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EMERGENT AMERICANS
A Report on "Crossroads Africa"
By
Harold R. Isaacs



CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
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Massachusetts Institute of Technology
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INTRODUCTION

This is a report on the experience of a group of young Americans who went to West Africa last summer on the international work camp project called Operation Crossroads Africa. I went along to see what I could learn about the effect of their encounter with emergent Africa. It was not until I was nearly through with the writing of this report that I found myself referring to them as emergent Americans. When this phrase leaped up at me from a passage I had just written, I knew I had finally come upon a shorthand description that covered almost everything I had to say about their experience.

By calling them emergent Americans I do not mean to say that they are the first American generation to come out into a changing world - we have all been at that now for quite a while. But they are part of the first generation of Americans who may be fresh enough and new enough to emerge into the new world a'making along with all the other people who are emerging to make it - the yellows, browns, and blacks of the world, all the people we insistently keep thinking of as the non-whites, the non-Europeans, the non-Westerners. They are going through the experience of ceasing to be the subject peoples of the earth, while Americans and Europeans are going through the experience of ceasing to be the earth's masters.

This involves a good deal more than the transfer of political power. It becomes also a matter of changing over everything that went with the political power that used to be - the ethnic notions, the racial notions, the views of history and of cultures, all the

great host of images and self-images programmed into us from birth onward, all the patterns of thought, attitude, and relationship in which we have learned to locate other people. In some ways this is an even more massive and more complicated process of change than political or economic change because it has to take place in the minds and glands of men.

We have been coming around only slowly to accepting the need for this kind of change, but the pace is quickening. It has begun to quicken, at last, at the summits of our national life. It has begun to shape new impulses and new frames of mind and new views of all human affairs in the minds of young people coming up into all the confusion. Since they have fewer of the old scratches on their minds - or have not been scratched quite so deeply - they have a better chance to acquire the new conceptions and self-conceptions that our times demand. They are beginning to do this. This is what makes them the emergent Americans.

They are still painfully vulnerable - as the summer's experience of these young men and women in West Africa often showed - and as they stood at their new thresholds, seeking not only a new view of the world but a new way of decently esteeming their fellow men, it became very clear that what they also badly need, to begin with, is a new way of esteeming themselves. Such is the main burden, the main showing of this report.

Since I have for some time been engaged in a study of these matters at the Center for International Studies at M.I.T., I was very glad to be invited by Rev. James H. Robinson to make a study

of his program in 1960. I should perhaps explain that I undertook this study not as a professional psychologist, sociologist, anthropologist, or group dynamics expert - I am none of these things, though I borrow something from them all. I am a writer interested in certain aspects of contemporary international politics, and especially, just now, in the great changes in human relationships coming as a result of major political change in world affairs. Crossroads Africa was a matchless laboratory in which to watch some of this process taking place.

This undertaking in international communications was conceived and organized by Dr. Robinson, one of the country's leading Presbyterian ministers, and for the last 23 years, pastor of the Church of the Master in New York City. Nearly ten years ago, he inspired and helped promote several American student projects in India. In 1958 he took a pilot group of 60 to West Africa, 183 went in 1960, and more than 200 are going in 1961. It is a wholly private enterprise, financed entirely by gifts of foundations and individuals, and by the students who take part in it.

For the closeup purposes of my study, I chose the members of three groups, those going to West Nigeria, Ghana, and Guinea, plus a number of other individuals from certain other groups. In the spring of the year, I travelled across the country to interview them about their expectations of the summer, their ideas about Africa and Africans, race relations, and a few other subjects. In June, I went through the orientation with them in New York, went on with them to West Africa, looked over their shoulders at their various worksites

for a week or so at a time, and listened to them and some of their African talk about their experience while they were having it. Six months later, I again sought out almost all the members of these particular groups to discuss the summer's experience once more, this time retrospectively.

In addition, the entire group of Crossroaders contributed information, expectations, and impressions in a series of pen-and-paper exercises which they performed for this study before they left New York and again - sometimes under rather trying circumstances - on leaving West Africa. They performed this paper work with a patient generosity quite beyond the call of duty, and I thank them all here again for their conscientious cooperation.

All this material has enabled me to deal mainly in this report with the impact of Crossroads on its American participants. I was in West Africa only for the summer, arriving and leaving with the Crossroads groups. I gleaned what I could from Africans involved in various ways in the project, but I can scarcely regard these gleanings as sufficient basis for a judgment about the project's impact on them or, even less so, on the communities in which the work projects were located. The last chapter of this report contains what I am able to say on these matters, but this is clearly a subject that awaits further inquiry.

To Dr. Robinson, I owe a great debt for giving me the chance to share in this rich learning experience, and to him and Mrs. Robinson both, my thanks for their assistance and cooperation and their many kind courtesies during a very busy summer.

To Viola R. Isaacs, who accompanied me on this journey, I am indebted, once again, for many acute and helpful observations and for sharp and helpful editorial judgments on parts of the report.

To Arnold R. Isaacs, Harvard '61, I owe grateful thanks for great and useful assistance. He participated in the project as a work camper in one of the groups in Ghana, and besides giving me the benefit of his many sharp personal observations, he also assisted in drafting, administering, and scoring the various test and other papers which we inflicted on the whole Crossroads contingent. His report on these papers provided the basis for several sections of this study, and his work is duly cited at the proper places in the text.

My heaviest acknowledgment is due to those Crossroaders who allowed me to explore this experience with them in long interviews before, during, and after the summer. Owing to various circumstances and happenstances, there were 32 whom I was able to interview at all three stages, and 12 others with whom I talked only before, only during, or only afterward. But all 44 of them, in their varying measures, are the principal contributors to this study and gave me whatever grasp I gained of what this experience meant to them. By sharing it with me in this way, they made it richly meaningful for me, and my grateful thanks go to all of them.

I must finally also thank Miss Deirdre Cooney for some extremely useful culling of material from the interviews, and for some heroic typing.

The students who took part in Crossroads undoubtedly closely resemble a great many of those now offering themselves as recruits for the Peace Corps. The Crossroads enterprise and the Peace Corps are and must be quite different - in duration, in the kinds of jobs to be done, in levels of skills required, in conditions of sustained contact with other peoples and in strange environments. These differences are important and they mean that Peace Corps volunteers will have rather different demands made upon them and will have, in many respects, a different kind of experience. Still, there are some broadly common elements in the two enterprises and there may be much in this report that may be of interest and perhaps of some value to those interested in the Peace Corps. I should perhaps warn such readers in advance, however, that it contains no answers to the problems of selection and adjustment, and offers no sudden illumination of some of the cloudier subtleties of intercultural experience. It makes some observations on some of these matters and offers some tentative suggestions. I can only hope they prove useful, not only to future Crossroads operations, but to others in similar or related undertakings.

Harold R. Isaacs

Cambridge, Massachusetts
May 30, 1961

THE CROSSROADS PROJECT

In the last week of June, 1960, several plane loads of American college students put down at points along the West African coast: Dakar, Monrovia, Accra, Lagos. Their total number was 183, and divided into 14 groups of 12 to 15 each, they fanned out to various places in 10 West African countries: Senegal, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Dahomey, Nigeria and Cameroon. After travel, delays, some adventures and minor vicissitudes, each of these groups made their way to towns and villages, usually from 30 to 300 miles from the capital cities, joined up with cooperating teams of Africans, and went to work on a variety of local community projects. They built schoolhouses, clinics, parts of training centers and improved market places. They cleared bush for roads and dug drainage ditches. After some five or six weeks of this toil, they travelled about, either to other parts of their host country or briefly into some neighboring country. In the last week of August, they regained their assembly points and took off again in their chartered planes for Europe and for home. This was Operations Crossroads Africa, organized and led by Rev. James H. Robinson of New York City.

As conceived by its organizer, Crossroads is not a project in economic aid or technical assistance, but primarily an undertaking in communications. To be sure, the labor of 183 young

Americans was not intended to be exclusively symbolic or merely a device. It was certainly part of the Crossroads purpose to make a practical demonstration of Americans' readiness to help Africans help themselves in places where much needs to be done. The results were to be visible in the new schoolhouses and other physical improvements in the villages and towns where they worked. But it would completely misread the primary purpose of Crossroads to try to assess its results by measuring the dollar value of its contributed labor or its product. The principal aim was to expose young Americans to Africa, and to bring them together with young Africans in settings where they could learn the most about each other. This is a far less tangible and far more difficult purpose but it is along this dimension that I have tried to assess the project and its impact on those who took part in it.

Let it be said here at once in a large summary of a great host of particulars, that Crossroads was a major experience for all its participants and for many it was life-changing.

For the American Crossroaders, it was adventure: a sudden and great leap across the oceans and continents to a drastically different world. It was participation in history: they moved right into the arena of great world-changing events and some of them had grandstand seats for the spectacle of African states acquiring their independence. It was a major learning experience: they replaced their scanty stock of early notions about Africa - mostly the jungle, animals, safaris, wild savages and Tarzan - with a great new mass of actualities about places, people and events. It was

an incalculably revealing intercultural experience: they learned in the most direct and most taxing physical way what it means to be "underdeveloped" and something of the complexity of the process of social and economic change. But most crucially of all, for a great many, it was a life-changing experience: some made major career decisions. Almost all made major discoveries about the problems of "race" relations. And some learned a great deal about themselves.

For the Africans who came most intimately into contact with Crossroads - and they were primarily the students who joined the projects as fellow work-campers - the experience was equally one of fresh discovery. Very few of them had ever actually met an American before, or had close contact with any. Virtually all of them had the same small stock of odd notions and stereotypes about America and Americans from sources that were either quite scanty or highly prejudiced or both. Very little of this could survive the actuality of contact with individuals and the weeks of almost constant question-asking and question-answering. Even where prejudice was so strong that it sought only its own reinforcement - and this was the case here and there on the basis of strong political or racialist biases - it had to adapt itself somehow to new information and at the very least it had to exclude present company. This report will be able to deal only modestly with the effect of the experience on the African work-campers, and only with cautious speculation about other Africans touched by the experience, the villagers, townspeople and officials.

1. Selection

The 183 students who took part in Crossroads 1960 came together from 30 states, from Canada and one of them from Uruguay. They were just about evenly divided by sex, and included 21 Negroes, one Mexican-American, and one Chinese-American. A few were as young as 17 and some as old as 30 or over, but the greatest number by far were between the ages of 19 and 23. They were mostly juniors and seniors from 90 different colleges and universities, with a sprinkling of high schoolers and freshmen at one end, and a handful of graduate students at the other, plus a few who were out of school altogether. By religion, 159 were Protestant in 18 different varieties, 16 were Jews, 4 Catholics, and 4 explicitly professed no religion at all.

These Crossroaders were selected from a total of about 700 applications culled by Dr. Robinson, Mrs. Robinson, and a committee of advisers, including several group leaders. The application forms on which they based their choices laid fairly heavy stress on details of each individual's extra-curricular activities at school - Crossroads was looking for "leadership" types. It also wanted quite a bit of detail about his involvement in church or church-connected activities. It asked for evidence of experience with and attitude toward non-white or other minority groups, and for a statement of the applicant's reasons for wanting to go to Africa with Crossroads.

In making their selections, Dr. Robinson and his assisting

committee wanted to come as close as they could to approximating a rough facsimile of a national cross-section. They wanted each group as far as possible to reflect the great American mixture. Their best success in this effort came in the regional spread. As finally formed, the group included 75 students from the north-eastern states, 43 from the midwest, 21 from the west, and 30 from the south, plus 13 from Canada and one from Uruguay. This made it possible for each group to represent all regions. Those from the southern states were of course the most exposed as objects of particular interest to Africans, and they had to be individuals who would be able to carry gracefully the burden of their special "minority" status.

The number of Negroes in the group was large enough to match an appropriate percentage in a national cross-section, but it was disappointingly small from the project's point of view. It had been hoped that each group would be quite thoroughly mixed racially as in every other way. Despite special efforts and special journeys by Dr. Robinson, it did not prove possible to draw a sufficient number of acceptable Negro applicants. The 21 who were finally included gave some groups two Negro members, the rest only one. The principal reason for the lack of Negro candidates was obviously financial. Every Crossroader had to pay \$875 for the privilege of travelling to Africa to toil in the sun. Some white students raised this sum from their own resources, but most sought help of their colleges, special alumni funds, campus and church groups and community organizations. Many fewer Negro students were

in a position to spend money over the summer instead of earning it, even assuming they could somehow raise what was needed in the first place. The greater pressure on funds at Negro schools and in Negro communities made it less easy to find extra money for this purpose.

But lack of money was not the only reason. Crossroads was able, thanks to a number of special contributions, to offer several full or partial scholarships to Negro students, but this was only partly successful in attracting more Negro applicants. There were at least two other factors at work in this situation. First, the spring of 1960 was the season of the sit-ins across the South. The full attention of the most active, energetic, and dedicated students was fixed on their own new and bold effort to break down the barriers of customary discrimination in public eating places. One sit-in stalwart from Atlanta did come along, but almost did not make it; like many others he was out on bail. The second factor was the active disinterest of Negroes in Africa, even as late as the spring of 1960. Older Negroes in school administrations and community organizations were not too widely inclined to support the Crossroads idea. Every young Negro who did join Crossroads grappled, as we shall see, with a host of the new and nettling problems of the Negroe's relationship to emergent Africa. There was still at this time a rather widespread preference for avoiding the whole thing.

As to other groups in the desired cross-section, the number of Jews included seemed to fit the national scheme adequately, but there

were not enough Catholic applicants to choose from, and only four Catholics ultimately made the trip. The basic recruiting for Crossroads was done personally by Dr. Robinson, and this may mean either that he did not reach many Catholics, or that his leadership of the project suggested to Catholics a sectarianism that it did not actually have. Indeed, since Dr. Robinson happens to be Presbyterian, it is doubtless not accidental that among the 159 assorted Protestants who made up five-sixths of Crossroads 1960, the largest single group by far (59) was Presbyterian. This was certainly not by his design, but was almost a natural consequence of the auspices under which he appeared and the circles into which he moved from campus to campus as recruiter for his project.

Imbedded here, in fact, is one explanation of the character of the larger number of the 1960 Crossroaders and part of the reason for their success in the summer's undertaking. It has to do not so much with the process of selection, but with the self-selection that preceded it. Dr. Robinson visited a great many colleges and universities to spread the word and win recruits for Crossroads. His normal point of contact would be some campus religious organization, and more occasionally international affairs clubs or committees. Dr. Robinson presented Crossroads to his audiences as a serious and strongly-motivated project that needed serious and strongly-motivated people to make it a success. It was largely just such young people who came to these meetings, listened to him raptly

flocked around him with questions at the close, and eventually sent in most of those 700 applications. The selectors had a weeding and combining job to do, and according to Dr. Robinson, it was exceedingly difficult to make choices among those who offered themselves. An extraordinary number of the self-selectees were ready-made for the job.

1. Self-Selection 2. Self-Selection

James Robinson is not a very parochial man; he sees his Crossroads project usually through the large windows of world affairs, politics, and race relations. But he is also a Christian minister who manages to convey to his listeners that he is also working for more love and brotherhood among men. He appealed to young people on both counts, and it was precisely in both contexts that the major self-selection for Crossroads took place. Crossroads tapped a widely-felt urge among many young Americans to do something important, something useful, and even, without apology, something good. Much the same urge is now moving large numbers in the great surge of recruits lining up for the Peace Corps. It is an impulse with a venerable history among Americans. It is subject to distortion, vulnerable to cynicism and it is easy to underestimate and dissipate, along with so many other valuable national resources. But it was this impulse that brought out most of the self-selectees for Crossroads. This means that they were largely service-oriented, the broadest term I can find to distinguish them

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first got together (at Union Theological Seminary in New York) everybody found they could meet their similars all the way along the range from active religionists to practicing atheists.

The fact remains, however, that there was a strong leaven through the entire group of young people with quite strong religious commitments, with a great many of them planning to make their careers in church work, whether at home or abroad. Of the 44 Crossroaders I interviewed, five were actually heading for the ministry, and 12 others said they were planning to work in the religious field, mostly as teachers. Some of these individuals showed some of the same drives and needs that used to provide earnest recruits for missionary movements in the past. "When I was 12 to 15, " (said one young woman), "I wanted to be a missionary to some place like Africa, not necessarily Africa, just some underdeveloped place. I wanted to help people, I wanted to do something good. But then I dropped this idea, it was really unrealistic." But she never did drop it entirely, and Crossroads offered her a chance, at least for a summer to indulge it. In this group there were five much more seriously committed individuals who were quite specifically planning to work "in the mission field". For them, Crossroads was an opportunity to see what the mission setting in Africa was like, and it was also a way of testing themselves against the needs as they saw them.

Our times are in fact not very hospitable to the old-style missionary impulse. Rather large events have conspired to make it seem quite "unrealistic" now. To its own misfortune, much

mission work was associated in some measure with colonial power and with all the premises of Western domination over much of the world. Neither the power nor the premises are surviving the current changes. Most of the great missionary bodies have been revising their philosophies and programs in order to survive and in order to attract young people like these Crossroaders who want to do good in the world but who also are thoroughly in sympathy with the new self-assertion of Asians and Africans and the rebirth of their own cultural identities. Hence the new accent is on service. It was in search of opportunities to be of service that these young men and women found their way to Crossroads, and some of them will doubtless find their way to larger opportunities either within or outside their churches. Indeed, this impulse to help, to do good, to make the world over can now find outlets entirely outside the religious sphere. It merges readily enough nowadays with the larger and more secular shape of things in the nation and in the world. American involvement in world affairs in the last twenty years has more and more had to take the shape of giving, of aid, of assistance. It is, in an ironic kind of way, something new under the sun: a form of power based on benevolence instead of rapacity. The old "colonialist-imperialists" (to say nothing of "Wall Street") would not have known what to make of it. Starting with Marshall aid to Europe in 1947, the United States has given away without hope of direct monetary return three times more than the total value of American private investments abroad as of 1945. I am certainly not suggesting

that this is not a self-interested benevolence, but I am suggesting that this new form of wielding power offers obvious opportunities to indulge the old American missionary impulse in new ways and in new settings. As a small but dramatic illustration of this in our present group, there is one Crossroader whose summer in Africa led him to question the usefulness of the direct religious approach to service abroad. He came back and entered the theological seminary as he had planned, but left after one term to enter government service and will go abroad instead with an aid mission.

But this heaving world offers challenge enough to many young people who are not moved primarily or at all by religious or missionary impulses. This is a time of great and chilling events, of the making of history in the large. The American involvement in this history is filled with dangers and promises that plainly affect every individual's future. Most people just live with it. But a great many, especially young people, feel curiosity and concern and, most of all, feel a need to participate in some meaningful way in all that is going on. They want a role, they want to make some personal impact on these great and impersonal events. Crossroads offered them a way of making contact with these events in the African setting, to bring them close to the great process of emergence from colonialism and backwardness, and the emergence of new problems and new demands on Americans in world affairs. This also drew a great many self-selectees to Crossroads, even as it is drawing many more now to the Peace Corps. One index to this kind of interest is shown by the distribution among the Crossroaders of their major

subject interests at school. Among the total 183, the greatest clustering by far took place in history (30), political science and international relations (26), sociology (15), with a significant drop to only three in economics. These interests are of course shared by both religionists and non-religionists, but the spread is shown in my own group of 44 interviewees, where alongside the 17 already mentioned as aiming for church-connected careers, there were also 7 who said they would seek careers in the United States foreign service, and 14 who said they were hoping to go into graduate work in order to teach in related fields and perhaps also go into government service.

The self-selection, then, produced a great majority of Crossroads recruits moved by an urge to "service", whether in a religious or a secular framework, or by the urge to learn and participate in significant affairs affecting the nation and the world, or in varying combinations of all these elements. Even though it may not have seemed to some of them the thing to stress on the Crossroads application, let it be said that there was also a fair share of the simpler urge to have an exciting and adventurous summer of travel and new experience, to take in new impressions, to see new places and people, to do things they had never done before, and to test themselves against a variety of new demands. Not every Crossroader who went to Africa was intent upon taking the world upon his or her shoulders, at least not right away. Whether they looked inward or outward, some of them had other things on their minds, and this too was as it should be. No one, least of

all a young American discovering the world in 1960, could be of one piece in mind, spirit or outlook.

This process of selection and self-selection did not produce a group of uniformly crackerjack work-campers, super-successful adjusters-to-Africa or relaters-to-Africans. But it did provide Crossroads 1960 with a body of 183 young men and women who worked hard at trying and were, on the whole, remarkably successful.

They sustained with many minor but few major casualties the shock of the sudden transplant from American to African conditions. They learned a great deal about living way out of their accustomed norms of privacy, sanitation, and familiar food. They suffered a scatter of cases of malaria and a variety of digestive maladies, but came through, as far as I know, without any serious or lasting effects.

They put up with a considerable array of adversities - including a great deal of administrative bumbling and a number of leaders who were not always marvels of sensitivity or competence. They also put up with each other - in itself often no small accomplishment.

They learned quite a bit from the Africans who joined them in the work camps and whom they met along the way and they taught some Africans quite a good deal in return.

They worked hard and they put a number of small but visible new marks on several African landscapes.

With all the aches and discomforts and difficulties, they had a summer's experience in which they learned much about the

world and a great deal about themselves. Some of them will be affected in serious ways by this experience for all the rest of their lives.

II

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

1. Africa and the Africans

Every Crossroader saw only a small piece of Africa and on that small piece he had only a limited experience. But this was already vastly different from seeing no part of Africa at all. He had the chance to test what he had in his mind about Africa against some bit of the African reality, enough of it to re-shape almost everything he had learned or absorbed before and to lay a new basis for everything he would learn henceforth.

In the minds of the young Americans preparing to go out with Crossroads in 1960, Africa was of course already a kaleidoscope of many shapes and images. Each one carried around in his or her mind some of the bits and pieces of our common early holdings about Africa - dark jungles, wild animals, Tarzan, black and savage tribesmen - but almost everyone had also acquired some much newer overlaying knowledge of contemporary Africa. They were aware of the new nationalisms, the changing politics, the emerging states, the new leaders, parties, movements, and most of them had also met

African students in this country. So their images of a dark and wild continent peopled by illiterate and primitive villagers were already being jostled by lively mental pictures of busy places where history was being made and of highly articulate and well-educated young Africans speaking in the accents of the new world revolutionary politics. By the summer's end, every Crossroader's mind was crowded with real African sights and sounds. Whatever the new confusions that had replaced the old, they were at least more realistically based on the assorted and contrasting aspects of places he had actually seen and people he had actually met and known.

