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Books in West Africa

Report and Recommendations

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BOOKS IN WEST AFRICA:
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Explanation

This is a report based on recent observations by Franklin Publications in certain West African countries, but drawing also on earlier Franklin studies, plus consultation over the last two years with African, American and European specialists on West African education and cultural and economic development, as well as with people directly concerned with book publishing, printing, and distributing.

The survey teams's primary responsibility was to recommend action to the Franklin board of directors, and that recommendation is included among the others at the end of the report. At the same time it is hoped that the report may be of some service to other groups concerned with books in West Africa, and copies are therefore being presented to book people and government officials in the countries of the area; to book publishers and book associations in the U.S. and Europe; to foundations and other organizations concerned with Africa; and to the foreign-aid and technical-assistance agencies of the U.S., U.K., France, and Germany; and to international organizations.

Recommendations at the end of this memorandum include suggestions of possible interest to other groups as well as to the Franklin board of directors.

Focus on Books

The most recent survey by Franklin was undertaken with the same diffidence expressed in the last report, because Franklin is even more aware now of the fact that "Africa needs books, not surveys." It seemed necessary, nevertheless, to fill in major gaps in information regarding the book situation in West Africa before drawing general recommendations; and it is a fact that no other group, public or private, has attempted a

comprehensive view focused on books. Even the many educational missions making recommendations that cannot be carried out without books, and economic-development missions whose suggestions require books for producing the trained manpower they predicate, have tended to overlook the question of how those books are to be prepared, published and distributed.

Such previous studies of the book situation as have been undertaken have dealt with special parts of the general problem, or have regarded the problem from one point of view -- that of a British publisher trying to hold his export market, of an American publisher wondering if export of his books would be feasible, of an African educator eager for books but lacking familiarity with the book business, of an African entrepreneur thinking of going into the publishing or printing business, etc. But a partial view, overlooking relations with other elements, is certain to be an inaccurate one.

Franklin is keenly aware of the shortcomings and lacunae in this report and apologies are offered for inevitable errors of observation and interpretation. But it is hoped that the report may at least direct the attention of better informed observers to the basic problems, and to the need for a comprehensive view, even if one's own interests are highly specialized.

The Recent Survey

The recent survey, in November and December 1962, was financed under a grant made to Franklin by the Ford Foundation with the objective of helping to establish and strengthen indigenous book industries in developing countries.

Two distinguished leaders of American publishing contributed their time for the survey; William E. Spaulding, president of Houghton Mifflin Co., president of the American Book Publishers Council, former president of the American Textbook Publishers Institute, and former board chairman of Franklin; and Simon Michael Bessie, president of Atheneum Publishers, former general editor of Harper & Brothers. They were accompanied by

Datus C. Smith, Jr., president of Franklin, former director of Princeton University Press and former president of the Association of American University Presses.

The countries visited in 1962 included Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone in the English-speaking group; and Cameroun, Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Senegal among the francophonic countries. Mr. Spaulding and Mr. Smith had been in Ghana and Western Nigeria the previous year, and Mr. Smith had studied the problem of educational books in Liberia on an earlier trip. The survey benefited, likewise, from observation of educational publishing needs in Nigeria by Byron Buck, Franklin's textbook consultant, during a 1960 trip sponsored by the Fairfield Foundation.

The reception accorded the surveyors was exceptionally cordial in every country, and notable assistance was given at every point by government officers, both African and expatriate, as well as by foreign specialists from different countries.

Regional Problems and National Problems

Many of the problems noted, and accordingly many of the solutions that present themselves, are purely national, relating to only one country. But circumstances in West Africa suggest that the regional approach must at least be considered. That approach is dealt with at length later in the report. It seems to have much to recommend it. But realism requires an understanding not only of the logical arguments in behalf of regional solutions but also of the strong psychological and political factors tending to make a regional solution difficult if not impossible.

The regional possibility had been mentioned here because both its promise and the forces opposing it should be borne in mind as each facet of the general problem is considered. The detailed discussion of the issue will be found in sections headed "Regional Book Projects" and "Inter-Country Publishing Arrangements" on later pages.

General Conditions

The conditions relating specifically to books in West Africa are

dealt with in the next section, but the following underlying circumstances must be recognized first:

Education is the basic investment for economic development, and books are the basic tools of education. Audio-visual methods of instruction have an enormous role to play in African education, but without books and other printed materials to intensify and support the educational function of the other media the effect of the new methods will be transitory and superficial.

Educational, cultural, social, economic, and political development in West Africa all rest on improvement in the use of the national language -- English or French, as the case may be -- and no other educational function is as basic as the teaching of reading and the provision of reading material that will lead the student to greater and greater proficiency in the art through reading on his own time and by his own desire.

The area's polylingualism, far from modifying the emphasis on English and French, greatly emphasizes it, as almost every civic and educational leader in West Africa will acknowledge. But there is a paradox, at least in Nigeria and Ghana and at least for the time being, as to the vernacular languages. School use of good reading materials in simple, attractive, interesting form in the major vernaculars that have been reduced to writing can be, for this school generation, the essential foundation for improvement in English.

The basis for this statement was presented on pp. 3-4 of last year's Franklin report, "Books for Ghana and Nigeria." It should be added now that there is even some feeling in francophonic areas that -- with command of French still being the final objective -- use might be made of such mother tongues as Foulah in Guinea or Wolof in Senegal for teaching the art of reading in a language already known through the ear, with the reading skill shifting to the new language, French, after oral mastery of the latter has been acquired. This argument must assume, of course, that the learning of oral French, or oral English would begin at the very

start of school, even before the child had learned to read his mother tongue. And the argument would apply with decreasing force as knowledge of English and French spread more widely. In another generation, when the majority of children come from families knowing those world languages, even if the vernacular is the one customarily used in the household, learning to speak and read English or French may well precede the reading of the vernacular.

Another aspect of the linguistic situation deserving comment, though at the moment it has not yet assumed great importance, is the introduction of French in the English-speaking countries and of English in the French-speaking countries at the secondary level if not earlier. This applies not merely in Cameroun, where there is an official hope for eventual bilingualism, but in the other areas as well. In some sections Arabic is permitted as a substitute for English or French as the second new language to be learned after the mother tongue.

To emphasize the complexity of the linguistic problem, it should be noted that the mother tongue may be a minor one, not sufficiently populous for school use; or especially in the French areas, the language may not have a written form at all. An offset to this handicap is the fact that, in areas where a mixture of vernaculars is found in a single community, many of the children often acquire fairly good oral command of the area's major vernacular (the one that will be used to teach them to read) before they get to school.

Wisdom, imagination, experimentation, and evaluation of different methods of learning to read and of learning foreign languages are obviously needed. For instance, methods requiring an especially high level of teaching competence, no matter how ingenious or valid such methods may be in themselves, may actually have a retrogressive effect. Learning to read is the heart of the question of African education. Comment is offered below on ways in which book-publishing organizations can cooperate with educators in research looking toward discovery of the best methods, and then in carrying out those methods on a mass basis.

Besides the wish to teach young people in school, there is a powerful urge for the development of adult-literacy in most of the countries. The hope exists that it may not be necessary to wait for a whole generation before having a predominantly literate population. Adult campaigns are expected to help the older generation make up for its previous lack of education at the same time that the formal school system takes care of the coming generation. This effort is meeting with varying success in different countries, and it is not possible to generalize about it. It should be borne in mind, however, as a large additional area worthy of close attention, and one in which many of the school problems are encountered all over again in somewhat different form. Insofar as supplementary reading materials are concerned, as discussed in a section below, it is obvious that supplementary materials for adult new literates are badly needed in the major written vernaculars as well as in English and French.

