



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

African Liberation and Unity in Nkrumah's Ghana: A Study of the Role of "Pan-African Institutions" in the making of Ghana's foreign Policy, 1957 - 1966

Grilli, M.

Citation

Grilli, M. (2015, November 3). *African Liberation and Unity in Nkrumah's Ghana: A Study of the Role of "Pan-African Institutions" in the making of Ghana's foreign Policy, 1957 - 1966*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/36074>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/36074>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/36074> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Grilli, Matteo

Title: African liberation and unity in Nkrumah's Ghana : a study of the role of "Pan-African Institutions" in the making of Ghana's foreign policy, 1957 - 1966

Issue Date: 2015-11-03

3. The Bureau of African Affairs and Ghana's Pan-African Policy in 1960

Introduction

After Padmore's death, many changes occurred in the foreign policy system of Ghana. The Office of the Adviser on African Affairs immediately changed its name into the new Bureau of African Affairs (BAA), an institution even more independent, better financed and more integrated with the CPP than the former. Barden, who was second in command at the Office, was appointed first secretary and then director of the new BAA.

The whole Pan-African policy was put under revision. A new advisory body, called African Affairs Committee, was established by Nkrumah to reform the "Pan-African" institutions of Ghana and to deal with the foreign policy making process. The Committee particularly worked for elaborating specific action plans to deal with the challenges of African politics in 1960. During this year, seventeen countries reached independence, an event which caused a radical change in the political map of the continent. Ghana had to face the different problems emerged in this period, starting with the crisis in the Congo. In order to deal with this question and others, the "Pan-African" institutions of Ghana were strengthened. Generally speaking, the whole Ghanaian Pan-African policy was strengthened. Still, all these efforts proved not sufficient. Accra failed its mission in Congo and Nkrumah saw his position heavily damaged at the end of the year.

On the other hand, this period proved successful for Barden and his BAA. The institution developed considerably during the management of the African Affairs Committee. A wide net of BAA agents allowed Barden to work on the different missions imposed by the evolutions of politics in Africa. At the end of the year, he could report to Nkrumah a certain satisfaction about the work done and he even requested more resources for the BAA in the future.

This chapter will be divided in two parts. In the first part, made of eight sub-chapters, it will be analyzed how Ghana's Pan-African policy and its institutions were reformed after Padmore's death. The whole period of management of the African Affairs Committee will be examined, covering the conception and performance of the new policy. The period under examination is September 1959 – March 1960.

The second part will describe the period following the Committee, when the BAA was officially established. There will be a particular focus on the missions performed by Barden and his staff in Southern Africa, Congo, West Africa and East Africa. The end of the chapter also includes a brief analysis of the consequences of the events of 1960 for the later evolution of Ghana's Pan-African policy.

3.1. The Establishment of the Bureau of African Affairs and the African Affairs Committee

Nkrumah's first act after the death of Padmore was to change the name of the Office of the Adviser on African Affairs into that of the Bureau of African Affairs. The new institution was conceived as an evolution of the former office with stronger powers and more resources. Barden was the best candidate to take over the post of Padmore, having been his second in command for months. However, others candidates - backed by the Foreign Service - also tried to run for the same job. The clash between Barden and the Foreign Service on the appointment mirrors what Padmore had experienced two years before.

In early October 1959, Kwame Nkrumah announced in a press release the establishment of the Bureau of African Affairs "in order to put the work begun by the late Mr. George Padmore on a permanent basis".²⁸⁶ At first, the BAA was simply an alias of Padmore's Office but it soon became clear that it would have been a far more radical and

²⁸⁶ W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.107.

powerful institution than the Office ever was. Nkrumah himself became its acting director.²⁸⁷

The secretary of the new institution was A.K. Barden. Already in September, he had practically run the Office by himself, since Padmore was too ill to deal with it. After Padmore's death and Markham's assignment to the Broadcasting department, he was left in charge of the Office activities and he kept the job even after the BAA was established.

Even though he was known to be Padmore's favorite employee, his rise to power was contested and challenged by other figures. The Foreign Service was particularly critical of his appointment as head of the BAA. They did not consider the ex-serviceman sufficiently qualified to deal with the Ghana's Pan-African policy.

At the time of the establishment of the Bureau, other candidates proposed their names for the post of head of the new office. One of them was K.B. Asante, at the time a civil servant of the Ministry of External Affairs.²⁸⁸ He had been quite close to Padmore since 1959, when the latter had insisted to transfer him from Israel (where he was chargé d'affaires at the Ghanaian embassy) to Accra, at the Ministry of External Affairs.²⁸⁹ Even if Asante had never worked for the Office, he proposed himself as a candidate for Padmore's succession. However, despite being backed by Ako Adjei, his candidacy was discarded by Nkrumah, who moved him instead to the Ghanaian embassy in New York. In the case of another opponent, Owusu Ansah, Barden himself got rid of him by weakening his political position and leading him to retire from the competition.²⁹⁰

Barden's position was still too strong for any man of the Foreign Service to challenge it. Padmore had had the ultimate word even after his death. Nkrumah knew well that

²⁸⁷ Although Nkrumah had been appointed acting director of the BAA, soon the post of Director was taken by Kofi Baako. He acted as a director until 9 November 1959, when that position was abolished. The reasons were two. First of all, Baako had been also appointed Minister of Information and Broadcasting and he could not manage the two posts together. Secondly, the Committee was supposed to run the Bureau collegially. See PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November 9th 1959 at 12 P.M, "Director to the Bureau". The post of Director was to be re-established later and Barden was going to gain the post.

²⁸⁸ He was bound to become Principal Secretary of the African Affairs Secretariat in 1961.

²⁸⁹ Interview with K.B. Asante, 4th September 2011, Accra. Asante was at the time a young diplomat, acting as chargé d'affaires at Tel Aviv. During one of his trips, Padmore had the chance to meet him. The two men discussed for hours on African affairs. At the end of a long night of discussions, Padmore was convinced of the potentialities of Asante and requested his transfer to Accra.

²⁹⁰ Interview with K.B. Asante, 4th September 2011.

Barden was already trained and experienced in the activities of the Office, and therefore of the BAA. He could not take the risk of appointing someone from outside the Office during such a delicate phase of African politics.

Barden was having problems with the Foreign Service similar to the ones previously experienced by Padmore. It was a reflection of the distance of outlook between the orthodox and unorthodox methods used by the two wings of the Ghanaian foreign policy system. Moreover, the Foreign Service feared particularly Barden's radicalism. The competition between the two systems was bound to become even harsher than it was in Padmore's time.

Barden emerged victorious and obtained the control of the BAA. However, Nkrumah decided to manage Ghana's African policy by himself for some months, controlling also the activities of the Bureau. Thus, he decided to create a proper body to deal with this question: the new African Affairs Committee.

3.2. The African Affairs Committee and the Evolution of the "Pan-African" Institutions

With the death of Padmore, Nkrumah had lost not only a friend but also his Adviser on African Affairs. He needed to fill this gap. Thus, he decided to establish a close council to deal with Ghana's foreign policy in Africa: the African Affairs Committee.²⁹¹ The new body was planned to take all the decisions concerning Ghana's Pan-African policy and the management of the "Pan-African" institutions of Ghana. Even the BAA came under the control of the Committee for almost eight months. The Committee introduced important

²⁹¹ An "African Affairs Committee" already existed under Padmore's control even though its nature and aims were different from Nkrumah's one. It was established in 1959 to deal with the new challenges of Ghana's Pan-African policy and, *in primis*, with the issue of refugees. Padmore was the chairman while other members were: Barden, Makonnen, Markham, Djin, Tettegah, Vanderpuje, Asare, Elliot, Amoah Awuah, Heymann, Atta Mensah, Drake and Bediako Poku. See AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee, typescript, "African Affairs Committee".

changes in the structure of the “Pan-African” institutions, including a more rational division of duties between the different offices.

Thanks to it, Nkrumah could fill the vacuum left by Padmore’s death. He could share views on African Affairs with high-level party members, ministers and men of the “Pan-African” institutions. At the same time, he could also manage the BAA, the AAC and the AAPC secretariat, which all came under the authority of the new body. In the following eight months, the Committee became the most important foreign policy-making body of the Ghanaian government.

The African Affairs Committee reunited once a week at Flagstaff House, gathering together some of the most important figures of the Ghanaian politics. Between ordinary members and guests, the Committee included men like Botsio, Makonnen, Djin, Diallo, Barden, Adjei, Adamafio, Welbeck and Baako.²⁹² Nkrumah attended all meetings since he was chairman of the Committee itself. The main target was to discuss on relevant questions concerning African Affairs and to propose specific policies to be implemented. The organization and the duties of the “Pan-African” institutions of Ghana were also discussed, including the possibility of establishing new ones.

The first meeting took place at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959.²⁹³ Both Botsio and Welbeck attended as representatives of the government and party which Nkrumah wanted to be strongly involved in the making of Ghana’s Pan-African policy. Welbeck linked himself to the BAA, establishing a close collaboration between the “Pan-African” institution and the CPP and became chairman of the Bureau of African Affairs in May 1960.²⁹⁴

²⁹² The complete list of the personalities who attended at least one meeting of the Committee is the following: A. Y.K. Djin, Amoah Awuah, Joe Fio Meyer, T.R. Makonnen, Edwin Du Plan, A.K. Barden, N.A. Welbeck, P.K. Yankey, Kofi Baako, Abdullay Diallo, Kwaku Boateng, Mbiyu Koinange, Kojo Botsio, Ako Adjei, S.A. Dzirasa, John Tettegah, Tawia Adamafio, Eric Heymann, A.L. Adu, Alfred Hutchinson, J.A. Maimane, Jimmy Markham and, obviously, Kwame Nkrumah. This list has been compiled on the basis of the minutes of the meetings of the African Affairs Committee which are inside the following files: AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin and PRAAD, SC/BAA/251.

²⁹³ AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, *Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959.*

²⁹⁴ Welbeck became chairman of the BAA at the end of the period of the African Affairs Committee administration. He was appointed chairman at the act of establishment of the BAA in May 1960. See W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p.107.

The first task of the Committee was to rationalize the duties of the “Pan-African” institutions of Ghana. It was, indeed, important to save resources and, at the same time, to make good use of the personnel of the BAA, the AAC and the AAPC secretariat, also considered part of the same system.

At the first meeting, the participants discussed the “fusion” between the BAA, the AAC and the AAPC Secretariat.²⁹⁵ The latter was planned to be absorbed by the Bureau, which was practically already controlling it.²⁹⁶ In some cases, the personnel had to be shared by the three institutions. For instance, Edwin Du Plan was appointed Administrative Secretary of both the AAPC Secretariat and the African Affairs Centre.²⁹⁷ Even Kwodwo Addison held a position in both the BAA and the AAPC Secretariat and was also meant to become director of the last “Pan-African” institution to be established: the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute of Winneba.²⁹⁸

The whole “Pan-African” system of Ghana (including the AAPC) was put under the control of the Bureau. With such an organization, the country could save resources and coordinate better the activities of the different institutions. Moreover, Nkrumah could concentrate the chain of command only in the hands of Barden so as to rely only on him on the matters of Pan-African policy. The main aim of the African Affairs Committee was to elaborate such a new system before transferring the power to the BAA.