The Early Holdings

It has been only in the last year or two that fuller and more serious information about Africa has begun to move through the channels of communication in the mass media and in our schools. Up until this time, our "common knowledge" of Africa remained sparse and wispy, and so it still largely was among these young men and women even as they prepared themselves to go to Africa with Crossroads. These were mostly young people near or just past 20, so that their growing-up and going-to-school years ran from around 1945 until now, and most of them would have finished high school and entered college sometime between 1957 and 1959. This was only yesterday, yet in almost all but the last of these very recent years, Africa still remained a continent largely submerged below the levels of the ordinary American awareness. In the churches

and schools they attended, the movies they saw, the reading they did, only small bits and pieces of fact and fantasy about Africa came their way. None of this was ever notion or knowledge that seemed to be important or relevant to any of the central business of their lives, and yet it helped shape and reinforce some of the most deeply-imbedded notions they acquired about peoples, places, and societies. In our interviews, we asked our Crossroaders to scrape their memories for some of these early acquisitions, and here, in their words and phrases, bunched together from the answers of many different individuals, is how they located and described what they had seen or heard about Africa in their younger years.

At church or in Sunday school, a majority of our group heard about:

"...missionaries, people going to teach and be doctors in the African jungles; voodooism in interior Africa; heard about Egypt in Sunday school; about Schweitzer; Sunday school lessons about converting the heathen; Africa a vast jungle, missionaries beating down the jungle to establish themselves; a story about a missionary to East Africa who was bitten by a snake and died; the missionary to Africa was the person of the highest dedication because it was the most Godforsaken place a man could go; the Africans were man-eaters who stopped being cannibals only when they became Christians; I remember a story in the Sunday school paper about a child from a village tribe trudging down the road to the mission school to get an education; missionaries talking about the hard conditions, the primitiveness, illiterate savages, tribal wars, witch doctors; terrible sanitary conditions, people needing medicine and Christianity; missionaries crossing streams, crocodiles, going through forests carried by porters; we were asked to bring books and pencils, for African children at our mission in Angola..."

At school, by nearly the universal testimony of those interviewed, there was:

"...little or nothing, a little geography, Africa on the world map, the slave trade, some names of countries and rivers; Livingston, Stanley, Rhodes, the Nile, the Sahara, something about the Congo; British and French and Belgian colonies; jungles, tribesmen, primitive people with bones through their noses, head hunters, pygmies, a dark continent full of savages, animals, torrid zones, minerals, huge and unexplored; Bartholomew Diaz going around the Cape, Vasco de Gama; pictures of people carrying rubber trees; life of a boy, happy-go-lucky in the jungle; in high school I heard of Ghana's independence; heard about the apartheid situation in South Africa..."

The movies emerged from these recollections as perhaps the the major source of notions and impressions of Africa, although again and always in their sparsest and most stereotyped forms. I noticed, incidentally, that those who spoke of going to the movies as small children were generally referring to the last few years before the television era, roughly between 1945 and 1949 or 1950, and that a gap then followed in which moviegoing was quite rare, becoming a more or less regular habit again only as a feature of the teenage dating period. These limitations did not, however, prevent the group from sharing at least one item of movie exposure: all but one or two had seen some of the Tarzan movies, and those who had not seen the ape man in the movies had seen him in the cartoon strips and comic books. It was clearly from the Tarzan films, and from the standard movie of the safari-white hunter-lions-white girl-worthless husband or fiance variety that the members of this group had, like their fathers and mothers, gotten their most vivid mental images of Africa as wild jungles or open land inhabited by wild animals and wild men. The actual recollection

of movies was quite thin, partly because movies about Africa were not that numerous and partly because all such movies were much the same and blurred into simple and largely uniform memories, like these:

"Tarzan, swinging through the trees, the apes, the jungle people, savages, snakes, dense green forests, jungles, lions, the beautiful white girl, the wicked hunters, the ivory hunters, Tarzan overcoming the cannibals, the dancing savages, alligators in the rivers, tribesmen killing people, attacking the hunters, Africans always carrying things for the whites; King Solomon's Mines, the tall Watussis and their dance; Spencer Tracy as Stanley; Snows of Kilimanjaro, African Queen, always somebody going along the river through dense vegetation..."

Hardly any of the wisps and bits about Africa picked up by these Crossroaders in their younger days ever came out of books. In general there was an impression that books had competed rather unsuccessfully with all the other more intrusive media of communication. But even when there were books in one's young life, very little in them, it seems, had to do with Africa. Five individuals could think only of Little Black Sambo, which was about a little black boy but also about some very un-African tigers. The most frequent mentions were of Jungle Tales, The Jungle Book, and Jungle Boy, and some half a dozen or so referred to pictures of Africa in the National Geographic. Others remembered cartoon strips or comic books, e.g. The Phantom. Even those who were ardent readers could not remember reading much that ever dealt with Africa. They had all seen Tarzan Movies, but none, as far as I could gather, had ever read Tarzan of the Apes in its original form or heard of

Tarzan's creator, Edgar Rice Burroughs. No one mentioned the name of Sir Rider Haggard, creator of so many vivid African adventure tales so famous a generation or two ago, including King Solomon's Mines. Three individuals spoke of reading the Stanley-Livingston story in some form, and there were single mentions of the Just So Stories, the Osa and Martin Johnson story of their African camera adventures, one 9th grade dip into a biography of Schweitzer and one reading of Paton's Cry The Beloved Country. There was no mention of Conrad.

Out of all this - church, school, movies, reading - came an Africa that was not quite all fantasy. The missionaries did have those adventures and suffer those hardships. The animals, seen in the zoo, did exist. The movies, sometimes filmed on the scene, did give some idea of what some African locales looked like. And there were tribes of black people living without any of the real or alleged benefits of modern civilization. But neither was this Africa real either. It was one big zoo or game preserve, a setting for white heroes and white villains to play out their little stories, a place where untamed nature itself was the greatest villain of them all. Its animals were hunted with awe and respect most of the time, but its people were supernumeraries, part of the scenery or assigned bit roles in dark masses flitting through the jungle throwing spears or poisoned arrows, or sullenly or passively carrying burdens. They were unknown and hardly imaginable, subhumanized creatures of fear and fantasy. None of our Crossroaders had at this time of their lives actually seen any

African. There were only the obscurities of the African links to Negroes in America to connect them at any point with real life, and most of the time not even this connection was made, at least not consciously or in any sharpness of detail or feeling. There is a common knowledge of the slavery episode in our history, but both whites and Negroes have reasons to leave it in the few unelaborated passages that appear in the history books, to keep it blurred in our social memory. In this Africa so far away and so faintly seen, contemporary backwardness remained dimly associated with primeval savagery, but even this, strained through the media of our popular culture, was only remotely fearful. Small white minds were always reassured: the whites always prevailed in the end, the white girl was venerated as a goddess until rescued by superior white wit and brawn, the black men were always thrust back, faceless, into their jungle. Small Negro minds could seek to share in this reassurance by blocking out any connection between Negroes and anything relating to their African origins. In sum, it can be said that in the Western white man's universe, Africa and the Africans served primarily as the principal natural proof of the Western white man's superiority.

The Overlay

In the minds of all of our Crossroaders, as among Americans and Europeans more generally, these early holdings about Africa had, by the spring of 1960, been overlaid by whole new sets of facts, ideas,

and associations. This overlay was quite fresh, most of it forming only within the last year or two, at most three, as a result of the events re-shaping Africa and its relations with the Western white world. Among many Crossroaders, these new views of Africa had in many cases begun to gather substance only in the most recent months of special inquiry and reading in preparing for joining the project. By this time, the regular channels of communication were carrying quantities of new information about Africa. In newspapers and magazines one read news from Africa from day to day, week to week. In church and church groups, students became aware of the new pressures and new ideas affecting Christian enterprises in the missionary field. At school, many had begun to enter student world affairs and had brought Africa into view just as it was beginning to cut loose from its colonial ties. From the first new beginnings - visibly marked by the opening of the road to independence in Ghana with the election in 1951, and the Mau Mau outbreak starting late in 1952 - events had moved fast, so fast that the literature could hardly be expected to keep pace with them. The movies became a mixture of old and new themes, as illustrated in such films as Something of Value (1957) and Roots of Heaven (1959). By now, also, our Crossroaders had seen a good number of television documentaries, like the Murrow-Friendly reports on South Africa, Eric Sevareid's report on the election in Nigeria, Chet Huntley's filmed account of Ghana, and others multiplying from week to week.

Now too their reading about Africa had taken on entirely new dimensions. Many of our group had opened John Gunther's Inside

- Africa and several had more ambitiously sampled parts of Lord Hailey's African Survey. New books on French African countries were still hard to come by, but the recent history of Ghana and Nigeria could be discovered in such specialized works as James Coleman's Nigeria, Apter's Gold Coast in Transition, Nkrumah's autobiography, Ghana, and others. Some read Van Der Post's The Dark Eye, Richard Wright's Black Power, special issues of magazines on Africa coming in a spate, Saturday Review, Holiday, Look, Current History, readings in West African Review, African Special Report (the last two supplied during the spring by Crossroads) and Africa Today, and the papers in the American Assembly Report on Africa. Three Negro Crossroaders mentioned authors apparently quite unread by the whites: Carter Woodson, W.E.B. DuBois, George Haynes, Franklin Frazier. Peter Abrahams was mentioned only once.

There was nothing uniform or consistent about the extent of this new exposure to Africa in this group of 44 Crossroaders. Some, seriously interested, had studied hard and read a great deal, and acquired quite a new body of knowledge. Others had not yet done much homework on this new subject and still skimmed lightly across its surface. But they all knew now that there was a lot more to Africa than jungles, animals, primitive tribesmen. They knew this not only from what they had read and seen in films about contemporary Africa, but also because by now, with only one or two exceptions in the whole group, they had met young Africans. They had met them as fellow-students, as fellow-

delegates at student conferences, and as campus visitors. They found them to be:

"...highly-intelligent, well-educated, very articulate, intensely nationalistic, brilliant students, sometimes with a rather high opinion of themselves, brash, arrogant, aggressive; people who know where they are going, a sense of direction and purpose; more interested in talking than in listening; hard workers; possessive and persistent; not happy people or easy companions; people for whom the future counts...."

They had also seen and heard visiting figures like Nkrumah or Tom Mboya, in person or on television. Obviously it did not take many such encounters to efface or at least to move to more distant corners of the mind the previous image of the African as a spear-carrying tribesman or an inferior man.

Out of this mixed and varied store of old and new exposures, then, our Crossroaders had acquired their kaleidoscopic view of Africa and Africans, a crowded array of contrasting ideas and figures, of old notions and new facts. This mixture emerged quite vividly during our interviews in the spring when I asked them what came to their minds when they thought about Africa.

Some examples:

"Dark natives, the term paper I did on French and British masks, talking to Dije, the Nigerian student I met. I saw Africa as hot steaming jungle with wild animals and snakes, but he told me the wildest animal he ever saw was antelope and a scorpion."

"The map, hunters, beautiful countryside, western buildings, grass huts, deserts, what a friend told me about the slums in Lagos..."

"The bush country, plains, elephants, giraffes, antelopes, nationalism, dark people, thin, suffering from undernourishment..."

"So much changing! Forest, trees, rain, natives in tribal dress, heat, danger, snakes, conflicts. Also construction, hotels, schools, preparations for independence, questions about segregation in America, about philosophy and politics..."

"Far away, black people, jungles, animals, minerals, white people, apartheid in South Africa, Communist technicians in Guinea..."

"Modern cities, jungles, illiterate people and educated people, malnutrition, confused religions, young people working to build the country; some curious about us, some antagonistic, grass huts, slums..."

"I expect to meet educated people, tradesmen, people in slum areas. I think of open plains, high grass, people interested in independence, black faces, poverty, cities becoming modern..."

The Actualities

After a week in New York spent listening to a lot more about emergent Africa, they boarded their planes, crossed the oceans, went to Africa, and began to see some part of the African actuality with their own eyes. They saw cities, Douala, Lagos, Cotonu, Lome, Accra, Abidjan, Monrovia, Freetown, Conakry, Dakar, names they had seen in their reading. Then they mounted their lorries and rode out cross-country and settled in to work at jobs in small places not found on many maps, not listed in their books, not quite so readily pictured from what they had been told - not many like Batouri, Shagamu, Eha Amufu, Akugbene, Granpopo, Anecho, Kwasso, Prampram, Larte, Shia, Mamou. And they met and talked with and worked with all sorts of Africans. In this way they saw, in some form or other, the actual stuff of all the newer images they had acquired about Africa just be-

fore setting out on their journey, the jostling of old and new, traditional and modern, the onset of change. At the same time, they actually saw rather little to reinforce their earlier images of Africa. They saw some "jungle" - or "rain forest", as it is called in West Africa - but only at the fringes of a busy, busy foreground full of so much else to see. In the physical setting a few things upset some previous notions: hardly anyone was prepared, for example, to discover how relatively cool and pleasant it was in West Africa during most of the summer, and the animals, which had filled so much of the mind's eye before, were simply not to be seen. The open landscape alive with running game, seen a thousand times on the screen, was on the other side of the continent, not here. A few monkeys were sighted, a few birds, and lizards and insect life, but only a rare snake - there were several reports that to see a snake, a group had gone to the zoo in Lagos. Some Crossroaders did travel quite deeply to glimpse villages that made their worksite communities look positively modern by comparison, but you had to travel hard and far to get out of sight of Western influences. What they saw mainly was the Africa of dramatic contrasts, the mixed patterns of extremes that mark the swiftly transforming society.

Thus they saw the big cities inherited from the colonial era, with their clusters of modern buildings and shops, often in a great bustle of new construction, new glass and concrete structures rising up out of the heaped and stifling clutter of surrounding slums, shacks of tin and wood and dobe hugging the damp earth. Beyond the cities

in the sparsely-peopled countryside they saw the scattered villages of grass-roofed mud huts. They saw modern ships being unloaded onto small boats hewn out of single mahogany trunks, carried ashore by men, and then hoisted onto modern trains or trucks by huge new cranes. They saw these loads being freighted by rail and road around the country, but most of the loads they saw wherever they went were still being carried on people's (mostly women's) heads. They saw some people travelling in trains, automobiles, buses, and lorries, riding on bicycles (and a few flying in planes overhead) but they saw many more people getting to where they were going walking the roads or street on their bare feet. They saw Africans dressed in Western clothes, Africans in a great and gay profusion of highly-colored cottons, and some Africans in hardly any clothes at all. ("I remember a woman I saw at the State ball in Accra, dressed in kente cloth that cost here \$300 or \$400, dancing with her baby strapped to her back, and the women buying things in the Kingsway department store, and the people wearing G-strings up in the north.")

All the great contrasts were there, partly indeed as they had been led to picture them, but on direct impact enormously different, the reality crowding in on them with great hosts of new particulars. Places only vaguely identified before now became familiar scenes experienced in close detail. People visualized before as a dim and faceless mass became certain individuals, not often open to intimate knowledge but some of them now known well enough to like or dislike. In general the experience was, as one girl put it, "a great filling in of detail," to replace the great blurs and blobs

that had been there in their minds before. Some examples:

"I think now of the specific places I spent time in, the meals we ate, the students we talked with, the city of Accra, the buildings going up, people who would drop everything and take me places when I asked them for directions. Children swarming all over you, the fishermen, the foreman on the project, the students, the people of Shia. I think of Ghana as a changing place, but I can't say it in just a phrase. In every village there was something different..."

"I think of the women in kente and the babies on their backs, the market place, the university college, the fishermen, our travels in the north, hot and dry, the children with large stomachs from protein deficiency, Nkrumah and the day we went to Parliament to hear him, David and his desire for education, Maud, the chief's daughter and the way she could understand people..."

"I think of individual people, Marie, the lazy little girl in the green hat, Peiti, Lonu, so different. I think of the meat market, the mountains, the great beautiful mountains that reminded me of North Georgia, the dirt huts and thatched roofs, the farmers in the fields, all stooped over, people chasing around in the cold rain early in the morning, the Sunday we spent on the mountain outside of Mamou, it was beautiful, cool, the most peaceful day I spent all summer..."

"The food, the difference in the whole idea of eating just to fill up. And when you've seen the inside of a mud hut, you have a more specific idea of what it is like. It is the little things you remember, like the way they balance themselves in small boats."

"Independence, poverty. But the most vivid thing I have in my mind is the sight of a pathetic man, dirty, with torn clothing, the way he walked, slow, looking at the ground, as if nothing mattered in his existence."

In a way, the most salient thing that had happened to the African scene for each Crossroader was that now he or she was in it; the whole thing had acquired a richly personal meaning:

"I now think of closer things, much more related to me. It is not so far any longer from America or from myself. I think of all the different experiences, the kinds of friendship, the feeling for spontaneity, the individual personalities."

"I had read about Africa and Africans before the trip started, but in reality there existed a vacuum when it came to thinking realistically about Africans. Now I feel

I know the people to a small extent, and can understand and predict reaction which Nigerians might have in a given circumstance."

"My original view of Africa, specifically Ghana, was gained from books and talking to people who had been there. My view was primarily intellectual and abstract. Living in Ghana made me revise my thinking on many things, not so much that my original thoughts were necessarily wrong, but that they were simplifications. Most of my thoughts of Africa now result from my experience. They are primarily emotional, not intellectual. Naturally, the intellectual thought remains, but it is supported by this new emotional feeling."

At some given point, the wide-eyed view, taking in everything, became a more sharply-focused view, seeing more sharply, suggesting not merely differences but also judgments:

"I was surprised at the way the women worked much harder than the men. I remember watching a young fellow help an old woman, but it was only to help her put a load on her head, instead of carrying it for her. Women have a lot to do to open up new fields for themselves. They are not inferior."

"I was excited by the villages, the way the people accepted me, the different way of living. The House of Assembly of Eastern Nigeria was part of the contrast. The women with their low status, I didn't like that at all. I felt like such a great contrast myself to all the African women, even among the politicians. There was a great contrast between the freedom and independence of American women compared to African women, except those who had done a great deal of travelling."

"I never really understood what it meant that 50% of the children died before they were five until at the village one fisherman said he had had 21 children and only 7 still lived. Another said he had 6 out of 23. Another had one out of six, with one wife. This really hit home what it meant, to hear people tell you things like this..."

The Africans

The Crossroaders had several different kinds and degrees of contact with Africans and each one yielded its store of memorable experience.

There was first what one might call the crowd-of-black-faces experience - the first encounter for most of them with the sensation of being conspicuous because they were white, and for Negro Crossroaders the reverse sensation of being identified with the majority kind. In both varieties, this was a special experience, and we shall speak of it again.

Then there was the waving-from-the-bus contact, a form of communication not to be under-estimated. It was for the Americans one of the first and gayest of their experiences. They cheerfully and noisily made their presence known (at least in Lagos where I saw them doing it), and it was from the bus or "mammy-lorry" that many of them learned their first words of greeting in a variety of African tongues. It can probably be said for a certainty that no West African street crowd had ever before seen a band of young "Europeans" jammed into a mammy-lorry singing their way through the streets, and no one most certainly had ever before come up the driveway of the United States Consulate General in such a vehicle to attend a party given in their honor. Africans waved and called cheerily back, and one could almost hear the eggs cracking on a whole hatch of brand new notions about Americans in these African minds.

It was eventually necessary to come down from the lorry and this was the beginning of the walking-through-the-street contact. This was often no casual matter.

"They're wonderful people, everybody, I mean. I was surprised at the ease of meeting people, no matter where we stopped. They would come up to speak to us, and you could talk for hours. Once in the rain I took shelter in an old man's house, and we talked for two hours through a young man who talked English. Somehow I feel that Africans have more time to stop and talk. They talk about everything, just talk."

"I'll never forget one time I took the bus into town and wandered off, losing track of the time. The bus suddenly appeared in the street where I was and the driver hailed me to come on board. He had come looking for me, complete with his whole busload of passengers! And they were all pretty gay about it too. Now where else could something like that happen to you?"

"What struck me most about the Africans was their wonderful hospitality. They were always inviting us, offering us gifts, bringing out fruit, willing to share any information with us. It was quite different from what I'd expected Africans would be like, withdrawn, curious, yet wary of strangers, mistrustful..."

"The Africans I met were friendly and warm-hearted and would go far out of their way to do you a favor as a total stranger..."

This reporter especially remembers one of those euphoric early afternoons when it was not a matter of walking-through-the-streets, but of dancing through them, a business that started with some of the American girls during a visit to a community center trying to learn some dance steps, and ending up dancing those steps outside and down the road followed by a host of dancing whooping children.

There was a great deal of non-verbal communication all summer, especially at work projects where there were workmen and villagers who knew little or no English, or where there was a mutually defect-

ive knowledge of French. In these cases, facial expressions took the place of talk, laughter made its own language, and gestures got the work done. ("When I think of Africans," said one Cross-roader whose summer had largely passed in this kind of communication, "I think of the smiles on their faces or the frowns, what I remember is their facial expressions.") There was a real frustration in this, but there was also a kind of solace in meeting with faces instead of words, a way of conveying pleasure or fatigue, impatience, or human perversity, or a satisfactory understanding on a great host of important matters that did not touch on American policy in Algeria or the race problem in Harlem or Alabama.

Each Crossroads group joined up with cooperating teams of Africans at the work projects. These were only sometimes composed of students of university or comparable age and grade. There are, after all, not that many students at this level in West Africa (the four universities are at Ibadan in West Nigeria, Legon in Ghana, Freetown in Sierra Leone, and Dakar in Senegal). There were some conflicts with school schedules, vacations, or family work obligations. There was also a certain unenthusiasm among many such students for tumbling out at the call to go into the bush to do hard manual labor. Most of them still tended to see their advance into higher schooling as their big move away from the threat of lowerclassness to the comforts of white collardom, and, as we shall find remarked later, the dignity and worth of common labor as cheerfully performed by American university students was one of the major lessons that participating Africans learned from their Crossroads experience. But some university students

did turn out at several places, and larger numbers of secondary school students caught up by some of the new currents, and between these working partners and the young Americans a many-sided process of mutual discovery went on all summer long. In varying degrees of depth, intensity, formality, and informality, they explored American and African politics, American and African family systems and customs, dating and mating practices, educational methods and goals, and each others' outlooks, personal, social, national, racial. Examples:

"We had the chance to make friends with people from such a completely different background, both political and social, the opportunity to discuss ideas and problems of common interest with these different people..."