In any consideration of teaching methods in Africa it is necessary to remember how inadequate is the supply of teachers and how low the average level of their education. Teachers are frequently drop-outs with only six years of schooling, and the Franklin visitors heard one shocking comment: "That young man had hoped to go to secondary school, but he wasn't good enough for that so he had to leave school and become a teacher."

Even the physical circumstances of the too-limited number of schools must be considered. For instance, both African and foreign advocates of audio methods of instruction usually overlook the plain fact that audio methods are acoustically impossible in many, perhaps most, African schoolrooms unless special sound-insulation provision is made for them. This is not to suggest that audio methods should therefore be dispensed with -- on the contrary, the Franklin surveyors advocate their use most warmly -- but that African solutions must be found for African problems.

British, French, and American assistance can be invaluable, including not only consultants to work with Africans in devising and testing and carrying out new methods, but even in supplying equipment and

in other practical ways. But the plans must be built on a local base with active African participation. They cannot be prefabricated abroad.

Book Conditions, Present and Prospective

At the present time the overwhelming majority of all the books in West Africa are foreign. The books are written, published, and printed abroad -- in England and France; in insignificant degree, in the U.S. and other countries; and a very small number in Africa itself. In the past there has been little effort at preparation of books specifically for African use, and the strong recent tide in that direction has not yet had great effect.

Furthermore, as noted in last year's report, some of the efforts at Africanization of textbooks have had the sad result of moving backward rather than forward: in an attempt at Africanizing their books certain publishers have turned to expatriate authors some of whom have been long out of touch with forward-looking educational developments at home, or to African authors entirely without training or experience in textbook-preparation. And even such books have been largely prepared and printed abroad.

In the field of supplementary-reading material, which the Franklin surveyors regard as playing nearly as essential a part in education as the formal textbooks themselves, the situation has been even worse. Only a handful of books can be found, whether in English, French, or vernaculars, meeting the requirements of a modern supplementary-reading program for either African school-children or African adult new literates.

Neither the African nor the expatriate educators are satisfied with how things have been handled in the past, and there is of course a strong enthusiasm for Africanization in the civic leadership of all the countries and, whether or not in all respects logical, a mass support for such moves.

There is every indication that the coming decade will see profound changes in the book field in West Africa, and there are signs that at least some British and French publishers interested in the area are making wise adjustment to this fact in their future plans. In some cases this may be no more than "cooperation with the inevitable," but in others there is

evidence of far-seeing vision and a recognition that intelligent service to African welfare is justified not only on moral grounds but also from the point of view of the publisher's long-term commercial interest.

This is perhaps an appropriate place for a frank comment on the delicate question of American influence -- and especially American book influence -- in these areas once exclusively British or French in their educational and cultural orientation.

It should be clear that no benefit would be conferred on Africa by substituting American books for the other foreign books used in the past. At least in the school field the need is not for more or different foreign books but for development of books peculiarly adapted to Africa's real needs, with an African book industry the mechanism for meeting the need, and with developed publishing industries continuing to play a part, though not an exclusive part, as allies, partners, or business associates.

The more fully an African book industry can develop in service to the area's educational and cultural requirements, the greater will be its support of British and French publishing in preserving their long-term commercial stake in the area, both as exporters and as co-participants in local publishing.

Once the plan for universal primary education gets fully under way, and as the expansion of secondary and higher education achieves full development, the possible market for all books will grow to a point almost passing present belief. There will be room not only for the entirely African firms certain to develop, and for African firms working in association with foreign houses, or fully Africanized branches of foreign firms, but also for an import market for books in English and in French probably exceeding the present volume of such imports.

It is clear that sooner or later, the present assured import market for foreign textbooks at the elementary-school level will be lost; and the particular British and French firms now having that volume will suffer unless they adjust to new conditions. But the total import of English-language and French-language books into West Africa, including university-

level textbooks as well as general-reading books, and the profitable placing of reprints or co-publishing rights there, should greatly increase, perhaps after a readjustment period, just as proved to be the case in America and in other areas when the local book industry developed.

It will be proper for America to play a part in development of an African book industry, and such participation seems to be universally desired by the Africans. Furthermore, there is a wish on the part of Africans, and even on the part of many expatriates, for knowledge and availability of American books which, even to most educated Africans, are virtually unknown. The Franklin surveyors feel even more strongly than when they reported last year that there is a clear need, and economic feasibility of sale, for certain categories of imported American books as supplements to British books and to the African-published books to be expected in the coming decade. There is even a modest need in the francophonic countries for imported books in English, and that need will grow.

But in addition to the need for imports of American editions of some kinds of books, there is a far greater need and desire for republication of such books in English in either existing or African-adapted editions; for French translations of some of them; and for adapted translations into major vernacular languages of certain kinds of simple books for beginning readers.

Comment will be found on later pages regarding the conditions under which Franklin believes it will be proper and practical for American publishers to play their parts in this African book revolution.

African Book Industries

When reference is made in this section of the report to "African book industries" no doctrinaire definition of the term is intended. Foreign participation may be discouraged by particular African countries in particular circumstances for political or other reasons. But to the extent that African countries invite or permit operation by foreign firms, we see

no reason for excluding from the definition any thoroughly Africanized branches of foreign organizations or partnerships between foreign and local institutions. The important point -- in the consideration relevant here -- is not the nationality but the place of the operation and the extent to which it is related to the conditions of African life and responsive to the needs of the country as closely observed on the ground. A British or French -- or even American -- publisher with wisdom, imagination, patience, and professional skill, and a determination to create an African publishing organization entirely or substantially manned by Africans, should be able to make an extremely useful contribution and, politics permitting, to stay in business for many years to come.

For at least the immediate future West Africa could not get along without foreign book activity, even if that were considered desirable. Having said that, however, it is necessary to add at once that creation of 100% African book organizations is an extremely worthy objective in its own right, and one that should enlist the active assistance of all countries wishing to further West Africa's educational, social, and economic advance. The more real the indigenous book industry, the greater the freedom with which the West African countries can continue doing business with foreign book firms without a psychological feeling of inferiority or of treating their own culture as a derivative one.

Although Franklin is interested in all aspects of work with books in African countries, and recognizes the importance of all phases, its own unique responsibility, especially in connection with a Ford Foundation grant that made this survey possible, relates to the establishment and strengthening of indigenous book industries in developing countries. Much of the balance of this report, therefore, will be devoted to that basic objective, though with occasional reference also to book imports and to industry relations with developed industries as just discussed.

Indigenous Book Industries

Book publishing is an activity involving three basic operations:

(1) the editorial operation encompassing writing or translating, editing, artwork, and everything else involved in getting material ready for the printer; (2) printing, that is, the physical manufacture of the books; (3) distribution, or putting the printed books into the hands of readers. But the organization and policy direction of the whole book process, and correlation of its three elements just listed, is the function of (4) book publishing in the inclusive sense.

Without that last mentioned factor, the book publisher, the highest skills in the three other areas may be misdirected or may remain entirely unused. And it is the shortage of West African book publishers that seems to the Franklin surveyors to be the biggest obstacle to development of book industries in all of the countries.

We shall return to the question of book publishing in that comprehensive sense, and to the problem of establishing African book publishing organizations, but a preliminary look at the separate elements will be useful.

