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July 22, 1971

CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Sterling Wortman
Vice President
The Rockefeller Foundation

Lowell F. Hardin
International Division
The Ford Foundation

FROM: Vernon W. Ruttan, Director
Economic Development Center
University of Minnesota

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RE: Nigeria Trip Report

Since returning from Nigeria I have debated several times whether I should send you my Nigeria trip report. I have finally decided that in addition to the report of the Research Review Panel you would find the report of use.

As you can see from the comments on the last few pages I was profoundly disturbed by the lack of scientific leadership at IITA. My decision to pass the comments on to you is based on the anticipation that unless corrective steps are taken the IITA is probably in the process of losing its most able scientific talent.

CSO

Enclosure

SEP 7 1971

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Nigeria Trip Notes

April 8-17, 1971.

In April 1971 I visited the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan, Nigeria to participate in research review of the IITA Research Program. The other members of the panel included: Dr. F. Jurion, Former Director of INEAC the Congo; and Dr. Melak H. Mengesha, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture Haile Seilassie I University Ethiopita. I was accompanied by Mrs. Ruttan and Lore. We had previously traveled to Tunisia to visit the University of Minnesota-AID project.

April 8 (Thursday)

We arrived at the Lagos airport at approximately 8:30 a.m. on Thursday morning, April 8. We were met by Douglas Headly, Agricultural Economist at IITA. Customs procedures were among the more difficult that I had experienced. After completing customs procedures we proceeded to the IITA guest house near the Ikeja Airport. Following brief rest at the guest house we proceeded by car to downtown Lagos. We were met there by Caroline Moomaw - wife of a former colleague at IRRI. Mrs. Ruttan and Lore spent the afternoon with Mrs. Moomaw. I proceeded with Doug Headley to appointments with Herbert Kreisel, Program Director USAID and with Haldore Hanson, Ford Foundation representative for East Africa.

The meeting with Herb Kreisel focused on the current directions of AID programming in Nigeria. A major effort is being made by AID to assist the new state government set up in Nigeria. Originally

Nigeria consisted of four states. Division of the country into 12 states was part of the steps that had been taken to avoid dominance by either the North or the East.

A second major AID effort has been to establish better agricultural data in Nigeria. This is primarily involved by support of special agricultural census.

Our meeting with Haldore Hanson focused primarily on Hanson's conception of the emerging role of IITA. Hanson, as many other observers of the IITA program, felt that the program was focusing too rigidly on the objective of increasing food production in the humid tropical areas. There is some feeling that these areas are primarily suited to production of export crops rather than food crop. The areas with greatest potential for food crop production are in the semi-humid tropics and the Savannas. Apparently Will Myers was fully dedicated to a focus on the humid tropics. In Hanson's judgment the future focus may be somewhat more open to discussion now than in recent years. The Ford Foundation is making a major effort to provide support for national and state research agencies with whom IITA will need to work throughout West Africa.

The other major efforts of the Ford Foundation in East Africa focus in the areas of population and vocational and technical training. Very little progress has yet been made on the population problem in West Africa. There is a general assumption that tropical Africa is just beginning to face the population explosion that is anticipated when more effective health measures reduce death rates. Current projections are for the population of tropical Africa to rise from 235 million in 1970 to a possible 600 million in the year 2000.

On Thursday evening I attended the premiere showing of the first feature movie made in Nigeria, Genghis Harvest. The movie centered around the rise and fall of an African nationalist leader.

When I talked to Mrs. Ruttan later that evening she was very concerned as to whether she and Lore should stay in Nigeria as long as planned. Apparently the health situation is much more difficult than we had anticipated. Life in Ibadan for the IITA staff members is also apparently much more difficult than it had been for the IIRI staff members in the Philippines.

April 9 (Friday)

On Friday morning Mrs. Ruttan and Lore proceeded to Ibadan with Mrs. Moomaw and Mrs. Moorman. Douglas Headley and I stopped to visit the Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN) on the way to Ibadan. We met with Deputy Director Samuel Adewumi. The Institute program focuses on cocoa, kola, cashew and coffee. The Institute is located in a new research facility funded primarily by the Central Government and by the Western state. It is constructed at a capital cost of approximately half a million pounds. The scientific staff consists of 40 scientists, 100 technicians and a labor force of approximately 400. It is located on 2,400 acres. Research focuses both on development of new variations and better management practices for existing varieties. Development of new cocoa varieties takes 20 to 25 years, a new generation being possible in about five years. Although the new institute is clearly just now getting way, I was impressed by the general outlook and confidence of Deputy Director Adewumi.

We had dinner Friday evening with the Moomaw family.

