



# African leaders meet under Quaker auspices

Leadership and the Processes of Development is topic of Bouake Seminar. December conference is ninth in series.

Surrounded by curious children, a group of Africans and Europeans sat picnicking at the entrance to a small village—the half-way point on their seven-hour bus ride from Abidjan to Bouake on the Ivory Coast.

The group, composed of 18 West Africans, two interpreters and Quaker staff, was to spend the next eight days in a Benedictine monastery in Bouake discussing the question of "Leadership and the Processes of Development."

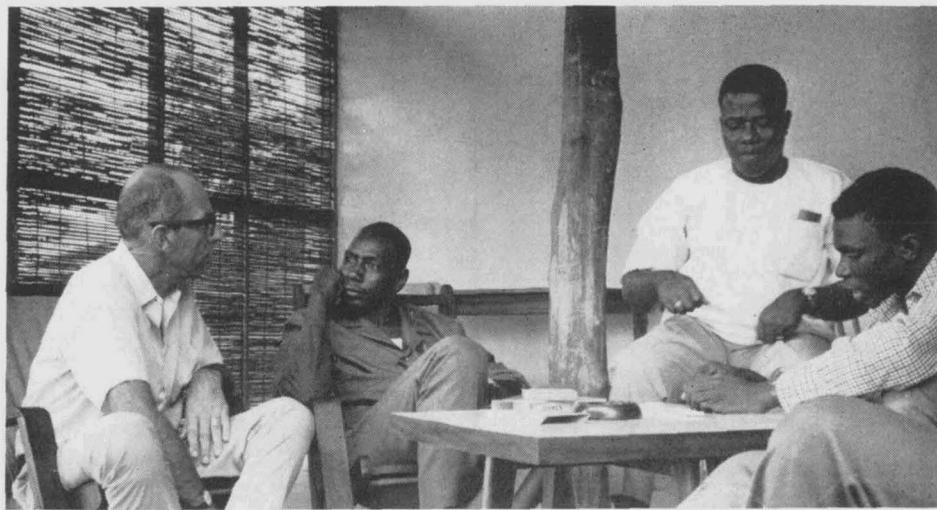
The conference, which took place last December, was the ninth "International Dialogue" to be held in West Africa under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee, Friends Service Council (London), and the Canadian Friends Service Committee. In 1961 and 1962, several West African diplomats had taken part in AFSC Conferences for Diplomats in Europe. They urged the Quakers to sponsor similar seminars in West Africa. The program

began in 1963 with a focus on the problems common to newly independent and developing countries. One of the primary aims was to promote better communication between English- and French-speaking nations.

## Ten nations represented

Ten countries were represented at the Bouake seminar. Many of the participants held important governmental posts, but, as is usual in AFSC conferences, they attended as individuals. As a result, they had no official positions to defend and could feel free to express private thoughts and feelings. They lived together; they ate together. Ideas born in discussions could be elaborated upon over an evening meal. As expressed by Laurence Naish, financial secretary of Friends Service Council, who acted as a resource person, they had "the unusual opportunity to think

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Participants in the Bouake Seminar take advantage of free time for informal conversation. The Seminar, held under the auspices of British, Canadian and American Friends, was the ninth such meeting to be held in West Africa since the program began in 1963. Representatives of ten nations met to discuss leadership and the processes of development.

## Draft conference airs vital issues

Calling for open public discussion on all aspects of conscription, Congressman Thomas B. Curtis (Rep-Mo) charged that Congress is preparing to rubber-stamp Executive Branch recommendations on draft legislation.

Curtis, an advocate of a volunteer military, made the charge at AFSC's National Conference on the Draft, held April 6, 7, and 8 in St. Louis, Mo.

Vincent Harding, Professor of History at Spelman College in Atlanta, invoked the "other America" of persecution, slavery, and Indian extermination as a background to discussion of the military way of life and American protection of privilege and capital investment abroad.

A third speaker on the opening panel, Colonel Daniel Omer, Deputy Director of Selective Service, admitted inequities in the draft, but declared it is the best means of supplying manpower for defense, besides strengthening men's sense of duty and teaching democracy.

These three views were representative of the spread within the conference, which was designed to reach no conclusions but to broaden the dimensions of public dialogue on the draft. Representatives of militant youth groups from Watts and Harlem rubbed shoulders with students from the South and Ivy League Colleges, and pacifists spoke from the same platform as State Department officials during the three day gathering, held on the campus of Washington University.

