AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Major Professor

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The problem with which this thesis is concerned is that of agricultural development in Nigeria.

The approach taken in the study of the problems involved in agricultural development is historical. The first chapter gives a general layout of the study—the methodology, the assumptions, the delimitations, and significance.

Chapter Two focuses attention on agriculture as a means to achieving economic growth. Age-old traditional methods of farming are discussed and evaluated. Technological change and modern methods of farming are suggested as replacements for the traditional methods. The significance of outside aid in the transformation of land and man is discussed as a prerequisite to technological change.

Chapter Three wrestles with the problem of increasing agricultural production. In this chapter, areas of hardcore problems, such as soil and land use, and resistances against modern methods of agriculture which have retarded agricultural production are discussed.

Chapter Four examines the problem of internal and external markets. Under this chapter, modern means of
communication are discussed as a prime necessity to facilitate economic growth. The problem of resources and capital are analyzed as important to economic growth, but are not thought to be determinants of economic growth.

Chapter Five explores the role of government in agricultural development. The government must make plans to improve both small peasant farming and large plantation systems, by disseminating information and knowledge and by making credits available to the farmers. The role of Marketing Boards as agents of the government is also evaluated.

Chapter Six argues that the Federal Government, in conjunction with the state governments, should co-ordinate efforts in building a research center where new techniques applicable to varying agricultural problems in Nigeria could be studied.
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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MASTER OF ARTS

By

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I Agricultural Exports

II The Main Agricultural Exports of Nigeria in 1957
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study involves an analysis of the problems of agricultural development in Nigeria. The investigation made was concerned with agricultural planning initiated by the four regional governments of the North, the West, the Mid-west, and the East, and the problems associated with national agricultural development. Although Nigeria was under British rule for more than a century, very little effort was made to modernize the methods of farming scientifically and technologically during the years of colonial administration. It is the object of this study to identify the problems involved in Nigerian agricultural development before and after Nigerian independence, October 1, 1960, and to identify the steps that have been taken since to increase and improve agricultural production and yield per acre of land.

Methodology

The approach to the study of the problem is historical. The thesis examines the role of Nigerian regional government in agricultural development and the kind of government programs initiated to disseminate better methods of farming among the people. The thesis analyzes the importance of agriculture in
achieving growth in the Nigerian economy. Problems con-
fronting scientific farming and impediments to its general
acceptance are discussed. It is also discussed whether if
the Nigerian Federal Government had assumed full responsibility
for agricultural development nation-wide, agriculture would
have responded with higher productivity. An examination was
made of Nigerian economy. Despite the fact that there is
land and labor in abundance, low productivity is unfortunately
the result. The final stages of the thesis probe the problem
of education, poor land use, marketing problems and lack of
the knowledge of manure and fertilizers on the part of the
peasant farmers in the take-off stage for sound agricultural
development.

Assumptions

In undertaking this study several significant assumptions
were made: (1) the Nigerian Economic Development Committee
has not addressed itself squarely to Nigerian agricultural
problems; (2) the technological and scientific farming, which
is operated by the regional government, has functioned in
isolation and consequently, has failed to influence peasant
farming to change; (3) the Nigerian economic products have
failed to gain marketable value because of poor methods of
cultivation. There is little wonder why the yield is poor.
Poor production methods led to poor harvests, and poor yield
has contributed to the poor living standard of the people.
Delimitations

At the time the study was undertaken, only partial data were available regarding the "Nigerian Agricultural Development Plan," which was initiated by Dr. Oluwasanmi of the University of Ife and completed in April, 1970. It was possible therefore, to draw only general conclusions regarding the potential effect of such a plan based on the data available.

Significance of Study

After considerable research it was concluded that Nigeria, as a whole, lacks a sound national agricultural planning system. In some areas, however, where good planning was made, it was tragically designed to meet the international market demand instead of meeting the need for local and regional consumption. This study was undertaken to determine if the Nigerian Federal Government could assume responsibility for agricultural development across the country.
CHAPTER II

THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Today a great majority of people share the notion that for the under-developed countries, including Nigeria, to become developed they have to shift from agricultural economy to an industrial economy. Such an idea is misleading. Probably what Nigeria needs is re-organization of the farm lands, introduction of more efficient methods of farming (both technological and scientific methods), and mechanized operating units in which modern tools are used. It is only by the use of such modern tools and methods that development and growth in the national economy can be achieved.

Unfortunately, Nigeria has a low productivity in agriculture even though it is an agricultural country. In the country, there is a direct relationship between agricultural productivity of the peasant farmers and that of the populace as a whole. The level of per capita incomes, the standard of nutrition, the general welfare of the populace, their living standard and their purchasing power are indicative of low productivity and low income.

In Nigeria there are favorable weather conditions which are conducive to prolific yields. But no matter how kind the weather and climate may be, if agriculture lacks modern
farming techniques and organization, very little pay-off is realized. Primitive methods of cultivation will have negative effects on production no matter how favorable weather conditions are.

**Primitive Agriculture**

Primitive agriculture is one of the focal points worth exploring as the cause of poverty and general economic backwardness in Nigeria. However, agriculture alone is not responsible for the backwardness of the country. The general setting of productive resources, the lack of capital, the standard of health of the population and their attitudes toward work, education, the level of technical "know-how", the political institutions and ideologies have a cumulative effect on the welfare of the masses and a negative effect on the national economy.¹

**Nigerian Economy**

Agriculture is the most important segment of the Nigerian economy. More than 70 per cent of the people are actively employed in agricultural pursuits. Such agricultural pursuits include livestock, fisheries, and forestry. These are the sources of more than half of the national income.²

In 1950-51 agriculture and other related industries provided more than two-thirds of the national income and

² Ibid., p. v.
in 1957, it provided 61.2 per cent. While other industries such as manufacturing, transportation, and communication contributed less than 10 per cent separately. In 1952-1953 agriculture employed about 78.2 per cent of the population. The remarkable growth in the country in the 1950's is an indication of better organization and better methods of farming which are being practiced by the peasant farmers.

This is just the beginning of what is to come if production techniques and better methods of farming are put into operation. During this period, agriculture rose in quality and value. During the ten year period, that is between 1950-59, income received from agricultural exportable goods averaged more than half of the total of the Gross Domestic Income. Agriculture has made some valuable contributions, particularly in providing funds for better educational, health, transportation and infrastructure facilities which have aided the government to create a better society. ³

In the six-year development plan of 1962-68, the Niger Dams Project was initiated among many other things, to supply electricity, provide canalization and irrigation in the northern states for the purpose of encouraging agricultural pursuits among the Hausa-Fulani people who are used to the practice of animal husbandry and cultivation along the Niger River valley. The Niger is capable of supplying electricity to neighboring states such as the Niger Republics, Togo, Dahomey and Mali. Although water control and the generation


³Ibid., pp. 4-5.
of electricity are the sole aims of the Niger Dam Project, the effect on agriculture will be significant. In fact, the adoption of federal economic planning in agriculture is of great importance because only the federal government can provide the needed funds for its development technologically and scientifically. It is cited that

the adoption of national economic planning is almost universal in poor countries of Asia, Africa, the Near East, and Latin America. Although the approach differs considerably from country to country, the general tendency is for governments to accept a large measure of responsibility for determining the broad objectives, the rate, the content of the overall development of the economy and the distribution of benefits. In this context the planning of agricultural development is very important.

Excluding oil, agriculture is the prime mover of development in Nigerian economy. The growth of agricultural exportable crops has been very encouraging in its dynamic contribution to economic growth. Agricultural exports have made some substantial contributions since 1950. Growth rates of agricultural production were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa</td>
<td>9.0 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>8.5 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>6.5 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundnuts</td>
<td>6.3 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>6.1 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Produce</td>
<td>0.3 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>5.1 per cent per annum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In comparing Nigeria's agricultural growth with that of Ghana or Ivory Coast, statistical information available revealed that growth rates from 1956-58 to 1962-64 periods showed Ivory Coast ahead with 11.9 and Ghana next with 9.2, and Nigeria last with 4.1 per cent per annum.\(^7\) It should be noted that Nigeria is twice as large as Ghana and Ivory Coast combined. However, these ratios represent physical tonnages. In Nigeria's and Ghana's case, the sharp increase was in cocoa which flooded the market and consequently caused a decline in price level. The decline in the price of cocoa during this period was offset by the increase in prices of groundnuts, palm kernels and timber. The statistical information concerning growth rates in Nigeria of prime agricultural exports is depicted in the table on page 9.