Special attention is called to the vicious-circle character of the problem, with no one of the elements able to advance separately. Each division seems to be waiting for a move in the other sectors, yet all observers agree that a common movement forward would be entirely feasible. The Franklin surveyors believe that supply of the missing element -- the publisher -- and coordination of the publisher's thinking and planning with the thinking and planning of educational authorities, would make that joint advance possible. The three publishing elements awaiting that leadership are:

1. Editorial. West Africa has able individuals skilled in the fields of writing, translating, drawing, painting, graphic design; and there are many people, both in those groups and among educators, with a clear vision of the kinds of reading matter and kinds of artwork that would appeal to African book-users and that would implement educational plans of the different countries.

But very few of those people have had the experience of working with book publishers or of directing their thoughts along book publishing lines.

And in apparently countless cases they have been frustrated by the lack of an African book industry to encourage them by offering an audience. Only truly exceptional writers such as Achebe or Ekwensi or Senghor have been able to hope for publication in Europe or America, and even the outstanding graphic artists have found little interest in their talents among foreign book publishers.

Furthermore, whatever the ability of the writers themselves there are many books on subjects of specifically African interest not necessarily able to command a world audience yet entirely worthy of African publication if there were an African industry -- just as thousands of titles of special American interest achieve publication in the U.S. every year, thanks to our local industry, though many of them would have been regarded, quite properly, as impossible by a publisher in Britain. (The American industry has many initial advantages over an African one, most notably in the size of the literate population, but both the English-speaking and French-speaking populations of Africa offer adequate potential markets for many books on African subjects that British or French publishers would reasonably regard as too "special" for their lists.)

There have been some new opportunities for African authors and artists in recent years, with some of the expatriate publishers seeking out and making use of African talents, but the base of operations has generally continued to be London or Paris, where the final editing has taken place, the design and physical specifications of the books have been fixed, and the books manufactured. The stimulus and guidance that a publisher can give writers and artists is largely lacking in such circumstances, and in any event the overall editorial as well as entrepreneurial direction tends to be Europe-oriented, or at least not as responsive to African needs and desires as if the publishing industry were based in Africa.

There have been a number of writers workshops, educational-materials centers, etc. in various African countries, and West African writers have participated in several of these. Some have been of obvious utility and value, but because of lack of connection with the realities of an actual

publishing situation the atmosphere has apparently been somewhat artificial and the contribution has fallen short of expectations.

In the field of textbook publishing, expatriate publishers have engaged some writers of high personal ability and with good educational credentials. But there has been little joint use of their talents with those of educational researchers and of people skilled in modern techniques of textbook preparation. The need is to integrate knowledge of the actual conditions of African education and of the reading interests of African young people with the skills not only of writers and artists but also with those of editors experienced in the specialized work of creating textbooks.

The foreign publishers should not be too harshly judged in all this, for they have been caught in the vicious circle referred to above: they have been prudently hesitant to publish new kinds of books for which a market is not assured, while the educators have felt unable to adopt educational approaches for which suitable printed instructional materials are not available. This inaction while awaiting a movement by the other party is to be observed not only with respect to new kinds of textbooks designed to meet African needs but also with respect to supplementary-reading materials which at present play little part in African education but seem destined to assume a major role -- and if so to have wide implications for a future African book industry. The impasse can be broken only by cooperative action, which would be far easier to arrange if there were indigenous book industries.

2. Printing. Quite paradoxically, the part of a book industry presenting the highest demands in terms of modern technology, and requiring the largest number of skilled workers -- namely the printing industry -- is, in most West African countries, farther advanced than any other part. And the plant-capacity for printing comes closer to satisfying West Africa's present need. There are many printing plants in the area, including some of great size. Two of the large plants -- the Gaskya Corporation plant in Zaria, owned by the government of Northern Nigeria, and the Imprimerie Nationale in Conakry, Guinea -- are being used to only a small fraction of

their capacity. The new Ghanaian plant at Tema, now abuilding, will be another of huge capacity, though the way in which it will be used is of course uncertain at the present time.

The surveyors have the impression that most of the plants of all sizes could perhaps double their production if there were firmer management, abler supervision at the foreman level, and an adequate supply of skilled workers.

Printing presses and composing machines can be seen standing idle in various parts of West Africa, and some of the large pieces of equipment are said not to have turned a wheel in a year or more, while in one of the new plants some pieces are still wrapped as they came from the factory. It is painful to think of idle printing equipment in an area so desperately in need of printed material.

Considering only plants and equipment, West Africa probably has more than enough capacity for meeting its present printing needs. With even modest improvements in management and modest increases in the number of trained workmen, the overall plant capacity would seem to cover present requirements. (It should be noted, however, that even the above guarded generalization is not too meaningful, because the distribution of plants does not match the distribution of needs.)

But, whatever the present situation, the plant capacity will have to be greatly increased to serve the future needs of the area. As literacy and education expand, as an indigenous book industry becomes established, and as foreign firms seek increasingly to shift manufacture of their Africa-market books to Africa, the need for plant expansion will press with great urgency.

Once more, however, we encounter the "vicious circle" in which each of two partners is waiting for the other to take the first step. As in the other cases, the obvious solution is concerted action and simultaneous advance by printers and publishers together. This has happened, actually, in the interesting case of the well-equipped printing plant called Caxton West Africa, Ltd., the joint venture of the British printing firm of

W.H. Clowes & Son and the government of Western Nigeria, with at least a basic volume of business being assured by agreement with the British publisher, Longmans, Green & Co., which has thus been able to transfer to Nigeria some of the book manufacture formerly carried out entirely in the U.K.

Printers need some assurance of this sort from publishers if they are to feel safe in undertaking plant-expansion, modernization of equipment, the training of additional personnel, and other forward-looking moves. But the publisher dare not commit himself to a publishing program without certainty that he can secure production of his books. So, here again, an advance in tandem is the obvious solution.

If an expansion of the West African printing industry is to occur, locally based schools of printing will obviously be required, quite aside from the need for some foreign training for certain managerial personnel and some specialized technicians. It is also worth considering whether certain service industries, auxiliary to printing, should be established, such as engraving, ink-grinding, offset-platemaking, specialty-binding, sort-casting, specialty-composing, roller-casting.

Paper manufacture is not properly regarded as part of the printing or publishing industries, but as paper is the only material for books required in large and continuing volume it must be borne in mind in any consideration of an African book industry. At the present time the paper used in West Africa is imported, and perhaps careful study in terms of overall economic planning will indicate that continuing use of foreign paper is the best permanent policy in spite of the presence in parts of West Africa of possible raw materials such as timber, bamboo, bagasse, rice straw, etc. Various studies of the possibilities have been made under both national and international auspices. The Franklin surveyors, not expert in paper technology and not competent to weigh the major development factors involved, are unable to express an opinion on the issue. It may be observed, however, that continued import would seem to be a thoroughly feasible

solution from the point of view of the book industry alone, if that is found to be the best procedure in more general economic terms. It should be noted, however, that development of an African book industry as visualized in this report should in itself offer an additional incentive for establishment of an indigenous industry making book papers (as opposed to newsprint plants which have somewhat different requirements and, presumably, might have a much greater total market.)

To summarize the situation as to physical production of books, even the present inefficient use of equipment gives West Africa a productive capacity approximating the present needs for printing; though the capacity is not evenly distributed according to the distribution of needs in the area; but even completely efficient use of present plants will not accommodate the enormously increased needs once indigenous African book publishing industries get fully under way.