"I feel I made some lasting friendships with Africans, friendships that got past the phase of superficial friendliness and progressed to the point of sharing our deepest thoughts. The realization that people share the same concerns and problems, only perhaps in a different context, brought new insight to me. I accept the African now as a person, not as a curiosity, a person slightly different from myself. In this way, I also learned much more about myself."

Out of this daily contact over a period of weeks - some groups had it in a more sustained way than others - came varying measures of mutual admiration and more critical appreciation. In a few places, the Africans were wholly accepting of Americans, ("disconcertingly admiring," said one Crossroader, "embarrassingly so."), but more often they did not hesitate to be challenging and critical. The Americans were as a rule slower to respond in kind. They came too filled with favorable predispositions, too determined to be friendly and to establish their bona fides, and most of

all intent upon avoiding that hateful Western white air of superiority. Inevitably this was expressed in a strong initial tendency to take everything in quite uncritically. Some Cross-roads never got past this phase, but a great many happily did, breaking through with their new African friends to the point where they could be mutually more open-eyed, feel freer to see both the notes and the beams and to speak about them. Some examples:

"I have a more realistic and less idealistic picture of Africans now than I did before. I found the students in our group less keen than I had expected as a result of my contacts with African students in the United States, but less self-conscious and much more enjoyable to be with. I disliked the occasional displays of arrogance on the part of some educated Nigerians, rudeness toward people serving them. But I was impressed by evidence of the feeling of responsibility among family members. I think I have gained some understanding of the practice of polygamy, but I wasn't able to find out as much as I'd hoped about the role of women. At present I feel that women are Nigeria's greatest lost resource. Men are the superiors and they don't seem to want genuine competition from women on an equal basis. I enjoyed the women very much but I feel they are being gypped."

Or again:

"They responded to us as strangers and guests, and I am still writing to about 15, most of them students who were with our group, and I think of those who responded very warmly to our coming. But I did not like the snobbishness of the University students, the way they talked to the orderlies waiting on them at dinner. And then there was the problem of getting them back to the villages, getting them to work with their hands! They seemed very little concerned with working for Ghana, just out for Number One. I heard a lot about tribal prejudices."

From another group:

"There was an acceptance of us, warm and friendly, and quite unsophisticated. This gave us both pleasure and irritation. There was something to be deeply enjoyed in the lack of inhibition in the dancing, in the shows of great

emotion. But there was also a certain unsophistication in a way of thinking that refused to make distinctions or to accept explanations..."

By the Adjectives

We have at least one bit of evidence of another kind to give us a broader, though rather thinner view of how the Cross-rovers as a whole reacted to their encounters with Africans. This view comes out of the results of one of the tests taken by the group on a before-and-after basis, a list of 88 adjectives which they were asked to check off in June to show what they expected Africans to be like, and again in August to show how they had found them.* The result showed, broadly, that in June the Crossrovers in general had thought very well indeed of Africans, both of the modern and non-modern types, and that in September, with a lot more supporting information and experience, they held even more strongly to their positive views.

The adjectives were offered in a mixed, miscellaneous list. For scoring purposes, they were sorted out into six categories, each one designed to concentrate a certain bias or tone. Each grouping also contained certain more neuter words applicable to several of the categories but carrying different tonal qualities according to the company they were made to keep among the rest of the adjectives. This kind of test obviously yields results of many kinds of imprecision, and yet, when you look at them hard

*This instrument was designed and scored by Arnold R. Isaacs and the quotations in this section are from his report.

(as you might look at certain kinds of painting) they do tell you something about the subject, viz.;

- All the Crossroaders acquired over the summer a larger mass of mental images of Africans and a greater readiness to express opinions about them. In the group as a whole, all the scores rose by just over 23%, that is, they checked off one-quarter more of the proffered adjectives in August than they had in June. "We take this (reported A.R. Isaacs) to indicate that there was a marked increase in the sheer number of images they carried in their minds. They associated more things with the abstract idea of 'Africans.' They saw more of these adjectives as accurate or appropriate descriptions and were in fact ready to pick them out as attributes and characteristics of the Africans they had met."

- The highest response went to the category called "modern-admiring." This referred to the "new African" in his most positive aspects, crediting him with "devotion, sincerity, aiming toward worthwhile goals and having highly favorable personal and intellectual qualities." In June the 136 Crossroaders who took this test checked off 39% of all the adjectives offered in this category. By August this view had been strongly reinforced, the score (for the same 136) rising to 51%, an increase of nearly one-third.

("modern-admiring": "intelligent, educated, well-dressed, polite, self-assertive, intellectual, prosperous, sincere, cosmopolitan, industrious, self-confident, dedicated, honest, well-informed, proud, politically-conscious, expressive, nationalist, aggressive.")

- They also held in June a positive view of the "non-modern" African, a view that held within it "many of the associations of the romantic 'noble savage' idea and certain other emotional elements, including a more subtle form of condescension toward the 'simple' African, and, more important, a general failure of insight into pre-literate cultures." At the beginning of the summer the group checked off 35% of the adjectives in this group, and at the summer's end, in the second strongest increase, this score had risen to 45%.

("non-modern-admiring": "primitive, musical, expressive, passionate, warm, physically well-developed, artistic, loving, beautiful, uncomplicated, unself-conscious, emotional, uninhibited.")

- On the other hand, they were somewhat more inclined in August than in June to note some of the more negative aspects of backwardness. Thus, in a category called "non-modern-negative" they checked off 29% on the pre-test and increased this to 36% in the re-test, "probably," comments the reporter on the basis of his personal observation, "because of the increased awareness of the non-perjorative items in this group, i.e., an increased sensitivity to illiteracy and poverty."

("non-modern-negative": "primitive, uneducated, illiterate, poverty-stricken, ignorant, ill-fed, disease-ridden, nearly naked, superstitious, drunken, lazy, uninhibited, uncivilized, sexually promiscuous.")

- Another and somewhat more ambiguously-grouped set of words formed a fourth category called "non-modern-paternalistic." Here the intent was to catch those patterns of attitude from which the fear or repulsion has been removed and replaced by a "condescending, superior attitude, suggesting a failure to recognize different

cultural values and a judgment of other values entirely in terms of one's own." In this group, a response of 20% on the pre-test in June rose to 28% in August, moving from fifth to fourth place in the order of category responses. "We can only make some guesses about this result," remarks the reporter, "since from our personal observation of the group, it seems fair to say that condescending or superior attitudes were not strongly present and did not increase over the summer. I think examination would show that the major part of the increase occurred, again, among those items duplicated in the "non-modern-admiring" category. We have already mentioned the subtler form of condescension which we feel is a component of this admiring image." This is clearly one item that would take closer scrutiny than this test affords. We will return to this matter in a later section on culture and values.

("non-modern-paternalistic": "primitive, submissive, childlike, clumsy, unmechanical, extravagant, disrespectful, humorous, passive, un-self-conscious, uncivilized, emotional, uninhibited, uncomplicated.")

- The weakest reinforcements of the summer came for those images that were hostile or threatening. There were two sets of such images. The first applied to the "modern" or "new" African, having to do with political hostility, anti-American prejudices, racial sensitivity. In this category, the Crossroaders in June checked off 21% of the applicable adjectives, but except for one or two groups, the summer's experience failed to support these apprehensions, and the score for the group as a whole fell to 19%, dropping from fourth to fifth place in the rank order of categories.

("modern-threatening": "hostile, anti-American arrogant, anti-European, anti-white, secretive, radical, militant, fanatic, cunning, prejudiced, defensive, nationalist, self-conscious, aggressive, politically-conscious.")

- The second set of threatening images was attached to the "old" or "non-modern" kind of African, the survivor of all those early holdings relating to primitiveness and savagery. This was at the bottom of the entire list both in June, with a score of only 11%, and in August, when it showed a slight rise to 13%. Actually, in this self-selected group, there was by June very little basis left for fears of this particular kind, and where it existed it would, perhaps, not have been expressed. But much more decisively, there was little or nothing in the summer's experience to lend any support to these primeval images. The checking of these adjectives both before and after should perhaps be taken as showing fear and the sense, still not allayed for everyone, of unbridgeable cultural distances.

("non-modern-threatening": "primitive, savage, ugly, unpredictable, sexually promiscuous, dishonest, immoral, violent, impulse, hostile, uncivilized, uninhibited, aggressive.")

2. African Politics, U. S. Policy and the American Image

Crossroads 1961 provided a unique opportunity for schooling in some aspects of African and world politics. It was Africa's year in global affairs and the chance to learn something about this at first hand was, for some Crossroaders, the summer's most memorable experience.

To begin with, many Crossroaders had front seats for some of the year's major events. In Dahomey and Ivory Coast the groups attended the ceremonies marking the establishment of their independence, and in Lagos, the capital of Nigeria, they saw something of the preparations being made for the same event, then only a few months away. In Ghana, Crossroaders attended the celebrations at which Ghana became a Republic. In Cameroon, the Crossroads group felt the unsettlement of affairs in that new country by being subject to curfew and other restrictions on their movements. In Senegal, they were in the country when the newly-formed Mali Federation split dramatically apart. This was also, of course, the summer of the Congo events, and although Crossroads happily had cancelled its plans to send a group into the Congo for the summer, groups elsewhere were able to feel the reverberations of what happened there. In Ghana some of them saw the planes of the great UN airlift moving troops to the Congo. In every West African country, they could follow the Congo news as reported in the local press and broadcast over the various African networks, and as reflected in the reactions of the African students with whom they were in daily contact.

At the same time, Crossroaders were exposed to the chance to learn something about the shape of the new African politics. This exposure varied widely from place and to place and so did the extent to which Crossroaders "took" it. Some, as in Guinea, had a lot of politics all summer long, almost too much of it for some members of the group. Some, as in Nigeria, had little or even none

of it. The content also varied greatly. In Guinea, where "everything was political," they were able to see what a one-party, Communist-style authoritarian system looked like, with total repression of all opposition, and total control of all organization and communications. In Ghana, they could see something of a more mixed, more transitional kind of regime where opposition was present, still audible, but increasingly muted. In Nigeria, they could - if they sought it - get a lively view of the advantages and disadvantages of regional and tribal divisions; they could see, in the fluttering banners of rival political parties facing each other across village streets, the dangers of future internal conflict, but also the hope of free and open politics. In some of the ex-French territories, Crossroaders were struck by the low intensity of politics; one Ivory Coaster remarked how "sudden" the independence celebration was. In Senegal, on the other hand, Crossroaders came into contact with African students who were highly vocal in their opposition to their own government. In several countries, the Crossroads groups met some of the new African political leaders, Azikiwe in Nigeria, Sekou Toure in Guinea, Houphouet-Boigny in the Ivory Coast, Nkrumah in Ghana, and other high officials in Liberia, Dahomey, Cameroon, and Togo. The African students in the work camps were, in some of these countries, deeply interested in their local politics. Those Crossroaders who were interested were able to learn a great deal from all these exposures.

Let it be kept in mind that politics, as such, was not a

primary Crossroads interest. The work camps were usually at quite a distance from the capital centers and the opportunities for those interested in politics were limited to their localities during most of the summer and the brief periods of passage through the larger cities. Except in those few places where politics intruded upon every day's activities (as in Guinea, and perhaps Senegal), the day-to-day experience tended to move in quite other directions. Hence, the learning process about politics tended to be mostly indirect and incidental.

For the group as a whole we do have at least one source of information about this experience in the results of a test administered to the entire Crossroads group in June and again in August. In this test we tried to get some idea of the Crossroaders' views of African politics, the problems of nationalism and development, of American policy, and the African image of America. Although the results of this test were somewhat blurred by its over-concern with some of the subtleties and ambiguities of all these matters, they did give us some interesting glimpses of the group's shifts of view during the summer. The test consisted of a series of 30 statements shaded in various ways on various subjects and each Crossroader was asked at the beginning of the summer and again at the end to register his agreement or disagreement with them. Out of these papers*, and from the notes of our own observations and conversations, we can offer a limited summary of what we learned.

*Tabulated and analyzed by Arnold R. Isaacs

As might have been expected, the group as a whole was highly sympathetic toward African nationalism. There were a few who tended to be hardheaded when it came to attributing over-lofty motives to African nationalists, and there was some pessimism about the chances of democratic development in Africa. It was far more common, however, for Crossroaders to take a much more uncritical view of these matters, suffusing them in warm sympathy and a hopeful expectation that all would come out for the best. This was the general position in June, and the amount of change in these views over the summer depended largely on the amount and kind of politics each group actually encountered. In the majority of countries where political interests were secondary, there was relatively little change. But in those countries where politics was an active preoccupation, the test showed a growth in sophistication, a certain sharpening and correction of earlier views.

Members of the group in Guinea, for example, went through a considerable experience of acquiring and then shedding a variety of notions about the nature of that highly authoritarian regime. In Ghana, where it was still possible last summer to hear contradictory political opinions, interested Crossroaders were able to acquire a much more realistic view of the nationalist regime in that country. At the very minimum, there was some exposure to politics in every group's experience - they learned at least something about the shape of the government and the political parties in each country, and acquired some new opinions about the outlook for the future. Quite a few came to feel still more strongly that political independence

was a necessary condition to growth and development. More of them learned that there was no great commitment among West African politicians to the ideas and practices of Western-style democracy. On the other hand, they acquired a more modest view of the immediate appeal of Communist ideology for Africans, and retained a certain dogged optimism about the long-range prospects for some kind of ultimate democratic development. These are faint indications, based only on their answers to a few questions, but they do suggest that some Crossroaders did increase the level of their knowledge and appreciation of the facts of current West African politics. At the end of the summer, they differentiated much more sharply than they had at the beginning among the shadings of possible opinions on these complicated subjects.

As to United States policy in West Africa, the great majority of Crossroaders began the summer with broad and largely undetailed "liberal" views of what this policy ought to be. They wanted the United States to be "friendly" toward the new nationalist governments and sympathetic toward all nationalist aspirations. They wanted the United States to do all it could to "help" the emergent countries. They also indicated their view that this help should be kept divorced from the cold war and even from American self-interest. All but a small minority were bent on a strictly "humanitarian" and "disinterested" approach to the whole matter.

Actually, most Crossroaders had little or no opportunity during the summer to test these views or get a firsthand look at American policy in action, or to understand it realistically when they did

come into contact with it. A few, as I have mentioned, saw the Congo airlift in action, but it seems reasonable to suggest that they shared the general confusion of everyone over what was going on in that troubled country and had no clear idea of what American policy and action in the Congo actually was. Almost all Crossroads groups in all the countries met some American officials, embassy, USIA, aid mission, or consular personnel. From some of them, Crossroads received aid, comfort, hospitality, and where it was sought, a certain amount of information and education as well. These contacts were quite fleeting and to some Crossroaders proved uninspiring. There were certainly some officials who were either unimpressive themselves or unimpressed with Crossroads. But on the other hand, it has to be said that some Crossroaders were rather well-stocked with stereotypes acquired from "The Ugly American" or other similar highly prejudiced views of American personnel abroad. They tended to think the worst of these official Americans and to hold on to their prejudices rather than upset them by any open-minded observation or serious inquiry. Those who were most automatically uncritical of African nationalists usually were also most automatically critical of official Americans, often at a distressingly naive level. (In Guinea, for example, where the new Guinean rulers now occupy the palaces and mansions of their former French masters, a few Crossroaders, courteously received by the American ambassador, looked askance at his modestly palatial home.)

American aid missions were functioning as yet only in two

West African countries, Ghana and Liberia. While some Cross-
roaders continued to express a broad and demanding kind of interest
in American "aid", not many of them were observed making much of
an effort to study the hard facts of planning and operating aid
programs. In Ghana, members of one group visiting the site of the
Volta Dam Project had the on-the-spot inspiration to write to the
State Department and to the press demanding to know why American
money had not been more quickly forthcoming for this project. In
the discussion which followed, it quickly developed that no one
in the group had informed himself about the project, the problem
of its finances, or the history of negotiations relating to it.
In Liberia, a few group members picked up some Liberian student
criticisms of the American aid program, but neither checked into
the facts nor listened to explanations when they were offered. In
Guinea, some Crossroaders were hotly critical of the slow pace of
negotiations for an American aid agreement without availing them-
selves, until the last few days of the summer, of the opportunity
to get at some of the hard facts of the matter as viewed by the
American officials most directly concerned.

These were, to be sure, only a few cases of excess of zeal
over effort and they have their place, no doubt, in a learning
experience. Yet they do suggest that those Crossroaders seriously
interested in these matters suffered certain handicaps, and that a
more systematic effort might be made to expose the groups to the
chance to learn more about the problems and complications of Amer-
ican government activities in the countries they visit. I must

add that there is a certain rueful irony in the need to make this suggestion, since in several countries Crossroaders had to spend much time repeatedly (and unsuccessfully) denying to skeptical Africans that they were in Africa for the summer at the direction and expense of the United States government.

The most marked change from "before" to "after" in this whole range of matters, however, did not bear so much on African politics or U. S. policy so much as it did on the African image of America and Americans. Here again, as in so many other aspects of the summer's experience, the effect remained intangible. Most of these young men and women confronted for the first time a foreign image of themselves, their country, and their culture. The effect was many-sided and confusing. In certain matters under criticism they rose to self-defense. In others they felt a certain vulnerability. In many cases, it helped the young American correct his own view of his own country while at the same time giving him a sharper sense of how it could look when seen from afar by a person as foreign to it as an African. He discovered how some Africans saw American "facts" and he often discovered that he did not know enough of these "facts" to set himself or the African straight. It was an upsetting experience for some, a sobering one for many.

By the evidence of the test we have been referring to and from our own interviews, the great majority of Crossroaders expected Africans to be suspicious of American motives and behavior, mainly because of the problem of American race relations. And so indeed, as we shall see, the Africans were, but not quite as much in as many places as

many places as many of the Americans expected. Crossroaders were challenged on the race issue more frequently and more strongly than on anything else, but except in certain places, these challenges were not always hostile and their answers were not always disbelieved. In general, the Crossroaders received a warmer and friendlier reception than they had anticipated. Many expected, for example, to be lumped by Africans with white Europeans and treated with generalized hostility. This was sometimes the case, but they also often found, to their pleased surprise, that Africans did distinguish between Americans and Europeans, and usually in the Americans' favor. Certain groups found that some Africans still looked to America as a model for their own political and cultural aspirations, that they were aware of American efforts to eradicate racial discrimination, and tended to credit American sincerity in this and other matters. In general, the evidence seems to be that Africans turned out to be much less hostile than many Crossroaders had expected, even if this did not mean they were necessarily more admiring of America. It meant, rather, that they had more ambivalent and diffuse images than the Crossroaders had anticipated. Even where there was strong political hostility, as in Guinea, there was sometimes a strongly admiring view of some particular aspect of American life, e.g., its technology. Most important, however, was the fact that the Crossroaders themselves in most cases were warmly received as individuals. They could feel, by the summer's end, that they had made some impact, at least on their fellow work-campers. If they did not always displace negative images of America and Americans, the Crossroaders were generally able to feel

that they had at least managed to contradict them and to set up counter-images that would last. On the other hand, they could not help but come away from the experience with a strong sense that America as a nation and a society and Americans as people were a long, long way from commanding in West Africa that peculiar blend of confidence and respect or sense of common goals and interests that must underlie fruitful mutual relations.

3. Race

On the subject of race, which so dominated African thinking about America, our Crossroaders learned a good deal. What they learned was life-changing for a few, critical for some, important for all.

For the white Crossroaders, it was most commonly the experience of being exposed to Negroes as friends and peers, often for the first time in their lives; of having the problems and emotions of race relations and race attitudes brought more closely and more intimately into their lives than ever before. They not only discovered, as though it were new, the impact of this matter on the American society, on Negroes, and on themselves, but in the African setting they also learned about the great new impact of this matter in world affairs.

For Negro Crossroaders, the learning experience was even more complicated. They were meeting and living with white peers on a sustained and intimate basis, and for some of them also this was a quite new experience. They were able both to teach and to learn

something about the meaning of the race problem in the society and in their own lives. At the same time vis-a-vis Africans, they had the peculiar and difficult task of "explaining" what it meant to be a Negro in America, while also, each one within himself, somehow facing up to the need to re-examine and re-define their identities as individuals and as Negro Americans. This was a complex, painful, and mostly inconclusive experience.

Perhaps this is a good place to enter another reminder that I report here in detail only on the 44 Crossroaders with whom I discussed these matters at length before, during and/or after the summer. This group included 33 whites and 11 Negroes, 8 of the whites and 2 of the Negroes from the South, and 25 whites and 9 Negroes from other parts of the country.

Northern Whites : As far as the white Crossroaders were concerned, it followed from the conditions of both self-selection and selection that they had - or earnestly tried to have - the "right" attitudes on the race problem, whether they came from North or South. This meant that they were usually what is called "liberal", i.e., they decried prejudice and were against racial discrimination.

