made little contribution to the country's labour policies or practices. It was only after returning to Britain in 1943 and discussing various problems with the Chief Industrial Commissioner that concrete plans began to emerge. Parry returned to the Colony in 1944. By the end of 1947, two wages Boards for the maritime and mining industries and two Joint Industrial Councils (J.I.C.s.) for construction and transportation had been established.¹ At least two questions regarding these changes suggest themselves. Firstly, what prompted Parry's concern with innovation? Secondly, having decided change was necessary what motivated his selection of bargaining machinery as a solution?

The Need for Innovation

The wartime strikes stimulated Parry's concern for industrial relations reform and labour regulation. But as a trade unionist himself, he wished to promote the interests of the Sierra Leone labour class. In his view it was not sufficient to provide worker organisations with legal reality if at the same time legitimate channels through which worker petitions and demands could be reviewed were not provided.

1. Personal success attended Parry's work. In 1946 he was appointed Commissioner of Labour in Sierra Leone and shortly after the post of assistant to the Labour Advisor in the Colonial Office was offered to him.

"The creation of trade unions is in itself a fairly simple matter. To fit them into a comprehensive system of industrial relations is a much more exacting task".¹ In the Sierra Leone context it was also perceived that the agency capable of introducing necessary reform measures was not the nascent trade union movement, but Government itself. At this time Government was the major employer of wage earners, employing over half of those for whom returns were submitted.² Parry felt this economic position should reflect itself in industrial relations leadership. "At all costs the government and employers must establish machinery whereby unions can evolve their proper purpose".³ Before the Sierra Leone Legislative Council he argued:⁴

It is fast becoming an obligation everywhere in the world that all Governments shall provide proper machinery for regulating the relationship between employers and persons who are employed. In so far as the English Government is concerned and in all its colonies; and in order to do this it is necessary to build up an adequate and proper system of industrial relations. (sic).

While the proper purpose of a Union and a proper system of industrial relations were never explicitly defined there

-
1. Edgar Parry "Colonial Trade Unions" Corona No. 7. (Aug. 1949) pp. 20-21.
 2. Government employed 15,518 out of a total of 30,714 wage-earners in 1946 and 21,712 out of 40,480 in 1950.
 3. Daily Mail 12 January, 1953 p. 2. Report on a London tutorial given by Parry.
 4. Legislative Council Debates 12 October, 1945, p. 6.

is no doubt that machinery of some kind was considered necessary. Parry's selection and placement of particular types of machinery reflected in part his personal experience and partly his conviction that an institutional approach in regulating labour-management affairs could only succeed through Government supervision.

Choice of Bargaining Institutions.

Parry's choice of industrial relations' machinery for Sierra Leone may be traced to his own experiences in the labour movement, first as a worker and branch chairman of the Preston Gasworks, later as a full time official at the district level for the National Union of General and Municipal Workers. While at the district level (1934-41) he represented his union on various district and national Joint Industrial Councils.¹ It was during this period that his knowledge and appreciation of bargaining machinery developed.

Joint Industrial Councils

The history of the JIC in Britain starts with the recommendation issued by the Whitley Committee in 1917-18. The Committee proposed "establishment for each industry of

1. Parry had accepted the Sierra Leone position after failing to gain an appointment to the top administrative ranks in his union. Interview with Mr. Edgar Parry retired from the Colonial Office, 21 November, 1965.

an organisation, representative of employers and workpeople, to have as its object the regular consideration of matters affecting the progress and well-being of the trade from the point of view of all those engaged in it, so far as this is consistent with the general interests of the community".

When possible the machinery was to be national in scope.

Before World War II industry-wide bargaining (whether or not under a JIC arrangement) had become "the most important feature of Britain's formal system of wage determination".¹ By 1944, 97 JICs were in existence with the system particularly well developed in national and local Government, public utilities and dock transport.² Significantly it was Parry's union (NUGMW) which had organised extensively in gas and electricity industries, water undertakings, road transport, hospital and municipal services and Government industrial establishments.³ By the early 1950's the NUGMW was represented on over 100 JIC and Joint Conciliation Boards, in addition to 34 Wages Councils and Wages Boards.

-
1. R.F. Banks "The Pattern of Collective Bargaining" in Industrial Relations. Contemporary Problems and Perspectives B. C. Roberts (ed.) (London, 1968). p. 96.
 2. N. Barou British Trade Unions, (London 1947) p. 120.
 3. B.C. Roberts, Trade Union Government and Administration in Great Britain, (London, 1956) p. 525.

Transformation of the Joint Industrial Councils - In transferring the Joint Industrial Councils to Sierra Leone a number of significant modifications took place on British practices. For example, in Britain, separate JICs operated for Government and private employment in the same industry. In Sierra Leone private employers were invited to sit with Government representatives on the employers' side in both transport and construction JICs. While the small industrial sector covered by each council may have accounted for the change the Trade Union Advisor at the time offered an alternative analysis: "(JICs) served as Wages Boards for non-Government workers in Building, Engineering and Transport".¹ Thus, an indirect surveillance of private employer bargaining activity was achieved.

To insure private employer observance of negotiated agreements further deviations from British practices were introduced. Signed agreements between the two parties on the JICs were made statutory and legally enforceable after 1947. By introducing the practice of "extending" industrial agreements, all employers in the construction and transport industries, whether or not they were represented on the JICs, were bound to observe the terms and conditions

1. Letter from Mr. Edgar Parry, 1 October, 1967.

negotiated. Each of these measures abrogated the principle of "voluntarism" characteristic of JIC negotiations in the metropolitan country.

In Sierra Leone, not only were Government and private employers incorporated into the same council, but, even though Government was the major employer in both transport and construction, Government representatives occupied only two of five employer seats on the Construction JIC and three of five on the transport body (Government employed 5,617 construction workers and 2,439 railway labourers in 1947). The apparent reason for this change was the desire to camouflage the dominant employer position of Government Departments and waylay fears of Government wage administration. The private employer seats on construction and transport councils were allocated to the Chamber of Commerce, the African Chamber of Commerce and the City Council.¹ Most of the employees of these bodies were not engaged in transport or construction. Nevertheless, the arrangement did superficially camouflage the employment position of Government Departments and incidentally avoided the

1. Proceedings of the Inaugural General Meeting, Joint Industrial Councils for Artisans and General Workers and the Transport Industry, 6 March, 1947.

possibility of a black-white, trade union - employer bargaining situation.

The character of the Joint Industrial Councils was further modified by the appointment of Labour Department staff to Chairman and secretarial positions within the Council. (In the U.K. the usual practice was for the Chairman to be selected from the members represented and the parties themselves to supply secretarial help.) The difficulty of insuring qualified and experienced personnel from either the employer or union side for these positions was one reason for the change. But in addition, it was pointed out that, "by appointing a labour officer as Chairman the JIC's were also appointing a Conciliation Officer and, indeed, they become invaluable in this latter respect".¹

Again, this innovation transformed the British institution, partly to neutralize differences between the bargaining conditions in Sierra Leone and England, and partly to insure the presence of a regulating agency during negotiations. The joint aim of neutralizing differences between contexts by institutional reform and providing guided supervision during negotiations was seen as the essential precondition to the transfer and successful operation of the bargaining machinery.

1. Letter. Mr. Parry, October 1, 1967.

The regulatory function. During the transfer of the JICs their essential regulatory function was never in doubt. This exercise in regulating labour management relations through institutional means became singularly manifest in the treatment of the railway workers.

In 1947, the Railway Department employed almost 2,500 workers on the most important transportation network in the country. (Before the War, no road link existed between the Colony and Protectorate.) In 1946 the Sierra Leone Railway carried over 100,000 tons of goods to and from Freetown and the Protectorate. It was the most important supply link for export agricultural produce, domestic food for Freetown, chrome ore from the Hangha mine and timber products.¹ In addition over 750,000 rail passenger journeys were made in 1946. Four years later, even after the development of a road network, over 60% of all agricultural exports were shipped by rail. Despite its obvious economic importance, or rather because of it, no JIC was established for the Railway Workers' Union. Instead, this union was allocated representation rights to both transport and construction bargaining bodies (two seats on the former and one on the latter).

1. A Plan of Economic Development for Sierra Leone.
(Freetown, 1949), p.30.

At the first meetings of the JIC's, the division of the railway worker delegates was protested against. Officials of the Railway Union proposed a separate JIC to cater only for their number.¹ Mr. Edgar Parry, then Commissioner of Labour, vetoed the proposal. He argued that "it was reasonable at the time to set up one JIC for Rail and Road Transport, though these two industries could in due course have their own separate Councils as in the U.K." No comment was given as to why it was considered reasonable. However, in view of the general nature of the reforms, the strategic economic importance of the railway, coupled with its history of labour conflict suggest themselves as the underlying reasons for the selective omission. By following a policy of divide and rule it was hoped that the potential bargaining strength of the Railway Union would be diffused.

Wages Boards

The other British bargaining institution to be transferred to Sierra Leone was the Wages Board. Unlike the JIC, Parry had no personal experience as a representative on a

-
1. Minutes. Meeting of the Artisan JIC, 20 August, 1947. p.3.
 2. Labour Department Files. Commissioner of Labour's "Note" on negotiating machinery proposal.

British board. Nevertheless, the strategy of neutralizing contextual difficulties by institutional change and the desire to exercise indirect Government control in negotiation resulted in a very resourceful adaptation of the British bargaining body.

United Kingdom labour legislation in 1909 provided for the establishment of Wages Boards (equal numbers of employer and worker representatives and an odd number of Government appointees) to fix minimum rates of pay in those industries or trades when the rate was "exceptionally low as compared with that in other employments". In 1917 the Whitley Committee suggested that Wages Boards be refashioned to form embryo JICs. This was effected by the Trades Boards Act of 1918 when the absence of voluntary negotiations was made a major criterion for establishing a Board.¹

When introducing the Ordinance providing for the establishment of Wages Boards in Sierra Leone before the Legislative Council in 1945, Parry (then acting Commissioner of Labour) demonstrated an awareness of the provisions in the United Kingdom 1909 and 1918 Acts. Referring to the 1918 Wages Board Act, he noted:

1. A detailed account of British Wages Boards and Councils, their history and operation, is in F. J. Bayliss British Wages Councils, (Oxford, 1962).

It was considered sufficient reason to apply it if the workers were unorganized or because of certain social and economic difficulties were unable to represent themselves properly.

I have always considered that these conditions exist in Sierra Leone. In this country there are thousands of illiterate workers who are incapable of negotiating open terms with their employers...¹

Parry expressed the belief that the Boards would bring about more effective trade union organisation; "This measure will stimulate the growth of trade unions and give them the amount of encouragement and protection they need in their early years to allow them to develop to their full stature."² With backing from the Governor, the draft Wages Board Ordinance became law before the end of 1945.³

Under the terms of the Sierra Leone Ordinance the "Governor in Council, if satisfied that the condition of employment or other circumstances of any workers or groups of workers are such as to render expedient the application of this Ordinance, may, by Order, apply this Ordinance to any specified workers or group of workers".⁴ The Boards were given the power to fix holidays and overtime as well as rates of pay.⁵ Government employees were ineligible for appointment

1. Legislative Council Debates 12 October, 1945 p.12.

2. Ibid.

3. It was necessary to refer the draft legislation to a Select Review Committee for slight amendment before it was accepted.

4. Wages Board Ordinance, No. 16 of 1945.

5. The authority was given under Orders in Council 1946 and 1947, and paralleled the U.K. Wages Council Act, 1945.

as independent representatives. Failure to abide by a Board's decision made an employer liable to court action and a fine. Further, under the Ordinance employers were obliged to keep wage payments records on all employees.

Representation on the Wages Board. - By January, 1946, a Mine Workers Wages' Board was established with three appointed representatives and five representatives each for employer (DELCO (2), SLST (2) and Hangha Mines (1)) and workers sides (Mine Workers' Union occupied all five seats). In 1947 a second Wages Board was set up to cover the maritime and waterfront industry. On the body seven employers (including representatives from Messrs. Elder Dempster Agencies Ltd. and Messrs. Palm Line Ltd.) and seven trade union representatives (all from the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union) sat with three appointed members.

Private Employment and the Wages Boards. - Following the example of the British Wages Councils on which Sierra Leone machinery was modelled one would have expected to find the weakest trade union organisation, lowest pay and poorest conditions in those industries or trades covered by Wages Boards. For example in Sierra Leone one would have expected superior bargaining arrangements and conditions in

construction and transport sectors where JIC's were introduced and an absence of bargaining and poor wages in mining and maritime work. Evidence, however, suggests no such relationship.

By the end of the War trade unions were operating in mining, maritime, building and transport industries. The mine workers in the iron ore and diamond mining areas had organized into trade unions even before the passage of the 1939 Trade Union Ordinance. The Marampa mine strikes of 1938-39 were re-enacted during the war (three of the major war time strikes were in mining). During the final year of the war, the Yengema diamond miners both unskilled and semi-skilled workers, downed tools. This unofficial stoppage resulted in negotiations and a 3d. per day wage increase. A second strike by this group in 1945 required conciliation by the Labour Department and an eight hour day was conceded.¹

Despite the relatively high level of unemployed in the maritime industry during the war,² the maritime and waterfront sectors were organized into three unions by 1941 (Waterfront Workers Union; National Union of Seamen - Freetown Branch; and the Freetown Maritime Workers).

1. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1945. p. 5-6.

2. During the latter war years it was estimated that 500 seamen were available to fill about 100 vacancies.

Corresponding advances were made in construction and transport. By 1945 the Building and Construction Workers' Union and the Masons' Union represented the construction workers while transport labour was organized in the Railway Workers' Union and the Sierra Leone Motorists' Union. Up to this time none of the unions in the four industries had succeeded in establishing any formal bargaining procedure with employers.

Thus, on the basis of organization and the demonstrated ability to win concessions by collective negotiation, there is little to suggest the superiority of any one sector.

The second British criterion for the establishment of Wages Boards, low wages and conditions in respect to other trades or industries, likewise suggests a similar conclusion. Wage rates for transport (Railway workers) and construction (Public Works Department) in the Colony were 1/- to 1/3d. before the war. The cost of living bonus brought the total to 1/9 by the end of 1945. The same workers in the Protectorate however, were receiving 8d. - 10d. (daily rate for unskilled) in 1938.¹ The 5d. total war bonus made the rate 1/1 - 1/3 by the end of the War. Following the Marampa Mine strike in 1938 an increase of 1d. brought the daily wage

1. Blue Book 1938.

for unskilled labour to 9d. In addition two cups of rice, free housing and medical treatment were provided.¹ At this same period workers at the diamond mines averaged 11½d. per day while receiving subsidized food, housing and free medical care.²

At the close of the second World War, daily paid labour (unskilled) at the DELCO iron mines was receiving 11d. per day, exclusive of ration. The same grade in the diamond mines was getting 1/2½d.

Throughout the war years a seaman's wage depended very much on job opportunities. However, even after the War, official sources noted the continuation of the war time practice of a free cooked meal provided to stevedore workers.³

The above data again provide little conclusive evidence for determining the industrial superiority of any one sector. Certainly in the Protectorate, mine labour was at least on a par with unskilled counterparts in transport and construction. With the exception of maritime labour hours worked for all groups averaged about fifty each week. Furthermore, rates for skilled grades and artisans were standardized across industries.⁴

-
1. The Weekly News 13 August, 1938, p. 3 reprint of the Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.
 2. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1945. p.4. and Orde-Browne, Labour Conditions in West Africa, op. cit. pp. 123-127, 137-138.
 3. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1947. p. 7.
 4. Colonial Report 1938, p. 38.

The real criterion for placing certain types of machinery was implied by Parry himself:¹

Four industrial groupings were covered in the first instance: mining, waterfront, transport, building and civil engineering. In fact I started off with an even simpler division; broadly those who worked for the Government and those who didn't.

The number employed in the principal industries and services (over 1,000) for 1947 illustrates the government and private employer breakdown.

Table 3.1

Major Employers 1947

Building and Construction (Government)	5,617
Transport - Rail - (Government)	2,439
Mining Operations (Private)	6,285
Maritime and Waterfront (Private)	1,352
Public Departments and Administrative Offices	3,413
Health Offices	2,304
Service Works	1,629
Private Commercial Undertakings	5,973

SOURCE: Annual Report of the Labour Department 1947

1. Letter from E. Parry, op. cit., 31 January, 1967.

From the above statistics it can be concluded that the criterion followed in the establishment of types of bargaining machinery, was the existence of government or private employment in an industry. The motive behind this scheme was the desire to insure Government influence. Parry noted that "no project (at that time) could succeed, or win respect, unless it was enforced by the Government".¹ The creation of Wages Boards in mining and maritime industries allowed for Government influence through the appointment of independent members.² On the other hand the designation of JIC's for Government employees in transport and construction allowed equal representation for labour and employers without any independent appointees. Since Government as employer was represented, there was no need for the third party.

Conclusion

The reasons why the Sierra Leone Administration promoted a system of industrial bargaining machinery after World War II were its desire to regulate labour-management relations and limit industrial unrest. The reason it adopted the scheme of Joint Industrial Councils and Wages Boards for particular

1. Ibid.

2. While independent members by law could not be Government employees, Government had considerable scope to appoint 'sympathetic' neutrals. During negotiations, independent members acted as in-built arbitrators in any crucial matter that arose.

industries was due to the recommendations of Mr. Edgar Parry Trade Union Advisor and later Commissioner of Labour. By establishing bargaining machinery it was believed that unions could exercise a legitimate function in expressing grievances. In the expression of disagreements within a procedural framework extreme labour conflict could be avoided.

To safeguard the proper functioning of the machinery Government either as employer representative, Labour Department official or through appointed delegates maintained an influence in all bargaining bodies. On the Joint Industrial Council covering transport and Construction employees, however, Government representatives did not reflect the employment strength of Government Departments. Limited representation was practised in order to preserve an appearance of bargaining autonomy.

Differences in organisation and the placement of JIC's and Wages Boards between England and Sierra Leone have reflected basic differences in the economic and political power of governments. For the transfer to Sierra Leone bargaining machinery was modified to accommodate environmental differences and Government policy objectives. Despite the many changes which took place in the machinery, however, the formal bargaining institutions which finally

emerged in Sierra Leone were remarkably similar to the British, namely, "industry-wide agreements, Joint Industrial Councils, (and) statutory wage regulating bodies (Wages Boards)..."¹

1. R. F. Banks op. cit. p. 103.

CHAPTER IV

INTRODUCING CHANGE

CHAPTER IV
INTRODUCING CHANGE

Once the Colonial Administration had decided to support the reforms recommended by Edgar Parry, the practical difficulty of gaining worker confidence presented itself. Again it was Parry who played the strategic role in deciding how the changes were to be introduced. The problem was a complicated one since it was realized that it was insufficient to simply lessen worker and trade union resistance to proposed reforms. Instead the active cooperation of labour groups was sought.

In attempting to gain trade union cooperation, leaders of the new groups were singled out for particular attention. Social prestige and security of position were insured trade union leaders through legislation and less formal arrangements. These concessions were made in exchange for union cooperation in reform efforts.

Ultimately for the workers the acceptability of the experiment rested upon the effectiveness of the bargaining bodies in wage determination. This meant increasing wages. Early negotiations indicated that employer representatives were willing to negotiate wage rises. Wages increased substantially after 1946 and the real wage position of the

unskilled labourer was raised to its pre war level. Although by the early 1950's wage levels in Sierra Leone were comparable to those in other British West African countries, the absence of industrial conflict in the former reflected the achievement of the reforms.

Trade Union Cooperation

In winning the confidence of the trade unions Parry, with Government backing, concentrated attention on the leadership of the new organizations. Priority was given to ensuring the social and economic prestige of this elite.

Leadership Support

Even during the war years trade union leaders were appointed to the Labour Advisory Board along with representatives from Government, the Services and commercial concerns.¹ The Board advised Government on all matters affecting labour in the Colony and one of its more important tasks was the recommendation of wage rates and the creation of skill grades for trade tested workmen. A trade union representative was invited to sit on the committee reporting on the second cost-of-living survey in Freetown.²

1. Royal Gazette August 21, 1941. p. 411.

2. The appointee was a representative of the Railway Workers' Union (Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1944).

After the war the practice of incorporating union leaders into policy-making bodies continued. A Joint Consultative Committee created in 1946 to advise Government on labour matters contained three union representatives (Maritime, Mining and Artisan Unions).

Post war unemployment in Freetown and the operations of the Employment Exchange afforded an important opportunity for fostering confidence in reform among union leadership. From the beginning of the unemployment wave the Labour Department's policy was to repatriate as many Protectorate ex-servicemen and workers as possible while giving preference through the Exchange to workers of long residence in the Colony.¹ In implementing this policy the Department called upon the trade unions. Before the war had ended, it was agreed that the unions would recommend fifty per cent. of the workers for vacancies filled through the Freetown Exchange. Given compulsory notification of vacancies by major employers in the Colony, this in effect gave unions control over one half of all employment opportunities in the Colony. (The Labour Department could justify this arrangement by maintaining

1. Daily Mail June 27, 1945, p.2. 'Broadcast talk of Mr. E. Parry, Commissioner of Labour on Unemployment'. In this article Parry estimated that 250,000 men from the Protectorate had been employed on service works of one kind or another. This estimation exceeded others given at the time.

that the unions organized primarily the Colony labourers since the more urbanized and Krio speaking labourers were in a better position to appreciate the advantages of union membership).

Confidence among union leaders inspired by this preferential employment treatment paved the way for further innovation which again enhanced union leadership security and prestige. The Employment Exchange concession was given on agreement with union leaders that certain structural changes in the movement would take place. The plan was to eliminate overlapping trade unionism. In August 1945 the two construction workers unions merged to form the Sierra Leone Artisans and Allied Workers' Union. The following year the Waterfront Union and Maritime Workers' Union, covering all sea-going and port labour except articulated seamen, amalgamated. The trend was imitated in the Protectorate when the United Mine Workers' Union registered in 1945, following a merger between the Mining Employers' Union and the Yengema Diamond Workers' Union. Parry, by this time acting Commissioner of Labour, believed a streamlined industrial trade union structure was essential if the bargaining machinery was to be effective.¹ (The episode

1. Interview, Mr. E. Parry, op. cit. Parry's union the NUGMU had experienced reorganisation and centralization during the 1930's. This structural development within his own union along with various reports of TUC Annual Congresses, supporting an industrial union structure, probably influenced his thinking on the matter. See H.A.Clegg General Union in a Changing Society (London 1964) chapter v, pp. 125-150.

again illustrates the way institutions may be transformed to facilitate transfer operations.)

As a further insurance against trade union proliferation, an amendment to the Trade Union Ordinance was passed in 1946. This amendment empowered the Registrar of Trade Unions to refuse registration to a trade union in any industry in which one union was already effectively organized.¹

These measures produced a trade union movement based generally on industrial organization and eminently suitable for representation on the proposed negotiating machinery. The 1946 amendment assured a compactness to the Sierra Leone movement sharply distinguishing it from other British African labour movements. By 1953 there were seventy three registered trade unions in the Gold Coast and 141 in Nigeria. (In addition, 49% of the unions in the Gold Coast and 63% of the Nigerian Unions had a membership of 250 or fewer.) Up until 1962, the number of unions in Sierra Leone fluctuated around nine each year. Six unions, representing major industries have been operating from the 1940's to the present date.²

1. The amendment reads: "The Registrar shall not register a trade union if he is satisfied that any other trade union already registered is sufficiently representative of the whole of the interests in respect of which the applicants seek registration."

2. This stability in union organization was reflected also in the leadership turnover among the six major unions. From the 1940's to the early 1960's the post of general secretary in three of the six (Transport, Maritime and Artisan Unions) remained virtually unchanged.

TABLE 4.1

SIERRA LEONE TRADE UNIONS

<u>Union Name</u>	<u>Date Registered</u>
1. United Mineworkers Union	March 1945, following the amalgamation of two earlier unions.
2. Clerical and Mercantile Workers Union	October, 1945, after reorganization of an earlier union.
3. Sierra Leone Artisans and Allied Workers Union	September, 1946, following an amalgamation of two earlier unions
4. Sierra Leone Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union	November, 1946, following an amalgamation of two earlier unions.
5. Sierra Leone Transport and General Workers' Union	February, 1947, formerly called the Sierra Leone Motorists' Union.
6. Railway Workers' Union	April, 1941.

Of these six the Mine and Maritime Unions were the sole bargaining agents on their respective Wages Boards, while the Transport and Artisans Unions occupied the majority of trade unions seats on the two TICs covering their groups. With the exception of the Clerical and Mercantile Workers' Union (which became temporarily inactive during the mid-1950's) all of the industrial unions claimed total membership of above 1,500 workers.

In addition to legal and structural reform, union leaders in 1945 were provided with a Trade Union House, centrally located in Freetown to house union administrations. Leading trade unionists were heard over the local broadcasting system and their speeches, all related to labour and trade unionism, were reproduced in the local press during 1946.

Following the introduction of transport and construction JIC's in 1947, a new trade testing scheme was adopted. All tests which had been carried out by Trade Test Boards, either at Government Training Centres or in the workshops of employers were to be controlled by a system of panels consisting of a qualified tester nominated by employers, a trade union official and a representative of the Labour Department. A sub-committee for trade testing was appointed by the JIC's.¹

In 1951 after a revision in the Constitution one delegate for the Legislative Council was to be selected by the unofficial members of the Protectorate Assembly from among members nominated by the Governor. Nominees were to ~~be~~ represent interests such as commerce, trade unions and missions. After the 1951 elections the Assembly designated a trade unionist to the Legislative Council post.

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1947 p. 4.

Throughout the period, this process of legitimatizing the role of trade union leadership was part of a broader Government scheme designed to regulate, institutionalize and control organized labour. Notwithstanding ultimate intentions, the Government's industrial relations policy brought prestige and authority to union leaders. } Nor did the leaders themselves remain unimpressed. When the JIC for Artisans was introduced in 1947, Marcus Grant General Secretary of the Artisan and Allied Workers' Union, expressed the sentiment that "...to us it appears like a dream".¹

Writing on trade unionism in the country the leader of the Mine Workers' Union related in a more cautious vein:²

Government of this time (immediately after the War), to its credit, was not slow in responding to the signs of increasing activity inside the movement. It set up negotiating and consultative machinery along similar lines to those in the United Kingdom. Wages Board was established for the miners and waterfront members, and a Joint Industrial Council for the Artisan, Transport workers and railway workers. Apart from these a Joint Consultative Committee of Employers and Employed was set up to deal with matters of general interest to industry as a whole.

Both union leaders were unanimous in their claim for the work of Edgar Parry. Again in the words of the

1. Proceeding - Inaugural General Meeting of the Joint Industrial Council for Artisan and General Workers and Transport Industry 6 March, 1947 p. 2.
2. Siaka Stevens "Trade Unionism in Sierra Leone" Empire (September 1948) p. 5.

mine leader:¹

Any brief resume of a decade of trade unionism in this outpost of Empire would be incomplete if it failed to mention an important fact which experience in trade union work over the last few years has shown to us, namely that Labour Advisors and officers of the right type can be of inestimable value to colonial trade union movements. Not by dictating to or unnecessarily interfering with the unions, but by tactful guidance, pointing out pitfalls in trade union work, recommending suitable material to read - above all by straight dealings with the unions - can Labour Advisors and officers from the United Kingdom be of great help in the Colonies.

In sum, Parry's effort to gain labour cooperation in the introduction of bargaining bodies was directed particularly at union leaders. The effort was certainly well advised since trade union leaders were most immediately involved as negotiating representatives in the bargaining reforms. In addition, as literate members of the labour movement they were among a very select number to whom reforms could be explained and through whom reforms could be translated to the rank and file. In return for the various Government measures designed to enhance their security and prestige, the confidence and cooperation of union leaders was secured.

1. Ibid.

Upward Wage Movement

Doubts harboured as to the value of the new bargaining bodies to the workers were dispelled with wage concessions at the initial negotiations of both Wages Boards and JIC's. Following negotiations on the Mine Workers Wages' Board during 1946-47, all classes of labour received increases. Unskilled groups had their rates raised by sixpence to 2/- per diem, Wages for unskilled labour were also raised by the same amount on the Transport and Construction JIC's. Colony labourers had their daily rate fixed at 2/3 following the wage increase, while the unskilled worker in the Protectorate received 1/6. (Semi-skilled and artisan rates were also substantially increased in both Colony and Protectorate areas.)

In 1948 wage increases were also negotiated on the Maritime and Waterfront Workers Wages' Board and the following year began a second round of negotiations for mine, transport and construction workers. Again wage gains were conceded along with favourable revisions in conditions of service. During these early negotiations the role played by the independent members of the Mine Workers Wages' Board was crucial in the concessions granted.¹

1. Minutes of the Mine Workers Wages' Board 1946-47 and 1949. Labour received increases following the favourable votes cast by the independents.

The wage concessions brought substantial relief to the depressed living conditions which resulted from war-time inflation. Real wages had dropped to almost half of their pre-war position during most of the war period. Negotiations on the industrial bargaining bodies during the late 1940's gradually restored the real wage of unskilled labourers. Between 1945 and 1949, a period of relative stability in living cost, wage rates for workers in the Colony moved from 1/5 to 2/6 and the real wage reached its pre-war level by 1949. (See Appendix 2.)

Negotiated improvements in wages were complemented by the introduction of factory wage inspections to insure employer compliance with agreements signed. However, not until mid-1948 did systematic wage inspections commence. Some indication of the high violation rate was given by inspection results for that year. Of the 240 inspections made (102 in the Colony and 138 in the Protectorate) only twenty-eight employers were found to be paying not less than the minimum rates. This represented a non-compliance rate of 88%. Of the 689 workers whose wages were examined, no less than 572 or 83% were below the minimum level. Arrears totalled £2,395.8.1.¹

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1948 p. 8.

The following year a marked improvement was recorded. Of the 293 inspections made¹ covering 1,922 only 332 or seventeen per cent. of the workers were below the minimum.

The need for effective supervision at this time was made even more important following Government regulations affecting work conditions introduced in 1946 and 1947. Circular No. 23 of 1946 directed that a 'Fair Wages' Clause² be inserted in all Government and public contracts. The principle clause required that: "Rates, wages, hours and conditions should not be less favourable than those established in the trade or industry in the district where the work is carried out."³

In July 1947 an amendment to the Wages Board Ordinance was made. It provided for legal 'extension' of the terms and conditions of work agreed upon by Joint Industrial Council. In effect, this resulted in all workers in occupations and work categories in the industries covered by the Councils having their wages and conditions statutorily regulated. The 'extension' was operative regardless of whether the workers were members of the negotiating unions

-
1. In the Colony 61 and in the Protectorate 232 inspections were made.
 2. British resolutions upon which the Sierra Leone regulation was based were put forward in 1909 and 1946. In certain industries and enterprises it is a statutory requirement for private employers to observe the Fair Wages Clause. See Ian G. Sharp Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration in Great Britain (London, 1950). Chap. vi.
 3. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1946 p. 5.

or whether the employers concerned had a seat at the bargaining tables. In 1951, the 'extension' clause was slightly modified, giving the Commissioner of Labour the power to refer agreements back to the council for a second consideration.¹

Thus, while Government desire to regulate and supervise industrial relations must be recognized as the primary labour objective at this time, institutional arrangements were the means adopted to this end. Institutionalization took the form of establishing bargaining bodies and consolidating nascent trade unions primarily through legislation, Labour Department supervision, and less formal 'ad hoc' arrangements. To insure union cooperation in proposed changes special attention was given to union leadership. The upward wage movement reinforced confidence among the rank and file.²

-
1. The practice of 'extending' contracts and work agreements, while popular in certain continental European countries, was unusual in Britain. One exception was found in the Lancashire Cotton manufacturing industry. Significantly, the Chief Industrial Commissioner with whom Parry had talks while in Britain during 1944, had been instrumental in introducing the practice into this industry. See also Sharp. op. cit. p. 405. The Webbs also noted Joint Boards regulating minimum wages and bonuses for agricultural labour under the Corn Production Act 1917. History of Trade Unionism (London 1920) p. 498.
 2. Private employers in mining and waterfront apparently offered little initial resistance to the proposed bargaining arrangements. Private employers almost certainly felt at the time, that they would continue to control wages and conditions regardless of industrial relations institutions. Events during the succeeding decade maintain this supposition. Also, by selecting Wages Board for the private sectors, the need for private employer cooperation was to an extent obviated.

Summary

Parry succeeded in his programme of industrial relations reform with the introduction of bargaining machinery by gaining Government support and trade union confidence. War-time strike activity, post-war stoppages in other West African countries and the release of the radical nationalist leader Wallace Johnson from confinement all contributed towards Government's decision to experiment. Trade unionists had very little to lose by the introduction of bargaining institutions, and indeed had been impressed by the concern demonstrated for the movement by the trade union advisor.

Since the 1940's wages and conditions of work for the majority of Sierra Leone manual workers have been regulated by the network of JIC's and Wages Boards. Unlike other British West African administrations, the Sierra Leone Government did not rely on appointed Commissions of Inquiry or similar national tribunals in wage determination. Differences between these States and Sierra Leone reflected basic ideological differences on the role of Government in industrial relations.

(Methods of Wage Determination in British West Africa)

After the War Government efforts to establish machinery to review and set wage rates for employed labour in Nigeria, Gold Coast and Gambia were haphazard. This resulted in a succession of institutional arrangements often unnecessarily complex and centralized systems of wage determination. In both private and government employment trade unions failed to achieve any recognized bargaining responsibility. Wage revisions throughout the post-war period necessitated government intervention and were attended by strike action. In the cases of Gold Coast and the Gambia important changes in industrial relations and bargaining practices were made by the late 1950's and early 1960's.

The Gambia

After the war a Labour Advisory Committee was responsible for recommending wage rates for approximately 1,000 Gambian government workers. This committee would forward suggestions on wages and conditions to the Government which had statutory power to give them effect.¹ In 1949 three Whitley Councils were introduced for established and unestablished junior civil servants and for the teaching profession.

1. The Minimum Wage (Unskilled Manual Labour) Ordinance 1947.

Two years later a fourth Council was added to cover senior service officers. Also during 1951 a Minimum Wages Committee which included trade union representatives was appointed to advise the Executive Council on wage rates. However, all appointments to this Committee had to be nominated by the Labour Advisory Board, which remained the most important body during the period. In 1954 the Board vetoed a suggestion to promote Wages Boards in industry.¹

It was not until 1960, following a series of strikes, that a Commission of Inquiry was called to review industrial relations in the country.² Since 1952 only one wage increase had been given and the Commission promptly recommended a twenty-five per cent. increase in unskilled labour rates. In addition, it was recommended that Joint Industrial Councils and Workers Committees be established and the Labour Office be upgraded to an independent Department.³

-
1. Annual Report on the Labour Department (Bathurst) 1954.
p.5.
 2. This Commission consisted of two Sierra Leoneans, G.S. Panda, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Labour and A.J.A. Lewis, Acting Deputy Commissioner of Labour in Sierra Leone.
 3. Report of the Labour Department for the Years 1960-62.
Bathurst p.2 (Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1964.)

By the end of 1960 five JIC's were in existence covering artisans, transport, commercial, Port Authority and agricultural workers. The Government announced its fundamental policy of non-interference in the determination of wage rates. However, under the Labour Ordinance 1960 agreements of the JIC's were to be binding on all employers and workers specified in the contract.¹

Before negotiation machinery was properly established, a General Strike took place in January 1961, led by the Gambia Workers' Union. Sierra Leone sent a relief military detachment to Bathurst to stand by. After a return to peace, the machinery was made operative and by September the first series of agreements became effective.

Gold Coast

Prior to World War II, Wage Boards, territorily based, were operating in the Gold Coast. During 1938-39 District Commissioners submitted sample budgets for their respective districts in order to guide wage payments for Government labour. Wages Boards were then convened to set rates for these workers.² This arrangement was complemented during

1. Ibid. p. 19.

2. The Board set rates for labourers in Eastern, Central and Western Provinces, Ashanti and Northern Territories.

the war years by cost-of-living awards granted upon recommendation of a Government Advisory Committee.

After the war the Harragin Committee was appointed to review salaries of civil servants. The Committee inspired a review of the grading and remuneration of unestablished and daily rated Government staff. A Committee to review conditions of this group was established in February 1947 under Mr. Justice Korsah. Both Harragin and Korsah Committees recommended general wage increases for the Government workers reviewed. However, before the increases were made Public Works and Railway Departments struck after what appeared to be an unnecessary delay in implementing the report of the Korsah Committee. After Government workers received the increase "demands for similar treatment came thick and fast from employees in every branch of commerce and industry".¹

In late 1945 the miners union attempted negotiations with the Chamber of Mines. Failing agreement, the dispute was referred to arbitration and was settled in favour of the miners (Gorman Arbitration award).

Industrial unrest continued during 1948-49 despite general wage increases. Underlying the discontent was

1. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1947-48,
Accra, p. 41.

inflation and declining real wages in part caused by a shortage of imported goods¹ and the practice of giving 'lump sum' retrospective pay awards. The inflation was promoted further by the increase in wealth in the cocoa producing areas following the favourable terms of trade from 1949.² (This economic situation provided a suitable background for nationalist political agitation at the time.)³

During this period the Government sponsored a survey of one hundred and seventy four firms in Accra in order to assess prevailing industrial relations conditions. The survey team noted that:⁴

1. Ibid. p. 5.

2. Cocoa produce price per ton moved from £84. in 1949 to £130.7 in 1950, and from 40/- per load 1949 to 65/- per load in 1950. Elliot Berg "Real Income Trends in West Africa" in Economic Transition in Africa Melville J. Herkovits and Mitchell Harwitz (eds.) (London, 1964) p. 232.