Although it was practically run as a Ghanaian “Pan-African institution”, the AAPC was not controlled only by Ghanaians. The Secretary General was a Guinean, Abdoulaye Diallo and other Africans were also involved in the project. By transferring all the activities

²⁹⁵ A real fusion which was never made official. Indeed, the three offices kept having proper statutes. The “fusion” consisted mainly in coordinating the policies of the offices and also in making use of the same personnel.

²⁹⁶ Thompson seems to be right when he states that “The Bureau, by late 1959, had virtually absorbed what was left of the AAPC”, in W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.107. However, it must be underlined that matters like the one of the organization of the AAPC conference of Tunis (January 1960) were administered by the AAPC Secretariat alone. The BAA was often coordinating the contacts between the liberation movements and the Secretariat (The BAA archives includes many letters with request by nationalist parties to join the AAPC) but it was not organizing the conference. It is exactly what Barden wrote to the “American Friend Service Committee”, which was requesting information about the delegates to the AAPC of Tunis on December 1959. See AGPL, un-catalogued/Secretary's Personal Correspondence (BAA/1A), Letter, Barden to Loft, 28th December 1959.

²⁹⁷ AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959, “Appointment of Officers”.

²⁹⁸ W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.107, footnote n°241.

of the AAPC to the Bureau, Nkrumah showed his will not to share the leadership of the Pan-African struggle. The Committee decided also to move physically the AAPC Secretariat to the BAA building.²⁹⁹

The finances of the AAPC and the AAC were put under the control of the African Affairs Committee. A Finance and Management Committee was established for this purpose. The latter had also to investigate on the refugees of the African Affairs Centre to discover if there was any non-refugee occupying a place. In that case, measures had to be taken to expel the intruders. Interestingly, this committee included men of the AAC, the BAA and the AAPC, a sign of a further integration between the three institutions.³⁰⁰

After dealing with the organization of the Pan-African institutions, the Committee started working on the practical problems of Ghana's Pan-African politics. Every question was discussed: the production of Pan-Africanist press, the accommodation of refugees, the economical and political support to freedom fighters etc.

The next sub-chapters will deal with each one of these questions, trying to explain the role played by the African Affairs Committee. Through this analysis, it will be possible to have a picture of Ghana's Pan-African policy in the period the Committee was operating, from October 1959 to March 1960.

3.3. The African Affairs Committee and Ghana's Policy on Refugees

Ghana's policy on refugees had been elaborated during Padmore's last months. At the time of the establishment of the African Affairs Committee the first waves of refugees were

²⁹⁹ AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959, "All-African People's Conference Secretariat".

³⁰⁰ AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959, "Finance and Management Committee". The members of the committee were: Makonnen, Awuah, Adu, Du Plan and Barden. Djin was added in the following meeting, as he was considered important for his knowledge of financial matters of the AAPC. See AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October, 20th 1959 at 6:30 P.M., "Finance an Management Committee"

knocking at Ghana's doors, demanding adequate accommodation and support. Due to the lack of resources, the Committee had to develop strategies and instruments to deal with the requests.

The accommodation of political refugees in Ghana was managed by the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the AAC and Padmore's Office / BAA. Since 1959, all these institutions had to coordinate their efforts to meet the demands of the refugees, providing them with shelter and documents. They also had to check on the identities of the Africans requesting political asylum, welcoming only the reliable ones.

The Ministry of Interior was particularly critical about the lack of a proper definition of "bona-fide" refugees. Padmore had insisted on this point but he had not clarified which authority should be considered responsible for controlling the accesses to Ghana.³⁰¹ As long as Padmore had been alive, the final decision was his.

After his death, the African Affairs Committee decided to give the duty to Dzirasa and Barden, made both responsible for the issue of passports.³⁰² The decision on the political "bona fide" of the African nationalists had to be taken by the Committee itself. The first documents issued with the new system of political "checks" were 12 passports for African students (and freedom fighters) in November.³⁰³ From that moment on, every request of this type came to Barden's desk.³⁰⁴

In many cases, a Ghanaian passport was requested to reach destinations other than Ghana. In such a context, Accra worked like a hub for freedom fighters. Members of

³⁰¹ The problem for the Ministry was the actual definition of such a criteria and its implementation. Indeed - as the Dyer-Ball wrote to Padmore - it was difficult to "check the political bona-fides through normal diplomatic and police channels" and it was then necessary to seek help from the Office of the Adviser on African Affairs on the issue. See AGPL, un-catalogued/ BN-African Affairs Committee, Letter, Dyer-Ball (Minister of the Interior) to Padmore, 16th May 1959 and Letter, Goodwin (Min. of the Interior) to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, 15 May 1959. This is a clear confirmation of the fact that the implementation of the so-called "Pan-African" policies was inevitably a task that pertained to Padmore's Office and the other "Pan-African institutions" more than to the civil service.

³⁰² AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959, "Issue of Passports".

³⁰³ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November 9th 1959, "Passport for Freedom Fighters". The question, it is said, was going then to the Foreign Ministry (Ministry of External Affairs) and Ako Adjei was responsible for the implementation of the action.

³⁰⁴ To be precise, the request was forwarded to the BAA only when it involved the political endorsement of a liberation movement. Otherwise, it was the Minister of External Affairs who was in charge of the issue of passports.

nationalist parties demanded documents for participating to conferences and political gatherings, or simply to reach a country where they had won a scholarship (in most of the cases countries of the socialist bloc).³⁰⁵ Freedom fighters like Moumié or Cabral were also moving frequently between Accra, Conakry and Cairo or other destinations. In these cases, a Ghanaian document could be used as well as any other.³⁰⁶

Moreover, the Committee discussed how to check the credentials of the freedom fighters once they were in Ghana. The first reason was economical. The Ghanaian government could not waste its money on people who were not really dedicated to the cause. The second reason was political. Indeed, it was essential for Ghana not to have spies or any kind of “imperialist agents” in its territory, especially in places like the African Affairs Centre. In 1959, the first cases of infiltration of foreign agents had taken place at the AAC. Barden had investigated two of them between April and May 1959, one relating to an alleged British spy and the other to a Portuguese one.³⁰⁷ In the same year, more troubles were caused by a South African journalist who had been hosted at the Centre as a freedom fighter. Once he had gone back to South Africa, he wrote harsh articles against Ghana,

³⁰⁵ It is probably the case of the 12 passport issued on November. And it is also the case, for instance, of two member of the UPC who requested a Ghanaian passport to reach the German Democratic Republic in 1960. Indeed, they had been invited by the GDR Youth to visit the country. See AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Manga and Bei to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the BAA, 12th September 1960. Another example is the issue of travel documents for two students from Bechuanaland who had been awarded with a UN scholarship on 13th September 1960. The BAA requested the supply of detailed information on the students and references by a “recognized leader o party executive”. It practically meant that Ghana was willing to help only recognized and allied freedom fighters. See AGPL, BAA/370, Letter, BAA to S.N. and K.B. (Bechuanaland), 13th September 1960. See also the first letter sent by the students, in which they underlined the presence of their brother in Ghana as a guarantee of their “bona-fides”. In AGPL, BAA/370, Letter (handwriting), S.N. and K.B. to Nkrumah, 30th July 1960. It is worth noting that many requests were addressed directly to Nkrumah and only after they were forwarded to the BAA.

³⁰⁶ During 1959, some members of the UPC were traveling from Accra (they were residents of the African Affairs Centre) to Conakry to meet Moumié at the party headquarters. Of the three of them one had an Egyptian passport, one a Cameroonian one and the last one had none. In this case, Ghana approved his travel to Conakry, probably giving him a special political permit. See AGPL, un-catalogued/Particulars of Residents in the African Affairs Centre -1959, three forms with the title ”Particulars of Residents in the African Affairs Centre – Accra” referring to the individuals: Jean –Marie Manga, Abel Kingue and George Mbaraga. It is interesting to underline that Manga was the same one who submitted the request for a Ghanaian passport for travelling to the GDR quoted above.

³⁰⁷ On the alleged British spy see AGPL, BAA/961, Aide Memoire n.1 and n.2 by Barden. On the alleged Portuguese spy see AGPL, BAA/961, Report, Title: “Mr. Oliveira Moita de Deus Luis Carlos” by Barden. See also in the same file a profile of Mr. Oliveira sent by the Ministry of External Affairs to the Bureau. The date is 4th May 1959.

revealing his real identity.³⁰⁸ At the first meeting of the Committee, the question was discussed and it was approved the creation of a “Screening Committee” in order to ensure no recurrence of such cases.³⁰⁹ Its establishment reflects the increasing needs of Ghana on the ground of internal security.

The new body did not have to work alone. It counted also on the collaboration of Ghana’s allied nationalist parties. Before being screened by the Committee, the freedom fighters had to undergo a control by their parties before they departed for Ghana. Then, once the refugees were at the AAC, they were also checked by the country representatives of their parties in Ghana.

With the crossed-reference of the Screening Committee and the liberation movements, the Centre could be sure to host only real freedom fighters. One example is the reception of a delegation of South African freedom fighters on February 1960. They were received by Makonnen at the Centre, but before going any further with the political screening, he sent them to the local “South African Group” for receiving a preliminary screening by them. Then the question was passed to the Committee.³¹⁰

Welcoming refugees was only one of Ghana’s initiatives to sustain African liberation movements. Accra was also very active on the ground of the independence struggles, supporting the nationalist parties abroad. The next point of the Committee’s agenda was to

³⁰⁸ Hommel was a journalist of the newspaper Johannesburg Star who, on false pretenses had spent some months in Ghana during 1959. He had received the permission to stay in Ghana since he told the Ghanaians he was persecuted by the South African government. He also expressed the desire to stay in Ghana as a teacher. After some months he left Ghana to visit his family. In reality, in November ’59, Barden received news of some articles about Ghana published by Hommel in the Johannesburg Star. Then, he kept in touch with South African freedom fighters to know more about the real identity of Hommel. See AGPL, un-catalogued/BB-Secretary’s Personal Correspondence, Letter, Barden to Peake (South Africa), 14th December 1959. Thanks to this letter, it is also possible to know that Peake was responsible for some articles against Hommel’s. See also AGPL, un-catalogued/BB-Secretary’s Personal Correspondence, Letter, Hommel to Barden, 4th November 1959 and, in the same file, also: Letter, Raboroko to Barden, 17th November 1959; Letter, Peake to Barden, 24th November 1959. See also the reaction of the Hommel issue by the PAC in AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Closed, Letter, Potlako Leballo to Barden, 1st December 1959 and also, in the same file: Letter, Hommel to Barden, undated.

³⁰⁹ AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959, “Screening Committee”. The minutes of the meeting reported the following: “In order to avoid harboring Imperialist inspired Agents at the African Affairs Centre and to safeguard at all times the Security of the State it was resolved that a committee be set up to investigate and report to this committee from time to time the activities and movements of any occupant of the Centre. The members of the committee were: Makonnen, Welbeck, Yankey, Du Plan and Barden.