April 10 (Saturday)

On April 10 I visited a research site on which Douglas Headley and Paul Zuckerman are conducting a farm management field survey. There area is about 80 miles from Ibadan (east of Oyo). The most interesting feature of the field trip were the mixed farming techniques carried on by the African farmers in the study area. Land is held in rather large blocks of several square miles by extended family groups. Apparently in this area there is relatively light pressure on land. We spoke to one farmer who is renting land because he did not want to farm his own land located further from the village. Apparently the only benefit the landlord obtains from the renter is that the land is cleared, thus permitting easier access by the landlord to his scattered oil palm trees. It strikes me that in this area almost the only factor input is labor. Land itself apparently receives an extremely low rent.

Saturday evening we were invited to the home of Arthur Lane, Chairman of the IITA Research Committee. We also met several other staff members there including Frank Moorman and Michael Harrison.

One point that has come across clearly at every session that I have had with IITA staff members is extreme dissatisfaction with IITA administration. It is not yet clear exactly how much of this represents a sense of frustration with the general problems of working in Nigeria and how much exactly reflects deficiencies in administration.

April 11 (Sunday)

On Sunday, April 11, we had dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Headley, agricultural economist at IITA. Also present were Professor and Mrs. Kenneth Parsons from the University of Wisconsin team at IFE. Dr. Parsons is currently completing his third year in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of IFE. The University of IFE is the state university of the Western state (Yoruba). It is one of the four Nigerian universities which has a faculty of agriculture. My impression is that Ken Parsons has a somewhat more "sober" view of development potentials than he had a decade ago.

Sunday evening Mrs. Ruttan and I had dinner with Herbert R. Albrecht, Director of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture. The other two members of the IITA Research Review Panel Dr. Mengesha and Dr. Jerion were present. Also present were Dr. John ~~NICKEL~~ Nichols who is currently Dean of the College of Agriculture at Makerere University in Uganda and Mr. John Porter of the Africa Division USAID. Nichols and Porter are participating as observers in the review. Nichols is scheduled to become the next Associate Director of the IITA.

April 12 (Monday)

Monday morning the Review Panel met with the administrative staff of the IITA. The morning was devoted primarily to discussion of the scope of the Panels review effort; background on site and program development at the IITA; and a visit to the IITA site.

The afternoon session was devoted to a general prospective on the program of the IITA. This was achieved through a discussion with the Research Committee and the Training Committee of the Institute. Considerable discussion focused around the question of whether the initial conception of the Institute, focusing primarily on food crops in the tropical rain forest area, continued to represent the appropriate focus of the Institutes program. There was also a considerable amount of discussion with respect to the focus of the program on crop production systems. My own questions centered around whether the focus should not be broadened to focus on agricultural or, at the very least, farming systems. Much of the discussion of the training program focused on the appropriate relationship between the Institute and the universities of the region particularly the University of Ibadan. It is my own judgment that the Institute is developing too much of an arms length relationship with the University of Ibadan. I argued rather strongly that this arms length relationship could limit the development of the Institutes own program and staff.

Monday evening we were invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Moomaw. Moomaw's held a reception attended by most of the Institute administration and staff plus a number of the people from the University of Ibadan.

It had become obvious by this time that there are very severe tensions between Director Albrecht and Associate Director Briggs. These tensions combined with the particular style of operation of the Director and Associate Director are resulting in substantial morale problems among the staff and staff families.

April 13 (Tuesday)

The morning session of the IITA Review Panel was devoted to discussion of the rice improvement program. The discussion was led by James Moomaw. The program involved work on flooded rice and what is referred to as climate dependent and ground water dependent upland rice. Apparently it will be fairly easy to transfer the high yielding capacity of the IRRI varieties from Southeast Asia to West Africa for use under irrigated conditions. Moomaw has already achieved yields of approximately 7000 pounds per acre. The major focus of the rice program at IITA, however, will be upon the water dependent (swamp) rice and the climate dependent upland rice in contrast to the IRRI emphasis on rice grown under fully irrigated conditions. The rice program will be developed in cooperation with a project undertaken in cooperation with FAO (WARDA-West African Rice Development Association).

The afternoon program focused on the agricultural economics program and the ecology and environment program. Douglas Headley the agricultural economist has placed major emphasis on a farm management study designed to identify the economics of indigenous cropping systems. His program also involved close working relationships with the maize, rice and legumes and root crop programs. They also outline some anticipated effort in the sectoral analysis field, particularly relating to the fertilizer sector.

The work in the field of ecology and environment is now just getting underway. It involves assessment of indigenous land use practices such as burning and factors affecting the intensity of land use such as erosion, leaching and related soil water plant relationships.