3. Roper op. cit. p. 65.

4. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1948-49 p. 4.

Financial status of the employers, the capabilities and duties of the employees, and the conditions of their employment were so diverse as to constitute a major problem when considering the establishment of statutory machinery for the fixing of minimum wages and conditions of employment. This problem was further complicated by the absence of any stable or responsible organizations of either employers or workers.

Although a 'temporary allowance' of fifteen per cent. on wages was given to all Government employees and to most employees in large private concerns before the end of 1949, the Trade Union Congress called a General Strike in January, 1950. The strike, which received strong promotion from nationalist political leader Kwame Nkrumah, involved workers in the Colony, Ashanti and Northern Territories.¹ Most Government Departments were affected and when arbitration was refused, Government retaliated by dismissing both pensionable and non-pensionable employees. After the strike a further twenty per cent. was added to the wages of Government employees.

In spite of the continued unrest and absence of bargaining opportunity, the Labour Department was able to conclude: "The policy of Government in encouraging Trade

1. Some fifteen thousand workers in the Mine Employees Union did not join the strikers.

Unions and emphasizing the importance of free collective bargaining between employers and employees has proved a sound investment". However, it was felt that, "... a strong and responsible Trade Union movement, which can only be created by the experience of voluntary collective bargaining is a paramount need in the Gold Coast".¹

In March 1951 another Commission of Inquiry was called to review wages and salaries of Government employees. The following year the Lidbury Report for established civil servants and the Gbedemah Report for daily wage staff resulted in an increase of about seventeen per cent. for Africans in all industries. Thirty-two stoppages were reported in 1952-53 (April to March) most of which were concerned with delays or dissatisfactions with the increase granted.

In 1953 a Wages Board was established for retail trade and a Whitley Council for high grade professional and clerical Government employees. Despite innovations, the pattern of wage determination continued to be dominated by the Government appointed Commission of Inquiry. The

1. Report on the Labour Department 1949-50 (Accra)
p. 8.

attempt at bi-annual negotiations between the Chamber and Mines¹ and miners union broke down once again during the mid fifties resulting in 2,406,400 man days lost in the industry and the appointment of a Board of Inquiry.

Again in 1956 another salary and wage review was undertaken by an appointed commission. Increases were subsequently granted to workers in both Government and private sectors.²

Industrial relations institutions were recast after Ghana attained independence in 1957. The 1958 Industrial Relations Act consolidated sixty-nine unions into sixteen, introduced compulsory check-off and required that standing negotiating bodies be established in sectors in which unions were organized. Penalties were instituted for failing to negotiate.³ Nevertheless, the two major wage increases in 1960-61 and 1967 resulted from the recommendations of appointed Commissions of Inquiry. The advance of industrial negotiations has been slow.⁴

-
1. Representing gold mining employers and the British Aluminium Company.
 2. Over thirty-five per cent. of the forty-five strikes during 1956-57 were traceable to demands made by private sector employees for increases similar to Government allowances. Annual Report on the Labour Department 1956-57, (Accra) p. 13.
 3. Lester Trachtman "The Labour Movement of Ghana: A Study in Political Unionism" Cornell, Reprint No.127 n.d. p.185.
 4. Interview with Mr. A.J. Coleman, Regional Labour Officer Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana Labour Department, Jan. 4, 1968.

Nigeria

The most varied institutional arrangements for wage determination after the war were found in Nigeria. Under legislation passed in 1943, the Governor had power to fix wages and conditions of workers after considering the recommendations of Labour Advisory Boards.¹ The Boards were 'ad hoc', meeting from time to time to review work conditions for the region or trade which they covered. The first Board, established for the Lagos and Colony area, recommended rates for certain textile workers. In addition to minimum rates and hours, these bodies made suggestions covering the abolition of child labour, apprentice training, overtime, public holidays and sick pay. In 1944, the Lagos Board, inquired into conditions in the motor industry and during the same year a Labour Advisory Board was established for the rubber plantation, Benin Province. By the end of the 1940's Boards had been established to (periodically) review conditions in the tin mining industry, tailoring trades, motor trade, stevedore and dock labour, retail trade and the rubber industry.

1. The Boards included an equal number of representatives of employers, workers and an odd number of appointed members.

While the minimum conditions established upon the recommendations of the Boards provided a form of social and economic protection to workers covered, their 'ad hoc' nature distracted attention from the establishment of a permanent bargaining forum.

In 1946 Commissions of Inquiry were reviewing the wages and salaries of Government employees.¹ Reports submitted during the year recommended a fifty per cent. increase on the 1942 cost of living award. The following year the Miller Commission was assigned the task of further investigating the conditions of unestablished and daily rated government employees.

An attempt to promote Whitley Councils for senior and junior grade government employees met with little success in 1948. The effort was again made in 1953, though Constitutional reforms the following year necessitated considerable modification in the original scheme.²

Concern for negotiating machinery in the mining industry increased after the Enugu Coal Strike in 1949. A Commission of Inquiry (Fitzgerald Commission) which

-
1. Established staff were covered by the Harragin Salaries Commission while daily paid employees came under the Tudor Davies Commission.
 2. After 1954, Whitley Councils were fostered in each Regional Government as well as the Central Government Administration.

investigated the matter, proposed the establishment by statute of a Joint Industrial Council.¹ This suggestion was accepted, and a Bill was drafted authorizing the establishment of a JIC for the industry. However, the Bill contained no assurance that the miners union would be the recognized bargaining agent for the workers.

(At the time the Nigerian Coal Miners Union had a claimed membership of 3,962 out of 6,425 miners at the colliery.) This absence ultimately frustrated the development of the Council and in 1951 a strike and go slow by the workers again disrupted industrial relations of the mine.

Not until 1954-55 was a JIC finally established for the coal industry. At about this same time councils were also formed for workers in electricity and tin mining.² In the latter case, the experiment failed since not all employers in the minefield were members of the Nigerian Mining Employers Association representing employers on the JIC. Agreements reached by the council were binding only on Association employers. The official verdict

-
1. This suggestion undoubtedly came from Mr. E. Parry, then Assistant Labour Advisor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was sent out to Nigeria at the time.
 2. In the case of the Plateau Minefields the council was set up upon the recommendation of a Board of Inquiry appointed after repeated failures in negotiations.

on the operation of this Council was, "generally unsuccessful".¹ In 1961 yet another attempt to establish a JIC for the industry was made.

Supplementing other wage setting arrangements, Government in 1949 introduced a system of Provincial and Regional Wage Committees to reflect section variations in cost of living and labour conditions.² Nigerian government employees throughout the country were graded on a range of eleven basic wage rates. Provincial bodies, which included government, native authority, private employer and trade union representatives, met periodically to grade workers according to a particular wage rate. At higher levels, the Regional and Central Wage Committee proposed changes in the grouping and rates paid to particular categories of labour.

One consequence of the scheme was a variation in wage rates from 9d to 2/7 daily rate for unskilled labour depending upon district. In April 1952 the lowest rate was revised from 9d to 1/6. For the most part, private employers followed the example of the Committees in setting their rates.

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department for the Year 1956-57 Lagos. p. 4.

2. The motive behind the innovation was to protect against "...excessive purchasing power in the hands of employees in rural areas." Ibid. 1952-53, p. 19.

The Constitutional change in 1954 made labour administration a Regional as well as Federal Government concern. Almost immediately the Western Regional Government established a minimum wage rate for its employees outside the procedure of the Provincial and Regional Wage Boards. The Morgan Commission fixed a five shilling minimum wage for unskilled labour in the Western Region. Early in 1955, the Federal Government appointed two committees: the Gorsuch Committee to review remuneration in public services; and a fact finding committee for daily rated staff. The Northern and Eastern Regions followed the recommendations of the Federally appointed fact finding committee.¹ A proposal by the All Nigerian Trade Union Federation that a central negotiating body be set up for all Government employees, both Federal and Regional brought no change and in 1960 two separate Commissions were once again appointed to review wages and salaries.²

By the mid fifties dissatisfaction over the 'clumsiness' of the Labour Advisory Board system prompted

-
1. The anomalous situation created as a result of this multiple wage setting system is discussed by T. M. Yesufu in An Introduction to Industrial Relations in Nigeria (Oxford, 1962) pp. 142-143.
 2. The Mbanefo Commission for Federal, Eastern and Northern Regional Government employees and the Morgan Commission for the Western Region.

the introduction of the Wages Board Ordinance of 1957. Under the Act, Wages Boards were to be established in industries or occupations where wages were unreasonably low and where no adequate machinery existed for the effective regulation of wages and conditions of work.¹ The retail trade was the first to be covered by a Wages Board.

Despite the virtual absence of collective bargaining, the instability of Government sponsored negotiating machinery and the reliance of employees throughout this period on increases awarded by Federal and Regional Commissions of Inquiry, Government industrial relations policy remained unchanged. A statement on the subject read as follows:²

Government re-affirms its confidence in the effectiveness of voluntary negotiation and collective bargaining for the determination of wages.

Government intervention in the general field of wages should be limited to the establishment of statutory wage-fixing machinery for any industry or occupation where wages are unreasonably low by reference to the general level of wages. Any other policy would seem likely to lead to political influence and considerations entering into the determination of wages with effects that might be ruinous economically, and which would have serious adverse consequences for the development of sound trade unions.

-
1. Annual Report of the Labour Department for the Year 1956-57 p. 23.
 2. Ibid. 1954-55 par. 20.

Government and Industrial Relations

This review of industrial relations developments in other English speaking West African states puts into unique relief aspects of the Sierra Leone experience. Firstly the Sierra Leone Administration after 1945 did not rely on appointed Commissions of Inquiry to review wages and conditions of daily paid employees and unestablished staff. Secondly, Sierra Leone was the only British territory in West Africa to promote an institutionalized bargaining pattern requiring active government support. Only after more than a decade had elapsed were similar programmes attempted in the other countries, (i.e in Ghana from the passage of the 1958 Industrial Relations Act; with the establishment of JIC's in the Gambia in 1960; and to a lesser extent in Nigeria after the passage of the Wages Board Ordinance in 1957.).

The distinctiveness of the Sierra Leone system has been related to the initiative of the Trade Union Advisor, and the Administration's willingness to experiment with reform. Indeed the intangible area inhabited by 'initiative' and 'willingness' assumes critical importance in explaining differences when the more concrete phenomena of economic history are reviewed.

Common Historical Backgrounds.

In many respects the developments affecting labour in British West Africa followed parallel courses. For example, following the passage of favourable legislation trade unions grew quickly in each territory (though somewhat faster in Nigeria than elsewhere). In 1942, trade union advisors were appointed to the Gold Coast and Nigeria as well as Sierra Leone. Growing nationalistic forces were apparent all along the West Coast even before the outbreak of World War II. In 1937 both Wallace Johnson and the Nigerian leader Nnamdi Asikiwe were expelled from the Gold Coast for seditious articles in The African Morning Post. Upon returning to Nigeria the latter lost little time in establishing the West African Pilot and launching his celebrated career as a nationalist leader.

In each British West African colony, despite compulsory arbitration provisions, strike activity peaked during the mid war years. In the Gold Coast during 1942-43, ten strikes took place, while 5,292 workers were involved in eleven strikes in Nigeria during the same period. The high strike frequency in Sierra Leone during 1942 was paralleled in the Gambia where four strikes, involving 1,260 workers, were called.¹

1. J. I. Roper op. cit. p. 108.

During and after the war, economic conditions were similar among British West African territories. The largest percentage of the labour force was engaged in subsistence agriculture (over ninety per cent.), while wage earning employment was found in cash crop production (cocoa, groundnut, palm kernel, etc.) mining and growing urban industries. (A measure of the fast growth of the urban sector of these economies was reflected in population statistics. The population of Accra in 1936 was 38,000. By 1960 it had reached 338,000. In Lagos 99,000 residents were listed in 1936 while the 1962 figure reported 450,000. Similarly in Freetown a population of 44,000 in 1921 had increased to over 128,000 by 1963.¹) In each economy government was the major employer of wage labour.² Such labour was characterized by a low skill level, illiteracy and migrancy.

-
1. Kenneth Little West African Urbanization (Oxford, 1965) p. 18.
 2. In the U.S.A. and U.K. Government Employment accounted for only 12.3% (1951) and 14.1% (1950) of total employment respectively. Moses Abramovitz and Vera F. Eliasberg The Growth of Public Employment in Great Britain (Princeton, N.J., 1957) p. 102.

TABLE 4.2

	Employees of Public Authorities			
	Gold Coast (Dec.1953)	Nigeria (Dec.1951)	Sierra Leone (Dec.1954)	Gambia (1954)
Total Employed Wage Earners	224,329	303,421	41,968	4,690
Employed by Public Authorities	107,263	162,201	23,498	2,323
Government Employment as Percentage of Total	48%	53%	55%	49%

SOURCE: J. I. Roper op. cit. p. 18.

The fact that territories with shared historical experiences and similar economic structures emerged with different systems of wage regulation forces attention to less discreet determinants of social change. Ultimately, the difference between Sierra Leone practices and methods of wage determination in other British West African colonies, was related to philosophies of government's role in industrial relations. Only the Sierra Leone Administration among the four West African territories failed to imitate

the philosophy of 'voluntarism' and government non-intervention in industrial relations. Ironically, Sierra Leone successfully transferred certain institutional forms of the British system while rejecting its philosophy.

Outside Sierra Leone, the acceptance of the philosophy of voluntarism led generally to the haphazard and pragmatic wage setting arrangements outlined above. Whether from a sincere desire to allow the free and unfettered development of collective bargaining between unions and employers or from a policy of restricting unwarranted trade union growth, Colonial Governments in other African countries could rely on the British philosophy of industrial relations to support a passive role in labour administration.

The Role of Government in the British System of Industrial Relations.

O. Kahn-Freund, analyzing the legal framework in which the British industrial relations system functions, claimed that: ¹

1. O. Kahn Freund "Legal Framework"
in A. Flanders and H. Clegg (eds.) The British System of Industrial Relations (Oxford, 1954)
p. 44.

There is perhaps, no major country in the world in which the law (government legislation) has played a less significant role in the shaping of these relations (industrial) than in Great Britain and in which today the law and the legal profession have less to do with labour relations.

Elaborating on the point, the author noted that:¹

British industrial relations have, in the main developed by way of industrial autonomy. This notion of autonomy is fundamental and it is...reflected in legislation and in administrative practice. It means that employers and employees have formulated their own codes of conduct and devised their own machinery for enforcing them. Very important exceptions apart, the role of the law has been negative. Such legislation as has been passed has been mainly designed to remove obstacles to the shaping of industrial relations.

Evidence of autonomy is found in two important spheres of industrial relations. First, in the absence of state regulation of union strike action and second, in the development of collective bargaining practices. In the settlement of industrial disputes the law is extremely permissive, especially when compared with the labour laws of the United States or Australia. As a result of legislation passed in 1906 and 1913 a trade union or employer organization can never be liable for the use of coercive measures. Only individual employers and employees

1. Ibid.,

can be held responsible.¹ The legal permissiveness regarding strike action was circumscribed somewhat by the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act 1875² and temporarily by the 1927 Trade Union Act³ and wartime compulsory arbitration. During normal times, the United Kingdom has no compulsory arbitration as does Australia, and no emergency strike injunction clause as does the United States.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the U.K. Government policy of industrial autonomy has been the effective growth of collective bargaining⁴ as a means of settling wages and conditions within industry. Collective bargaining according to one authority, is a rule-making process.⁵

1. In the recently contested Rookes vs. Barnard case the courts temporarily altered the liability of trade unions under the law, in an effort to insure individual workers' rights. Trade Union legislation sponsored by the Labour Government in 1965, however, has re-established the status-quo, once again guaranteeing legal immunity to trade unions in strike action.
2. This Act limits strike action in essential services i.e. gas and water supply and, after 1919, electricity.
3. The act, voided after the Second World War, placed certain restrictions on the right of civil servants to strike.
4. This term is attributed to Beatrice Webb in her work on the co-operative movement in 1891. By 1900 collective bargaining had become widespread and expanded rapidly after World War I.
5. Allan Flanders What's Wrong With the System (London, 1965) p.21.

It could more appropriately be called joint regulation; since its distinctive feature is that trade unions and employers or their associations act as joint authors of rules made to regulate employment contracts, and, incidentally, their own relations. They may sometimes use third-party assistance in the form of conciliation, mediation and arbitration and public inquiry, but it serves only as an auxiliary aid to reach their own agreement, for whose contents and observance they are equally responsible.

The British preference for collective bargaining is distinctive insofar as "collective bargaining has been made the subject of little legal regulation," at the same time receiving little legal support.¹ For example, in England there is no legally recognized collective contract between a trade union and an employer. The only legal document existing is between an employer and an individual worker. Thus, even after an agreement is reached through collective negotiations, the state provides no support for the terms and conditions voluntarily established.²

1. Flanders op. cit., p.23.

2. By contrast, the agreement between an employer and trade union in the United States is a legal contract entered into by the two sides. Failure to abide by the conditions of the contract is a civil offence.

Voluntarism in West Africa

It was the principle of 'voluntarism' that British Colonial administrators adopted in treating labour matters in Nigeria, Gold Coast and the Gambia. In so doing, the economic and political differences between governments in the metropolitan country and West Africa were ignored. As major employers of wage labour policies of 'voluntarism' adopted by West African Colonial administrations were tantamount to refusal to bargain. It was one thing for Colonial administrations, under pressure from the Colonial Office, to pass legislation legalising trade unions' right to organize. It was another matter to recognize in the new unions legitimate bargaining partners.

The Colonial Office during this period failed to point out the anomaly of the situation. In fact its reaction to the Sierra Leone experiment was far from enthusiastic.

Following his visit to the West African Colonies in 1949 the Chief Labour Adviser to the Secretary of State noted:¹

1. E.W. Barltrop 'Labour in West Africa' Corona (July, 1949) p. 13. Barltrop had visited Sierra Leone during the early months of 1949 and had held discussions with various major employers and Labour Department officials. Colonial Report 1949, p.13.

It is reported in some quarters that the best help can be given by means of the maximum possible regulation of wages and conditions, in consultation with the Trade Unions on Wages Councils and Joint Industrial Councils. Well these things are being developed in every colony and we shall see. Certainly it is noteworthy that in the territory (Sierra Leone) where there is the greatest amount of regulation by law, there is the best record of industrial peace. Is that the whole explanation? I doubt it, but the subject calls for a separate paper.

The willingness of the Colonial Office to tolerate the Sierre Leone experiment at all was probably conditioned by the relative economic unimportance of the country at the time.

TABLE 4.3

Economic Data on Nigeria,
Gold Coast and Sierra Leone, 1950

<u>Country</u>	<u>Balance of Trade</u>		<u>Principal Export</u>
	<u>Imports</u> (% U.K.) £	<u>Exports</u> (% U.K.) £	(Value %)
Nigeria	60,523,00 (50.04)	85,580,000 (84.26)	Cocoa, Groundnut Palm Kernel and Palm Oil total over 70%
Gold Coast	45,869,440 (59.04)	70,338,177 (41.93)	Cocoa total over 70%
Sierra Leone	6,745,865 (63.74)	6,661,232 (88.10)	Palm Kernel 35% and Minerals 42%

SOURCE: An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories 1951
op. cit. passim.

Although Sierra Leone recorded the highest percentage of imports from the United Kingdom (63.74) and the highest percentage of exports (88.10), in absolute terms her trade contribution was dwarfed by the other two West African states.

Conclusion

Ironically it was the country that rejected the British philosophy of government's role in labour relations that transferred bargaining institutions based on British models. In doing so, Sierra Leone was the only British territory in West Africa where periodic wage changes in both Government and private sectors were negotiated through standing industrial bargaining bodies. The verbal encouragement given to the development of collective bargaining in other West African territories proved futile, when the same Colonial governments as major employers, failed to provide a realistic institutional framework for collective negotiations with her own employees. By contrast, the Sierre Leone Administration never paid lip service to the idea of 'voluntarism' but actively went about establishing negotiating bodies for its own workers and those in private employment.

In a recent commentary on wage policy in African territories, the authors have put forward the suggestion that collective bargaining in the private sector of employment has in fact advanced:¹

In practice governments have almost always tended to pursue a cautious wage policy. Often they tend to be over-cautious and the pay of government employees is allowed to lag too far behind the levels set by the larger private enterprises. There was a tendency for this to happen in former British territories where governments tended to follow the British principle of paying government servants on the basis of 'fair relativity' with private enterprise. This inevitably meant that official salaries lagged behind if only for statistical reasons. The situation was then remedied by the government appointing a special committee of inquiry which almost always proposed substantial increases. These proposals the governments would accept and this decision would then induce further rises in the private sector.

While this sequence may have operated in East Africa evidence that Government made wage adjustments on the basis of 'fair relativity' with private sector employers is lacking in British West African states. The appointment of commissions of inquiry in each case was in response to increasing living costs and declining real wages.²

1. B. C. Roberts and L. Greyfie De Bellecombe "Development of Collective Bargaining in former British and French African Countries" in Industrial Relations and Economic Development Arthur M. Ross (ed.) (London, 1966), p. 219.

2. Attention will be directed to this relationship in the following section.

Official sources recorded the primacy of the government wage policy: "Following government's lead in granting wage increases most large employers who had not already made upward changes in anticipation soon followed suit..."¹ (emphasis my own). It was concluded that Government's position as the major employer and the inclusion of the Fair Wages clause in public contracts, constituted a powerful levelling influence in wage setting.² Further, it has been noted that the private employers themselves were not at all times pleased with being so tightly bound to government decisions³ but were unable to alter the pattern.⁴

In Ghana throughout the decade of the fifties Labour Department Reports give no indication that the larger private concerns were setting the pace in upward wage adjustments. During 1957-58 unskilled labour in government departments and private commercial concerns were receiving 5/- - 5/6 per day. Hours worked, however, were substantially lower in Public Authority employment.

-
1. Annual Report on the Department of Labour for the Year 1952-53, Lagos p.10.
 2. Ibid.
 3. ILO Industrial Relations in Certain African Countries (Geneva, 1964) p. 283.
 4. Warren op. cit. p. 32.

TABLE 4.4

Hours Worked in the Gold Coast, Dec. 1957

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Employment</u>	<u>Hours Worked</u>			
		<u>35-40</u>	<u>40-45</u>	<u>45-50</u>	<u>Other</u>
Public Authorities	142,505	111,536	7,074	8,633	15,262
Private Employers	134,908	24,358	16,389	54,496	39,664

SOURCE: Annual Report on the Labour Department, 1957-58
Accra, p. 71.

In the Gambia to 1961, the statutory rate for Government labour was the accepted rate for all private employers.

Exceptions apart, in no territory of former British West Africa did collective bargaining succeed without direct government support and sponsorship. Until the late 1950's only the Sierra Leone Administration had provided such support while wage policy in sister territories was conditioned by a policy of 'voluntarism' and implemented through periodically appointed Commissions of Inquiry.

Other Institutions for Negotiations

The Sierra Leone bargaining machinery for major industrial sectors of the economy, was supplemented in 1949-50 by two additional bodies for white collar groups in

Government and teaching. In 1949, upon Labour Department recommendation, Whitley Councils for Senior and Junior branches of the Civil Service were introduced. After negotiations, agreement was reached on a temporary cost-of-living bonus of $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ on basic salaries.

By the end of 1949 arrangements were also in progress to establish a Joint Committee on Terms and Conditions of Service of Teachers. The Committee set up in 1950 consisted of an employers' panel (with representatives of Government, local authorities, and various mission groups) and a teachers' panel, members of which were nominated by the Amalgamated Teachers' Organisation. An independent Chairman was appointed by the Government and the Labour Department supplied the secretary.

Both institutions were set up following the establishment of Wages Boards and Joint Industrial Councils and were supplementary to them.

PART III

FUNCTIONING AND EFFECT
OF THE INDUSTRIAL BARGAINING MACHINERY

CHAPTER V

EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE TO 1955

CHAPTER V

EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE TO 1955

The industrial bargaining machinery in Sierra Leone was designed to provide trade unions with a 'legitimate function' and to enable Government to participate both directly and indirectly in a decentralized system of wage determination. From the point of view of the Colonial Administration, the success of the scheme could be measured primarily in the containment of labour strike action. This 'intended' effect was particularly desirable and difficult given the political and economic ferment in West Africa in the decade following the War.

Strike data for Sierra Leone and comparable statistics for other British West African countries, indicate that relative industrial peace was achieved up to the General Strike in 1955. Nor was the quiet gained at the expense of higher wages. For example in 1954, unskilled labour in Freetown received a 3/9 per diem rate, while comparable rates for unskilled workers in Accra, Lagos and Bathurst were 4/6, 3/9 and 3/4 respectively.¹

1. Throughout this section primary attention will centre upon the Government's minimum wage for its unskilled labourers. This rate was considered to be the 'key' rate because of the number of Government employees receiving minimum per diem rates and because it set the pattern for rates paid in the private sector.

Various economic factors could have affected the observed strike patterns in the four British territories. However, a review of cost of living changes, trade conditions, unemployment, industry mix and trade union organization indicated no basic differences among the four countries.¹ Variations in the bargaining arrangement in West African countries was then related to the extent of industrial unrest.

In addition to the 'intended' effect of the bargaining machinery in limiting strike action, 'unintended' and 'other' effects also resulted. An unintended and certainly unwanted effect of the existence of industrial negotiating machinery was the disregard of joint consultation at the plant level. Other effects of the institutional arrangements were the rapid narrowing in area and skill differentials and the growth of private employer organization.

1. The factors suggested themselves from an analysis of K.G.J.C. Knowles Strikes: A Study in Industrial Conflict (Oxford, 1952) Chapt. iv.

Intended Effect of the Bargaining Machinery

Strike Patterns

From 1946 to the middle of 1949 not one strike took place in Sierra Leone. By contrast the 1945 General Strike in Nigeria was followed by twenty-eight strikes and 17,416 man days lost in 1947-48. During the same year in the Gold Coast strike frequency totalled thirty-seven and 46,865 man days lost. One strike during each year from 1946-48 was recorded in the Gambia.

From 1949 available employment and strike data presented in Appendix 3, indicate the relative quiet of industrial relations in Sierra Leone.

Economic Factors and the Strike Pattern

Various economic and social factors have been related to observed strike patterns.¹ The following analysis will attempt to evaluate living costs changes, trade conditions, unemployment and industry mix as explanatory factors underlying patterns of industrial conflict in West African countries.²

-
1. For Great Britain see K.G.J.C. Knowles op. cit. ch. iv.
 2. In each sub-section the absence of reliable data has limited analysis of the relationship between strike fluctuations and the economic factors considered.

Changes in the Cost of Living.

The relatively low real wage position of Sierra Leone labour was improved after 1947, following implementation of JIC and Wages Board agreements. At the same time, the recommendations of the Harragin-Korsah Commissions of Inquiry in Ghana, brought real wages slightly above Sierra Leone's standard. Wage increases during 1946 in Nigeria (in the aftermath of the 1945 General Strike) helped maintain the superior real wage position her employed labourers held during the war years. Thus, only after a decade had elapsed was the pre-war real wage position of most of West Africa's urban labour force restored. This trend was soon reversed, by the sharp rise in living costs which affected all four British West African states. Between 1949-51 the average jump in cost of living indices for the four territories was over ninety points or approximately forty per cent.

This sharp rise in living costs, reflected in the index figures, was the result of several factors, enumerated by the Governor of Sierra Leone in his annual address to the Legislative Council:¹

1. Legislative Council Debates Session 1951-52
'Governor's Speech', p. 5.

A question to which the new Executive Council will no doubt wish to give early consideration is the rise in the cost of living. This increase appears to me to be the outcome of a number of causatory events and circumstances. For instance, the increase in the prices of export produce could hardly fail to affect the prices of produce for local consumption. The devaluation of sterling is now beginning to be felt in a steep rise in the prices of goods which are affected directly or indirectly by dollar or hard currency values. The rearmament programme in the United States of America and the United Kingdom has brought about shortages both of materials and of manufacturing capacity which in turn are bound to create scarcities and increase the costs of many manufactured goods.

In addition he noted that rising expectations on the part of local producers had led them to demand higher prices for their goods. Finally, substantial increases in wages and the numbers of wage earners, "have tended to encourage a demand for higher rewards by local producers and distributors".

While the factors underpinning the cost of living rise were multiple, the retail price indices were particularly sensitive to changes in food costs. (Each index gave a weighting from forty to fifty per cent. to this item.) The retail price index for food in Sierra Leone was 302 in 1949 (all items = 250). Two years later 459 was recorded (all items = 341). In the case of important staple food

items the increase in price over pre-war levels was recorded in the following table.¹

TABLE 5.1
Freetown Cost of Living Changes 1939-52

	<u>1939</u>	<u>1952</u>
Clean Rice	7/6 per bushel	30/-
Palm Oil	4/6 per tin	20/- 22/-
Fish (Bonga)	6d. per dozen	4/-
Foofoo	2/6 a basket	12/-
Chicken	9d. each	4/-
Eggs	9d. a dozen	4/-
Sugar	2½d, a lb.	10d.
Milk	2½d. a tin	7d.
Flour	11/- a bag	55/-

SOURCE: Sierra Leone Legislative Council Debates
Session 1951-52 'Budget Debate' p. 142.

No country escaped the consequences of this sharp rise in living costs. Real wages in all four British West African states declined. Not until the price rise halted in 1952 did real wages once again recover (Appendix 2). For most of West Africa, sharp price increases during the pre-Independence period had come to an end. Cost of living

1. In Nigeria and Ghana, the spread of maize rust resulted in further shortages and consequently higher retail prices in this staple food item at the time. See Bruce F. Johnston The Staple Food Economies of Western Tropical Africa (Stanford, Calif., 1958), p. 6.

rose mildly in Nigeria 1951-55, even more gradually in Ghana, and in the Gambia a decline was reported. Only Sierra Leone failed to enjoy this period of relative price stability. The reason for this was directly related to the illicit diamond mining industry which blossomed after 1951, and the extra wealth generated by the 'boom' period.

The price increases, measured by the rise in the Freetown Cost of Living Index (from 341 in 1951 to 417, first half of 1955) eroded the real wage position of the employed worker. Consequently, during the first half of the 1950's, only the Sierra Leone labour force failed to improve upon its pre-war real wage level. While wage labour in sister territories maintained or improved real wages above the 1939 base period, the Sierra Leone labourers' real wage declined. (See Appendix 2).

Nevertheless, strike frequency and man days lost, especially during the period 1949-51, remained well below Ghana and Nigeria figures. The Enugu Coal Miners' strike in 1949, and the Accra General Strike in January, 1950, had no parallel in Sierra Leone. The nearest approximation was in the strikes in the mining area. Even after 1951, when Freetown was experiencing continued increases in retail prices, strike activity was negligible.

Trade and Government Reserves

The relationship between strike frequency and cyclical fluctuation in trade has been generally observed.¹ In West Africa, the higher strike frequency in the Gold Coast during the early 1950's seems to conform to this pattern. Relative to Sierra Leone and Nigeria, for example, the Gold Coast Administration enjoyed a superior trade advantage after 1950. "There was in this period a very sharp rise in revenue, largely due to the favourable trend in cocoa prices, associated with a much slower growth in expenditure."² By 1955, the Central Government enjoyed a substantial reserve margin when measured against annual expenditure and the economic situation of sister states.

TABLE 5.2

Central Government Annual Expenditure and Reserve Balances Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, 1955

(£ million)

	<u>Gold Coast</u>	<u>Nigeria</u>	<u>Sierra Leone</u>
Annual Expenditure	48.3 (March, 1955)	60.7	7.4
General Reserve (uncommitted)	64.6	32.1	3.2

SOURCE: Ghana Economic Surveys 1955, 1958.
 Nigeria Overseas Economic Surveys Oct. 1957.
 Sierra Leone Colonial Report 1955

1. Knowles op. cit. p. 146.

2. Walter B. Birmingham et al. eds. A Study of Contemporary Ghana Vol.I. (London, 1966), p. 318.

This favourable reserve balance enabled the Gold Coast Administration to pay the highest minimum wage rate, 4/6, (after the publication of the Liddbury-Ghedemah reports in 1952) in British West Africa to its unskilled labour. Rates in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia at the time were 3/9, 3/4 and 3/4 respectively.

However, the strike frequency in the Gold Coast remained high as employees in the private sector struggled to have their rates realigned with Government employees. Of the eighty-three stoppages reported in 1952-53, sixty-four involved workers in the private sector.¹ In other words, the fifty per cent. of the employed labour force (Government and private employers accounted for approximately equal shares of all employees) who were largely responsible for the strike frequency pattern, was not the group in the best position to press for gains following favourable trade receipts.

Furthermore, the reserve positions of Nigerian and Sierra Leone Governments during this period were also buoyant. Yet administrators in Sierra Leone felt strongly

1. Report on the Labour Department 1952-53, Accra, p. 7.

against a liberal spending policy in order to avoid the possibility of further price increases. Before the Legislative Council in 1951, the Governor noted:

When you come to study the financial situation in detail, you will find that higher wages and increases in the cost of materials have enlarged departmental and other expenditure to an extent which requires positive counteraction. You will, I think, find it impossible to escape the conclusion that some action to retard inflation will be necessary, either by increasing taxation or by rigorous economy or by retrenchment of services or by a mixture of all three.

Acceptance of this conclusion resulted in lower wage rates paid Sierra Leone labourers than to wage-earners in the Gold Coast or Nigeria. The situation could have led to a higher strike frequency in Sierra Leone than in the other territories. The fact that this did not happen suggests the search for other economic factors which may have influenced developments.

Unemployment.

Another factor which may have influenced strike activity was the extent of unemployment. Employment Exchange statistics seem to indicate a relatively higher rate of unemployment in Sierra Leone, compared with Ghana or Nigeria. (See Appendix 4). This fact becomes even more impressive

when it is realized that the Sierra Leone Exchanges operated a monthly system of unemployment registration (i.e. unemployed applicants had to appear at least once a month to maintain their names on the unemployed register.¹⁾ In contrast, up to 1956, Nigerian Employment Exchanges required registration only every six months. (The sharp decline in registered unemployed after that year was largely due to the introduction of monthly registrations.)

There exists, however, some doubt as to the reliability of the Employment Exchange unemployment data during this period. One criticism noted that: "Not only do the figures include some persons who may actually be at work, but they exclude unemployed persons who have not registered at the exchanges."² The danger of the latter fault was minimized

1. One criticism of the monthly registration system was the considerable inconvenience caused the registree. "Very often these persons have to travel some distances - persons have been known to travel as much as 21 miles - to report to the nearest Exchange which means that not only transport to and from the Exchange but also food has to be allowed for as the whole day might be spent at the Exchange". N.A. Cox-George "An Essay on Employment and Unemployment in Sierra Leone in 1948" (Sierra Leone Collection F.B.C., Freetown), p. 58.
2. I.L.O. Employment, Unemployment and Labour Force Statistics, A Study of Methods (Geneva, 1948) p. 96. It was concluded by the Committee making this Report that such statistics were to be considered 'generally unsatisfactory'.

in Sierra Leone (Colony) after legal restrictions were brought in against employing labour outside the labour exchanges. This had the effect of making registration in the Colony compulsory, since only registered workers were placed in employment. It was concluded from this evidence that the Sierra Leone Employment Exchanges compelled the registration of a greater number of unemployed persons, as well as probably encouraging more employed persons to double register in the hope of securing better jobs. It was not until 1958 that the Labour Registration Act in Ghana introduced compulsory registration for certain groups of workers.¹ In Nigeria compulsory registration in Lagos lasted only to 1952 and was judged to have failed at that time.

In Sierra Leone, the early introduction and spread of the exchange facilities helped to promote their usage.² By comparison, the Nigerian system seems to have lagged behind Sierra Leone:³

-
1. Ghana Economic Survey, 1958, p.24.
 2. The Freetown Exchange established in 1943 was supplemented by a branch at Waterloo, in Bo (1945) and in Bonthe (1957).
 3. Annual Report of the Federal Ministry of Labour 1962-63, Lagos, p.7.

Registration facilities are limited to the comparatively few employment exchanges in the country and even in the areas where they exist many of the unemployed are not eager to avail themselves of the opportunity for registration owing to the uncertainty of ever obtaining employment through the Ministry's employment exchanges which only deal with vacancies received from employers who voluntarily decide to recruit through them.

The extent of underestimation in the unemployment figures issued by the Ghanaian exchange, was demonstrated first in 1952, following a special unemployment survey. While the Employment Exchanges data gave an annual unemployed figure of approximately 6,000 up to 1955, the special survey uncovered almost 24,500 unemployed throughout the country.¹

More recent population Censuses in Ghana and Sierra Leone provide even more conclusive evidence. Relating the unemployed data for the two countries to the wage labour force (those employed and those seeking wage employment) the discrepancy between this rate and the unemployment rate produced by the Employment Exchanges in Ghana was considerable.