³¹⁰ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee held on Wednesday 17th February 1960.

discuss on the measures to take in order to strengthen Ghana's presence on the battlefields of African liberation.

3.4. The African Affairs Committee and the Support to Freedom Fighters

In line with Nkrumah's liberation policy, the Committee worked to strengthen Ghana's support to nationalist parties, especially those in Southern Africa. The Prime Minister wanted to support their struggle but also to attract them toward the political model of Ghana. Thus, the CPP became increasingly involved in the activities of the BAA. Ghana also needed more instruments to be informed on the evolution of politics in Africa. For this reason, the Committee approved the establishment of an intelligence service specifically devoted to inform Ghana on the activities of the liberation movements.

Since October 1959, the Bureau had begun investing large resources in a daily work with African liberation movements. Party cadres were trained in Ghana and funds were also delivered to their countries in order to support the liberation struggles.

The Bureau increased its collaboration with the CPP in order to provide a proper political training to the liberation movements. The party facilities and personnel were made available to complete the political training provided by the AAC.³¹¹ In the case of the Sawaba party, the collaboration with the CPP increased so much that in October the Nigerien freedom fighters requested and obtained the affiliation of their party with the CPP. The members were authorized to have a special CPP/Sawaba membership card.³¹² The CPP

³¹¹ Makonnen make reference on usual contacts between the guests of the Centre, CCP and the TUC (trade unions of Ghana). See R. Makonnen, *Pan-Africanism from Within*, p.223.

³¹² AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-Letters for Action by the African Affairs Committee, Letter, Yacuba and other two Sawaba members to the Chairman of the Finance and Management Committee, 28th October 1959. See also PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November 9th 1959, "Sawaba party".

begun also to request the presence of nationalist parties supported by Ghana at rallies and political gatherings.

In the meantime, the African Affairs Committee worked on the internal structure of the AAPC and the Bureau, in order to make them interact better with liberation movements. The activities of the BAA abroad were divided in regional sections. At the meeting of the 22nd of October 1959, the Committee approved the creation of the first regional section, the Eastern one, appointing Koinange as its head.³¹³ Other sections were planned to be established once they found other “efficient persons” to deal with them.³¹⁴ The regional representative had an outstanding role, since he became the bridge between the nationalist movements in his area and the BAA. Soon after the creation of “regional sections” of the Bureau, the Committee decided to apply the same scheme to the AAPC. It was a clear confirmation of the ongoing process of fusion between the two agencies.³¹⁵

The next step for the Committee was to find new sources of information coming from the fronts and to provide a concrete help to the liberation movements with Ghanaian agents on the spot. At the time, the Committee was counting only on the information gained by Nkrumah’s personal contacts or by the diplomats.³¹⁶

At the meeting of 19 November 1959, the Committee discussed for the first time the establishment of a proper “Intelligence Service” to deal with African Affairs. The question

³¹³ Koinange had been already Padmore’s men in East Africa.

³¹⁴ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, *Minutes* of the 3rd of the African Affairs Committee meeting held on Thursday, October 22nd 1959, “Mr. Koinange”. The minutes state: “It was decided that in order to make the work of the Bureau representative and effective an Eastern Section should be created and as soon as efficient persons for other sections of our continent could be found, other sections could be established. It was resolved that Mr. Koinange should be in charge of the Eastern Section of the Bureau”. In the same meeting it was approved that Koinange was moved to the Centre and provided with a VIP accommodation.

³¹⁵ As for the Bureau, the Committee approved the establishment of zone representatives within the AAPC secretariat structure. The zone where the same proposed for the BAA: 1) Northern Zone 2) West African Zone 3) Eastern Zone 4) Central African Zone 5) South African Zone. It was resolved also that: “Persons appointed to these posts should be active nationalists enjoying the full confidence of the Nationalist movements in their respective Zones and they should first be screened by the Screening Committee before a decision is taken”. In PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November, 9th 1959, “South African Zone”.

³¹⁶ Indeed, during the meeting of the African Affairs Committee of 9 November 1959, Nkrumah had proposed to examine the information that were coming from his sources. Quoting from the minutes of the meeting: “The Prime Minister stated that it must not be forgotten that he received regularly information from sources near and far regarding day to day happenings in our continent and that it was his intention from time to time to enlighten members of the Committee on these matters”. In PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November, 9th 1959, “Information”.

emerged from a discussion on Congo. Indeed, the Committee needed a reliable source of information on the actual situation of the country in order to take measures. The Ghanaians could not rely only on local sources, even if they were coming from individuals connected with allied parties, in this case Lumumba's MNC. Quoting from the minutes of the meeting:

Comrade Makonnen pointed out that the situation in the Congo and Ruanda was very grave and since no accurate and comprehensive situation report was forthcoming, he would suggest that steps be taken at once for the wife of Mr. Lomotey, who belonged to a prominent and influential family well known to the two leaders of Abako and the M.N.C. to proceed at once to fish-out reports from the various leaders. The Chairman whilst agreeing to the suggestion, pointed out that in view of the fact that policies in Congo had tribalistic tendencies and as Mrs. Lomotey was herself a Congolese, he felt her reports might under-liberately be influenced by her tribe. Continuing, he remarked that he preferred at least *two loyal and intelligent Ghanaians* (italics of the author) to undertake this task. It was further suggested that the selected Ghanaian should be sent under disguise to find out the shades of opinion of the various political leaders in the Congo.³¹⁷

The case was discussed and Welbeck suggested creating a proper Intelligence Service to provide Ghana with fresh news on African affairs. According to him, Padmore himself had supported this idea before his death. Quoting from the minutes:

It was suggested by Comrade Welbeck, supported by Comrade Amoah Awah that the time was ripe for our men to be trained in intelligent network and sent out on occasions to obtain vital information under the guise of cultural, Football, Athletic, associations, etc., from dependent African territories. This information, he concluded, would assist us in formulating concrete plans towards the accelerated achievement of African Unity. It was pointed out that this suggestion concerning the establishment of intelligent service which would supply the Bureau and the Foreign Ministry with reports had been discussed with the

³¹⁷ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 5th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held on November 19th 1959 at Flagstaff House, "The Situation of Congo".

late Comrade Padmore who was in favor of the idea. Resolved that steps be taken to accelerate the training of our men in intelligent service.³¹⁸

The Committee discussed also to provide the BAA with the powers of an intelligence agency. Welbeck suggested appointing men of the Bureau as “political attaches” to be sent in each Ghanaian diplomatic mission in Africa. Their task was to collect information on African Affairs and to support the liberation movements by dealing with their local representatives.

[...] Comrade Welbeck pointed out that hitherto the Bureau and the Committee had relied only on newspaper reports and correspondence from friends concerning daily political development from dependent African countries. Continuing, he said that in order to lend concrete support and to ginger up our policy of assisting our brothers now in the heat of the struggle to overthrow imperialism, it was imperative that emissaries should be sent to such countries to revitalize their morale and also to bring up factual information about events there.³¹⁹

Thanks to the political attaches, the Bureau officially entered inside the diplomatic “orthodox” system. In the following years, this process proved to be irreversible as well as problematic.³²⁰

The training of the political attaches was also examined. It was considered essential that they were indoctrinated in the CPP ideology. To be in line with the Party was considered fundamental even for those who worked on the support to African liberation and unity. The Committee decided that the political attaches had to be instructed in party

³¹⁸ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 5th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held on November 19th 1959 at Flagstaff House, “Intelligent [sic] Service”.

³¹⁹ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, “Political Attaches”.

³²⁰ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, “Political Attaches”. Indeed, the presence of BAA agents in the Ghanaian embassies and high commissions often caused diplomatic incidents and limited the autonomy of diplomats.

ideology at the new “Winneba School”. This school was the first stage of the last of the “Pan-African” institutions in Ghana: the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute.³²¹

After having discussed all the measures adopted in order to improve Ghana’s liberation policy, the Committee examined the establishment of the Institute, a crucial project for Ghana’s Pan-African policy as well as for the reform of the Ghanaian civil service.

3.5. The Roots of the Ideological Institute of Winneba

While working on Ghana’s Pan-African policy, the African Affairs Committee discussed also on the establishment of an institution to be used both for Ghanaian citizens and African freedom fighters. The first reference to a project for the establishment of an ideological institute in Ghana can be found in a meeting of the African Affairs Committee of the 12th of November 1959. Nkrumah himself first suggested the transformation of a college in Winneba into a party school.

He wanted an institute that could serve as a “factory” for a new generation of indoctrinated administrators coming from the ranks of the party. At the same time, such a school could also provide a political and economical training to party cadres of African liberation movements. The Ghanaian Prime Minister could solve two problems at once. He could launch a project to radicalize the state and he could provide the liberation movements with the same training granted to CPP members, bounding them to Ghana. Quoting from the minutes of the meeting:

The Prime Minister stated that he had just returned from a visit to the College site and found the place to be congenial for serious study. The Primary objective of the School, he continued, would be to teach the Party’s ideology to loyal and dedicated party members.

³²¹ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, “Political Attaches”.

Concluding he said he envisaged the possibility of extending this facility to at least two members each of Nationalist Organizations in Africa.³²²

The question was discussed again on 14 January 1960, the same day the political attaches were established. The targets of the school were clarified and three men were made responsible for the project. Quoting from the meeting:

In connection with the Winneba Secondary School, it was decided after lengthy discussions that it should be taken over completely by the Party for the sole purpose of indoctrinating party member into Party's ideology. [...] it was agreed upon that Comrades Boasteng, Adamafio and Welbeck should inspect it and submit a report. The same Comrades were appointed to be directors.³²³

Then, they agreed to send the political attaches to the school so as to receive a proper indoctrination. At the same time, it was also discussed the CPP's take-over of the school. Quoting again from the meeting of 14 January:

[...] it was agreed that emissaries [political attaches] should be sent but that they should receive indoctrination at the party school. It was agreed that Comrade Kojo Botsio should work out a plan for the immediate taking over of the Winneba School by the party and that Comrades Welbeck, Boateng and Adamafio should contact him to this effect.³²⁴

Even if the school began its activities in 1960, it was only in the following year that it was officially established as the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute of Winneba. The period of the Committee had been, however, important to put the basis of the project and to adapt it to the needs of the CPP and the BAA.

Yet, before the Institute was set, another important intervention had to be made in order to strengthen the Pan-Africanist ideology in Ghana. The Ghanaian civil servants and

³²² PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 5th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held on November 12th 1960 at Flagstaff House, "Winneba College".

³²³ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, "Winneba School".

³²⁴ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, "Political Attaches".

the CPP party members were not informed on what was happening in Africa at the time. The Committee worked to solve this problem.

3.6. The BAA at the Service of the Party and the State

As the Bureau had gained support by the CPP, the Party requested its collaboration for providing information on African Affairs to Party members and civil servants. The Committee had realized that there was a poor knowledge on African Affairs within the Ghanaian state. Institutions such as the Bureau were supposed to collaborate with the Minister of Information and Broadcasting as well as with the Party to find a solution to this issue.