If they were from the North, they generally held these views and attitudes without having had many (or any) occasions to act upon them in any way. They might have had a sprinkle of Negroes as classmates in high school or (even more rarely) in college, or known one or two Negroes as teammates or fellow participants in school activities. They shared public eating and transport facilities with Negroes as a matter of normal course. But only quite rarely would

friendship, acquaintance or indeed, any contact with any Negroes extend beyond the school hours of the day into the home or social hours. "It was," remarked one new Ivy League graduate, "just like five o'clock anti-Semitism." There were only one or two limited exceptions to this pattern in the entire group, one or two high school friendships (including a few awkward and usually one-sided visits to homes), and in one case a summer spent with some Negro fellow-volunteers at a settlement house. As a rule, there was neither occasion nor opportunity for any Negro-white relationships on an equal basis to occur either in the home, neighborhood, or social circles in which all these young people moved. The home neighborhoods were usually far apart. In white homes, a Negro appeared most commonly only as servant, sometimes "a wonderful person" or "just like one of the family," but still no peer, and even such contacts have been decreasingly common, since most of our Cross-roadsers came up when servants had largely disappeared from American middle class life. Their parents, as a rule, either automatically accepted the prevailing prejudice patterns of their communities, or else passively deplored them up to some point. Only in a few cases were they actively or more militantly "liberal". These boys and girls grew up with some awareness of the established system of discrimination, denials, and exclusions affecting Negroes (and other minority groups) but in most cases, if they were members of the majority group, it did not intrude in any direct way upon their lives. It never became a close or emotionally sensitive issue. One read about it in the newspapers or heard about it, but most of the time

there had been no need to think about it at all. Until the sit-in movement started by Negro students in the South in the spring of 1960, very few of these young men and women had ever felt called upon to make this a matter of their own personal concern and action. A few Crossroaders were even caught up sharply by the discovery that they had unthinkingly joined fraternities and sororities that still practiced racial and ethnic discrimination. Some took up an active role in picketing and demonstrating in support of the sit-ins during the spring, but this was still only a small number.

In sum, with only a few exceptions, our Crossroaders from northern states either "never knew any Negroes" or had had only the most fleeting contacts with any, and although they held more or less "liberal" views about race problems, they had had only the scantiest kind of involvement in the fight for civil rights in the country, and this was still largely the case right up until the day they presented themselves to join their Crossroads group for orientation in June just before leaving for Africa.

Southern Whites: Our Southern white Crossroaders had no greater contact with Negroes than their Northern counterparts, perhaps even less. ("My parents moved to a community with no Negroes," "I never knew any Negroes until we moved when I was 12;" "I had no contact with Negroes at all until I grew up," "When I was little I played with our maid's daughters.") What was different for these Southerners was not the amount of contact, but the saliency of the whole

matter of race relations, in their homes and in their social environments generally, especially in these years of steadily rising pressure and tension within the established system. In the North, the patterns of prejudice or non-prejudice in most Crossroaders' homes might vary, but would ordinarily remain of a passive order, i.e., it would not be a matter of daily or vivid concern or become a cause for action or conflict within the family or with society. Our Southern Crossroader parents, by contrast, divide sharply into at least two groups, both with strong feelings and community involvements. On the one hand there are the "liberals" who felt the need to find some way of humanizing their own and their children's thinking and behavior in relation to Negroes. On the other hand, there are the parents who generally conformed more or less strongly to the stereotyped racist patterns of the community. There was sometimes a division between parents (e.g., "My father thought Negroes were inferior, but my mother never allowed me to use the word 'nigger'"), but either way, it was a highly sensitive matter, setting up strong emotional currents within the family and governing much of its relation to the world outside. The years in which these boys and girls were moving through high school into college, moreover, were the years following the Supreme Court decision of 1954, full of drawn issues, open conflicts and violence: Little Rock, Clinton, the Lucy case in Alabama, the lynch murder of Mack Parker in Mississippi and the Talahassee rapes. No one remained untouched by these events and pressures. Everyone felt pushed, forced, driven on the issue. The young men and women of whom we write here, and their

write here, and their parents, had to decide where they stood; the problem would no longer leave them alone. "My parents always taught me to respect the equality of people," said one girl, "but living up to it here was so hard!"

Several of these students had found some new ground to stand on through church youth groups making their slow way toward changed ideas and practices. Three of them had attended church student conferences conducted on an integrated basis, in Ohio, where for a weekend they sat at tables and in conference rooms and shared dormitory rooms with Negroes, and joined together also at social evenings. Only one of them had become, last spring, an active participant in the sit-in movement. I believe it is fair to say that all but one or two of these young white Southerners stood at varying distances but still quite far from the new Negro view that change had to come now; that Negroes were still unknown to them as individual people; that their expressed opinions on race matters continued to be deeply undercut by a host of unexpressed uncertainties, hesitations, and ambivalences, and that these were uppermost in their minds as they came to New York last June to join Crossroads.

Exposures: The first big thing that happened to all of them, wherever they came from, was the simple business of being exposed to Negroes as individuals. This began right there in New York during the orientation sessions held at the Union Theological Seminary. The groups formed up, and each group had one or more Negro members. They shared rooms in the dormitories, ate together, socialized together - including dancing - and of course attended the meetings, at which many

of the speakers were distinguished Negroes in various fields. For a remarkable number of these Crossroaders - and not only the Southerners - this was the beginning of a radically new experience. They passed for the first time, many of them, the barriers that normally prevent whites in our society from meeting and knowing Negroes in the normal and ordinary ways in which one meets and knows all sorts of people. One young man, Midwest-born and New England-educated, said:

"That week in New York was my largest dip into Negro society, my largest single contact with Negro intellectuals. The speakers at the orientation opened up to me the vast and competent Negro leadership I had not been exposed to before - I got my greatest lessons on this whole question in that first week."

Some were faced, really for the first time, with the need to overcome habits and trepidations acquired in a lifetime of emotion-laden conditioning. Two examples:

"I had never really known Negroes before living in this atmosphere, there in the subways, in the restaurants, all the Negroes. You really notice it, and in church too that Sunday, it was startling, it was so different...To me there was a kind of barrier at first, then we got to know them as part of the group, and throughout the summer we did everything together. Color in the American Negroes, and the tribal marks on the Africans made no difference after awhile. You just stopped noticing it."

Again:

"I was put in a situation I had never been in on a social basis. I went into the project with the big idea of brotherhood in my mind. The actual situation I first met in New York was nerve-racking for me. I was always aware of sitting and eating with Negroes. But finally this disappeared and I just stopped thinking about it. It just became a matter of person to person. But it was hard at first. I couldn't realize how submerged I was. I thought I could handle anything like this, until I was actually put into it. It took time. Now I have come back, and see all these people here (in the South)

again and it is so difficult. But when I went to Atlanta for a Crossroads conference, right away it was just like Africa again. What can I do about this? There is not much opportunity in this setting to carry on that kind of relationship. I have tried to tell some of my friends here what this experience is like. I have wondered whether to stay here in the South to try to do good here, but I want to be a free individual without hurting my family. I'm not sure I can do that here, even if I have the stamina or determination to try it."

This process of mutual discovery continued throughout the summer, and for some Crossroaders, especially among whites from the South, it was the summer's main business. Said one:

"I had never been in contact with educated American Negroes before and I made a real effort to come to terms with the two in our group. It was a real education for me, all new to me, like discovering a new society."

Another felt a great sense of liberation:

"The outstanding thing (of the summer) was to be able to move freely with American Negroes in our group without the sword of segregation over our heads. Strange that you had come to Africa to do that. This summer was the freest I have ever been in terms of race, gave me the first opportunity I've ever had to become friends with a Negro, and I held this very high, because I have never had such a chance before."

A girl from the South said:

"It came to me sharply how the barb of inequality hits a person."

A boy from the Midwest said:

"I had never understood what it was to be a Negro in America. I suppose I still don't, but I understand it more now."

In Africa: In Africa, the learning experience about race became a triangular affair. While they were coming to some new terms

with each other, Negro Americans and white Americans both had to meet Africans' demands and queries on this matter. They found all Africans interested in it wherever they went, and had to answer more questions on this subject than on anything else. Some of this interest was relatively mild, some of it suspicious, some of it hostile. These differences were often a matter of politics. Africans still more favorably disposed toward the United States were usually less aggressive about the race problem. Africans politically antagonistic toward the United States used the race issue as a weapon, attacking as hard as they could at an obvious point of American weakness. But whether it was milder than they had expected or dismayingly strong, feeling on the race issue plainly held a major place in the African view of America.

Even in places like Guinea and Senegal, where Crossroaders were able to learn at first hand what the Communist-inspired assault on the race issue was like, they also learned that African ideas on the subject did not come merely from exposure to Communist propaganda. The facts about the American situation spoke loudly enough for themselves, and African black men had ample reason within themselves to react to what they heard. Long before Communists ever became an important element in the education of any Africans, British and French colonial authorities had seen to it these American facts of life - often carefully selected and highlighted - were made known to their black colonial charges. Even in crypto-Communist Guinea, the young Guineans who worked with Crossroads had gotten their ideas and information about American racism not primarily from their more recent Communist sources, (though these were not meager), but a long time before, from their French teach-

ers, who in school, in the press and on the radio had, for so long, taught everything they knew about the world outside. The facts of American racism were extremely useful to the colonialists in inculcating young Africans against being infected by American democratic ideas and suggesting that compared to American democracy, the colonial regimes were perhaps not so bad. The young Guineans who met our Crossroaders watched them narrowly in the first days to see if any of the Americans would hold back from any of the unremitting handshaking that goes on among these late children of French culture; they had been told that Americans never touched Negroes, not even to shake hands. They were soon satisfied on this score, but only our individual Crossroaders, not the American people, got the credit:

"We came to be regarded as exceptions, not as representative of the majority of the American population, which they still thought of as racist."

As they made their way through repeated discussion of these matters with sharply-questioning Guineans, members of the group went through a certain evolution:

"On race, we all tried to be defensive, to say it wasn't so bad. Then we quit trying to justify the situation in the United States and became more frank, with the Guineans and with ourselves."

One Crossroader in this group belonged to another American minority group and since he was burdened neither by the guilt of the whites nor the defensiveness of the Negroes, he was able to add another dimension to the experience for all of them:

"The whites in the group were saying: 'Yes, but we've made progress.' At the end of the summer they were pretty well rid of their efforts at rationalization. What I tried to do was point out that we should be talking about

discrimination in general. It annoys me to hear Negroes talking so violently about discrimination when they themselves have all sorts of it. And when I asked the Africans about intermarriage, I found they were against it too. They felt that Africans should remain pure in the same way that the white racists do. Yet they were critical of America on this very score. One African I talked to thought mulattos were inferior to him. So obviously Africans have their own system of discrimination. All of us, Mexicans, Negroes, Jews, Africans show some kind of discrimination - and we have to oppose all of it."

The dialogue, starting from the large and the impersonal, moved readily to the particular and the personal, as in this account:

"Things like dating would come up in the form of being asked whether I would date a Negro, whether my parents would mind, whether I would marry a Negro. I said I would date a Negro, that my parents would not mind, that I might marry a Negro, but would be reluctant to do so because of the many problems. It was strange, being in a land of black people, but I got used to it. I got more of a conception of what race is and what it isn't. I had never dated a Negro at home. I went out with an African in Dakar and felt strange about it. In the beginning some of our girls would not dance with Africans. I was interested in my own reactions to this experience. It was something new. It was not different, yet it was different. I realized how much race was in our own minds, that we always are conscious of color, and that we do notice what race people are. I wanted to feel that race did not mean anything to me. I was brought up to be overly conscious of persons being Negro because they are a special group. You never get used to it because they are special, you have to be so careful, anything you might say or think might be construed as prejudice. When I was a child, Negroes were just apart, the people who lived 'over there.' I had no feelings about them, they were not involved in my life at all but in high school a Negro girl was my best friend. I think during the summer I lost most of this race consciousness. All the girls in the group eventually came around to dancing more freely with the Africans. They were sensitive at first. But then you just sort of forget about it."

Back Home: It is not easy to try to judge the longer-range impact of these encounters on each individual. As one Crossroader put it during the summer: "Now we all feel strongly about it because we are here in this situation. But what will it be like a month from

now when we are home?"

Not one month, but six months later when I talked of this again to most of these young men and women, they located themselves at various points along a path of change. One girl who had felt while she was in Africa that:

"...you can, you really can forget the whole business of race and color, you can do it in finding love and friendship with another person..."

now said, in some painful confusion:

"I really don't know. You can't fight racial feeling as one person. I don't agree with the feelings people have, and I hope they will change. I think things will resolve themselves, but it will take generations. Our generation is still too instilled with prejudice. I know we can't afford it, so who knows what will happen. I don't know."

Many spoke, like this young man, with a strong sense of new commitment:

"I never was concerned before with the problem as I am now. I never gave it thought before. Now I do. I take a strong stand. I am concerned about it. I think about it and care about it, and about the effect of this thing in the rest of the world."

In his case, he had come back to New England, and I could not discover that his new feeling had, as yet, been transplanted into any new behavior. But some Southern Crossroaders who carried this same feeling back to their homes and their campuses found it almost immediately put to test, in some instances in a critical and deeply personal way. One girl came back to a fiance whom she saw now with new eyes and heard with new ears, discovering with shock and dismay that he shared the conventional racist views of the community. The issue had simply not intruded upon them before and she had not noticed it.

But she noticed it now, because when she spoke of her experiences and her new outlook, these two young people who had believed themselves in love found themselves sharply divided, and when she joined a lunch counter sit-in demonstration, she found that it meant not only breaking Southern "tradition", but also breaking her engagement.

Another young woman who returned to a Southern environment found herself in a major crisis within her family:

"I have had to make a big decision. We had never even discussed this kind of thing before. I had never known a Negro personally as a friend until this summer. I had worked with them, but never on an equal basis. We never really had occasion to talk about this. It all came to a big blow-up... It was the first time I had ever talked to my father that way, and I'm 23 now. I just had to decide that they had their view and I had mine. They are different. I must lead my own life. None of this is so far away from me anymore. Now it is all so real."

I think this was the essence of what a great many Crossroaders learned about the race problem across the summer - that it is real.

The Negro Experience: The experience of Negro Crossroaders on this matter of race was much more complicated. Partly it was like that of their white comrades, i.e., a new association on a new basis of intimacy with members of the opposite group, yielding up some new knowledge and new insight. I think this was a meaningful experience for some of these individuals, though only for a few could it have that great impact of newness that so many of the whites felt. Negroes generally have not been able to afford to be as unaware and ignorant of whites as whites have been of Negroes. Almost all those I interviewed had had some working contact with whites, whether at school or in job situations, and each had, in varying degree, his or her share of defensive sophistication about the varieties of white behavior. Still, most of them got to know some white Crossroaders better than they had ever known any whites before, and they could feel that some of the whites had got to know some of them. As one of them remarked: "I think the whites found out from us that there are all kinds of Negroes, and we could find out - if we didn't know it already - that there are all kinds of whites." They learned something also about some of their own prejudices. "I even found myself liking some of the Ivy League types," said one girl. "I had never met people like this before." Nor, for that matter, had she ever met Negroes like some of the highly intellectual, high-achieving individuals who were with Crossroads, whether as students or as staff. On both counts, she greatly improved and sharpened her perceptions.

Relating to the white Crossroaders was a fresh experience for many, but it was much more in relation to the Africans that these Negro Americans found themselves on new and much more uncertain ground. To

begin with, there was a thrill in seeing new nations of black men asserting themselves and their individuality, a thrill in seeing black men free of white domination, occupying the seats of power, making history, commanding respect. It was possible for some to feel a certain satisfaction as they watched their white American comrades take the full weight of the African reaction to American racism. This was what they had been hearing about, this was evidence that the world was changing, that the whites of the world now, at last, had to listen with respect to non-whites, and begin yielding up some of their self-deceptions and hypocrisies. This was no small sensation, to feel the great wind blowing at your back, thrusting you forward, instead, as always hitherto, blowing in your face, holding you back. But this, too, some soon discovered, was a mixed sensation. One individual, for example, found out what it was like to enjoy discrimination in reverse - he was served out of turn in front of a line of waiting Europeans. "I must say I enjoyed it," he said, "but then I started feeling guilty about enjoying it. It was just the same as discrimination against us, and it was bad." This young man was angry at himself for not being able to take greater relish in this new experience. He wanted to relish it. He had a long, long score to settle. But he also understood the nature of that score; it was not going to be settled by a simple reversal of roles because he knew too well what it was like to be on the receiving end. There was an aggravating kind of irony in his inability to be as complacent about this as he was tempted to be. He had hated white men for their contempt and their baseness, and had always

thought how good it would be to be in their place, and yet, when the moment offered itself, he found, to his own great irritation, that he could not get down to that level, or at least that he could not remain there long.

Another virtue, the need to respect the truth, intruded on some of these encounters. The realities of American racism are harsh enough. When Africans went way beyond them, as they often did, Negro Crossroaders found themselves patiently trying to correct, to explain, to set them straight. Such was the case, for example, when Africans seemed to think that segregation and separation was total in all American life, that there was no association and no contact at all between Negroes and whites, that Negro children under segregation did not go to any school, and even that the United States was a country, like South Africa, with a majority black population ruled by a white minority.

This process of correction was more than a matter of merely getting the facts straight. For one thing, it involved the Negro's self-respect. Most of these distortions suggested that Negroes were putting up with conditions worse than they actually were. But here a different and subtler element entered the dialogue, for in trying to explain the facts of life to Africans, these young Negroes often found that they were explaining these facts also to themselves, that they were getting a new sense of their own values as products of the American culture. This occurred at different levels, some simple ("I was appalled by the lack of any concept of health standards") some more complicated ("When I looked at the African women, I realized that as

an American woman I am free and independent.") One Negro Cross-roader had to try to convince his hosts that he was quite free to speak as critically as he wished of the social and political regime in America, that he would not be penalized, imprisoned, or "hung" for speaking his mind, as they said they feared he might be. He had to try to explain how different American democracy was from the African non-democracy in which they lived and in which they were, indeed, in some peril, if they ever spoke out in any such critical vein. Here is the way another Negro Crossroader, who had a similar experience in yet another African country, described the matter:

"I think the most important thing for me in the summer was this business of trying to explain the situation in the United States. I had never been put on the defensive this way before. What is democracy, I had to ask myself, and what did you do about it? I found this very difficult. I had been warned of things like this, but you never know what it is like until you actually experience it. I had to re-think through the ideals of America and then to think about what I saw happening around me. As I listened to the Africans talk, I still thought I was going to have a better chance in our democratic system even if it was slower..."

When the African attack opened up, as it sometimes did, into a generalized assault on the American society as a whole, some of these young Negroes, whatever their own angers or feelings of alienation, found themselves coming to its defense.

"I found myself defending America, its policies, the racial situation, the situation of American whites and Negroes in a way that I could not imagine myself doing."

Wrapped up in this experience was the discovery, or the confirmation, of the fact that will it or not, like it or not, these individuals were integrally and inescapably part of the American society and American culture, committed to its struggles and its goals, and

could not be otherwise. In the small group of individuals who shared some glimpses of this experience with me, there was only one limited exception to this, one girl who at the end of her summer's African experience felt ready to spend the rest of her life in Africa rather than in America. She felt this way because her struggle for her integrity as a person had revolved not around the issue of Negro vs. white but the issue of darker Negro vs. lighter Negro, and among Africans she had found for the first time in her life, not rejection but acceptance - and precisely because of her color. At least for the moment, this sensation blotted out all others. Even so, as she spoke of plans that might take her back to Africa for good, she spoke also of first getting an advanced degree that would help her counteract the low status of women in African society, and clearly had no thoughts of surrendering her culture, her citizenship, her essentially American identity. It was clear that whatever travails her plans might bring, if they were realized, her prospective African husband was due to learn what it means to have an American, and not an African, for a wife.

In the encounter between these young Negro Americans and Africans are matters that lie deeper than perhaps we are called upon to go in these pages. They share parts of a common ancestry around which there are thick clusters of tangled notions and emotions, lost history, an inheritance of mutual rejection and self-rejection. They have seen each other dimly across great distances of time-space and culture-space and where they meet pools of prejudice and ignorance lie between them that are in some ways even deeper than those that lie between white and non-white. This has had many forms in the past, and takes many

different forms in the changing present and it gets linked to all our current history. Both groups, the African and the American, are emerging into a world in which white supremacy, as a set of ideas and a system of power, is coming to a great wrenching end and a massive rearrangement of human affairs is taking place. In their part of this experience, Negro Americans and Africans are having to find new and more mutually acceptable images of themselves, each other, and their relationship. Africans are able to move into the new epoch first by establishing their own new nation-states, no longer such a difficult task in this time of disintegrating empires. Negroes in this country have the more complicated task of taking their part in the American struggle to achieve an open, plural, free society. Between the two, from the purely personal to the massively impersonal, a whole new history is to be made, and our young Negro Crossroaders, in this summer of 1960, brushed up against some of its beginnings.

4. Culture and Values

Every Crossroader also had in Africa the experience of seeing at first hand what a "backward" or "underdeveloped" culture is like. This was, in a way, the summer's most profound experience. It was filled not only with great discovery, but much perplexity, confusion, and some pain. It raised in many minds questions to which there are no quick answers, perhaps as yet no clear answers at all. It forced upon everyone, in an intense and concentrated way, the issue of culture and values, of what we hold and how we hold it, and how we stand, now, in relation to others.

These, too, are matters opened by the largest aspects of our current history - the end of Western European political power in the world, the collapse of the self-serving notions of ethnic and racial superiority which were used to rationalize that power, the drive to self-reassertion by the ex-subject peoples, the revision of all power relations and all the human relations affected by them - a vast drama, full of violence and infinite complexities. These are now the great affairs of men, and in West Africa last summer all the young Americans who took part in Crossroads began to share, in a small and peculiarly personal way, in this large and complicated historic experience.

They were part of a new generation, readier than their elders to see the world with new eyes, to relate to other people in new ways. They were intent upon shedding any ethnocentrism which might have clung to them from their conditioning and schooling. They were ready

to identify strongly with the emotions and aspirations of nationalist-minded Africans. They had taken on a certain humility about themselves and their world and were ready to "relate" in some open, friendly, and accepting manner to whatever they might meet in the African society.

As the many pages of this report have shown, there was much that they met in West Africa to which Crossroaders reacted with strong and positive pleasure, the beauty in the countrysides, the beauty of the people and their friendly and gay warmth. They felt the great sensations of change and discovery, of seeing for themselves, of displacing fantasies with hard bits of reality, of trying to move themselves to new rhythms - the music and the dancing had a contagion even for those who could not quite tune in on it. But an experience like this takes place in many layers and they run from pleasure to pain, from simple to complex, from easy to hard. It is part of the great positive achievement of Crossroads that it carried its people in the course of a brief summer through many of these layered dimensions of new awareness, new sensations, new ideas, and new emotions. There were all the exposures that produced satisfaction, pleasure, joy. At the same time there were other aspects of West African life about which it was not always so easy to have simple or straightforward reactions.