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1951-52, Accra
p. 4.

TABLE 5.3

Unemployment in Ghana and Sierra Leone

	<u>Censuses</u>			<u>Employment Exchanges</u>		
	Total Wage Labour Force (A)	Unem- ployed (B)	B as % of A	Recorded Employ- ment (a)	Unem- ployed (b)	b as % of a
Ghana 1960	657,670	163,810	25%	330,000	11,257	3%
Sierra Leone 1963	132,551	30,796	23%	57,609	9,226	16%

SOURCE: Ghana Census Advance Report, Tables 29 and 50
Sierra Leone 1963 Population Census Vol.111,
Table 17.

It can be stated with some assurance that the relatively high unemployment rate listed by the Sierra Leone Employment Exchange during the 1950's gives some approximation to the actual situation. Nigeria and Ghana figures underestimate the unemployment situation which existed. Real unemployment was undoubtedly higher than official figures indicated.

On balance, economic consideration such as the unemployment rate and Government's reserve position fail to provide satisfactory explanations for the different strike activity found in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone.

Industry Mix

The recorded strike patterns for Nigeria, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone remain unexplained on the basis of industrial structure and inter-industry propensities to strike.¹ Generally the same industrial structure was found in each territory. The mining sector, an area of high strike propensity in most countries, accounted for virtually the same percentage of wage earners in each of the three colonies during the mid 1950's.

-
1. Clark Kerr and Abraham Siegel "The Inter-Industry Propensity to Strike; An International Comparison" in A. Kornhauser, R. Dubin, and P. M. Ross (eds.) Industrial Conflict (New York, 1954), pp. 189-212

TABLE 5.4

Industrial Structure in Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone1956

	<u>Gold Coast (Dec.)</u>		<u>Nigeria (Sept.)</u>		<u>Sierra Leone (Dec.)</u>	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	42,435	15.9	36,852	8.2	2,269 [*]	4.9
Mining	32,272	12.1	58,932	13.2	6,031	13.2
Manufacturing	17,688	6.6	21,384	4.8	N.A.	-
Construction	46,647	17.4	101,944	22.8	8,716	19.1
Utilities	7,989	3.0	7,755	1.7	N.A.	-
Commerce	29,608	11.1	45,070	10.1	7,108	15.6
Transportation Communication	23,048	8.6	56,799	12.7	8,121	17.8
Services	67,693	25.3	118,503	26.5	13,306 ^{**}	29.2
Miscellaneous	-	-	131	-	-	-
Total	267,380	100	447,370	100	45,551	100

SOURCES: Ghana Labour Statistics 1956 (Accra) Table I
 Nigeria Report on Employment and Earnings Enquiry
 (Lagos, 1959). p.3.
 First year that an industrial classification of
 wage earners was presented.

SOURCES: (Contd.)

Sierra Leone Annual Report of the Labour Department, 1956 (Freetown), p. 17.
 Data for Sierra Leone did not conform to the International Standard Industrial Classification scheme and adjustments in the figures had to be made.

* includes some manufacturing

** includes some utilities.

Institutional Factors and Strikes

Alternative analysis suggests the importance of institutional factors in explaining the different strike pattern between Sierra Leone and other territories.

Trade Union Organization

Trade unions have traditionally used the strike as a weapon in safeguarding and promoting worker interests. As such, greater strike activity might have been explained by greater organization among wage earners. The data in Appendix 5 indicates, however, that unionization has grown apace in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Calculated in terms of wage employment, available figures in Ghana on paid-up members, and total membership in Nigeria correspond to the general growth pattern in Sierra Leone. In this quantitative aspect, there is little to distinguish Sierra Leone from neighbouring territories and the problem

of explaining the relatively low propensity to strike remains unsolved.

(Qualitatively, union ideology and identification with nationalist parties might have had an impact on their strike activity. As noted elsewhere, however, the problem of quantifying this variable is particularly hazardous.¹ The degree of radicalism in a trade union movement may be as much an effect of economic and institutional factors as the strike pattern which it is hoped it will explain. Also, in the case of African states it has been argued that the alleged political role of trade unions before independence has been exaggerated.² For each of these reasons a more rigorous comparative study of trade union ideology is not attempted here.)

The union data for Sierra Leone does indicate important structural differences between the labour unions there and in Ghana and Nigeria. The relatively small and stable number of trade unions in the territory was regulated to the bargaining arrangements introduced after the war.

1. Knowles op. cit. p. 144.

2. Elliot J. Berg and J. Butler "Trade Unions in Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa" J. Coleman and C.G. Rosberg (eds.) (Berkeley, 1964).

Bargaining Machinery and Industrial Unrest

The relatively low level of strike activity found in Sierra Leone can be related in three ways to the industrial bargaining bodies established after 1945. Firstly, the bargaining arrangements insured union stability and union leadership prestige. Secondly, the standing nature of the JIC's and Wages Board made each responsive to demands following economic changes affecting industrial workers. Finally, the practice of 'extending' statutory JIC agreements eliminated the cause of unrest among workers engaged by private employers.

Union stability and leadership prestige. - Following the amalgamations in 1945, the Trade Union Amendment Act of 1946 insured the security of existing trade unions by placing limitations on the right to organise. At the time an industrial trade union structure was seen as a prerequisite to the effective operation of the industrial bargaining bodies. By enlisting the major union groups to represent labour interests on the Wages Boards and JIC's their organizational stability was greatly enhanced. These reforms were supplemented by measures especially designed to increase the prestige of union leaders.

The resulting organizational stability and security among union leaders eliminated possible sources of conflict leading to industrial unrest. By contrast, the Enugu Coal Strike in 1949 was partly traceable to intra-union leadership rivalries, and the continuing disturbances in the Nigerian mining industry during the early 1950's, to union instability.¹

Through the introduction of bargaining reforms, Sierra Leone by-passed the organizational conflict stage, which according to Ross and Hartman has "dominated the early stages of labour-management relations in many countries..."²

The 'standing' bargaining machinery. - The standing character of Sierra Leone's industrial bargaining bodies meant that issues on wages or related matters could be discussed on short notice at the request of either side. For example, in the case of the Mine Workers Wages' Board, claims were to be submitted to the chairman four weeks before a meeting. Extraordinary meetings, however, could

-
1. Agwa Akpala "The Background of the Colliery Shooting Hartman in 1949", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria III, No. 2 (Dec. 1965), p. 360.
 2. Arthur M. Ross and Paul T. Hartman Changing Pattern of Industrial Conflict (New York, 1960), p. 67.

be called by the chairman on a few days notice.¹ Similar arrangements were made by the JIC's. The obvious advantage of this procedure was that either side was assured of a ready hearing being granted to whatever claims it brought forth. Its advantages were especially noticeable during the period of fast rising living costs between 1949-51. The Mine Workers Wages' Board as well as both JIC's had negotiated two separate pay increases by 1952.² In the absence of standing machinery, it was only after serious industrial unrest in both Ghana and Nigeria during 1950, that 'ad hoc' committees awarded wage increases.³

The more serious disturbances in the mining industries of Ghana and Nigeria during the mid 1950's related to this absence of any reliable bargaining arrangement. While the parties to the Sierra Leone Mine Workers Wages' Board were negotiating wages and other issues during 1955-56, frustration and confusion characterized negotiations on

-
1. Minutes Miners Wages' Board 13 March, 1946, p. 1-2.
 2. Mine Labour (Heavy) daily rates were raised from 2/2 (1950) to 3/2 (1951) and again to 3/8 (1952). Construction workers received increases from 2/6 (1950) to 3/- (1951) and finally 3/9 (1952).
 3. Industrial unrest was usually followed by higher wage rates paid in the Gold Coast and Nigeria. Thus from the workers' point of view the absence of negotiating machinery was more beneficial to them.

newly introduced bargaining bodies in the other two territories. In Ghana, prior to the November 1955 mine strike, the absence of an effective conciliation procedure on the industry's joint negotiating committee delayed settlement. After the strike a Board of Inquiry was appointed to investigate the dispute and wage increases granted.

The success of the standing bargaining machinery was itself related to the Sierra Leone Government policy of granting wage increases in line with cost of living changes. The policy took form during negotiations at the first session of the Mine Workers Wages' Board. Voting for the 6d. wage increase for unskilled labourers, appointed members to the Board noted:¹

From an examination of cost of living figures they were convinced that the present margin was insufficient to provide the essentials of life and the means to discharge obligations towards wife and family.

During subsequent JIC negotiations the 1942 Freetown Cost of Living Index was featured in a central role.

1. Minutes. Mine Workers Wages' Board, March 13, 1946, Appendix, p.4.

Whenever the index indicated substantial price rises, as it did during 1949-51, employers conceded to union wage demands to the extent of readjusting wage rates in order to maintain real wages. The standing bargaining machinery which allowed for the periodic submission of union wage demands, provided the policy with in-built sensitivity.¹

Extending statutory agreements. - The practice of extending negotiated JIC agreements gave assurance to all workers in an industry that their rates would be adjusted in line with those of Sierra Leone Government employees. This practice prevented strikes in the private sector which emerged after the reports of Commissions of Inquiry in the other British territories.²

The absence of 'extention' provisions led to the collapse of negotiations on the JIC for tin miners in

-
1. The policy initially satisfied union leaders, as successive wage demands were met by wage increases. Only when it became apparent that employers were unwilling to grant wage increases in excess of cost-of-living changes did unrest grow. This was the case prior to the 1955 General Strike.
 2. Report of the Labour Department 1952-53, Accra, p. 7.

Nigeria during the mid 1950's. When the JIC was established in 1955 its agreements were not binding on employers who were not members of the Nigerian Mining Employers' Association.

Lack of statutory support for agreements reached, resulted in lack of confidence among the unions in the Northern Plateau region. The Labour Department, commented on the ineffectiveness of the machinery:¹

The Joint Industrial Council for the tin mines has not been able to function as the ultimate authority charged with the responsibility of resolving the problems of conditions of service and remuneration in the industry. Constant invitations have been made to Government to assist in solving their problems.

Conclusion

An outline of comparative economic data for Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Nigeria failed to uncover basic differences which might have accounted for the different strike pattern observed in Sierra Leone after World War II. Each territory enjoyed sizeable trade balances by the mid 1950's (the highest reserves found in the Gold Coast);

1. Annual Report of the Department of Labour 1956-57, Lagos, p. 14.

each country experienced sharp rises in living costs during the period 1949-51 (with continuing price escalation in Sierra Leone even after 1951); unemployment data for Nigeria and the Gold Coast proved unreliable and the real extent of the problem was probably similar in all three countries; and the industrial mix was generally the same in Nigeria, Gold Coast and Sierra Leone, with the strike-prone mining industry accounting for 12-13% of all wage earners in each territory. While the growth of union membership as a percentage of total wage employment was roughly the same for each country, structural differences in the Sierra Leone labour movement were related to the pattern of industrial wage bargaining.

The conclusion reached in this analysis supports the theory that industrial conflict during the early stages of labour-management relations can be limited by ensuring organizational stability to trade unions and providing security and prestige to trade union leaders.¹ Both of these resulted from the introduction of bargaining machinery

1. Arthur M. Ross and D. Irwin "Strike Experience in Five Countries" Industrial and Labour Relations Review, 4 (April, 1951), p. 336.

In this study the authors related industrial unrest during the early years of labour-management relations to union organizational stability and leadership security. The above theory is a reformulation of a practical implication derived from this study.

in Sierra Leone. In addition the standing nature of the bargaining machinery assured union leaders of a ready hearing for wage claims. Finally, the practice of 'extending' JIC agreements helped to contain unrest among privately employed workers not directly represented on the bargaining bodies.

Unintended Effects

Mines Strikes

While industrial relations in the decade after the War ran a relatively peaceful course in Sierra Leone the disputes which did take place, particularly in the mining industry, emphasized the consequences of failing to honour agreements or refusing to participate in the bargaining arrangements. Since neither of these situations could have arisen in the absence of industrial negotiating machinery, they were in a sense unintended effects and part of the 'growing pains' of the institutional bargaining pattern. The strikes did serve to indicate, however, the danger of over-reliance on industrial bargaining arrangements to the detriment of joint consultation at the plant level.

DELCO

After the 1946 Wages Board agreement for the mines was signed, the management of the iron ore producing Development Corporation attempted to offset the increased costs of the higher wage rate by imposing higher output requirements per worker. Production requirements were raised from six to eight tons on lump ore and eight to ten on powder ore. The company justified this move by claiming that increased mechanization was responsible for the higher output expectation.¹

Negotiations during 1949 secured a reduction in the miners work week from 48 to 45 hours. In response, the iron mining company reduced pay. Following protests by the workers, the Commissioner of Labour was called in and interpreted the agreement in favour of the miners. The Development Corporation, however, refused to back-date the increase to the date that the agreement was first published.

In June, 1950, acting unilaterally, the company introduced a shift system at the Marampa powder ore mill

1. Protest against the action was made by the Sierra Leone T.U.C. but no satisfaction was gained.
Sierra Leone Labour I, No. 1 (Oct. 1946) p. 2.

and announced that Sunday, formerly regarded as an off day, was henceforth to be worked like any other day.

The cumulative effect of the company's actions resulted in a three day strike during October, 1950. The miners presented a long list of grievances and a board of inquiry was appointed to investigate the matter. The report of the board placed the blame for the breakdown in labour relations with the Development Corporation. The charge was made that the action by the company undermined worker confidence in the Wages Board, "and in the ability of that body to assist them, as the company seemed always able to continue, either by preventing discussion or by increasing tasks to meet increases in wages, to have its own way".¹ The board vindicated the union of any irresponsible activity and concluded:²

We find that the conditions under which the workers were made to work were unsatisfactory, and that the policy pursued by the Company in its relations with the Union and the Wages Board had demoralized the men, and that these circumstances in the main provided a background for seething discontent both at Marampa and Pepel.

-
1. Report of the Board of Inquiry into the causes and circumstances of the stoppages of work at the works of the Sierra Leone Development Company Limited (Freetown, 1951) p. 20.
 2. Ibid. p. 24.

SLST

The second mine strike during the early 1950's took place at the Sierra Leone Selection Trust, after the diamond mining company refused to entertain a worker demand for negotiations outside the wages board machinery. The workers claimed that the statutory machinery led to unnecessary delay. The disagreement finally resulted in an unofficial strike in 1951.¹ Workers remained adamant in their demand for private negotiations and the Labour Department was persuaded to give its consent in order to resolve the conflict. As a result of its decision, the Department inevitably jeopardised the position of the Wages Board.

This strike prompted Government to issue a statement on its industrial relations policy. The statement noted Government's view "that the existence of the Joint Industrial Councils and Wages Boards has contributed very substantially to the industrial peace..." during the post-war years.²

1. Since the War the largest percentage of strikes have been unofficial stoppages. The preference for this form resulted from the unwillingness of union leaders to personally identify with worker strike action and risk falling into disfavour with Government officials.
2. Annual Report of the Labour Department, 1951, p. 8.

But "the recent tendency towards the use of unofficial strikes has been the cause of much concern" and would "only result in destroying the authority of the trade unions and bring them into disrepute". The statement included a challenge to both sides of the bargaining bodies to make changes if they were dissatisfied with present arrangements:

The constitutions of the Joint Industrial Councils, and the powers given to Wages Boards, make provision for the peaceful settlement of matters relating to wages and conditions of employment. If anyone thinks at any time that these bodies can no longer cope fully with the functions which they were set up to perform, it is open to them to seek any changes they consider necessary in consultation with others who have an interest in the working of this machinery. Careful consideration will be given at all times to any joint representations made to Government for the smoother operation of either Joint Industrial Councils or Wages Boards. In the meantime it is urged upon both workers' and employers' representatives not to adopt unconstitutional methods of securing their aims while constitutional methods are available to them.

Neither side took up the challenge. Instead, the Labour Department diagnosed the illness and prescribed its own remedy in the form of joint consultation.

Joint Consultation

It was decided by Labour Department officials that the emphasis on industrial wage bargaining had shifted attention

away from the importance of local plant works committees. The absence of consultation at the plant level led to an accumulation of unresolved minor grievances. It was the host of minor grievances which eventually led to unofficial strike action.¹

From 1951, the Labour Department actively encouraged the establishment of work committees at the mines and in Government Departments. The following year committees were set up in Railway, Public Works and Road Transport Departments, Service Works and the three mining centres (Marampa, Yengema and Hanga).

(During this period the official emphasis on joint consultation procedure was even greater in the Gold Coast and Nigeria. In both of these territories, consultation was viewed as the first step in the development of more advanced industrial relations machinery. The Labour Report in Ghana for 1953-54 noted that: "The policies so long pursued of encouraging the settlement of differences between employers and workers by negotiation and of established

1. Parry himself had only marginal confidence in the usefulness of joint consultation in Sierra Leone and this was probably one reason which led to its neglect during the immediate post war period. Interview op. cit. This was perhaps the only area where Parry deviated significantly from the original principles outlined by the Whitley Committee to regulate industrial behaviour. See Sharp, op. cit. pp. 324-326.

joint consultative machinery were continued". The Report continued: "It is fully recognized by the Ministry that, as industrial organization progresses both among employers and workers and as personnel matters receive greater recognition, it will be necessary to advise the separation of negotiating machinery and consultative machinery."¹

A similar emphasis was placed on joint consultation in Nigeria, where it was felt that "consultation committees not only fulfil a useful function but also serve as an educational forum in which the principles of negotiation and discussion can be learned by workers' representatives".²⁾

In Sierra Leone the enthusiasm for joint consultation was not maintained. By 1967 officials at the Labour Department could enumerate only ten work committees, four of which were located in the Provinces.³ Among the new manufacturing concerns in the Western Area, there is a corresponding lack of concern for local plant consultation. In each case overriding employer and worker concern with

1. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1953-54, Accra. p. 8.
2. Annual Report of the Department of Labour 1954-55, Lagos. p. 16.
3. Interview Mr. F.H. Johnson, Senior Labour Officer, March 10, 1967.

wage bargaining has obscured the necessity for procedures to treat routine worker grievances.¹ In the case of the DELCO mining concern, management's insistence that the work Committee representation remain outside union control has resulted in a union boycott of the Committee.

(Nevertheless, worker suggestions tendered at Committee meetings have resulted in productivity gains.)²

This absence of consultation machinery has not been without serious consequences. For example, since 1955, the highest recorded man-day-lost due to strikes took place in 1959 (28,927 days) and 1962 (44,230 days). Significantly, the reported cause of three of the five strikes in 1959 was 'disagreement over management policy not directly connected with wages, hours or working conditions'. In 1962 one half of the twenty-two strikes which took place resulted from grievances unrelated to wages, hours or work conditions.

-
1. Author's survey of some 25 manufacturing concerns in the Freetown and Wellington area.
 2. Interview with Mr. G. Nurton, Personnel Manager DELCO mines, Marampa, August 15, 1967.

Other Effects

An interesting and unanticipated effect of the industrial negotiations was the changes which took place in area wage differentials and the wage structure. After setting differentials at initial bargaining rounds, it became increasingly difficult for trade union leaders to justify different area wage scales for labour in the same occupational grade.¹ In the case of the construction industry, Protectorate labour discontent resulted in the formation of a separate union and the threat of divided negotiations. Responding to this pressure, union leaders in the Colony became more adamant in demands to have the area differences removed.

In addition to closing the wage gap between Colony and Protectorate labour there has been a continuous narrowing of skill differentials following JIC and Wages Board negotiations. The trend has resulted from the bargaining strategy adopted by trade union leaders of placing demands for flat rate wage increases. To a certain extent,

1. For example, Colony construction workers (unskilled) in 1950, received 2/6 - 3/3 per day while their counterparts in the Protectorate earned 1/8 - 2/2. Employees covered by Wages Board decision were unaffected by the area differentials since virtually all mine labourers were employed in the Protectorate and all maritime workers were Colony based.

however, the increased earnings of skilled workers have offset the trend.

Closing Area Differentials

Wage Rates

The setting up of two different wage scales for Colony and Protectorate based labour was defended at the early meetings of the Artisan and Transport JIC's. Lower rates for the latter group were justified on the grounds that farming offered the opportunity to supplement income. In reaction against their situation, the fast-growing body of Protectorate wage earners formed a General Workers Union during the late 1940's.¹ The new union claimed membership among unskilled agricultural labour, ferrymen, forestry workers and Public Works Department employees.

The leader of the union, in a letter addressed to the Artisan JIC and Labour Department stressed the iniquity of the wage differential:²

-
1. Wage employment in the Protectorate increased from 13,971 in 1946 to 22,327 by 1950. The corresponding change for the Colony Area was much smaller from 16,743 (1946) to 18,153 (1950).
 2. Letter S. Stevens, General Secretary of the Protectorate Workers Union, to the Labour Department, 25 May, 1951.

Rates have been fixed here in Freetown for Protectorate workers, over their heads, without their being represented or privileged to have a say on the machinery which fixes such rates and conditions. Such is the situation which is responsible to a great measure for the unjustified differentials which exist today between Colony and Protectorate rates of pay, differentials which almost everyone now agrees are totally unnecessary.

The Council of Labour also queried the pay difference and advised the Artisan Workers' Union to secure a uniform rate.¹ An additional incentive to press for uniform wages resulted from claims that employers hired workers for construction work in the Colony, terminated their contracts and then sent the workers to the Protectorate to be re-engaged at lower rates.²

When initial demands to close the area differential were not answered, the Protectorate Union sought representation rights on the Artisan JIC.³ Failing in this attempt, a strike at the Kenema Forestry Department early in 1951 opened the question of representation once again. On the initiative of the Acting Chief Conservator in the Kenema

-
1. "Minutes" Artisan JIC 8 June, 1951. p.2.
 2. Letter Marcus Grant, General Secretary of the Artisan and Allied Workers' Union to the JIC Secretary, 28 October, 1949.
 3. An administrative oversight permitted the union to register early in 1950. The registration was criticized by the existing Artisan unions.

District seats were requested for the Forestry Department on both transport and construction JIC's. The employer spokesman related: "I feel that such representation would throw light on up-country matters which in the past have perhaps not received adequate attention".¹ Simultaneously, Mr. Siaka Stevens, General Secretary of the Protectorate Union (also the Acting General Secretary of the Mine Workers' Unions) requested the assistance of the Commissioner of Labour in setting up a separate JIC for Protectorate workers.²

These pressures prompted the leader of the Artisan Union to propose the appointment of a Commission to study living conditions in the Protectorate and establish the justice of the pay differential. While this Commission furnished no concrete evidence, the combination of forces acting on the Artisan Workers representatives resulted in stronger demands to close the Colony and Protectorate wage gap.

-
1. Letter 21 May, 1951 to the Secretary of the Transport and Artisan Unions and the Commissioner of Labour.
 2. As a result of this pressure the representation on both Artisan and Transport JIC was changed early in the 1950's. Both expanded the number of employer and trade union seats. Protectorate representatives for the employers side were brought in through the Chamber of Commerce and Protectorate District Councils. Artisan and Transport Unions offered seats to their own Protectorate branches. The Protectorate General Workers Union, however, failed to secure a seat on either Council in the face of objections made by the Unions already represented. Shortly after, the Union disbanded altogether.

In 1952 the Union succeeded in having six Protectorate townships upgraded to a higher pay scale. During subsequent negotiations in 1954 and 1956 the differential between the two areas gradually narrowed.

Earnings

TABLE 5.5

Artisan Workers JIC Daily Rates

/ (shillings)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Colony (A)</u>		<u>Protectorate (B)</u>		<u>Ratio</u>	
	(1) Unskilled	(2) Skilled	(1) Unskilled	(2) Skilled	A(1)/ B(1)	A(2)/ B(2)
1949	2.5	8.0	1.67	5.33	1.5	1.5
1950	2.5	8.0	1.67	5.33	1.5	1.5
1951	3.0	8.5	2.5	8.0	1.2	1.06
1952	3.75	9.17	3.25	8.67	1.15	1.06
1953	3.75	9.17	3.25	8.67	1.15	1.06
1954	3.75	9.17	3.25	8.67	1.15	1.06
1955	4.75	10.17	4.25	9.67	1.12	1.05
1956	5.5	10.9	5.0	10.42	1.10	1.05
1957	5.5	10.9	5.0	10.42	1.10	1.05
1958	6.33	11.75	5.83	11.25	1.09	1.04
1959	6.33	11.75	5.83	11.25	1.09	1.04
1960	6.33	11.75	5.83	11.25	1.09	1.04
1961	7.0	12.4	6.5	11.67	1.08	1.06
1962	7.67	13.08	7.17	12.33	1.07	1.06
1963	7.67	13.08	7.17	12.33	1.07	1.06

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department and the Sierra Leone Royal Gazette

1. The skilled category refers to first class artisans. The highest rates listed for this group were taken.
2. After 1961 the Provinces were divided into two wage areas. In the above table the rate for the lower area was selected.

Equal pay for equal work remained a bargaining issue after Independence. However, its further advance was frustrated by plans for economic development. Following a union petition to eradicate area rates, the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour cited a letter from the Director, Central Statistics Officer: "A rise in the cost of labour in areas B and C relative to area A would reduce the economic advantage in setting up any business in those areas, and so tend to retard economic development." In fact, since Independence in 1961, bargaining has been increasingly circumscribed by the belief that rapid economic development necessitates a low wage policy.

Earnings

The merging of the Colony-Protectorate wage scales was reflected in the dramatic closing of the earnings ratio between Colony and Protectorate workers (labourers and artisans) during the 1950's.

TABLE 5.6

Earnings Ratios Between Colony and Protectorate WorkersEarnings Ratio

	<u>Colony/Labourer</u> <u>Protectorate/Labourer</u>	<u>Colony/Artisan</u> <u>Protectorate/Artisan</u>
1949	1.56	1.62
1950	1.46	1.87
1951	1.65	1.64
1952	1.35	1.31
1953	1.14	1.32
1954	0.65	1.03
1955	1.07	1.08
1956	1.05	0.89
1957	0.97	1.10
1958	1.13	0.88
1959	1.09	0.95
1960	1.24	1.18
1961	1.15	1.12
1962	1.63	1.09
1963	1.31	1.00
1964		

SOURCE: Abstracted from the earnings data in the Annual Reports of the Labour Department Statistics for this series were submitted by major Government departments and the larger private employment concerns between 1949-63.

As noted in Table 5.6 during certain years the earnings of Protectorate labour actually surpassed those of Colony labourers and skilled workers. This was primarily the effect of the diamond mining boom during the 1950's which drew a large number of labourers away from subsistence agriculture and Protectorate construction work.

The extent of the move out of construction work to the alluvial mining areas prompted one author to conclude; "That construction and building lost more workers to the diamond fields in 1954 to 1956 than any other industry."¹

To counteract the move wage supplements and other bonuses were necessary to keep Protectorate labour in the construction industry.

Narrowing Skill Differentials

A considerable narrowing in skill differentials in all sectors has taken place following industrial wage negotiations. For example, in the construction industry the ratio of a first class artisan to an unskilled Colony labourer in 1948 was 3.33. By 1966 the ratio had been reduced to 1.60. A similar pattern is found among construction and mining workers in the Protectorate. In each case, the narrowing has taken place following wage negotiations. Compared with Ghana and Nigeria the extent of the decline in skill differential has been most pronounced in Sierra Leone (See Appendix 6 and 7).

1. H.L. van der Laar The Sierra Leone Diamonds (Oxford, 1965) p. 173. This same source estimated the growth in diamond diggers at 5,000 in 1952 to 50,000 - 75,000 by the late 1950's. Ibid., p. 65.

This narrowing in the skill differential following successive wage negotiations has resulted from the bargaining policy of union leaders to press for flat rate wage increases for all grades. The policy recommended itself for its simplicity and the fact that maximum marginal increases would be received by the greatest number. Also, the union leaders concerned were probably aware that the skilled numbers in their rank were capable of maintaining a considerable earnings differential despite the movement in minimum wage rates (Appendix 7). For example, although the skilled worker in the mining industry had the poorest record in wage rate increases 1949-63, earnings for the group more than trebled and kept pace with the general rise. Similarly the earnings difference between a skilled artisan and general labourer in the Colony's construction industry did not close as decisively as the wage rate differential. In the Protectorate construction industry, the earnings difference between the two skill categories was actually greater in 1964 than it had been in 1949.

The trend in earnings presented in Appendix 8 indicates that supply and demand considerations continue to put a

premium on the services of the skilled worker. As a result, bonus payment, high overtime pay and wage rates above the minimum all increase earnings for skilled workers. While training facilities and technical training programmes are now operating (there are three technical institutes and training centres located throughout the country) the inadequacy of these facilities is reflected in the practice of sending workers outside the country for training.¹

(The earnings data compiled by the Labour Department indicates that the superiority of clerical grades over skilled artisans has persisted despite the frequent negotiations on bargaining councils and increases gained for the latter. The willingness of Government and private employers in the construction industry to maintain the high pay of the white collar groups seems to be based more on custom than anything else. As the Isaac Report for Ghana noted, such differentials appear unjustified: "In most cases both would have the same standard of literacy

-
1. For example in 1964 SLST sent six apprentices to the Ghana Polytechnic; Daily Mail sends employees for training to Ghana (Daily Graphic) and Nigeria (Daily Times); Star Brewery also sends its employees to Buruti, Nigeria for training on new equipment. In addition, several firms including the mining companies and the Daily Mail send staff to England for training. The practice of training workers on expensive machinery outside Sierra Leone may be the most economical solution to the training problem. See Appendix 9.

(middle school) but the artisan would have had in addition four years training as an apprentice.") ¹

Employer Associations

A final note treats the effect of the bargaining arrangements on employer groups. In 1954 with the registration of the Association of Builders and Building Contractors the tendency towards employer combinations emerged. The following year witnessed the establishment of the Association of Transport Operators. In more recent years, the Sierra Leone Industrial Employers' Association (1964) and the Sierra Leone Commercial Employers' Association have registered with the Registrar of Trade Unions. In each case the employer groups have stressed the advantage of a united front in industrial wage negotiations as well as business practices generally.

1. Isaac Report p. 17 as cited by Tony Killick in Walter Birmingham et al. (eds.) op. cit. p. 140.

CHAPTER VI

THE 1955 FREETOWN GENERAL STRIKE

CHAPTER VI

THE 1955 FREETOWN GENERAL STRIKE

The effectiveness of the bargaining machinery in limiting industrial unrest without substantially raising wages ended in 1955 with the Freetown General Strike. While the strike climaxed a period of steadily rising prices its cause was traceable to the institutional bargaining arrangements as well as to economic factors. This major industrial dispute, involving primarily transport and construction workers in Freetown, exposed certain limitations and misuse of the negotiating machinery.

The Rising Cost of Living

Effect of the Diamond Mining Boom¹

Alluvial diamond mining in Sierra Leone had been carried out since the early 1930s by the Sierra Leone Selection Trust Company, part of the Selection Trust Ltd. a holding company with headquarters in London. Up to 1955 this Company had exclusive rights to diamond mining in the country, almost all of which takes place in the Eastern Province, Kenema and Kono District. After that year these rights were reduced to an area of four hundred and fifty square miles, mostly in the Kono District. "Virtually all rights in the rest of the

1. For an authoritative account of the growth of the diamond mining industry in Sierra Leone see H.L. Van Der Laan The Sierra Leone Diamonds op.cit.

country were surrendered to the Government which...could issue licences for diamond digging in these areas".¹ This change resulted from flagrant disregard of the mining company's rights by individuals and small groups of illicit diamond miners, especially after 1952. Prior to the 1955 Agreement, a Paramount Chief speaking before the Legislative Council estimated that there were about 30,000 illicit diggers in the country producing 30,000 pieces of diamond a month.² At £15 a piece this amounted to an annual sum of £5,400,000 which, when transferred through illicit channels, escaped excise taxation on its way out of the country. In addition, SLST officials alleged that there was waste, due to the haphazard and inefficient mining methods of the illegal miners.³

Only after the Government's licensing scheme became effective and a Diamond Corporation was established to buy the diamonds was the illicit mining brought under some control.⁴ By 1963 the importance of this mineral in the

1. Ibid., p. 12.

2. Legislative Council Debates 1954-55, I, December 17, 1954, p. 359.

3. The Economist March 12, 1955, p. 880.

4. An estimate made in 1957 calculated 80,000 licensed diggers producing 465,000 carats and 3,000 employees of the SLST producing 400,000 carats. D.T. Jack Economic Survey of Sierra Leone 1958, p. 31.

country's economy was indicated by the fact that alone it contributed 64% of total export value.¹

One important consequence of the mining boom of the 1950's was the transfer of labour from agriculture and other occupations to mining. Van der Laan calculated that two-thirds of the estimated 30,000 illegal miners in 1954 had been farmers. Their removal from agriculture not only withdrew manpower, but simultaneously increased the demand for rice, the staple agricultural foodstuff. It was estimated that the new diamond miners alone increased the total demand for marketed rice by 18%.² While it is uncertain whether the move from agriculture resulted in an absolute fall in production,³ the increased demand for rice was not satisfied internally. After 1954, Sierra Leone became a major importer of her principle food item.⁴

-
1. Jean M. Due Changes in Incomes and Imports of Consumer Goods in Sierra Leone (Univ. of Illinois: Bulletin 719, 1965) p. 58 and O.P. Bangai A Statistical Study of Exports of Sierra Leone 1920-64 (Freetown, 1965) Table I.
 2. Van der Laan op. cit. p. 170. Based on calculations of 450 pounds of rice per year for one digger.
 3. During World War II rice production increased despite the drop in manpower. Cox-George op. cit. p. 241-242. While rice production changes are difficult to calculate, since most of the produce is consumed domestically, after 1954 there was a decline in both quantity and value of agricultural exports. See Due op. cit. and Bangai op.cit.
 4. During 1956-57 imported rice equalled about one-fifth of domestic production.

Table. 6.1
Sierra Leone Rice Imports 1950-57

	<u>Quantity</u> (tons)	<u>Value</u> (£)	<u>Import Value</u> (per ton)
1950	50	2,486	49.7
1951	1,084	37,400	34.5
1952	-	-	-
1953	5	364	72.8
1954	4,586	289,858	63.2
1955	21,065	968,018	45.9
1956	36,800	1,650,442	44.7
1957	31,052	1,492,270	46.0

Source: D. T. Jack op. cit. p. 12.

Perhaps the more important fact about the new wealth and demand was its concentration in the mining areas. The effect of this was to draw agricultural goods and livestock away from Freetown to the Kono and Kenema Districts. For Freetown this resulted in food shortages and continual price rises even after the price leaps in other West African cities had levelled off.¹

Newspaper reports near the end of 1951 cited food cost increases, widespread malnutrition among children, hoarding and profiteering in rice and foodstuffs and an increase in crime.² A memorandum sent to the Government at the time

-
1. The problem was exacerbated by the fast increasing Freetown population. Banton estimated the city's population to be 85,000 in 1953 (up from 64,567 in 1947) and growing at a rate of 2,500 per annum. op.cit. p. 78.
 2. Crimes against property increased from 4,642 in 1948 to 5,699 in 1952. Annual Reports of the Sierra Leone Police Force, 1948 p. 10; 1952 p. 12.

related: "We consider the situation graver than during the last of the 1914 war when serious consequences such as the riot and looting of Syrians occurred..."¹

During this early period of hardship, it was not the Freetown trade union leaders who led the protest against the community's economic plight. Union leaders were hesitant about adopting a radical course during the wage negotiations of 1951-52. (Wage increases were subsequently secured through the JICs and Wages Boards during both years). Instead, the Sierra Leone women, under the banner of the Women's Movement, organized popular protest demonstrations² and petitioned government for assistance.³ By the end of 1951, the Movement had pooled its finances, made bulk purchases of palm oil and retailed the item at a controlled price.

1. Memorandum to H.E. Sir George Beresford-Stooke October 1951 from the Sierra Leone Women's Movement Daily Mail 25 October 1951.
2. During a protest march in Freetown in November, 1951 an estimated 18,000-20,000 women participated.
3. Demands included a government rice subsidy, controlled exportation of palm oil and controlled prices for oil and nuts, the establishment of a union of fishermen and fisherwomen, and control over imported non-luxury items (i.e. milk, sugar, flour etc.).

Despite their efforts, prices continued to increase during the following year. Price increases in meat, rice, foofoo and palm oil were recorded.¹ By September 1952, a seven day strike notice was given by City Council employees who demanded an increase in their cost-of-living allowance. The threatened strike, which would have affected the markets, water works and fire brigade, was temporarily called off after conciliation efforts by the Commissioner of Labour. Not until the workers finally struck work for one day early in October were concessions granted.

At the end of the year, Government finally established a Price Control Advisory Board empowered to regulate prices in the Colony area.

Early in 1953, the cost-of-living crisis was clearly evident in the Protectorate. After a tour up country the Acting Commissioner of Labour noted that "all over the districts in the Protectorate the cry is against the rise in cost-of-living."² In September, seventy-three Protectorate based railway employees resigned membership of the Railway Workers' Union "owing to the cost of living".³ (A sharp

1. Daily Mail 23 June, 1952, p. 2.

2. Ibid., 25 March, 1953, p. 1.

3. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Railway Workers' Union (Freetown, 1955) p. 3.