Between the first actions undertaken by the Committee, there was the establishment of a “Bulletin on African Affairs”. This publication – produced by the BAA - was planned as an internal instrument to provide the party and the most important institutions with fresh news on African affairs. It was officially established on 16 October 1959, as a bi-weekly publication “containing brief but concise, critical analysis and comments on daily events all over Africa”.³²⁵ Its editors were: Makonnen, Heymann (Guinea Press), Dzirasa, Du Plan and Barden.³²⁶

The Bulletin can be considered the first official “pan-African” newspaper in Ghana. It was also the first of a series of publications edited by the BAA. It was not a proper magazine, but a collection of short articles focusing on the most important issues of the African political scene. It also included a section that followed the changes occurred in the institutions of the continent.³²⁷

³²⁵ AGPL, un-catalogued/BN-African Affairs Committee Bulletin, Minutes of African Affairs Committee Meeting held at Flagstaff House on October 16th 1959, “News Bulletin”.

³²⁶ *Ibidem*.

³²⁷ It is not easy to find copies of this bulletin. One copy is kept at the Bureau of African Affairs archive. It is centered around the question of the Mali federation, providing information on Mali and other francophone

The Bulletin was a useful tool also for Ghanaian politicians who had to perform public speeches on African affairs. At the meeting of the 14th of January 1960, the Committee underlined the growing importance of African Affairs in the political life of Ghana. Consequently, it recommended its members to be constantly updated on these issues. Quoting from the meeting:

the Chairman [Nkrumah] said that our position in the African struggle for independence was such that any speech given by every Comrade should be above criticisms. [...] the Chairman remained members [of the Committee] of their present position in world politics and stressed that all speeches made by them should strictly conform to the party's political ideology as well as the Government's Foreign Policy.³²⁸

A similar operation was made in the educational system. Indeed, Nkrumah insisted to have the NASSO working together with members of the Committee to create Study Groups on African Affairs and NASSO groups in every secondary school and university of the country.³²⁹ Ghanaian students were supposed to be constantly informed on African Affairs and the achievements of the government in the fields of African liberation and unity. It was planned to provide "lectures by members of the Committee on the Governments Policy, African Affairs, African unity and International African Opinion".³³⁰ Moreover, it was agreed to form an "African Writers Association", equipped with the Bulletin and other materials produced by the Committee.³³¹

The Committee worked also on creating Radio programs on African Affairs to spread the Pan-Africanist ideology in Ghana and in the rest of the continent. The question was discussed for the first time in November. The issue with the programs broadcasted by Radio Ghana was often the lack of fresh material on the political scene in Africa. Baako - the new Minister of Information and Broadcasting - had tried to modify the situation but

countries. The Bulletin includes at the end a list of African politicians from the francophone African countries quoted in the articles. See AGPL, BAA/14, "Information Bulletin on African Affairs", vol.2, n.21, undated.

³²⁸ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, "Platform Speeches".

³²⁹ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 5th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held on November 19th 1959 at Flagstaff House, "Establishment of NASSO in the University and Secondary Schools".

³³⁰ *Ibidem*.

³³¹ *Ibidem*.

without success. Thus, the Committee decided to supply the Radio with the same information provided by the Bulletins.³³² It was also established a radio program on African Affairs called “Voice of Africa”, to be broadcasted every Thursday. James Markham had to provide the Committee with reports about it.³³³

In January, the Committee was still unsatisfied with the developments of the radio program on African affairs.³³⁴ The program had a low quality, far from the level requested by the Committee. According to Markham, the manuscripts of the program were sent to the radio already altered, worsening the quality of the information provided. Thus, Nkrumah and the other members of the Committee decided to deal personally with this question. The Broadcasting Department had to respond directly to the Committee for matters of African Affairs. This fact proves the importance of propaganda for Ghana’s Pan-African policy.³³⁵

Nkrumah strongly believed in the efficacy of medias to spread the Pan-Africanist ideology throughout Africa. “Radio Ghana” was considered as probably the most effective, and in the following years, it was developed even further in order to reach several regions of the continent.

Another media that the Committee improved in the same period was that of the press. “Voice of Africa” was going to be the first Pan-Africanist magazine ever published in Ghana, able of reaching all liberation movements in Africa.

³³² They also decided that all commentaries on African Affairs should always “begin with the sign call < This is the Voice of Africa> coming to you from Radio Ghana”. See PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November, 9th 1959, “Commentary”. The same name “Voice of Africa” was used for the magazine created by the Committee.

³³³ At the time, Markham had also worked for the AAPC, before being transferred to the Broadcasting Dept. See AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Odoi to Barden, 20th June 1960, and, in the same file, Letter, Barden to Odoi, 14th July 1960.

³³⁴ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, “Manuscripts for Broadcasting”.

³³⁵ Again in March, however, Markham was still lamenting that all his drafts were rigidly revised by the head of the Broadcasting Department before being broadcasted. It was resolved that in no case such things should have happened and that the heads of Broadcasting were requested to see Nkrumah on the issue. See PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 14th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 10th March 1960, “News Commentary – African Affairs”.

3.7. Voice of Africa

Connecting the African liberation movements to Accra was one of the main targets of Nkrumah's Pan-African policy. The Committee had already worked on strengthening the presence of the BAA on the field. The Ghanaian Prime Minister needed another instrument to reach every corner of Africa with his message. The Committee started working on a magazine specifically designed to provide the liberation movements with news on African affairs as well as a Pan-African point of view of the major questions concerning the continent. This project was "Voice of Africa" (VOA), one of the most famous magazine ever produced by Ghana. At its peak, it could reach a relevant number of African countries and many others outside Africa.

The project of a Pan-Africanist magazine was first introduced in a meeting of the Committee on the 9th of November 1959. The BAA had to produce a monthly magazine in order to spread Nkrumah's political message throughout Africa and connect the different fronts of the African liberation struggle. Quoting from the minutes of the meeting:

It was agreed that the Bureau should publish a monthly magazine on African Affairs embodying Ghana views and commentaries on International matters concerning happenings in Africa, and that Ghana views should be couched in a way which can be taken as *directives or guidance to freedom fighters* [italics by the author] all over Africa.³³⁶

The magazine was planned to be completely different from the Bulletin. It was meant to be an important instrument of Ghana's Pan-African foreign policy, influencing indirectly the political position of liberation movements. The Committee also decided to publish it in English and French so as to reach the great part of the continent. The Minister of External Affairs was also involved.³³⁷

³³⁶ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 4th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on November, 9th 1959, "Editorial Committee".

³³⁷ The members of the Editorial Committee were: Heymann, Adjei (Minister of External Affairs), Makonnen, Du Plan, Fio Meyer and Adamafio.

At the time, the project was still without a name. In early 1960, the magazine was finally called “Voice of Africa”, the same name of the commentary on African Affairs broadcasted by Radio Ghana. On January, the Editorial Committee had already begun working for the new magazine. At the meeting of the Committee on 14 January 1960, Nkrumah showed appreciation for the first results and he suggested to concentrate the efforts on those countries “in the heat of the struggle for independence”.³³⁸ The Editorial Committee also changed its members with the entry of Welbeck and Barden and the exit of Makonnen. Once again, Welbeck got involved in the most important activities of the BAA.³³⁹

The production officially started that same month and the first copies were immediately shipped abroad. At first, the distribution channels were the same of those that had been used when Padmore was in charge. The BAA sent free copies of VOA to the parties, movements or individuals that were already receiving free copies of Ghanaian newspapers. In 1960, copies of VOA reached the following African countries: Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Swaziland, Basutoland, South Africa, Tanganyika, Uganda and Bechuanaland. Outside the continent, it was distributed in: Sweden, United States (California, Michigan, Ohio, and New York), Jamaica, Czechoslovakia, China, France, United Kingdom, Poland, West Germany, and East Germany.³⁴⁰

The BAA often asked the members of liberation movements to distribute extra copies to all the other members of their parties. Some of them became, *de facto*, local agents of distribution of the BAA press.³⁴¹ In some cases, a whole association offered the BAA to

³³⁸ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, “Manuscripts for Broadcasting”.

³³⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁴⁰ Letters to and from these countries concerning VOA in 1960 can be found in: AGPL, BAA/348; AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Closed; AGPL, BAA/370; AGPL, BAA/349; AGPL, BAA/357; There are evidences of the shipping of materials other than VOA also in Trinidad, Saint Kittis and Nevis and Cote d’Ivoire.

³⁴¹ For instance, it is the case of a man from Nyasaland, who expressed his will to become an agent for VOA, Evening News and Ghana Today in Nyasaland. See AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Closed, Letter, Mushandira (Nyasaland) to the Editorial Board of the African Affairs Committee, 1st February 1960.

become their local distributors. For example, the Uganda Youth Organization was already working for the BAA in this field at least since autumn 1959.³⁴²

The case of the Cameroonian Alphonse Ebassa is worth noting. He was at the same time a distributor and a local BAA agent and informant in Sierra Leone. Ebassa, probably an *upéciste*, offered his services to the BAA in 1959. From Freetown, he was sending regular reports on Sierra Leonean politics to the BAA, informing them also on the distribution of Ghanaian press in the country. It is interesting to read one of his letters in order to understand what the BAA could expect from the distribution of VOA and other Ghanaian newspapers. The letter is dated 26th May 1960:

[...] Sierra Leone is now confronted with great difficulty about signing a military pact with Britain as the value of independence in 1961. However, the whole country is divided over this issue and many people are very anxious to get large quantity of the Voice of Africa [...] warning all Africa against military pact agreements. [...] There is a great demand for the above mentioned Ghana newspapers [“Ghana Times” and “Evening News”] here, people are very keen to know more and more about the changing wind all over Africa, and the only way to know the facts is to read Ghana’s papers which are not available here through imperialists agents. We are asking you therefore to send us reasonable quantity of “Ghana Times” and “Evening News” [...] for free distribution. [...] please don’t forget also [...] bulletins for free distribution to counteract imperialists’ hostile propaganda against independent African States, especially the Republic of Guinea.³⁴³

The political press was considered very important to spread the influence of Pan-Africanism in Sierra Leone. Ebassa not only asked for more copies of Ghanaian magazines but he even proposed to open himself a local branch of the BAA. Quoting from the same letter:

I am planning to open [a] “Bureau of African Affairs” Agency in this colony, importing about 20000 copies of newspaper from Ghana weekly for sale just to enable 2,5 million

³⁴² AGPL, un-catalogued/BK/Closed, Letter, Uganda Youth Association to Barden, 10th November 1959.

³⁴³ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Ebassa to Barden, 26th May 1960.

people to enjoy healthy educative reading matters, thereby preventing them to become the victims of various propaganda against African liberation movement.³⁴⁴

At the time, the production and distribution of political materials was becoming an increasingly important weapon to win the battle for influence in Africa. Nkrumah and Barden were both aware of the need to intensify the efforts to win a “war of propaganda” with conservative African countries and imperialist foreign powers. For this reason the VOA project was considered a prior one.