3. Distribution. This is the weakest link in the chain. If one assumes perfectly prepared books, suited to African needs and interests, efficiently manufactured in appropriate form and made available at suitable prices in adequate quantities, West African book industries will still not be able to operate unless they can create an effective means -- far more effective than anything visible at the present time -- for taking the books from the printing presses and putting them in the hands of readers.

The shortcomings of the distribution system are obvious to educators and civic leaders anxious to have enlightenment spread through the country, but they are also obvious to the publishers or would-be publisher wondering how he can conduct a profitable business depending for retail distribution on only a handful of bookshops concentrated in chief cities.

The situation as to distribution of textbooks is not as bad as that sounds, for there are many retail merchants and even street traders who handle books for a brief period each year at the time of the opening of school. But there are vast areas where even the sure-sale distribution of prescribed school textbooks is very imperfect, and there are only a relatively limited number of points in all of West Africa where one can

find a wide and interest-challenging collection of books for supplementary or general reading. The creative and educational function of the retail bookstore is almost entirely lost because the shops concentrate so heavily on the textbooks that are required reading anyway. And much of the clientele for the few shops with the largest stock consists of expatriates, and the general-reading titles available cater largely to that trade.

In the distribution sector, as in the others surveyed the need for joint action is evident: distribution is poor because there are few books published that will interest African readers at prices African readers can afford; and there are few such books published because distribution is so poor!

The publishers enjoying a thriving business in approved textbooks, and not yet attempting publication of any wide range of supplementary books designed specifically for African readers, have had small incentive to press for a better distribution scheme. The retailers themselves have not been inclined to push adventurously into new territory (where business is expected to be thinner than in their established places of business). And there have been few jobbers or wholesale distributors to serve as a supply line from the publishers to remote points of retail sale.

Most of the expatriate publishers have tried to "go it alone" in distribution, and even the largest and most prosperous of them lack a volume of business big enough to maintain a full distributing mechanism for their publishing list alone. Indeed, the publishers whose textbooks have been on approved lists -- even in those cases in which a system of multiple-title approvals gives an appearance of competition -- have had such an assured market for those books that they have not been under much economic pressure to create an improved textbook-distributing system, and virtually none to work for mass availability of any books that are not prescribed in schools.

A jobber who received books from all publishers and distributed to all retailers in any one country might well have a flourishing business, and the volume flowing through the channels he created should be large

enough to sustain an effective organization. The jobber's close and continuing contact with the retailers should permit a control of credit that would be both firmer and more enlightened than the present somewhat whimsical system. And the jobber would have an incentive to encourage the establishment of retail outlets in areas where there are none at the present time.

Existence of a jobbing organization would not prevent the publishers from maintaining whatever corps of field representatives they might wish, but they could devote their entire energy to sales-promotion, determination of trends in need and use, creative editorial work, etc., without direct involvement in the mechanics of distribution.

A "chain" system of retail bookshops is of course a possibility. This plan is already followed in some countries, for instance the Church Mission Society and Sudan Interior Mission Bookshops in Nigeria, the Methodist Book Depot in Ghana, the book departments of the Kingsway supermarkets, etc. Independent retailers hear of "chain" plans with dismay. A recent expatriate project planned for Nigeria, the Nigerian Book Distribution Centre under leadership of the W.H. Smith Company, the famous British retail bookselling chain, aroused such a storm of protest among Nigerian booksellers that it seems to have been abandoned. It was not universally approved by British publishers to begin with, and only some of them elected to enter the plan; but the Nigerian booksellers' opposition was especially strong. There is no reason in general theory (whether or not in terms of particular commercial interest) why groups of retail bookshops might not gain some of the advantages of chain operation whether through joint ownership or through cooperative relations of other sorts.

All of the above comment has related to so-called conventional booktrade primarily through bookshops. But unconventional selling methods that have brought a booktrade revolution in many other countries must also be considered for West Africa. In the long run such methods, especially in "bush" districts, seem to promise an even greater contribution not only to mass education but also to the social unification of tribal and urban areas

so ardently desired by many of the West African countries.

Included among the unconventional methods -- some of which have already had tentative experiment -- are racks at points of sale other than bookshops, such as markets and bus stops, following the system of British and American paperbacks; use of an existing distribution system for newspapers and magazines; "instant bookstores" attached to schools, adult literacy centers, youth clubs, health centers, information centers, etc.

In addition to the trials that have already been made along these lines, there are groups, firms, and organizations in almost all of the countries considering new projects. Some of these are profit-making in purpose, some merely seeking to advance the public welfare; some are expatriate in inspiration, some are African. If they are able to succeed they will do much for the countries in which they work.

Soundly conceived distribution projects, whether conventional or unconventional, deserve every encouragement, both from the West African governments and from outside countries trying to help. That help should include, if possible, capital loans for such equipment and installations as may be required, such as warehouses or depositories, point-of-sale racks, and trucks or jeeps. As to the last, however, careful thought should be given to the potentialities of existing bus or truck routes before it is decided that a new fleet of transport vehicles will be required. Perhaps existing transport might serve to take stock to regional centers, with the jobber's own vehicles fanning out from there to surrounding communities. This would be an extension of methods used in extremely limited ways by existing "chains."

The major capital element in a book-distributor's business represents the cost of his stock-in-trade, that is, the books he purchases from the publishers for resale to the retailers. In order to have warehouse stock of many titles for filling retailers' orders without constant small-copy orders from publishers, the jobber's investment of this sort must be very substantial. But publishers traditionally have some credit arrangement with distributors in any event; and, in order to encourage development of

a new jobbing system presumed to serve their own economic interest, publishers frequently allow an extraordinary credit period at the beginning, sometimes "freezing" as a long-term loan the charge for a large initial order to fill the pipeline, though requiring the distributor to make current payment for subsequent orders. It may also be possible for the creator of a distributing system to attract publisher investment in his enterprise, the investment being represented in part by cash and in part by a line of credit for book purchases.

These details have been mentioned in order to suggest that, if a distributor can in some way finance the distributing mechanism itself, there is reason to suppose that the publishers can help substantially with the cost of his stock-in-trade.

The long-term outlook for book distribution in several West African countries seems to Franklin to be most promising, whether undertaken by groups of book publishers, by newspapers or magazines, by existing booktrade organizations (such as Publishers & Stationers Supply in Nigeria), or by firms created for the purpose -- provided proper heed is given to the operating principles mentioned later, and due consideration is given to the requirements arising from low literacy and income.

But -- with apologies for yet once more alluding to the "vicious circle" -- it must be emphasized that a distribution system in any West African country must, at the present time, depend almost entirely on books prescribed for school use. A system doing only that would not make any new contribution to the national interest but would only achieve some improvement, at the purely housekeeping level, over the present catch-as-catch-can method of schoolbook distribution. It will be only with the coming into being of new kinds of books appealing to a new kind of market that a nationwide distribution system will realize its potential. A suggestion of kinds of books perhaps meeting the requirement is given later in this report. But the generalization must be stated once more: the most ingenious and effective distribution system ever created will have only limited usefulness unless there are books directly suitable for the market, and priced for the

economy in which they are expected to sell.