I had dinner Tuesday evening with Dr. Al Nyberg. I had known Nyberg from the Philippines where he was doing his Ph.D. thesis on the Philippine coconut industry under the University of Philippines Cornell contract. Nyberg is currently stationed in the Department of Economics at the University of Ibadan by the Rockefeller Foundation where he is teaching and doing research. He has had a rather heavy teaching commitment. I gathered that he has a very positive view regarding the strength of the Economics Department which must be one of the better departments in any developing country. In addition to U.S. assistance there are several staff members in the department from Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Tuesday was the day for everyone in the Ruttan family to come down with colds. It looks as if Lore will escape fairly easily. Marilyn is having a rather severe cold.

April 14 (Wednesday)

The morning session was devoted to the maize program. Discussion was led by the program coordinator Michael Harrison. I was particularly impressed by the flexible breeding system which Harrison is using. Apparently the focus is on the development of increasingly more productive composites from which it is possible to develop either varietal hybrids or classical hybrids. The Wednesday afternoon session was devoted to the grain legume program. Although there is a number of projects in the grain legume area the thrust of the program itself has been delayed until the arrival of Ken ^{Rachia} Ratche who had previously been stationed in India and in East Africa. As of the present the program objectives and content for the grain legumes program have not been fully identified.

At 4:30 I presented a seminar on "Induced Technical Change in Agricultural Development" to a seminar at the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER). This seminar was attended by staff members from the Departments of Agricultural Economics, Economics and NISER.

Wednesday evening Mrs. Ruttan and I had dinner at the home of Professor Leonard Miller, Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Ibadan. Miller is stationed at UI by the Rockefeller Foundation. Among the agricultural economists whom I met on Wednesday evening at the Miller's home were Dr. Adegeboye who works in land economics and Dr. Olayide who works in production economics impressed me the most. Adegeboye has his Ph.D. from Iowa State. Olayide has his Ph.D. from the University of California at Davis.

April 15 (Thursday)

On Thursday morning I visited in the Department of Economics and the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Ibadan. My first meeting was with Professor Aboyade, Chairman of the Department of Economics. Our discussion centered around several of the issues that had been presented in my seminar the previous afternoon. Professor Aboyade had earlier presented a seminar in which he had argued that Nigeria was endowed with both surplus land and surplus labor relative to available power used in agriculture. As a result of my discussion with Aboyade and earlier field observations I now believe that serious investigation into the potential for mechanized per in humid rain forced area is particularly

appropriate. Tsetse fly infestation in the rain forest^{ed} area has precluded the use of animal sources of power. The result has been limitation in the amount of area that could be cultivated even though in many areas the land remains underdeveloped and utilized at low levels of intensity.

There was also some discussion of international aid assistance and Nigerian economic development. Professor Aboyade has been heavily involved as a consultant to the government on aid strategy. I recalled that he spoke on these issues at a seminar at the University of Minnesota in the winter of 1969. Aboyade is quite concerned by the tendency for both USAID and the World Bank to focus on project assistance rather than program assistance dispute the projects frequently distort the programs.

I then visited with Dr. H. M. A. Onitiri, Director Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER). NISER is the central economics research unit established by the government of Nigeria and located on the University of Ibadan campus. Its program is oriented to apply research related to economic development policy and planning in Nigeria. Onitiri is concerned that too much of the Institute research efforts goes no farther than the publication state. He is in the process of setting up a consultant arrangement which I would interpret as an extension staff to work directly with the central and state government in the area of economic information and analysis.

Following my meetings with Aboyade and Onitiri I returned to the Priemer Hotel to meet with Jurion and Mengesha. After a brief meeting and review of the preliminary draft we devoted the rest of the morning to completion of the draft of our report to the IITA Director and Board of Trustees.

On Thursday lunch we visited with the IITA Board of Trustees. Thursday afternoon was devoted to additional writing and editing.

Thursday evening Mrs. Ruttan and I attended a reception and dinner for the IITA Board of Trustees and the Research Review Panel. After the reception the Review Panel again met to re-edit the panel report for final typing on Friday morning.

April 16 (Friday)

On Friday morning the Research Panel presented its report to the IITA Board of Trustees and Administration (copy attached). The entire morning was devoted to the Review Panel recommendation. The item which received the greatest attention was the recommendation by the Panel that the IITA extend its geographic scope to include both the humid forest and savanna tropics. It was argued that the location of the IITA at Ibadan in a transitional zone between the forest and the tropics gave it a unique locational advantage to work in both areas. It was also argued that the complementary economics relationship between the agricultural system of the savanna and tropics in West Africa provided an important economic rationale for IITA to conduct related research in both areas. The recommendation was generally well received by both the Board and the IITA Director although the panel was questioned in considerable detail about the rationale of its recommendations.