In March 1960, the question was discussed again at a meeting of the African Affairs Committee. Nkrumah underlined the political importance of VOA for his Pan-African policy and he recommended investing in the project as many resources as possible. At the time, VOA was still produced with discontinuity, due to problem with the Guinea Press:

The Chairman [Nkrumah] commenting on the production of the “Voice of Africa” said that he was disappointed to find that a paper which was becoming increasingly popular with the freedom fighters all over Africa had been discontinued. Continuing, he said that the few copies which were printed played an *important role in the propagation of our policy abroad* [italics of the author] and that every effort should be made to continue its regular production.³⁴⁵

VOA had also to achieve another target: involving the freedom fighters themselves in its production. The Committee considered important to increase the collaboration with African nationalists. Thus, parties like the BCP, the PAC and the ANC were asked to publish articles on VOA. Thanks to this initiative, Ghana could attract politically even more the freedom fighters, providing them with a large publicity. The ANC was one of the first

³⁴⁴ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Ebassa to Barden, 26th May 1960.

³⁴⁵ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 14th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 10th March 1960, “News Commentary – African Affairs”. The Committee resolved that Comrades Tawia Adamafio, John Tettegah and Barden should contact Eric Heymann to find out his difficulties and to ensure that the project became a real success.

parties to collaborate with VOA. In February 1960, Barden wrote to an ANC representative proposing their involvement in the production of a column on South Africa.³⁴⁶

Voice of Africa was soon considered a seditious publication by the colonial authorities. In the Central African Federation, the magazine was banned already in July 1960.³⁴⁷ From Nkrumah's point of view, it was not totally a bad news. It proved that VOA was having success in being the voice of African freedom fighters.

With the establishment of VOA, the BAA had finally an instrument of propaganda ready to be used in the different contexts of African liberation. In 1960 it was still a project under constant revision. In January 1961 the final version of the review was published, correcting all the mistakes in the production and distribution made during 1960.³⁴⁸

After the question of propaganda, one last element of the work of the Committee must be taken in consideration: the use of conferences to improve Ghana's influence on liberation movements and to promote African unity. The second AAPC conference and the Positive Action Conference became fundamental for Ghana's Pan-African policy in this period.

3.8. The AAPC and PAPSA Conferences

Two conferences held in the first months of 1960 ideally closed the period of administration of the African Affairs Committee. The second AAPC and the Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa (PAPSA) were both used by Nkrumah to re-launch his support to the liberation and unity of the continent.

Being the AAPC Secretariat completely dependent on the BAA, the latter was also involved in the organization of this second conference, scheduled at Tunis on 25 January

³⁴⁶ AGPL, un-catalogued/BB-Secretary's Personal Correspondence, Letter, Barden to Nokwe (ANC), 8th February 1960.

³⁴⁷ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Millapo (N. Rhodesia) to Barden, 13th July 1960.

³⁴⁸ No copies of 1960 had been found during the research, whereas those of 1961 are available.

1960. All the correspondence relating to the conference was received by the BAA itself. Interestingly, some organization and parties (the PAC, for instance) asked the BAA to participate to the conference on their behalf.³⁴⁹ The Committee, behind the BAA, was the body which was practically running the whole organization.³⁵⁰

The Ghanaian delegates were fourteen, including Botsio, Barden (representing the BAA), Welbeck, Admafi, Adjei, Tettegah and Du Plan.³⁵¹ The aim of the delegation was to push for an acceleration of the liberation and unity processes in Africa. Moreover, they presented the next conference to be held in Ghana: the “Conference of Political Organization”, later known as the Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa (PAPSA).³⁵²

The PAPSA, held in Accra between the 7th and the 10th of April 1960, was called by Nkrumah to protest against the French nuclear tests in the Sahara and to discuss African liberation and unity.³⁵³ With regard to the second point, the PAPSA was going to be very similar to the first AAPC. It was planned to be a gathering of African nationalists in which Nkrumah could promote his views on African affairs. The invitations to the conference

³⁴⁹ AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Closed, Letter, Potlako Leballo (PAC) to Barden, 5th February 1960. Leballo wrote to Barden: “[...] the Boer government made it difficult for us to obtain Passports to attend the Conference. I hope your delegation was able to represent our Congress in spite of our absences”. The PAC sent to the BAA also the resolutions of their national conference, which had been held between the 19th and the 20th of December 1959. See AGPL, un-catalogued/BK/closed, *Resolutions* of the Pan-Africanist Congress conference held at Johannesburg the 19th to the 20th of December 1959. In the case of “The American Friends Service Committee” (Southern Rhodesia) the Bureau refused, since “its role in the organization of the conference was not so central as it had been during the previous one of Accra”. In AGPL, un-catalogued/BB-Secretary's Personal Correspondence, Letter, Barden to Loft (American Friends Service Committee, Southern Rhodesia), 29th December 1959.

³⁵⁰ For example, it was the Committee who dealt with the question of ANC and NCNC which had not been invited at the conference. See PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, “Invitations to All African People's Conference in Tunis”. The Committee decided to invite them, even because the two parties had protested against the AAPC for having been ignored. It was resolved that Du Plan and Diallo were the ones to work on the matter.

³⁵¹ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, “Report on the 2nd All African People's Conference held in Tunis on 25th January 1960”, submitted by Barden on 4 February 1960. This is a report on the whole AAPC conference of Tunis submitted to the African Affairs Committee by the members of the delegation. The delegation was divided in 1) a political committee 2) economic and trade union committee 3) social and cultural committee 4) press release.

³⁵² *Ibidem*.

³⁵³ Ghana was protesting against French nuclear tests in the Sahara since July 1959, when Ako Adjei had sent a protest note to the embassy of France. The question had been then moved to the UN and in the spring of 1960 was still far from being solved.

were extended to different nationalist parties (UPC, UNIP and Zanzibar National Party), country representatives (UAR, India, Ethiopia, Liberia and Sudan), associations and labor unions (for instance, the Gambia Labour Union).³⁵⁴

The PAPSA was the occasion for Nkrumah to launch the Positive Action as the best political instrument to be used in the liberation process of the continent. At the opening speech, Nkrumah underlined the potentiality of Positive Action for both the struggle against nuclear test and the apartheid. He also presented his idea of providing African freedom fighters with training schools to learn the basis of Positive Action. This can be considered one of the first references on the project of the ideological school, even if there are no direct references to it. Quoting from the speech:

Positive action has already achieved remarkable success in the liberation struggle of our continent [...]. If the direct action that was carried out by the international protest team [against the French Test] were to be repeated on a mass scale, or simultaneously from various parts of Africa, the result could be as powerful and as successful as Gandhi's historic Salt March. [...] positive action with non-violence, as advocated by us, as found expression in South Africa in the defiance of the oppressive passes laws. [...] In my view, therefore, this conference ought to consider the setting up of a training centre where volunteers would learn the essential disciplines of concerted positive action.³⁵⁵

At the PAPSA conference Nkrumah re-launched Ghana's Pan-African policy. After its closing, a lot of changes involved the Bureau and the other institutions controlled by the Committee.

³⁵⁴ The UNIP was invited also at the celebration for the Republic of Ghana (1st July 1960). Mainza Chona, Vice President of the UNIP and representative in U.K. was head of the delegation in both the PAPSA and the Republic celebrations. See AGPL, BAA/370, Letter, Mainza Chona to Barden, 10th August 1960. For all the speeches of the delegates see AGPL, BAA/467, Speeches by delegates at the PAPSA Conference held in Accra 7 – 10 April 1960.

³⁵⁵ PRAAD, ADM/16/1/24, Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa, Opening Session, speech of Kwame Nkrumah, 7th April 1960, Community Centre, Accra Ghana, 1960, p.4.

3.9. The End of the Experience of the African Affairs Committee and the Official Establishment of the BAA

With the successful organization of the Positive Action Conference, the African Affairs Committee could consider its goals achieved. At the beginning of 1960, Ghana had a strong political position and could guide other countries towards independence. The BAA was ready to be freed from the control of the Committee and to work autonomously.

In March, the African Affairs Committee met for the last time, having fulfilled all its goals.³⁵⁶ The BAA could finally be established as an independent body the 28th of April 1960.³⁵⁷ A press release of the 4th of May indicates Welbeck as chairman and Tettegah, Makonnen, Koinange, Adamafio and Djin as members of the board.³⁵⁸ Barden – still holding the post of Secretary - kept running the BAA as acting director.³⁵⁹ He was becoming undoubtedly one of the most powerful men in Ghana, considering also his privileged relationship with Nkrumah.³⁶⁰

David Bosumtwi-Sam was appointed administrative secretary of the BAA. He was the same man who had been responsible for Barden's training before he was hired by Padmore. Barden himself insisted for having him at the Bureau.³⁶¹ The new administrative

³⁵⁶ The last meeting was the one of the 17th of March. See PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 15th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee to be held on Thursday 17th March 1960 at Flagstaff House. Kwesi Armah refers to the African Affairs Committee working even after 1960. See K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.22. However, according to David Bosumtwi-Sam this body was no more working when he was appointed Administrative Secretary of the BAA, in the spring of 1960. Interview with D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 19th July 2012. The author had not found any document concerning the African Affairs Committee which dated after the 17th of March 1960.

³⁵⁷ Daily Graphic, 28th April 1960; quoted in AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Arai (Embassy of Japan, Accra) to Barden, 28th April 1960.

³⁵⁸ Press release of the Government of Ghana, dated 4th of May 1960 and quoted in W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.107.

³⁵⁹ Welbeck, the chairman, did not follow all the activities of the BAA. Basically, Barden alone run the office since its establishment. See for example AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Malianga (South. Rhodesia) to Welbeck, 14th July 1960. In the letter a student, Malianga, had to deal with Barden, as Welbeck was unavailable.

³⁶⁰ Both Makonnen and Thompson confirm that Barden became increasingly close to Nkrumah, to the point that, according to both of them, Nkrumah was soon unable to realize that Barden was influencing him in a negative way. See R. Makonnen, *Pan-Africanism from Within*, p.220 and W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.107. Even K.B. Asante had confirmed in an interview with the author, Accra, 4th September 2011, that Barden was very close to Nkrumah and "he had a bad influence on him".

³⁶¹ Interviews with K.B. Asante, Accra, 4th September 2011 and D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 19th July 2012. According to both of them, Bosumtwi-Sam had been chosen for his broad knowledge and competences.

secretary was a competent “neutral” civil servant absolutely reliable for the delicate matters of the BAA. Once he accepted the post, he was also indoctrinated to the socialist and Pan-Africanist ideologies which were more than ever pervading the BAA.³⁶²

Similarly to Padmore’s Office, the BAA was established as a body dependent only on Nkrumah, who had also provided Barden with the funds to support freedom fighters.³⁶³ Only the “African Affairs Annex”, an intelligence body attached to the Office of President, and Nkrumah himself could have access to information concerning the Bureau.³⁶⁴ Again, the reason was political. Nkrumah was aware that part of the Government, the party and the civil service was against Barden and the Bureau.