The clear need is for overall book industry vision that will see the readers' needs and interests, the publishers' title-selection and editorial planning, the printers' economical manufacture, and the distributors' service in taking the books to the readers -- all of these -- as parts of one whole. If the right kinds of books are published and if the machinery is provided for making them available to the potential customers, the sale of books in West Africa could be multiplied even under existing conditions of education. In spite of low literacy in most of the countries, and in spite of low annual income for most of the people, there is a market to be tapped. And the market is large enough right now to make the selling prices of many kinds of books appropriate to the economy, and it can become large enough for many other kinds of books in the future.

4. Publishers. At the very center of the need just described is the need for indigenous book publishing organizations -- forward-looking, creative, public spirited. Those qualities are not contrary to the shareholders' proper interest in profit-making. Indeed, the publisher who sees how to serve West Africa by producing books meeting the area's actual needs and capturing the readers' interest is much more likely to continue making profits than one hoping to go on forever with the present sale resulting chiefly from the fact that nothing much better is immediately available.

The rudiments of a West African book publishing industry are already present. It is not correct to say, as some observers have, that there is no book publishing in the area.

For one thing, some of the expatriate commercial firms are Africanizing their work with some speed and to a substantial degree. A small new firm, African Universities Press, Lagos, set up by a British publisher, Andre Deutsch, has Nigerians as three out of four of its directors. Two of the larger firms, Oxford University Press and Heinemann, have distinguished Nigerians as their resident managers; and the firm with

perhaps the largest West African business, Longmans Green, has an African manager in one of the three regions of Nigeria and has stated its intention of having full Nigerian management eventually. Several other British houses can be expected to Africanize their management in the next year or so, and to make Africa instead of London the base of operations for much more of their African business. Almost all British publishers declare their willingness to print in Africa to whatever extent the African printing industry may become able to serve them efficiently and economically.

The French publishers also, though they have not moved very far as yet, are beginning to show recognition of the new conditions. An organization called C. E. D. A. (Centre d'Édition et de Diffusion Africaine), representing the Paris commercial houses Didier, Hatier, and Mame, though still essentially French and with a Frenchman in charge of their one African office in Abidjan, is using some Ivoiriens among its co-authors, has substantial Ivoirien government capital, and is producing (in France) books intended specifically for Ivory Coast schools. In Senegal there are reports of a coming alliance of Hachette with a Senegalese book organization. One also hears of other French firms either contemplating membership in C. E. D. A. or planning independent operations of somewhat the same sort.

But, quite aside from the recent moves by British and French publishers, the area is by no means empty of entirely African book enterprises. One of potentially great importance is the publishing department of the huge printing establishment, Gaskya Corporation in Zaria, Northern Nigeria, whose shares are owned by the Northern Region government. In relation to its potential, Gaskya is not very active as a publisher, but it does, nevertheless, bring out a number of small new books each year in English, Hausa, and even Arabic.

There is some book publishing -- not very much in one place but amounting to something altogether -- by cultural, literary, and historical societies in most of the countries; and by ministries of education, information, health, agriculture, and industry in several of them. The Bureau of

Ghana Languages in Accra has published many books already and has extensive plans for the future. The cultural society, Mbari, in Ibadan is another organization that has done some publishing and plans more.

The church mission organizations, though primarily retailers in their book activities, also engage in publishing to some extent; the Sudan Interior Mission publishes in English and vernaculars from its headquarters in Jos, Northern Nigeria; the Ghana-autonomous Methodist Book Depot and Presbyterian Book Depot publish in various languages; and there is publishing by mission organizations in Port Harcourt, Eastern Nigeria.

There is one actual university publisher, the University Press at Ibadan, and there are plans -- some very ambitious plans -- for others at a half-dozen institutions. The Ghana Universities Press at Legon, which plans to serve as publishing outlet for the University's Center of African Studies as well as other units, is one of these.

A few newspapers and magazines in the area and quite a number of printers have published occasional books. A Societe d'Edition has recently been formed in Dakar by an experienced printer and a group of intellectual leaders, while another printer in that city has published in the past. A societe has also been formed in the Ivory Coast and another in Cameroun. There are probably two-dozen printers in the area who have done book publishing of one sort or another at different times, the most interesting of these being the lively small printer-publishers in the city of Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria, who have even created a genre named for their city, "the Onitsha novel."

Altogether there are probably a hundred more or less active "imprints" in West Africa, some African and some expatriate, but among them all not a single African commercial organization whose exclusive concern is with book publishing. There is no intrinsic error in combining book publishing with printing or bookselling or other related activities, but to serve the purpose there must at least be departments or particular people with a single-hearted interest in publishing. Thus far most of the publishing by Africans has been an almost accidental adjunct of other

activities.

An outstanding exception is the organization Presence Africaine, directed by an African, Alioune Diop, and having what is probably the most distinguished list of African authors of any publisher in the world. But Presence Africaine, though maintaining a bookshop in Dakar and enjoying status as a truly African organization, conducts its book publishing from Paris, and is not nearly as effective in securing Africa-wide distribution as the quality of its trade publishing list would justify.

The openness of the publishing field has not gone unmarked by Africans. There are many groups and individuals talking about going into book publishing. West Africa is waiting for them. All the ingredients of a book industry are available in some degree already, and the leadership that book publishers can provide is the missing factor.

Training Programs

Of all the forms of assistance that other countries can give to Africa for the development of book industries, training is probably the most important, because trained people with vision can accomplish a great deal even with the present imperfect equipment and institutions, whereas even a perfect up-to-date mechanism without their ability and vision would be of slight use.

Training is needed in every branch of the book business -- editorial preparation, artwork, layout, printing, distributing, and bookselling. Some of the training should be on the ground, with consultants from abroad assisting to the extent desired; some should be in Britain, France, or America; and some would be most advantageously carried out in countries such as Egypt or Iran which have achieved a striking development of their own book industries in recent years.

Especially as to distribution, but to some extent in all phases of book work aside from the strictly technological field of printing, the need is not for elaborate training in a formal sense but for the chance to observe methods employed in other countries and to consider whether those

methods, or adaptations from them, might be serviceable in Africa also. Especially for that reason, observation trips for selected individuals should, whenever possible, include visits to more than one foreign country.

Although, as indicated, formal courses may not be required, that is not to say that indiscriminate journeying will meet the need. It is essential that whatever organization is sponsoring the training project make careful advance arrangements with professional publishers, printers, booksellers, etc., to assure the most effective cooperation in giving the visitors the kinds of experiences that will be of most value to them.

Statism in West Africa

Most Americans and Europeans think that development of our book industries, and their service to our countries, have come about through the stimulus of private enterprise; and that view is also shared by many Africans who hope for the same sort of development in their own countries. But it would be unrealistic to overlook the place of statism in West African thinking, notably in Ghana and Guinea, and the feeling on the part of the leadership of those countries that the state itself should be the most important or the exclusive publisher and printer, and perhaps even bookseller.

Outsiders are entitled to hold views on the wisdom or unwisdom of such judgments, but the decisions are to be made by the Ghanaians and Guineans. Some of the recommendations in this report presuppose private-enterprise book industries for full implementation. We see no reason, however, for withholding assistance, to whatever extent it can be effective, from the effort to supply good books to the readers of any African country, whether the approach to the book industry is that of private enterprise or of the state.

Regional Book Projects

We mentioned earlier in the report that regional possibilities should be borne in mind in any consideration of West Africa's book needs. It will now be useful to look more closely at the factors working for and against

such solutions; and then, in the following section we shall consider a possible middle ground between regional and one-country approaches.

