

## Notes and News

### REPORT OF HONORARY DIRECTOR, 1983

The following is a shortened version of the report presented by the Hon Director, I. M. Lewis, to the 56th meeting of the Executive Council at Gaborone, Botswana, 22–24 September 1983:

Building upon the short-term financial respite achieved last year, our major endeavour this year has been to attempt to diversify and stabilize the Institute's sources of core-funding while also re-establishing and extending our international role in African Studies. This has entailed much laborious work with a small administrative staff operating on a minimal and vigilantly scrutinized budget.

The Institute's efforts to re-animate its international liaison and co-ordinating role in African Studies, and to expand its scope to include Arabic-speaking North Africa, are already achieving a gratifying response. We can also report some success in our attempts to secure funds for new research projects and seminars. However, despite much painstaking and concentrated effort, the struggle to attract the financial support necessary to sustain this new programme of activities is proving extremely difficult and protracted. While many approaches to governments and agencies for both core-funding and research support are in hand, we have at this stage no clear indication of the likely outcome. On present showing, we may expect to secure new research grants including an overhead component, but this will still leave us with a core-funding requirement in a context of rising administrative and service costs. The Institute's overall situation remains precarious.

#### *Directorship and new Institute policy*

Since assuming the role of Honorary Director, I have tried to carry forward the policies adopted at the Ibadan meeting of Executive Council which are broadly those pursued last year under the joint direction of Professor Michael Crowder and myself. With the advice of the Projects and Finance Advisory Panel and help from a number of colleagues, a Policy Memorandum was prepared for circulation with *Africa* and for use in publicizing the Institute. This statement of our aims and activities stresses *inter alia* our desire to include Arabic-speaking North Africa within the scope of the Institute's work. With a request for comments and suggestions, this document was sent to African Studies research institutes throughout Africa as well as to Africanists in the United Kingdom and Europe. Most of the responses received have been positive, indicating above all the *continuing need* for an international co-ordinating agency, straddling the Anglophone/Francophone divide in African Studies, and capable of organizing seminars, research and publications on an international basis.

#### *Fund raising*

These measures to publicize the aims and activities of the Institute and to seek wider support, given our limited administrative resources, were judged those most appropriate initially by the Projects and Finance Advisory Panel. This group, chaired by Sir Leslie Kirkley, has met several times in the course of the

year and has been closely associated with the initiatives which I have taken over the past twelve months. Although we have been fortunate in securing the support of people with valuable experience and contacts, we still urgently need more active enthusiasts with the necessary time and skills to devote to this vital work. We have only just begun to turn our serious attention to approaching companies and business houses and at present we lack the manpower resources to do this effectively. Over the past twelve months efforts have mainly concentrated on governments and foundations. Thus I have met with some and written directly to all African ambassadors and high commissioners in the UK, using where possible existing IAI Executive Committee and other connections.

These approaches included a request for support for the Nigerian proposal to be put to the next Unesco budget meeting, that the Institute be included in the list of inter-African organizations in receipt of recurrent budgetary aid. This proposal has also, of course, been circulated to all Executive Council members and to the Governing Body, as well as to other national Unesco delegations. We hope that this concerted effort may yield the desired result. The response so far from African ambassadors has been favourable, but we have still to see to what extent they may feel able and disposed to follow Nigeria in providing direct governmental subventions.

Parallel approaches have been initiated, or maintained, with a number of other governments, either directly or indirectly. These include: France, Italy, Portugal, USA, etc. A very great deal of effort has been directed at trying to persuade the British government to restore (and extend) its modest grant to the Institute through the Overseas Development Administration. However, despite months of protracted negotiation and correspondence, the Overseas Development Agency appears unable to contribute directly to the Institute's general budget, but will consider funding appropriate research projects which, of course, may include a financial overhead component.

Vigorous approaches for budgetary aid and grants for particular projects have also been made to international and regional organisations. To give effect to the Institute's new interest in Islamic North Africa, the Chairman and I drafted the research project on African Studies in Arab States and Islamic Studies in African States. This has been submitted to the major Arab and Islamic funding organizations and we await their response. Here, as in establishing contact with Islamic and Arab states represented in London, I am much indebted to the generous help and support of His Excellency, the Somali Ambassador, Mr Mohammed Jama Elmi. The Ford Foundation has undertaken to contribute substantially to the costs of our forthcoming International African Seminar on Marriage, and the Third World Foundation has recorded its willingness to meet part of the costs of one of our other projected seminars. The Italian Centro de Ricerca e Documentazione, Rome, and the Institute for Muslim Minority Affairs at King Abdulaziz University, have similarly indicated a desire to co-sponsor future seminars (and publications) of mutual interest.

#### *Current research projects*

***African Language Project.*** With a supplementary grant from The Leverhulme Trust, it is hoped that this project will soon be finally completed.