The impact of growth through agricultural development projects is felt in the large output of both exportable and cash crops. As a result prices of cash crops have been on the declining side.\(^8\) Nigeria like any other agricultural country has a low return in agriculture. This shows that human efforts in agriculture have always been under paid primarily because of the nature of the goods and because of the perishable nature of the crops.\(^9\)

The rapid population growth in Nigeria presents a curious problem on how the farmers will be able to catch up economically

\(^7\)Ibid., p. 7.
\(^8\)Ibid., p. 20.
### TABLE I

**AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cocoa</strong></td>
<td>241.0</td>
<td>293.0</td>
<td>421.0</td>
<td>563.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>189.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groundnuts</strong></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groundnut oil</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>107.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groundnut cake</strong></td>
<td>346.0</td>
<td>371.0</td>
<td>433.0</td>
<td>386.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>140.0</td>
<td>161.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>126.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Palm kernels</strong></td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Palm oil</strong></td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rubber</strong></td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>0.2*</td>
<td>0.6**</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cotton lint</strong></td>
<td>1.8***</td>
<td>9.2****</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>136.2</td>
<td>136.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cotton seed</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>117.0</td>
<td>116.8</td>
<td>213.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tons, 000</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>501.0</td>
<td>592.0</td>
<td>580.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£m</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>501.0</td>
<td>592.0</td>
<td>580.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1938 only
**1950 only
***1937-1939 only
****1950 only
*****Totals may not correspond because of rounding. The total of exports came to £268.9m in 1965. Items listed on this table totalled £158.3m. Other item was tin £14.9.

10Tbid., p. 18.
with providing enough food for the population if modern methods of agriculture are not invoked. With the emergence of urbanization and white collar jobs, the food production and agriculture might become the job of minority.\textsuperscript{11} Recent growth in agricultural production in Nigeria has been temporary rather than sustained. Migration of the surplus semi-literate people into cities in search of jobs which do not exist because of lack of employment opportunities in their home regions is a sign of inefficient planning on the part of the government. Development of agriculture in the countryside is below the modern standard. The poorly equipped farmers are underemployed for they use crude equipment, usually hoes and cutlasses which require no skill, and it is little wonder they achieve low productivity. How could this state of affairs be reversed? A possible way of reversing this procedure is for Nigeria to build up a skilled agricultural staff, and to make investment in human capital, which might bring a speedy and rapid transformation of the country.\textsuperscript{12}

For Nigeria to have a reduction in the farm population, the federal government should make adequate policies that would bring a continued decrease of the agricultural population. Such policies might include, providing financial benefits to young high school graduates who would like to


\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 96-97.
make commercial agriculture a life-time career. As a matter of fact, a small group of highly skilled and better equipped farmers can be more productive than thousands of farmers who have no knowledge of scientific and modern agriculture. Creating agricultural settlements in rural areas would help shift the problems of the cities to the suburbs where ecological problems such as air pollution would be eliminated. Even though Nigeria is not a fully industrialized country, it should be noted that some of the cities are plagued by industrial problems.

Nigeria is still a backward country, and industrialization is a dream yet to come true. And Nigeria can be counted among those newly independent countries that have invested a lot of money in building prestigious industries, giant dam projects, iron and steel complexes, skyscrapers and international airlines have suddenly become a mark of national achievement and development, even though these things make some significant contribution to the National economy, they are not what Nigeria has a pressing need for right now. These projects could wait awhile. What Nigeria needs now is investment in agriculture, in farm implements, pesticides, fertilizers, land resettlement and extended extension service. The policy of the Federal Government and the Regional Governments should attack the idea that agriculture is a mean work, or that agriculture is a continuation of colonial forms of development. The

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13 Oluwasanmi, p. 208.
Regional Governments should realize that an increase in food production would yield greater dividends than investments in prestigious palaces and skyscrapers.\footnote{14}{Ibid.}

Contrary to this notion, Gunnar Myrdal stated that the craving of all underdeveloped countries for industrialization is due to lack of balanced economies, which they inherited from the colonial masters and economic dependence on the mother country. There is no economic justification for this for it destroys the very basic tenets of international trade. Industrialization is a means to an end in those countries where the potentials for growth abound and could increase the living standard of the people with very little ado.\footnote{15}{Gunnar Myrdal, An International Economy: Problems and Prospects (New York, 1956), p. 226.} It will be misleading for Nigeria to divert all her investment to industrialization for industrialization is achieved at a high stage of production. In the more advanced countries the development of manufacturing industry has been a part and responsible for their notable economic progress and it has increased their standard of living.\footnote{16}{Ibid., p. 226.}

Technological Change

Technological inputs have brought a tremendous yield in agriculture. Spraying the cocoa trees against capsid bugs or black shot has probably increased production and
marketable value by 20 per cent. Cocoa output per acre of land has tripled, rubber and palm produce have higher quality as a result of planting superior varieties. Better farming techniques, using fertilizers, and stricter disease and pests controls have been achieved in cotton and groundnuts. There is great room for improvement in agriculture.

The fact that about three quarters of the population is employed in agriculture, or in agricultural related industries is conclusive evidence of inefficiency and mismanagement of agriculture. Most of the farmers practice subsistence farming. Judging from the advanced countries' standard of high per capita income and their high agricultural productivity, which requires a small fraction of the population to feed the rest, it stands to reason that Nigerian governments should emulate this example and reduce her agricultural population.

For Nigerian agriculture to function dynamically, it is imperative that farmers be encouraged to welcome advanced technological agriculture. The primitive method of the digging stick, or the hoe and the cattle-plough system should be replaced by modern agricultural technology. For technical change to materialize in Nigeria, the system of land use needs some modification and the bushland must be cleared if the introduction of new tools is to transform the agricultural economy.

17 Lewis, p. 20.
18 Oluwasanmi, p. 211.
agriculture used among the peasant farmers is the fallow method associated with shifting cultivation. This system shows how the fertile land is destroyed by fire, and left to grow back to bush, and after a short period of intervening years, is recultivated with no manure or fertilizers added to it.

Considering the method of agriculture given above, traditional agriculture, at best, offers little opportunity for growth. This is so because the land has been exhausted; the profitable production possibilities of the land are almost nil. The peasant farming community who toil on such land are poor and economic growth stemming from agriculture is almost nil.²⁰

One of the barriers to technological change in agriculture in Nigeria is the traditional social structure. The old system of feudal ownership of land has not yielded to a new in many parts of the country. Perhaps the peasant farming communities are reluctant to abandon age-old techniques and plunge into economic progress, such as planting high yielding seeds, using ploughs, and driving tractors, adopting the use of pesticides, and chemical fertilizers, or sanitary wells which are not to be seen at present.²¹ Perhaps the peasant farmers' reasons for this resistance to technological change is deeply rooted in their traditional social structure. It is however desirable


²¹Ibid., pp. 66-67.
that Nigeria should adopt new productive technologies in agriculture. Besides, another point which can be advanced is the love of leisure, lack of incentive to work, and lack of technological creativity which stems from the fact that the master-servant relationship kills initiative and originality of the people in the lower bracket and reduces them to subservient positions.22

Traditional social structure aside, another obstacle to better agricultural technology is the shortage of trained and educated manpower, whether in the public sector or in the private sector.23 Undoubtedly, if farmers are well informed about other methods of achieving greater yield they would welcome it, but it may not be overnight.

Outside Aid and Agricultural Policy

The problems of underdeveloped countries which contain a great portion of the world's population have become a point of contention in the economic policy decisions of advanced countries.24 For instance, it is the foreign policy of the United States, as well as other developed countries, to support programs with money and equipment which would speed up economic development of the poor countries. This attitude of growing concern stems from

22Ibid.


humanitarian and foreign policy considerations, or it may stem from purely economic motivation in order to create a viable international trade.\textsuperscript{25} In this respect, outside aid has made agricultural development in Nigeria more efficient and dynamic. However, it must be said that there are different ideas about outside aid. Many people think that aid is a kind of gift, others maintain that outside aid lowers the prestige of the country. It is the opinion of this group that Nigeria should learn to rely on herself instead of going abroad in search of aid.\textsuperscript{26} Critics of the Federal Government have failed to realize that outside aid is indispensable for Nigerian agricultural development. For Nigeria's economy to achieve a take-off stage, developing capital, in the form of financial aid and manpower from outside the country, is absolutely necessary. How could Nigeria be put on the road to progress if there was no outside aid? To justify this Onyemelukwe stated:

Much bilateral aid in Nigeria has gone into water supply, health and education. An outstanding example is the £2.5 million from the United States Government, through the agency of the International Co-operation Administration in 1961 for the University of Nigeria, Nsukka demonstrated comprehensive secondary schools in Western Nigeria together with teacher-training projects in Northern Nigeria and in Lagos. An increasing amount of technical aid including technical assistance has been received from agencies like the USAID, the Ford Foundation, and various United Nations Agencies such as ILO, WHO, UNESCO, and FAO.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., pp. 131-132.