The arguments in favor of regional projects are fairly well known: the countries of West Africa are sociologically and culturally homogeneous in many fundamental ways, and foreign cultural influence in most of the area has come from either Britain or France. English and French are the official languages, and there is even some sharing of vernaculars from country to country. There is a large element of Islamic influence in most of the countries, a substantial number of Muslims in the population, and even fairly widespread familiarity with the Arabic language, or at least ability to read Arabic script. For the older generation much of the educational background is closely tied to Christian missions, and in most of the countries those missions are still playing a recognized part not only in education but also in bookselling. There is of course a close racial relationship throughout the area, and accordingly a similar interest in (if not agreement about) such racially-oriented policies and principles as Africanization. Furthermore, economic community of interest is bringing the countries closer together, in spite of the differing aspirations and doctrines of the leaders and of those who follow them, and in spite of divisiveness represented by the Monrovia and Casablanca Groups.

But the factors arguing most strongly for a regional approach to the book problem, are, first, that all the countries except Nigeria have small populations -- several of them only a million or two -- thus offering too narrow an economic basis for a strong book industry dependent on only a national market; and, second, that the school systems of all the countries are going through a revolutionary development at about the same time, and accompanied by a comparable drive for adult literacy. It must also be noted that in school subjects such as mathematics, science, and the teaching of reading (unlike the situation in the more locally oriented areas of social science, citizenship, etc.) it should not be too hard to prepare books suitable for general West African use. Indeed, some of the British publishers and a few of the French publishers are making exactly this effort.

Also, as we mentioned under "Printing" above, there are already some large West African printing plants in existence and others coming into being. Their sheer size inevitably suggests a regional approach, even though, in the long run, they may not be too large for purely local use.

But strong influences are working against regional solutions. Psychological factors relating to nationalism, local pride, prejudice against other countries or the actual or presumed doctrines of their leaders, reluctance to give what might amount to economic support to a project in another country -- all of these present at least unspoken obstacles. They are summed up, occasionally, by an apostle of Africanization who says he no longer wants his country's books to come from London (or from Paris, as the case may be), but who admits he would prefer to take them from those traditional centers of culture than from a West African country that he believes to be no further advanced than his own. (It is for this reason that the purely African, and African-directed, organization Presence Africaine referred to above uses Paris as its base of operations. It has been unable to find an African base acceptable to all!)

But there are important practical considerations besides these partly emotional objections. One is linguistic. Besides the major division into the countries with English as the official language and those with French, there is great variation not only as to what vernacular languages are spoken but also as to whether they have been reduced to writing and (the critical issue) whether they are used in any way in school. Even aside from language questions, however, there is a wide variety of educational approaches, responding to British, French, and American influences and, to some extent, an effort at developing an educational plan peculiarly well suited to the one country. It seems unlikely that the same school textbooks could meet exactly the requirements of all the countries using English, or that other standard books would qualify fully in French.

On the other hand, there seem to be real possibilities for regional handling of the problem of supplying supplementary-reading material in English and in French that would be useful throughout the area, and that

would be preferable to any books now available from Britain, France, or the U.S. There are likewise promising opportunities for parallel editions (i.e. similar in editorial approach or identical in part) for different countries in the region, and many possibilities for economizing on preparation costs or production costs through consolidating production, even when editions will not be exactly the same. That thought leads to proposal of the "middle ground" in the section immediately below.

Inter-Country Publishing Arrangements

In spite of the rational arguments in behalf of a regional approach to West Africa's book problems, the political, psychological, and administrative obstacles to its employment may be too great. There is, however, a possible middle ground between an entirely one-country method (which keeps the market too small) and a true regional method (which may be economically logical but politically impossible and in any event would probably require long and arduous negotiations for achievement.)

The method suggested might be termed "inter-country" instead of "regional," and it recommends itself by avoiding many of the psychological hazards mentioned above. It would also have the advantage that it would not have to be planned monolithically on an all-or-nothing basis but could be carried out, piece by piece, as opportunity offered and as the common interests of particular publishers should induce them to work together.

Under the "inter-country" method proposed, a book with a potential market in more than one country might be produced in a substantial edition, thus gaining the economy of central manufacture, but portions of the edition would appear with the title page bearing the name of a publisher in another country, to whom those books would be shipped in bulk for publication in his country under his name and with the benefits of his local auspices and his familiarity with the local market. And, with proper planning, it should even be possible to arrange, without much loss of the printing economy, for some variations in the editions to meet local needs.

A special advantage of this method comes from the fact that some of the countries without large markets of their own, have printing facilities in excess of present needs. The huge Imprimerie Nationale in Conakry, Guinea, is a case in point; and there are other though less striking examples of printing establishments with current leewa; for taking on additional work.

A start on inter-country cooperation on textbook printing under international auspices has been made at the Ministry of Education printing plant in Yaounde, Cameroun, where a Unesco project operating to a degree as part of the same plant and eventually to become incorporated in it, is undertaking to print textbooks for five neighboring countries: Cameroun, Chad, Central African Republic, Gabon, and Congo (Brazzaville). The plant is only moderate in size, in no way comparable to the huge establishment in Guinea or to that being constructed in Ghana; and each book is prepared for use by only one country, without the full benefits of inter-country publishing visualized above. The approach, is nevertheless, an interesting one and deserving of careful evaluation when it has been in use long enough to permit judgment in the light of experience.

The method of "inter-country" cooperation is extensively used in Anglo-American publishing and -- especially with respect to books involving color illustrations or other expensive operations -- among European countries, and even to some extent in Asia. Under Franklin sponsorship there has been such cooperation between publishers in Cairo and Beirut for some projects, and in other cases, among publishers in Iran, Pakistan, Malaya, and Indonesia.

For any such "inter-country" plan in West Africa it is of course essential to make sure that the books selected for that treatment are indeed of multi-national interest. Some comments on this question are made in the section "Kinds of Books" below.

It should be noted, incidentally, that although one might assume that the language (English or French) would have to be uniform for this plan to work, parts of books, such as colored illustrations, might be

produced centrally for use in books in both languages, with flat sheets of the printed portion being delivered to the publisher in the other country with blank space left to receive his imprinting of the text or legends in his own language. The economy of this method is not as great as in cases where a book is uniform throughout, but it does sometimes make economically possible the inclusion of material that would otherwise be out of the question for a small edition.

The basic execution of this "inter-country" plan is visualized as being through publisher-to-publisher arrangements, without elaborate regional machinery or the necessity for multi-national, or even bi-national agreements. On the other hand there would be obvious usefulness in the service of a disinterested organization (Franklin might be one if it were working in West Africa) to help bring publishers together, and especially to let publishers in different countries know of common interests in their clienteles and of cooperative possibilities that therefore suggest themselves.

Kinds of Books Needed

Although one would not be wide of the mark to say that West Africa needs every kind of book, the primary needs can perhaps be narrowed down to these categories:

1. Books for the Teaching of Reading, in English, French, and major vernaculars, Franklin has stated elsewhere its belief in the need for much more research on methods of teaching reading, and especially on the relation of the vernaculars to English, as alluded to on an earlier page of this report; and its own eagerness to serve an auxiliary function in that sort of project by providing the printed materials needed for pilot use of the methods being tried.