To begin with, these young Americans came briefly but directly to grips with the fact of backwardness. Our current sensitivities usually require quotation marks around that word - it is "backwardness" or even "so-called backwardness". But there was nothing so-called about the hard realities of underdevelopment in what they saw, the general lack of health, the staggeringly high mortality rate among

children, the lack of resources, the meagerness of the production of the means of life, the sparseness of the standard of living in its most elementary physical aspects. This was poverty, more poverty than most of them had ever seen before, although a girl from Kentucky said that one would not be less assailed by backwardness in her home section of the country than she had been in Africa, and in Atlanta a boy offered to walk me a few blocks to see living conditions he thought were worse than any he had seen over there.

Work: In their own limited way, these young Crossroaders not only saw these things, but also experienced them. On their work projects they became themselves hewers and drawers. They worked with their hands and muscles and with simple, not to say primitive tools. They carried dirt in basins balanced on their heads. They made bricks out of mud and dried them in the sun. They cut bush with simple blades, and chopped at roots and trees with axes and picks with handles made out of the branches of trees. In short, they had their own brief object lesson in what it means to have growth and development start from the plain ground and with little to work with besides willing but bare hands.

There was, moreover, a question about the willingness. The Crossroads groups ran into the universal problem of differing conceptions of work. This was true not only of the African students who thought manual labor was below their dignity, but also of the ordinary villagers who generally did not believe in doing too much work at any one time. This produced much anguish in Americans brought up in the Puritan ethic and dedicated to the proposition that hard work

and efficiency conquers all:

"There was a ditch to be dug. I would dig. But they would just stand around, wander down the street. I felt the job had to be done. They didn't. It might get done eventually, but not right away. The villagers and the students both had pretty much the same attitude. I was responsible for organizing that job, but after three days it broke down. I didn't want to be a Simon Legree, so I said I didn't want to be foreman anymore. They elected one of the students to be foreman, the laziest guy in the whole work camp!"

Another ingredient in this situation was the problem of differing conceptions of time. In one group there was much laughter, but also some strong feeling, about "WASP" (white Anglo-Saxon Protestant time), "ACPT" (American Colored People's time) and "AFT" (African time.) After a few tries at WASP, hampered by ACPT, the group finally settled for AFT.

Many of the Americans became quite vocal in their criticism of African work habits and inefficiency, especially when these kept them from seeing their work projects through to conclusion. Many Africans agreed with them. Indeed, the American capacity for hard work won great admiration everywhere from Africans, who were not, however, always moved to emulate it. These were, in Africa as in other parts of the world, differences that had to do with kinds of culture and levels of development and, somewhat less visibly, with the quality of vigor and health, and this in turn had quite a bit to do with sanitation and with diet.

Sanitation: In the cities, the Crossroaders only passed through the slums, but at their worksites they lived in or near small villages and towns where they had a much closer look at how the people actually lived. Some visited in homes and saw what living arrangements were

like inside those mud huts. Some of them talked to men who had begotten up to 15 or 20 children and had only four or six survive, and with women who carried the main burdens of keeping such families alive. Some Crossroaders travelled to more distant parts where they saw truly primitive villages where human existence was being maintained at its most minimum levels. Again, briefly and in a limited way, some Crossroaders themselves lived in conditions of rigor and non-sanitation which introduced them even more intimately to the terms of this way of life. They had expectable reactions:

"It turned my stomach sometimes, the way they handled food, with no concept of health needs..."

"I was appalled by the lack of sanitation... I have a new appreciation for things I always took for granted, bathrooms, clean, cold water, refrigeration..."

They were often dismayed and appalled not only by the filth and the disease, but by Africans who did not seem to be so dismayed or appalled themselves.

Diet: The problem of diet and food became a major part of the summer's experience, in more ways than one.

"I talked to the women of the village about their diets. They ate only yams, palm oil, some beans. No meat. They had grapefruit, but they didn't eat it. They did have some nuts. The problem of diet would always come up. They would ask why they lost their babies. This would always go back to the matter of diet. They were quite receptive about it and some began to boil their water after our talks. But if you mentioned milk or grapefruit they would make faces of distaste."

Another:

"I couldn't understand the way they would not

eat the grapefruit and oranges they had. They just rotted. We tried to tell them. I think this upset me, why they couldn't understand about the problem of food. I suppose they were just strongly tied to their old ways."

Food was also a much more first hand and personal problem for the Crossroaders; it became, indeed, one of the most difficult, contentious, and delicate problems of the whole summer. Almost every group, as we have said, had Africans for fellow-work-campers. In some cases, cooks and cooking facilities were provided by the Africans. In others, the American group was responsible for the house-keeping arrangements, with its members taking turns at kitchen duty. In those groups I observed, there was no clear settlement of the problem of menu. Where the Africans were in charge, African-style food, or some variation thereof, predominated. Where the Americans ran their own mess, there was a greater tendency to stick to supplementary canned goods, fruit, and such other familiar items, as might be locally available. In both cases, guilt complexes took shape, strictly among the Americans. Where Western-style food dominated, some of the Africans objected, and the Americans felt guilty about it, feeling that they were even more hopelessly culture-bound than they had feared. On the other hand, where African food was the rule, some American members made it a point of intercultural honor to get along - or at least appear to get along with what was served. This was not easy to do, for I run no risk of exaggeration when I say that the African cuisine aroused no great enthusiasm among the Americans. It consists primarily of starches (yams, cassava, corn, and, more rarely, rice) which are usually pounded into cakes or pastes, sometimes partly fermented, and eaten with

"soups" which are usually quite low in nutrition or edible content (e.g. fish heads) but crammed with formidably hot peppers. Also eaten extensively in various forms are plantains, a much starchier version of the familiar banana. This remarkably unbalanced diet is the object of some quite intensive, though still largely unsuccessful, national health education campaigns, as in Ghana, where the new leaders of the nation are exhorting their people to change these old and harmful eating habits and substitute new ones which will make better use of available protein, fruits, and other foods.

Food habits are among the most deeply-ingrained of all the habits one acquires from one's culture, and despite the strong urgings of their popular new voices of authority, Africans were still not rushing to increase their consumption of meat, fish, or fruit. By the same token, a violent change in food habits is one of the more "shocking" features of what is called "culture shock" and not many of our young Americans were quite ready to make steady fare out of the kenke, fufu, or gary which was set before them. They were comparatively happy with a dish like fried plantains, but only one or two unusually adaptable characters have reported getting fond of any other African dishes. Confronted with African food, most of our Crossroaders did the best they could with it and then secretly or semi-secretly eked out with supplies of chocolate, tinned cheese, tinned biscuits, or other similar edibles which were apparently consumed by some Africans, because they were almost always available in local village stores. The Crossroaders who did this, however, felt they were betraying Crossroads and Africa, not to say the United States

of America. The big word was "culture-bound" and they gave themselves a hard time with it. As time passed, however, some of these more refined inhibitions wore off, views about food became more vocal, and conflicts over it more open. I have the impression that most of the groups ended up by managing to have mostly Western-style food, but still, on the list of things that Crossroaders said they had "liked least" about the whole project, food led all the rest.

The physical effects of this "failure" were often uncomfortable and distressing but - as far as I know - minor. The psychological effects are another matter and seem to me to call for some small reflection, both as a practical problem for Crossroads and as an aspect of intercultural experience. Experimenting with a different diet is certainly part of the discovery of a foreign culture. Staying with it for any extended period of time, however, surely should be a matter of taste or necessity. As we all know, some cuisines have leaped cultural barriers with great success. Nobody who has his intercultural culinary adventures among the French, the Italians, or the Chinese has any of these problems. But generally speaking, people tend to remain attached to their own food tastes and habits - be they the overcooked meats, thick sauces and gelatin-wrapped vegetables of the American Great Plain (otherwise known as "good home cooking"), the blubber of the Eskimo, the curry of the Indian, or the starch of the African. It is not a bad thing to be flexible about these matters, but it is absurd for anybody to feel - as some Crossroaders did - that he is a

kind of ethnocentric boor because he prefers his own kind of food, or, for that matter, likes one kind and does not like another. This is partly a matter of taste, and taste is partly a matter of one's culture, and let not the emergent American be the only man so poor that he does not have, by right, a taste and a culture of his own.

I observe with some interest that in our society, and especially among our earnest interculturalists, only those who have made a religious or communal fetish out of their food habits really get away with insisting upon their preferences. We go out of our way to help a religious Moslem or Jew avoid pork and to get our Hindu visitors their vegetable plates, and a large part of our dininghall and restaurant culture goes out of its way to help some people eat only fish on Fridays. On the other hand, some of our Crossroaders were ready to charge themselves with food-chauvinism because they did not care to eat fermented yams and could not down some palate-burning sauce. Some of my most highly-esteemed Crossroaders looked at me askance when I said they were practicing unnecessary hair-shirtism. I think they got over it, but for future reference by Crossroads, let me insist here on my point.

It seemed to me that some sensible balance could be struck as between the American and African partners in each group for some cheerful mutual experimenting, some compromises, and some more or less regular routine in a reasonably fair give-and-take arrangement of the daily menus, without involving either feelings of guilt on one side, or rejection on the other. There could obviously be no fancy foods of any kind on Crossroad tables - the larder had to be

designed for sustenance and low exchequer - but there was no virtue in trying to live on a diet that earnest health officials in West Africa are condemning every day as inadequate and injurious and to make a great intercultural issue out of doing so. In this respect, as in so many others, real success in an intercultural encounter is not realized by trying on some false masks to make one look as much as possible like the other fellow, but by being oneself.

Servants and Women: There were two other subjects that kept coming up in our conversations about the summer in Africa. One was the status of servants, menials, and indeed, all kinds of subordinates in African life:

"The relations to servants bothered me, the children and teen-age girls in one home we stayed in were fed scraps after we ate. We couldn't stand the system, and we said it would have to be different while we were there..."

In another country:

"They treat servants horribly. They need force, they tell you, and even say they are not human. They yell at them and call them names..."

And in still a third:

"I did not like the treatment of inferiors in the social set-up - waiter, servants, store clerks, all who were not students or people in the higher echelons..."

The other matter was the status of women. Wherever they went in West Africa, Crossroaders found that it was the women who did most of the work and had the fewest rights and privileges. In Ghana and Nigeria women had begun to enter political life, but it was plain that in the society at large they still occupied a place in the scheme of things that was essentially menial. Observed one

young man who was in Guinea:

"You just couldn't get past some of the culture and its customs, the customs about the diets and some of the sexual mores, for example the belief that during pregnancy sexual activity should be continued to 'feed' the child, but during nursing for two years, no sex relations of any kind are permitted. The men had other wives, but what about the women!"

Or this, from a Negro girl who was in Nigeria:

"The low status of women, I didn't like that at all. I felt such a great contrast between myself and all the women, even among the politicians at the House of Assembly. I think of their polygamous society, and I think it is better for a man to have one free and independent woman than many who are not free and not independent. The men wanted to buy me. It is hard to conceive of someone wanting to buy you as a wife after seeing you for only five minutes, and this was right in Lagos too!"

Or finally a sharp vignette of a scene witnessed by a girl in Sierra Leone:

"In a fishing village a man had beaten a woman and she was bleeding. She ran down the road, but all the people made her go back. She was treated just like an animal. I didn't like it."

Inward Thoughts: Out of all the strangeness, the sparseness and the harshness of the life, all the problems of backwardness, out of the unspoken tensions, and out of past notions or emotions suddenly revived, there came unbidden thoughts into the minds of some of our Crossroaders. They began to appear in some of my conversations with some of these young men and women after we were all back from Africa. In the middle of some talk with one of them, these words suddenly came tumbling out:

"I discovered I'm a lot more culture-bound than I thought I was. The more I saw Africans, the more I couldn't help feeling that they were pretty backward, they were really

so far behind in everything. I thought a lot about the problem of different levels of culture and tried to explain it to myself...I think I even felt uneasily that maybe in some way they were inferior, and this feeling worried me. Since I've been back, I have just pushed that feeling away and gone back to thinking about Africa and Africans the way I did before we went, all wonderful and exciting."

During the ensuing weeks late in each interview, I repeated these remarks to dozens of Crossroaders. I asked if they thought anyone in their groups might have felt this way, or anything like it. Most of them thought someone had, or that someone might have. A few immediately nominated themselves. Whichever way they came, the answers ranged widely among a great many of the summer's hitherto unspoken thoughts. Here is a selection of examples:

"Yes, one fellow said something like this, that he couldn't help but feel that our culture is superior, just look at these people, still doing things the same way as they did hundreds of years ago..."

"Probably so, several of the girls, but I never talked to members of the group about anything like this..."

"I don't really know. This might have run through their minds. We really didn't know about the holding of such opinions. You can't judge people by their culture. That's the way they want to live, it's their way...I did wonder why these people had lived like this for centuries, why hadn't they done things for themselves, why didn't they build that wall themselves, the wall we built. I really wondered about this. On the other hand, we do have to ask if all our gains make a better individual...I'm really talking in circles..."

"I don't have any problem worrying about inferiority. I don't know why the African did not advance as fast technically as the West did. I don't know the answer to this, but I am more interested in seeing things go well now for these people. As for religion, I talked to a fetish priest, and I was amazed at his answers to my questions. His opinions were really not very far from my own."

"In my way of thinking, when I see things in a culture that I frown upon, I try also to see the things which we had either lost or don't have at all. I think of the

Africans' pace of life, the way people smile and greet you, not like in New York..."

"I felt many times myself that they were inferior, and I still do. I mean at the work level, in efficiency. I don't think of any other respects. Culturally, they're just different. What is civilization? How do you judge it? All people are superior or inferior in some ways. You see a thing like this through your own values."

"There are many reasons why people are backward. One can rationalize. They have been kept down, they have been suppressed. But still, why? Why the stench, why the dirt, the offensive odors. I just couldn't adjust to them. I disliked walking through the streets and the markets. Though I appeared to like it, I never really adjusted to it."

"I don't recognize any feeling like this. Any member of our group might have felt this way. It might have been hard for some people to accept the differences, the carrying things on heads, the polygamy. Even I felt I'd rather roll things along in a wheelbarrow than carry it on my head. Inferior, yes, as far as background is concerned. Living in an advanced society is superior for me, but I didn't feel superior to any African as a person."

Self-Esteem: Out of these answers peer some of the confusions and perplexities of the emergent American. There is no single formula for sorting them out, much less resolving them. But I believe we come here to the heart of the learning experience of these Cross-rovers during their African summer, and I must try to clarify it a little if I can.

I have called these young men and women emergent Americans. I mean that they are emerging, along with most of the rest of the world, into a whole new set of tasks and relationships. They are ready to begin seeing the new shape of things on the globe and in human affairs. They carry with them a heavy burden from the past, but they are quite ready to move from new thresholds to join with

other people in this difficult business of making the world over. This is why, in essence, they found their way through Crossroads to Africa. They wanted a closer look at things that were changing. They were filled with a great wish to "relate" to other people in a new way. They wanted to "understand" and be "understood" by Africans. They wanted to respect Africans. They wanted, with all their might, not to think ill of them or of their culture just because they were different. This was the great ethnocentric sin of the fathers and they were bent on shriving themselves of it. To this end they were ready to go just about as far as they could go in the opposite direction to accept the other fellow on his own terms.

As I hope these pages have shown, they succeeded to a remarkable extent. In their own modest way, they shared a new experience of contact across a pretty formidable cultural line. But in the process they also found themselves assailed by all these strong negative and rejecting views about much of what they saw and encountered. These feelings created in them a great dismay and confusion. That was why they discussed them so little or not at all among themselves. They wanted not to acknowledge them, to push them away - "I've gone back to thinking about Africa and Africans the way I did before we went, all wonderful and exciting." In fact, the Crossroader who opened this discussion with that troubled outburst about being "culture-bound", said to me some time later: "You know, I think that had a little more time gone by, I never would have said what I said at all. I would have put it entirely out of my head." But these things were and are in quite a few of these heads, and it is

needful to have them out for an airing.

I would begin by sorting two things out of this dismay and confusion. The first was the troubling discovery that some individuals made that negative and distasteful things could revive notions and habits of mind that they thought they had discarded forever - "I even felt that maybe in some way they were inferior." This was, indeed, a very dismaying thought for a Crossroader to have especially if it meant something about racial or biological inferiority. That is why it induced the guilt that led to repression and silence. If it was this kind of notion, it taught the individual that he could not quite discard old habits of mind, as he did old clothes. But, as everyone knows or should know by now, not facing an unbidden thought will not make it go away. I know one Crossroader who had brought himself to the edge of serious trouble because he had not, for many months, been able to talk openly about his most inward reactions to his African exposure. It had become extremely important for him to look squarely at his own feelings and to begin the process of revising them by first acknowledging what they were.

But more commonly - and this brings me to the second point - when they uneasily faced the sensation of feeling that something African was "inferior", more of the Crossroaders were thinking not of race or biology, but of things that could be judged quite differently, such as levels of education and economic development, sanitation, diet, the conditions of life. The point is that by every value and standard which the American deems important, these things

are bad, they are undesirable, they are negative, damaging to human decency and progress, and that one is entitled to think so clearly and firmly without regard to anyone's race, creed, color, or national sensitivity and, where it is important to do so, to confront the matter fairly and to speak about it plainly. This applies not only to the "hard" stuff of the standard of living, but to the "soft" side as well, such matters as relationships between people, the status of women, the measure of freedom in politics.

Over-timorousness in this respect is likely to make people forget that the emergent African feels exactly the same way about virtually all of the same things. He too is dedicated to wiping out poverty, raising his people up and out of the swamps of backwardness. Moreover, if he wants to carry them with him into the middle of the twentieth century, he knows that a good part of their traditional culture will have to be swept out of their way. A lot of sententious moralizing goes on about materialism and gadget culture, but I do not know of any emergent nationalist movement in Africa or anywhere else that does not say its program is to industrialize, modernize, uproot and transform. The struggle between modernism and traditionalism, between motion and stagnation, is, after all, the major content of the national and social revolutions now convulsing the greater part of the world. This is what all the shooting is really about.

But it would be much too simple for the emergent African and the emergent American to see eye to eye, even on those things they agree about. I hope it is obvious that there are all kinds of

emergent Africans and all kinds of emergent Americans, and that the whole truth is a much more complex weave than one can try to trace in a few words. But let me here stand far enough back and run the familiar risk of over-generalizing for the sake of getting an impression of what some of the over-all pattern looks like. The emergent African and the emergent American, I am saying, reach their near-common position from different directions and arrive there in rather different postures. This applies to more than the great questions of political method, path of change and development, kind of institutions. For the emergent American comes into this new environment with a heavy burden of guilt. He carries a share of the burden of historic responsibility for all that Western white men were and did in the world, including Africa. He carries even a larger share of guilt for those things in his own society that so directly affect his relations with the African black man. Partly this is wealth - vis-a-vis the have-nots of the world, the young emergent American feels in a way like the grandsons of the old capitalist robber barons, he has gains to redivide, old sins to expiate. But sharper and deeper than this - because hardly any Crossroader could really feel, in a personal sense, sinfully rich - is his part of the burden of American racism. This is a real burden, and he takes it upon himself, the Negro American and the white American, each in his own way. Hence he comes into his encounter with the African with the humility of a person who feels he has to prove his own bona fides.

This emergent African, on the other hand, is a man driven most

of all by the great need to reassert himself and by an unfulfilled hostility toward the Western white world which he both hates and wants to emulate. As a result, he is defensive, even about the things he is intent upon changing. He is a man who suffers from great vulnerabilities, about himself, his history, his culture, and about how all of these things have been seen in the eyes of others. Within his own walls he is full of passion to retrieve, regain, change, transform. But in this moment of his emergence, face to face with the Westerner - and especially the American - he defends it all, including everything he does not really want to defend. For this reason, his best defense, of course, is attack, and heaven knows there is enough for him to attack. In the face of this attack, the American, full of guilt and humility, yields. He does not counter-attack because he fears that if he does, he will not show the African the respect he feels he owes him or the care for his feelings that he wants to have. The result is that he often simply accepts some self-serving African exaggerations, e.g., that all of Africa's troubles stem from colonialism, or the idea that the path to more freedom lies through less freedom, or that customs that violate his idea of the dignity and worth of the individual have to be approved just because they exist in somebody else's culture. My argument is that by this combination of impulses and surrenders, the emergent American neither wins nor relieves the African. He succeeds only in confusing and disarming himself.

It is not so much a method of counter-attack that the emergent

American needs but a new way of achieving a fair confrontation of values and goals between members of societies that are all in the process of change. He has to learn how to be unsparingly critical of himself without being too uncritical of others. He certainly has to reject those things in his own society which need to be rejected and changed. But he also has to be proud of those things in his society of which he has a right to be proud. The ethnocentrism of the fathers assigned all virtue to themselves, but the cultural ultra-relativism of the sons threatens to err just as badly in surrendering all virtue to others or suggesting that anything goes. It is a good thing to be getting rid, at last, of the ethnocentric absurdities we have inherited. But this cannot be made to mean that we also get rid of our essential commitments to our own values, our right to have our judgments about ways of life and human relations. It simply means that we have got to learn to hold these values and rights in a new way.

This is a time when all cultures, all societies, all men are going through a time of vast change in all their mutual relationships. This means, among other things, that we are all rearranging the truths and falsities in the ways that we see each other, and ourselves. This makes for more communication between different kinds of men, but let no one think it is easier to communicate now than it was in the days when we had each other and ourselves in the fixed focus of the old power relations and the old stereotypes. Everything is blurred now, moving, changing, full of the grimaces of violence and high and deep emotion, and without symmetry, order, or sweet reason.

This may be difficult and unpleasant, but that's the way it is. The problem, amid all this heaving ground, is to find the solid place that we stand on, and then to see how things look from there.

Emergent Africans and Asians, emerging from the long epoch of their subjection, are massively engaged in re-establishing and re-creating their identities, their self-respect, their self-esteem. All Western men, coming out of their long epoch of mastery, have to do likewise, for they will not simply fade away or, I hope, become subjects in their turn. The great positive achievements of Western European civilization have to be carried in some new form into the new epoch and the task of doing this now rests, for the moment, in the hands of the emergent American. To arm himself for it, what he needs most of all is to re-define, re-establish, and re-locate his values, his identity, his judgments - to create, in short, a new kind of American self-esteem.