\textsuperscript{26} C. C. Onyemelukwe, Problems of Industrial Planning and Management in Nigeria (London, 1966), p. 129.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., pp. 129-130.
How could Nigeria have funded these complex projects without outside aid? And how could Nigeria catch up with other developed nations if outside aid is to be shunned off? Realizing that Nigeria is underdeveloped and it could ill-aford the capital needs for development, it has to depend on outside aid even though national prestige, at times, might be at stake.

In developing technical know-how and improving manpower by way of fellowships, Nigeria was among the three countries in Africa that received the lion's-share in the 1964-1965 United Nations Expanded Program for Technical Assistance. In addition to technical assistance West African Countries, including Nigeria, witnessed a tremendous increase in the use of fertilizer between 1960-1965, assisted by the Food and Agriculture Organization. The increase in agricultural produce for local consumption would have been greater in Nigeria if peasant farmers had welcomed the use of fertilizers and technological know-how in greater numbers. Fertilizers and technological aid aside, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has regarded the problem of research organized on a regional basis as a focus of attention. Nigeria, Ghana, and Sudan have been classified as "ecological zones," or areas with similar environmental conditions, suggesting potential


agricultural research in the areas of financial and man-
power deficiencies. The results of research programs
obtained from developing countries, particularly from the
International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center in Chapinzo,
Mexico, has been tremendous. Implementation of such
projects is in the planning stage in Ibadan, Nigeria which
would serve as a supply base for the West African countries
for increasing their agricultural production of rice,
cotton, and maize. The West African "ecological zones"
offer a potential fundamental break-through in agricultural
research.

The whole of Africa, except the South African
Republic, is among the international aid recipients. African
countries' intense concentration on agriculture made them
susceptible to different kinds of aid. The fact that
African countries are influenced by the same geographical
and environmental conditions account for the fact of simi-
larity in their agricultural products. These countries
also have very similar natural resources. This is a fact
that negates trade contacts among African countries. Out-
side forces from exportable products in the African
countries have exploited the abundant supply, and these
economic products have been under paid because there is no
standardized price. For instance, a general broad approach
can not be applied to solve the problem of under-develop-
ment. Nigeria, Ghana, Pakistan and Hong Kong have different
economic resources and problems. This is the reason an

Ibid., p. 167.
Ibid., p. 168.
individual approach must be sought to solve the problem.\footnote{Ian Malcolm David Little and J. M. Clifford, \textit{International Aid} (London, 1965), pp. 125-128.}

There are some problems involved in international aid as Gunnar Myrdal maintained. In the donor country, like the United States, it is done for humanitarian reasons and sometimes for political reasons. The utilization of the aid has often created political rifts in the receiving countries, and it has lowered the national prestige of those developing nations which were permanently dependent on the United States for international aid.\footnote{Myrdal, pp. 328-329.} International aid that is given for economic development and growth is not bad in itself; it depends on whether the receiving country will pay it back with short-loan interest or long-loan interest. Probably, rushing international aid to any part of the world that shows the slightest symptom of need should be re-examined, even though it might be more humanitarian to do so. It may be better to let such countries ask for aid before granting it.
CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEM OF INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

The importance of agriculture in Nigerian economic development and growth cannot be ignored. In fact, it is an important factor in raising the level of real income per head in the country. Nigeria, like any other tropical country, is confronted with two major problems in agriculture: (1) low agricultural productivity per capita and per unit of land, and (2) low percentage of land under cultivation. These two major problems stem from the poor methods of agriculture practiced by the peasant farmers. It has been difficult over the years to change from the old methods of shifting cultivation and land destruction to some forms of scientific farming, such as mechanization in the method of farming. Technological innovations and the use of machine tools have not been accepted regardless of the efforts made by the government to popularize their use.

Old habits are cables and new ones are cobwebs, hence the peasant farmers cannot adopt new methods over night; it takes time. Irrigation, canalization and the use of fertilizers are yet to be practiced among the peasant farmers.

Plantation methods have definite advantages in the system of native production especially where this system is headed by wise and capable governments and directly funded by such governments. An address delivered to the Nigerian Council by Sir Hugh Clifford in 1920 concerning European plantations in West Africa supported the idea that peasant farmers would survive any price crisis.

The extraordinary cheapness of this production would save them in spite of their happy-go-lucky methods of cultivation.\(^2\)

In fact, the deep depression of the 1930's proved the wisdom of Sir Hugh Clifford's conclusion.

If agriculture must be improved, the hindrances retarding the progress must be recognized. Such hindrances are lack of education among the farmers, the system of land tenure; lack of knowledge of pests control, crop protection, and fertilizers, and lack of the knowledge of crop rotation.\(^3\)

The key factor in the process of agricultural development according to Clifton R. Wharton is the human factor. He stated that the human tendency to change is expressed in their willingness, capacity and ability to welcome change on the part of many peasant farmers. But agricultural development cannot be determined by the willingness and behavior of farmers alone, but rather by the very system under which agriculture is operated.\(^4\)


\(^3\)Hodder, p. 120.

\(^4\)Southworth and Johnson, p. 107.
The Nigerian agricultural economy is carried on under settings which are traditional in nature. Methods of farming have been practiced up to the present time for subsistence. The infrastructure of Nigerian agriculture contains both physical and capital operations which public or private institutions and economic services needed for individual operations. However, individual farm operations because of this traditional background have been less responsive to the need of the people.

Areas of Hard-core Problems

Areas of hard-core problems do exist in agriculture. Such problems are encountered in education, research and capital. In the field of agricultural training, education, and mechanical training, Nigerian farmers are sadly lagging behind. It is even worse, that there are millions of people in the country who do not see the need for such mechanical skills and education. However, the few educated Nigerians who are aware of this fact are making great efforts to correct the situation.

Higher education aside, public education, which is the keynote to development and related knowledge, is conspicuously missing. Education, which should be put into the hands of the public sector is left in missionary hands and

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5 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
the private sector. With the result that religion, reading, writing, and arithmetic receive major emphasis, eliminating agriculture and related subjects from the curriculum. Instead of agriculture being taught, English and English Literature, Latin and British History receive major emphasis.

Perhaps what Nigerian governments need to do is to establish public schools, and build agriculture, mechanical and technical schools which would be of greater pay-off to the economic development of the country.

To borrow a leaf from the American example does not suggest that Nigeria should go industrial overnight. In fact industrialization is a gradual process. For agriculture to have a feed back from industries, Nigerian governments should initiate legislation that would support agriculture and broaden the scope of the Kianji Dam. It could be made to produce electricity at a very low cost that peasant farmers could afford and at the same time to irrigate the Niger basin, some what like the Tennessee Valley Authority of the United States of America. 8

Nigeria, unlike America, lacks educated agricultural manpower. As a result of this, research and improvement in the methods of agriculture have not improved significantly. And where progress has been made, as in building an Oil Palm Research facility, the project has been entirely funded by

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the United Nations, and not by the Nigerian government.

The time is up for Nigeria to learn to do many things for herself, and this can only be done through education as pointed out earlier. Education would propel the economy through the five stages of development as enumerated by Walt W. Rostow: (1) the traditional society, (2) the pre-conditions for take-off, (3) the take-off, (4) the drive to maturity, and (5) the age of high mass consumption. Not only would the traditional system be broken, but a built-in ability to analyze critically would be established. The farmers would be able to make independent choices and judgments. For Nigerian economy to reach the take-off stage remains the duty of sound and efficient planners. As an agricultural country Nigeria has the potential of new production functions in both agriculture and industry which would lead to expansion of internal and external markets, and which is the pre-condition favorable to take-off. As agriculture becomes commercialized, a great number of peasant farmers would be ready to change.

Soil and Land Use

Besides the problem of education, soil and land use constitute another problem. The system under which the soil is cultivated retards economic progress. In fact, the

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The communal or land tenure system is based on the assumptions that land has no economic value and that the right to use it depends on ownership or the consent of the owner. The system of tribal land tenure has been under constant attack by the Nigerian governments. Although the so-called land tenure was created as a result of the law of inheritance, it has contributed to the inequality in income distribution. The governments of the federation are quite aware that it is socially and economically undesirable to perpetuate this system of land use. But what can the governments do now when most of the population depends on subsistence farming?

Why for instance, should Nigeria have 75 per cent of the population economically active in agricultural pursuits just to be self-sufficient in food production while it takes only between 12 per cent to 6 per cent of the population of the United States of America to achieve similar results?

Although Nigeria is a net exporter of agricultural produce and her economy is strictly agricultural, more than 75 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture or in agriculture-related industries. To get development in agriculture there is need for technology, the know-how, and scientific methods of agriculture which would bring a substantial decrease in farm population in the country.