## Differing views presented

"The conference made it possible for people of diverse views to communicate" according to Fay Knopp, conference director.

"The Draft: Its Impact on American Society" was the theme of the conference, which was sponsored by the AFSC in cooperation with Fisk University Student Council, the Executive Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of St. Louis University, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Washington University, and Webster College.

Sessions covered such topics as the

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# Concerned youth serve in new program

To many young Americans today, the war in Vietnam has given a sense of urgency to the need to deal with America's own social problems. More and more of these young people have been coming to the American Friends Service Committee in their search for positive ways in which to effect a change.

With the initiation of the new Youth Services Opportunities program (YSO) administered by the Youth Services Division, the AFSC offers young people new opportunities to deal with these problems in a constructive manner.

Explaining the background of the decision to start the program, the YSO program statement said, "The Vietnam war is literally being fought before the eyes of millions. Nationally, the conflicts that flare into violence in the struggle for social change are seen as they happen. There is no way to escape being conscious of Vietnam or the rapidity of social change."

The YSO program includes young people between the ages of 18 and 23 who are eager to give one or two years of service. It is expected that many of the applicants will be conscientious objectors seeking alternative service

assignments. Some may be college drop-outs who are unable to sit by in the present situation. Others may be unskilled young people for whom AFSC has had no long-term projects to date.

The director of YSO, Marthalyn Dickson, explains that the program will combine meaningful work with continuing education under creative supervision and personalized guidance. Volunteers will undergo orientation and training prior to assuming their assignment responsibilities. The program staff will strive to maintain flexibility in their efforts to meet the needs of the individual volunteers.

## Personal growth stressed

The essence of YSO is expressed in the proposed educational program in which volunteers will strive to relate personal growth with social change through training sessions, reading, and the examination of ideas. Periodically, the participants would be brought together in seminars to discuss questions such as the relationship of the social problems with which they work to the war in Vietnam or the "philosophical bases of change." The AFSC feels

that these young people have vital questions to ask about the world, the United States and themselves. They need support and guidance in their search for answers to these questions.

Volunteers will be assigned to projects throughout the AFSC in response to requests from various program divisions and regional offices. Among the assignments that have been chosen are a project in community service in Robeson County, North Carolina, an enrichment program for youth in Royal Oak Township, Michigan, a tutorial project in Denver, Colorado, and a project in community development in a rural Mexican village.

Three young men have already been assigned to projects. Edmund Nakawatase, Joseph Mellilo, and James Horgan are working under the supervision of Scott Nielsen of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office on a community relations project among the farm laborers in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Bill Madeira is in training in the Information and Publications Department of the AFSC in Philadelphia. By the end of 1967, YSO hopes to have 40 volunteers in the field.

The AFSC has long been concerned with peace. It also has a long history of activities for youth including an active program of counselling and referral for conscientious objectors. The YSO program is an extension of these concerns.

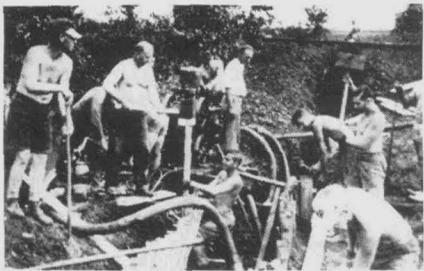
## Draft *continued from page 1*

draft and its effect on the American traditions of individual liberty; the draft and education, the socio-economic effects of the draft, the draft and human values, the draft and foreign policy, and the effect of the draft on young Americans.

Speakers and resource persons represented a wide range of disciplines. They included William R. Keast, president, Wayne State University; Dr. Edgar Friedenberg, professor of sociology, University of California; Staughton Lynd, associate professor of history at Yale University; Walter Millis, staff member, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California; and General S. L. A. Marshall, military analyst.



Four faithful volunteers mend clothing for shipment overseas at the AFSC warehouse in Philadelphia. During the past fiscal year 400,000 items of clothing passed through the warehouse en route to Algeria, the Congo, Jordan, Kenya and Uganda (where they will be distributed to Sudanese refugees). The volunteers shown are among 150 who come to the warehouse regularly to help. They are: Emily Murphey, Marie Goetz, Katherine Karsner, Jessie de Schweinitz.