**West African Museums Project.** This project, based in Abidjan but including Anglophone (as well as Lusophone) West Africa, and financed by the Ford Foundation (\$135,000 over two years) is reported to be making excellent progress under the energetic direction of Dr Philip Ravenhill. Proposals to extend it to include further emphasis on Lusophone Africa and possibly also Djibouti have been raised. It is hoped the Gulbenkian Foundation may be interested in the former proposal.

**Housing the Urban Poor in Africa.** The British Social Science Research Council has made the Institute a grant of £6890 to enable a six-month literature survey to be carried out prior to holding a seminar on this topic. Fuller details are presented later in these Notes and News.

#### *Seminar programme*

**The Professionalism of African Medicine.** Fuller details are to be found later in Notes and News.

**Contemporary African Marriage.** This seminar is now planned to take place at the Institute of African Studies, Nairobi, in September 1984 with the co-operation of its Director.

**Other seminars.** These will be arranged according to the response from agencies whose financial support is being sought. At present, likely candidates for 1985/6 are those on Urban Housing, Informal Trade and/or Islamic Education in Africa. In the absence of a 'rolling grant' for a series of seminars, we are obliged to proceed in this *ad hoc* fashion which involves very high administrative inputs in time and energy in locating appropriate supporting agencies.

#### *Public lecture series*

Following the Institute's successful arrangement last year of public lectures in London by distinguished visiting Africanists, this year we were pleased to co-sponsor, with the African Studies Centre, SOAS, a well-attended and most informative public lecture on 'France in Africa' by Kaye Whiteman, Editor of *West Africa*.

#### *New developments*

An entirely new departure arises from the opening in Lisbon of the Centro de Estudos dos Povos e Culturas de Expressão Portuguesa which includes a programme of research focusing on Lusophone Africa and is co-operating with the Institute. The new Centre was officially opened by the Portuguese Head of State, General Eanes when I had the honour to deliver the Inaugural Lecture entitled 'De-colonisation and the Ethiopianisation of Africa'. The Centre and the Institute are collaborating in organizing the first Series of African Studies Lectures at the Centre (details of the lecture series were published in Notes and News, *Africa* 53(4), p. 79). The Centre has also offered the Institute facilities for opening a small office in Lisbon.

#### *Other activities*

As a visiting Professor at the University of Helsinki (September 1982) and Rome (April 1983), I was able to discuss the Institute's new programme with Africanist colleagues, including in the latter case, Professors V. L. Grotanelli

and Bernardo Bernardi and Ambassador Gasbarri, Secretary-General of the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa. In October 1982, I was able to visit the African Studies Centres in Kyoto, Osaka and Tokyo and had fruitful discussions with Japanese Africanists. As a member of the International Scientific Council of the Republic of Djibouti, which held its inaugural meeting in January 1983, I was able to discuss Institute affairs with the Head of State's Chief of Cabinet and other ministers in Djibouti who are interested in holding one of our seminars there. A visit to Somalia in July provided an opportunity to follow up my approaches to the Somali Government in meetings with ministers and senior officials in several ministries. En route to Somalia I stopped over in Jidda to consult colleagues at King Abdulaziz University about possible future IAI collaboration. Finally, attendance at the Second International Congress of Somali Studies in Hamburg (in early August) provided a welcome opportunity for consulting German and other Africanist colleagues about the Institute's relations and support.

#### *Conclusions and recommendations*

The retirement of our Honorary Treasurer and of our Honorary Financial Secretary highlights the urgency of finding appropriate replacements to carry forward and intensify the Institute's search for a more secure financial base. Under Sir Leslie Kirkley's leadership, the Projects and Finance Advisory Panel is playing an important role. But the Institute urgently also requires a Finance Committee led by Finance Officers with the experience and standing which would enable them both to administer the Institute's financial affairs and to take some of the initiatives necessary to secure our future. The problem is to find the right people with sufficient time to devote to the Institute. The Institute is extremely fortunate in having such an energetic Chairman as Professor Jacob Ajayi who frequently visits London and takes every opportunity, through his scholarly contacts, of forwarding the interests of the Institute. As an Honorary Director with heavy responsibilities at the London School of Economics, I have tried to give as much time as possible to Institute affairs. But I feel an outstanding need for further British-based – as well as international – support and am very conscious of how colleagues' numerous other commitments often make it difficult for them to devote as much time and energy as the Institute requires.

So I end this annual review with an appeal for help. The inauguration of our new programme of activities is a promising development. But our hopes for implementing it successfully will depend on our attracting more people with the right qualifications who are prepared to serve the Institute with commitment and dedication. We also desperately need to recoup and expand our membership. All Africanists who share our aims are urged to join (or rejoin) the Institute, subscribing to *Africa*, and participating in our activities.

#### SIR GEORGE BERESFORD-STOOKE: A PERSONAL TRIBUTE

Others have already paid tribute to the political acumen of Sir George Beresford-Stooke, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Sierra Leone from 1948 to 1953, who died in April 1983. He served as Hon. Treasurer of the Institute from 1955 to 1965, and as Vice-Chairman from 1957 to 1974. This is a