11 Hodder, p. 106.
There is much room for development in agriculture and land use in Nigeria. In most parts of the country, a sizable area of land is controlled by feudal lords who make little or no use of it all year round. For instance, the cattle Fulanis in Northern Nigeria have no knowledge of a cropping economy. They have a vast area of pasture land which is set on fire during the dry season in readiness for the rains. Their belief is when the pasture land is burnt it will grow better green pasture during the rainy season. This has proved generally not to be so. And this has contributed to semi-desert land in the North. On the other hand, some who live in the South have a better understanding about the use of land. To aim at a general description of land use in Nigeria is a mere illusion for the economic value in the use of land varies from the city to the jungle land. Meek (1948) stated that land tenure in the former colonial countries constitute a form of wealth or capital and the very exploitation of it was the only means of livelihood a farmer had.\(^\text{13}\)

Although a lot of improvements have been made since Meek wrote, much room for improvement in the systems of land tenure and farming is yet to be desired. In the area of farm input, the Nigerian governments in conjunction with Food Agriculture Organization have stepped up the use of fertilizers. Two main problems have been pointed out in an FAO paper (c/250) as to the effective use of fertilizers:

\(^\text{13}\)Hodder, pp. 122-123.
(1) investigation be made into the best and most effective ways of using fertilizers, and (2) demonstration of their effectiveness be made public for the farmers to see. Such demonstration would go a long way to encouraging and disseminating such valuable information among farmers in improving the quality of their land. Nigerian farmers should be encouraged to use fertilizer input in order to obtain abundant harvest from their farms.

Nigeria is one of the target areas where fertilizer input is small, and an increase in the fertilizer input can help improve the already exhausted soil. By adequate use of fertilizer inputs, production possibility curves would be shifted from low yield to high yield. Through government planning, fertilizers could be brought to distant farmers who lack purchasing power.

To those farmers who could not afford to buy fertilizers, the government could initiate plans to send agriculturists to teach peasant farmers to use fertilizers of organic origin. For instance, the use of leaves, plant stalks, animal blood, and carcasses could be encouraged to enrich the soil of its lost manure. Even though these organic matters are of low nutrient value to the soil, they are better than when neither manure or fertilizers are added to the soil.

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15 Ibid., pp. 80-81.
There are methods of preserving soil moisture, such as planting cover crops and nitrogen—synthesis plants. Plants in this group have proven a great substitute where nitrogen-containing fertilizers could not be obtained. Groundnuts, which are one of Nigeria's exportable crops, belong to the leguminous family and are capable of converting a great amount of atmospheric nitrogen into nitrates through the help of nitrogen-fixing bacteria. Even though the demand for nitrogen fertilizers in Nigeria is great, it will be more expedient and less expensive for the governments to import nitrogen fertilizers from the more advanced countries.16

The Use of Companion Crops

It is interesting to note what the results of research are showing in Nigeria. Most of the research is conducted by Nigerian Universities and the United Nations. For instance, the Institute of Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria has conducted research to show how undersowing could provide a means of controlling weeds and could bring considerable benefit by increasing production of herbage plants.17 Another example was "chloris gayana," a kind of cover crop, that achieved a remarkable success when planted under millet, but while planted under sorghum the results were depressing. Where

16 Ibid., pp. 84-85.
mucuna had proved unsuccessful as a companion crop, but when planted with maize, it was an asset.\textsuperscript{18}

In the savanna areas of Nigeria where sorghum is the staple food, test after test has been made to improve the quality of sorghum and produce dwarf sorghum. This has met very little success and such scanty successes have been very local. In Northern Nigeria, according to R. J. Haggar of the Institute of Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, maize and soya beans have proved the most suitable companion crops. Mucuna has proved also competitive in this area. And companion crops in general have proved very helpful in the reduction of weed invasion.\textsuperscript{19}

Modern Development in Agriculture

Some measure of success has been achieved in agricultural development in Nigeria on somewhat of a regional basis. In the Eastern States of Nigeria prior to the Nigerian Civil War, extensive agricultural projects were launched. In the Eastern Nigerian Development Plan, agriculture and its related branches of forestry and fisheries received the major emphasis of about 40 per cent of the total funds earmarked for development.\textsuperscript{20}

In this part of the country a kind of organizational

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 51.

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 43.

approach was taken following the previous example of Western Nigeria Development Corporation. Principal crops produced on plantation systems are palm oil, rubber, cocoa, citrus, coconut, cashew, rice and vegetables. The entire acreage of plantations amounted to 254,180 acres of land, about 1.3 per cent of the total area of the Eastern States.²¹

The Eastern States of Nigeria Rural Development Program believed that the keynote of the Rural Development Program is self-help. However, over-generosity in the form of outside aid is not a bad thing in itself, but it could lead to a decrease in incentive, and killing of initiative drive, both for agricultural and community development.²²

The new development program was designed to stir up the people into action, and to break the tie with the past by using modern methods of agriculture, especially in the large plantation systems. A. H. Hanson commented that such a program as the Farm Settlement Scheme is not easily evaluated in terms of money. Hanson stated:

One has to consider the degree to which a particular project provides a stimulus to economic activity generally and to estimate the extent to which it introduces, diffuses and popularizes new productive skills and new ways of economic life. One has to remember, too, that the critical minimum effort required for take-off into sustained economic growth may demand a boldness in the initiation of projects which is incompatible with meticulous balance sheet calculations.²³

²¹Ibid., pp. 212-214.
²²Ibid., pp. 215-216.
²³Ibid., pp. 235-236.
As a matter of fact, the ENDC made some "grass-roots" innovation which could have yielded some handsome dividends. But in the wake of political trouble of January 15, 1966, to January 9, 1970, most of the Eastern economy was brought to a stand still. The keen inter-regional rivalry amounted to bitterness and civil war. The war stemmed from the fact that the Southern Regions (West, Mid-west and East) dominated the Federal Legislature and Federal Civil Service, and they were more educationally, politically, and economically minded than their Northern counterpart.24

In the Western and Mid-western Regions of Nigeria, modern agriculture received major emphasis. Under the political party of Action Group a ministry of Agriculture was created and headed by Chief Samuel Akindeko who made plans for improvement of agriculture in the West and Mid-west areas. The West Regional Government launched extensive agricultural programs in establishing plantation systems, farm settlement, agriculture schools where better methods of farming were taught and where modern equipment in agriculture was used. Moore Plantation School of Agriculture, in Ibadan, ranks first among the agriculture schools in the Western Region.

Cocoa, which is the main economic crop, has been greatly improved. Cocoa production has contributed to the material wealth of the people who live in the Western Region. They have a better standard of living than their neighbors. They

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24 Aluko, p. 18
seem to have about twice as much income as their neighbors who live in the North and East.\(^{25}\) Apart from cocoa plantations there are farm plantations comprised of rubber, kola-nuts, palm oil, timber, cotton, rice, and other related projects funded by the Western Nigeria Development Corporation and which in turn is responsible to the Regional Government.

Development in agriculture in particular is on the upward spiral. But progress can be achieved at a faster pace if lack of training and lack of skills and knowledge needed for development are removed. Education is an acute shortage for development.

As Demetrius Patapatiou pointed out in his article entitled "A Greek Looks at Advisory Problems in Developing Countries," developed countries not very long ago were underdeveloped. The experience gained from these countries would help developing countries to attain a take-off stage at a faster rate and within a shorter period of time. For them to make the most of the cumulative knowledge thereby acquired, their problems and errors need careful study.\(^{26}\)

A thorough study of problems of the now advanced countries along their development in agriculture fifty years ago would help Nigeria establish a viable agricultural


system. And modern development in agriculture cannot be carried out without outside help. To prove the point, development and economic growth are taking a new format particularly in Nigeria and in other parts of Africa. The Japanese are helping. They are building super highways. And the American businessmen are asking, "And so what? Let them." Japanese commercial aid is likely to yield a significant pay-off in commerce and trade. The proposed trans-African highway from Mombasa, Kenya’s principal port, to Lagos, Nigeria,27 could be the beginning of something big.

Even though there may be some economic interest attached to such a highway project, it will undoubtedly boost the Nigerian economy and other African countries thereby linked. In addition to this Japanese plan, a new kind of aid is being poured into Nigeria. The Ford and Rockefeller Foundations are establishing an International Institute of Tropical Agriculture at Ibadan near the University of Ibadan and near to Nigerian Research Centers.28

The importance of the Research Centers is significant in that it will have a great impact on food production not only in Nigeria but in West Africa as a whole. This research program is designed to probe into such areas as soil and crop production in the tropics and to plant

protection, agricultural engineering and economics and livestock production. With the use of these new thrusts, covering all phases of development, agriculture would be improved and the living standard of Nigerians would be improved.