1.09.
1.60
1.80-
1.82.
5.31

decline in payers of dues among all the registered trade unions took place in 1954. See Appendix 5 for data on Sierra Leone trade unions.)

Finally at the end of 1953 union reaction against the economic situation in Freetown appeared. A strike by the Artisan Workers Union against Elder Dempster Lines took place in August over the failure of the Company to pay a negotiated wage increase.¹ In October, a second strike by the same union, involving approximately eight hundred men engaged by Messrs. Pauling and Company, took place at the dock-yards.² Following a threat by the union leader to call out union men engaged by the company in the Protectorate, the four day old strike was called off.

Early in 1954 a strike date was issued by the Freetown electricity workers. This group was dissatisfied with the provisional estimates made for them in the City budget and with the promotion procedure within the Department. The strike was averted after a meeting between the Chief Electrical Engineer and a delegation of electricity workers.³

-
1. The strike lasted only one-half day.
 2. The strike followed victimization of six workers who were demonstrating against unannounced pay deductions.
 3. Daily Mail, 8 February 1954.

Growing protest did little to curb the price increases. In May, Government approved an increase in the controlled rice price (Government rice mill supplied rice to authorized dealers to be sold at regulated prices. Each bag sold allowed the dealer a profit of 8d, and on average three bags were sold each day. This provided a profit of only 2/- a day, certainly a low margin for the bulk involved.¹ During August 1954 dealers were allocated four bags each day.) On the 1st September Municipal Rates were increased by 1/6.²

Nor did prognostications offer any cause for optimism. The Minister of Trade and Commerce predicted shortages of local rice for the following year due to the poor weather conditions in 1954.³ The flow of imported goods to the country was disrupted by the London dock strike (mid 1954), causing a delay in goods reaching West Africa.

When negotiations on the Artisan and Transport JICs commenced in late September - 1954, it was against this bleak economic background of ever mounting prices.

1. This probably contributed to the black marketing and selling above control prices which were taking place.
2. From this same date the Women's movement printed a newspaper every ten days providing popular commentary on the economic situation.
3. Rain early in 1954 prevented the clearing by burning of land in the upland rice region of the country.

Cost of Living Index

From the start of the 1954-55 negotiations, the cost-of-living change was featured prominently. On the basis of unofficially collected data, worker representatives recorded the following price changes:¹

	<u>1951-52</u>	<u>1954</u>
Rice	3d (cup)	6d.
Foofoo	$\frac{1}{2}$ d for 2 oz.	2d. for 1 oz.
Palm Oil	9d. qt.	1/4 qt.
Fish	9d. lb.	1/6 lb.
Meat	2/- lb.	2/9 lb.

Increases in municipal rates and school fees were cited, along with substantial increases in rents.²

The unions expressed dissatisfaction with the existing cost of living index (based upon the 1942 budget survey) and went to great lengths to demonstrate what they believed to be the true cost of living rise. The view of the Labour Department official who chaired the meetings of the JICs was defensive: "As figures supplied by the Labour Department

1. Minutes. Transport JIC, 22 November, 1954. Prices recorded from traders in the market place.
2. Union spokesmen quoted the rent for a worker and his family as £3/month in 1954, up from 12/- or 15/- per month in 1952.

were the only statistics available it could not be practicable to hold up negotiations further until more reliable figures were obtainable".¹ Employer representatives concurred and, during the final stages of negotiation, were surprised that the unions would refuse an offer of 6d based upon an eighteen point cost of living index rise (1952-54) when they had accepted 9d for a rise of one hundred and twenty two (1950-52) during the preceding bargaining session.²

It was only after the Strike that the extent of unreliability in the index figures was exposed. A British statistician, Mr. W.B. Reddaway, visited the country "to examine the construction of Cost of Living Indices in the light of present conditions...", and to submit recommendations for their improvement. In this task Reddaway was forced to make an assessment of the adequacy of the 1942 based Index. His statement on the subject was illuminating.³

-
1. Minutes. Transport JIC, 2 December, 1954.
 2. Minutes Combined JIC Meeting, Artisan and Transport, 4 February, 1955. Figures were based upon the quarter preceding the bargaining round.
 3. W.B. Reddaway Notes on the Movement of Retail Prices 1951-54 (Freetown, 1955) par. 1.

It will not be possible to carry the new index backwards into the past because prices were not collected for some important sectors (notably rents), and were not collected by properly controlled methods for most of the field. I regard it as most important that the new index should not start life by being associated with an uncertain measurement of a very controversial figure...

Specific criticisms of the index were numerous. For example, the budgets on which it was based had been restricted to literate heads of households. Effectively this meant only clerks and artisans. Reddaway proposed that the new index be based on labourer expenditure patterns "since users will normally be able to assume that the movement (whether upwards or downwards) would probably have been smaller for artisans and clerks".¹ Secondly, under the 1942 Index, luxury items (tobacco, festival fees etc.,) which did account for some proportion of worker expenditure were excluded. Three categories originally included in the survey (rent, household utensils and miscellaneous items) provided no policy or method for measuring price changes; "Consequently at all subsequent dates these categories, which accounted for just over 15 per cent. of the expenditure covered by the index

1. W.B. Reddaway Recommendations About the Cost of Living Index in Sierra Leone (Freetown, 1955), p. 3.
This was so because the items purchased by labourers were "capable of showing very big price movements, which might well not apply to the items which feature more largely in the budgets of artisans and clerks."

in Nov/Dec. 1942 have been included in the calculation as if prices were unchanged from that date".¹ This omission caused the index figure to under-estimate real cost-of-living increases. Finally, shortcomings in the procedure used to collect price data on food, fuel, light and clothing were also exposed. In short, the original union criticisms of the index figure were completely justified.

The Reddaway survey in 1955 brought to public attention the fact that a revised cost-of-living index based upon a budget survey in 1951 had been put aside by the Government. This report (known as the Francis Report) provided the weights and other data for the revised index in 1955.² In addition, a sample survey of rents had been undertaken by the Statistical Office in November 1952. The sample results indicated a 10 per cent. rise in rents over a one year period from November 1951. It is not unrealistic to assume that these surveys could have been combined and a procedure for periodic re-assessment adopted long before 1955. Government failure in not publishing the Francis Report and not taking greater initiative in providing a more realistic cost-of-living

1. Ibid., p. 12 For example, the index figure for rents remained unchanged at 108 from 1942.

2. Reddaway spent only two weeks in Sierra Leone and relied heavily on the 1951 survey report in constructing the 1955 Index.

index contributed to the General Strike in 1955. When the Transport JIC in November 1954 passed the motion to have a British statistician come to Freetown to review the existing index, the frustration of worker and union leader had already reached a critical stage.

JIC Negotiations and the General Strike

At the start of negotiations on the Artisan and Transport JICs in 1954 union representatives put forward a wage claim for 1/6 (for all grades) with additional automatic increases tied to changes in the cost-of-living index. Fearing the consequences of this arrangement, the employers stressed the unreliability of the index figure.¹ Conceding the point the unions put forward a flat rate demand for an increase of 2/6 per day.

During November, December and January, meetings were held which resulted in the employers on both Councils increasing their initial offer of 2d to 4d. Their final offer of 6d was made after the issue of a strike notice on 21st January by both Transport and Artisan Unions. The demands of the unions had in the meantime been reduced from

1. Government officials at JIC negotiations, while not willing to press for the introduction of a new index, were not above using the deficiencies of the old one to their advantage.

2/6 and were at 10d by the beginning of February.

Throughout the negotiations, the employers' representatives, both government and private, urged that in the event of a 'dead-lock,' the issue be submitted to arbitration. This was in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Constitutions of both JICs.¹ This procedure became a major point of contention between the two sides.

For their part, the union leaders held the mistaken idea that any decision handed down by an appointed arbitration tribunal was binding on the two parties concerned.² At no time before the strike took place did Government officials attempt to correct this erroneous notion. In fact in official press releases and broadcast speeches emphasis was placed on the illegality of strike action by any worker in 'essential' services.³ The constitutional

1. Clause 1 in the constitutions of both Councils.
2. Daily Mail 26 January, 1955, p.1. It was only after the strike that the important voluntary aspect of arbitration was recognized. Sierra Leone's 1939 Trade Disputes Act parallels the 1919 Industrial Courts Act in Great Britain and in both statutes the decision of an arbitration body becomes operative only after 'voluntary' acceptance by both sides.
3. The Artisans Union organized workers in 'essential' services (water supply, electricity and sanitary work). Government maintained this position on the basis of its interpretation of the 1939 Trade Disputes Ordinance.

obligation of the unions to seek arbitration was repeated without any mention of the voluntary nature of an arbitration decision. In a crucial meeting called by the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour near the end of January, the Minister, Siaka Stevens, (formerly general secretary of the Mine Workers Union), further confused the issue by informing union delegates that:¹

Government has in hand provision for the setting up of a Board of Inquiry to look into and report on the causes and circumstances of the dispute. I repeat "to look into and report on the causes and circumstances of the dispute" after which compulsory arbitration may be resorted to if necessary. This is the course laid down by law.

The situation before the Strike was one of employer insistence on recourse to institutional methods for settling differences and apprehension on the part of union leaders over the nature of these same methods. The unions' scepticism of an arbitration award (regardless of its nature) was explained after the strike by Mr. Marcus Grant, General Secretary of the Artisan Workers' Union:²

-
1. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Strike and Riots in Freetown, Sierra Leone, During February 1955 (Freetown 1955) Appendix C "Note of a Meeting Called by the Minister for Lands, Mines and Labour on the 27th of January," p. 63.
 2. Minutes. Combined JIC Meeting 19 February 1955 p. 2. Marcus Grant was active in the labour movement from the organizing days of the Sierra Leone Youth League before the War. (He was appointed secretary of the Seamen's Union in 1938.) Grant retired as General Secretary of the Artisan Union in 1965 after more than twenty years in the post.

An arbitration tribunal could consist of three members, a chairman, and one member each representing employers' and workers' interests respectively. Since it was the Governor who appointed the tribunal, the chairman would invariably be a Government official and since Government was the largest employer of labour, this would mean that the Employers would have two representatives on the tribunal against one in respect of the Workers, the interests of employers would therefore be better watched.

An arbitration tribunal weighted in favour of the employers' side led Grant to conclude that since Government as major employer had refused to go above a 6d wage increase in negotiation, it was unlikely that it would be willing to do so in arbitration.¹

(After the Strike, in his testimony before a Commission of Inquiry, Grant voiced union dissatisfaction with industrial relations machinery that seemed to have as its sole purpose the frustration of union demands. His opinion of the bargaining machinery was crystallized in the term 'set-up' designed to thwart any union strike action.)²

1. Strike Report op.cit. p. 15. A single arbitrator appointed to decide a case in 1949 had been a Government appointed Supreme Court Judge. This earlier case, however, had been decided for the union's side.

2. Ibid., p. 46.

Events Preceding the Strike

On the 21st January 1955 the Transport and Artisan Workers' Union served their first strike notice to Government Departments and private employers involved in JIC negotiations.¹ In the event of continued 'dead-lock' workers would stop work after two weeks. Three days after the posting of the strike notice the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Labour corresponded with all members of the JICs expressing regret over the failure not to bring the case before arbitration and alluding to the restrictions on the right to strike of workers in essential services. On the same day a radio broadcast speech emphasized that: "In the event of strike action the Government wishes to make it clear that any strike action by workers employed in connection with the supply of water or electricity or the performance of sanitary services would be contrary to law."²

Following a meeting with the Minister for Lands, Mines and Labour on 27th January, union leaders withdrew the strike notice and consented to re-engage in negotiations.

1. Namely the Railway, Road Transport, Electricity, Public Works, Posts and Telegraphs, and Sanitary Departments, Services Works (Civilian employees) and private and commercial contractors.

2. Strike Report op.cit., p. 11.

Resumed negotiations saw the two sides moving closer towards agreement. On the 4th of February the employers' offer had been increased to 6d per diem wage increase for all grades, while union demands were reduced to 10d. Still dissatisfied, Artisan and Transport Union leaders once again served strike notice on the 5th February. Failing settlement a 'General Strike' was scheduled after three days. On the 6th of February, the General Secretary of the Maritime Workers' Union attempted to conciliate and to persuade the Transport and Artisan Union leaders to "explore all legal avenues,"¹ before striking. The advice was not accepted and the strike took place as scheduled on the 9th of February.

Freetown General Strike

The General Strike, involving approximately 9,000 workers, most of whom were members of the Artisan and Allied Workers' Union and the Transport Workers' Union, lasted until the evening of the 12th of February. The strike action was localized in Freetown, although unofficial action was threatened among the Yengema and Hangha mine workers.²

1. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

2. Annual Report of the Labour Department, 1955, p. 16.

During the first day of the strike, demonstrations took place in the Cline Town Railway Station and the Queen Elizabeth II Quay areas. Despite the demonstrations, the leaders of the Maritime and Waterfront Workers and the Railway Workers' Union refused to align themselves officially with the struck unions.¹ Nevertheless, it was estimated that about five hundred Railway men struck work independently in sympathy with the strikers.²

As the strike continued past its second day, an increasing section of the Freetown community, workers and non-workers, including women and teenagers, became involved. From the 11th February, reports of interference with public services and open conflict with the Freetown police increased. Events on the 11th culminated in the death of the Assistant Superintendent of Police, after which the Royal West African Frontier Force was called in. Following the alleged killing of a Freetown youth by a Lebanese trader & widespread looting of Lebanese trading shops commenced.

1. In the first case growing competition from other West African ports probably influenced the no strike decision while in the case of the Railwaymen, a split among the leaders of the union during the early months of 1955 frustrated consensus within the union itself.

2. Daily Mail 15 April 1955 p.p. 4-5.

When the strike was finally called off on the evening of the 12th, the official mortality list numbered eighteen,¹ with an additional one hundred and twenty one wounded. The assessment of damage to public property was over £69,000 while Lebanese traders claimed that more than £160,000 worth of merchandise was lost in the lootings.² In his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry after the strike, the Commissioner of Police noted the arrest of eighty people between February 9th and the 20th, some of whom received sentences of up to two years' imprisonment. About thirty daily wage employees in the Departments of Public Works, Electricity and Post and Telegraph were dismissed. Pensionable employees were rehired only after forsaking all retirement benefits. (Fortunately for this group, Government rescinded this action upon the advice of the Commission of Inquiry). Approximately 36,000 man days of work were lost during the strike. Finally the Freetown General Strike was also seen as a contributing factor behind the Protectorate tax riots in 1955-56.³

-
1. One policeman and seventeen civilians. This official list undoubtedly understated the true number of civilian deaths since only those bodies taken to the city hospital were recorded.
 2. Daily Mail 15 February 1955 p. 2 and Legislative Council Debates July 21, 1955, p. 25. 'Lebanese' in popular usage today is a generic classification including Lebanese, Syrians, Armenian, etc., residing in Sierra Leone.
 3. Commission of Inquiry into Disturbances in the Provinces 1955-56, pp. 12-13. These disturbances were chiefly the result of maladministration of the Protectorate poll tax.

Factors Which Contributed to the Strike

The breakdown in negotiation and the diminution of union confidence in the bargaining machinery may be seen as part of a wider change in inter-group and inter-personal relations that together determined the health of Sierra Leone's system of industrial relations.

Conciliation efforts by the Labour Department, were practically non-existent during the strained negotiations preceding the General Strike. Apart from informing the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour of certain provisions for arbitration under the Trade Disputes Ordinance, the role of the Commissioner of Labour was passive.¹ This indifference may be traced to earlier differences between the union leaders and the Commissioner which prompted the Council of Labour to sever all connections with the Labour Department.²

(The cause of the rift seems to have resulted from a personality clash between the leader of the Maritime Workers' Union and the Commissioner of Labour.) While the break was only temporary, it apparently jaundiced the view of the

1. Letter. 14 January 1955 Commissioner of Labour S.R. Britton to Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour.

2. Daily Mail 5 April 1954. The Browne-Marke Board of Inquiry into the causes of the strike severely criticized the role played by the Labour Department. The Report of this Board, however, was set aside following the appointment of the Shaw Commission.

Commissioner and was probably partly responsible for his failure to conciliate.

The efforts of the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour to mediate in the dispute were futile. At least two factors contributed to his lack of success. Firstly, some antagonism had developed between Siaka Stevens (Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour) and Marcus Grant when the former started his organizing drive among Protectorate labour during the late 1940s.¹ Whatever rivalry was born of this episode could hardly have been mitigated when Stevens became the first Sierra Leonean to lead the newly created Ministry of Lands, Mines and Labour after 1953.

In addition to this personal rivalry, the Minister never succeeded in freeing himself from other pressing commitments so that he could concentrate on the threatened labour stoppage. During the period leading up to the February strike, the Minister was forced to give time and energy to the very important talks with the Selection Trust Diamond Company over an amended tax schedule. On 31 January, the Minister was detained by the mine talks

1. Grant claimed organization and representation rights of this group for his own union, the Artisan Workers.

and failed to carry out his intention of attending a combined JIC meeting. This was the first combined meeting of both Artisan and Transport JICs, and it was called immediately after the unions had withdrawn their first strike notice. From a tactical point of view, the Minister's failure to attend was a grave mistake.

Nor was any assistance forthcoming from official quarters. If anything, action taken by other Government personnel exacerbated the situation. For example, the Governor left Freetown for a one week tour of the Port Loko and Kambia Districts of the Protectorate on the 4th of February, five days before the strike.

Following the broadcast of the Government's statement on the strike, the trade union leaders composed a counter-statement defending their position. Despite requests for the use of the rediffusion service, the Public Relations Officer refused to give the unions broadcasting time. Justification for this refusal was that "it was not part of its (Government's) duty to make rediffusion facilities available for a partisan statement by one side in an industrial dispute".¹ Given the fact that the Government

1. Strike Report op. cit. p. 11. In the opinion of the Shaw Commission, the Government was justified in this decision: "The workers' case need not have gone by default and in fact it was not prejudiced in any way by this denial of rediffusion facilities for their 'counterblast'".

was the major single employer on both JICs this position was hardly tenable.

Immediately before the strike took place on the 9th of February, a Board of Inquiry was appointed by Government without any prior consultation with the trade unionists. On the 8th of February a Government press release warned the workers that daily paid staff would have no claim to pay while away from work. Salaried employees who participated would have their contracts terminated, thereby forfeiting pension rights and annual allowances.

If by those various activities the Government hoped to demoralize union leaders and the rank and file, the walkout on the 9th February testified to their failure.

The Commission of Inquiry

The Commission of Inquiry appointed near the end of February, "to inquire into and report on the riots and disruption of public services", and "on the antecedent strike...", was under the chairmanship of Sir John Shaw, an officer in the British Colonial Service. Assisting him were the Honourable A.C. Acolate, Puisne Judge in the Supreme Court of the Gold Coast, and Mr. George Gordon Honeyman, Barrister and one time chairman of a British

Industrial Court and the Arbitration Boards in Jamaica and Trinidad.

The character of the Commission was reflected in its attention to technical and legal aspects relating to the strike. Particular interest was taken in the constitution of the JICs, the rules of the respective unions on a strike vote, provisions regarding industrial disputes in the constitution of the Council of Labour and finally the Trade Dispute Ordinance 1939. On the basis of its findings on these points, as well as testimonies given in public and private hearings, the Commission placed the entire blame for the breakdown in industrial relations on the unions, and particularly on the leaders of the Artisans Union.¹

Government was exonerated from any blame for the conflict. On the failure of Government to publish the 1951 Francis Report the Commission reported: "We had no positive evidence as to what actually caused the delay, but the government had nothing to gain by suppressing the report." Apparently Government's position as major employer on bargaining bodies, which utilized as a major bargaining

1. Ibid., pp. 41-42, "In the present dispute one of the most alarming features has been the unwarranted assumption by Marcus Grant of dictatorial powers, which he has sought to justify by various specious arguments which have wholly failed to convince us."

criterion changes in the cost-of-living index, had not yet registered with the newly arrived Commission appointees. According to the Commission it was inconceivable that a sinister motive, "prejudicial to the workers' interests..." lay behind the omission.

The failure of the Government to make clear to the union that acceptance of an arbitration award was voluntary went undetected by the Commission. Further, it saw nothing reprehensible in the Governor's departure on a Protectorate tour at a time when crucial council talks were under way.¹ (This partiality to Government resulted in major distortions in the Commission's final Report.)

While the Commission of Inquiry found that the "existing machinery was adequate to deal with the dispute which culminated in the strike", it offered several suggestions for improvement.²

1. The two existing Councils should no longer combine in negotiations (as they did from 31 January 1955)
2. Separate Councils should be created for Government and non-Government employees.

1. "There was no reason then to suppose that a strike was imminent, still less that it would take place on the 9th February, on the contrary, the first strike notice had been withdrawn and negotiations resumed."
Ibid., p. 49.

2. Statement of the Government of Sierra Leone on the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Strike and Riots in Freetown during February, 1955 and Report op.cit. pp. 52-53.

3. Separate Councils for "essential services" should be created, parallel with revised legislation limiting the right to strike or to lock out.

The Sierra Leone Government's initial response to these recommendations was cautious. It emphasized that the Joint Industrial Councils were voluntary bodies, "and it (was) for employers and employees to consult together and agree as to the future form negotiating bodies should take."¹ Nevertheless over the next two years the various recommendations made by the Commission were discussed at meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee. By 1958, a separate JIC for private commercial firms had been established. A suggestion that an independent party sit as chairman in future Council meetings, in place of a Labour Department official, was also adopted. Finally, since 1955 no combined Transport and Artisan JIC meetings have been held to negotiate wage rates.

1. Ibid., Statement

Conclusion

The continued upward spiral in prices during the early fifties, had a disquieting effect upon the Freetown community. When negotiations resumed on Transport and Artisan JICs in 1954, union leaders voiced suspicions of the cost-of-living index. Government representatives on the Councils side-stepped the issue; adopted a hard bargaining strategy during negotiations; and when deadlock was reached insisted that the JIC constitutional provision for arbitration be adhered to. The trade union leaders resented what appeared to be calculated 'use' of the industrial relations machinery. Marcus Grant rightly pointed out the trade union's disadvantage in the case of a bargaining tribunal being appointed. Frustration with the situation was evident in Grant's testimony before the Shaw Commission. He depicted the negotiating machinery as a 'set up' specifically designed to deny the union's right to strike. (This same union leader had been on a visit to England just before the strike. While there he noted that British trade unionists under similar industrial relations practices simply refused arbitration if they thought their interests would be better served by so doing. Before the Commission, Grant noted that the precedent for

his own union action had been set by the U.K. electricity workers.¹ If the Creole trade union leaders' acceptance of the industrial relations machinery had been conditioned by their admiration for anything English, the preference held equally well for those practices less congenial to the Colonial Government.)

In the wake of the strike and the recommendations advanced by the Shaw Commission the industrial bargaining machinery underwent considerable change.

Institutional and Economic Changes After the Strike

Official indifference and complacency towards industrial relations matters before the 1955 Freetown General Strike were followed by general disillusionment with the existing bargaining arrangements after the event. Confidence in the character of the pre-Strike negotiating machinery was gone and from 1955 changes took place in the design and operation of the Wages Boards and Joint Industrial Councils.

1. Strike Report op.cit. p. 47.

Changes in Design

The practice of promoting Wages Boards in private employment, and JICs for government employed workers, was maintained until 1958. When workers in the printing trade were given bargaining machinery in 1954, the prescription was a Wages Board to cater for this private employment sector.¹ After the Port of Freetown came under the supervision of the Government in 1955, a separate negotiating body was established for port labourers.² Since the port worker was now paid by the Government, a JIC settled wages and conditions after 1957. (The creation of the Port JIC effectively halved the jurisdiction of the original Maritime and Waterfront Workers Wages Board, which continued to serve the interest of maritime (sea going) labour employed by private shipping lines. This move met with no union opposition since the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union became the recognized worker representative on the new JIC.)

A departure from this earlier criterion for establishing one body or the other took place after 1955, following the

-
1. The Printing Wages Board functioned intermittently only up to 1957, and was then defunct.
 2. Formerly, the major importing and exporting (private) firms had control over the loading and unloading of ships in the Freetown harbour.

insistence of private commercial firms for bargaining rights outside government dominated transport and construction JICs.

As far back as January 1953, a spokesman for UAC, on behalf of the Sierra Leone Commercial concerns, presented the Sierra Leone Government with an ultimatum demanding the separation of private employers from the Artisan JIC. Instead, a system of direct negotiations between management and employers were sought. At the time the reasons given for seeking separation included:¹

1. Government alone was in a position to recover extra costs of a wage increase through taxation.
2. Commercial firms were forced to ignore economic circumstances in their departments.
3. Wage increases in one bargaining group set off rounds in other industries.

It was concluded that "the outlook and the background of these two sections of the employers' group must necessarily be different and at times conflicting".²

When no change resulted from this initial petition a second attempt was made the following year. However, only

1. Letter 19 January 1953 Unilever House, London to Colonial Secretary signed on behalf of UAC, P.Z. Ollivant, Genet & Co. and CFAO.

2. Ibid.

after the 1955 General Strike did the Chamber of Commerce representatives to the transport and construction JICs refuse to occupy their seats on Council. (They undoubtedly gained support for this move from the Shaw Committee recommendations.)

In the beginning, the trade unions opposed the split, and accused the commercial firms of attempting to disrupt industrial relations in the country. They felt that private employer bargaining would result in company unions.¹ This opposition to individual private employer bargaining resulted in the establishment of a Commercial Workers' JIC in 1958. The body covered all private commercial firms and functioned up to 1966.

After this first break, negotiating arrangements presented a mixed pattern. While private employment in ocean shipping came under the Articled Seamen JIC in 1967, and a Wages Board was established in 1958 for Government employed agricultural workers, the old system (i.e. Government employment - JIC; private employment - Wages Board) pertained in setting up the Fishing Industry Wages Board in 1962.

1. Minutes Joint Consultative Committee 14 September, 1956. Union representatives included leaders on the transport, artisan and maritime unions.

Changes in Operation

The Mine Workers' Wages Board, established in 1945, functioned successfully to 1952. At the inaugural meeting of the Board, the Colonial Secretary noted significant aspects of the new bargaining arrangement:¹

This Board, as you will all know, has been adopted to deal with mining workers collectively, as opposed to the old system by which each mine had its own arrangement, laid down by the management as seemed most appropriate in the circumstance.

Following the strike at the SLST Yengema diamond mine in 1951, prolonged negotiations took place, resulting in a substantial wage increase for the employees. The critical feature of the settlement was that it took place outside the province of the Wages Board. The Labour Report for the year noted: "There is little doubt that had the Company refused to negotiate or had insisted on negotiations inside the Wages Board, the workers would have ceased work again and might have resorted to violence of various kinds." The independent settlement marked the first serious threat to the industrial character of the negotiating

1. Minutes Inaugural Meeting of the Mine Workers' Wages Board 13 March 1946.

arrangements. Despite the criticisms of its action at the time,¹ SLST again granted a wage increase to its employees, outside any Wages Board procedure, after the 1955 General Strike.² Similarly the maritime industry experienced independent settlements from 1955. Employer representatives and the General Secretary of the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union agreed upon substantial wage increases during August of the same year. Both sides wished to avoid the regulation stipulating that a period of six months had to elapse before an award of the Wages Board could be modified. Since the Board had awarded a 7d increase the previous March, formal negotiations could not have started until October. But, as a Commission of Inquiry had granted a 1/- rise to workers in transport and construction work during July, 1955, the maritime employers and trade union leaders thought it prudent not to delay a similar increase for workers in the industry.

Although the Commissioner of Labour condemned the settlement outside the Maritime Wages Board, in October the following year negotiations outside the Maritime Wages Board

-
1. A motion moved at a subsequent sitting of the Mine Workers' Wages Board read: "That this Board does not accept the principle of differential minimum rates for different undertakings within the mining industry in Sierra Leone." Minutes, 9 July, 1952.
 2. The action followed an unofficial strike allegedly inspired by members of the Artisan Workers' Union employed at the mine.

again took place. Again the reason given for the action was to avoid time delays involved in the statutory machinery.¹ Further, from the unions' point of view, the outside bargaining provided a two step bargaining strategy. If increases were not gained through independent action, the Wages Board insured an alternative means of settlement.

Bargaining outside the framework of industrial bargaining bodies entered a new phase in 1960. Since that year the Clerical and Municipal Workers' Union has continuously pressed for individual negotiations with private commercial concerns. (This development reflects the reversal of the union arguments which had originally led to the creation of the industry-wide Commercial Workers' JIC during 1957-58.)

Labour Advances After the Strike.

In the aftermath of the 1955 General Strike, wage labour and labour organizations in Sierra Leone entered a period of unparalleled economic advance. The one shilling increase granted to transport and construction workers in 1955 was soon generalized to all sectors. An additional

1. Letter from the Port Manager to the Commissioner of Labour November, 1956.

rise of nine pence for wage labour came in 1956 and two years later a further ten pence was awarded following negotiations on the industrial bargaining bodies. Between early 1955 and 1958 wages for the majority of Sierra Leone's employed work force increased by two shillings and seven pence or almost 70%. (Appendix 2 outlines the upward movement of real wages during this period.)

Improvements in other work conditions supplemented the wage gains. Better conditions clauses, which had been incorporated into the agreements signed by the Artisan and Transport Workers' Unions from the early 1950's were adopted following negotiations on the commercial, fishing and agricultural bargaining machinery. Although the working of the clauses differed slightly among the different sectors, the general principle was the same. In each case the clause gave insurance that those workers receiving rates above a negotiated minimum level would continue to receive the more favourable rates, "...to the same extent as the terms and conditions enjoyed by him immediately before the signing of such subsequent Agreement..."¹ The clause safeguarded

1. Schedule of Recognized Terms and Conditions of Employment for the Artisan and General Workers, February 2nd, 1965, par. 13.

the superior wage position of those workers who were receiving above the stipulated minimum rates for their occupation.

During 1957-58 the Miners' Union and the port workers in the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union secured the 'check-off' of union dues. The procedure became operative following union member authorization of the subscription. (The practice for sea-going maritime labour of paying union dues after completing each coastal trip remained unchanged.) During the same period the Artisan Union accumulated a total of some five thousand signatories to the check-off.¹ Following a tour of the Protectorate, the General Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union accompanied by a Labour Department Officer introduced the check-off while recruiting members.²

The new groups under the check-off arrangement joined the Railway Workers who had earlier secured the practice. In the later cases, the Labour Department gave support and

-
1. The union expressed dissatisfaction with the procedure, however, as it was believed that it gave rise to the fear of victimization. TUC Information Service Trade Union News For Overseas, number 41, July 30, 1958, p. 1.
 2. Annual Report of the Labour Department 1959 (Freetown) p. 9.

cooperation in the unions' effort to convince workers of the benefits of the scheme.¹

Another indication of the congenial industrial relations climate favouring worker and union interests took the form of an arbitration award on sick pay to the Artisan Workers' Union.²

Legislation provided additional gains to wage labour. In 1956 an amendment to the Employers and Employed Ordinance removed general sanctions for certain apprentice misdemeanours and desertion while on a journey. During the same year Forced Labour Ordinance No. 33 prohibited the use of such labour and more closely defined the conditions justifying the use of communal labour. Since 1954, subsequent amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act have considerably improved the extent and quality of coverage offered to labourers. Improvements included more generous basic compensation payments (1954), extensions in coverage (inclusion of domestic servants in 1955), payment in respect

-
1. For an official policy statement on the check-off see Government Notice No. 45, January 15, 1958.
 2. From 1957 claims for sick pay supported by a medical certificate were assessed according to the following scale:

<u>Annual Earnings</u>	<u>Sick Pay Allowed</u>	<u>Pay Allowance on Days Out</u>
£ 125 and above	one month	one-half pay
£ 85 - 125	14 days	full pay
£ 85 and below	14 "	one - half pay.

of artificial limbs (1962), and finally compensation paid for accidents near the work place (1967).

At least two factors can be isolated in helping to explain the substantial gains conceded to workers after the 1955 Freetown General Strike. Firstly, was the response of the Colonial Administration to the strike itself. The widespread civil disorder which attended the strike made explicit the latent danger of the strike in the West African urban context. Migrant labour, high unemployment, and rising prices were the sources contributing to the urban living standard of which the strike itself was a reflection. The demonstration of worker protest in the setting had the effect of stimulating popular dissatisfaction. Until Government was willing to remove the sources of the low living standard it had but little other choice than to attempt to limit the occasions when popular reaction to the economic situation would lead to civil disorder. Strike prevention through a soft bargaining policy and supplementary concessions was one elected means.

The second factor favouring advances for wage employees was the general upswing in the economy, related to the diamond mining boom and the increases in indirect taxes

reflecting the upward trend in imports and exports which swelled the Government revenue particularly during the late 1950s. An indicator of the increasing economic activity in the country was the trend in major domestic exports. Government revenue followed a similar upward trend.

Table 6.2

Major Domestic Exports and Total Government Revenue
for Selected Years

(£ thousands)

	Exports	Government Revenue
1950	6,661	3,269
1955	9,927	7,546
1960	25,927	12,835

Sources: Annual Trade Reports; D.T. Jack op.cit. p. 9;
Quarterly Statistical Bulletin, No. 3,
September, 1964, p. 10.

It seems reasonable to conclude that the labour gains which followed the General Strike were related to the strike and the subsequent labour policy adopted by the Colonial Administration. The timing of this changed climate coincided with a general economic upswing which disposed Government and private employers to concede to labour demands thereby securing industrial peace and civil order.

This relationship between wage movements and general strikes in large urban centres was observed in each of the British West African colonies. The pattern was begun in Nigeria in 1945, followed by the Gold Coast in 1950, by Sierra Leone in 1955 and finally by the Gambia in 1961. A major urban strike in each case was followed by a substantial upward movement in wage rates (Appendix 2). Employer sensitivity to strikes is also reflected in the relative wage movements in the construction and mining industries in Sierra Leone, following periods of unrest.

Bargaining Leaders

From the first sittings of Wages Boards and JICs, the changes in wage rates for workers in mining or construction have established the standard for workers in other industries. Wage changes for transport, maritime, agriculture and, until recently, commercial employees have each been greatly conditioned by rates paid the artisans and miners. Also, most of the new manufacturing concerns refer to the rates paid Government labour in construction when determining their own wage scale. While small concerns hiring labour for retail trading or other work are suspected of paying below the minimum standard set by the Artisan JIC,

the impression is that the construction labourer's rate in the Colony and the miner's rate in the Protectorate represent the most important rates from 1946-47.¹

The reason for the Artisan JIC assuming its leadership position was related to the concentration of Government and private employment covered by the decisions of this bargaining body. A wage increase by the Artisan Council affected some 9,000 construction workers as well as employees of the large commercial concerns and certain sections in the Railway Department. The total represented the largest single category of employed workers covered by JIC or Wages Board machinery. The concern of both Government and private employers naturally turned to the Artisan Council since changes made by it had the most telling economic consequences.²

-
1. This impression is based upon the author's survey of some twenty-five manufacturing concerns in the Freetown area and interviews with businessmen and Labour Department officials. Appendix 11 outlines the timing of Artisan and Transport JIC meetings 1947-52, and indicates the leadership role of the former.
 2. The bargaining leadership of the Artisan Council has given an unrealistic bargaining atmosphere to subsequent negotiations on the Transport JIC. This situation produced a series of complaints from the leader of the Transport Workers' Union. The proximity of interest and the desire for effective joint negotiations resulted in combined meetings of both JICs during the talks which preceded the 1955 General Strike.

Over most of the period during which they have operated, the Artisan JIC maintained a position of superiority vis-a-vis the Mine Workers' Wages Board. But after the 1950 and 1951 mine strikes and subsequent negotiations the latter body surpassed the Artisan Council in wage setting. Following the 1955 General Strike the JIC rates again moved ahead of the Miners' Board. The movement reflected employer sensitivity to worker strike action.

Table 6.3

Wage Rates in Construction and Mining
(shillings)

	<u>Artisan JIC Rates</u> (Colony Labourer)	<u>Miners' Wages Board Rates</u> (Heavy Labour)	<u>Ratio</u> Artisan/Miner
1948	2.25	2.0	1.13
1949	2.5	2.17	1.15
1950	2.5	2.17	1.15
1951	3.0	3.17	.95
1952	3.75	3.67	1.02
1953	3.75	4.0	.94
1954	3.75	4.0	.94
1955	4.75	5.0	.95
1956	5.5	5.0	1.10
1957	5.5	6.0	.92
1958	6.33	6.0	1.06
1959	6.33	6.0	1.06
1960	6.33	6.0	1.06
1961	7.0	6.0	1.17
1962	7.67	6.67	1.15
1963	7.67	6.9	1.11
1964	7.67	6.9	1.11
1965	8.17	7.33	1.11
1966	8.17	7.33	1.11

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department and Sierra Leone Royal Gazette. The above rates are for unskilled workers, the largest group in wage employment covered by the bargaining machinery. It is estimated that unskilled labour accounts for 75% of the wage labour force.

Summary

The 1955 General Strike had a considerable impact on the industrial bargaining situation. The strike promoted a feeling of scepticism about the effectiveness of bargaining procedure in regulating union-management affairs. Government officials and private employers were no longer convinced of the rightness of the system and their subsequent reaction resulted in major changes in the design and operation of the JICs and Wages Boards.