2. Basic Textbooks in the National Language, i.e. English or French. These must obviously be editorially prepared in closest association with the educational authorities, presumably on the ground and primarily by Africans, with whatever consulting assistance they may wish (especially as to methods of textbook preparation) from British,

French, American, or any other specialists. In view of the strong interest in American educational methods and American textbooks displayed by Africans in some of the English-speaking countries, yet in view also of the strong British tradition and the many continuing connections with British education, joint Afro-Anglo-American projects might be appropriate in some cases, if desired by the local country. The cooperation among UCLA, the University of Leeds, and University College, Ibadan, may suggest a pattern for such cooperation.

The French orientation of education in the francophonic countries, as well as the language situation itself, argues strongly that basic assistance in the development of French textbooks should come from France rather than from other countries. Americans should, however, stand ready to help in special ways that might be useful, including cooperation, if that should be desired, in multi-country training programs in which it is felt that a view of American textbook publishing might be a useful supplement to observation in France.

3. Language-Teaching Books in Other Languages, that is English-teaching books for use in the francophonic countries, French teaching books for the anglophonic; and, in countries where Arabic is offered as an alternative to French or English, teaching books for that language also. It will be recalled that for many of the learners these will be third languages, not second; first the mother tongue; then English or French as the national language; then French, English, or Arabic as the additional foreign language in secondary or other advanced schools. In view of the attention that American educators and textbook publishers are giving to the teaching of English as a foreign language, and to methods of teaching French to English-speakers, it is possible that American contributions in this area would be useful. Especially in the French-speaking countries, for which neither French nor British publisher have done much specifically for African use in the field of English-teaching books, American participation might be especially desirable.

4. Teachers Manuals. It goes without saying that clear and simple teachers manuals would be needed to accompany specific textbooks. There would seem to be a need also for manuals dealing with general educational principles and methods of teaching and these might be adapted for African use from American or British or French books and issued either in English or in French translations. Special kinds of manuals, possibly usable in several of the countries speaking a given language, might be prepared. One such, that would relate to the Supplementary Reading Books discussed in Section 6 below, would be a very brief and simple "Teachers Guide to the Use of Supplementary Reading Books" or "Teachers Guide to the Use of School Libraries."

5. Adult-Literacy Teaching Material. For the reasons explained above, the greatest need is undoubtedly in the vernaculars, if they exist in written form, but there is also a need in English for beginners as well as for those literate in their mother tongues, and a very pressing need in French. The methods of teaching, and hence of the printed material, might well be influenced by the research referred to in Section 1 above, though the differential in the students' age would presumably affect the subject matter.

6. Supplementary-Reading Material in English, French, and major vernaculars. This is the great unexplored source for African education, and incidentally for economic support of African book industries. If, through the interest and variety of a wide range of possible reading material, some of it prescribed and more available for use according to individual tastes, the student can be led to exercise his newly acquired ability to read, the major resource of all education will have become engaged. Merely to teach students how to read, and then to lead them prescriptively through a series of textbooks will not accomplish true education. Only material that will challenge the student's interest and lead him, by his own desires, to progressively higher levels, will give final implementation to the desire of all African countries for an educated and informed citizenry.

Many of the books in this category may be feasible for trade sale, but school libraries (and if possible classroom libraries even if relatively small collections at first) are the most promising means of laying a variety of reading possibilities before the student.

7. How-To-Do-It and Books of Practical Information. For both vocational-school use and for individual self-teaching there is a wide need for simple books dealing with trade skills, baby care, hygiene, agricultural practices, etc. Some of these books should be published in vernacular languages, some in English, some in French. Some might be based on existing American, British, or French works, suitably adapted; but for the most part they should be written anew for proper accommodation of African tools, materials, trade practices, agricultural methods, etc. Special projects for preparing such books might be set up in cooperation with ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, Youth, Industry, etc. to produce the kinds of materials needed to serve their special objectives. A special requirement in such work is to bring into good working relationship the specialists in editorial preparation (some of whom might well be foreigners at the outset) and the practical-minded journeyman who knows the actual conditions of work at first hand.

9. General Reading. African book-publishing cannot be said to have reached maturity until it has moved also into this wide field. For the immediate future, however, it is too much to expect that any one publisher can bring out an extensive list of general-reading books in addition to dealing with his chosen parts of the basic requirements in the preceding sections. Every publisher worth his salt will wish to do some such books, especially to do his part in encouraging African authorship, and eventually the feasibility of doing more of them will increase; for the time being, however, many of the books for general reading will continue to be imports, or, for some titles reissues by African publishers through arrangements with the proprietors of British, French, and American editions.

10. Scholarly Books. In spite of the fairly impressive volume of scholarly publishing on African subjects by British, French, and American publishers, including a growing number of works with some element of African authorship, there is still need for African scholarly publishing outlets for the increasing number of able scholars at African universities. Active university presses could also play a creative role, besides providing an outlet for scholarly writing. On every ground there is reason for general interest in the desire to establish university presses at several West African universities. Some of them may have that desire before the parent institutions are quite ready for them, but, even in a cautionary role in such cases, the university presses of other countries — and especially of the United States because of the historical development of our scholarly publishing — can be extremely useful. It is hoped that the Association of American University Presses can follow out its plan for close cooperation with the university presses of Africa.

Information About Foreign Books

The above sections deal with books that may be published in West Africa. But, as suggested earlier in this report, the need for books from abroad, aside from textbooks, will undoubtedly grow, as has been the experience with other areas of the world where indigenous book industries have developed. The broader the educational base becomes, the larger the number of students proceeding to secondary school and university, the wider the distribution of supplementary-reading books and the growth of school and public libraries, the larger will be the number of readers wishing to buy foreign books in English and French.

For the sake of West Africa itself, and surely for the sake of the countries exporting books in English and French, it is essential that better bibliographical information be provided. Even the booksellers are inadequately informed of the existence of books of possible interest in their clienteles, and educators, librarians, government officials, and — worst of all — general readers do not know much more than the bookseller

can tell them. Understandably, knowledge of British books is the most complete, though there are grave shortcomings there. There is almost complete ignorance of American books in nearly all quarters, including the most cultured and best-educated. The best importing booksellers in the French-speaking countries have attractive stocks and exceedingly well-run bookshops, though with emphasis on relatively expensive items attractive to the expatriate clientele but not to Africans.

It may be appropriate to say a word about the place of American books in their original editions. Many of them are too expensive for wide commercial sale, both absolutely and in comparison with the prices of British books of the same sort. But there are thousands of American titles, especially in the category of "quality paperbacks," that are not out of line with other book prices in Africa and whose subject-matter would be of prime interest to African scholars, educators, government officials, and others. There are also many American scholarly, scientific, and technical books that are unique in character and needed for certain libraries, government offices, etc. and that are not ruled out because of price. There are also mass-market juveniles, mass-market how-to-do-it books, and a number of other categories in the unknown world of American books. The Franklin surveyors' American connections may influence their judgments, but it appears that it would be to African as well as American advantage if more effort could be given to acquainting Africans with that part of the American bibliography in which they would have a natural interest, and then to improving availability of such books for the Africans who want them and can afford to buy them.