The Economic Map of Nigeria on page 35 is intended to show the economic wealth of Nigeria, the annual precipitation, the agricultural crops and vegetation and territorial boundaries. From the map it will be understood that areas under heavy rainfall, especially in the South, are naturally conducive to good farming. But as the physical map shows, rainfall diminishes northwards. The conclusion derivable from this is that inter-regional trade between North and South is very important.

\[^{29}\text{Ibid.}\]
CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF MARKETING IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

In an agricultural country like Nigeria, where production is undertaken primarily for subsistence, marketing structures are nonetheless important. But Curiously enough the immediate preoccupation of Nigerian farmers has been solely concerned with providing for his material needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Therefore, it is correct to say that his purpose in undertaking the business of agriculture is to produce enough food to feed his family, and to clothe himself. However, it would be misleading to conclude from this that Nigerian peasant farmers operate completely outside the limit of the exchange economy, or that trade in agricultural products is an entirely new idea that grew up as a result of the contact with European colonization.

Markets are essential parts of the indigenous Nigerian economy. In all Nigerian towns and villages there is a place set aside where buyers and sellers meet daily to exchange the surplus produce of their farms. In many Nigerian communities, the immediate environment of the head of the community is often designated as the market place.

1Oluwasanmi, p. 143.
In Yoruba towns and villages, for example, the markets are located near the residence of the "Oba," and they are usually the most important centers of trading and social activities. Such markets like the one just referred to are known as the "king's market." They are significant because of royal assent in such trading activities and partly because of the keen interest of the political, civil and spiritual head of the community in coordinating their economic activities.

In addition to daily transactions which occur among villagers in their local markets, each village has its "market day" which is set at intervals of five to nine days. During "market day" people come from far and near for the main purpose of buying and selling produce.2

Transactions in Early Times

In early times, transactions in village markets were carried out in terms of barter. The village blacksmith exchanged a hoe for a few yams; the farmer gave in exchange some measure of corn for the game of the hunter; and the weaver traded textiles for the products of the tanner.

Later this barter system yielded to a very cumbersome system of exchange. The system which evolved permitted those products to be sold for money. The crude form of money then was cowrie shells and manilla. These were the two most important forms of money used in pre-British Nigeria. Cowrie shells were widely used in Nigeria in the

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1Ibid., pp. 143-144.
early times both as a means of payment and also as a store of value. With the arrival of the British, the Cowrie shells were driven out of circulation as a medium of exchange by the pound sterling which is the only form of money in the country today. At this stage of development, indigenous markets were very limited in scope by the range of goods offered for sale primarily because of poor transport and communication facilities. Products were carried to markets on heads of wives and children. The goods traded in the markets consisted of agricultural products and of the products of cloths of the weaver, and hoes, cutlasses, and axes of the blacksmith. In addition to these, livestock such as goats, sheep, cows, fowls, pigs, dogs, and game were also sold. The network of exchange was not limited to regions or members of the same ethnic group, and the whole process was highly diversified. Sometimes it embraced village communities forty to fifty miles apart. The largest centers of population such as Ibadan, Onitsha, and Kano served as trading posts for the produce of near-by towns and villages. It was, and still is today, common sight to see women in most of the rural areas balancing their wares on their heads while trudging their ways to market centers.3

The "creation" of the country or the amalgamation4 of the country in 1914 brought together interdependent

3 Ibid., p. 144.
communities that were once isolated from each other by tribal and linguistic differences. As a result the product of one region came to be widely accepted in other communities. Fulani cattle, once reared and held by this nomadic tribe as concrete evidence of wealth, are now traded for money and at the same time have become an indispensable item in the diet of the southern regions of the country. The dried fish and cowpeas on the Ibadan market, or the onions, yams, and beans traded in Onitsha market on any one day may have come from as far north as Sokoto, Maiduguri, Kaura-Namoda, or even Lokoja in Northern Nigeria. By the same token, a given bag of kolanuts or a tin of palm oil or yams for sale on a Kano market may have come from as far south as Shagamu, Ikare, Effon-Alaye, and Akure in Western Nigeria or Aba, Abakaliki in Eastern Nigeria.

Modern Means of Communication

The building of railways, roads, harbours and the whole complex of a modern communication system and capital infrastructure have facilitated the rapid expansion of the market. Railways and roads broke down regional and tribal isolation and helped the free movement of freight from one remote corner of the country to another. If a fairly good system of transportation and communication is conducive to successful colonization, it is equally indispensable to free flow of yams, gari, palm oil, cotton, cocoa, cattle, sheep, goats, fowls, beans and groundnuts to the consuming
The Extension of the Scope of the Internal Market

The production of exportable crops contributed immensely to widening the scope of the internal market for farm products. The prime motive of indigenous agriculture, as mentioned above, is self-sufficiency in food production. Whatever surplus he has left over is too insignificant to give the farmer command over a wide range of agricultural products. There is great room for improvement in internal markets. Such improvements include building of railroads and infra-structure social over-head which could facilitate easy communication within the country. With such a network of roads, a northern cattle Fulani could sell his cattle in the South with no hardship or loss. By the same token the Southern businessman could sell clothes and other products which the Northern people are in dire need of. And so, the vicious cycle created by subsistence farming could be broken down by commercialization of agriculture.  

As a matter of fact, it is the production of commercial crops which accelerated regional specialization in food production. For instance, the cocoa farmer in Western Nigeria spends more of his resources on the production of surplus food to sell, as well as cultivation of cocoa in order to receive the higher economic returns. He also uses

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5 Oluwasanmi, p. 143.
6 Ibid., pp. 143-144.
part of his cash earnings buying those necessities of life which he lacks. Similarly, the oil-palm producer in Eastern Nigeria follows this pattern of inter-regional trade.

Inter-regional trade within the country has been made possible owing to the construction of roads, and railway lines from the south to the north. This fact has contributed immensely to increased economic mobility in the country. However, even though roads do exist which link Nigeria and other neighboring countries, the roads could be developed to highways, and territorial boundaries could be removed to foster economic progress and mobility.

Nigeria presents a peculiar problem because of its climate, soil, density of population, and political and social differences. All these points make inter-regional trade a problem, but it is a problem which is not unsurmountable. 7

External Trade in Farm Products

Although external trade of farm products is not without its own problems, the market for export crops is more highly organized than that for foodstuffs for domestic consumption. In the first place, the commodities involved are fewer in number; mainly cocoa, palm kernels, palm oil, groundnuts, cotton, and rubber. They are more durable than the average food crop and can be stored over fairly long periods without appreciable deterioration in quality.

Secondly, at the top of the marketing hierarchy there are about a dozen highly qualified European firms with capital and necessary know-how to handle a substantial portion of the trade. Before the second world war, over 95 per cent of the trade was handled by the United African Company.\(^8\)

The Nowell Commission Report issued on "Marketing of West African Cocoa" indicated that:

The bulk of purchases by middlemen were financed by the European firms through a system of payments in advance. The sharp competition among the European firms to secure a lion's-share of the market, the financial inadequacy of the middlemen, and the unwillingness of banks to make short-term loans to middlemen who were mainly Africans, placed the European firms at an advantage because they command the capital and the business acumen. Under these circumstances the middlemen were strictly obligated to the European firms to advance them money for cocoa purchases.\(^9\)

A lot of market abuses prevailed either as a result of open competition or cut-throat competition. The European firms did not hesitate in accusing the middlemen of a rise in prices, thereby making the cocoa market unprofitable for the European firms that liked to pay the least amount.\(^10\)

In view of the abuses, the Nowell Commission, after a thorough investigation, came up with this conclusion: "West African cocoa trade has not in general been a

\(^8\) Oluwasanmi, p. 150.


\(^10\) Nowell Commission Report, p. 34.
profitable business in recent years."\textsuperscript{11} This unprofitable state, the Commission concluded, was due to:

...intense competition between the firms on the coast and their parity prices with current world prices; and to various forms of increases of the remuneration paid to middlemen; to an increase in advance made to middlemen and the extension of the period to which they were allowed to remain outstanding (particularly in Ghana).\textsuperscript{12}

The acceptance of the Nowell Commission Report, indicating that the European firms' cocoa trade was rather an unprofitable enterprise, received sharp criticism. Both Africans and certain independent businessmen doubted whether the position of the firms was as bad as it was painted.\textsuperscript{13} Bauer raised the question why the European firms remained in cocoa trade realizing how unremunerative it was—as they claimed. Bauer contended that they were free to terminate their trade, but they chose not to; therefore, their continued activity in this trade is conclusive evidence that it offered a profit of some sort. Bauer's findings proved the Nowell Commission Report misleading and that its recommendations should be rejected at all phases.\textsuperscript{14}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 102.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 147.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 101.
\item \textsuperscript{14} P. T. Bauer, "Origin of the Statutory Export Monopolies of British West Africa," \textit{The Business History Review} (September, 1954), pp. 200-201.
\end{itemize}
Market Reform

As a way of reforming the marketing system, the Nowell Commission proposed a system of farmers' co-operatives for the collective marketing of the farm produce, and for the representation of their joint interests.\textsuperscript{15} The co-operatives could be established on a statutory basis, on the national, regional, and local levels, and they would be responsible for collecting from members for bulk sale to buyers already established in the cocoa trade.\textsuperscript{16}

The farmer co-operatives have improved tremendously since 1942. That year saw the formation of the West African Cocoa Control Board. The Cocoa Control Board was a part of the Colonial Office Organization which was enlarged to encompass the purchase and disposal of exportable surpluses of Nigerian economic export commodities.\textsuperscript{17}

Nigerian international trade had made some substantial increases, as shown in the table on page 45, compared with the previous table in Chapter 2.