Changes in design effected the placement of a JIC in the private sector for commercial employees. This alteration modified the original pattern of establishing JICs for Government and Wages Boards for private employment sectors. Change in operation was brought about by the development of less formal employer-trade union negotiations in the case of the maritime industry and individual employer talks in mining and commerce. In both cases the industrial bargaining machinery was made either supplementary or redundant.

Certainly the most important effect of the 1955 General Strike for the wage earner, was the resulting high wage policy adopted by Government and private employers. Due to sensitivity to the possibility of recurring civil disturbances

stimulated by labour strike action, wage concessions were made in an effort to appease labour groups. During the three years after the strike, wage rates paid unskilled labour rose appreciably. The period was one of relative price stability and real wages reached their highest level. In addition to the wage gains important provisions concerning the conditions of work were also conceded.

The high wage policy was facilitated to some extent by favourable trade balances and Government reserve surpluses which were both related to the rise in the value of diamond exports. Nevertheless, the desire of employers to limit unrest was the true underlying motive behind the wage movement. Sensitivity of employers to labour disturbances was reflected at the industrial level in the timing of the upward movement of wages in construction and mining during the 1950s.

Politics and the 1955 General Strike

Insight into the political aspect of the General Strike involves commentary on the history of labour's political party affiliations. Employed urban-based labourers from the 1920s have remained outside the major political party developments. During the period of the 1920s - 30s when professional Creole politicians were in the last years of their hegemony, little concern was shown and party support

(i.e. National Congress) was rarely solicited from the working class. In fact it was the professional Creole political leaders who became the most ardent attackers of I.T.A. Wallace-Johnson's Youth League during the late nineteen thirties.

As the political reins of power were transferred through successive constitutional reforms from the 1920s, it was the established traditional tribal leaders who gained the advantage.¹ But this group had even less inclination to listen to the demands of the urban wage earner. (The threat to the chiefs' authority was greatest among the dissatisfied local young men subject to traditional rule.)² When the Sierra Leone Peoples' Party was established during the late 1940s it invariably adopted a suppressive approach to any popular grievances.³ The reason for this has been succinctly stated by Dr. Martin Kilson:⁴

1. Constitutional changes from 1924 gradually expanded the representation and political influence of Protectorate tribal leaders on legislative bodies. The Colonial policy of favouring the tribal leaders vis-a-vis Creoles in the Colony led to hostility between the two groups.

2. Kilson op. cit. esp. Chapter xi

3. Ibid., passim.

4. Ibid., p. 192.

Far more than has been recognized by some observers of African political change, there are numerous circumstances in which the African elite may well have a greater harmony or identity of interests with the Colonial authorities or expatriate groups than the common people. This is particularly the case during decolonization, whenever the people challenge the authority of the governmental and social systems. These are after all, the systems the new elite aspire to control once colonial authorities transfer power to them. Populist behaviour, in their reckoning could hardly be permitted to threaten the transfer of this power.

During the Strike it was the SLPP African Members of Government who were in need of Police protection.¹ Not surprisingly, after the strike, suspicions grew linking it with various political intrigues. A hint of collusion between the unions and the opposition party was made in the Sierra Leone Government statement read in the House of Commons.² Another charge suggested Grant had instigated the strike in order to launch his own political career. Before the Shaw Commission Grant admitted his part in the formation of a Sierra Leone Labour Party shortly before the strike took place.

-
1. Ministers A. Margai, Stevens and Mustapha.
 2. Great Britain Parliamentary Debates (Commons) 1954-55, 537, p. 561. It was claimed that an opposition party leader had addressed the strikers and blamed their plight on the party in power. The statement was denied by trade union leaders and members of the opposition party. Daily Mail 19 February, 1955, p.1.

Whether or not the suggestion was true, this union leader gained considerable popularity after the strike. One newspaper commentator noted: "His men - the peasants from Lokko, Mende, Kono, Sherbro country - all followed him with some amount of loyalty. This is a wonderful lesson for all those who have pretensions to the political leadership of this country."¹ After the publication and distribution of the Shaw Commission's Report with its condemnation of Grant's action, a mass demonstration moved a vote of confidence in the union leader. During the following year, Grant enjoyed continued popularity and when the 1957 General Election was announced he came forward as a candidate of the Sierra Leone Labour Party.

The platform of this party was generally 'reformist' in character. The Labour Party was the first to distribute a 'manifesto' before the election. The document proposed certain political, social and economic reforms, namely, independence within the shortest possible time; Africanisation of the civil service; and better roads, schools and housing. Special trade union rights included the right to bargain collectively, while the eradication

1. Daily Mail, 17 February, 1955, p. 3.

of any difference between Colony and Protectorate people was demanded.¹

Despite efforts to attract working class support the Labour Party failed to develop a sizeable following.

D.J.R. Scott in his review of the 1957 General Election made the following observation:²

The Labour Party made little effort to appeal to workers in the Protectorate - iron and diamond mining and railway men - and where it did so it met with little success. Moreover workers throughout the country were hardly aware of themselves as such rather than as members of their several tribes, and it was left to the new party to show them good reason why they should so see themselves.

This the Labour Party failed to do and when the election results were announced, the Party had not won a single seat. Grant received a substantial number of votes, but was decisively beaten in his constituency.

The failure of the Party was partly related to the Colony-Protectorate divisions (Grant, a Creole, failed to gain Party support outside the Colony), tribal loyalties, the absence of a working-class consciousness and the

1. 'Manifesto' of the Sierra Leone Labour Party, January 1957 from Private Collection, The Reverend Professor Harry Sawyerr, Fourah Bay College, Freetown.
2. Dr. D.J.R. Scott "Sierra Leone Election of May 1957" in W.J.M. Mackenzie and K.E. Robinson (eds.) Five Elections in Africa (Oxford, 1960) p. 189.

financial weakness of the Labour Party. In addition, the Party failed to consolidate support among trade union leaders. For example, former leaders of the Railway Workers and Mine Workers campaigned for election under the rival Progressive Party. Each claimed the support of their individual unions during the election.

Again, the earlier structuring of the trade union movement into a limited number of major industrial unions (to better serve in the bargaining arrangements) affected union political activity. The major unions, each with its own bargaining machinery, reached decisions on labour matters (for example the Maritime Union during the General Strike) and in politics, independently. In each case union leaders have made pragmatism and self-interest guiding principles in deciding.

During the most recent General Election in 1967 these characteristics again frustrated an organized labour coalition. While S. Stevens headed the opposition APC party supported by the leaders of the Commercial Workers' Union and Transport Workers, Marcus Grant (now General Secretary of the Maritime Workers' Union) still unreconciled with Stevens, campaigned for election under the SLPP.

The fact that bargaining power resided with the major industrial unions has engendered an independence that has also impeded the effectiveness of the Council of Labour. While this body is titular head of the labour movement in the country it has no real power. A major split in the Council from 1962 to 1966 left individual member unions and industrial relations in the country largely unaffected.

CHAPTER VII

CONSEQUENCES OF 1955 - THE
BREAKDOWN IN INDUSTRIAL NEGOTIATIONS

CHAPTER VII
CONSEQUENCES OF 1955 -
THE BREAKDOWN IN INDUSTRIAL NEGOTIATIONS

While the high wage policy after 1955 succeeded in keeping strike frequency relatively low (see Appendix 3), it led to an acceleration of the rural-urban migration movement, especially from 1958. When wage employment opportunity in urban areas failed to expand rapidly enough to absorb the newly arrived migrants, unemployment increased. In recent years the high unemployment level has been accompanied by a growing national debt and a chronic deficit in Government budgets. After 1965, the consequences of this have been a wage freeze and a fall in the total number of wage earners, thereby increasing unemployment.

As a result of these restraints industrial wage negotiations on either Wages Boards or JICs, have become moribund. Searching for gains, trade unionists, particularly in the commercial sector, have turned to collective bargaining with individual private employers. As a result, wage increases and other concessions have become specific to small groups of employees. Recent inter and intra union disputes have decreased the likelihood of an early return to more centralized methods of wage regulation.

Growing Unemployment

Unemployment for 1958

Consecutive wage increases from 1955 continued through 1958. Early in March of that year the JIC for Artisans reached agreement on a ten-pence wage increase for daily paid workers to be made back dated to the first of the year.¹ The increase was soon generalized through successive negotiations to other industries. Shortly after the increase the Ministry of Works and Housing announced retrenchment in their work force.² In response, the Council of Labour threatened a protest demonstration and entered negotiations with Government officials. Early the following year Government announced the appointment of a committee to investigate the redundancy problem. At the time, financial shortages were blamed for the labour expenditure cuts.³

In March 1959, the Railway Workers' Union called a strike in protest against retrenchments in the Department. A committee appointed to inquire into the dispute cited the termination of service of forty-eight men, twenty-four of whom were trade unionists, as the main issue in dispute. (The strike was called after the Department had refused to

1. Minutes of the Artisan JIC, March 4, 1958.
2. Daily Mail, July 28, 1958, p. 1. The extent of the 'lay-off' was not given.
3. Daily Mail, January 13, 1959, p. 1.

reinstate the union men.) During the committee's investigations, it was found that a freeze had been placed on an original proposal to retrench one hundred and thirty-five labourers.¹ Regardless of the magnitude of the retrenchment the right of the Railway management to adopt this policy was reaffirmed in the Committee's Report. Following the publication of the report the Railway Union rejected its findings and temporarily adopted a 'go-slow'. After this episode the Council of Labour cabled the Colonial Secretary requesting the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate the extent of redundancy in the country.²

By June 1959 water supply workers were being affected by staff cuts. The General Secretary of the Artisan Union claimed shortly after that 2,096 P.W.D. employees had been retrenched over the last few months.³ Before the House of Representatives, however, the Minister of Communication reported only 1,000 as the total Government retrenchment for 1959.⁴

-
1. Report of the Independent Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Railway Dispute, March 1959 and Government Statement Thereon. (Freetown, 1959) p.4.
 2. Daily Mail, May 25, 1959, p.1.
 3. Ibid., July 25, 1959, p.12.
 4. Ibid., February 8, 1960, p.2.

The following year brought extensive employment cutbacks in private firms. The commercial concern of U.A.C. announced dismissal of seventy-seven workers, (fifty-five labourers), throughout the country.¹ Soon after, G.B. Ollivant, Ltd. released sixty employees, the reason given by both companies being slack trade. (When these two firms merged in 1963, additional retrenchment took place.)

In 1962, Government was again charged by the Council of Labour with wholesale retrenchment in various ministries. Government spokesmen admitted one hundred and fifty-five dismissals but not seven hundred as originally charged.² By the middle of 1963, retrenchment had spread to the mining sector. The Yengema branch of the Mine Workers' Union protested against the release of one hundred and thirty employees. An original management proposal allegedly involved only sixty to eighty workers.³

Union leaders led worker protest against the employment cuts. In the Joint Consultative Committee, the leader of the Artisan Workers' Union attacked Government's role in leading the 'redundancy campaign'.⁴ This spokesman

1. Ibid., January 26, 1960, p.1.

2. Ibid., May 25, 1959, p.1.

3. Ibid., July 25, 1959, p.12.

4. Minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee, September 23, 1960, p.1. The attack preceded this union leader's election success in 1962 as an SLFP candidate.

advocated labour intensive development schemes, sponsored by Government, to offset employment decline.¹

Unemployed labourers themselves demonstrated their dissatisfaction. In October 1960, a newly formed Hungry Men's Union numbering five hundred, petitioned the Commissioner of Labour for employment. A demonstration march of two hundred unemployed labourers was staged in Bo during October 1962.² In May the following year the police were called in to break up a parade of one hundred unemployed men marching to the Ministry of Labour.³ The marchers claimed a following of 1000.

During October 1964, unemployed workers numbering over one hundred staged a three day sit-down strike at the Freetown Labour Exchange.⁴

Complementing these popular protest demonstrations were the increased demands from different work groups for limitations to be placed on labour imported into the country. In September 1961, the Council of Labour took the lead in regard to this with a resolution requesting Government to

-
1. Suggestions included swamp rice growing, railway reconstruction and road building.
 2. Daily Mail, October 9, 1962, p.1.
 3. Ibid., May 17, 1963, p.1.
 4. Ibid., October 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 1964.

repatriate artisans imported to Sierra Leone by civil construction firms.¹ In June 1963, road construction workers threatened a sit-down strike in protest against expatriate labour from Italy and other West African countries.² Again, in 1964 the Construction Workers' Union called for action against foreigners employed in construction work in Sierra Leone. The protest was directed particularly at the supervisory personnel.³

An earlier effort from organized labour to halt rising unemployment was made by the Council of Labour. This body petitioned Government for unemployment benefit legislation modelled on ILO conventions.⁴

Government, especially after Independence in 1961, responded to the various pressures for employment creation. It did so primarily through its own development spending and through fiscal incentive to private entrepreneurs to establish industry in the country.

Labour statistics presented in Appendices 12 and 13 document the rise in the level of employment during recent years in response to this spending. Available data for Ghana and Nigeria provide comparable trends to developments in Sierra Leone.

Y

-
1. Daily Mail, September 30, 1961, p.1.
 2. Ibid., June 25, 1963, p.1.
 3. Ibid., September 6, 1964, p.1.
 4. Ibid., November 13, 1962, p.1.

Despite this increased Government development spending and resultant job creation, the unemployment situation was but little alleviated. For the rising demand for labour to 1965 produced a bargaining climate favouring trade union and worker interests. Wage increases during 1965 were negotiated on the various bargaining bodies covering workers throughout the country. The increase made the Sierra Leone unskilled worker one of the highest paid in West Africa (75¢ per diem), and exacerbated the unemployment situation.

The extent of the problem was uncovered in the 1963 Census Report. The Report included information collected on the status of the civilian labour force (persons ten years of age and over¹). Table 7.1 illustrates the extent of unemployment for urban centres with a civilian labour force of 3,000 or more during the census taking.

1. This relatively low age limit was used since "it was believed that persons in the 10 to 14 years age group make a significant contribution to the product of the country". Sierra Leone Government 1963 Population Census of Sierra Leone Volume I (Freetown: C.S.O. 1965), p.xvii.

TABLE 7.1

Status of the Civilian Labour Force in Selected
Urban Centres.

Civilian Labour Force

Selected Locale	Total			Male			% Unempl.	Working	Not Working	% Unempl.
	Number	Working	Not Working	Number	Working	Not Working				
1. Freetown	45,249	39,264	5,985	35,112	29,449	5,463	13.2	29,449	5,463	15.6
2. Bo Town	7,082	5,694	1,388	5,967	4,666	1,301	19.6	4,666	1,301	21.8
3. Kenema Town	4,382	3,842	540	3,860	3,342	518	12.3	3,342	518	13.4
4. Kissy	4,225	3,395	830	3,583	2,826	757	19.6	2,826	757	21.1
5. Koidu Town	4,048	3,583	465	3,497	3,043	454	11.5	3,043	454	13.0
6. Lunsar	3,610	2,962	648	3,108	2,482	626	18.0	2,482	626	20.1
7. Baoma	3,594	3,545	49	3,323	3,278	45	1.4	3,278	45	1.4
8. Makeni	3,373	2,920	453	2,584	2,162	422	13.4	2,162	422	16.3
9. Yamandu	3,160	2,935	225	2,829	2,613	216	7.1	2,613	216	7.6

SOURCE: 1963 Population Census of Sierra Leone, Volume III, op.cit., Table 4.

Of the nine major employment centres only one had an unemployment level below 7% while the lowest figure for the larger cities (civilian labour force over 4,000) was over 11%. In all but one centre the unemployment per centage was higher among males than the combined figure for both sexes.

More recent data on unemployment is available through the Employment Exchanges. Statistics here indicate a 100% increase in the number of registered unemployed between December 1961 and December 1966. In October 1967 registered unemployed reached a new peak of 10,166, with over one half of this number in Freetown. While labour and domestic servants still constitute the bulk of the unemployed the rate of unemployment increase has been faster in recent years among semi-skilled and skilled workers.¹

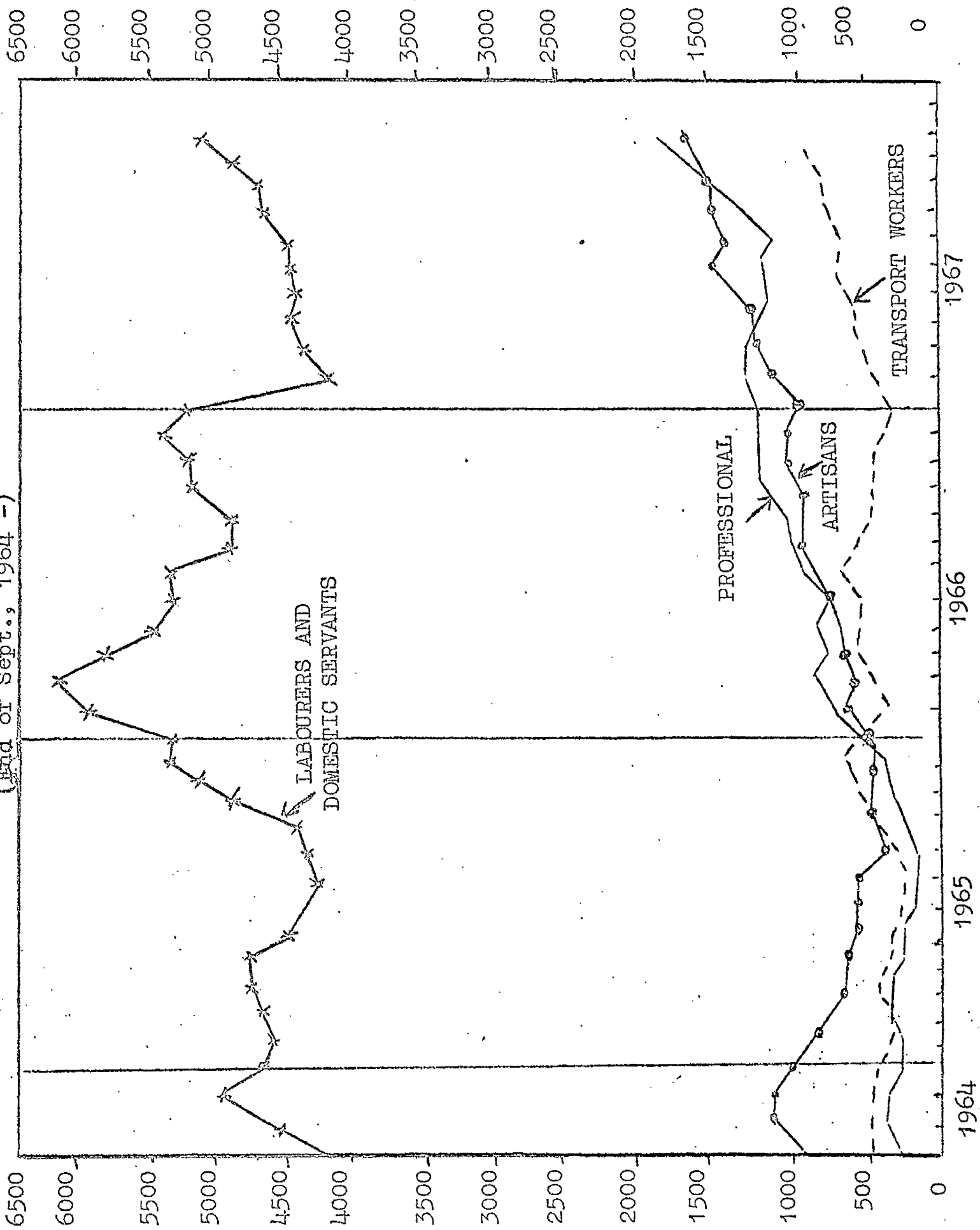
Trends in unemployment among artisans are broadly similar to those of "Professional and mercantile". Registered unemployment in these two groups taken together rose from 1.7% in January 1962 to 35.1% at the beginning of 1967, and to 38.5% by the end of October, 1967.

This recent trend (depicted in Chart I) partly reflects the effects of retrenchment on the unemployment situation as opposed to the rural-urban migration flow of

1. Ibid.

CHART I REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

(End of Sept., 1964 -)



unskilled workers. Nevertheless, the scale of the urban unemployment rise would indicate that the movement of labour from the agricultural areas to cities in search of wage employment remains the major determinant of the level of unemployment.

While this movement is undoubtedly related to a complex of factors,¹ the influence of urban wage levels on the movement is today generally recognized.²

Wage Levels

Rural-urban migration, whether temporary or permanent, is primarily responsible for the high unemployment levels recorded in Sierra Leone's urban areas. The less attractive aspects of subsistence farming along with relatively high rates for wage employment are factors prompting the move. Up to 1965 the unions, bargaining through the industrial negotiating machinery, successively pushed the daily minimum wage up to seventy-five cents. The allure of a high rate

-
1. An early study of migration to Freetown is included in Michael Barton West African City op.cit. esp. Chaps. iii and iv.
 2. For a recent authoritative account on the subject see H.A. Turner Wage Trends, Wage Policies and Collective Bargaining: The Problems for Underdeveloped Countries (Cambridge, 1965).

to the rural agriculturalist can be appreciated when it is realized that yearly earnings for more prosperous farming households were estimated to be Le 128 in the early 1950s.¹ At the minimum wage rate a single unskilled worker might expect to earn over Le 200 annually. In view of the mounting unemployment, it seems clear that the minimum wage for unskilled labour has far exceeded the differential necessary to encourage the move into the wage employment sector.

The fact that this differential has persisted despite chronic urban unemployment since 1958 emphasizes the importance of non-economic variables in the setting of minimum wage rates.² For example, Government's concern with limiting industrial unrest has undoubtedly been a prime underlying factor explaining wage increases from 1955 to 1965. In addition, the bargaining sophistication and persuasiveness demonstrated by the more experienced trade union leaders have considerably improved chances of success at the negotiating tables. Recent wage claims have been tendered during periods of expanding employment opportunity (1960-62

1. Kenneth Little The Mende of Sierra Leone: A West African People in Transition (London, 1951), p.258.

2. Cf. W. Warren op.cit. pp. 33-36.

and 1964-65)¹, while retail price increases have provided union leaders with a level of popular dissatisfaction useful in supporting pay demands. (The general price rise was 30% between 1960-66 in the 1960 Freetown retail price index.)

Since 1965, however, there has been a decided weakening in the importance of these non-economic factors with the increased recognition of product market and labour market restraints in wage determination. This recognition has resulted from Government's inability to increase budgetary spending and the existence of surplus labour populations elsewhere in West Africa, affecting private employer investment and decision making.

By December 1966, the Sierra Leone public debt had reached Le 70 million, while debt servicing accounted for about 20% of recurrent revenue in the 1967-68 budget estimates. Annual Government current expenditure (now around Le 40 million) has continually outstripped current revenue during most of the Independence period. Since it is generally assumed that wages and salaries account for between 60-80% of current government expenditure in any one year, the need to contain wage and salary rises has become imperative (assuming no further increase in revenue sources.)

1. See Appendix 12.

Elsewhere in West Africa the combination of relatively high minimum wages and the failure of wage employment opportunity to expand rapidly enough has led to the same problem as it has done in Sierra Leone. For example, in a survey of Lagos in 1963, 15.5% of the potential labour force was unemployed.¹ In a more recent statement Dr. T.M. Yesufu observed that "it seems clear that in urban areas, at least, the unemployment constituted not less than 10% of the labour force - a figure which undoubtedly soared with the political and military crisis in the country since January 1966".²

The extent of unemployment in Ghana can be deduced from data collected through the National Employment Service. In 1966, this Service which operates through forty-five public employment centres, received 285,349 applications for 69,774 vacancies notified. The previous year's figures were 180,246 as against 91,864 notifications.³ Cotonou, the capital of Dahomey, registered 20,000 unemployed in 1964 out of a potential labour force of about 50,000.⁴

-
1. Report on the Urban Unemployment Survey 1963, Manpower Board to the International Seminar on Manpower Problems, (Lagos, 1964).
 2. Dr. T.M. Yesufu "Labour in the Nigerian Economy", A paper delivered over the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, October lectures, 1967, p.7.
 3. Republic of Ghana Economic Survey 1966, (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1967), p.94.
 4. E. Costa "Back to the land: the Campaign against Unemployment in Dahomey" International Labour Review, January 1966 p.30

As a result of this situation one of the most seriously affected sectors of the Sierra Leone labour community has been the maritime industry. Increasing protests have been made by labour groups in other West African countries against the practice of European shipping concerns of engaging labour at Freetown and then travelling up and down the coast.¹

In 1958, coastal labour competition was made a bargaining issue, with employer representatives on the Maritime Wages Board noting the resolution tabled at the twenty-fifth Congress of the International Transport Workers'

-
1. As early as 1949 the Sealy-Langford Commission of Enquiry had been appointed to investigate this practice. Annual Labour Report 1950-51, (Lagos) p.15. Ship owners had originally defended the practice on the basis of the greater expertise of Sierra Leone Kroo labourers in handling cargo off and onto ships. Captain G.D. Simpson "Kroomen From Freetown" SEA "Journal of the Elder Dempster Lines) July 1954.

Federation in 1957:¹

The amalgamated dock workers' union of Nigeria and Cameroons will seek to move that: This Congress notes that the most important factor contributing to the poor working conditions of Nigerian dockers is the importation into Nigeria of dock labour from other colonies. It decides therefore to request the executive committee to consider the possibility of a meeting between representatives of the I.T.F. and the Overseas Employers' Federation to find if there is any reason why this practice should still take place.

After the mid-fifties the employment position of Maritime labour worsened markedly. From a low dormant list of 479 in 1955, those workers unable to secure maritime employment for an entire twelve month period expanded to 4,633 by 1964. The Port Labour Pool's¹ listing of vacancies filled showed a sharp downward trend after 1956.²

-
1. The Port Labour Board which supervises the operation of the Pool was created during 1947 on the recommendation of the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Wages Board. Although technically classified under the Employment Exchange scheme, the Port Labour Pool occupies a distinct section within the Exchange (Maritime workers are jointly registered with the Port Labour Board and the Employment Exchange.) Originally the procedure was introduced to stop corrupt practice in recruitment of maritime labour. See, Report of the Committee Appointed to Examine the Working of the Tribal Administration (Colony) (Freetown, 1955) Appendix E. P. 23.
 2. This decline was taking place despite the rise in the number of vessels stopping at Freetown to take on labour.

TABLE 7.2

Annual Returns From The Port Labour Board

Year	<u>Registrations</u>			Vacancies <u>Filled</u>	Number of Vessels Taking on <u>Maritime Labour</u>	<u>Index of Wage Rates³ (shillings)</u>	
	Total	Active ¹	Dormant ²			Maritime	Artisan
1948	3,346	-	-	10,378	-	3.5	2.25
1949	4,096	-	-	11,466	-	3.5	2.5
1950	3,641	-	-	12,617	230	3.5	2.5
1951	5,039	-	-	15,727	303	4.25	3.0
1952	5,243	3,582	1,661	16,135	267	4.25	3.75
1953	6,075	6,021	321	20,024	341	4.83	3.75
1954	6,551	6,010	541	20,930	354	4.83	3.75
1955	8,239	7,760	479	19,881	350	5.83	4.75
1956	8,134	7,278	856	19,897	368	6.5	5.5
1957	8,029	6,808	1,221	17,991	380	6.5	5.5
1958	8,066	6,079	1,987	16,953	360	7.0	6.33
1959	8,085	5,659	2,426	15,202	404	7.0	6.33
1960	8,027	5,037	2,990	12,956	416	7.0	6.33
1961	7,880	4,345	3,535	11,379	432	7.0	7.0
1962	7,877	3,936	3,941	9,270	397	7.67	7.67
1963	7,962	3,735	4,227	7,403	363	7.67	7.67
1964	7,849	3,216	4,633	7,181	263	7.67	7.67

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department.

1. Workers engaged in maritime employment during the year.
2. Workers who were not engaged in maritime employment within the year.
3. Rates paid general labour.

A reflection of the constrained economic position has been the inability of the Maritime Workers' Union to maintain the wage differential which existed between labourers in the industry and Colony-based construction workers (Table 7.2).

Union leaders in Sierra Leone have recognised the mounting restraints on industrial wage bargaining related to this combination of product market and labour market conditions. The most significant development in wage bargaining during the post-independence period has been the turn to individual private employer bargaining in order to maximize unions' ability to exploit employers' ability to pay.

Individual Employer Bargaining.

The union which has pioneered in the negotiation of individual employer contracts, outside the industrial bargaining machinery, has been the Clerical, Mercantile and General Workers' Union. The union was first registered in 1945 but became inactive during the early 1950s.¹ Not

1. This union was not given representation on the Artisan JIC, the body which negotiated rates for commercial employees up to 1956.

until the Commercial Workers' JIC was established, after the Freetown General Strike, was the union reconstituted. The reorganized group injected a new vitality into the labour movement especially from 1960. After a series of strike threats and minor stoppages, the union signed 'side agreements' with private banking and commercial firms. By June 1962, the union had successfully negotiated a twenty-seven point collective agreement with the Bank of West Africa. The agreement followed an earlier strike threat and was the first individual employer contract signed in the country. From 1962 the union exercised increased pressure on private employers to negotiate individual agreements. Strike threats were tendered to Shell Oil Co., and the commercial firms of SCOA and UAC. In the last case an eleven point memorandum was sent to the company. The union was involved in work stoppages against the Elder Dempster Shipping Company, Mobil Oil, and Staveley Motors during 1963. By October 1963, the union had successfully settled a second independent agreement with Elder Dempster after four months of negotiations.¹

1. Daily Mail, October 26, 1963, p.1.

The following year a thirty-five point agreement was signed between the union and the commercial concern of R.T. Briscoe. Early in 1965 the Clerical Union issued a strike notice against the country's leading commercial firms (CFAO, SCOA, P.Z., GBO, UAC). The notice was withdrawn after conciliatory proceedings were initiated by the Secretary to the Prime Minister. By June 1966, the Union demanded an amendment to the Clerical Workers' JIC constitution giving legal status to individual collective agreements. This demand was eventually submitted to an arbitration tribunal which ruled against the Union. The tribunal argued that the better condition clause already insured the superior wage position of those workers receiving above the minimum industrial rates.

The union remains committed to extending the scope of independent employer negotiation. The advantage claimed for the practice is that it provides an opportunity to deal directly with the more profitable concerns on an individual basis rather than lumping all commercial firms together under the rubric of a Joint Industrial Council. The union leaders feel that the JIC allows the more profitable firms to take advantage of the economic restraints on unions

which are forced to consider the employment repercussions of wage increases on the less profitable companies.¹ In addition, through individual bargaining the union feels it can attract a stronger following among all occupational grades covered together under a single contract. (If this is so, Sierra Leone in the future may conform to the West African pattern of company unionism.)

In recent years other unions have emulated the style of bargaining adopted by the Clerical Workers. For example, near the end of 1966 the Artisans signed an agreement with the Whatlings Overseas Ltd., construction firm, securing increases in pay and improved conditions for about 1000 workers.²

The trend towards individual employer bargaining has not been without repercussions for other areas of labour-management relations. The union demands on individual private employers for wage increases and better work conditions resulted in a wave of heightened strike activity from 1962. During the high strike years of 1962-63 most stoppages lasted less than two days. (In 1962 seventeen

1. Interview Mr. George Palmer, General Secretary of the Clerical, Mercantile and General Workers' Union, Freetown, June 25, 1967.

2. Daily Mail, December 5, 1966, p.8.

strikes lasted less than two days, while the figure in 1963 was ten.)

TABLE 7.3

Industrial Disputes in Sierra Leone 1961-65

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>
Number	4	22	11	4	3
Work Involved	318	4,042	1,893	824	1,320
Man - days lost	1,447 $\frac{1}{2}$	44,230	1,185 $\frac{1}{2}$	6,480	3,245

Source: Annual Report of the Labour Division. Ministry of Lands Mines and Labour 1965, Table 14.

Official reaction to increases in industrial conflict resulted in 1964 in the passage of the Trade Disputes (Declaration of Law) Act. The Amendment provided for a twenty-one day strike notice which was aimed at eliminating 'wild cat' strikes.¹

Conclusion on Independent Negotiations.

As long as the economic situation in the country remains at its present depressed state there seems to be little likelihood that the standing industrial bargaining

1. House of Representative Debates Session 1964/65. Vol. III, November 17, 1965, p.36. Prior to the 1957 General Election a proposal to limit the right to strike of workers in public utility and public health service had been withdrawn.

machinery, especially that covering Government employees, will provide labour groups with an adequate channel to press for gains. In the meantime, the trend towards individual collective agreements presents itself as an alternative union strategy. Profitable private firms provide ready targets from which gains may be extracted,¹ while the need for selectivity on the basis of profitability recommends this approach on economic grounds. On the other hand, the inherent danger in this new situation is the possible growth of a highly paid labour hierarchy, made up of a limited number of privileged workers employed by firms enjoying reasonable profit margins.² In addition, wage increases through private negotiations might produce a disincentive to investment in certain industries, or in industrial investment generally.

Allowing for the potential unfavourable repercussions, it is hardly tenable, given the living standard of the Sierra Leone wage earner, to suggest restrictions on any

-
1. The gains need not be in the form of wage increases. For example, among the more successful manufacturing concerns in Sierra Leone, namely Aureol Tobacco Co., J. Mattar & Co. (Bo), Sierra Leone Diamonds, Ltd., and the Star Brewery, free or subsidized meals, transport and medical facilities have been provided and widely acclaimed by workers. Absence of such provisions have become a source of grievance among workers at the A.J. Seward Col (Cosmetics), Texaco, and the Seven-Up factory all in Freetown. (Some findings in the author's survey of thirty Sierra Leone industrial enterprises.)
 2. The imbalance in the situation will be partly offset by extended family obligations.

form of upward wage movement.¹ More constructively, the need for the future is for sound planning of economic growth with labour considerations, especially improvements in the level of wage employment being given priority.

A Final Note.

For effective wage negotiations to take place across sectors and industries, a reduction in the level of unemployment is a prerequisite. In the short run there seems little possibility of this happening, given limitations on increasing Government revenue - expenditure. However, this does not preclude qualitative alterations in the way existing funds are spent. For example, in past budgets attention to the labour employment effects of fiscal policy has been scanty. But unemployment has now reached such a critical level that reform in this area seems desirable. Reasons supporting the desirability of reform have been outlined in an ILO report on the Employment Objectives in Economic Development. After noting that a choice exists between alternative

1. In a recent survey of households in the Western Area, it was found that about 18% of all households in Freetown were receiving less than Le 20 per month. The figure for towns outside Freetown was 32%. Findings indicated that less than 3% of all Freetown households had running water within the house; over one-fourth of all dwellings were considered to be in poor condition; while 28% of all dwellings were reputedly over fifty years old. Sierra Leone Government Household Survey of the Western Province November 1966 - January 1968 (Freetown: C.S.O.), passim.

development paths, the report concludes:¹

If paths of development are chosen that provide relatively few new jobs in the early stages those who need and seek work or more work will scarcely share in the benefits or progress. The purpose of economic development is to raise levels of living, and the main purpose of insisting that employment objectives should be given weight in the choice of alternative paths of economic development is that this is the surest, if not the only, way of making certain that the improvement in levels of living that come about as economic development proceeds will be widely shared.

Appreciation of the importance of labour planning was reflected in the 1962 Sierra Leone ten-year development plan prepared by Dr. David Carney. In his statement of priorities, Dr. Carney stressed the importance of adopting the 'programme' rather than the 'project' approach to development planning in order to avoid economic imbalances. The author illustrated his point by indicating the employment effects of excessive concentration on educational expansion and agricultural reforms. On the last point Carney noted that:²

-
1. ILO Employment Objectives in Economic Development (Geneva, 1961), foreword p. iii.
 2. David Carney Ten Year Plan of Economic and Social Development For Sierra Leone, 1962-63 to 1971-72 (Freetown: Government Printer, 1962) p.5.
Three earlier development plans had been prepared for the economy from 1946. None of these earlier plans recognized unemployment creation as an important planning objective.

An over-emphasis on modernization of agriculture through improved planting and breeding techniques, mechanization, agricultural credit, and so on, is bound to make labour even more redundant. So that an effort must be made at the same time to absorb the surplus labour thereby released into the other forms of employment in building and construction, in manufacturing, industry, in trade and other services.

Unfortunately, Carney's directives had little time to impress themselves on the minds of Government decision makers. Insufficient attention to methods of financing development schemes prompted Government to abandon Carney's plan. Also, Carney never made explicit the kind of effort that was necessary for expanding wage employment opportunity in the sectors indicated.

Inducements to Private Investment

Government has offered a variety of Fiscal incentives in order to attract both internal and foreign investment. The Development of Industries Board (D.I.B.) was established by law in 1947. Under this early scheme Government made available 20,000 leones annually in the form of private investment loans. Fiscal measures provided under the 1960 Development Act were especially designed to attract foreign investment! After receiving a Development Certificate under the Act, "... a tax holiday from 2-5 years, duty

free import of machinery and equipment, free or relaxed duties on raw materials...", may be granted.¹ Subsidies are also available through relaxation of import duties and the granting of specific licences. In addition, Government has encouraged the development of an Industrial Estate, outside Freetown, through subsidized rents and minimum down-payments.