In the spring of 1960, the Bureau was ready to operate on a bigger scale. Although there were still some problems to be solved, the general structure had been set. Welbeck wrote to Nkrumah to update him on the situation of the BAA and of the other institutions that had to deal with Ghana’s Pan-African policy.³⁶⁵ He underlined the quality of the work done by the Committee in the previous months in preparing the “Pan-African” machinery of Ghana. Quoting from the letter:

The Ghana Government has made its intention clear by public declaration that it would give financial assistance to all Freedom Fighters in their attempt to free themselves from imperialist yoke. By this declaration, it is meant, no doubt, that the assistance is not short of financial aid which the Freedom Fighters everywhere stand sorely in need of. Fortunately, we are in a better position than most, if not more than all the independent African States, who have also pledged themselves to that end. *We are in a better position because we have the effective machinery to deal with the problem* [italics by the author]; our financial

Bosumtwi-Sam remembers to have decided to join the BAA after several attempts by Barden to convince him.

³⁶² Interviews with D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 19th July 2012 and E.A. Richter, Accra, 23rd December 2011.

³⁶³ According to Thompson, most of the money used by the BAA came directly from a fund connected with Nkrumah’s office (presidential Contingency Fund). This way, Nkrumah could avoid any check by other members of the party, the government or the state. Thompson, W.S., *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p. 449. However, Thompson does not provide any source for his statement. It is simply a deduction made by the comparison between the official data (the ones of page 449) and the ones published in NLC, *Nkrumah’s Subversion in Africa*.

³⁶⁴ Interview with E.A. Richter, Accra, 23rd December 2011. Nkrumah became president after the proclamation of the republic on July, 1st 1960.

³⁶⁵ AGPL, BAA/370, *Letter*, Welbeck (and Djin) to Nkrumah, undated, title: “Operation Independence, Transfer of Financial Aid to Freedom Fighters”.

position is rosier and besides, we have command of more dollars which, to all financial doors everywhere, is the open sesame; and there is no doubt, whatsoever, that we are pursuing our aim which is broad-minded with more seriousness, vigilance and thoroughness than any of our sister African States and we have well laid flexible plans to suit in each turn, the ever changing maneuvers of the imperialist tactics.

Even the African Affairs Centre was reorganized. It was maintained as a separate body from the BAA, even if the two institutions were collaborating. In June, Nkrumah officially appointed his friend Makonnen as the head of the Centre and he asked the Guyanese Pan-Africanist to give full attention to the institution in order “to formulate vital programs to meet the needs of our African kinsmen”. Interestingly, Makonnen was asked to report only to Nkrumah and never to the BAA.³⁶⁶

Immediately after his appointment, Makonnen began to give shape to the new Centre. He wanted to model it on Nkrumah’s political needs. Indeed, through the political training provided at the Centre he could influence politically the African freedom fighters pushing them towards Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist thoughts. According to Makonnen, before his appointment, the Centre had been run without a precise indication on the political targets to achieve. Since Ghana had entered a new political phase, it was time to take a stand and to make good use of its “Pan African” institutions. In June 1960, he wrote to Nkrumah:

Having followed with interest the uneven development in the life of the Centre, I would like to know really what role or function would you like the Centre to undertake. Do you my dear Prime Minister like the Centre to be a closed shop – an exclusive retreat for people with a mission known only to you and your exclusive lieutenants, or do you want it to be a hospitality centre for dedicated nationalists and their allies in revolt against colonialism and its endemic ills? [...] Or would you want the Centre to take on the appearance of prevailing centers to be found in other countries, for instance international House in New York or Peace and Friendship Centers in England and Stockholm, or Centers for International Friendship found in the People’s Republic? ³⁶⁷

³⁶⁶ AGPL, BAA/357, Letter, Nkrumah to Makonnen, 17th June 1960.

³⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

Even if the reply is not available, the evolution of the Centre indicates that Nkrumah pushed for a large use of ideological training. He wanted the Centre to be not only a place where to host the freedom fighters could be hosted but also one where to provide some basis of ideology and political tactic. The Ideological Institute of Winneba was supposed to complete this political training.

With the BAA and the AAC in full operation, Ghana was ready to deal with the many questions on the table of African politics. Two of them in particular attracted the attention of the country: the struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa and the crisis in Congo. The next two sub-chapters will deal with each of them. It will be the occasion to see in practice how the “new” Bureau was working and how Barden got increasingly involved in the making of Ghana’s Pan-African policy.

3.10. Sharpeville, the Question of Refugees and the South African United Front

One of the main problems the BAA had to face in 1960 was the one of South Africa. Verwoerd’s government had showed an increasing hostility towards African nationalist parties. The Sharpeville massacre transformed this hostility in open war. Members of the PAC and ANC had to escape from the country and seek the help, among others, of Ghana.

After Padmore’s death, Southern Africa became more and more important for Ghana’s Pan-African policy. The AAC welcomed an increasing amount of refugees from the area and the BAA deepened its relations with nationalist parties in Basutoland (Basutoland Congress Party - BCP), Nyasaland (Malawi Congress Party - MCP), Bechuanaland (Bechuanaland People’s Party - BPP), Swaziland (Ngwane Liberatory Congress – NLC - and the Swazi Progressive Association - SPA), South West Africa (South West Africa National Union - SWANU), Northern Rhodesia (United National Independence party – UNIP), Southern Rhodesia (National Democratic Party – NDP) and

South Africa, where ANC and PAC were both backed by Ghana.³⁶⁸ It also intensified its activities in the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique so that the whole region was covered.

Ghana intensified its struggle especially against the apartheid system in South Africa. It was not only a semi-colonial and racist entity but it also represented a threat for the African liberation struggle in the whole region. Indeed, the Verwoerd government was acting as the fulcrum of a “white front” between South Africa and the two other white-ruled and anti-communist powers of the area: the CAF and the Portuguese Empire. Damaging the fulcrum could have led to the fall of the whole system.

The BAA supported both the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress, the two major nationalist parties of South Africa at the time. In line with Nkrumah’s vision of nationalism, Ghana officially sponsored also the re-unification of the two parties, which had split in early 1959.³⁶⁹ At the same time, however, different Ghanaian factions were backing one of the two parties, leading to a difficult reconciliation between them. At first, Nkrumah’s government backed vigorously only the ANC. Being the strongest nationalist party in the country, it was seen as the only weapon to break the apartheid regime. Still, after a few months from the establishment of the PAC, Nkrumah himself had pushed for an opening to Sobukwe’s party.³⁷⁰ On 12 November 1959, the question was raised at the meeting of the African Affairs Committee:

Comrade Hutchinson explained in detail the moderate tactics of the national congress [ANC] and said that the break-away group, Pan-Africanist Congress, was radicals and extremists who were not prepared to enlist into their fold any European. Continuing he said that the National Congress was apprehensive of the fast moves of the radicals and considered that the Congress would be drawn into serious trouble. The Prime Minister [Nkrumah] said that if the Congress were not prepared to co-operate with this group, it

³⁶⁸ The BAA had also contacts with a significant number of other parties, associations and even individuals. In South Africa, for instance, the Bureau was in contact with an association of Indians. See AGPL, BAA/370, Letter, Nutsugah (secretary to the cabinet of Ghana govt.) to Barden and the Principal Secretary of the Minister of external Affairs, 24th October 1960.

³⁶⁹ The PAC was established from a split between factions of the ANC on April 6th 1959. See on the issue R. Makonnen, *Pan-Africanism from Within*, p.218.

³⁷⁰ Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe (1924 – 1978) was the founder and president of the Pan-Africanist Congress.

must nevertheless refrain from vilifying them and said one never knew which of the two could bring about independence and supported his case by quoting the CPP and the UGCC as a convincing example.³⁷¹

In the following months, the position of the PAC became increasingly stronger in Ghana. Indeed, political radicalism was growing in the whole country and in the party, influencing also the balance of the support to the two South African parties. While officially supporting the reunification, the Bureau provided more attention to the PAC. After Nkrumah's indications in November, even the Committee backed it with more vigor. Few months later, however, their expectations were partially betrayed. The PAC was still far weaker than the ANC and he had achieved scarce political results. Thus, Nkrumah's line went back straight to the reunification option.³⁷²

In the meantime, a tragic event occurred in South Africa. On March 1960, a march organized at Sharpeville by the PAC against the so-called "pass laws" turned into a massacre. This bloody event signed the beginning of a process of exacerbation of the political situation of South Africa. Shortly after, all the African parties of South Africa were banned and many members of PAC and ANC had to escape from the state. The BAA was immediately available to come to rescue the refugees.

Hundreds of requests for political asylum and Ghanaian citizenships came to the desk of different ministers, the BAA and Nkrumah himself. The experiences of the refugees were usually very similar. Members of ANC and PAC or other organizations had to flee out of the Union of South Africa to escape from imprisonment after the Declaration of Emergence following the Sharpeville events. Most of them had sought refuge in neighboring countries, especially Basutoland and Bechuanaland. There, local nationalist parties provided them with shelter and protected them from South African agents. Since local parties were all linked to Ghana through the BAA, Barden was constantly informed of

³⁷¹ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 5th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held on November 12th 1959, "South African National Congress".

³⁷² PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, "Memorandum on South Africa". The "top secret" document, which is undated, was probably submitted by a member of the PAC writing from South Africa. It includes also some considerations on the best tactics Ghana's government should adopt in dealing with South African affairs.

the situation. The BAA itself received many of the letters from the refugees, who were mostly party members. The following is an example of a letter sent to the BAA:

As a full member of African National Congress Youth League and having participated in the Defiance Campaign and boycotts, I knew that the Special Branch Detectives of the Union Government will look high and low for me. They actually did and visited my home and questioned my mother [...]. I found that I would not be safe in any part of the Union of South Africa. I fled to Basutoland and have been ever since the Declaration of the Emergence there. I met my fellow freedom fighters from all parts of the Union of South Africa. The refugees are well looked after there by the Basutoland Congress Party. [...] Time and again we met members of the Special Branch Police of the Union Government [...] I panicked and left Basutoland [...] My intention was to reach Lusaka and then to proceed from there to Ghana. Unfortunately I was stopped at Bulawayo. [...] I was put on the earliest train bound for Bechuanaland. [...] Sir, again, I ask you please to give me any assistance you can to get me out of Bechuanaland. My aims and objectives is to get to Ghana and further my studies.³⁷³

The Ghanaian state was unprepared to manage such a huge wave of refugees. There were not enough structures. Even more importantly, Nkrumah did not want to host too many of them, dividing the nationalist forces of Southern Africa and keeping them away from the front. The only solution was to keep the freedom fighters in the region, delivering men and funds for their assistance directly to the countries where they were hosted. Even Barden supported this line and he reported the Ghanaian position to the South Africans. The following letter is also the response to the previous one:

Much as we have committed ourselves to assist in issuing where possible, travelling documents to active nationalists in South Africa, we do it in such way as to avoid influx of nationalists leaving the battlefield. If such a situation was to happen it would mean that all the nationalist organizations will be leaderless and none suitably staffed to carry on the struggle. In this connection, I hope you will agree with me that you should not be

³⁷³ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Spencer Joel Thloloe to Barden, 20th July 1960.

discouraged or be afraid to stay in South Africa to carry on the struggle since tree of liberty must all times be watered by the blood of martyrs.³⁷⁴

The BAA undertook the mission of providing support to South African freedom fighters on the field. The solution was perfect to prove the efficiency of the net established by the Bureau in the region. Barden himself held a key role in the mission. Indeed, he had begun traveling throughout Africa, managing connections, delivering funds, and organizing the political training of freedom fighters. Thanks to these travels, he could also be constantly updated on the progress of the African liberation struggle.