There are indications of the availability of a great amount of mineral resources such as oil, gold, columbite, radio-active mineral resources, iron, lead, zinc ores, limestones, clays, salt springs, and coal and oil which have not been tapped.\textsuperscript{18} It must be noted that the value of

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 157.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.
exports fluctuate according to the rise and fall in export prices.

### TABLE II
THE MAIN AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS
OF NIGERIA IN 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Export Product</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Value in £000</th>
<th>% of Total Export</th>
<th>Main Region* of Origin of Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa</td>
<td>135,300 tons</td>
<td>26,036</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>W. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>14,832,000cft</td>
<td>4,983</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>W. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm kernels</td>
<td>406,198 tons</td>
<td>17,959</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>E. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm oil</td>
<td>166,202 tons</td>
<td>2,799</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>E. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>40,029 tons</td>
<td>7,025</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>W. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundnuts</td>
<td>302,387 tons</td>
<td>13,810</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>N. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beni seed</td>
<td>19,206 tons</td>
<td>20,139</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>N. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hides &amp; skin</td>
<td>168,158 cwt</td>
<td>1,366</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>N. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>25,196 tons</td>
<td>3,218</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>N. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>79,844 tons</td>
<td>6,537</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>S. Cameroors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5105,872</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Northern, Eastern, Southern, or Western

The inability of farmers to form collective bargaining units in agriculture has made them open to exploitation and frequent decreases in prices. Whereas if an organization of agricultural producers is formed it could be organized in line with labor unions where security and fringe benefits could be enjoyed by the members and prices could be set not by buyers but by sellers. As long as there is no unity

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19 Ibid.
among agricultural producers, and agriculture remains in the subordinate position, it will continue to be exploited. Cartelization in agriculture would be a tremendous success if Nigerian agricultural producers would team up with other agricultural countries such as Ghana, Kenya, and Sudan for those crops which they grow in common. The formation of such farmers organization would help replace subsistence farming with commercial farming. When less people are employed to till the land and harvest the crops, people may not be happier but their working lives will definitely be more rewarding and meaningful in terms of real income.  

But whether agriculture is of a subsistence nature or commercial, it is a form of economic activity which on the whole offers only very little gains to those engaged in it. It is subject to sporadic fluctuations.

The Problem of Capital

The shortage of capital is a major obstacle of agricultural development in the country. Perhaps equally significant is the unwillingness of the elite to invest in an enterprise like agriculture which does not offer much gains for speculative profits. In Nigeria, for that matter, a substantial amount of capital is held by Muslims and Lebanese, and it is tragic that the government has failed

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21 Ibid., p. 48.
to encourage such capital to be spent for national economic progress.22

It could be said that the prime motivation for economic development in the country is political. Very often political parties during election campaigns promise to introduce better economic life by developing irrigation, agriculture, credit and marketing, education and social services for the purpose of receiving more votes. But when such politicians are voted in, the wealth remains concentrated in only a few hands.23 Among the drawbacks to agricultural development are the shortage of technical and administrative ability and the shortage of expert assistance which is needed for sound economic development. Without an adequate supply of such people there is danger that investment in human capital, without the help of highly qualified personnel, may be a waste.24

Capital is another problem in introducing technological agriculture to the peasant farmers. It is obvious that farmers cannot afford the highly complex and sophisticated machines such as those in the large European industrial complexes. Simple tools and less expensive capital-saving equipment, such as tractors, could be introduced to the farmers and replace the hoes and knives.

In the area of research and development in agriculture the United Nations has offered a helping hand by funding the

22 Ibid., p. 603.
23 Ibid., p. 604.
24 Ibid.
building of the Oil Palm Research Institute in Nigeria.  

Agricultural development is on the priority list of the Regional Governments, and on the federal level, agriculture has received prime position by the building of the Niger Dam Project.

**Poor Farming Techniques**

In the country, the danger of replacing the thick and evergreen forest with grassland is threatening. As a result of poor farming techniques and yearly destruction of fertile land, a great portion of the bushland has been rendered exhausted. In the south where precipitation is heaviest, especially through the months of May to September, gully ing and soil erosion have altered the topography and have brought an adverse effect on the agricultural potential of the farmers.

In the south the degree of vegetal cover is rapidly decreasing; the original forest cover which was once humus-forming has deteriorated. Preventive measures against soil erosion have been eliminated. To prevent this kind of man-made grassland and erosion, it should be the policy of the government to afforest open land and to discourage

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26 Ibid., pp. 224-225.


28 Ibid., pp. 45-46.
the use of bush fires.

It would be good economic planning if the accumulation of knowledge is made relevant to the development of agriculture, such as the pertinent areas of soil management, husbandry, and dairy farming. A great amount of research, developmental techniques, and know-how applied to the advancement of the economy could meet the needs of the country, considering the sunlight, temperature, topography and seasonal changes.²⁹

The Problem of Labor Mobility

As a result of seasonal practice of agriculture during the wet season, labor is plentiful. However, during the dry or hot season, labor migrates from one section of the country to another. It is apparently clear that the peasant farmers migrate to Nigeria from the neighboring countries while some Nigerian peasant farmers migrate to other countries, especially Ghana, in the wild hope of gaining riches there.

The Department of Labor in 1956 confirmed the statement that a large number of peasant farmers drifted from farms and villages to towns and cities in search of paid jobs after the planting and harvesting periods were over, but then returned to the farms when the next planting season was near.³⁰ During the dry months, the problem of seasonal

²⁹Southworth and Johnson, pp. 197-198.

unemployment is acute in towns and cities, particularly in the Plateau mine fields and the Udi coal fields.

The following statistical data shows the percentages of "migratory" workers in different parts of the country:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Region</td>
<td>59 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Region</td>
<td>30 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Region</td>
<td>7 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos Area</td>
<td>4 per cent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The western region has the greatest percentage of "migratory" workers because of diversified employment possibilities.\(^{31}\)

The problem of subsistence agriculture and technical know-how as pointed out in Chapter III is a chronic one. Dr. Adam Skapski, Technical Education Adviser to the Western Region Government put it aptly when he said that the old system of education in the country is irrelevant and not responsive to the needs of the people. He went on to say that Nigeria tended to "make education bookish and not practical," thereby creating a generation of "pen pushers" having little or no use of their brains.\(^{32}\)

In conclusion it could be said that technical skill is conspicuously absent in many phases of development, especially in agriculture. To fill this vacuum remains the duty of a strong national government. In fact the success in the centralization of government is less than half the solution. Goods would not get produced, modern methods of agriculture would not provide a miracle overnight,

\(^{31}\)Ibid., p. 119.

\(^{32}\)Ibid., pp. 129-130.
and factories would not spring up instantly simply because the National Government was vested with power. In fact, concentration of power in the hands of an ill-equipped, inefficient national government unable to plan, unable to co-ordinate, and unable to adjust, direct, and execute national projects effectively and efficiently may turn out to be a dangerous weapon at its worst.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{33}Aluko, p. 285.
CHAPTER V

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The urge to bring about agricultural development in Nigeria is a great one. But the agglomeration of various ethnic groups do make national agricultural development very difficult. Overriding tribal and ethnic differences, charging the Federal Government with major developments because of its financial powers would have aided development and economic growth. On account of the ethnic groups and regional jealousies, major developments in the country are made on a regional basis. It is appropriate to quote Rudyard Kipling's poem which aptly elucidates the depth of group feeling and belonging instead of national feelings when he wrote:

The stranger within my gate
He may be true or kind,
But he does not talk my talk
I cannot feel his mind.
I see the face, and the eyes and the mouth,
But not the soul behind.
The men of my own stock
They may do ill or well,
But they tell the lies I wanted to
They are used to the lies I tell;
And we do not need interpreters
When we go to buy or sell.¹

¹Aluko, p. 15.
The interpretation of this poem goes to support the intensity of tribal differences among the people of Nigeria. However, concerted efforts are being made to create national feelings in the country.

On account of regional or tribal differences or a combination of both, operation of agriculture under a national umbrella is difficult. The map of Nigeria on page 54, showing the political and ethnic groups, clarifies the tribal groupings in Nigeria.