Shortly after Independence, an Industrial Development office was created to encourage and advise prospective investors in:²

- a. performing feasibility studies
- b. aiding industrial planning
- c. formation of ownership structures
- d. preparing development certificate, etc.,
- e. finding suitable land sites
- f. providing helpful information
- g. encouraging good company-Government relations.

During 1961 the Government started loan and credit schemes for both agriculture and fishing. To March 1965, Le 236,072 had been made available through credit under the first scheme, and by December 1965 the value of loans to

-
1. World Bank An Approach to a Comprehensive Program for Industrial Development in Sierra Leone with Special Reference to Indigenous Small Industry, par. 1.9
 2. Ibid., par. 1.10. The report noted however that many of the office's functions were not being fulfilled and the staff was inadequate in coping with certain aspects of the work.

fisheries (for nets, engines, and boats) was about Le 68,000.¹ Finally, the Sierra Leone Government's direct investment has made it an important shareholder in several new concerns, often with overseas connections.

<u>Name of Company</u>	<u>Government Shares</u> (one share = one leone)
1. National Construction Co.	119,997
2. Freetown Hotels, Ltd.	100,000
3. Sierra Leone Airways	10,000
4. Guma Valley Water Co.	2,028,563
5. Sierra Leone Investments ²	150,000
6. Wellington Distilleries	105,000
7. Sierra Leone Cement Works	8,000

It should be added that a major disincentive to private investment took the form of the non Citizens (Trade and Business) Act, 1966. The Act prohibited outsiders from engaging in certain business (i.e. manufacture of cement blocks; supply of granite; transport by road, sea or

1. Ibid., pars. 1.11, 1.12.

2. Sierra Leone Investments was a joint investment arrangement by the Sierra Leone Government and the Commonwealth Development Corporation. It operated from 1961-65 making investments in a limited number of enterprises and industries.

rivers; bakeries; mineral water; etc.) The bill was repealed during 1967 by an NRC decree.

There was a fair response to these Government measures designed to attract and stimulate private investment. By 1966 the World Bank Report noted that there were "about 30 real manufacturing enterprises and another 35 enterprises representing auto repair, printing and publishing and bakeries. The total employment in these 65 enterprises employing six or more is 6,770".¹

But a disappointing aspect of the new manufacturing concerns has been their limited impact on employment creation. It was estimated that the total new job openings since 1960 amounted to only 1,500. Related to this has been the extent and generosity of the fiscal incentives provided under the 1960 Development Act. Generous depreciation allowances and other subsidies to private investment encouraged the more liberal use of machinery and the establishment of capital intensive industry (brewery, distillery, diamond processing, etc.). Not only the extent and nature of the concessions but the need for any at all is suggested in Appendix 14, which records the twenty industries established with Development Certificates as opposed to fourteen industries established without benefit of any Government subsidy.

1. World Bank Report, op.cit. par. 3.7.

On balance, the various programmes designed by Government to stimulate private investment have not resulted in significant job creation. Government's spending remains the principal positive influence on changes in the level of wage employment.

Government Spending and Employment

The extent of Government development spending in gross figures rose from 5.3 million leones in 1962-63 (total spending amounting to 31 million leones) to 12.8 million leones in the revised budget estimate for 1966-67 (total spending reaching 49.4 million leones¹). Spending was concentrated on earmarked development projects, infrastructure and general improvements in welfare facilities.² Spending through the Produce Marketing Board (expansion in the manufacturing activities of the Produce Marketing Board, between 1964-65 alone, saw the creation of 1,318 new employment opportunities), on construction projects (schools, roads, Government buildings, etc.), improved electricity, water and sanitation services and on Government services generally was primarily responsible for the expanded employment

1. Bank of Sierra Leone Annual Report and Statement of Accounts Year ending 1966, p. 44.

2. Bank of Sierra Leone Economic Trends, September-October 1967, p.3.

opportunities to 1965 (Appendix 12). Since 1965, however, the mounting public debt and Government's inability to uncover revenue sources has resulted in her failure to fund new employment creating projects. Again, the 1960 Development Act, providing company tax concessions, can be faulted (in addition to the effect it has had on capital-labour substitution¹). Company taxes as a percentage of total Government revenue have declined markedly in recent years.

TABLE 7.4

Contribution of Company Taxes to Recurrent Revenue

	Le. million	Percentage of Total Revenue
July 1963 - June 1964	5.9	16.0
July 1964 - June 1965	0.8	2.4
July 1964 - June 1965 (revised)	0.6	1.8
July 1965 - June 1966	1.8	5.2

Source: S.R. Dixon-Fyle "Economic Structure and Short Period Behaviour of the Sierra Leone Economy", p. 19.

In order to help restore Government revenue, and discourage the substitution of capital for labour, tax

1. Relatively high urban wages were probably also at fault.

reforms suggest themselves. Reform proposals might include strict control and general limitation on generous company tax concessions, In addition, a review of import subsidies on capital equipment is recommended. A recent observation of W. Arthur Lewis notes:¹

The big waste of capital in under-developed countries -- has come mainly in substituting capital for labour in moving things about; in the handling of materials inside the factory; in packaging; in moving earth; in mining; and in building and construction. The bulldozer, the conveyor belt, and the crane usually achieve nothing that labour could not do equally well. They spend scarce foreign exchange solely in order to produce unemployment.

To remedy this, prohibitive import duties and the elimination of accelerated depreciation allowances seem in order.

(Optimally, the wage freeze and Government development spending on infrastructure would compensate private investors for the higher taxes paid.)

Internal Challenge to the Industrial Bargaining Machinery

In the event that the economic crisis subsides, there is no clear indication of the pattern of wage bargaining for the future. The removal of restrictions on the right to organize a trade union resulted in the proliferation of new

1. W. Arthur Lewis "Unemployment in Developing Countries"
The World Today January 1967, p.21.

union groups after 1962. Inter union conflict has accompanied this development and along with internal union leadership rivalries the prospect of achieving the union consensus and cooperation necessary for industry-wide wage talks, has diminished.

Consequences of Organizing Restrictions

A highly compact union structure was one result of the 1946 Trade Union Amendment Act which placed restrictions on the registration of new unions. This amendment facilitated the operation of the bargaining bodies in at least two ways. Firstly, the elimination of rival competing trade union groups precluded difficult representation problems on the industrial bargaining bodies. Secondly, the virtual prohibition of rival and breakaway union groups gave security to leaders of registered unions. Offsetting the advantages was the explicit restriction of workers' right to organize and join a trade union of their own choosing. The frustrations caused by the situation gave rise to a series of intra-union disputes.

From the mid 1950s, complaints were increasingly brought against union leaders and executives by dissatisfied members. Usually the complaints involved alleged misappropriation of union funds or the arbitrary use of

power by union leaders. Intra union conflict, finally requiring an investigation by an appointed Commission of Inquiry, disrupted the affairs of the Railway Workers' Union during 1954. Union members condemned the president of the union both for acting in the dual capacity of president and union solicitor and for misusing union funds. The Commission upheld the complaints on the first charge but dismissed the second. Nevertheless, in its report, the Commission strongly urged an amendment to the Trade Union Ordinance requiring independent auditing of all union accounts.¹

The indifference of union leaders to orderly book-keeping procedure, noted also by the Shaw Commission during its investigation into the accounts of the Artisan Union, was the source of recurrent charges of fund misappropriation. Whenever union factions sought to harass union leaders, this charge was invariably made. The following examples illustrate the point.

After his failure to pledge the support of the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union in the Freetown General Strike, the General Secretary of the union was challenged on his

1. Sierra Leone Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Railway Workers' Union (Freetown, 1955), p.3.
It was found that nine other trade unions had failed to submit their accounts at the time the Railway executive was summoned for financial statement.

right to represent seamen.¹ Shortly after, members of the Maritime Union demanded the accounts of the union. It was claimed that two shillings were paid to the union by each member after every voyage, for which no benefits were received. Workers sent a memorandum to Government demanding an inquiry into the union's accounts.² During July and August 1956 the General Secretary of the Maritime Union was called before the Court to defend against the allegations. The Court subsequently discharged him.

During February 1956 the Amalgamated Teachers' Union demanded the auditing of union accounts, although a motion that legal action be taken against the General Secretary was vetoed.³

In October 1959 another demand for a Commission of Inquiry was made by ninety-three bus drivers and conductors. It was claimed that no annual meeting of the Transport and General Workers' Union had been called over the past twelve years. Monthly dues of two shillings were being paid and the petitioners demanded an investigation of the union's accounts and of the conduct of the General Secretary.

1. Daily Mail July 5, 1955, p.1.

2. Ibid., April 21, 1956, p.1.

3. Ibid., February 27, 1956, p.1.

In the middle of 1960 an investigation into the financial records of the Railway Workers' Union uncovered a deficit of nearly £3,000 in union funds during 1957-59. The union's General Secretary was shortly after sentenced to a five-year prison term.¹ Again in 1960 a Freetown magistrate called for an inquiry into the management of the Miners' Union at Marampa following alleged complaints.²

Each of these examples demonstrates the importance of the corruption charge during intra union disagreements. The tactic was directly related to the legal confines placed on organization rights and was one of the few effective means of putting pressure on union leaders. (An alternative course would have been simply to renounce union membership altogether, the option taken by seventy-three railway workers in 1953 in protest against dues payments.)

From the late nineteen fifties misgivings grew after each intra union dispute over the appropriateness of the restrictive regulation on union registrations. Pressure for reform came not only from within the country through discussion on the Joint Consultative Committee but also from

1. Ibid., September 20, 1960, p.1.

2. Ibid., April 21, 1960, p.3.

the International Labour Organization.

ILO and the Freedom of Association Convention

With the passage of Convention 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize in 1948, the ILO declared as fundamental the right of workers to organize and join trade unions of their own choosing.

Article two of the Convention stated explicitly that:

Workers and employers, without distinction whatever, shall have the right to establish and, subject only to the rule of the organization concerned, to join organizations of their own choosing without previous authorization.

The position was reaffirmed at the Dakar Conference in 1955 and at the African Regional Conference of the ILO held in Lagos in 1960.¹ At this second meeting, a resolution was passed which "...called upon the Governing Body of the ILO to make a solemn appeal to all African states to ratify and keep under review the conventions dealing in particular with...freedom of association and right to organize..."²

The combination of intra union conflict and ILO persuasion resulted in a draft trade union bill being submitted to the Joint Consultative Committee for

1. See B.C. Roberts Labour in the Tropical Territories op.cit., p. 245.

2. Ibid., p. 253.

consideration in late 1958. Early the following year, the bill, with the restrictive organization clause deleted, was discussed, but no action was taken. Criticisms on both sides focussed on the danger of a multiplicity of small unions.¹ The bill was redrafted and again considered in June 1960, but it was not until early 1962 that it received its final reading in Parliament. The Act to Amend the Trade Union Act, no.21 of 1962 removed the power of the Registrar of trade unions to forbid registration to any union on the grounds that another union already represented workers in the industry of trade in which it wished to organize. The amendment brought Sierra Leone legislation into harmony with ILO Convention 87 and made available an important means of redress for dissident union groups.

The immediate impact of the revised legislation on union numbers and membership was striking. Within one year five new unions had registered under the amended act.² In 1962 the total union membership of the nine registered

-
1. Minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee, February 5, 1959.
 2. New unions were registered in transport (Sierra Leone Motor Drivers' Union), construction (General Construction Workers' Union), seamen (Sierra Leone Articled Seamen's Union), dockworkers (Sierra Leone Dockworkers' Union), and teachers (Milton Margai Training College Teaching Staff).

unions was 28,487. By 1965, fifteen unions accounted for a membership of 40,556.¹ (Paid-up membership, however, rose by only 1,612, reflecting not the financial insecurity among the new unions, but a decline in paid-up members among the older, long established unions. For example, the Artisan Union's paid-up membership dropped from 7,050 in 1962 to 3,036 by 1965. Difficulties in the use of the check off and hesitation in enforcing dues payment in the face of rival organizations probably account for the decline.)

The rise in total membership resulted not only from the organization drives of the new unions, but also from renewed efforts by older unions to attract and expand membership. In the case of the Transport and General Workers, organizing interest spread to the catering trade. (Earlier this union successfully organized wage labour in agriculture.) Organizing drives soon spread throughout the Provinces. Near the end of 1962, the Artisan Union had established branches in each of the three Provinces.² Clerical and Transport Unions both followed with their own branch organizations.

1. See Appendix 15.

2. After Independence in April 1961, the interior of the country formerly called the Protectorate was subdivided into three Provinces, in the East, North and South. At the same time the Colony was renamed the Western Area.

Union Growth and the Bargaining Machinery

The fillip in labour union growth and membership inevitably affected representation on JIC and Wages Boards. After registering in 1963, the Dockworkers' Union had little difficulty in displacing the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union as the union representing labour interests on the Port JIC. The older union which had organized both seamen and dock workers simply could not counter the interest created among the shore based dockers in an organization catering specifically for them. The Maritime Union continued to represent sea-going labour on the Maritime and Waterfront Wages Board.¹

During negotiations in 1965 a representative of the Construction Workers' Union sat as an official member of the Transport JIC. Shortly after, this union was also given representation on the Artisan Council. Three members of the Seamen's Union (registered in 1965) were incorporated into the Maritime Wages Board the following year.

-
1. The successful organization drive of the Dockworkers' Union coincided with the death in 1964 of Mr. George Thomas, seventeen years General Secretary of the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union. Although Mr. Marcus Grant (long time leader of the Artisan Union) assumed the vacated post, the change in leadership, coupled with the declining economic prospects of sea-going labour engaged at Freetown, have seriously limited the role played by the union in recent years.

Surprisingly little conflict arose in the process of granting representation rights to the bargaining bodies. The relative willingness of the older unions can be traced to their own leadership rivalries which in 1962 resulted in a split in the country's Council of Labour. This division among the ranks of the older unions corresponded with the registration and organization of new union groups. Their emergence sparked off a competition for allegiance between the two divided sections of the labour movement. (The split in the Council of Labour will be treated below.) Thus, the fact that the Construction Workers gained representation rights on the Transport JIC was partly related to the personal rivalry which had developed between the Leader of the Transport Workers' Union and the General Secretary of the Artisan Union (chief rival to the newly registered Construction Workers' Union).

Efforts to curry favour with the newly formed trade unions as well as the sheer organizing success of such groups as the Dockworkers facilitated the extension of bargaining rights to recently registered groups.

Continued Disunity in the Labour Movement

While the increasing number of trade unions has produced considerable changes on the composition of

bargaining bodies, the 1962 Trade Union Amendment has far from eliminated intra-union conflicts. Such conflict remains an important feature of union affairs and has inevitably affected the operations of Wages Boards and JICs. The seriousness of intra union disagreements has placed in jeopardy the continued existence of one important Joint Industrial Council, and has caused periodic disruptions on both kinds of bargaining bodies.

Mine Workers' Union

During 1961 the Marampa branch of the United Mine Workers' Union broke relations with the union's national headquarters. The conflict was apparently motivated by the dismissal of the branch president by the Executive Council of the union. A work stoppage followed the dismissal and in further protest, the branch refused to send delegates to the Wages Board negotiations later in the year. Concessions on both sides, however, restored harmony by the end of 1961.

Events within the union remained apparently peaceful until 1967 when the National Reformation Council appointed a one-man Commission of Inquiry to enquire into the administration and finances of the union. During the subsequent hearings, evidence of misuse of union finance was exposed, along with dissension between local branches of the union

and the Freetown based national executive. All six branch executives were directed to repay amounts varying from sixty to one hundred leones to their respective branch treasuries.¹

In a statement delivered to the investigating Commissioner the Yengema branch secretary claimed that his branch alone forwarded 18,747 leones to Freetown between January 1964 and July 1967. He protested against the secrecy surrounding this money, and queried how the increased union dues (from twenty to forty cents a month) were being spent.²

This evidence of internal discord has not been without consequence for the union's bargaining effectiveness. While cuts in Government expenditure have placed severe limitations on bargaining in that sector, private employers, particularly in commerce and mining are not operating under quite the same restrictions. For example, over the last three years the Commercial Workers have repeatedly won wage concessions from private commercial firms in the country. But mine workers have received no statutory wage increases since 1965. The failure to seek and win improvements is in part

1. Daily Mail, November 10, 1967, p.1. The money represented funds given for educational purposes by the Mines International Federation.

2. Ibid., November 14, 1967, p.8.

related to the internal disunity and leadership weaknesses of the union.¹

Leadership rivalries have also been a major disrupting influence in the Dockworkers' Union. Tensions in this union have involved tribal and political divisions. The study of the union's difficulties illuminates multiple stresses which have continually frustrated internal cooperation.

Dock Workers' Union

Conflict within the Dock Workers' Union first appeared in 1965 following the return from Soviet Russia of a former member of the union's executive. According to the reigning executive "the nine months training injected a revolutionary attitude into him which we felt will ruin the union and as a result we had no alternative but to expel him".² Following the decision to expel, expulsion orders were issued to six other union members who were associated with the returning member. Disbarred members retaliated by starting court proceedings against the illegality of the expulsion orders. Some three hundred supporters organized a protest

-
1. The fact that only sixty per cent of the Marampa daily wage staff are organized is partly related to leadership rivalries at the branch level. Interview Mr. G. Nurton, Personnel Manager, DELCO, August 15, 1967.
 2. Daily Mail, December 16, 1966 Union treasurer's testimony before the Board of Inquiry probing the dispute in the Dock Workers' Union.

march and forwarded a petition to the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour denouncing the victimization, and charging the union's executive with fund misuse.

Before the case reached the Supreme Court, union management and intra union relations took a dramatic turn. During November 1966, the Port Authority, in response to a directive from the Minister of Finance attempted to introduce a shift system among highly skilled crane operators in an effort to limit overtime earnings.¹ Failure to consult the union adequately coupled with worker dissatisfaction with the scheme, resulted in the rejection of the proposal and the announcement of the 'work-to-rule'.

The Port Authority, the leadership of which was expatriate, responded by attempting to break the authority of the Dockworkers' executive group. The Port Manager issued notices to four union officials to proceed on leave one week after the work-to-rule was announced. In addition, the union's check-off arrangement with the Port Authority was suspended. Management belief that the union's authority

-
1. In June 1966 the Minister of Finance instructed the Ports Authority to reduce overtime to fifty per cent of any employee's monthly income. The Panda Commission Report noted that previously overtime had contributed ^{EARNINGS} ~~contributed~~ ^{WAGE RATE} ~~contributed~~ ^(MONTHLY) ~~contributed~~ ^{TO} two hundred per cent of monthly earnings for some workers. G.S. Panda Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Docks Dispute (Freetown, 1967), p.5.

could be effectively challenged took account of the existing intra union and tribal conflict surrounding the expulsion orders.¹

Initially, the management counter-attack appeared to succeed. On November 10, two hundred members of the Dockers' Union rebelled against the union's executive, claiming it had misrepresented their interests to management. The group renounced the work-to-rule.

The complexity of the situation was further exaggerated when both union factions appealed to influential political leaders, selected on obvious tribal grounds, to champion their respective causes. The union executive group sought council from the Secretary of the Prime Minister, a Mende and member of the ruling SLPP. The rebel group, urged on by the expatriate Personnel Manager at the Port, who himself maintained close ties with Temne members in both SLPP and APC parties, found support from the Minister of Transport and Communication, who was a Temne, from the Permanent Secretary to the same Ministry and from Temne elements among APC representatives.

-
1. Division within the union was along tribal lines with the predominantly Mende executive against the Temnes. Formerly the Personnel Manager at the Port had served as district officer among Temne people in the Northern Province.

With a General Election due in four months, the seriousness of the situation which threatened to divide tribes into political camps, warranted the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry. In December 1966 an official announcement named Mr. George S. Panda, retired Secretary to the Prime Minister and Sierra Leone's first African Commissioner of Labour as sole commissioner investigating the dispute. After two weeks of testimony, a Report issued by the Commissioner apportioned blame on all sides involved. In particular the Port Authority was criticized for its arbitrary introduction of the shift system, for stopping the check-off, and for issuing compulsory leave for the union executive members after the dispute had begun.¹

The union executive came under fire for wrongfully dismissing union members.² It was concluded that the executive was, "...guilty of mismanagement of the union's affairs and...the constant threats against management had impaired the efficiency of the working of the Ports and had no doubt created suspicion in the minds of the workers". The Dock Workers' Union was temporarily suspended until

1. Unity, January 30, 1967, p.1.

2. This dismissal involved breaches of the union's constitution regarding the right of appeal.

1967 when the expelled, Soviet trained, union member was elected General Secretary.¹

Since March 1966 no Port JIC meetings have taken place and the likelihood of negotiations in the near future on behalf of the three thousand members of the Dock Workers' Union is slight.

A final case study of the Artisan and Allied Workers' Union illustrates the potential impact of inter union rivalries, usually bred of personal allegiances, and the political ambitions of the leadership, on internal union stability and bargaining effectiveness.

Artisan and Allied Workers' Union

The General Secretary of the Artisan and Allied Workers' Union, Mr. Marcus Grant, campaigned successfully as an SLPP candidate during the General Election in 1962. Immediately after, Grant established the Sierra Leone TUC as a rival national centre to the existing Council of Labour.² The leader of the Council of Labour, Mr. H.N. Georgestone, (also General Secretary of the Transport Workers' Union)

1. Another outcome of the dispute was the removal from office of the British Personnel Manager, following the recommendation in the Panda Report that the position be filled by a Sierra Leonean.
2. The Artisans' Union was soon joined by the Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union and the Sherbro Amalgamated Workers' Union.

had himself been a founder member of the SLPP¹ and joint leader with Grant of the 1955 General Strike. However, Georgestone had resigned from the SLPP in 1957. Grant's personal success as an SLPP candidate in the first General Election of the Independence period, plus the possibility of promoting a personal following among trade unionists in the country heightened his political ambitions. At the same time, his new alignment with the up country Peoples' Party tarnished his image among Creole trade unionists in the Freetown area. (This division was reflected in the split within the Artisan's Union, as well as the alignment of the Sherbro Workers' and Maritime Union, composed largely of Provincial up country workers, with Grant's newly formed national centre.)

Shortly after the split, an attempted reconciliation during a meeting of an ILO seminar in Freetown failed. Early in 1963, the TUC accused the ICFTU of provoking union warfare, by supporting the Council of Labour.² By August dissension had appeared within the ranks of the Artisan Union. Workers at Port Loko and Freetown passed a vote of no-confidence in the General Secretary, claiming that he

1. He campaigned unsuccessfully for office during the 1951 General Election.

2. Daily Mail, January 29, 1963, p.1.

was using the union for his personal ends. An investigation was demanded into the union's accounts.

Following the no-confidence vote, Grant was given support by the Motor Drivers' Union (chief rival to the Transport and General Workers' Union) and by Provincial branches of the Artisan Union. Members of the Bo branch elected Grant General Secretary for life and accused the Council of Labour of, "engineering acts against Grant".¹ About nine hundred attended the Bo branch meeting and threatened to secede from the union if Grant's reputation was not cleared. In 1965, the union branches in the Province did secede following Grant's retirement as General Secretary. A new union, the Southern and Eastern Provincial General Workers' Union, was subsequently formed. Since no Artisan JIC bargaining negotiations have taken place since before the union's split, representational problems are still to be settled.

An uneasy merger was effected between the two warring national centres in 1964 during the absence from the country of Mr. Georgestone, leader of the Council of Labour.²

1. Ibid., August 31, 1963, p.1.

2. The fortunes of the Council of Labour also suffered during the split. Leadership tensions and disagreements within the Council caused the failure of a proposed three day national strike in September 1963 over unemployment and Government's rejection of the 1960/61 Audit Report.

?? Leader?

Grant, with political backing from the Prime Minister of the Peoples' Party, created the Sierra Leone Federation of Labour, with himself as General Secretary. Following the return to Sierra Leone of the former head of the defunct Council of Labour, an arrangement was made for a joint directorship of the new Federation.¹ Finally in 1966 the national union centre was reconstituted and renamed the Sierra Leone Labour Congress, and the leader of the Mineworkers assumed the post of General Secretary to the new organization. The stability of the new body is far from certain, with persistent inter union rivalries fostering an ever present centrifugal tendency. As late as the Artisan JIC negotiations in 1965, after the apparent reconciliation between union leaders, the Artisan Union claimed representation rights for certain categories of workers organized in the Transport Union.²

Employers Refusal to Bargain

Complementing inter and intra union conflict as a disrupting factor on the continued effective functioning of the bargaining bodies has been the recent reluctance of

1. The Federation included nine of the largest unions in the country.
2. Minutes of the Artisan JIC, March 10, 1965, Appendix A.

employers to respond to union negotiation requests. Over the past five years, continued delays and tardy responses from employer groups have resulted in innumerable holdups and delays in the sittings of both Wages' Boards and Joint Industrial Councils.

The most protracted delay caused by employer representatives took place during the Artisan JIC negotiations which were initially requested by the union towards the end of 1963. Negotiations began early the following year but through constant interruption and changes in employer representative no agreement was reached.¹ Talks at one point stopped for a full six months (March to September 1964). Between January and October 1964 the Artisan JIC met on eighteen separate occasions. Yet not until February of the following year was an agreement finally signed.

From 1965 worker representatives on Transport and Artisan JICs and Maritime and Agricultural Wages Boards experienced continued difficulties in gaining employer cooperation over negotiation requests. In the case of the Agricultural Workers' Wages Board, subordinates to the General Manager of the Produce Marketing Board were reprimanded.

1. Particularly following the appointment of Mr. S. Pratt as General Manager of the Railway. Before entering negotiations Pratt petitioned for a briefing period which caused a lengthy delay in talks during 1964.

for entering negotiation during his absence. (The Labour Department established a special committee to investigate the matter.¹) Throughout the period, the Labour Department has maintained a passive role in enforcing employer cooperation.

The increasing unwillingness of employer representatives to respond to union requests to meet on the bargaining tables is itself a reflection of fundamental economic problems currently influencing industrial relations. Increasing unemployment has affected employer attitudes towards industrial bargaining and this in turn has hastened the move towards independent bargaining outside the industrial machinery.

1. Special Committee to Enquire into the Representatives of the S.L. Produce Marketing Board at the meetings of the Agricultural Workers Wages Board on the 14th and 23rd September 1965.

Summary

The adoption of a high wage policy after 1955 by Government and private employers, while successfully containing industrial unrest, had the undesirable effect of accelerating the rural-urban migration movement. Particularly after 1958, unemployment in all major urban areas increased. Employment Exchanges recorded an increase of over 100% in the numbers of registered unemployed from 1960 to 1966. Government spending on development projects helped in limiting the problem to 1965, but chronic budget deficits in recent years will necessarily bring a halt to the employment-creating effects of such spending in the future.

While the relatively high minimum wage rate was partly responsible for the observed migration and resulting unemployment, fiscal measures, designed to stimulate the level of investment have not helped to ameliorate the problem. Generous company tax concessions in the form of accelerated depreciation allowances and import subsidies for machinery have encouraged capital substitutions for labour. Further, the effect of company tax holidays (granted for periods of up to five years) has been to limit potential Government revenue. This in turn has limited Government efforts to increase employment opportunity

through its own building programmes. The need for some tax reform has become increasingly apparent.

The reality of the product market (employer ability to pay) and labour market situation has been to promote the development of collective bargaining among trade unions and individual private employers. Sierra Leone labour leaders feel that this strategy will allow workers in more profitable firms to press for maximum gains, rather than force them to tailor their demands in the light of conditions throughout an industry. (The move toward individual employer bargaining has been to some degree hastened by the refusal of employers to acknowledge worker claims submitted through the industrial bargaining arrangements.)

The future of industrial negotiations has been further threatened by disunity within the labour movement itself. The removal in 1962 of restrictions on the right to organize a trade union has led to a proliferation of new registered unions, each seeking bargaining rights and additional members. Accommodation of new unions on the industrial bargaining machinery proceeded satisfactorily up to 1965, partly through the successful balancing of leadership rivalries and interests. (This was certainly the case in the extension of representation on the Transport JIC.) More

recently, however, inter and intra union conflicts (especially among dockworkers, miners and organized construction workers) often involving political and tribal loyalties, have placed a premium on cooperation and labour unity. Whether or not these are achieved on a lasting basis may well determine the future of the industrial bargaining bodies.

PART IV SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Part IV Summary and Conclusions

Just prior to the twentieth century, opportunities for wage employment were expanding in Sierra Leone. The demand for labour was localized in the capital city of Freetown, where fortification projects, the building of a coaling station and railway, and commercial activity concentrated. By about 1880, maritime labourers from Liberia began to settle permanently in Freetown, soon joined by Colony and Protectorate workers engaged at the various construction sites.

During this early period, the Sierra Leone Administration relied on various tribal headmen resident in Freetown, to regulate and control the activity of the newly arrived wage earners. This preference for indirect administration recommended itself since it minimized the need for more active control by public authorities, and utilized existing social relationships in a way helpful to effective labour administration. Indirect supervision through the various tribal headmen characterized labour administration up to World War I.

The economic impact of the War, however, brought serious consequences for the majority of the Colony's wage earners. As employment opportunities had expanded during the early War years in response to fortification needs,

inflationary price rises eroded the real wages and living standards of the work force. By 1918-19 retrenchments at defence works exacerbated the economic distress of the Freetown community.

The situation came to a head following a strike among manual workers at the Government Railway in 1919. The strike itself soon stimulated a popular reaction throughout the country and rioting was accompanied by the looting of Syrian merchant shops.

During the crisis, the Acting Governor's handling of the situation was widely criticized in the despatches sent from the Colonial Office and within the country by District Commissioners. It became clear that official opinion favoured the use of stronger Government measures, including military intervention in controlling civil disorder. This attitude was certainly dominant among Colonial Office personnel at the time. While the Railway workers were successful in winning their wage demand after the 1919 strike, subsequent strikes by this group in 1920 and 1926 met with a radically different official response. During these disputes the Sierra Leone Administration, with Colonial Office support, adopted an uncompromising position in the face of labour demands, and made liberal use of police and military

intervention. The policy proved successful in breaking both strikes. A Railway Workers' Union which led the workers during the six week long 1926 strike disbanded in the face of Government opposition after the workers had returned to work.

Not until the 1930s was there a move towards a more liberal labour policy. The move itself was inspired by developments both within and outside the country. Externally, the recommendations and conventions of the International Labour Office modified the earlier authoritarian Colonial labour policy supported by the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office during this period was also more willing to concede reforms following an increasing number of reports from various territories in the Commonwealth on the spread of labour disturbances and their political repercussions. The changed Colonial Office attitude during the 1930s was reflected in a spate of statute additions in Sierra Leone. Legal reforms incorporating ILO conventions gave special attention to safeguarding workers from various forms of exploitation. In addition draft bills sent directly from the Colonial Office ensured labour's right to belong to a registered trade union and engage in strikes.

Within the country the growth of the mining industry during the 1930s and the emergence of the nationalist

Sierra Leone Youth League were producing their own causes of strain on continued effective labour regulation and control. By 1939 a wave of strikes directed by those trade unions organized by the Youth League indicated the strength of the challenge coming from this source.

But at the very time that labour radicalism was increasing, the Second World War broke out. The military importance of the Freetown harbour warranted the introduction of a variety of restrictions on civil liberties. Provisions under the Emergency Power Regulations justified the imprisonment of Wallace Johnson, leader of the Youth League, for the duration of the War. Again during this period, the liberal use of legal controls by the Sierra Leone Administration was defended by Colonial Office representatives. At the time extensive regulatory measures were also operative in Nigeria, where valuable mineral deposits gave to that territory a military importance similar to the strategic Freetown harbour.

Wage employment in Sierra Leone expanded rapidly during the first three years of the War. But despite legal prohibitions industrial unrest was not successfully contained. In 1942 Mr. Edgar Parry, a Trade Union Advisor, was sent to the Colony to advise nascent trade union groups. That same year a record of thirteen strikes was reported. From this period Parry began to formulate a number of reforms designed to regulate the activities of labour groups, by bringing them within a recognized institutional bargaining framework.

The essence of Parry's scheme, which became operative after 1945 was this: labour unrest could be controlled by providing trade unions with an explicit bargaining function in representing labour's interests.

In providing trade unions with an officially recognized function, it was believed that the appeal of more radical activities would be lessened. In addition Parry as a trade unionist himself, sincerely felt that the provision of bargaining machinery would promote the economic interests of the working class.

The need for Government's active support for the proposed reforms inevitably brought into question the whole philosophy of what Government's role should be in labour-

management affairs. Guided by British Government philosophy, Administrations elsewhere in West Africa preferred limited intervention. Under this philosophy, the establishment of bargaining machinery and other legal controls on labour organizations and negotiations, was outside the province of Government authority. In Sierra Leone, however, Government officials implicitly recognized the dominant employment position of public authorities and other basic economic and political differences between the British Government and those in the colonial dependencies. Recognizing the differences led to the rejection of the principle of non-intervention since it was inconsistent with the realities of the colonial situation. Charged with the responsibility of effectively administering the Colony's affairs, one aspect of which was the control of labour unrest, Sierra Leone policy makers supported the proposals of the Trade Union Advisor. By 1947, Joint Industrial Councils had been established in those industries where Government as employer was dominant; in the privately controlled maritime and mining sectors, Wages Boards were introduced.

The placement and representation on these two types of bargaining machinery, though generally patterned on their British counterparts, indicated the manner in which

Government influence and control was maintained. For example, the Wages Boards were selected for the private sector. Through the Government appointed members to these bodies, official influence was maintained. The JICs in the Government controlled transportation and construction industries apportioned the employer representative seats to private employers and Government Departments. This practice was introduced even though Government was the dominant employer in construction and transportation. Its object was to give JIC wage bargaining the appearance of autonomy.

In overcoming many practical problems in the establishing of the bargaining machinery, primary attention was directed at trade union leaders. Parry realized that it was to this group as literate members of the labour movement that he must appeal. In gaining their cooperation for the proposed changes, his strategy involved promoting the security and prestige of these leaders. This was accomplished by incorporating union leaders into labour policy-making bodies, by passing legislation restricting the growth of rival trade unions in the same industry, and arranging broadcast of speeches and newspaper coverage given to the speeches of major union leaders. Following initial negotiations in 1946-47 on the Wages Boards and JICs, substantial wage concessions were made by all employer groups. These

increases reestablished the pre-War real wage for employed workers and affirmed union confidence in the industrial bargaining bodies.

During the decade following World War II the industrial bargaining machinery continued to function under conditions of ever rising prices. The standing nature of the bargaining machinery, however, made the system sensitive to labour demands and after the submission of wage claims, pay increases were made to cover the rise in living costs. The practice of extending negotiated agreements insured those workers not represented on the industrial bargaining bodies that their rates would also be adjusted.

As a result of this combination of factors, i.e. the stability of union organization and the promotion of leadership security, the standing nature of the bargaining machinery and the practice of extending industrial agreements, a remarkable degree of peace characterized labour-management relations in the country. By comparison with neighbouring British West African states which were experiencing similar trade conditions, inflation, unemployment levels, with comparable industry mixes and trade union organization, Sierra Leone's labour force was less strike prone. To 1955 the experiment in labour regulation through institutionalizing union functions appeared successful. The experiment

provided a case study supporting the theory that union-management relations during the formative stages of industrial relations can be peacefully maintained by insuring union stability and the prestige and security of union leaders.

The study also indicated the particular way that the design of negotiating bodies will affect the pattern of labour-management conflict which does emerge. For example, in Sierra Leone, the importance of industry wide agreements led to the neglect of local level consultation and resulted in a number of mining strikes during the early 1950s. On the other hand, the practice of 'extending' the agreements of Joint Industrial Councils to cover all workers in an industry minimized the probability of unrest among private employees which appeared in other West African states, following the recommendations of appointed Commissions of Inquiry for Government employees.

Even the 1955 Freetown General Strike was affected by the design of the bargaining machinery. The decision on the part of the Maritime Workers' Union not to support the strike reflected to some extent the industrial character of the negotiating bodies. Rather than cooperate in the strike the leader of the Maritime Union saw the interests of his group promoted by waiting and having the gains achieved by

transport and construction workers generalized to maritime workers in subsequent wage talks with shipping concerns.

While its character may have been influenced by the industrial design of the bargaining machinery, the General Strike was also partly the outcome of a more serious malaise in industrial relations, which was related to the functioning of the bargaining institutions. Successful wage negotiations up to 1955 had shifted official attention away from more parochial areas of labour-management concern. As a result the cost of living index, introduced in 1942, had not been revised despite serious deficiencies in its construction; personality differences between the Commissioner of Labour and certain trade union leaders, and between Mr. S. Stevens, the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour and Mr. M. Grant leader of the Artisan's Union were left unresolved; and the preoccupation of the Governor and the Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour in other administrative affairs minimized their conciliatory roles during the increasingly strained JIC negotiations which preceded the strike. A tentative conclusion from this summary emphasizes the dangers of disinterest developing in one sphere of labour-management relations partly as a result of successes in another.

.