III

SOME PROBLEMS

1. The "Best" and the "Worst"

The great mass of the Crossroaders performed through the summer with notable success. Some, of course, performed better than others. A few performed quite badly, and a few were total failures. In an attempt to locate these best and worst performers, I asked the 14 group leaders to rate their individual members by a list of characteristics indicating their effectiveness in the group, on the work project, and in their adjustment to the African environment and their relations with Africans both on and off the worksites. From those who were rated "excellent" on all or most of these items, the leaders were asked to sort out those who were so good that they would, in the leader's opinion, qualify as future Crossroads leaders. From among those rated "poor" they were asked to indicate those who were so poor that they should not, in the leader's opinion, have been selected for Crossroads in the first place. By this means, with the kind cooperation of the leaders, I assembled a list of 31 of the "best" and the remarkably low total of 13 of the "worst".

The "best" were mostly singled out for such qualities as maturity, balance, and cheerful adaptability to Crossroads conditions. Of the "worst", nine were said to be unable to get along with their groups,

two were marked down for inability to adjust to African conditions, and two were mentally or emotionally disturbed. Only two of the 13 failed badly enough to be sent home before the summer was over; one was a young man who took ill at the very outset and was flown home after the first two weeks, and the second was a mentally ill boy whose condition was not recognized at first and who was shipped home in midsummer when he began to act quite erratically. A third individual, after a strained summer, blew up in a combination of physical and emotional disturbance at the very end, failed to board the homebound charter plane and had to be repatriated separately some days later.* Even taken at full face value, the judgment that there were only 13 failures in a group of 183, and of these only three or four really critical, stands as a considerable tribute to the success of Crossroads as a group enterprise. I took a closer look at this judgment, however, and some of the results of this scrutiny are worth some mention.

I lined up the "best" and the "worst" and began to examine them for any identifying marks or characteristics that might help future selectors for Crossroads (or any other such enterprise) make

*Neither in this case nor in that of the young man sent home for mental illness in midsummer, was Crossroads informed of any previous history of mental or emotional disturbance and psychiatric treatment. The screening process and recommendations in these instances failed to turn up this essential information. As suggested during the summer to the Director, one safeguard against this contingency would be a declaration in the application to be sworn and signed by the applicant and the parent or guardian where necessary, absolving Crossroads of all financial or other responsibility for any outcome where information about previous need for psychiatric care has not been disclosed.

their choices. My information about these individuals consisted of some personal knowledge of some of them, from interviews and from encounters with them and their groups in Africa, and for almost all of them, what they had put down in their application forms and in the battery of tests and papers taken for the purposes of this study at the beginning and again at the end of the summer.

Out of all this, I must report, came no ready-made scores, signs or portents, no simple litmus test or Geiger counter for sorting out the good risks from the bad. There were only a few suggestive glimmers. By most of the available criteria, the "best" and the "worst" had a lot more in common than otherwise. With regard to most of them, it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that the judgments which nominated these "worst" and "best" depended rather less on the performance of the individual Crossroader and rather more on the personality and performance of the individual group leader.

In most readily identifiable respects, the "worst" at rough glance followed pretty much the profile of the group as a whole. There were a few exceptions. Two, for example, were older women who at 32 and 35 had apparently not been able to integrate very successfully with their younger comrades. This does not necessarily suggest a rule about age, for there were two men similarly older who got along very well, one of them, in fact, winning nomination from his leader to be one of the "best." Similarly, it can be noted that the one serious mental case to whom we have already referred was only 17, at the youngest end of the age spread. On the other hand, there were several others in the same age bracket who seem to have passed all the summer's tests quite

well.

Despite this, however, it does seem to make sense to suggest to Crossroads that the age restrictions be held quite firmly between 18 and 25.

Secularites and Religionists: A second difference in the look of the profile is faint but may seem more significant. I have already remarked that there was in the Crossroads group a fairly heavy stress on religious motivation, or at least a religious source for being "service-oriented". At the very least, this tended to make for individuals more strongly impelled to "get along" and "do the right thing" and perhaps, also, to repress more successfully any open expression of discontent or dissatisfaction, especially within the group itself. On the surface, at least, and especially from the leader's standpoint, this tended to make the religiously-minded individual a better "group" member than his more secular-minded partner. It is rather striking to note that while the "best" and the "worst" were much alike in the matter of religious self-identification - they came from all groups, Roman Catholic through varieties of Protestant to Jewish and "none" - they differed as groups in describing their reasons for coming with Crossroads. Of the 31 "best", 14 gave an explicitly religious cast to their statement of purpose; of the 13 "worst" only one did so. The rest framed themselves in more broadly humanistic or political interests.

Here again, however, I think it would be rash to jump from this narrow ledge of facts toward conclusions that may be a lot further

away than they look. There were many secularly-oriented individuals who performed either creditably or quite successfully as Crossroaders, and perhaps an equal number of more religiously-oriented individuals who were satisfactory but not the most conspicuously successful in their groups. In the three groups I studied most directly, the difference arising out of the varying religious and secular accents were minor, muted, and mixed. They seemed to affect somewhat the clustering of friendships within the groups. It was also noticeable that some of the more secular-minded types seemed to be more successful in relating to Africans than some of the religious types. In one instance, a seriously religious young American was troubled to find that some of the young African students were Christians more by rote than by conviction and he had great difficulty in discussing the matter with them. In other instances, however, it would have been hard to establish that religion or non-religion had anything to do with the case.

From the papers of members of other Crossroads groups came only an occasional echo of small frictions arising out of some being more and some being less religious. But there was only one issue of this kind that was serious, and this bore more on Crossroads policy than on the behavior of particular individuals. The members of one group found that their project was to build a chapel in a missionary compound and that they were also expected to conform to the mission's rules about such things as drinking and smoking. Several members of the group objected to this situation as a matter of principle. This group had many problems, and some of its members were not among Crossroads' most successful choices, but in this matter it did not seem excessive of them to expect that they would have some option about

accepting or not accepting a project of this kind. It so happens that in this particular case, the leader nominated only one member of his group for the "worst", and he did so for quite other reasons than those we are discussing here. But the incident does illustrate my suggestion that the secularites were in general much less likely to contain their discontents, much more likely to speak out in criticism and challenge. Since the "failure" in some of these cases may not have been much more than a "failure" to get along with the leader, this difference in religious outlook may have been important in locating such individuals among the leader-chosen "worst" in their groups.

Authoritarians and Xenophiles: Another interesting kind of inconclusiveness turned up in the results of a test* designed to identify individuals as more or less "authoritarian" and more or less "xenophile". This test combined a part of the "F Scale" developed by Adorno et al in The Authoritarian Personality and the "Xenophile Scale" (XPL for short) devised by Howard V. Perlmutter, formerly of the Center for International Studies and the Menninger Clinic. Perlmutter combined these two instruments to see what links there might be between authoritarian traits and reactions to things foreign. The test calls upon the subject to register the extent of his agreement or disagreement with a series of categoric or sweeping statements (e.g., "People can be divided into two distinct classes, the weak and the strong" and "Most European girls make better wives than American girls.")

* Scored and analyzed by Arnold R. Isaacs

Since "high authoritarianism" (or High F) as defined here is associated with strong ethnocentrism, rigidity, and bigotry, and "low authoritarianism" with what Adorno called the "democratic" personality, it could be safely predicted that the self-selectees who came forward for Crossroads would be overwhelmingly "low authoritarian," or Low F - and so they were, 135 out of 177 tested. Similarly, "high xenophilism" (or High XPL) implies a high degree of readiness to stereotype, whereas "low xenophilism" (Low XPL) suggests some greater degree of self-esteem, or at least a greater unwillingness to accept sweepingly favorable statements about large groups of foreigners. By these definitions, the bulk of the Crossroaders could be expected to be Low XPL - and so they were, 116 out of 177 tested.

"The low-authoritarian low-xenophile is assumed to be more likely to be an 'equalitarian' personality. His disagreement with xenophilic items does not imply that the domestic way of life is favored over the foreign. It is expected that he is unwilling to draw comparisons between typical Americans and other foreigners because he sees people as essentially equal or too varied to compare."*

I am quite sure that the 105 Crossroaders who showed up as Low F - Low XPL (they would total 115 if you arbitrarily assigned to Low XPL the ten others who scored zero, or just on the line between high and low) will be most happy to recognize themselves in this portrait.

But the interesting thing is that when we plotted the scores on these tests for the two groups, the "best" and the "worst", and laid them side by side on a piece of graph paper, they looked pretty much

*Howard V. Perlmutter, "Correlates of Two Types of Xenophilic Orientation", Journal of Abnormal Psychology 52:1 January 1956, Page 130

alike. There did not appear to be much meaningful difference between the two assortments of high and low authoritarians and high and low xenophiles. A longer look did bring a few small differences into view. Among the "worst", for examples, there was one High F - High XPL character who shot right up out of the groups limits to the highest scores in all Crossroads, highest authoritarian and highest xenophile - and he turned out to be the mental case who had to be shipped home in mid-summer. But even he was different only by the height he reached on the graph; there was a high-high among the "best" too, though he was much less high than his unfortunate counterpart. Another difference of some possible meaning was the appearance among the "best" of six Low F-High XPL types, while among the "worst" there was only one. This low authoritarian high xenophile type, says Perlmutter, is "the most likely to make generalizations about the positive attributes of foreigners and the negative attributes of domestic people." This suggests that there may have been a somewhat more common tendency among the "best" to be more enthusiastic about the Africans, or at least to be seen in this way by their leaders. On the other hand, it has to be noted that more than a third of the "best" scored within two points or less of zero on the XPL scale. In other words, whether plus or minus, many of them were far from extreme in their views.

What all this seems to tell us is that while the authoritarian-xenophile scale can tell us quite a bit about the kind of volunteers who come forward for an enterprise like Crossroads (and many of the same will offer themselves for the Peace Corps), it does not predict their performance in the field. One can safely suggest that the high

authoritarian type is not a good candidate, whether for Crossroads or the Peace Corps, or for that matter, for any kind of service abroad except possibly military service in time of war. Beyond that, success or failure is clearly a question of characteristics that are not measured on this particular scale. This may be a negative finding, but it is not, I trust, without value.

In any event, it takes us a short way into an examination of what I believe to be the most important of all the ingredients in determining the success or failure of any individual in an intercultural contact, viz., his view of himself and his own culture. This particular test does not do the job for us. It is too crude, it sorts out some of the extremes of the matter, but tells us nothing about the subtler aspects of the problem or those all-important in-between shadings between philism and phobism where most of our answers must lie.

2. The Leaders

In relation to our group of "bests" and "worsts", my doubts ran not only to the particular test, but also to the quality of the judgments about "bad" and "good" which were made here in the first place. These doubts are based on some personal knowledge of some of the Crossroads and some of the leaders involved.

One of these leaders was, by all accounts, perhaps the most ineffectual leader in the entire project. He was chosen on the basis of an impressive personal record which, however, turned out to provide nothing that met Crossroads needs. It would be impossible to accept

his judgment about individual members of his group without close and critical examination.

In a second case, the "worst" was a young man with a strong impulse to dominate and manipulate people around him. He succeeded in doing so to the extent that he split his group into "factions" one of which was named for him, the other for the leader. The leader of his group was apparently quite unable to establish or maintain the minimum authority that would have made it impossible for him to perform as he did. It seems clear from the accounts (available to me only at secondhand) that this was a young man with some troublesome characteristics. It seems equally clear, however, that a stronger leader would have put a halter on him. He might not have been a satisfactory work camper, but he would not have been allowed to disrupt the whole group.

A third instance illustrates even more plainly how a meeting of weaknesses can result in costly failure. This was the case of a young woman who had some difficulty all summer in getting along with her leader. But so did virtually all the other members of her group. Seven out of ten of them referred to their problems with the leader in the reports they wrote for this study at the summer's end. A few days before departure for home, at the assembly point where several of the groups had gathered for the return trip, the young woman took ill. She had symptoms of pain and temperature, as did several others at the same time; it was either the effect of another diet change or an outcropping of tension and excitement. The others rested, were tended, and got over it. But because her group leader

in anger and disgust, had simply washed his hands of her and paid no attention to her problem, this young woman was left isolated. She managed to get herself alone into the care of outside medical authorities, worked herself into a highly disturbed state, and refused to accompany the group onto the plane for the trip home. There was at this point a rather general failure of leadership in the situation. It proved impossible to win her back to a more relaxed condition and no one was able to take the responsibility for taking her aboard the plane despite her complaints and her high agitation. She had to be left behind and repatriated a few days later at painfully high cost to the project. It seemed clear, from her own behavior and some of the things she said in the stress of the situation, that this was a disturbed young woman - and it was later asserted to a Crossroads official by a member of her family that she had a previous history of emotional upset and psychiatric care. But it also seems possible that handled with sympathy and attentive care by a more sensitive leader, these problems would not have surfaced the way they did, or at least could have been contained with much less trouble and cost.

There are grounds for suggesting that the problem of leader selection was much less successfully solved by Crossroads than that of student selection. By the leaders' judgment, there were but 13 "failures" out of a total of 183, but I fear that by the students' judgments, the showing of the 14 leaders would not prove nearly so good. I did not directly ask the students to "rate" their leaders, but in the "Trip Report", one of the papers which each student wrote for this study at

the end of the summer, there was a free opportunity to express views on all the project's pluses and minuses. This brought forth quite a sprinkle of observations, happy and unhappy, about the leaders. By these entries, it appears that in the opinion of the students, three of the leaders were excellent, three were good, two were fair to mediocre, three were poor, and three were downright bad.

On the "excellent" and "good" leaders, the comments dealt mostly with the way in which they related to the group - "the democratic way in which the group was run" - or to their skill and competence in dealing with problems - "constantly showed a great deal of common sense in unexpected and difficult situations."

Of the "fair to mediocre" types, students' comments touched more on a sense of a lack of leadership. On one of them: "I really can't say he was a leader. He was very non-directive. He took no responsibility, but acted as though he were just another work camper. Compared to some groups, we didn't do so bad. But he was an amiable nonentity." Of the second, there was this description, from one of his own most strongly-recommended "best" Crossroaders:

"He had a contribution to make in personality and sincerity, but as work-camp leader his skills were few, he had not working experience, he lacked drive and decisiveness, he had no real skill at deep level understanding and communication."

Of the "poor" leaders, here is a comment on one of them also by a Crossroader whom he chose as one of his "best": "There was difficulty in making group decisions. It was the failure of the leader to try to understand and respect the point of view of the members of the group,

resulting in a lack of confidence in him on the part of the members." Of the same leader another group member whom he also scored as being the "best" wrote of "the difficulties involved in working around the misperceptions of the leader concerning group dynamics."

Among the three downright "bad" leaders, one was a remarkably ineffectual man who was simply thrust aside by some of the more mature and aggressive members of his group. Since he happened also to be a disarmingly likeable fellow, he became more or less just another member of the group. In contrast to his easygoing passivity, the other two "bad" leaders were more unfortunate types who took refuge behind a high authoritarian wall, refusing to consult with their groups on day-to-day affairs and failing in every way to relate to the students as individuals. Of one of them, a mature Crossroader wrote: "He could not relate to the group. He set himself up as an authoritarian figure. It took quite a bit of psychology to talk to him and negotiate. This pulled the group apart at the seams and caused great frustration. He interpreted everything that was said as being against him. We never knew anything about the money position of the group. There was no channel for suggestions of any kind. We all called him Mr. --- . He lived apart from us. Members of the group went all kinds of separate ways and he would just blow up at them." Of the second, group members made these judgments: "He was really quite unreasonable, and then we would be unreasonable in turn." Or again: "I don't know why he was on the project. He didn't know how to get along with us at all."

As handed out by the Crossroaders themselves, the merits and demerits appear to be more or less equally distributed between men and

women. Of the six leaders who were rated "excellent" and "good", three were women. One of these women was successful, however, not only because of her great pluck, her charm and her good sense, but also because she was the very model of a mother figure and, in fact, the group called her "Mom". It is doubtful whether this was the particular kind of successful leadership that the project needed. A second of these successful women leaders started out with great drive, briefly lost contact with her group in the actual work camp situation and retrieved her success by boldly and openly tackling a condition of smouldering discontent among her group members. For the rest of the summer, she commanded their high regard and affection and led them through a most profitable learning experience. Several women among the less successful leaders, however, were described as having some difficulty in relating to their groups, especially to the girls. My material is insufficient, however, to support any general statement about women leaders. When the men were bad they were very, very bad and it seems that none of the women was as good as the best or as bad as the worst of the men.

The successful combination of verve, imagination, authority, sensitivity, intelligence, and respect for young adults is plainly not easy to find. Here again, there is no litmus test to help in the selection process. The evidence does suggest, however, that the better leader is more likely a man than a woman, a younger man rather than an older man, near enough in age to pitch in with the work and enjoy the more active parts of the fun, yet old enough to be plainly senior to the young adults in his charge. The ideal Crossroads leader is, then,

a senior younger man who knows and likes young people, who knows how to be careful without being over-cautious, how to deal sensitively with individual needs and problems while respecting the needs of the group. But above all, he has to know how to wield authority without being authoritarian, how to share with the group the discussion of problems, the planning of activity, and decisions where there are choices to be made. In addition to this, he must know how to meet the people and the tangibles and intangibles of the African situation with resourcefulness and intelligence. This is quite a fellow and he was not too common among the leaders of 1960 and will not be easy to find in any year. Yet the greatest effort must be made to do so, for if the 1960 experience showed anything, it showed that the quality of the leader is crucial to the group's success.

I regret that I cannot identify for Crossroads the particular signs by which such successful leader types can be identified and selected - this will have to remain largely a matter of the Director's instinct and judgment. But I can propose steps to help insure as far as possible that the leaders of 1961 can be brought to emulate the best deeds of the best leaders of 1960 and to avoid the most serious errors of the worst. I suggest that the conference or seminar of the 1961 leaders held prior to the orientation be heavily and primarily devoted to these matters. In addition to the regular organizational and health briefings, the program should be in effect a concentrated training session, led by an experienced group dynamics specialist or social group worker, bringing specific counsel, guidance, and direction along the following lines:

1 - that it is absolutely essential to successful group operation to include all its members in discussion, consultation, planning, decisions, and responsibility on matters relating to the work projects, schedules, organization of the work camp and its day-to-day tasks, travel, and group funds. The most successful groups in 1960 were those groups where this inner democracy was most successfully achieved. The least successful groups were those in which there was no inner democracy at all. This should not be left to the chance of a particular leader's personality, but should be made part of the operating principles of Crossroads, clear and explicit to all concerned. The leader has ultimate responsibility and should have the ultimate power of veto and decision, but he should operate in a way that requires him never to invoke it. This should be spelled out in detail for the 1961 leaders by the best of the 1960 leaders.

2 - that sensitivity be developed to the patterns of group experience, and that leaders be trained to recognize the most common stages of the process: (a) the initial period in which important patterns of behavior are set; (b) the initial euphoria, in which enthusiasm and acceptance of setbacks and difficulties is highest; (c) the period of reaction and negativism (it seemed to come in some cases after the first two or three weeks in the field, usually as part of the adjustment to the work camp situation); (d) the period of shakedown, readjustment, and solid acceptance of both problems and needs, resulting, if well handled, in a general re-establishment of morale and opening up the period of maximum learning and enjoyment of

the project. The period of reaction and negativism is the crucial testing time for the leader and the group. The leader has to be able to recognize it and react sensitively to it. He has to know how to lubricate the specific points of friction, how to bring all the accumulating issues out in a group setting, how to meet individual needs and problems while protecting the interests of the group. This is a critical part of the leader's responsibility and whatever the individual variations among the leaders, it should not be left to his chance discovery. It should be spelled out as concretely as possible by leaders who went through the experience in 1960.

Once again, it cannot be stressed too strongly: the quality of the leader is crucial to the group's success. The more suited he is by training and personality to the task, the better, but he should also be given the benefit of past experience to help him meet it.

3. Administration and Policies: Some Suggestions

As the organizers of Crossroads know only too well, administration was a major headache in the 1960 operation. Crossroads conducted a pilot operation in 1958, but it involved only 60 students in five countries. Crossroads 1960 was three times larger in numbers and went to ten countries. The organizing task was multiplied many more than three times, but it was carried out by virtually the same size staff. Every Crossroads group felt some of the effects of the difficulties and shortcomings and much has already been corrected for 1961 on the basis of what Dr. Robinson and his aides learned in 1960,

especially in the matter of spreading the work to a larger staff.

Dr. Robinson was the creator, leader, inspirer, enthuser of Crossroads. He raised money, recruited students and leaders, selected applicants, oriented them, bought airline tickets, allotted airplane seats, arranged about health precautions, established diplomatic and operating contacts with ten African governments, (and sometimes with several ministries in each one), and set up committees of American and African sponsors. In West Africa during the summer all he did was to visit nearly all the groups, deal with special problems that came up, iron out difficulties either with Africans or within the groups, return the hospitality of sponsors and other interested persons, keep liason with governments, embassies, and consulates, deal with the press, do broadcasts and interviews, and on Sundays preach as guest minister in African churches. In all this, Dr. Robinson was assisted only by Mrs. Robinson, by two senior assistants who served as headquarters men in Accra and Monrovia just for the summer, and one junior staff assistant. That Operation Crossroads came off in these circumstances not only without major mishap but with notable success was a miracle for which I am sure Dr. Robinson is ready to share credit with a Providence that was clearly intent on helping one of its own.

It is not part of our present task to pass in any detailed review the way in which Crossroads was organized and administered. There were certain aspects of this matter, however, which bore critically on the impact of the project and the experience of its participants. For this reason, and for whatever useful purpose it may serve, I have

presumed to set them down here as I observed them and to make certain suggestions of procedure and policy that arise out of them.