In recent years there have been tremendous changes in the communal or land-tenure system. A vast area of land has been acquired by the Federal and Regional Governments for agricultural purposes. The Federal Government of Nigeria maintains that acquisition and rights on land requires a new set of ideas which must be defined. It maintains that land is a special factor of production, and as such it should be used economically for maximum production. A vast area of land has been acquired by the government for agricultural development in both Northern and Southern Nigeria. For example, in Southern Nigeria the increase in cash crops and the growing scarcity of good land for such crops has led to the evolution of de facto individual ownership in the cash crop areas. As this is an unplanned evolution it has involved a great deal of litigation over the various rights to use of the land as well as to the appropriation by chiefs of formerly communal land. If brief individual ownership of farms is occurring essentially
through the rather costly process of adjudication by courts on an individual basis.

Many programs had been set up by the government without necessarily calling on the peasant farmers to improve their methods of cultivation or management. The result has been annual destruction of economic trees like "Iroko," and deforestation of other economic trees which could have contributed to national income of farmers' income through local and external trade. Not only does the government set up farm settlement, it has taken pains to building the institution of agriculture extension service. This institution is charged with the problem of research in cocoa and oil palm and rice in Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra, and Leone respectively. The researchers in these fields work for improvement in cocoa, oil palm and rice productions and yield per acre of land. Critics of the government maintain that these various governments have failed to disseminate information to farmers, and so, such research has not been successful for the nation-wide level.2

Development in agriculture is considered one of the most important but yet most difficult tasks. Of all the Nigerian industries, it is the least appealing one. Unless the Federal Government of Nigeria treats this important segment of the economy as public, to be financially supported,
and not as private, substantial increases needed to cope with the rising population may never be achieved. If increased agricultural production is to be achieved, it behooves the Federal Government of Nigeria to supervise, and aid agricultural programs vigorously instead of allowing it to be financed by Regional Governments.

Nigeria is an agricultural country but it is yet to be seen if it will remain largely an agricultural country in the foreseeable future. Unless much planning is done by the Federal Government in encouraging agricultural programs, agriculture may be badly disorganized. Nigeria is beginning to industrialize now. It has been spurred on to the neglect of agriculture. Agriculture, in fact, provides a kind of feedback to the national economy. 

Agriculture Credit

On the part of the Regional Government adequate agricultural credit systems purposely designed to aid farmers to borrow from government credit unions at very little interest rate have proven very successful especially in the Western States and some other parts of the country. In this regard however, commercial banks have not been very co-operative in meeting the financial needs of the farmers owing to insecurity of such money being repaid. To cope with the farmers financial problems, the Nigerian Farmers Bank was formed.

In the Western Region where a lot of money is invested

in plantation systems, it is curious to note that extension services, training of farmers in modern methods of production, and marketing procedures were lacking. It is just of recent date that irrigation systems have become a reality in the Northern States.

One prime factor responsible for the development lag is due to poor and inefficient manpower in the governments' economic institutions. This is due to the standards of education and know-how that have been acquired by the people employed. These economic institutions, per se, lacked the know-how and the permanent basis for making economic forecasts, or initiating new projects, and evaluating policies to aid the National economy. Arthur Lewis stated that Nigerian economic planning is defective in five areas:

(1) inadequate programming for the private sector, (2) inadequate participation of the public decision making process, (3) inadequate and inappropriate machinery for the implementation of the public sector programs, (4) inadequate evaluation and (5) excessive political intervention in the making of economic decisions such as awarding contracts etc.4

Nigeria, like any other newly independent country, where government transactions involving millions of dollars are made by politicians with limited knowledge and little expert advice is open to criticism. In such a situation the Nigerian governments have a lot of housekeeping to make to bring about sound reform. The Nigerian Tenders Board is a case in point. Such a board should be created for all

4Lewis, p. 37.
government contracts and no politician should be a member of the board. It should be the responsibility of the government to see that all institutions handling public money should be subject to periodic auditing and they should be brought under the Treasury and the Public Service Commission.5

Small Peasant Farming Versus Plantation System

The Nigerian Regional Governments seem to be more inclined to favor large plantation holdings than small farm holdings. But social and political considerations on the contrary are quite in favor of the preference of small farm holdings over large plantations. Among many other things, small farm holdings provide a more even distribution of income and it negates concentration of wealth in a small group be it private or public. Even though large plantations have proven to favor concentration of wealth and power in the hands of elites, nevertheless, it has been very successful in competing with small farm holdings in raising such products like cocoa, tea, cotton, rice, and oil palm which the small farm holdings can ill afford. Large plantations have commanded a large amount of capital, greater technical know-how and technology transfer, better work discipline where timing of operation is important, and better knowledge and faster trade contacts with oversea markets.

5Ibid., pp. 38-39.
Plantations have proven more instrumental to technological changes. Large plantations in Nigeria provide a center for modern techniques, where new methods and skills are taught such as the Agricultural School in the Moore Plantation at Ibadan. In brief, a plantation is like a large scale industry, a nucleus for development of the whole economy.

However, the government has created immense opportunities for technological possibilities through the Research Institute in large plantations. For instance in Moore Plantation fertilizers are used, better varieties of seeds are planted, and improved methods of farming are practiced.

In the Northern Sector owing to recent openings of the Kianji Dam, it is possible that a farmer could double the annual production of groundnuts, cotton, millet, guineacorn, and yams because of irrigation which provides water whenever needed for plant growth. To keep more production in progress, Nigerian governments' policy makers have taken the initiative to import varieties of crops from other countries to help diversify the Nigerian crops. In addition, the policy makers have initiated four types of programs: (1) investment in plantations, (2) subsidies to planting economic trees, (3) research and extension, and (4) land settlement.

These are good programs in themselves, but in order

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Ibid., pp. 123-125.
to generate incentives in the young school graduates, it is necessary that the governments should make agriculture very attractive by increasing producers prices and decreasing profits through government taxation. However there is hope to make Nigeria industrial with a sort of feedback from agriculture in order to propel the national economy to a take-off stage. In addition, if government policies are geared towards increment in food production, population should be curbed by dissemination of information concerning birth control among the people.

Another problem confronting the progress of agriculture as Oluwasanmi aptly commented:

Unless the government and enterprising individuals can colonize the bushland without the burden of excessive compensation, the process of introducing innovating techniques in agriculture is bound to be slow and socially costly.

Therefore, it should be the aim of government policymakers to see that both collective and individual farming units are operated and supervised. The aim here is not to operate these farm units, but to create a new form of organization and production techniques which are more efficient and profitable than shifting cultivation. It is through this process of sound economic planning that organization can help link farming units and individuals

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7 Ibid., pp. 47-53.
with national policies either through production or distribution methods.9

Production and distribution techniques in agriculture to increase food supply should take priority over other programs in Nigeria because of the high demand and great need for additional food to feed millions of people. Nigeria, judging from the existing distribution of resources, presents an excellent example of a country where the greatest marginal productivity of capital lies in agriculture. But are the capital and production techniques used in Nigeria capable of supporting the teeming millions of her population? No, the fact that three quarters of the population are engaged in agricultural pursuits emphasizes the importance of the need for investment in agriculture. Changes in the methods of farming must be made. Such changes include eliminating the age-old methods of shifting cultivation in which hoes and cutlasses are used. By adopting modern techniques in agriculture and building cottage industries simultaneously, the national economy would increase substantially. However, it cannot be dogmatically stated that an agricultural economy would overnight yield to an industrial enterprise. The result of this idea differs from country to country. It has been proven that consumption pattern of landed gentry tends toward luxuries, such as jewels, foreign travels, foreign education for the children, ceremonials and

9Ibid., pp. 218-219.
festivities of different kinds, and investment abroad and in durable consumption assets that add nothing to national productivity. On the other hand, however, the little landowner operates differently because of his limited capital and time. So his urgency to invest in industrial pursuits is less. In Nigeria the great landowners have often been the repository of traditional values and traditional techniques.¹⁰

To fully implement investment in agriculture there is the need for human investment. This embraces education, acquisition of knowledge and technical know-how. In fact, human investment is a life process. Development in agriculture is of equal importance to development of industry. It could be deduced that the greater the investment in agriculture and human capital, the less is the increment in population growth. This is due primarily to the fact that some people would postpone their marriages, and some would not marry at all whereas otherwise population would increase. And to feed the teeming millions would be costly.¹¹

Agricultural planning which should have received a major emphasis in 1962-1968 with the Development Plan was relegated to the background. Not only was the Plan inaccurate, it was criticized in academic circles as amateurish,

¹¹Ibid., pp. 264-266.
lacking in time dimensions, but it failed to put the pressing need of the people into consideration. The Plan left out agricultural development. Rather, a bold agricultural program directed towards increase in production of different varieties of food crops should have been initiated. A program of this nature is more viable to national interest than rigid rent controls in the cities. A sound agricultural program which would have eliminated malnutrition was not designed. In fact malnutrition is a by-product of lack of proper education. If the worker has the knowledge of balanced diet, he would spend a less proportion of his increase in wages on food, and he would improve his nutrition requirements. Also a little amount of the wages would be needed to finance extended family commitments. Food crops are produced in limited variety, and it is little wonder why the common man cannot relate the importance of balanced diets as conducive to the promotion of good health. There is much to be done by way of improvement in familiarising the general public with the need for balanced diets. As a matter of fact, Nigerian staple food is generally carbohydrates which constitute such products as yams, cassava, potato, maize and rice and beans.  