One of the more interesting lessons learned from the review of Sierra Leone industrial relations practices to 1955 was that the appearance of a seemingly well-structured trade union movement under stable leadership, enjoying legally protected bargaining rights did not necessarily mean superior economic conditions for wage earners in West Africa at this time. In fact wage rates in Freetown generally lagged behind the rates paid to unskilled labourers in Lagos, Accra and Bathurst. In these cities workers, organized in less centralized trade unions having no recognized bargaining function, were more prone to engage in strike action. As a result of the strikes which did take place or as a result of the threat of such strikes, Government and private employers were persuaded to grant substantial wage increases. The achievement of Parry's scheme in Sierra Leone was that it removed some of the causes (i.e. demand for bargaining rights, union leadership rivalries, union demarcation disputes) of strikes and lessened the pressure on employers to offer pay concessions in order to insure industrial harmony.

After the 1955 General Strike a certain amount of disillusionment in the effectiveness of the bargaining machinery led to modifications in its design and operation.

The earlier pattern of establishing Wages Boards in the private sector and JICs for Government workers was no longer closely followed. After 1955, the policy of employers of relating wage changes to cost of living changes was superseded by a more generous wage policy. As a result wages for general labour increased by 70% between 1955 and 1958. Thereafter, wage concessions continued to be made during negotiations in 1962 and 1965. By 1965, the 75¢ per diem wage paid the Sierra Leone labourer made him the highest paid unskilled worker among the English speaking West African states.

During this period the standing character of the industrial bargaining machinery facilitated the submission of union wage demands during periods favourable to the workers. Thus, even though unemployment in the country was increasing after 1958, increased Government spending on development projects during the first half of the 1960s resulted in a rising demand for labour and claims for wage increases. Employer groups anxious to contain industrial unrest, and guided by no clear wage policy preferred to make concessions rather than acknowledge the labour supply situation.

Since 1965 the liberal spending policy pursued by Government, evident in the high wages paid to its own

employees, came to a halt. Ever rising unemployment, resulting from rural-urban migration and a national debt which in December, 1966 totalled above Le 70 million demanded expenditure cuts.

One effect of this levelling off in Government spending has been to bring industrial wage negotiations in the country to a standstill. The high unemployment levels have made it possible for private employers to follow Government example, at least on the industry-wide bargaining bodies. The trade unions, faced with the economic depression have resorted to collective bargaining with individual private employers outside the industrial machinery, in an attempt to win concessions. In retrospect, labour's success on the industry-wide negotiating machinery is now one cause of its disuse.

The likelihood of industry-wide negotiations in the near future is slight. Not only does the country's chronic balance of payments problem and large national debt indicate this, but disunity within the labour movement itself has diminished the prospect. Union leadership rivalries since 1960 have become more frequent, not only between rival factions in the same union, but also among union groups in the same industry. The 1962 amendment to the Trade Union Act,

removing the earlier restriction on the right to organize, has not helped to stabilize union organization and leadership security. While the possibility of increasing strike action resulting from this situation has been countered by labour legislation requiring a twenty-one day strike notice before a strike can take place, more positive steps towards inter-union cooperation have not been stimulated.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The Introduction of Labour Legislation
to British West Africa

Immediately preceding and during the early war years other British West African territories experienced similar developments to Sierra Leone in labour legislation and regulation. Legislation was introduced usually after persuasion from the Colonial Office (primarily through despatches, visits to West Africa by Colonial Office personnel, and the passage of the Colonial Welfare and Development Act, 1940). By the early 1940s all West African territories had incorporated into their statutes important legislation dealing with labour.

<u>Ordinance</u>	<u>Ghana</u>	<u>Nigeria</u>	<u>Sierra Leone</u>	<u>Gambia</u>
Trade Union	1941	1939	1939	1932
Arbitration	1941	1941	1939	1944
Workers Compensation	1940	1941	1940	1940
Consolidated Labour Code	1948	1945	1946	1944
Labour Department	1938	1942	1941	1961

The legislation in each case was modelled on English statutes. Under the Trade Union and Arbitration Ordinances, unions were held not to be unlawful because their objects were in restraint of trade. (British Trade Union Act 1871) and were given immunity from legal action in tort¹ (Trade Disputes Act of 1906). Protection was provided against action on grounds of conspiracy or inducement of breach of contract and the statutes also legalized peaceful picketing and removed any liability for interfering with the business of another person (British Trade Disputes Act, 1906).²

A significant departure from the U.K. Trade Union Act of 1871 was that the trade unions in West Africa were required to register with a Registrar of Trade Unions if they wished to secure legal protection. This provision followed a recommendation contained in the 1930 Passfield Despatch. Registration could be refused a trade union if the organization had not complied with the provision of the law or if its objects were unlawful or not primarily statutory objects.

1. A civil wrong other than under common law.

2. United Nations Special Study on Social Conditions in non-Self Governing Territories (New York, 1956) p. 43.

One authority has noted that compulsory registration was justified on the grounds that it protected union members against corrupt leadership. More importantly, through registration, "more would be known of protest movements, and colonial governments would be better able to keep a finger on the pulse of industrial organization and industrial feeling, so that they would know where and when industrial trouble was likely to break out, and which organization and leaders they must watch".¹

On the right of trade unions to strike, each of the West African colonies passed Arbitration and Trade Disputes Ordinances modelled on the United Kingdom 1919 Industrial Courts Act. (In the Gambia, however, no provision was made for appointing boards of inquiry to investigate disputes.) Under the Trade Disputes Ordinances, Governors were empowered to refer a dispute to an 'ad hoc' arbitration tribunal,² decisions of which had to be voluntarily accepted. The new legislation proved a fillip to trade union organization.

1. Roberts Labour in the Tropical Territories of the Commonwealth, op. cit., p. 263.

2. Consisting either of a sole arbitrator, an arbitrator assisted by assessors, or an equal number of arbitrators nominated by each party and an independent chairman appointed by the Governor.

Year	Ghana		Nigeria		Sierra Leone		
	Regis- tered Unions	Member- ship (Paid-up)	Regis- tered Unions	Member- ship (Total)	Regis- tered Unions	Member- ship (Paid- up)	(Total)
1940	-	-	13	4,508	7	-	-
1941	-	-	27	12,892	11	750	-
1942	4	913	80	26,275	11	750	
1943	4	-	85	27,154	11	-	
1944	11	482	91	30,000	9	-	
1945	14	6,030	97	27,261	9	-	8,262
1946	24	10,976	100	52,747	8	-	11,660
1947	28	30,458	109	76,362	8	5,496	12,821
1948	41	38,135	127	90,864	8	6,235	13,839
1949	56	17,985	140	109,998	7	6,072	15,955

SOURCE: Labour Department Reports and J. I. Roper
Labour Problems in West Africa
(London 1958), p. 107.
From 1940 the number of registered trade
unions in the Gambia remained at three.

In Ghana, trade unionism expanded particularly after 1944 with the Government policy of authorizing civil servants to join particular trade unions.¹

1. For example, the Trade Union (Civil Servants and Waterworks) Ordinance (No.20 of 1944) authorized civil servants employed on technical duties at waterworks to be members of the Weija Waterworks Workers' Trade Union. The Trade Union (Civil Servants) Order (No.4 of 1946 authorized employees of the Posts and Telegraph Department, other than those holding senior appointments to become members of the Post Office Employees' Union. Order No.5 of 1946 directed certain Public Works Department employees to join the P.W.D. Employees Union. See Annual Reports on the Labour Department (Accra) 1944-45, p. 4; 1945-46, p.6; and 1946-47, p.10.

APPENDIX 2

Cost of Living Changes and Real Wages in West Africa

Series I 1939 = 100

Sierra Leone - Freetown

Year	Unskilled Labour		Cost of Living Index	Real Wage Index *
	Wage Rate	Index		
1939	1/-	100	100	100
1940	1/-	100	-	-
1942	1/5	140	234	59
1943	1/5	140	242	57
1944	1/5	140	249	56
1945	1/5	140	234	59
1946	1/9	175	232	75
1947	2/3	225	233	96
1948	2/3	225	242	92
1949	2/6	250	250	100
1950	2/6	250	255	98
1951	3/-	300	341	88
1952	3/9	375	392	96
1953	3/9	375	389	96
1954	3/9	375	410	91
1955	4/9	475	417	114
1956	5/6	550	450	122
1957	5/6	550	487	113
1958	6/4	633	469	135
1959	6/4	633	469	135
1960	6/4	633	478	132
1961	6/4	633	501	126
1962	7/-	700	497	141
1963	7/-	700	501	140
1964	7/-	700	558	125
1965	7/6	750	581	129
1966	7/6	750	614	122

Source: Annual Reports of the Labour Department;
ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics 1962, 1967.

* The 1942 Cost of Living index provided figures to 1955.
 Splicing after 1955 on ILO data (1958 = 100) with
 417 = 89.

N.B. The unskilled wage rates presented in this Appendix
 do not conform with those presented in the Labour

/Department

Appendix 2 (Contd.)

Department Reports for 1961-64. Following Artisan JIC wage negotiations in 1962 the recorded wage rates were listed at 7/8 per day for unskilled labour. (Annual Report 1962, p. 30.) After a wage increase of 6d in 1965 the new minimum should have been 8/2. Inexplicably, the Labour Report in 1965 gave the unskilled rate as 75¢ (7/6). (Annual Report 1965, Table 9.) In sorting out the irregularity a compromise was decided upon. For comparative analysis among British West African states the 75¢ rate in 1965 was used and adjustments made in the rates 1961-64. (This 75¢ rate was generally quoted by labour department officers, trade unionists, and business managers as the observed rate.)

In subsequent analysis of Sierra Leone skill, area and industry wage differences, however, official Labour Report figures are used. In this case the rates are believed to be consistently higher than the wages really paid but they do indicate the general trends in the differentials reviewed.

Gold Coast - Accra

Year	<u>Unskilled Labour</u>		<u>Cost of Living</u>		<u>Real Wage</u>	
	<u>Wage Rate</u> ¹	<u>Index</u>	<u>Index</u> ²		<u>Index</u>	
1939	1/3	100	100		100	
1940	1/3	100	-		-	
1941	1/3	100	151		66	
1942	1/7	127	159		80	
1943	1/7	127	168		76	
1944	1/7	127	168		76	
1945	1/9	140	186		75	
1946	1/10	147	198		74	
1947	2/9	220	212		104	
1948	2/9	220	227		97	
1949	2/9	220	243		91	
1950	3/3	260	281		93	
1951	3/3	260	329		79	
1952	4/6	360	322		112	
1953	4/6	360	325		111	
1954	4/6	360	325		111	
1955	4/6	360	325		111	
1956	5/2	413	339		122	
1957	5/2	413	342		121	
1958	5/6	440	342		129	
1959	5/6	440	349		126	
1960	6/6	520	353		147	
1961	6/6	520	376		138	
1962	6/6	520	411		127	
1963	6/6	520	431		121	
1964	6/6	520	483		108	
1965	6/6	520	619		84	
1966	6/6	520	647		80	

Source: Annual Reports of the Labour Department;
ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics 1967;
 E. Berg "Real Income Trends in West Africa"
 in Economic Transition in Africa. Melville J.
 Herskovits and Mitchell Harwitz (eds.)
 (London, 1964) p. 232; and W. B. Birmingham
Economic Bulletin of Ghana, 4, No.3.

1. Base rate of 1/3 from Annual Report on the Labour Department 1938-39, p. 15.
2. Cost of Living Index 1939 = 100 spliced with ILO series 1958 = 100.

Gambia Bathurst

<u>Year</u>	<u>Unskilled Labour</u>		<u>Cost of Living</u>	<u>Real Wage</u>
	Wage Rate	Index	Index	Index
1939	1/-	100		
1940	-			
1941	-			
1942	-			
1943	-			
1944	-	-	185 ¹	-
1945	1/9	175	185	95
1946	1/9	175	190	92
1947	2/3	225	246	91
1948	2/3	225	263	86
1949	2/9	275	244	113
1950	3/9	275	249	110
1951	3/-	300	341	88
1952	3/4	333	351	95
1953	3/4	333	304	110
1954	3/4	333	296	113
1955	3/4	333	-	-
1956	4/-	400	274 ²	146
1957	4/-	400	-	-
1958	4/-	400	296	135
1959	4/-	400	316	127
1960	5/-	500	-	-
1961	5/8	567	-	-
1962	5/8	567	-	-
1963	5/8	567	-	-
1964	5/8	567	-	-
1965	5/8	567	-	-

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department, and Report of the Commission to Investigate the Basic Terms and Conditions of Service of Daily Rated Labour in the Gambia
(Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1960)

1. For December of each year to 1954.
2. After 1956 the Index covers an annual average. New Indices were introduced in 1950 and again in 1961.

Nigeria - Lagos

<u>Year</u>	<u>Unskilled Labour</u>		<u>Cost of Living</u>		<u>Real Wage</u>
	<u>Wage Rate</u> ¹	<u>Index</u>	<u>Index</u>	²	<u>Index</u>
1939	1/-	100	100		100
1940	1/-	100	-		-
1941	1/- - 1/3	116	-		-
1942	1/9 - 2/-	188	151		125
1943	2/-	200	167		120
1944	2/-	200	163		123
1945	2/3 - 2/5	226	176		128
1946	2/7	258	180		143
1947	2/7	258	211		122
1948	2/7	258	232		111
1949	2/7	258	229		113
1950	2/8	267	308		87
1951	3/-	300	323		93
1952	3/4	333	300		111
1953	3/5	342	315		109
1954	3/9	375	330		114
1955	4/8	467	342		137
1956	4/8	467	368		127
1957	4/8	467	375		125
1958	4/8	467	375		125
1959	4/8	467	390		120
1960	5/10	583	417		140
1961	5/10	583	443		132
1962	5/10	583	458		127
1963	5/10	583	458		127
1964	6/6 (est.)	650	466		139
1965	6/6	650	488		133
1966	6/6	650	559		116

SOURCE: Annual Report on the Department of Labour;
E. Berg. op. cit. pp. 234-35; and
ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics op. cit.

1. Dual rates in 1941, 1942 and 1945 are due to retroactive wage increases. The index figure represents the average for two rates.
2. Cost of living index based upon the calculations of E. Berg op. cit. (1949-53) and the ILO Year Book op. cit. from 1954. For an estimation of the years 1945-49 see Supplement to Appendix 2.

Supplement to APPENDIX 2 Series I - Nigeria

The Nigerian Cost of Living Index

From 1946 to 1953 no official measure of cost of living changes was made in Nigeria's capital city. One author (E. Berg Economic Transition in Africa Herskovits and Harwitz (eds.) p. 234) compiled a rough index of retail prices 1949-1953 from an official Federal Government publication. This estimate was incorporated in the present study and the remaining task was to bridge the gap between 1946-48, in order to present a continuous run from 1939. Inevitably the final product provides only the crudest approximation to what is thought to be the movement of retail prices over the years.

In constructing the cost of living index for Lagos 1946-49, relative price changes in imported goods were based on P.T. Bauer's index for 'landed costs of imported cotton price goods'.¹ Preference was given to this index over the Colonial Office Index of 20 Nigerian Imports since the latter contained several items not purchased by low income African families.²

-
1. P.T. Bauer West African Trade (Cambridge, 1954) Appendix 2 pp. 410-424.
 2. For example, whisky, cement, fuel oil and motor vehicles the prices of which rose less than other imports. In addition the index related only to c.i.f. values not to landed costs or to retail prices.

Year	Index of Landed Costs of all Cotton Piece Goods ¹ (1935-37 = 100)	C.O. Index of c.i.f. Value of 20 Nigerian Imports (1939 = 100)
1939	101	100
1943	247	222
1945	258	223
1949	381	329
1950	407	312

The percentage of imported goods in the consumption pattern of low income wage earners was estimated at forty per cent.² The remaining sixty per cent of consumption spending in Lagos was allowed for local produce, chiefly food.

The next step was to sort out the relative effect of price changes of imported and locally produced items on the overall cost of living movement. In the absence of any official data on price changes in locally produced goods this breakdown was arrived at by averaging the data available from the cost-of-living index (1939 = 100) which ran from 1942-45.

-
1. Cotton manufactured goods dominated imports from 1940-51 averaging 33% (total value) over the period.
 2. Estimation based upon Report of the Cost of Living Committee Lagos, 1942. The most important single items in the expenditure on imports by Lagos households were clothing (10%) and food (8%). Additional items included fuel, tobacco, medicine, household equipment, etc.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost of Living Index</u>	<u>Landed Cost of Cotton piece Goods</u>
1942	151	174
1943	167	247
1944	163	226
1945	176	258
	Average 164.25	226.25

SOURCE: Berg. op. cit. p. 204 and Bauer op. cit. p. 421

The same procedure used for Bauer's 'landed cost of cotton piece goods' produced a figure of 126% average increase in prices of this group for the years 1942-45. Since this index was taken to represent the average price increase in import generally, and since it was further assumed that imported goods composed forty per cent. of total expenditure of the average Lagos low income household, the weighted contribution of increases in import prices to the cost of living index increase was approximately 80% or $\frac{50}{64}$.

The remaining 20% = $(\frac{14}{64})$ was attributed to price rises of local goods and services.¹ For the years 1946-47 the

1. This relatively low rise in the price of local produce consumed in the Lagos areas was in part related to effective administration of war time price controls. Since the purchase of local food goods represented over 40% of total family expenditure the controls had a significant impact in containing cost of living increases. See West African Review April, 1943 for additional data on local food prices.

weighted average figure of about 20% for locally produced goods was left unchanged.¹ For these years, cost of living changes could result only from movements in the index of landed cotton goods. After 1948, however, increases in local food prices were taking place.² To account for this increase it was assumed that the average increase in local produce, measured at about 20%, 1942-45; increased to 30%, 1948-49. Along with index changes of imported cotton goods prices, the change in local prices, after weighting (i.e. 40% and 60%) produced a crude measure of cost of living changes.

It may be argued that the emphasis on local food produce alone distorts the internally generated changes in cost-of-living. For example, no account was taken of rents (which accounted for almost 8% of total expenditure according to the 1942 Report). It can only be offered in defence that the scarcity of any material relating to

-
1. The decision to hold prices of local goods constant, was based in part upon a review made of food costs for Nigerian prisons and hospitals after the War. Results indicated that the cost of feeding African prisoners remained stable after 1945. Bauer op. cit. pp. 331-332.
 2. Annual Report, Nigerian Department of Agriculture 1950-51
See also Governor's Speech to the Legislative Council
8 March, 1949 (Sessional Paper No.19 of 1949) on the
poor yield of the 1948 millet and maize crops; and
Bruce F. Johnston The Staple Food Economies of
Western Tropical Africa, op. cit. p. 6.

rent changes during the period in Lagos resulted in its exclusion. Moreover, no account was taken of rent changes by the Sierra Leone Cost of Living Index after 1942. Thus the limitations of each index used tend to balance and, on the whole, reinforce the belief that they should be used as only the roughest approximations to cost of living changes during the period.

Series II (1958 = 100)

Year	Sierra Leone - Freetown				Ghana - Accra				Nigeria - Lagos			
	Unskilled Labour Wage Rate	Cost of Living Index	Real Wage Index	Unskilled Labour Wage Rate	Cost of Living Index	Real Wage Index	Unskilled Labour Wage Rate	Cost of Living Index	Real Wage Index	Unskilled Labour Wage Rate	Cost of Living Index	Real Wage Index
1949	2/6	53	74	2/9	50	71	2/7	61	90			
1950	2/6	54	72	3/3	59	82	2/8	82	70			
1951	3/-	72	65	3/3	59	96	3/-	86	74			
1952	3/9	83	71	4/6	82	94	3/4	80	89			
1953	3/9	83	71	4/6	82	95	3/5	84	87			
1954	3/9	87	68	4/6	82	95	3/9	88	91			
1955	4/9	89	84	4/6	82	95	4/8	91	110			
1956	5/6	96	91	4/9	86	99	4/8	98	102			
1957	5/6	104	84	5/4	97	100	4/8	100	100			
1958	6/4	100	100	5/6	100	100	4/8	100	100			
1959	6/4	100	100	5/6	100	102	4/8	104	96			
1960	6/4	102	98	5/9	105	103	5/10	125	113			
1961	6/4	107	103	6/6	118	110	5/10	125	106			
1962	7/-	106	105	6/6	118	120	5/10	122	102			
1963	7/-	107	104	6/6	118	126	5/10	122	102			
1964	7/-	119	93	6/6	118	141	6/6(est.)	124	112			
1965	7/6	124	94	6/6	118	181	6/6	130	107			
1966	7/6	131	89	6/6	118	189	6/6	141	99			

Series II Sources: E. Berg op. cit. pp. 219, 222, 231-232; Annual Reports on the Labour Departments; ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics op. cit. provided the cost of living changes 1958 = 100. Splicing with earlier indices has been done in the case of Sierra Leone 1949-1955 and Nigeria and Ghana, 1949-1953.

Note: The ILO series on retail price changes for selected countries covers the period from 1953 with 1958 = 100. The base year in Sierra Leone's case is a poor one for measuring real wage changes since a substantial wage increase during that year frustrated the desired 'normality' of the base period.

APPENDIX 3

Strike Data for Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Ghana from 1949

Year	Sierra Leone						Indus- try Affect- ed	Issues
	Num- ber (1)	Involvement (2)	Man Days Lost (3)	Total Wage Employ- ment # (4)	(1) as % of (4) 1	(3) as % of (4) 2		
1949	2	860	2,460	38,894	.5	6		
1950	3	3,065	8,615	40,480	.7	21		
1951	2	3,000	26,400	47,378	.4	56	Mines	Wages
1952	1	2,000	2,000	46,499	.2	4		
1953	2	1,012	1,800	44,155	.5	4		
1954	4	350(est.)	484	42,450	.9	1		
1955	2	9,200	36,050	43,123	.5	84	General (Free- town)	Wages
1956	2	380	680	41,078	.5	2		
1957	3	1,644	3,324	43,244	.7	8		
1958	7	1,706	3,113	47,046	1.5	7		
1959	5	4,148	28,927	46,341	1.1	62		
1960	2	1,078	9,614	47,874	.4	20		
1961	4	318	1,448	51,520	.8	3		
1962	22	4,042	44,230	53,516	4.1	83	General	Wages Person- nel Rela- tions
1963	11	1,892	11,086	57,609	1.9	19		
1964	4	824	6,480	61,699	.6	11		
1965	3	1,320	3,245	69,223	.4	5		
1966	9	781	542	67,156	1.3	1		

SOURCE: Labour Department Reports

1. Number of strikes per 10,000 workers in wage employment.
2. Man days lost as a percentage of total wage employment.

* Based upon returns from employers of six or more workers.

Nigeria

Year	Num- ber	Invol- vement	Man Days Lost	Total Wage Employ- ment *	(1) as % of (2)	(3) as % of (4)	Indus- try Affec- ted	Issues
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)				
1949-50	46	50,060	577,000	n.a.	-	-	Mines	Wage Payment
1950-51	19	31,987	286,351	319,333	.6	90		
1951-52	38	6,930	20,243 ¹	303,421	1.3	7		
1952-53	26	11,855	59,847	286,818	.9	21		
1953-54	33	10,024	26,875	323,834	1.0	8		
1954-55	30	6,602	12,166	340,000(est.)	.9	4		
1955-56	43	89,522	901,679	357,024	1.2	253	Mines/ Cons- truc- tion	Retrench- ment Wages
1956-57	49	21,797	63,411	447,400	1.1	14		
1957-58	48	24,660	78,333	475,600	1.0	16		
1958-59	51	20,968	87,039	478,300	1.1	18		
1959-60	54	23,250	70,862	472,600	1.1	15		
1960-61	62	36,677	156,882	500,000	1.2	31		
1961-62	58	18,671	57,237	423,000	1.4	14		
1962-63	44	19,315	53,797	518,805	.8	10		
1963-64	126	41,884	90,875	441,385	2.9	21		
1964-65	164	78,992	276,175	561,500	2.9	49	General	Wages

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department
ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics op. cit.

- Figure does not include a man days lost calculation for the 'go slow' tactics at the Enugu coal mines and by locomotive drivers on the railway. It also excludes a series of minor stoppages at the collieries.

* Based on returns from employers of ten or more workers. The series to 1955 excludes certain occupations (ex. teachers) included thereafter. Employment data for Nigeria are largely approximations of the real employment situation. Poor responses to employment return sheets are one cause of the problem. See Labour Report 1963-64, pp. 16-18.

Ghana

Year	Number	Involvement	Man Days Lost	Total Wage Employment *	(1) as % of (4)	(3) as % of (4)	Industry Affected	Issues
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)				
1949-50	54	38,557	123,311 ¹	155,786	3.5	79	General	Wages
1950-51	19	5,482	11,017	184,338	1.0	6		
1951-52	39	15,404	38,185	217,685	1.8	18		
1952-53	83	31,639	129,678	216,275	3.8	60		
1953-54	65	20,529	125,927	223,614	2.9	56	Mines	Wages Personnel Relations
1954-55	35	8,263	29,207	244,417	1.6	13		
1955-56	25	33,319	2,492,616	245,078	1.0	1,017	Mines	Wages
1956-57	45	11,858	33,005	267,380	1.7	12		
1957-58	50	21,771	49,502	277,413	1.8	18		
1958-59	20	4,143	7,260 ²	292,000	.7	2		
1959-60	51	9,978	15,035	319,000	1.6	5		
1960-61	40	12,249	29,340	332,898	1.2	9		
1961-62	4	1,690	2,800	349,932	.1	0.8		
1962-63	8	940	1,372	356,215	.2	0.4		
1963-64	13	2,844	953	374,086	.3	0.3		
1964-65	13	7,100	66,507	386,860	.3	17		
1965-66	33	15,027	19,380	395,811	.8	5		

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department;
ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics op. cit.; and
Republic of Ghana Labour Statistics 1966, p. 3.

1. This figure under represents the true statistic since no estimation was made for the General Strike of January, 1950.
2. Strike data from 1958-59 reflect the effect of the 1958 Industrial Relations Act and subsequent Amendments on labour's propensity to strike.

* Coverage is for all employers other than those employing casual labour and domestics.

APPENDIX 4

Unemployment in Sierra Leone, Ghana and NigeriaSierra Leone

	<u>Total Wage Employment</u>	<u>Unemployed</u>		<u>Total</u>
		Employment Exchanges *	Maritime Labour Pool	
1949	38,894	6,244	-	
1950	40,480	3,832	-	
1951	47,378	2,379	-	
1952	46,499	2,268	-	
1953	44,155	-	-	
1954	42,450	1,483	3,950	5,433
1955	43,123	1,194	3,341	4,535
1956	41,078	914	3,920	4,834
1957	43,244	1,549	4,049	5,598
1958	47,046	2,547	4,039	6,586
1959	46,341	2,958	4,275	7,233
1960	47,874	3,852	4,037	7,889
1961	51,520	2,521	3,861	6,382
1962	53,516	4,307	4,232	8,539
1963	57,609	4,821	4,405	9,226
1964	61,699 (Dec.)	5,288	4,575	9,863
1965	69,223	6,813	4,753	11,566
1966	67,156	7,970	4,930	12,900
1967	-	8,050	5,180	13,230

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department;
ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1967, p. 376;
Labour Statistics 1966 (Accra, 1967) p. 3.

* For 1949-52 Employment Exchange unemployment figures represent the average for only two months, January and December, of the year. From 1954 annual averages are recorded.

	<u>Ghana</u>		<u>Nigeria</u>	
	<u>Total Wage Employment</u>	<u>Unemployment</u> ¹	<u>Total Wage Employment</u>	<u>Unemployment</u> ²
1949-50	155,786	-	-	6,159 (Dec.)
1950-51	184,338	-	319,333	5,769 (Mar.)
1951-52	217,685	4,079 (Mar.)	303,421	6,033 "
1952-53	216,275	24,473 (Special Survey) (Mar.)	286,818	6,379 "
1953-54	223,614	6,869	323,834	29,441 "
1954-55	224,417	6,056	340,000(est.)	21,748 "
1955-56	245,078	5,050	357,024	19,421 "
1956-57	267,380	6,285	447,400	2,713
1957-58	277,413	7,460	475,600	2,698
1958-59	292,000	8,917	478,300	5,065
1959-60	319,000	8,760	472,600	5,132
1960-61	332,898	11,257	500,000	6,861
1961-62	349,932	14,743	423,000	13,745
1962-63	356,215	15,492	518,805	15,055
1963-64	374,086	15,434	441,385	16,823
1964-65	386,860	13,600	561,500	20,770
1965-66	395,811	11,300	-	20,940
1966-67	361,502	11,500	-	26,630
1967-68	-	17,100	-	26,540

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Departments
and ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1967,
p. 376.

1. Employment Exchange figures used throughout this series.
2. The sharp increase after 1952 attributed to the greater use made of the Employment Exchange. Decline in 1956 related to a change in registration procedure.

APPENDIX 5

Trade Union Organization in Sierra Leone,
Nigeria and Ghana from 1949

Sierra Leone

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Membership</u>		<u>Union Membership as a % of Total Employment</u>	
		Total (a)	Paid-Up (b)	(a)	(b)
1949	7	15,955	6,072	41	16
1950	10	16,439	7,029	41	17
1951	11	17,419	8,381	37	18
1952	11	18,665	8,699	40	19
1953	11	19,852	9,373	45	21
1954	11	18,528	5,234	44	12
1955	10	23,626	9,170	55	21
1956	10	26,063	10,053	63	25
1957	10	28,448	8,303	66	19
1958	11	27,584	13,177	59	28
1959	10	25,182	11,560	54	25
1960	9	25,614	12,819	54	27
1961	9	27,234	17,405	53	34
1962	9	28,487	17,128	53	32
1963	14	33,666	19,041	58	33
1964	14	34,628	19,316	56	31
1965	15	40,556	18,740	59	27

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department

Nigeria

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total Membership</u>	<u>Total Membership as a % of Total Employment</u>
1949-50	140	109,998	-
1950-51	144	144,389	45
1951-52	124	152,230	50
1952-53	131	143,282	50
1953-54	152	153,089	47
1954-55	177	165,130	49
1955-56	232	175,987	49
1956-57	270	198,265	44
1957-58	298	235,742	50
1958-59	318	254,097	53
1959-60	347	259,072	55
1960-61	360	274,126	55
1961-62	402	281,124	66
1962-63	435	324,203	62
1963-64	502	352,790	80

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Department of Labour

Ghana

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Paid-Up Membership</u>	<u>Paid-Up Membership as a % of Total Employment</u>
1949-50	56	17,985	12
1950-51	61	28,170	15
1951-52	65	32,908	15
1952-53	59	35,129	16
1953-54	69	46,309	21
1954-55	75	44,092	20
1955-56	80	67,173	27
1956-57	95	57,845	22
1957-58	95	71,149	26
1958-59	16/24 ¹	179,000	61
1959-60	16	234,000	73
1960-61	16	281,000	84
1961-62	16	286,000	82

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department
and Birmingham et. al. op. cit.

1. The 1958 Industrial Relations Act reorganized trade union structure. Amendments to the Act provided for the check-off and abolished a worker's right to contract out of a check-off arrangement. This last restriction had the effect of making union membership compulsory. Since 1966 the compact union structure has shown signs of fragmenting, particularly in the maritime sector.

APPENDIX 6

Ratios of Skilled Workers Wage Rates to Those of Unskilled Workers October, 1954, October, 1960
and October, 1962

Country	Manufacture of Machinery ratio of iron-molder to labourer		Printing and Publishing ratio of machine compositor to labourer		Electricity, Light and Power ratio of electrical fitter to labourer		Construction ratio of carpenters to labourers				
	1954	1960	1954	1960	1954	1960	1954	1960			
Ghana ¹	-	-	1.99 (1957)	3.08	2.20 ²	2.75	2.45	2.10 ²	2.13	2.45	2.10
Nigeria ³ (Lagos)	2.46 (1956)	1.56	1.33	2.11	1.36	2.50	1.44	1.44 ⁴	1.29	1.44	1.62 ⁴
Sierra Leone (highest wage zone)	2.18	1.70	2.96	1.88	1.88 ^{5.6}	2.44	1.86	1.77 ^{5.6}	1.82	1.52	1.47 ^{5.6}

1. Average rates, 1957 Accra only. 2. Prevailing rates. 3. Average rates 1954 whole country; 1956 prevailing rates. 4. For 1961. 5. Whole Country.
6. Minimum rate.

SOURCE: ILO, Second African Regional Conference 1964 Methods and Principles of Wage Regulation (Geneva, 1964) p. 25.

APPENDIX 7

Daily Wage Rates for Construction and Mining Industries 1949-1963

(shillings)

Construction - Colony

Year	Labourer	Skilled		Ratio	
		2nd class	1st class	2nd class/ lab.	1st class/ lab.
1949	2.5	5.25	8.0	2.10	3.20
1950	2.5	5.25	8.0	2.10	3.20
1951	3.0	6.0	8.5	2.00	2.83
1952	3.75	6.67	9.17	1.78	2.45
1953	3.75	6.67	9.17	1.78	2.45
1954	3.75	6.67	9.17	1.78	2.45
1955	4.75	7.67	10.17	1.61	2.14
1956	5.5	8.4	10.9	1.53	1.98
1957	5.5	8.4	10.9	1.53	1.98
1958	6.33	9.25	11.75	1.46	1.86
1959	6.33	9.25	11.75	1.46	1.86
1960	6.33	9.25	11.75	1.46	1.86
1961	7.0	9.9	12.4	1.41	1.77
1962	7.67	10.6	13.08	1.38	1.71
1963	7.67	10.6	13.08	1.38	1.71

Construction - Protectorate

Year	Labourer	Skilled		Ratio	
		2nd class	1st class	2nd class/ lab.	1st class/ lab.
1949	1.67	3.5	5.33	2.63	4.01
1950	1.67	3.5	5.33	2.63	4.01
1951	2.5	5.75	8.0	2.30	3.20
1952	3.25	6.17	8.67	1.90	2.67
1953	3.25	6.17	8.67	1.90	2.67
1954	3.25	6.17	8.67	1.90	2.67
1955	4.25	7.17	9.67	1.69	2.28
1956	5.0	7.92	10.42	1.58	2.08
1957	5.0	7.92	10.42	1.58	2.08
1958	5.83	8.75	11.25	1.50	1.93
1959	5.83	8.75	11.25	1.50	1.93
1960	5.83	8.75	11.25	1.50	1.93
1961	6.5	9.42	11.67	1.45	1.80
1962	7.17	10.08	12.33	1.41	1.72
1963	7.17	10.08	12.33	1.41	1.72

Mining

Year	Heavy Lab.	Skilled (Highest rate)	Highly Skilled	Ratio Skilled Mine/ Lab.	Highly Skilled Mine/Lab.
1949	2.17	6.47	11.17	2.95	5.15
1950	2.17	6.4	11.17	2.95	5.15
1951	3.17	7.4	12.17	2.33	3.84
1952	3.67	7.9	12.67	2.15	3.45
1953	4.0	8.25	13.0	2.00	3.25
1954	4.0	8.25	13.0	2.06	3.25
1955	5.0	9.25	14.0	1.85	2.8
1956	5.0	9.25	14.0	1.85	2.8
1957	6.0	10.25	15.0	1.71	2.5
1958	6.0	10.25	15.0	1.71	2.0
1959	6.0	10.25	15.0	1.71	2.0
1960	6.0	10.25	15.0	1.71	2.5
1961	6.0	10.25	15.0	1.71	2.0
1962	6.67	10.9	15.67	1.63	2.35
1963	6.9	11.1	15.9	1.61	2.30

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department 1949-63.

APPENDIX 8

Average Weekly Earnings (shillings) and Hours Worked in the Construction and Mining Industries 1949-63

	<u>Colony</u>				<u>Construction</u>				<u>Protectorate</u>			
	<u>Labourer</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Artisan</u>	<u>Artisan/Labourer</u>	<u>Labourer</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Artisan</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Artisan/Labourer</u>
1949	12.75	39.00	30.00	42.00	2.35	42	8.17	18.5	39	18.5	2.26	
1950	15.00	42.00	34.00	46.00	2.27	44.8	10.25	18.17	.8	18.17	1.77	
1951	17.5	43.78	39.4	45.47	2.25	45.02	10.6	24.08	39.28	24.08	2.27	
1952	20.0	47.2	40.5	47.94	2.03	45.42	14.83	30.9	42.8	30.9	2.08	
1953	21.17	42.72	41.17	49.32	1.94	44.23	18.6	31.25	35.1	31.25	1.68	
1954	20.5	44.1	39.9	45.81	1.95	42.66	31.5	38.6	40.78	38.6	1.23	
1955	24.67	42.89	43.17	44.04	1.78	42.14	23.0	40.0	41.95	40.0	1.74	
1956	25.08	47.97	42.75	45.37	1.70	41.60	24.0	48.0	39.27	48.0	2.00	
1957	31.33	49.24	48.0	47.07	1.53	41.82	32.4	43.25	40.46	43.25	1.33	
1958	40.33	45.05	52.4	45.20	1.30	40.54	35.75	59.25	44.48	59.25	1.66	
1959	39.25	46.50	60.4	46.09	1.54	43.80	36.08	63.75	44.65	63.75	1.77	
1960	43.75	43.16	73.67	49.19	1.68	45.95	35.95	62.25	51.19	62.25	1.76	
1961	41.0	46.30	72.17	48.13	1.76	51.56	35.75	64.67	45.01	64.67	1.81	
1962	55.0	46.2	81.6	47.3	1.48	50.6	33.83	74.83	48.1	74.83	2.21	
1963	42.0	47.7	78.0	46.6	1.86	49.6	32.0	78.0	48.9	78.0	2.44	

Construction (Contd.)