Just before the second IAS conference (Addis Ababa, 14-24 June 1960), the acting director of the BAA made a tour of Southern Africa.³⁷⁵ He visited Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, the countries that had the greatest problems with refugees. There, he coordinated the support of the Bureau to the South African freedom fighters. He also worked for deepening the relationship between the local nationalist parties and the Bureau. For instance, he met the representatives of the Basutoland Congress Party, assuring them that Ghana was backing their struggle like it did with the one of South Africans. He also promised an increasing collaboration between their party and the Bureau.³⁷⁶

The issue of refugees in South Africa had been the occasion to see the Bureau in action for the first time after the end of the period of the African Affairs Committee. The result had been quite satisfying. Barden had proved that the BAA net in Africa was wide and strong and that his office could manage any problem concerning African liberation. He had successfully worked in the field to provide support to African freedom fighters and to collect fresh news on the evolution of African Affairs. Paradoxically, Barden was the head of the BAA but also its first agent.

³⁷⁴ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Barden to Spencer Joel Thloloe, 13th September 1960.

³⁷⁵ References to this tour can be found in a series of letters dated 30th July 1960 sent by the BAA to various parts of Africa. See for instance AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Barden to Khabisi, 30th July 1960.

³⁷⁶ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Basutoland Congress Party to Barden, 7th June 1960. Quoting from the letter: "You have left behind a name; a name for yourself, a name for Ghana, a name for Basutoland and a name for Africa. Many more people talk about the liberty of Africa and for them Ghana is a real and living country of people like yourselves. That your presence here had a powerful impact is borne by the fact that the office is overflowing with applications of people who want to study motor mechanics, *local government*, cooperatives and diverse other things. You should do something to quench the thirst you have aroused".

The next question Barden and the BAA had to solve was the one of Congo. In this case, the situation was even more complex, since the enemies were both external imperialist forces (the Belgians and the Americans) and internal ones (Tshombe, Kasavubu and Mobutu). In Congo, Nkrumah's Pan-African policy was at stake. From the result of this struggle depended the evolution of politics in the whole continent.

3.11. The Role of the BAA in the Congo Crisis

Ghana got involved in the Congolese politics even before the independence of the country (30th June 1960). Indeed, Lumumba was one of Nkrumah's closest allies in Africa and a supporter of a Pan-African policy similar to Ghana's. As Armah stated: "the Congo Crisis became a test case in the Pan-African struggle for genuine political independence".³⁷⁷ Thus, when the crisis erupted in July, Ghana was in the frontline to support such an independence from the aggression of the "imperialist forces". The BAA was particularly active in this phase, since its agents supported both Lumumba and the Ghanaian army (part of the UN mission) in Congo. Ghana's role in the Crisis had already been described by scholars and non-scholars.³⁷⁸ This sub-chapter will not describe again these events, but it will focus primarily on the work of the BAA in Congo.

Between 1957 and 1959, Nkrumah backed Kasavubu's ABAKO, as the party was considered the most powerful in the Belgian Congo. However, after the AAPC, the Ghanaian Prime Minister started to look at Lumumba as a better candidate for Ghana's support. Indeed, the latter was getting closer and closer to Nkrumah's political position. His Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) was emerging as a modern, non-tribal and

³⁷⁷ K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.50.

³⁷⁸ See K. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, PANAf, London, 1969; W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, and J. Mohan, *Ghana, The Congo, and The United Nations*, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 7, 3 (1969), pp.369-406 and H.T. Alexander, *African tightrope: My two years as Nkrumah's Chief of Staff*, Prager, New York, 1966.

centralist nationalist party, very close to the model of the CPP.³⁷⁹ On the contrary, Kasavubu was controlling a party representing mainly his ethnic group, although at the same time, trying also to present himself as a national leader.

In the winter of 1959/1960, Ghana's support moved definitely towards Lumumba's side. In this period, Nkrumah began supporting publicly the leaders of the MNC and Ghanaian agents were sent to Congo to monitor the situation. Some months before the independence of the country, the Committee had already set up a list of diplomats to be sent to Leopoldville. Between them there was Djin, who was going to become ambassador.³⁸⁰

Congo finally became independent on the 30th of June 1960 and Lumumba became its first Prime Minister. Ghana was the first country to support him. According to Thompson: "Probably no new nation ever brought so much help to a brother state so quickly".³⁸¹ Nkrumah granted Lumumba with help "at almost every level of government" with the transfer of doctors, engineers and civil servants from Ghana.³⁸² By supporting Congo, the Ghanaian Prime Minister wanted to strengthen what at the time was probably his most powerful and precious political ally for the attainment of his Pan-African policy.

Suddenly, however, the situation deteriorated. The Congolese *force publique* announced its mutiny on July 5th to demand the africanization of its ranks and an increase of the salaries. In the meantime, Katanga declared its secession (11th July). The two events mixed together brought the country on the edge of chaos, leading to the beginning of what was to be known as the "Congo crisis".

³⁷⁹ According to Armah (at the time Ghana's High Commissioner in London), the AAPC had a great influence in bringing Lumumba close to Nkrumah's political position. The MNC and CPP shared the same concepts of nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Quoting from K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.51: "Among the hundreds of delegates who attended the Conference were Patrice Lumumba [...] and two party associates. This memorable conference was for them a baptism of fire in the struggle for Africa's liberation. On returning home to Congo, a mass meeting was convened on January 3, 1959 at which Lumumba announced with fiery outcry the need for immediate and total independence for his country".

³⁸⁰ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 13th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee to be held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 25th February 1960 and PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, 14th Meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 10th March 1960, "Emissaries to Congo"; he was then substituted with Welbeck. See W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.142.

³⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p.123

³⁸² *Ibidem*.

On the 13th of July, Nkrumah declared that he would support Lumumba in every possible way.³⁸³ He decided, then, to send practically every troop available to Leopoldville in order to defend the government from the rebels and the secessionists. On July 16th, the first Ghanaian soldiers reached the Congo as part of the wider UN forces of the ONUC mission. In the meantime, even BAA agents were sent to Leopoldville in order to provide support to the Congolese government. The whole Ghanaian forces were first put at the service of Lumumba. Solving the Congo crisis was considered by Nkrumah as the most important mission of his Pan-African policy, even though he had to work through the UN to achieve this target.

The African Affairs Committee had already worked in the previous months to prepare a response to a situation of this kind. Thanks to Welbeck, intelligence agents were introduced in Congo.³⁸⁴ Even the BAA had been developed to face increasingly difficult missions like this one.³⁸⁵ When the Congo Crisis erupted, the whole system was put to the test. The Ghanaian intelligence and the BAA agents were asked to give support to Lumumba in every possible way.

Barden himself was involved in the mission in Congo. At the end of July, he moved to Leopoldville to coordinate the work of the BAA agents.³⁸⁶ After going back to Accra to submit a report to Nkrumah, he returned immediately to Congo again.³⁸⁷ The document includes some interesting thoughts on the political situation in the ex-Belgian colony and the actions he suggested to undertake:

[...] events in Africa have moved with remarkable speed. Ghana must act immediately on many fronts if she is to retain the initiative in the African Scene, and to secure the furtherance of complete independence and African Unity. [...] Events in the Congo and the dispatch of Ghana forces there require the setting up of high-level Intelligence Services in

³⁸³ K. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, p.20-21

³⁸⁴ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 5th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held on November 19th 1959 at Flagstaff House, "Intelligent Service".

³⁸⁵ PRAAD, SC/BAA/251, Minutes of the 10th meeting of the African Affairs Committee held at Flagstaff House on Thursday 14th January 1960, "Political Attaches".

³⁸⁶ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Barden to Ondong (Uganda), 30th July 1960. He wrote to Ondong: "I left for Congo to assist our brothers in consolidating their newly hard-won independence and also to achieve their territorial integrity and sovereignty which are being threatened by mass invasion of Belgium imperialists".

³⁸⁷ AGPL, BAA/370, Report, "Ghana's Role in Emergent Africa", Barden to Nkrumah, 25th July 1960.

the Congo. This will enable the Ghana Government to keep informed of developments not only in the Congo itself, but in the surrounding countries which will receive a vigorous jolt as a result of the Congo events. [...] The Intelligence Services [...] should operate a direct communication service between the Ghana Forces and the President and Minister of Defense [...].³⁸⁸

In August, Barden kept working relentlessly to support Lumumba, even if in the same period the secession attempt of the South Kasai led the situation to become ever worse than before.³⁸⁹ A special “Congo-Coordinating Committee” was also set up by the Ghanaians to coordinate better the efforts to defend the legitimate Congolese government from the aggression of the “imperialists”. Barden was included in the Committee, a sign of his increasing importance within the Ghanaian entourage. At the time, he was also constantly in contact with the Prime Minister for questions concerning African Affairs.³⁹⁰ Nkrumah committed Ghana to the defense of the independence and unity of Congo. Thus, he came to the point of proposing Lumumba a union with his country in August.³⁹¹

Despite Ghana’s total commitment to the cause and despite the BAA’s work in Congo, no solution to the crisis was found and USA and URSS definitely made their entry into Congolese politics. Neither the Ghanaian army as part of the ONUC nor the BAA could prevent the deterioration of Lumumba’s position in Congo after the fight of the Congolese government against the secessionists of South Kasai had turned into a bloodbath. While the troops of the United Nations – including the Ghanaian ones - were unsuccessfully trying to control the situation, Mobutu could dismiss by force Lumumba from the Government (September) and put him under arrest. He also contributed to the capture and the assassination of the former Prime Minister (January 1961) while he was escaping from his house arrest to Stanleyville, the seat of his new opposing government.

³⁸⁸ AGPL, BAA/370, Report, “Ghana’s Role in Emergent Africa”, Barden to Nkrumah, 25th July 1960.

³⁸⁹ AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Barden to Mlobeli (Basutoland), 7th September 1960.

³⁹⁰ See AGPL, BAA/348, Letter, Barden to Combs, 9th September 1960.

³⁹¹ W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p.140 He also made a speech on the same day to the Ghanaian National Embassy to confirm the total commitment of Ghana to the mission in Congo. See AGPL, BAA/414, République du Ghana, «*Allocution prononcée devant L’Assemblée Nationale sur Les Affaires Africaines par Osagyefo Le Docteur Kwame Nkrumah* », 8 Aout, 1960.