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13 Ibid., pp. 254-255.

14 Lewis, p. 124.
The Role of the Marketing Boards

Much improvement has been made in the Nigerian economy since the inception of West Africa Marketing Boards in the 1950's. The powers of the Regional Governments have been vastly extended covering such areas as introduction of universal primary education in the South, oil exploitation in the East and unemployment problems that confronted the country. On the economic scene, some economic elements have made no significant change. By 1962, Nigerian Marketing Boards which were organized in 1954 played a limited role in handling Nigerian exports. At that time, Marketing Boards accounted for only 63.2 per cent of Nigeria's total exports leaving 36.8 per cent in foreign hands.15

The major reason for forming Nigeria's Marketing Boards was to handle Nigeria's major agricultural exports and to stabilize producers prices. However, economic planning seems to have received more emphasis than stabilization of prices. The Marketing Boards have been a very effective weapon in creating needed savings for government-sponsored economic projects.16 The year 1954 was the beginning of an era of declining in terms of trade and an end to the period of prosperity in Nigeria Marketing Board. This marked a steady decline in price stability.

16 Ibid., pp. 583-584.
Nevertheless some amount of trading surpluses were realized during the 1954-1961 with the Western Region Marketing Board maintaining the lead with over £14.3 million, while the Northern Region Marketing Board suffered some significant losses, particularly on such exportable goods as groundnuts and cotton. In the West there was also a substantial decrease in cocoa producers' total income which fell abruptly from 39.4 per cent to 26.1 per cent.17

What contributed to these trading surpluses? One major factor which helped create trading surpluses was the creation of the Marketing Board as a single unit. There was no regionalization and accumulated large reserves were meant for stabilizing purposes.

Marketing Boards in Nigeria constitute an important institution which were set up to control the prices of the most important export crops such as cocoa, coffee and timber in the Western Region, and groundnuts, cotton and hide and skin in the North, oil palm in the East. It remains the duty of the Marketing Boards to purchase farmers' crops at the declining period when there was virtually no foreign market demand for them either as a result of war or very low prices.

In Nigeria, however, marketing boards are one of the agents owned and operated by the government and through which government uses its money to achieve gains for the

17Helleiner, pp. 385-388.
nation including the farmers. From the monetary gains thereby achieved, new projects are funded which otherwise would have been paid for through taxes. The Regional Governments gain directly or indirectly by using such money in five ways: (1) benefiting from high prices through the farmers' efforts to increase productivity; (2) the farmers save and use such funds to develop, improve, and even transform their land for cultivation; (3) the higher purchasing power in rural areas has a chain reaction and stimulates other economic development projects; (4) the marketing boards protect the farmer from world market prices and develop in the farmers a drive for higher profit by putting pressure on the government through their representatives; (5) government expenditure, both current and capital, increases through higher availability of funds.18

So far the Nigerian governments have put a substantial amount of money into the operation of the Marketing Boards. There is no available statistical data to clarify government spending through the Marketing Boards. It is imagined that the Federal Government has spent money in agricultural pursuits; spending more of it in the North. It has funded many irrigation and canal projects there since the civil war began. In aggregation, more agricultural projects have been established in the North more than

18 Diejomaoh, pp. 125-126.
Despite the substantial financial help from the Federal Government to establish agricultural development in the North, it still lags behind the South, the natural area for agriculture. Here, the Western Region Finance Corporation established in 1955 has made some significant steps in developing agricultural, industrial and commercial projects. Before the excision of the Mid-western Region in 1963, it was charged with the responsibilities of financing 209 Local Loan Areas with thirteen Secretary areas. With this kind of broad-based plan the corporation was capable of establishing permanent crops such as cocoa, rubber, citrus, the purchase of spraying equipment to fight against cocoa diseases and for fishing.

During the 1957-1961 period the demand for loans among farmers increased to £20,434, and ranging from £21 to £40 per farmer. About 11 per cent of the loans made to farmers fall within £40-£100 bracket.19

The Western Region Finance Corporation administered locally what might be called short-term, medium-term, and long-term loans. Loans which are given for the cultivation of food crops were short-term loans covering twelve months. The medium-term loans are repayable in two years with interest, and the long-term loans mature in three to fifteen years bearing interest at the rate of 2½ to 10 per cent per annum. Whereas interest rates on short-term loans range

from three pence to four pence on a pound per month. One evil is imbedded in the Finance Corporation financing and that is unnecessarily high interest rates which the Corporation has no tenable explanation for. In fact, a lot of mismanagement and backhand dealings came to be practiced. The Finance Corporation was rather lax and failed to scrutinize agricultural loans with the result that people who were not engaged at all in any agricultural activities demanded loans. The result of this was detrimental to productive agricultural investment. In fact, a great number of the people spent such loans on funeral and wedding ceremonies.

Perhaps if the Government of Western Region had designated the supervision of the loans granted to individuals to a responsible body, most of the misappropriation of funds would not have occurred. And when it did occur, no action was taken against such people because of their high public office; parliamentarians, judges, and members of the local loan boards themselves were involved.

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20 Borton, pp. 205-207.
21 Ibid., pp. 208-209.
22 Ibid.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING PERSPECTIVE

Nigeria is the most thickly populated country in Africa with over fifty-five million people, and in area it is numbered among the largest. The combination of these factors with abundant natural resources offer a ray of hope that despite the recent setback, Nigeria can still emerge the greatest among the African countries.

Agricultural pursuits which are the mainstay of the country's economy could be developed to a point where hunger, want, and poverty could be eliminated. To achieve the agricultural development and economic growth, coordinated agricultural projects in the different regions are necessary. It is also a pre-requisite for introducing specialization in production, trade and in generating self-sustained economic growth in the country. As a matter of fact, one of the keys to accelerating growth in the regional economy is the speed at which agricultural transformation is carried out.

To aim at industrialization in Nigeria without agricultural development, which is capable of providing food for the new urban populace, is to dream an impossible dream. The expansion of agricultural systems in Nigeria
could be achieved easily through extensive cultivation and simple technical improvements such as planting better seeds, the use of fertilizers, regular and careful weeding, and the use of insecticides and pests control. In order to practice these methods of agriculture, education must replace illiteracy; illiteracy which is the root cause of the stagnant rural society.

If the Federal Government, in conjunction with the Regional Government, could formulate plans such as building a research center where new techniques applicable to the varying agricultural problems in Nigeria are studied, Nigerian agriculture might even produce annual surpluses. Besides, joint-training of the necessary administrative and technical personnel for a modern agricultural system is a requirement. A joint effort of the governments is necessary to build fishery resources at suitable locations in the country to meet the critical shortages in nutrition. In fact Nigeria has an abundant supply of shrimp which is untapped. It would be economically viable for the government to introduce, at this stage of development, methods of canning and refrigeration in order to ensure the use of seasonal surpluses and reduce waste. Only by adequate planning and construction of a regional network of facilities for distribution and transformation of such food commodities can agricultural commodities be used to the fullest, because of their perishable nature.

Credits and loans have been made available to farmers,
but knowledge of how to make the best use of them is sadly lacking. It would yield a greater pay-off to familiarize the masses with banking procedures before credits and loans are enthusiastically welcomed. Nigeria is not self-sufficient in food supplies, but with sound national planning in agricultural development poverty and starvation could be removed.

Although Nigerian governments seem to lean heavily towards large plantation systems, this is not without some economic reasons. It is an economic gain which the small-scale farm units cannot provide. In the first place, large plantations are less expensive to operate. In the second place, it makes the applicability of modern technology easier and the yield per acre is greater. But it will be profitable to disseminate such information to the peasant farmers too.

Recommendations

The future of agriculture in Nigeria is promising and this will be more encouraging if the governments continue to initiate policies which will get more people motivated in agriculture by building agricultural and mechanical schools and equipping them with modern facilities. If this idea is implemented, more increases can be expected in both exportable crops and crops for local consumption.

Hopefully, the tremendous growth and experience of
past independence, and the painful lesson of the civil war would create a realistic approach to building one nation where affluency would replace starvation and want.

It is suggested that future studies on agricultural development in Nigeria will show that the Federal Government should treat problems confronting agriculture on a national basis.
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