	<u>Colony</u>				<u>Protectorate</u>				
	<u>Clerk</u> <u>Earnings</u>	<u>Clerk</u> <u>Hours</u>	<u>Artisan</u> <u>Earnings</u>	<u>Artisan</u> <u>Hours</u>	<u>Clerk</u> <u>Earnings</u>	<u>Clerk</u> <u>Hours</u>	<u>Artisan</u> <u>Earnings</u>	<u>Artisan</u> <u>Hours</u>	<u>Clerk/</u> <u>Artisan</u> <u>Ratio</u>
1949	38.33	54	30.0	42	36.4	43	18.5	39	1.97
1950	40.33	48.5	34.0	46	39.0	48	18.17	44.8	2.15
1951	46.33	51.35	39.4	45.47	41.25	45.39	24.08	39.28	1.71
1952	47.25	52.39	40.5	47.94	48.33	47.57	30.9	42.8	1.56
1953	50.17	51.06	41.17	49.32	52.5	46.0	31.25	35.1	1.68
1954	55.67	49.69	39.9	45.81	54.4	47.99	38.6	40.78	1.41
1955	59.6	48.72	43.17	44.04	56.4	44.52	40.0	41.95	1.41
1956	68.33	52.76	42.75	45.57	66.25	45.89	48.0	39.27	1.58
1957	79.33	51.88	48.0	47.07	76.25	45.62	43.25	40.46	1.76
1958	105.5	44.36	52.4	45.20	73.83	41.09	59.25	44.48	1.25
1959	82.67	45.36	60.4	46.09	76.75	48.65	63.75	44.65	1.20
1960	84.33	45.29	73.67	49.19	83.0	58.77	62.25	51.19	1.33
1961	127.0	44.25	72.17	48.13	78.25	41.55	64.67	45.01	1.21
1962	102.4	54.4	81.6	47.3	83.25	50.4	74.83	48.1	1.11
1963	122.0	49.0	78.0	46.6	94.0	48.8	78.0	48.9	1.21

Mining

	<u>Labourer</u>		<u>Artisan</u>		<u>Clerk</u>		<u>Ratio</u>
	<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Clerk/ Artisan</u>
1949	13.17	49	24.9	57	35.33	48	1.42
1950	14.17	50.8	26.25	55	38.75	49.3	1.48
1951	19.4	51.51	33.5	59.46	42.75	49.15	1.28
1952	23.75	51.77	38.5	58.7	46.0	50.68	1.19
1953	26.6	51.55	44.83	63.29	48.67	56.76	1.09
1954	28.33	52.91	43.0	58.59	49.0	48.32	1.14
1955	33.25	51.68	49.0	56.39	51.6	48.32	1.05
1956	40.0	54.66	52.08	58.08	55.25	48.76	1.06
1957	39.08	47.99	54.08	42.66	64.6	55.67	1.19
1958	48.17	46.98	62.67	54.26	72.25	47.53	1.15
1959	44.83	47.96	64.0	52.45	79.17	48.60	1.24
1960	44.6	49.47	64.08	51.34	77.67	48.23	1.21
1961	45.0	52.45	63.25	49.87	74.33	38.82	1.18
1962	53.4	56.2	82.25	56.4	86.25	49.6	1.05
1963	52.0	55.3	80.00	57.4	96.0	53.4	1.20

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Labour Department

Index of Wage and Earnings Changes 1949-63Labourers (Construction and Mining)

	<u>Wage Changes</u>			<u>Earnings Changes</u>		
	<u>Construction</u>		<u>Mining</u>	<u>Construction</u>		<u>Mining</u>
	Colony	Protec- torate *		Colony	Protec- torate	
1949	100	100	100	100	100	100
1950	100	100	100	118	125	108
1951	120	158	146	137	130	147
1952	150	195	169	157	182	180
1953	150	195	184	166	228	202
1954	150	195	184	161	386	215
1955	190	255	230	193	282	252
1956	220	300	230	197	294	304
1957	220	300	276	246	597	297
1958	253	350	276	316	438	366
1959	253	350	276	308	442	340
1960	253	350	276	343	432	339
1961	280	390	276	322	438	342
1962	307	430	307	431	414	405
1963	307	430	307	329	392	395

* From 1947-51 wages were slightly higher in the Bo Area than other parts of the Protectorate. Between 1952-54 higher wages were found in Bo, Bonthe, Kenema, Makeni and Magburaka. In 1955 the 'Colony Area' classification was changed to Area A which incorporated the Colony Area, Kenema, Makeni, Magburaka, Bonthe and Lungi Airport. In the remainder of the country wages were slightly higher in Port Loko and Njala than in other parts of the Protectorate not included in Area A. After 1956 the entire South-Eastern Province was included in Area A, while any area declared for licensed alluvial diamond mining joined Port Loko and Njala in their wage class. Since 1961 this class has been designated Area B while the lowest paid areas have become Area C. In the above table, the lowest area wage (C) has been used for Protectorate Construction workers.

Artisans (Construction and Mining)

	<u>Wage Changes</u>						<u>Earnings Changes</u>			
	<u>Construction</u>				<u>Mining</u>		<u>Construction</u>		<u>Mining</u>	
	Colony		Protecto- rate		Skilled	Highly Skilled	Colony	Prote- ctorate	Colony	Prote- ctorate
2nd	1st	2nd	1st							
1949	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1950	100	100	100	100	100	100	113	98	105	105
1951	114	106	164	150	116	109	131	130	135	135
1952	127	115	176	163	123	113	135	167	155	155
1953	127	115	176	163	129	116	137	169	180	180
1954	127	115	176	163	129	116	133	209	173	173
1955	146	127	205	181	145	125	144	216	197	197
1956	160	136	226	195	145	125	143	259	209	209
1957	160	136	226	195	160	134	160	234	217	217
1958	176	147	250	211	160	134	175	320	252	252
1959	176	147	250	211	160	134	201	345	257	257
1960	176	147	250	211	160	134	246	336	257	257
1961	189	155	269	219	160	134	241	350	254	254
1962	202	164	288	231	170	140	272	401	330	330
1963	202	164	288	231	170	140	260	422	321	321

APPENDIX 4

Craftsmen and Apprentices in Selected Specified Trades

<u>I S C O</u>	<u>Number Employed</u> <u>March 1964</u>		<u>Estimated Number</u> <u>1969</u>	
	<u>Craftsmen</u>	<u>Apprentices</u>	<u>Craftsmen</u>	<u>Apprentices</u>
<u>Minor Group</u> <u>7-5</u> Toolmakers, Machinists, Plumbers, Welders and Related Workmen	2,029	681	2,337	811
<u>Minor Group</u> <u>7-6</u> Electricians and Related Electrical Workers	270	126	323	135
<u>Minor Group</u> <u>7-7</u> Carpenters, Joiners and Related Workers	1,590	301	1,989	419
<u>Minor Group</u> <u>7-8</u> Painters and Decorators	418	72	519	73
<u>Minor Group</u> <u>7-9</u> Bricklayers and Con- struction Workers	813	168	1,146	208
<u>Totals</u>	5,120	1,348	6,314	1,646

SOURCE: Robert Brown Report to the Government of Sierra Leone on the Manpower Situation (Ministry of Overseas Development, London 1965. Table V)

Based on 708 out of 718 listed establishments on the Labour Department's Master Register.

APPENDIX 10

Industrial Negotiating Machinery, 1960Wages Boards

(Statutory)

Mine Workers' Wages Board (Private Employers) 1945	Maritime Workers' Wages Board (Private Employers) 1947	Agricultural Workers' Wages Board (Government) 1958
-------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------

Joint Industrial Councils

(Agreements statutory on publication by the Commissioner of Labour in the Royal Gazette)

Artisan and General Workers (Predominantly Government) 1946	Transport Industry (Government) 1946	Port Industry (Government) 1957	Commercial Workers (Private Employers) 1958
-------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------

APPENDIX 11

Artisan Workers - Joint Industrial Council Meetings
1947-52

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Number of Meetings</u>	<u>Subject of Negotiations</u>
13.3.47 to 5.6.47	8	Initial negotiations on terms and conditions of employment
20.8.47 to 9.2.48	10	Hours of work; overtime, leave with pay.
3.8.48 to 23.9.49	15	Rates of pay and general conditions of employment
11.11.49 to 24.11.49	3	Definitions of occupations
10.3.50	1	Definition of a watchman
25.5.51 to 15.6.51	7	Claim for increased wages
14.8.51	1	Revised claim for overtime
9.10.51	1	Rates of pay for ferrymen
18.3.52	1	Definition of occupations
25.7.52 to 20.8.52	8	Claim for increased wages

TABLE

Transport Workers - Joint Industrial Council Meetings
1947-52

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Number of Meetings</u>	<u>Subject of Negotiations</u>
17.4.47 to 13.6.47	7	Initial negotiations of terms and conditions of employment
16.1.48 to 23.2.48	3	Hours; overtime; holidays with pay
14.10.59 to 26.10.49	3	Rates of pay and general conditions of service

Contd.

Table
Transport Workers - Joint Industrial Council Meetings (Contd.)
1947-52

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Number of Meetings</u>	<u>Subject of Negotiations</u>
20.1.50 to 2.2.50	3	Definition of occupation
2.7.51 to 31.7.51	7	Claims for increased wages
28.8.52 to 30.8.52	2	Claims for increased wages.

APPENDIX 12

Number of Persons Employed, by Industry
(Monthly Average)

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
All Industries	47,925	51,547	53,628	58,146	61,699	69,223	67,156
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,813 3.8%	2,513 4.9%	2,350 4.4%	3,572 6.2%	4,902 7.9%	6,965 10.0%	5,208 7.8%
Mining and Quarrying	6,047 12.6%	6,155 11.9%	7,549 14.1%	8,270 14.2%	6,610 10.7%	6,687 9.7%	7,445 11.0%
Manufacturing	3,004 6.3%	3,655 7.1%	3,314 6.2%	4,452 7.7%	5,184 8.4%	6,153 8.9%	5,450 8.1%
Construction	8,740 18.2%	11,428 22.2%	10,392 19.4%	11,516 19.8%	11,952 19.3%	13,121 18.9%	11,286 16.8%
Electricity, Water and Sanitary Services	993 2.1%	1,049 2.0%	1,190 2.2%	1,465 2.5%	1,640 2.7%	1,651 2.4%	1,815 2.7%
Commerce	4,355 9.1%	4,497 8.7%	4,495 8.4%	4,261 7.3%	4,958 8.0%	5,312 7.7%	5,710 8.5%
Transportation, Storage and Communications	8,961 18.7%	8,684 16.8%	7,047 13.1%	7,145 12.3%	7,953 12.9%	9,207 13.3%	10,452 15.6%
Services	14,012 29.2%	13,593 26.4%	17,291 32.2%	17,465 30.0%	18,540 30.1%	20,127 29.1%	19,790 29.5%

Source: - Labour Department

APPENDIX 13

Index of Employment Changes in Various Sectors for Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone from 1953

(1958 = 100)

Year	<u>Employment in Non-Agricultural Sectors</u>			<u>Employment in Manufacturing</u>			<u>Employment in Mining and Quarrying</u>		
	Ghana	Nigeria	Sierra Leone	Ghana	Nigeria	Sierra Leone	Ghana	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
1953	77.8	...	...	59.3	...	...	117.4	177.9	100.0
1954	84.7	...	...	69.2	...	...	112.0	176.4	98.8
1955	82.2	...	...	75.7	...	...	36.5	180.4	82.3
1956	90.6	94.8	...	83.0	72.0	88.9	97.8	173.5	98.8
1957	95.2	100	94.4	90.3	106.3	90.1	100.7	165.2	115.2
1958	100.0	100	100	100	100	100	100.0	100.0	100
1959	106.5	98.7	102.5	102.4	109.1	111.7	95.2	87.7	99.2
1960	110.8	106.2	104	113.3	110.5	115.1	88.0	108.9	99.6
1961	121.5	89.1	109.9	137.5	115.4	733.9	86.0	119.0	101.3
1962	127.8	112.6	115.7	142.4	178.9	127.0	87.1	129.7	124.2
1963	132.0	93.8	123.0	151.8	154.0	170.5	90.5	134.2	136.2
1964	135.3	121.6	128.1	163.1	208.3	198.5	82.6	140.9	108.8
1965	135.4	...	139.5	152.4	...	262.7	81.0	159.2	114.9
1966	...	...	140.0	...	...	239.0	...	...	124.7

<u>Year</u>	<u>Employment in Construction</u>				<u>Employment in Transport Storage and Communication</u>			
	Ghana	Nigeria	Sierra Leone	Ghana	Nigeria	Sierra Leone		
1953	91.9	...	100	69.7	...	85.7		
1954	98	...	94.1	75.1	...	71.2		
1955	113	...	105.8	78.1	...	71.2		
1956	92.0	82.3	105.8	79.5	116.7	91.6		
1957	93.8	89.8	117.5	91.0	92.6	111.9		
1958	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100	100		
1959	119.0	83.1	108.1	94.5	97.9	90.6		
1960	121.8	91.0	102.8	107.5	80.7	91.2		
1961	124.7	72.1	134.4	115.5	87.8	88.4		
1962	120.7	81.4	122.2	112.4	102.4	71.4		
1963	115.5	49.2	135.4	113.0	116.5	72.7		
1964	127.3		140.3	94.0	119.3	80.7		
1965	143.8		153.7	93.1		84.7		
1966			128.2			100.4		

SOURCE: ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1967 and U.N. Statistical Bulletin for Africa November, 1965.

APPENDIX 14

INFORMATION ON INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS
IN SIERRA LEONE - 1967.

A. Industries studied, approved (Under The Development Act 1960)
and Established

1. Cigarettes, Leaf Tobacco, Smoking Tobacco and Shag.
2. Oxygen, Carbon dioxide and Acetylene.
3. Paints - Emulsion glass and distemper.
4. Frozen fish and Fish Cannery.
5. Beer.
6. Distilled Spirits.
7. Umbrellas.
8. Nails.
9. Cement.
10. Plastic Shoes and Sandals.
11. Knitted Fabrics.
12. Underwear and Outer Garments.
13. Diamond Cutting and Polishing.
14. Metal Beds and Springs.
15. Metal Doors and Windows
16. Tyre Retreading.
17. Footwear of all kinds except of Plastic.
18. Galvanised buckets (Metal trunks and Enamelware -
to be produced later).
19. Matches.
20. Flour, Wheat Offals.

- B. Industries studied. Approved and under Construction (Under the Development Act, 1960).
1. Confectionery and Biscuits - Production Date 1/7/68.
 2. Mineral Oil Refinery - Production Date 1/4/68.
- C. Industries studied. Approved (Under the Development Act, 1960) and not under construction.
1. Articles made of Cardboard and Paper.
- D. Industries studied and Approved and now in the process of submission to the National Reformation Council for establishment under the Development Act 1960.
1. Plastic Household Articles.
 2. Tomato Paste and Puree.
 3. Salt.
 4. Corrugated Iron Sheets.
- E. Industries under active study for establishment under the Development Act 1960.
1. Car batteries and U.2 Cell Batteries.
 2. Margarine.
 3. Toilet and Common Soap.
 4. Edible Oils.
 5. Animal Feed Mill.
 6. Instant Coffee.
 7. Steel Hot Rolling Mill.
 8. Chipboard Factory (by Forest Industries Corporation).

F. Industries Awaiting Study.

1. Textile Mill.
2. Sugar Mill.

G. Industries Established without Development Status.

1. Palm Kernel Oil Mill (By the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board).
2. Sawn Timber and Wooden Furniture (By the Forest Industries Corporation).
3. Cosmetics Perfumes and Pomade.
4. Wafers and Cones.
5. Spring Interior Mattress.
6. Aluminium Pots.
7. Candles.
8. Metal Doors and Windows.
9. Tiles - Terrance Concrete for Floors.
10. Mineral Waters.
11. Fibre Suitcases.
12. Bus Body Building.
13. Underground Petrol Tanks.
14. Ice Cream.

APPENDIX 15

Registered Trade Unions - December, 1965

<u>Name of Union and</u> <u>Date Registered</u>	<u>Membership</u>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Paid-Up</u>
Railway Workers' Union; 16th April, 1941	950	950
United Mineworkers' Union; 16th March, 1945	5,000	2,500
Clerical, Mercantile and General Workers' Union; 5th October, 1945.	4,000	2,000
Sierra Leone Artisans and Allied Workers' Union; 19th September, 1946.	6,397	3,036
Sierra Leone Maritime and Waterfront Workers' Union; 21st November, 1946.	5,600	400
Sierra Leone Transport and General Workers' Union; 21st February, 1947.	10,000	4,000
Sierra Leone Teachers Union; 9th September, 1950.	1,633	1,138
Sherbro Amalgamated Workers' Union; 15th June, 1951.	579	400
Fourah Bay College Teaching Staff Association; 9th January, 1959.	53	53

Trade Unions Registered after 1962

<u>Name of Union and Date Registered</u>	<u>Membership</u>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Paid-Up</u>
General Union of Construction Workers; 4th January, 1963.	800	500
Sierra Leone Articled Seamen's Union; 8th January, 1963.	1,000	600
Sierra Leone Motor Drivers' Union; 12th March, 1963.	979	206
Sierra Leone Dockworkers' Union; 3rd May, 1963.	2,649	2,649
Milton Margai Training College, Teaching Staff Association; 9th August, 1963.	16	8
Sierra Leone Alluvial Diamond Licence Holders' Union; 23rd July, 1965.	Not supplied.	
Sierra Leone Seamen's Union; 26th November, 1965.	500	300

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Official Documents and Reports

1. Sierra Leone

- Bank of Sierra Leone Annual Report and Statement of
Accounts, Year Ending 1966
Freetown, 1967
- Economic Trends
From September-October, 1967
- Carney, David Ten Year Plan of Economic and Social
Development for Sierra Leone 1962-63
to 1971-72 Freetown, 1962
- Childs, H. A Plan of Economic Development for
Sierra Leone Freetown, 1949.
- Cox-George, N.A. "Report on African participation in
the Commerce of Sierra Leone, and
the Government statement thereon."
- Francis, K.M. Report on the 1951 Freetown Survey of
Household Budgets, Freetown, 1955
- Jack, D.T. Economic Survey of Sierra Leone
Freetown, 1958
- Labour Department Files Minutes. Agricultural Workers
Wages Board. Freetown,
1958-65
- Minutes, Commercial
Workers Joint Industrial
Council Freetown. 1958-1966
- Minutes. Construction Workers
Joint Industrial Council.
Freetown, 1947-1965.
- Minutes. Fishing Industry
Wages Board, Freetown,
1962-1966.

Sierra Leone (Contd.)

- Labour Department Files (Contd.)
- Minutes. Joint Consultative Committee 1953-1961.
- Minutes. Maritime Workers Wages Board. Freetown, 1955.
- Minutes. Mine Workers Wages Board. Freetown 1946-1965.
- Minutes. Port Workers Joint Industrial Council. Freetown 1957-1966.
- Minutes. Printing Workers Wages Board. Freetown, 1954.
- Minutes. Transport Workers Joint Industrial Council. Freetown, 1947-1965.
- Proceedings. Inaugural General Meeting of the Joint Industrial Council for Artisan and General Workers and Transport Industry. Freetown, 1947.
- Panda, G.S. Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Docks Dispute. Freetown, 1967.
- Reddaway, W.B. Recommendations About the Cost of Living Index in Sierra Leone. Freetown, 1955.
- Notes on the Movement of Retail Prices 1951-54. Freetown, 1955.
- Annual Report on the Labour Department. Freetown, 1939-1965.
- Annual Reports of the Sierra Leone Police Force. Freetown, 1939, 1947-55.
- An Outline of the Ten-Year Plan for the Development of Sierra Leone (Sessional Paper No. 4 of 1946)

Sierra Leone (Contd.)

A Progress Report on Economic and Social Development, April, 27, 1961 - March 31, 1965. Freetown.

Blue Book. Freetown, 1915-1935.

Census Report 1931. Freetown, 1932.

Colonial Report. 1898-1938.

Correspondence Regarding Complaints of Certain Members of Staff of the Sierra Leone Government Railway (Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1926)

Legislative Council Debates 1922/23 - fol.
After 1954 Debates of the House of Representatives.

Medical and Health Services Annual Report. Freetown, 1928-1958.

1963 Population Census of Sierra Leone: Economic Characteristics Vol. III. Freetown, 1967

Progress Report on the Development Programme. Freetown, 1946-1951.

Quarterly Statistical Bulletins. 1963-1964.

Report and Summary of the Census of 1911. London, 1912.

Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Causes and Circumstances of the Stoppages of Work at the works of the Sierra Leone Development Company, Limited. Freetown, 1951.

Report of Commission of Inquiry into Disturbances in the Provinces (November 1955 to March 1955), London, 1956.

Report of the Independent Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Railway Dispute, March 1959 and Government Statement Thereon. Freetown, 1959.

Report of the Committee Appointed to Examine the Working of the Tribal Administration (Colony). Freetown, 1955.

Sierra Leone (Contd.)

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Railway Workers Union. Freetown, 1955.

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Strike and Riots in Freetown, Sierra Leone, During February 1955.

Report on the Cost of Living Survey Held in Freetown during February 1941. (Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1941).

Report of the Geological Survey and Mines Department 1933-34, Freetown, 1935.

Royal Gazette 1886-1967.

Sierra Leone Government Household Survey of the Western Province November 1966 - January 1968. Freetown, 1968.

Statement of the Government of Sierra Leone on the Reports of the Commission of Inquiry into the Strike and Riots in Freetown during February, 1955. Freetown, 1955.

Statement of the Sierra Leone Government on the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Disturbances in the Protectorate. Freetown, 1956.

Trade Report 1910-1955

Sierra Leone Archives "Deputations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. 1943"

Sierra Leone Railway General Manager's Report on the Accounts and Working for the Year 1919.

2. Great Britain

Parliamentary Debates (Commons) 1919-1927; 1938-1942; 1954-1956.

Great Britain (Contd.)

- Colonial Office. An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories 1951: The West African Territories III. London HMSO, 1952, CO 1, No. 281-3.
- Labour Administration in the Colonial Territories 1944-1950. London: HMSO, 1951 CO 1, No. 275.
- Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire 1937-43. London: HMSO, 1943, CO. 1, No. 185.
- Proceedings Colonial Office Conference 1930 London, 1930.
- Parliamentary Papers Correspondence Relating to Domestic Slavery in the Sierra Leone Protectorate London: HMSO, 1928.
- Report by the Honourable W.G.A. Ormsby-Gore, MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies) on his visit to West Africa during the Year 1926. Cmd. 2747:
- Public Record Office Colonial Office Papers C.O. 267; C.O. 268; C.O. 270; C.O. 272; 1900-1920.
- Orde-Brown, Major G.H. John Labour Conditions in West Africa London: Colonial Office, 1941.

3. Others

- Economist Intelligence Unit Quarterly Economic Review: British West Africa. London, June 1954 to date. From January 1968 Nigeria is reviewed separately.
- Gambia Annual Report on the Labour Department Bathurst, 1946-54, 1960-62.

Others (Contd.)

Gambia Report of the Commission to Investigate the Basic Terms and Conditions of Service of Daily Rated Labour in the Gambia.
(Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1960).

Ghana Labour Statistics Accra 1958-1966.

Gold Coast Annual Report on the Labour Department
Accra, 1938-1958.

International
Labour
Organization

Employment Objectives in Economic Development. Geneva, 1961.

Methods and Principles of Wage Regulation Geneva, 1964.

Report to the Government of Sierra Leone on Revision of the Consumer Price Index Freetown; The Mine Workers Price Index; and Statistics of Employment 1961. Geneva, 1962.

"Technical Guide: Description of series published in the Statistical Supplement to the International Labour Review, Section I, Consumer Price Indices" Geneva.

Year Book of Labour Statistics
Geneva 1960-67.

Manpower Board to the International Seminar on
Manpower Problems Report on the Urban Unemployment Survey 1963. Lagos, 1964.

Nigeria Annual Report on the Labour Department
Lagos. 1940-1964.

Manpower Situation in Nigeria; Preliminary Report (Manpower Studies. No. 1) Lagos, 1963.

Overseas Economic Surveys London, 1957.

Others (Contd.)

Nigeria (Contd.) Report of the Commission on the Review of Wages, Salary and Conditions of Service of the Junior Employees of the Governments of the Federation and in Private Establishments, 1963-64. Lagos, 1964.

Report of the Cost of Living Committee.
Lagos, 1942.

Proceedings of the First World Congress International Relations Association Geneva, September, 1967.
Papers by A. Flanders "Bargaining Theory under Modern Capitalism;" S. Konnappan "Bargaining Theory and Developing Countries"; R. Gubbels "The Strike: A Sociological Analysis"; and K. Laffer "Industrial Relations, its Teaching and Scope: An Australian Experience".

Republic of Ghana Economic Surveys Accra 1955-1966.

United Nations Special Study on Social Conditions in Non-Self Governing Territories
New York, 1956.

World Bank An Approach to a Comprehensive Program for Industrial Development in Sierra Leone with Special Reference to Indigenous Small Industry n.p. n.d.

B. Books

Banton, Michal West African City: A Study of Tribal Life in Freetown Oxford, 1957.

Barou, N. British Trade Unions, London, 1947.

Bauer, P.T. West African Trade. Cambridge, 1954.

Bayliss, F.J. British Wages Councils. Oxford, 1962.

Berg, Elliot J. "The Economics of the Migrant Labour Supply" in Urbanization and Migration in West Africa. edited by Kuper, Hilda Berkeley, 1965.

Books (Contd.)

- Best, J. Ralph A History of the Sierra Leone Railway 1899-1949 Freetown, n.d.
- Birmingham, Walter et al. (eds.)
A Study of Contemporary Ghana: The Economy of Ghana Vol. I. London, 1966.
- Buell, Raymond Leslie
The Native Problem in Africa, Vol. I. New York, 1928.
- Clark, J.I. (ed.) Sierra Leone in Maps. London, 1966.
- Cox-George, N.A. Finance and Development in West Africa: The Sierra Leone Experience. London, 1961.
- Dorjahn, Vernon R. "African Traders in Central Sierra Leone" in Markets in Africa, Bohannan, P. and Dalton, G. (eds.) Evanston, Ill., 1962.
- Dunlop, John T. Industrial Relations Systems. New York, 1958.
- Eldridge, J.E.T. Industrial Disputes: Essays in the Sociology of Industrial Relations London, 1968.
- Elias, T.O. Ghana and Sierra Leone: The development of their laws and constitution . (British Commonwealth. The Development of its Laws and Constitution Series, vol. 10.) London, 1962.
- Elkan, W. Migrants and Proletarians: Urban Labour in the Economic Development of Uganda. London, 1960.
- Freund, O. Kahn. "Legal Framework" in The British System of Industrial Relations, Flanders, Allan and Clegg, H.A. (eds.) Oxford, 1956, 42-127.
- Fyfe, Christopher A History of Sierra Leone. Oxford, 1962.

Books (Contd.)

- Fyfe, Christopher Sierra Leone Inheritance London, 1964.
- Galenson, W. (ed.) Labor and Economic Development
New York, 1957.
- Goddard, Thomas N. The Handbook of Sierra Leone London,
1925.
- Hobsbawm, E.J.H. Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic
Forms of Social Movement in the 19th
and 20th Centuries. Manchester, 1959.
- Johnston, Bruce F. The Staple Food Economies of Western
Tropical Africa Stanford, Calif.,
1958.
- Kamarck, Andrew M. The Economics of African Development
New York, 1967.
- Kassalow, E.M. National Labor Movements in the Post-
war World. Evanston, Ill., 1963.
- Kerr, C., Dunlop, J.T., Harbison, F.H., Myers, C.A.
Industrialism and Industrial Man
Cambridge, Mass., 1960.
- Kerr, Clark and Siegel, Abraham
"The Interindustry Propensity to Strike -
An International Comparison" in
Industrial Conflict. Kornhauser,
Arthur, et. al. (eds.) New York, 1954.
- Kilson, Martin Political Change in a West African State.
Cambridge, Mass., 1966.
- Kucyinski, R.R. Demographic Survey of the British Colonial
Empire, I London, 1948.
- Laan, L. The Sierra Leone Diamonds Oxford, 1965.
- Lewis, Roy Sierra Leone: A Modern Portrait,
London, 1954.
- Little, Kenneth L. The Mende of Sierra Leone: A West
African People in Transition.
London, 1951.
- Little, Kenneth L. The Mende Upland Rice Farmer
n.p. 1948.

Books (Contd.)

- Little, Kenneth L. West African Urbanization.
London, 1965.
- Meek, C.K. et. al. Europe and West Africa: Some Problems and Adjustments.
London, 1940.
- Meynaud, J. Salah-Bey, A. Le Syndicalisme Africain.
Paris, 1963.
- Millen, B.H. The Political Role of Labor in Developing Countries. Washington, 1963.
- Moore, W.E., and Feldman, A.S. (eds.) Labor Commitment and Social Change in Developing Areas. New York, 1960.
- Neufeld, Maurice F. Poor Countries and Authoritarian Rule. Cornell University, 1965.
- Padmore, George How Britain Rules Africa. London, 1936.
- Porter, Arthur T. Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society. Oxford, 1963.
- Prest, A.R. War Economics of Primary Producing Countries. Cambridge, 1948.
- Roberts, B.C. Labour in the Tropical Territories of the Commonwealth. London, 1964.
- Roper, J.I. Labour Problems in West Africa. Middlesex, 1958.
- Ross, Arthur M. (ed.) Industrial Relations and Economic Development. London, 1966.
- Scott, D.J.R. "Sierra Leone Election of May 1957" in Five Elections in Africa
W.J.M. Mackenzie and K.E. Robinson (eds.) Oxford, 1960.
- Scott, M. An Outline of Sierra Leone Trade Union Law. Freetown, 1960.

Books (Contd.)

- Sharp, Ian G. Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration in Great Britain London, 1950.
- Vyver, Frank T. de "The Transplantation of Trade Unionism to British Africa" in Transfer of Institutions, Hamilton, William B. (ed.) Durham, N.C., 1964.
- Warmington, W.A. A West African Trade Union Oxford, 1960.
- Webb, Sidney and Beatrice History of Trade Unionism London, 1920.
- Woodis, J. Africa: The Lion Awakes London, 1961.
- Yesufu, T.M. An Introduction to Industrial Relations in Nigeria. Oxford, 1962.

C. Articles and Other Essays

- Akpala, Agwa "The Background of the Colliery Shooting Incident in 1949" Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, III, No.2., (December, 1965).
- Barclays Bank, D.C.O. "Sierra Leone: An Economic Survey" London, 1966.
- Barltrop, E.W. "Labour in West Africa" Corona No. 6. (July, 1949).
- Bispham, W.M.L. "The Concept and Measurement of Labour Commitment and its Relevance to Nigerian Development" in Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research. Reprint No. 7., n.d.
- Bowen, W. "Colonial Trade Unions" Fabian Society: London, 1954.
- Central Office of Information "Sierra Leone: The Making of a Nation" London: HMSO, 1961.

Articles and Other Essays (Contd.)

- Chief Commissioner,
Sierra Leone
Protectorate "Land Tenure in Sierra Leone
Protectorate" in Journal of
African Administration. I, 3,
(July, 1949) pp. 119-123.
- Costa, E. "Back to the Land: the Campaign
Against Unemployment in Dahomey"
International Labour Review
(January, 1966).
- Davies, D.I. "The Politics of the TUC's Colonial
Policy" Political Quarterly 35,
(Jan - March, 1964).
- Doctor, Kailas C.,
Galtis, Hans "Size and characteristics of wage
employment in Africa: some
statistical estimates".
International Labour Review 93, 2,
(February, 1966) pp. 149-173.
- Due, Jean M. "Changes in Incomes and Imports
of Consumer Goods in Sierra Leone"
University of Illinois, Bulletin
719, 1966.
- Fabian Colonial Bureau "Report of a meeting held on
February 19th 1945, with the
colonial delegates to the World
Trade Union Conference to discuss
colonial labour problems". 1945.
- Fischer, Georges "Trade Unions and Decolonisation"
Presence Africaine, 6-7, 34-35
pp. 121-169.
- Flanders, Allan "Industrial Relations: What is
wrong with the system?: an essay
on its theory and future".
London, 1965.
- Frank, Jr., Charles R. "Industrialization and Employment
Generation in Nigeria" in The
Nigerian Journal of Economic and
Social Studies, -, 3, (November,
1967) pp. 277-297.

Articles and Other Essays (Contd.)

- Friedland, William H. "The Institutionalization of Labour Protest in Tanganyika and Some Resultant Problems", Sociologus , II, No. 2, 132-146.
- Friedland, William H. "Unions and Industrial Relations in Underdeveloped Countries" Cornell University, 1963.
- Geiss, Imanuel "Some Remarks on the Development of African Trade Unions " Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, III, 2, (December, 1965).
- Hopkins, A.G. "The Lagos Strike of 1897: An Exploration in Nigerian Labour History" Past and Present December, 1966, 133-155.
- Hunter, Guy "The Transfer of Institutions" in African Affairs, 67, 266, (January, 1968) pp. 3-10.
- Kaim-Caudle, P.R. "Review of Economic Changes in Sierra Leone, 1930-55" Durham University Journal. (December, 1957), 34-41.
- Lewis, W. Arthur "Unemployment in Developing Countries" The World Today (January, 1967).
- Orr, Charles, A. "Trade Unionism in Colonial Affairs" The Journal of Modern African Studies, IV, 1, (1966).
- Parry, Edgar "Colonial Trade Unions" Corona No. 7, (August, 1949), 20-21.
- Simpson, Captain G.D. "Kroomen From Freetown" SEA - Journal of the Elder Dempster Lines, (July, 1954).
- Stevens, Siaka "Trade Unionism in Sierra Leone" Empire, 5, (September, 1948)

Articles and Other Essays (Contd.)

- Trachtman, Lester "The Labour Movement of Ghana: A Study in political unionism" Cornell Industrial Relations. Reprint No. 127, n.d.
- Turner, H.A. "Wage Trends, Wage Policies, and Collective Bargaining: the Problems for Underdeveloped Countries" Cambridge, 1965.
- Walker, Audrey A. "Official Publications of Sierra Leone and Gambia" Library of Congress: Washington, 1963.
- Windmuller, J.P. "Model Industrial Relations Systems" Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Meeting. I.R.R.A.: Boston, 1963.
- Zell, Hans M. "A Bibliography of Non-Periodical Literature on Sierra Leone 1925-1966" Freetown, 1966.
- D. Unpublished Materials
- Bagai, O.P. "A Statistical Study of Exports of Sierra Leone, 1920-64", Freetown, 1965.
- Blyden, Edward W. III. "Sierra Leone: The Pattern of Constitutional Change (1924-1951)" Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1959.
- Cox-George, N.A. "An Essay on Employment and Unemployment in Sierra Leone in 1948" Freetown, n.d.
- Dixon-Fyle, S.R. "Economic Structure and Short Period Behaviour of the Sierra Leone Economy" Bank of Sierra Leone, 1968.
- Reid, A.M. "Political Development in Sierra Leone since 1945" Unpublished M.Sc. thesis, University of London, 1961-62.

Unpublished Materials (Contd.)

- Richardson, E.M. and Collins, G.R. "Economic and social survey of the rural areas of the Colony of Sierra Leone" Colonial Office: London, 1952.
- Yesufu, T.M. "Labour in the Nigerian Economy" Paper delivered over Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (October, 1967).
- Yesufu, T.M. "Problems of Industrial Relations in Nigeria With Special Reference to the Administration of Workmen's Compensation" Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1960.

E. Newspapers

- Illustrated London News, January 10, 1874, 32.
- Sierra Leone Daily Mail 14 January 1933 - 31 July 1952
(Continued as) Daily Mail
1 August 1952 -
- Sierra Leone Labour Vol. 1, 1946.
- Sierra Leone Weekly News 6 September 1884 - 22 December 1951.
- The Artisan 28 May, 1884 - 24 December 1888
- The Colonial and Provincial Reporter 21 September 1912 -
6 November 1920.
- The Sierra Leone Guardian 3 January 1930 - 30 December 1932
- The Times 1926, 1927, 1939, 1955.
- The West African Mail and Trade Gazette 13 November 1920 -
31 December 1932.
- West Africa 6 June 1964 - 4 July 1964.

F. Interviews

Accra, Sekondi Takoradi, Ghana, Personal interviews with Labour Department officials. January 1968.

Lagos, Nigeria. Personal interviews with Labour Department officials. December 1967.

Freetown, Marampa, Sierra Leone. Personal interviews with selected representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and large mining concerns October 1966 - April 1968.

Freetown, Sierra Leone, Personal interviews with the Commissioner of Labour and other labour officers. October 1966 - April, 1968.

Freetown, Sierra Leone. Personal interviews with all major trade union leaders. October 1966 - March 1968.

Freetown, Wellington, Bo, Sierra Leone. Interviews with managers and worker representatives in thirty industrial establishments. December 1966 and December 1967.

Preston, England. Personal Interview with Mr. Edgar Parry former Sierra Leone Commissioner of Labour, now retired from the Colonial Office. November 1965.