By far the most serious organizational problem had to do with setting up the work projects in the various countries. Both by correspondence and by sending emissaries on brief trips, Crossroads tried to make all the necessary advance arrangements. In many places, however, these proved to be either inadequate or non-existent. Some of this was due to insufficiently persistent Crossroads staff work, some of it to cross-cultural "misunderstandings" - i.e. differing interpretations of the meaning of the words "yes" and "no" and expectations of action to follow words. But no little part of the difficulty was also due to the delinquency or outright disinterest of African officials in some countries. For its own part in dealing with the problem, Crossroads is attempting to meet some of these difficulties by a much more sustained staff effort in the field during the spring of 1961 to ensure smoother operation next time. But this is not entirely a Crossroads problem, and it may be of some value to examine some of the elements involved as they emerged in the 1960 experience.

Self-Help: The core notion of the work-camp idea is not benefaction but participation in self-help. It was not always possible for Crossroads to observe this principle in West Africa last summer. To judge from the Crossroads experience, the idea of self-help has achieved some currency and enjoys some support only among some people in some countries. In Ghana, and somewhat more incipiently

in Nigeria, community development and welfare officials were themselves engaged in trying to stimulate self-help projects in the villages. They welcomed the chance to make Crossroads part of their program for the summer. In Ghana, for example, there is a Student Voluntary Work Camp Association which had laid out six projects of its own, and Crossroads was able to join in several of these. The Ministry of Welfare had a large campaign going along similar lines, and here too it was a matter of integrating the Crossroads group into an existing program. In Nigeria similar efforts were getting underway. These were not by any means large or major efforts as yet, but they did represent a baseline from which a common effort could be started. In Guinea there was a program called "human investment" for community work, though there was nothing very voluntary about it, and the Crossroads project was handled, for political reasons, in a somewhat special way. Elsewhere in West Africa, however, the idea of self-help had not yet displaced a much more eager interest in benefaction. In some places, especially in some of the newly-emergent ex-French countries, it was clear that the local people did not quite know what to make out of the groups of young Americans who appeared and said they wanted, of all things, to work. In Liberia, the local contribution to the Crossroads project was so minimal that it would have failed utterly if the local United States aid mission had not come unobtrusively to its logistical support. A Dahomey official appeared at a Crossroads evaluation session at the end of the summer and unsmilingly suggested that "next" time, Crossroads would do well to bring its own money for materials, or better

bring the materials themselves, bring more highly-skilled technicians to plan and execute the project, and, oh yes, it would be a good idea if they brought their own tents to sleep in too.

This attitude could not be wholly ascribed to African poverty; Africa is simply not that poor. It was much more a question of will and approach. The difficulties in some of the countries, especially the ex-French territories, may have been partly due to the confusion of this summer of transition - most of them acquired their independence at this very time. But I think it can be said that some of these difficulties were due rather less to the onset of African independence and rather more to the survival of African attitudes of dependence. In some of these situations Crossroads might hope to spur by example, perhaps act as a small catalyst, but, like sustaining an unrequited love, this is difficult to do. Some people can be spurred by example, but some of them must want to do the job themselves and put something into it, or else it is probably not worth doing.

At the very minimum, the hosts have to specify the job to be done and it should, most hopefully, be part of an ongoing self-help program or at least be intended to stimulate self-help enterprise as part of a larger community development program. This would be, again hopefully, the primary motivation of the students or villagers who come forward to work as the cooperating team. In addition, the hosts have to provide the needed materials and tools, and take the responsibility, through their own officials and overseers, to see the job through to completion. Wherever possible, it

should be a job that can be completed in the allotted time, precisely because it is intended as an example. Roofless cement block walls of a schoolhouse-that-was-to-have-been with the grass growing up around them or drainage ditches that have filled and disappeared, are not spurs to anybody's effort.

The hosts should also be expected to provide the transport needed for the project. In almost every country in 1960, Crossroads paid heavily - and more than heavily - for bus or truck transport which the hosts could very well have supplied themselves. At the end of a summer full of huzzas for friendly cooperation, for example, the authorities in Guinea presented the stunned Crossroads leader with a staggeringly high bill for the bus that had taken the group on a tour around part of the country. He did not have enough money left to pay even a fraction of it and the matter had to be negotiated amid much mutual embarrassment.

In sum, Crossroads needs to win through to a heavier stress on the cooperative nature of the undertaking. This lesson has been learned, sometimes harshly, by the United States government in its years of extensive aid to a variety of emergent countries, and it is not helpful to lard the matter over with loose and woolly phrases about "goodwill" or "strings". There is very little support in history for the notion that he who gives is really blessed anywhere except, perhaps, in heaven where true disinterestedness can be presumably identified. The more important truth is that he who receives without giving is damned, damned to suffer all the deforming effects of dependence and gratitude. Whether it be multi-billion

dollar government aid programs, the Peace Corps, or a little private enterprise like Crossroads, the same rule holds: blessed is not the benefactor but he who participates with all his might in self-help.

Self-Help for Crossroads: There were a few respects in which Crossroads itself could have done last summer with more self-help of its own. Owing only partly to inadequate advance arrangements, some groups found themselves at the outset with serious lacks in eating arrangements, whether in supply of food or means of preparing and eating it. There was no common pattern about this and the details varied widely from place to place, but there were enough emergencies or near-emergencies to warrant some special thought being given to this matter.

Unless future advance understandings are vastly more detailed and better-realized than they are likely to be, I believe that any group that expects to move to places without built-in eating facilities (e.g., as at a school, college or university) should be supplied with a few basic items of cooking equipment of its own. These could include a large frying pan, a large pot, one or more large kettles or other vessels for boiling water, and possibly even a portable stove. Each Crossroader should be required, against this kind of contingency, to carry a messkit of his own. In some of the cases I observed, it would also have been a great boon if groups starting off to their worksites carried with them a few items for a basic larder, a case or two of tinned beef and vegetables and

coffee or tea, sufficient to get them started until they established sources of supply at or near the worksite. Since the groups usually moved by bus or truck from assembly points to the worksites, this would not have presented much of a transport problem and could have helped to solve some of the hard details of settling into the work-camp situation and organizing it for the duration.

Hours on the Job: The work project rightly held central place in the Crossroads operation; the Crossroads conception was primarily fulfilled by common work of Americans and Africans on a job that needed doing and this made the work project the core and focus of the whole affair. At the same time, there was some need to recognize that not all the fellowship nor all the learning nor mutual discovery could take place while hauling or making bricks, flinging rocks or dirt, or swinging axes or picks. At some of the worksites I visited, the concentration on the work was so great that there was almost no time at all left for anything else. The working day would begin at about 7 A.M. and not end until about 6 P.M., with breaks for meals, but hardly leaving enough time or energy to wash dirty clothes, much less poke around in the village, meet and talk to people, or just relax with fellow work-campers. By contrast, at other groups where the day was more sensibly divided, the opportunities for contact were more plentiful. In such cases, the work-day ran from 6 or 7 A.M. to 1 or 2 P.M. leaving the afternoon and early evening free for these other activities. This timetable plainly gave the group a much more fruitful and satisfactory time of it,

and is strongly urged upon all future groups.

Linked to this is the matter of creating opportunities to allow individuals to get away from the group from time to time. In one of the most successful of all the 1960 groups, individuals went on detached assignments to attend student conferences as representatives of the group, to meet dignitaries, to engage in special programs. In several groups, some of the most memorable individual experiences were visits to homes of African fellow work-campers, made in ones or twos. A certain amount of plain "free time" away from the group ought to be planned whenever possible on some kind of rotated basis fair to all. The group served as home and haven for all Crossroaders but it was also confining; a little time away from it helped enormously.

The African Partners: It proved to be no easy matter for Crossroads to have cooperating teams of Africans made up of students of the appropriate age and educational levels. There are only four universities in West Africa (at Ibadan, Western Nigeria, Accra in Ghana, Freetown in Sierra Leone, and Dakar in Senegal) and in some countries such students were simply not available. Where students were to be found, there were a few calendar conflicts with examination periods or different vacation schedules, and in some cases students had either family or other work obligations to claim them. But in addition to these limiting considerations, there were others of a more inward nature. African students still do not come tumbling out at the call to do manual labor for

the good of the community. As we have remarked elsewhere in this report, the dignity and worth of common labor was still one of the major lessons that participating Africans learned from their Crossroads experience.

The result of all this was that only a few groups had a small number of university students as African partners. It was far more common to have secondary school students, most of whom were rather younger than a majority of the Crossroaders, and all of whom were at rather different academic levels. In Guinea, the work crew that was mustered up for the project by the authorities consisted almost entirely of young people whose schooling consisted only of the primary grades and some work in vocational or trade training schools. Some were illiterate, and some could not speak French. Other groups worked for periods of time with cooperating groups of African villagers, and in a few cases also had local hired hands, e.g. masons, working with them. In the English-speaking countries it was generally possible to have a certain amount of communication with these individuals beyond the smiling-laughing-joking stage. There is a great deal to be learned and gained even from non-verbal communication, including often a warmth of feeling and even great mutual affection, but a common language does help, and some common level of perception helps even more. This is not something that Crossroads can always or often govern, but the maximum effort has to be made in every case to ensure that the cooperating teams of Africans include at least some who stand at approximately the same age and school levels as the Crossroaders.

In this same connection, the nature and extent of contact between the Americans and Africans also varied widely from group to group. In the best instances in Ghana and Nigeria, the African work-camp team and the American work-camp team simply coalesced, bunking and messing together as well as working and travelling together. In other cases, the African fellow work-campers were on hand only during working hours and then separated for the night. In Guinea, for example, the authorities not only established separate quarters about half a mile or so apart, but even laid on a curfew for the African students which curtailed free-time contact in the evenings. In Liberia, the African participants in the work camp were rotated every week, which meant that it was barely possible for Americans and Liberians to get acquainted before the contact ended. In quite a number of cases, contact between the Americans and other Africans, e.g. the villagers and townspeople, was something less than adequate, either for lack of time or lack of initiative on either side. This, too, is a matter that should not be left quite so much to chance.

The French

The French-Speakers: In the French-speaking countries, communication was more difficult at best, i.e., even when the Crossroaders could speak enough French, which was not often enough. Those who could speak a little French suffered from the usual inhibitions in the presence of those who could speak it well. Those who could speak no French at all were severely handicapped. Crossroads had a real problem of numbers and capacities in this respect, but it is most

strongly urged - from the experience of too many non-French-speaking Crossroaders who found themselves in French-speaking countries - that the language requirement be more tightly observed. Those who are sent to French-speaking areas should be chosen only from those who can demonstrate a fair ability to communicate in French.

Travel: One of the most uneven of all the summer's experiences, as among the various groups, was the amount of travel to different places while they were in Africa. Crossroaders were told that as far as possible they would have some travel within their host country and, if opportunity offered, to at least one neighboring country. Quite a few of the groups managed to fulfill this compact at least in some part during the summer. Many groups travelled quite a bit, but a few travelled very little, and their unhappiness over this fact emerged rather clearly from their trip reports. Interest in travel was not - as was sometimes intimated when the matter became an issue - a lapse into privatism and pleasure-seeking. It was an important part of the experience to see some of the varieties of African land, life, and people. It provided opportunities to contrast at first hand the stages of modernism, transition, and primitivism that mark all the emergent African societies. It gave the students a chance to compare or contrast conditions in the ex-British and ex-French territories. For the groups that travelled and had these experiences, the summer's value was enormously enhanced. The two or three groups that failed

to have enough of this experience were to this extent deprived. The reasons for this failure varied. It was left largely up to the individual leader and the way the group budget was managed. Some groups did very well indeed as a result of intelligent leadership and common planning, consensus, and cooperative action. In some others, however, whether through bad money management or through limitations of the leaders, it did not work out nearly as well. It is urged, therefore, that the matter of travel not be left as an option subject to wayward circumstances, but be seen as a definitely-committed part of the summer's plan for each group. This would establish it more firmly and reduce the danger of failure through the mischance of a leader's perverseness or mismanagement.

The Orientation: The most important function of the orientation week in New York was to bring all the Crossroaders together, give the groups a chance to get acquainted, to lay the basis for the summer's program, and, indeed, to begin having the first of the summer's new experiences. As I have suggested earlier, these were not minor.

The formal sessions of information and orientation were in part quite valuable. But there were too many of them. Most of the group was saturated before the week ended and in the final days the actual intake was minimal. The program could be cut by at least two days, beginning on a Tuesday and ending on Friday. Both from observation of students, and my own, I would take the

liberty of suggesting that there were too many general talks, too few specific talks. Too much on Africa in the broad, too little country-by-country briefing for the individual groups. There was too much time for the talkers, too little for questions and discussions. The plenary sessions could have been sharply cut. Besides Dr. Robinson himself, only two or three star performers were needed, and all the ceremonial, diplomatic, or public relations appearances could have been crammed into a single session, including such notables as ambassadors and highly-placed exhorters. The rest of the program should concentrate on the hard stuff: country briefings, health briefing, personal and public relations in Africa. Some of this can be done in plenary, the bulk should be done in country group sessions. Legitimate free time should be left in the evenings to allow individuals to go out on the town without suffering pangs of guilt over doing so.

The additional orientations in London and Paris did not, by wide common consent, justify these costly detours. It became clear that it would be much more efficient and economical to go directly to Africa.

IV

THE IMPACT

1. On Africans

Very little has been said so far in this report, and with good reason, about the impact of Crossroads on the Africans who came into contact with it. The good reason is that I have only certain rather superficial impressions of what that impact was. This does not refer to the impact of the actual work projects, for I simply do not know whether the completed jobs have proved useful, or how many of the unfinished jobs were later carried to completion. These are important matters and it would be good to know more about them but as I stated at the outset, the primary objective of Crossroads did not have to do with bricks and mortar but with communication between Americans and Africans. The effects of this communication now dwell in the minds of the Africans and the Americans who had the experience. The effect on the American is the main burden of this report. Of the effect on Africans I know rather little. I will be able to report first on what the Crossroaders themselves thought of the impact they made, secondly, on the impressions of a group of African secondary school students, thirdly, on what I glimpsed myself of this matter, and finally, some fragmentary but sharp views of how some African work campers saw the summer's experience.

As Seen By Crossroaders: The majority of Crossroaders felt they had made a considerable impact on Africans, that they had made quite a scratch on some African minds about America and Americans. Examples:

"From the letters I've gotten I think they found it quite wonderful and feel quite strongly about it. We got to know each other as people, with different cultures, but knowing each other as friends, personal friends...I think there will be a lasting memory of Crossroads."

"One of the students wrote me that the villagers became more conscious of what they could do to improve their village. I've received over 40 letters so far, and I'm sure they will remember us for years and years. I think we did a lot of good and a lot of them hope to come to the U.S."

"I am convinced that Crossroads had a very positive and even tremendous effect on them. There were things they had never imagined possible, working on an equal level this way. It was difficult too for them to understand at first and they were suspicious of our motives, but after a time they realized we were sincere."

Overcoming suspicion was a recurring problem of the impact:

"I think some of them came to know Americans better, getting to know us as individuals, seeing so many different types. I think they keep on wondering if Americans are like the people in the movies they've seen. They seemed to think we were pretending all the time. They were friendly, but always suspicious, thinking maybe we were hiding the 'real truth' from them. D--- would ask me some questions, then he would ask the same question of others, and still others, to see what answers he would get. These would be questions like: 'What do you think of Africa?' or 'Would you really come back to Africa to live?' I think with some we finally overcame this mistrust and that they learned that all kinds of people make up a country or a culture, many different points of view."

Hardest of all was to persuade Africans not only that they had not been paid to perform all this toil, but had actually paid themselves for the privilege:

"They were surprised that students would work this way, and as volunteers. It kept being said that we were being

paid, and I don't know if we really persuaded them of the truth. Some students were still very dubious."

This was a battle fought out along this line all summer, often without feeling of positive result. Said one girl:

"I spent a lot of time trying to convince them that we had paid our own way on the project. They just wouldn't believe it. And you know, when I stopped to think about it, it did sound like an unlikely story!"

Some had the feeling that they had made a strong individual and personal impact:

"I've gotten some 25 letters, some of them very emotional. It meant a lot to them. But I do think I changed M---'s mind. He raked me over the coals about our capitalist system. I took a pragmatic, not a moral approach and tried to prove how it did more for more people, not out of exploitation, or love, but simply as a better way of doing things. I don't suppose I quite changed his mind, but he had more respect for the American point of view as I gave it - he listened to me. But I think I was effective as a human being, not as an American."

Some were hopeful that the credit they won as individuals might rub off on Americans in general:

"I think the impression we made on the students was very lasting and deep and can't be measured. I think we opened a lot of eyes. On the villager, I am not too sure. Perhaps the next American to come along will be held in esteem because of what we did, but this could be easily changed or blotted out by other Americans if they acted differently. I think we made a few close contacts in each village we were in and I think - or I hope - that the Africans will credit all Americans with what we did."

But most of the time, alas, this did not happen. For their virtues, the Crossroaders were marked out as exceptions to the American rule, as in this remark, from Ghana:

"B--- said we were just too good, too willing to work, too smart. 'You can't make me believe,' he would say, 'that everything in America is like that, that everyone is like you.'"

Or again in Guinea:

"As individuals, they accepted us and were glad to see us, but we didn't change their picture of the United States. They saw us as exceptions. I am sure that if we had made a negative impression in any way, this would have been applied in general to the whole United States."

"I think some people may have a better opinion of Americans, the high school kids we were with. But not the powers that be. In town, I don't know. Our communication with people in the town was not much."

In the realm of ideas, there was this modest judgment, from a boy who went to Senegal:

"I think they became a little more tolerant of the democratic process. In our long discussions we went into the whole process of democracy, the good points and the bad points."

The spectacle of American university students working with their hands was seen almost everywhere as a major item in the Crossroads impact. A girl from the South who had race problems very much on her mind came up with this vignette:

"I think they felt we shouldn't be working that way because we were white. As soon as one of us would stop to rest, one of the villagers would take the shovel, and it would be hard to get it back. I think this is what was in their minds because of one woman who would take a pail of water away from me and say: 'You shouldn't do this!'"

Or this observation, on the same subject, from a Crossroader in Senegal:

"I think some students did change their attitudes about work. They feel they are the elite and that the elite does not actually work. But I think some of them found some good in actually getting out working with us. They were reluctant, at first, but toward the end a few stayed with it and like it very much."

As Seen at the Remo Secondary School: This matter of American

students engaged in manual labor was an arrestingly new sight in West Africa and apparently made more of an impact on Africans than anything else. This was true even in Guinea, which had entertained visiting youth groups from all parts of the Communist empire, European and Asian, but never one that had come, like the Americans, to work. In times past or present, neither white men nor educated Africans had set a precedent for anything like this. By the mores of colonialism and equally by the standards of the emergent African, manual labor was inconsistent with power and status. So the descent of these Americans - from a land of great power and with the status of university students - boys and girls, full of a vivid and open spirit and readiness to do lowly toil for some common good, was in some places disconcerting, in a few exhilarating, and in all, quite unforgettable.

It happens that I have a small firsthand record of some African reaction to this American performance. It comes from a large group of African youngsters to whom nothing had as yet happened to make them tired, defensive, suspicious, or prickly. A band of these young Americans descended upon their school in the wonderful vigor and euphoric enthusiasm of the first weeks. These African youngsters took the Americans at face value, which was considerable. I am sure there were many others in other places just like them, but these happened to be the pupils at the Remo Secondary School, just outside the village of Shagamu, halfway between Lagos and Ibadan in Western Nigeria. The principal, Mr. E.O. Dada, responded readily to my suggestion of a way to get a view of his students' response to this American

invasion. In the second week, the entire school body was assigned, as its regular English composition assignment, to write on the topic: "What I have Learned About the Americans This Week." Their papers proved to be quite a revelation. It was almost impossible at the time even to imagine what these remarkably decorous African boys and girls were taking in about their American visitors. We now discovered that they had taken in a great deal. In one paper even my wife and I appeared, and we were described as "old". Perhaps some Crossroadsers will recognize themselves better in this striking passage:

"Fifteen American students arrived on the twenty-eighth day of June, 1960, to our school. There are seven men and eight women. They have greyish hair and very long legs. They have a yellowish colour. Their faces are round. Their eyes are very sharp."

Another paper begins to mark important facts:

"They come from different universities and of different tribes, but still they move together as they are born of the same blood. They dine together, both ladies and men. They sleep together, except in the case of the ladies."

From more of these papers, impeccably legible, remarkably grammatical, and often highly expressive, let me now simply quote - and I urge the reader not to run his eye over them too swiftly but to follow them with care, because they may contain the truest picture of the impact of Crossroads to be found anywhere in these pages:

"My class joined the group at work on their road project, which is about a hundred yards behind the laboratory and terminated at the Ikenne road. I was exceedingly startled to find the great work that had been done by these young students within five and a half hours. More astonished was I when I saw the ladies amongst them handle the cutlass in such a way as I have never seen a girl do in this part

of the world. With music from the bush radio set that was hung somewhere in the woods, things went on smoothly. While some were resting, the others continued to work without complaint about that fellow sitting down or the other playing, as one would find here. Some were detailed to remain behind at home, to prepare a meal for the group. This they did without complaint. I observed that some left the road work for the compound, either for water or for any other purpose anytime they felt like doing so. They never reported to anyone that they were going away. But they soon returned to carry on their work harder than before. The fact of it all was that there was the spirit of responsibility in them that we can never expect to find here...I was forced to think about the shame we youths are likely to ((inflict on) Nigeria even after attaining independence. With only school certificates, we feel that manual work should be despised and relegated (out of) our lives. But here we are with University students who have travelled over 9000 miles doing such work as we call base and mean here in Nigeria. We have got much to learn from our American friends if we want our independence to be a reality and not a flop."

. . .

"During the period of games (they) always took part in every sort of game and they were very anxious to know many of our native games. Some of them asked for the names of textbooks which we use in the classrooms for certain subjects, and then have recommended some books which they consider very helpful....I was coming from the laboratory one day when one of them asked me what we have done so far in biology. I listed out what we have done and on the second day he asked me to invite other science students to their room and explained all the parts and functions of the internal organs of a toad... Their cheerfulness abounds with industry. I could notice this, during the social gathering we had with them on Monday 4th July. Many of them were willing to learn how to dance like Nigerians. These people are not from the same University, yet they acted and did things with one accord..."

. . .