**Highlights of the past fifty years**, and the AFSC's response to these historical events, are recorded in the Service Committee's photo show, "To See What Love Can Do," which opened March 20 at the Philadelphia Civic Center Museum. A total of 317 pictures trace the programs of the AFSC in the United States and abroad from 1917 to 1967. Photos from the exhibit shown here (counterclockwise) are a refugee child, reconstruction work in France, a miner's family, the first AFSC workcamp, an early peace caravan, and the Friends Ambulance Unit in China. The exhibit will tour the country in the coming months.

## Africans meet

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quietly and creatively" in the peaceful atmosphere of the monastery.

The sessions dealt with such questions as the future role of youth in Africa and urban-rural relationships. But the focal point of emotions and energies was the problem of defining independence and assessing its relationship to former colonial rule.

Participants took turns chairing the meetings. No papers were required, but

the informal discussions were opened with short introductory speeches from appropriate participants. The group also made expeditions to local projects including a cotton factory and a project in agricultural development.

The presence of three women at the conference was a revelation to a number of the men. Commented one, "This is the first time for me to participate with African women. They do add much to the discussions, and one realizes how much they can contribute to the development of Africa."

By the end of the seminar, many of the walls preventing communication had been broken down. As Laurence Naish described it, "A group of men and women, many of them unknown to any others except their compatriots, came together and formed a living community, transcending language, race, tribe and temperamental barriers."

One of the participants put it another way, "I'm very depressed tonight, and there is no cure; it's because the seminar is ending and we will all have to separate."

# AFSC speaks out on rural poverty

Drawing upon its fifty years of experience, the AFSC spoke forth recently on the problems of rural poverty in the United States, and made strong and urgent recommendations for its alleviation.

Testifying in February before the Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty in Washington were Barbara Moffett, secretary of the Community Relations Division; Scott Nielsen, Community Relations program director for southeastern Pennsylvania; Pamela Coe, National Indian Program representative and William Channel, director of the AFSC's East Coast Migrant Leadership Education Program.

"The Federal Government must commit itself to a massive attack on poverty both urban and rural, and maximum development of local leadership and organization," the AFSC told the commissioners.

"The war on poverty has been both piecemeal and puny," the AFSC said in a prepared statement. "We deplore the trend to back away from programs which stress the organization of the poor to solve their problems in innovative ways."

"Our experience demonstrates that in rural areas, where those in need and those with on-going relationships with them have themselves organized and implemented programs according to their own needs as they see them, the

climate of despair turns to one of hope. Leadership has developed and improvements have been made."

"This is not always the case," the AFSC emphasized. "Some local leadership will fail, or be misguided. We should expect a degree of failure." Occasional negative experiences should not lead government leaders to abandon the valuable general principle of involving the poor.

## Recommendations given

Among other specific recommendations made by the AFSC Community Relations group:

- Access to the means of production and equal access to jobs must be made available to the rural poor. Modest land holdings for farming should be obtainable through subsidy, or tax incentives, or long term free interest loans. More access to capital funds, help with obtaining water rights, and the development of small, locally relevant non-discriminatory industry are urgent needs.
- The nation must address itself in earnest to the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American, particularly in relation to the rural poor.

"For farm workers, employer owned or controlled housing creates a condition of 20th century serfdom," the report states. "Freedom to seek change in working conditions, to participate in community activities, to receive community service, to register to vote, to enroll children in the school of your choice, to change your job become

myths. The threat of eviction and job loss prevails."

The report cites the case of an AFSC worker in New Jersey arrested by a farmer and held at gun point by him until state troopers arrived, after he had been invited on to the camp by the crew leader to help some of his people fill out social security applications.

• Rural education needs to be upgraded drastically if rural people are to have the opportunity to break out of the syndrome of poverty.

• Social services, including aggressive employment services, welfare offices, cultural and recreational opportunities, credit and legal aid, must be made far more accessible in rural areas.

• Expanded, nationally uniform and equal coverage under social welfare laws would do much to break the back of rural poverty and stem the tide of migration to communities, jobs, and states where benefits are more equitable and secure. All forms of employment should be covered by social security and benefits should be increased to provide its beneficiaries with an income above the minimum poverty level.

• Special attention needs to be paid to the problems of the American Indian. The Bureau of Indian Affairs must be given sufficient appropriations by Congress to implement the reforms they are now planning.

"In attacking poverty," the report concluded, "there is still the underlying belief on the part of far too many people that people are poor because of their own inadequacies."

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