In December, shortly before Lumumba's murder, Nkrumah had already considered his mission in Congo failed, leading to a re-consideration of his foreign policy. Still, Barden defended the work done by the BAA during the crisis and the one he was doing with the Stanleyville government. According to him, it was true that Ghana had lost the battle for defending Lumumba's government but the war was not over yet and the BAA was ready to fight it. According to him: "[...] In the operations in Congo, the Bureau projected itself significantly for the part it played and is still playing".³⁹²

Paradoxically, while Ghana's Pan-African policy had lost strength in 1960 - mainly because of the failure in Congo - the BAA emerged stronger. Barden had proved that he could work practically everywhere in Africa thanks to the net of agents he had created.

3.12. A Balance of the BAA Work in Africa

The end of 1960 was a period of evaluation of the work of the BAA in Africa. The Bureau was not only involved in Southern Africa and in Congo but in almost every region of Africa. The wide net of agents developed at the time of the management of the African Affairs Committee was working fine. The BAA was surely one of the strongest instruments of Ghana's foreign policy. Barden was also becoming more and more important and he was accounted as Nkrumah's new adviser on African Affairs

The acting director of the BAA was particularly interested in the evolution of politics in West Africa, since this area was considered crucial for widening the UAS project as well as for widening the political influence of Ghana. In late July, he reported the situation of the countries around Ghana to Nkrumah. He also suggested new solutions to attract politically the governments of francophone countries. Indeed, some of them were very suspicious

³⁹² AGPL, BAA/370, "Report on the activities of the Bureau – January to December 1960" submitted by Barden to Nkrumah on 16th December 1960.

towards Accra, especially those which had opposition parties backed by the Bureau. Here follows an extract of Barden's report (25th of July):

The acute crisis in the Congo has naturally preoccupied Ghana in recent weeks; developments in West Africa itself, where the French Community countries have achieved independence, as well as in other former French Territories are no less important and must not be over-shadowed and obscured by the more dramatic events in the Congo. [...] It is of the utmost importance in our goal of African Unity to establish firm contacts with the newly independent States of the French Community; at present there seems to be considerable suspicion of Ghana's aims and motives on the part of these former French States. [...] Many of the tensions existing between Ghana and former French Community States are due to nothing more than the lack of contact which has resulted in wrong interpretations of Ghana's aims and her role in Africa. Immediate steps must be taken if these misunderstandings are not to become hardened and to create long term, if not permanent stumbling blocks to African Unity. [...] We suggest that emissaries are sent forthwith to the newly independent States of the former French Community to establish confidence between them and Ghana [...].³⁹³

Ghana's primary mission – according to Barden – was to avoid the strengthening of the influence of other moderate countries such as Tubman's Liberia in the West African region, especially among the Francophone countries. If Nkrumah could extend his influence among the latter, he could achieve two targets of his Pan-African policy: developing the UAS project and weakening France's influence on its former colonies.

At the time, the radical Modibo Keita was the only francophone leader other than Touré who was willing to discuss about African unity. The President of the Mali Federation was already planning with Tubman and Touré a community of African States on the Sanniquellie model. Nkrumah had simply to push Keita to unite immediately his country with Ghana and Guinea. The Ghanaian diplomacy and the Bureau were promptly put to work to accomplish this mission.³⁹⁴ The operation was bound to be successful as in just a

³⁹³ AGPL, BAA/370, Report, "Ghana's Role in Emergent Africa", Barden to Nkrumah, 25th July 1960.

³⁹⁴ Modibo Keita had become president of the Mali Federation, which gained independence on June, 20th 1960 and got dissolved one month later. Nkrumah immediately worked to bring Keita on its side. He wanted to convince the radical Keita to let Mali join Ghana and Guinea in a political union. By doing so, the Ghanaian

few months Keita's new Mali – born out of the split of the federation - joined Ghana and Guinea into a three-states-wide UAS.

The Bureau had to work harder to spread Ghana's influence in the other francophone countries. Barden considered this target so important that he proposed to deal with it personally. In November 1960, while announcing the forthcoming union with Mali, Barden proposed Nkrumah to lead a mission of the BAA in francophone West Africa:

[...] it would appear advisable if arrangement could be made for a fact-finding mission of two to be sent immediately to Niger to assess the climate of opinion with regard to the Ghana-Mali declaration of intentions, and also to find out whether there are any reasonable prospects of establishing closer relationship which could ultimately lead Ghana to a similar union with Niger. The same fact-finding mission could also cover Dahomey and Haut Volta as the three states are contiguous in character. [...]³⁹⁵

Interestingly, he also proposed to involve the Malian Government in the running of the BAA with the appointment of a Malian Under-Secretary at the Bureau. According to Barden, "their participation in the activities of the Bureau [would] prove to the other African States the well-meant intentions of our Government and give reality to the foundation of United Africa".³⁹⁶

After Southern Africa, West Africa, and Congo, the BAA was also involved in another fundamental area of the continent: Eastern Africa. When he returned from Congo, Barden made a trip in the region to collect information and to organize the activities of the Bureau on the spot. Barden's mission started on 11 November 1960 with his visit to Sudan

had also the possibility to weak the position of Senghor in Senegal and also to avoid the interference of moderate countries like Liberia. Barden's report gives the reader a clear understanding of Ghana's policy in this matter: "[...] Monsieur Modibo Keita the Prime Minister of the Mali Federation [he was Prime Minister up to independence and then he became president] left on a trip to Liberia and Guinea. At the end of his four-day visit, Monsieur Modibo Keita issued a joint statement with President Tubman proposing the holding of a Conference of African States to study the possibilities of the creation of the Community of African States [the same name of the Sanniquellie proposal]. The Conference, it was suggested, should have been similar to the one held in Sanniquellie the previous year by the leaders of Liberia, Ghana, and Guinea. *This is an indication of the speed at which President Tubman is moving and unless immediate steps are taken by Ghana to put her case to the Community States the initiatives will pass to him*". See AGPL, BAA/370, Report, "Ghana's Role in Emergent Africa", Barden to Nkrumah, 25th July 1960.

³⁹⁵ AGPL, BAA/370, Letter, Barden to Nkrumah, 30th November 1960.

³⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.

followed by one to Kenya and one to Tanganyika. The trip proved fundamental to understand how to perform Ghana's Pan-African policy in the area. It also helped Barden to have a first-hand impression of the work done by the BAA agents there.

With Barden's trip to East Africa, the year of the activity of the BAA was ideally ending and the first balances of the work accomplished until then could be made. In 1960, Ghana had lost several political battles, *in primis* in Congo, where Nkrumah's Pan-African policy had impacted with Africa's involvement in the Cold War. However, Barden was quite satisfied of the improvements of his Bureau. The "Pan-African" institution had proved fundamental for Ghana's foreign policy and its power within the state was growing. Barden had proved to be one of the main protagonists of Ghana's Pan-African policy, being directly involved in several missions throughout the continent.

In December, the acting director of the BAA provided Nkrumah with a report on the activities of the Bureau in 1960.³⁹⁷ It was the opportunity for Barden to show the Ghanaian Prime Minister the increasing importance of the BAA and its political achievements. First of all, he described the new image that the BAA had gained among the liberation movements:

It is with a sense of great satisfaction that I have to report on the activities of the Bureau during the past 12 months. [...] the Bureau was able to establish itself as a nerve centre and pivot for the crusade of African Liberation, and in this position made a tremendous impact not only on dependent and independent African States, but also on certain parts of the world. Consequently, many dependent African States have come to regard the Bureau as the only source of their political and economic salvation. Conferences held in Accra last year also contributed a great deal to the popularity and prestige of the Bureau.

Then, Barden analyzed the case of Congo, showing him how the work done by the Bureau had strengthened Ghana's position in Africa:

[...] our policy and action in Congo have demonstrated to leaders of dependent African States that in Ghana they have a true and genuine brother on whom they can call in times of

³⁹⁷ AGPL, BAA/370, "Report on the activities of the Bureau – January to December 1960" submitted by Barden to Nkrumah on 16th December 1960.

crisis and need and who always still answer their call with promptitude and unflagging determination.

According to Barden, the Bureau had also played a fundamental role in creating political contacts. His trips all around Africa had proven useful to extend the net of the Bureau and also Ghana's influence among the liberation movements. Even African unity had been successfully promoted through these contacts, proving that the Bureau could be as useful as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the work with foreign diplomats and politicians:

More exchange of visits and contacts were undertaken during the year. I was able to travel extensively to many African States and countries. These visits considerably reinforced my knowledge of the problems confronting many Freedom fighters and gave me ample scope and opportunity to discuss these problems on the spot. In return, apart from visits paid to the Bureau by leaders and members of various political parties and organizations, the Bureau also received no less than six diplomatic missions from abroad. It is, perhaps, pertinent for me to emphasize the political necessity and importance of such exchange of visits and contacts; for not only do they help in bringing about broad understanding of the international political issues and of each country's policy towards them, but they also help to create a fund of goodwill an intimate understanding leading to easy co-operation and promoting the concept of African Unity.

Barden's report to Nkrumah represented not only an evaluation of the past year but also a plan for the future. According to the acting director of the BAA, Ghana's Pan-African policy had to become more radical. Furthermore, he invited Nkrumah to invest more resources in the Bureau, since it was the only institution which could assure concrete results in the struggle for African liberation and Unity.

Nkrumah was persuaded to take Barden's suggestions into serious consideration. The failures of Ghana's foreign policy and the progresses made by the BAA made him re-think the entire plan of Ghana's Pan-African policy.

3.13. Conclusions

As the year 1960 was ending, a report of the achievements and the failures of Ghana's Pan-African policy could be finally made. Undoubtedly, this period proved to be fundamental for giving a new shape to the whole system of foreign affairs. Almost every new policy conceived in this period became the basis for further developments in the following years.

The first and most important mission fulfilled by Nkrumah in 1960 was to continue along the path set up with his mentor George Padmore. His death could have meant the complete failure of a whole political project which had its roots back in 1945. Instead, the bases outlined by Padmore proved to be so solid they could resist the delicate phase which followed his death. Thus, his office survived and evolved into the Bureau of African Affairs. Barden - the new protagonist of Ghana's Pan-African policy - had been trained by Padmore precisely for this purpose.

Nkrumah's choice to involve fundamental figures from the party and the state in the making of Ghana's foreign policy proved wise. The work done by the African Affairs Committee in almost eight months was remarkable. It completely transformed the structure of the "Pan-African" institutions of Ghana and it also dictated a new, more radical, political line. After the work done by the Committee, the two "Pan-African" institutions were ready to deal with the challenges of the African scene. In particular, the net of BAA agents built by Barden during the management of the Committee proved to be effective.

In 1960, Accra was involved in almost every region of the continent, supporting African liberation and unity. The Bureau of African Affairs proved very effective in dealing with these questions. Even in Congo, where Ghana had failed to protect Lumumba's government, the BAA had still proved its efficiency.

After the Congo crisis, Nkrumah had to reshape completely Ghana's Pan-African policy. The work done in 1960 was a solid starting point. However, due to the new challenges in the African scene and the entry of the cold war in Africa, Nkrumah had to make some fundamental changes in the structure of the Pan-African institutions and in their policies.