"I learnt from their habit that they call each other his or her (first) name. Moreover when any one of them talk to you or you talk to them, they say yah and not yes. I could see that they are not too big to do anything. They work with all energy, play with all their strength, dance with joy...Imagine the road they are constructing, if it were us students, at least two or more students must have been suspended or caned several times or driven here and there before we could work..."

"None of them is supervised at the work, but they do the work as if there is a master watching over them...They all cooperate to do their work diligently...they show no supremacy among themselves...they show no superiority to the black Africans... They always like to play with the students and joke with them...They are never afraid of asking (us) what they don't know and wish to know...If we Africans should behave as these Americans, the whole world will be in peace and there will be no war or hatred."

. . .

"From these American students we Nigerians can learn a great lesson. Whatever our position may be, we must not think too high to do dirty work like road-making. Nigerian students will say that such work is below their dignity. But these American students have shown us that there is no work that students in secondary school or university cannot do. The ladies proved to us that what a man can do a woman can also do it. The boys should learn from the men cooking. If it is our men, they will say that the girls must do the cooking because it is their work. But they do not say so, they do everything together."

. . .

"When these people first arrived, I was much surprised to see them. This was due to the fact that I never knew that Americans were white in colour. And frankly, I have never seen a white American before. So I stood gazing at them for more than five minutes."

. . .

"The way they worked surprised me, because I have never seen white people working like that before. The men move with girls and the ladies move with the boys in the compound. I learnt from them the heart of friendship. By the way they work, their girls are really telling us that what a boy can do a girl can do it, for they almost overcome the men in all they do."

. . .

"If you meet them in the corridor or anywhere in the compound, they will smile to you as if you are their brother or town-mate."

. . .

"The American students neither wait for anybody to prepare food for them nor remain elegant at work to hear praise from people. They work beyond expectation... At leisure hours they seize every opportunity to improve on their knowledge of nature. Apart from reading, they take note of little-important creatures. For example, many snapshots of a column of driver

ants were taken by every one of the American students when they were in the compound yesterday..."

. . .

"The American students joke with our scholars without regarding for their dignity which is far greater than that of our scholars in all aspects... This week I have learned about the American students that faithful services, free-will dealings, obedience, and loyalty are the causes of the great progress they have in their works..."

. . .

"I learnt from them that it was true and necessary that we should pay good attention to any lecture, for on the very remembrance day of their independence when one Nigerian was delivering a lecture to them, they sat quietly looking with a good attention..."

. . .

"The way in which they play among themselves would make one think they come from the same school or even from a family, whereas they come from different universities. They are never annoyed or tired whenever some of us ask them to tell us something about America. And so if we students in Nigeria adopt such a spirit of service, we shall live to enjoy and be proud of our country, Nigeria."

. . .

"On July 4th, the day of their celebration of the American independence, they gave me a picture of the love they have for their mother country. They told us the history of the cause of the American Declaration of Independence and about the states which were represented by stars. They told us of some of their great leaders who fought very bravely for them to see that America became an independent state..."

. . .

I rather suspect that wherever Crossroaders went, there were at least some Africans on whom they made some part of this kind of impression. Who can say that this wide-eyed discovery by youthful Africans of American ways of working, playing, being open, polite, and mutually respectful, was not the most significant and enduring of all the Crossroads impacts on Africans that were made all summer long?

As Glimpsed By This Reporter: I watched the boys and girls at the Remo Secondary School watching the Americans. I had talked to some of them and had gotten only shy replies. In their case, I was happily able to learn something about their excitement and impressions from their highly articulate compositions. But there were many other places where I also saw wide or curious or smiling eyes following the Americans, but I could, for the most part, only speculate as to what lay behind them.

If they read their newspapers or listened to radio news, they might already have known something about these visiting Americans. The Crossroads projects were noted in the press of the various countries and reported in radio newscasts, in some places more fully than in others. This coverage was modest in quantity, limited in quality, and low-keyed in interest. It has to be remembered that when the Crossroads groups were arriving at their various destinations at the end of June and in the first days of July, the news was rather full of the Congo, and in Ghana even the Congo had to compete with the Republic Day celebrations. Eventually almost every group received some featured attention in the press. But the press in West Africa barely qualifies as a mass medium. Those who read in it got something about Crossroads, though without any attention-commanding emphasis. Editorial comment on the project was polite and welcoming. None of this added up to any notable impact.

On the African-in-the-street, Crossroaders had another kind of impact about which I could only guess. As I have already remarked, the communication with Africans at this level was largely non-verbal,

a great exchange of non-explicit messages which I had no way of decoding, at least at the African receiving end. I hope that future Crossroads (or Peace Corps) projects will build in some research efforts aimed at discovering and reporting the reaction of the ordinary local folk to their encounter with these strange visitors. The help of local scholars or other inquirers would be needed, for this is not the kind of information that a stranger can pluck casually or swiftly, or across a language barrier. In general, contact with villagers and townspeople was too sparse for anyone to get to know very easily how they saw and felt about the Crossroads project in their midst. I can speak directly only of those places I visited, but except in two or three villages where Crossroaders reported having unusual contacts, other accounts generally gave the same impression.

In Guinea crowds dutifully turned out at the orders of the ruling Party to give song-and-dance welcomes to the Crossroaders. It would be stretching things a bit to call this an "impact" or to know what this "impact" was. It was clear that these people would and did come out to welcome anybody in exactly the same way whenever they were ordered to do so. When the song-and-dance orders were not in effect, the atmosphere was largely apathetic. Our group was in the town of Mamou for weeks, but the only one who ever invited them into a home was a Lebanese lady. The only contact with the local people was some increasingly desultory waving as they passed to and from their toil. One Sunday some of the Crossroaders boys walked outside the town. "We went out into the country," one of them

told me, "and walked through simple villages, but the people didn't even come out to look at us, even though we had been told that no white men had ever gone to any of these places before!"

The Party had invited Crossroads to come in because the leaders had finally decided that it would suit their policy needs to do so. The work project they provided had nothing to do with community needs; it was a job for the Party, the building of a hostel for visiting foreign delegations on tour.

In its press and radio announcements of the project, the government stressed the suggestion that the arrival of this group of Americans showed that the United States approved of Guinea and wanted to be friends with it. (This presumably contributed to the atmosphere in which the Guinean government finally decided, at the end of August, to allow the United States to give it some \$13,000,000 in technical assistance and other aid.) A Party "responsible" (leading functionary) was put in charge of the Crossroads operation, and he bossed it in the best authoritarian manner. Other "responsables" met with the Americans in formal question-and-answer sessions but none joined in the work. In Mamou I called at the local headquarters of the JRDA (the Party youth organization) and spoke there to a number of extremely well-educated and well-groomed young Guineans whom I had never seen at the worksites and who had never, as far as I knew, made contact with the visiting Americans except on extremely formal occasions, like the parties given at weekly intervals by the different quartier councils of the town. To do the work, the Party had whistled up a contingent of primary and vocational school students, who were housed

and fed apart from the American group for the duration of the project. They were, for the most part, gay, energetic, and attractive youngsters who were charmed and delighted by the Americans and I do not think will ever forget the fun they had together. The notes of my conversations with some of them are filled largely with such comments as:

"They are people who work well and never seem to get tired. I am delighted with their politeness, their courage, and their fun. They have good fun. They like us very much. They do not hold angers against people. There are no angers between us, only kindness."

The apartness of the group from the townspeople was most marked in Guinea, but in one degree or another it also characterized the other groups I observed. A Nigerian student who joined the Crossroads group at the Remo School rather tartly wrote:

"What anyone would complain of would be the near-isolation we experienced. We found that no one had taken the trouble to inform the local communities that we were coming, or to tell them the purpose. The people who gave us the camp had not drawn up a list of interesting places we might visit. The only things we were given were beds to sleep on, a forest to cut, and blunt tools which got us all blisters in two days."

This was, of course, partly a reflection of larger problems in the African emergence, the persistence of deeply-imbedded attitudes of dependence, the difficulties in rousing people to work in new ways to change the conditions of their life. All the Africans engaged in community projects saw this as their major battle. At one of the work camp villages in Ghana, the Ghanaian student leader, at a rally held on the ground in front of the chief's house one night, berated the people for their lack of participation. Later he explained

to me:

"I think the villagers think of this as being done for them. It is not a matter of cooperation. They will gradually want to do things for themselves. There is no enlightened group here in Pram Pram so there is no strong reaction either way. Some of them are grateful, but some of them do not understand why people should come all this way to build a school. We haven't taken enough trouble to explain it do them. I think this is the Voluntary Work Camp Association's failure, that there is not enough education of the people. At the chief's rally the other night it was just pure ceremonial, giving thanks and so on. But there was no real explanation. It is difficult to say whether they understood me when I emphasized this. There was a lot of drinking going on, and the Chief did apologize for the people not coming to work. We know from experience there is often very little cooperation from fishing villages and I have been trying to figure this out. There is something cultural in it, perhaps. These people are not like the Ashanti, who pitch into such things much better."

In some villages, I was told, there was both greater participation by the local people in the work project and much more communication. Some of this had a ceremonial but warmly welcoming quality - in Larte, in Ghana, each Crossroader was initiated into a local clan. Some of it was gratitude for benevolent care - in Akugbene in Nigeria a nurse in the group won the hearts of many of the village mothers by the gentle help she gave them and their children. But even at its best, this was communication across many obstacles and barriers and the inwardness of what the village folk felt and thought about the whole matter remained even more unknown to us than it was to our devoted and earnest young Ghanaian work camp leader.

As Described By African Work-Campers: By far the most visible and most readily discoverable impact of Crossroads was on the

African student work campers who joined the Americans on their various projects. Here again I can write only of those I met and talked with, particularly in Ghana and West Nigeria, and from whom I have had some letters and copies of reports they have written on their summer's experience. Moreover, my contact with these individuals was almost fleeting. I had only glimpses of how they saw their experience. I can report these fragmentary impressions, not because I think they tell or even suggest the whole story, but because they may contain some clues to it and they may, for their own sake, be interesting.

In the first place, from what I saw of them, I would guess that these young Africans passed through the same sequence of reactions as their American counter-parts - the initial euphoria, the onset of irritations, tensions and second thoughts, and finally the relaxation into a more realistic acceptance and appraisal of the realities. Out of it all, for the Africans, as for the Americans, came a magic addition of minuses into pluses. This was not merely the afterglow of creative memory. It was a real appreciation of a rich encounter, an exciting learning experience whose difficulties and discomforts and tensions were part of its value. "In spite of the sentiments expressed by various people during the hectic weeks when everyone was touchy," wrote one of the Nigerian students, "every Nigerian, in cool reflection afterwards, has been able to realize the wonderful aspects of the visitors."

In the first flush of meeting, the older university or college

students were enormously impressed by the same things that so overwhelmed the youngsters at the Remo School. Chief among these - already so often referred to - was the spectacle of American university students, boys and girls - above all, the girls - vigorously and cheerfully pitching into the lowliest kind of manual labor jobs, not for pay but for the higher purpose of getting a needed job done. In fact, the impact of the girls as toilers was so great that I shudder a little to think of some of these young Africans coming one day to America, looking to see all the rest of America's girls in kerchiefs and jeans swinging pickaxes or machetes. I am not sure exactly what picture of American women they have now acquired and how they have related their new image, based on our girl Crossroaders, to female Americans as they know them from the films or the slick magazines. However this may be, our boys and girls together, working as they did, shook up whole clusters of little snobbisms among Africans of comparable class and education. I do not think dislike of manual labor was the only reason, but the fact was that in this group in West Nigeria, there were only three Nigerian university students and no girls, and only four such students and two girls in the group I observed in Ghana. What lasting effect the Crossroader example had, either on their African fellow work-campers or beyond them, I do not know. One Nigerian observed:

"One lesson of (Crossroads) is that there is nothing unworthy of anybody in manual labor...the 'do-it-yourself' system is well established in England and America, but it has no footing in Nigeria...We in Nigeria would employ a professional nail-driver to drive one nail into a wall for us. There are

a few Nigerians who 'do it' themselves, but there are many, many more who would sooner cut off their right hands than use them manually for their own benefit."

Of even greater and more peculiar force, at least in Nigeria, was the fact - also noted so often and so wonderingly by the Remo students - that the Americans came from so many different parts of their country. "I still can't believe it," said one of the Nigerian work campers to me at the end of the first week at the Remo School. "I can't believe that these Americans came from so many different parts of their country and only met together for the first time two weeks ago - and here they are, like brothers and sisters, in a family, cooperating and liking each other and respecting each other this way. This could never happen among us." He was referring, of course, to the gulfs of prejudice and habits of antipathy that divide Nigerians who come from the different regions and tribes of that country and who have not yet very often, even as individuals, much less in groups, discovered the virtues, pleasures, and uses of pluralism.

Coming on into the period of tensions and irritations, one encounters among the Africans, as among the Americans, the problem of food. The impact of this prime intercultural issue was obviously considerable. Since I have already written so much in this report on this subject from my own point of view, I think I ought to quote quite fully from some remarks on this same matter written by a Nigerian work camper:

"Throughout, our main problem was food, and we never really found a workable solution to that. Before the project started, (we) were speculating on the question of

feeding... We wondered what we would do if Americans and Nigerians were to cook together. I expected that we would have to live mostly on American food sparsely punctuated by Nigerian food freely adapted to suit the visitors. But when we got together at the University, I discovered that the enthusiastic Americans were bent on Nigerianizing for the whole period of their stay. It was decided that to start with, all the group should go American can change over gradually to Nigerian food. It was on this agreement that the project started. Many Americans were trying a bit too hard to show the Nigerians that they could do beautifully on Nigerian food. But nothing came of that agreement. There were a few tries at Nigerian food before the Nigerian cooks scared off most of the Americans with an injudicious amount of pepper. Some of them lost so much tear-drops they never returned again to Nigerian food, even when there was no longer any pepper."

"The Nigerians too might have liked some American food, but they definitely did not like sauerkraut*, bowlfuls of mushroom soup, spaghetti and the like. Unfortunately, many Americans were sick of the soup in two days and many simply could not stand sauerkraut. It worked out that what the cooks offered was not Nigerian, nor American, nor inbetween food. At one stage, in our last camp, when people were getting nervy and irritant, there was high tension in the camp because the Nigerians were indignant at the attitude of some Americans. They would not touch any Nigerian food for fear of pepper, which had been eliminated, they would not eat Nigerian-cooked fish because the head was not cut off and they would not touch any Nigerian stew if there was the slightest suspicion of palm oil. There were, of course, exceptions, but all of these annoyed some Nigerians, particularly when for days without break, they had been on American diet, good or abominable. That was not their idea of compromise."

Writing about this afterward, another Nigerian condensed the whole food problem into a few mild sentences:

"It was not easy for the Americans to take Nigerian food...(But) in any case this never damaged the morale of the camp and we got on fine. Apart from this question of food, which was nobody's fault, the Americans adapted themselves well to the environment wherever we went."

*The group leader, in one of his numerous unpopular unilateral decisions stocked in a huge supply of canned sauerkraut. It became one of the major sources of tension between him and the members of his group.

The initial euphoria of this particular group had not only been eaten away at its table, but had also taken a buffeting from Time. A well known Nigerian newspaperman from Lagos appeared at the work-camp one day, looked around, had some pictures taken, asked some questions. He said it was for a story for Time. In due course, such a story appeared - with how much of the Nigerian's authorship left in it no one of course could know - and a copy of the magazine made its way to Shagamu. One of the Crossroader girls jumped up on a table and read it aloud with gestures; she thought it was funny. But the Nigerians did not. Neither she nor anyone else in the American group was prepared for their reaction. They took sharp exception, mostly to a single sentence - the one sentence, incidentally, that made any reference to them. It read: "Incredulous Africans followed them everywhere; a dozen English-speaking Nigerian students worked beside them, jabbering questions about like in the U.S." The words that offended most were "incredulous" and "jabbering". A great cloud of mutual recrimination, incomprehension, and great unhappiness descended on the entire group, with the unfortunate girl reader as becoming the principal target for the slings and arrows of outraged sensibilities of the Africans and the repository for the confused self-accusations of the Americans. A number of miserable days followed and recovery from them was slow. The incident brought out into the open the many tensions, deep in each American trying to cope with the great array of special demands being made upon him or her, and in the Africans, who also had their apprehensions, suspicions, and uneasinesses, to appease and allay as

best they could. Recovery took all the longer because there was no help from the leader, who was quite incapable of trying to reweave the threads of mutual appreciation.

But this came about by itself. The tension and conflict were absorbed into the total experience. I know it was a strong and meaningful experience for the Americans. Of the Africans I cannot say quite as much, but I think that quite a good deal does show through, even from the fragments that I have been able so imperfectly to piece together. Enough shows, at any rate, to enable us to give full weight to the feeling put into words by an African Crossroader in a letter to one of the Americans with whom he had shared the summer's days:

"The summer has come and gone and the unpleasant sides of the camp are almost all forgotten. My scratches have healed, and my aches from carrying double blocks have gone...You Americans may remember the green fields and the lavish hospitality bestowed upon us in the way the people know it. You will not forget the strange way of life so totally different from yours and a number of other things which struck you...To us, these are commonplace. What I cherished most in the summer was the opportunity I had of making friends. It is difficult for me to express my feelings, because the more I think about the experiences of the summer, the more I find it difficult to estimate what I gained."

2. On Americans

Almost all that I can say about the impact of Crossroads on the Crossroaders has now been said. But there is at least one dimension on which I would add just a little to conclude, and this is the matter of how this particular summer, spent in this particular way, apparently changed some of their lives.

We have glimpsed more than one of these more critical outcomes: the one Southern girl who broke with her fiance, and the second who broke with her father, in both cases because they had come back to their home environments no longer able in mind or spirit to compromise with racism; the Negro who found there was no peace for him in Africa and that he would have to make his life as as American; and the dark Negro girl who found among dark Africans the first real peace of acceptance she had ever known, and was bent, through marriage, on making her life in Africa for good.

There were others, perhaps not quite so dramatic, but equally crucial. These were young people at a decision-making time in their lives, and some of their decisions were made in Africa last summer.

There were several, it will be recalled, who sought the chance to go to Africa to test their impulse to become missionaries. The impulse did not wear well in the African climate. Only one I know still plans to pursue that aim; most of the others were "disappointed", or "skeptical", or made otherwise unhappy or uncertain by what they observed of missionary life in West Africa. In at least two cases, there was a firm decision to drop the whole idea. In one, the change

of mind also involved quitting his studies for the ministry and taking up the larger missionary opportunity of a job with a government aid mission abroad. The second was a young man who remained intent upon a career in the church, but who decided he would make that career on his home ground: "I concluded that I could not be effective as a missionary in Africa." He said he had been "disillusioned with the missionary movement," that he had not liked the way missionaries he had seen were living in Africa, and had found that African Christian students "had great trouble relating Christianity to their personal lives, even through they could recite Bible passages better than I could." But the ultimate reason for his decision lay not in the missionaries or the African Christians, but in himself:

"I reacted (to African ways) with great frustration and impatience. This will keep me from going back to Ghana. I cannot honestly say now that I would fulfill my life by going back to serve there."

But if this young man had lost a calling, another had found one. This was a chap who, when I saw him in the spring, had been drifting in and out of college for some six years with absolutely no idea of what he wanted to make of his life. He had finally made a choice and was on his way to a degree in accounting. But when I saw him again in January, he was deep in African language studies, the star student in a new university program, and was heading back for Nigeria. "I want to get a job in Nigeria in any capacity I can," he said, "and I am studying Yoruba. I would be glad to go for five or six years. I found them to be wonderful people

and I hope I can help them in some way."

Another career focus was changed by a girl who was already in the final phases of her graduate studies in social work:

"It has all made me change my view. Before, I was heading toward psychiatric casework, that is a one-to-one sort of thing. In Africa I got interested in large scale public health, city planning, problems of urbanization. I want now to apply what I have learned not to the conditions of our abundant society, which can afford concern for the individual, but to the larger problems of a society like the African society. I thought before I would work in a private agency. Now I want to work in a government agency. I am still interested in both aspects of the problem, but I have now seen a change in my own role."

There were other less tangible, more personal shifts in image and self-image, a great quickening of the spirit in all things. A girl said that since coming home she, and two of her friends

"are trying to work at becoming more observant, more creative, trying to notice everything, to put it down in journals. This sort of thing did not happen to me as a result of my previous work-camp experience when we were all white, all Presbyterian, all in the same church with the same sort of people. This summer the group was so mixed, and so different. Now I want to get out into the larger world."

But when she finished talking about the larger world, about Africa, and began talking about herself, this is what she said:

"I think I have become more complex now, and it is going to take me longer to decide what I am and what I'm going to do. I was a person who did not establish close relationships with anyone. Even with my roommate, or any of the girls here. This goes back to my earlier years...I grew into a person who just never told anybody how I felt about anything. But this summer I found I could confide in (a friend), I could confide without fear of betrayal. My parents saw the difference in me the moment I got home, and so did my roommate as soon as I got back here. This made me more trusting of people and has opened a whole new world of relationships with people I've known

for a long time. During the summer I really let go and talked to people. I learned how... I talked more to people than I have ever talked to any friends before about my feelings, my impressions. This affected everything about me. Before I could never write, not even a letter. I felt I couldn't understand things or express myself, so I just wouldn't say or write anything. But this summer I felt I had something of my own to contribute, because I did come from the South. And now back here I have a contribution to make that no one else can. So I have a whole new confidence in myself, and I try to express myself. I never did this before."

Finally, there was the answer one young man made when I asked him what had been the most important experience of the summer for him. He talked first about the discovery of what a have-not economy is really like, and then he said:

"I think really it was the experience of having demands made on my total being. Every waking hour made its demand on my talent, my abilities, knowledge, strength, or whatever. I was constantly aware of this and it was a humbling thing, because I got a real good look at the sparsity of my total being. It was really shaking. I thought I did rise to the task, but not sufficiently. I wore out sooner than I would have liked to. I think of all the questions I should have asked, and didn't, or the times I got too tired for a side trip or a conversation, or when I couldn't get my mind off having a nice cool beer. All the human fallibilities. All my life, in all I've ever done, I've always been the leader, the president. I had a self-image of going to the center of things. Now I feel a new importance attached to what I do as opposed to what position I occupy, and I keep thinking that the important thing is to keep meeting all the little challenges, hour by hour, day by day."