Guidelines for American Publishers

Suggestions are offered above regarding opportunities in West Africa for American publishing activity, in addition to book export from the U. S. Franklin is convinced of the reality of those publishing opportunities, but knowledge of the "ground rules" imposed by local conditions is essential not only to avoid commercial disaster but also to provide useful service

to Africa. The following points should be kept in mind:

- (a) The book business in West Africa at the present time is almost wholly educational. The talents immediately called for are those of publishers with successful experience with textbooks, with books for school libraries and supplementary-reading books for school use, and with books for adult new readers.
- (b) Because of the small number of educated adults and low per capita income, general or trade publishing for West African consumption would have a hard time unless area-wide marketing were possible.
- (c) Because educational materials must, for some time, represent the largest element of sales volume for African publishers, close and cordial relations with ministries of education, information, health, agriculture, youth, etc., are essential.
- (d) For the immediate period, the best opportunity for American publishers to participate in West Africa would seem to be in partnership with indigenous firms or through the granting of rights for adaptation of their textbooks by African publishers, with the collaboration, where desired by the African publisher, of American editors and authors in producing adapted books suited to African conditions but retaining the teaching effectiveness of the originals.
- (e) For the time being African publishers will contribute most effectively toward meeting the need for Africanized teaching materials by enlisting local participation in the adaptation of British or American or other textbooks, rather than by trying, at the outset, to build such textbooks from scratch.
- (f) Africans respect British and French educational standards and are not certain about American standards (an M.I. T. graduate had difficulty in getting a science-teaching job in one African country because the institution was unknown). The Africans are, however, keenly interested in fresh American educational

ideas, and they are eager for American help toward establishment of indigenous publishing if it is carried out properly. But any aggressive attempt by Americans to "move in" on West African educational publishing without sensitive understanding of the problems and careful establishment of local relationships would be resented not only by the British and the French but also by the Africans themselves.

Final Objective

Returning to the African point of view adopted for most of this report, the final word should be a reminder that building a national book industry is a costly business. If the sole purpose were to provide today's books for immediate African use, the cheapest procedure would be to use existing foreign books, manufacture them abroad in the cheapest printing market, and ship them in. The effort to build an indigenous book industry can be justified only if it creates a mechanism that can continue to supply books in the future, and that can assure those books will be fully responsive to the country's needs. Every policy of an African country, or of a non-African country seeking to give help from outside, must be judged with that final objective in mind. Only in that way can the social cost of the effort be justified.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

The following listing of recommendations has been drawn primarily for American readers of the report - educators, foundations, book publishers, government agencies. It should be clear from the report itself, however, that Franklin has no feeling that Americans have an exclusive role to play in these affairs. In many of them British or French activity would clearly be both more appropriate and more useful, and in others the greatest promise lies in the direction of African-European-American co-operation. But this is the checklist for American consideration:

1. Training Programs in all branches of the book industry, see pp. 24-25.
2. Research in the Teaching of Reading, see pp. 5-6.
3. Technical Assistance, as desired, in the development of publishing, printing, and distribution, see pp. 9-23.
4. Projects for Language Teaching, see pp. 4, 30-31.
5. Projects for Teachers Manuals, see pp. 32.
6. Projects for How-to-Do-It and Vocational-Education Books. see pp. 33.
7. Projects for Supplementary-Reading Books, see pp. 32-33.
8. Cooperation with University Presses, see pp. 34.
9. Studies of a Possible Paper Industry, see pp. 15.
10. Encouragement of Joint Ventures of American and African Firms in publishing, printing, distributing, see pp. 35-36.
11. Information about Foreign Books, see pp. 34-35.
12. Encouragement of Inter-African Publishing, see pp. 28-30.
13. A Franklin Program in West Africa. The Franklin board of directors has authorized the undertaking of a Franklin program in West Africa, to the extent that financial support for it can be secured, to assist toward any of the above-listed objectives in which Franklin's competence is established and its services desired by the African countries. Franklin offices, manned by nationals of the countries concerned, will be opened at some points, but the Franklin organization will also seek to serve a liaison function with indigenous publishers in other African countries as well. Cooperation with publishing groups or organizations in other countries, especially Britain and France, and especially in the field of technical assistance to the developing African book industries, is earnestly desired.

FRANKLIN PUBLICATIONS

The foregoing sections of this report have dealt with the general question of books in West Africa. A few pages are now added on Franklin Publications itself, the organization that sponsored the report and is now planning active work in carrying out book programs in West Africa.

FRANKLIN PUBLICATIONS

Franklin Publications, Inc., is a non-profit, tax-exempt educational organization governed by a board of directors consisting of fifteen heads of leading book-publishing firms and ten educators, librarians, etc.; the present membership is listed on a later page. Franklin was organized in 1952, and its work has been supported by grants from foundations, governments (U. S. and other), universities, corporations, and individuals.

The policy of Franklin Publications rests on the conviction that a healthy and creative indigenous book industry is basic to educational and economic advance in any country. Furthermore, it is recognized that new nations are in special need of rapid development of such industries to consolidate their independence and manifest their own culture and personality. Only a strong local industry can do a fully effective job of publishing books responsive to local needs and of maintaining useful relations with the book industries of the rest of the world. Franklin is committed to the creation or the development and strengthening of such a local book industry — including printing, publishing, and distribution. In each country Franklin is flexibly responsive to any order of priority for serving the national needs that may be established by the people in that country.

Aside from African programs to be undertaken, operating offices are maintained in nine cities of the Middle East and Asia: Cairo, Beirut, Baghdad, Tehran, Tabriz, Lahore, Dacca, Kuala Lumpur, and Djakarta. The offices are staffed entirely by nationals of the local country. The New York office supplies technical assistance, secures financial support, and performs service functions requested by the other offices. Officers from New York pay occasional brief visits, but the local offices are autonomous in operations — notably including the decision of what books to include in their programs.

Publication is not by Franklin but by local publishers in cooperation with Franklin. A high objective in all the work is development of a vigorous book industry in the country concerned. Provision of technical assist-

ance to that end has played an important part in Franklin activity in every country. The kinds of projects undertaken in Franklin's existing programs have included:

Production of textbooks at both school level and university and technical-school level, especially for the Ministries of Education in Afghanistan, Iran, and the United Arab Republic.

Printing-plant projects in Iran and Indonesia.

Dictionary projects in Persian and Indonesian, and one projected for Arabic.

Preparation of one-volume general-knowledge encyclopedias, adapted to the specific needs of the local country. The first of these, in the Persian language, is now in physical production. Others, in the editorial stage, are to be in Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, and Indonesian.

A "Wirerack" project for mass distribution of inexpensive books in Iran.

Technical training of personnel: our own office managers and other leading staff members, textbook editors, encyclopedia and dictionary editors, book publishers, printers, etc. The largest such project provided observation and technical training in the U.S., U.K., and France for 15 Iranian textbook editors.

High-school library projects in Iran and West and East Pakistan, and one under consideration in Indonesia.

Programs of teacher-training books in Urdu and Bengali, and of home-economics books in Indonesian; projected vocational-education books in Arabic and Indonesian.

Translation projects (for a broad range of books of all kinds) in Arabic, Persian, Pashtu, Urdu, Bengali, Malay, and Indonesian. About 1,500 different books have appeared in translation. The number of copies of all books issued with Franklin cooperation is about 27,000,000.

In all of the work two considerations are held in view: (1) the immediate short-term value of the book or project from the educational or cultural point of view of the country concerned; and (2) the long-term up-building of a local book industry.

To summarize Franklin's basic operating principles, which will apply in any African programs undertaken:

- (a) The operating staff in each Franklin office is composed exclusively of nationals of that country, without resident Americans.
- (b) Books are chosen for publication by local advisers, not by Americans.
- (c) Publication is by local firms, not by Franklin. Books are issued for sale, not for giving away; and selling prices are appropriate to the local economy.
- (d) Technical assistance in development of a strong local book industry is treated as a valid objective in its own right, not merely in connection with distribution of Franklin-sponsored books.

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