A second item that received considerable discussion was the panel's recommendation for strengthening social science research at IITA and the panel's recommendation that greater resources and priority be given to the cropping system programs.

The review panel again met for lunch with the IITA Board of Trustees. Following lunch I devoted the afternoon to a final editing of the report of the review panel.

Later in the afternoon I met with Paul Zuckermann and Douglas Headley to discuss a number of personal professional problems. Zuckermann's appointment at IITA as a Ford Foundation intern will be completed this summer. He intends to return to the University of ^{Reading} Redings to write his Ph.D. thesis since English graduate education places relatively little emphasis on course work. Zuckermann is interested in exploring the possibility of post doctoral arrangements which would permit him to spend a year of combined research and post doctoral course work at an American university. Doug Headley, the Institute agricultural economist, is seriously concerned with his long-run professional future. He raises a number of significant questions concerning the IITA can provide a productive research environment on agricultural economics.

Friday evening, John ^{Nichols} who will replace Rodney Briggs as Associate Director of IITA and Mrs. Ruttan and I had dinner at the Moomaw home. Jim had left that morning for an International Rice Research Review at the IRRI. Much of the evenings discussion focused around the frustration of the IITA wives and families. Nichols was clearly more sympathetic than the present IITA administration appears to be to many of these problems.

April 18 (Saturday)

April 18 was devoted to primarily travel preparation and the return trip to Lagos. I left Lagos Saturday evening on Ethiopian airlines. Mrs. Ruttan left Sunday morning for South Africa on BOAC.

General Observations

The ten days (April 8-18) that I spent in Nigeria were extremely productive. My general observations focused around impressions on (a) economic development in Nigeria and (b) organization and administration of IITA.

Economic Development in Nigeria

Nigeria is clearly the least developed country that I have visited, perhaps with the exception of Laos. At the same time it does have what appears a very self confident technical, intellectual and political elite-men such as the three Nigerian members of the IITA Board of Trustees

The top administrative and professional staff at the University of Ibadan are clearly trained at the highest level and are very confident. There does appear to be a major gap between the elite administrative and professional and the technical levels. It is apparently impossible, for example, for IITA to obtain a level of competence in the IITA technical and service staff that was available in the Philippines. Public sector infra-structure investment in roads, power and public health appears weak and ineffectively managed. At the same time one is impressed with the vigor and apparent economic orientation

of the Nigerian farmer, worker, and small entrepreneur. The recent civil war has clearly represented a constraint on development. The extreme degree of currency over valuation and exchange rate regulation is also apparently imposing severe constraints on economic activity. If the current military government can, over the next decade, achieve a successful transition to civilian government I would anticipate Nigeria could make rather rapid economic progress.

The IITA

The IITA clearly represents the largest single investment the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations have yet made in international agricultural research institute development. The investment represented by its physical facilities and the annual budget represented by its staff is clearly larger than CYMMIT (Mexico), IRRI (Philippines) and CIAT (Columbia). The size of the investment in physical facilities and staff seems consistent with the objectives of IITA to become a world research center for tropical food crops and in addition to act as a center of adaptive research for maize and rice in West Africa. The complex mixed cropping farming systems employed in West Africa and the complex economic relationship between the savanna and the tropics in food production and consumption implies much more difficult role for IITA than for the other institutes. The problem of research resource allocation to focus on the really significant high pay-off research areas will be particularly difficult. The decision to make an initial investment in rice and maize represents an attempt to achieve a rapid pay off from research efforts on rice in the Philippines and maize in Mexico.

In spite of the very substantial investment that Ford and Rockefeller Foundations is making in the physical development and staffing of IITA they have, in my judgment, made incredibly bad decisions with respect to the selection of the Director and Associate Director. The management has completely failed to effectively draw on the body of institutional experience which the two foundations have acquired in the CYMMIT (Mexico) and IRRI operations. This is in contrast with the IRRI which drew upon, and added to, the institutional competence acquired from Rockefeller Foundation experience in Mexico.

Difficulties center primarily in the areas of research administration and personnel management. I have never witnessed such a bad morale situation among a university or institute staff. There is a substantial number of younger staff members who are actively seeking alternative employment. A number of the more senior staff who have made permanent career commitments to international work including some who have previous foundation experience are seriously questioning whether they made a mistake in accepting employment at IITA.

There is a general presumption that the IITA administration neither understands or nor is interested in the scientific program of the Institute. The Director apparently employs a rather "constipated" administrative style. The Associate Director has instituted a pattern of bureaucratic organization that seems quite inconsistent with either the size of IITA or sensitivity to the management requirements of a scientific activity. The dissatisfaction is particularly intense with respect to what is viewed as an autocratic and inconsiderate relationships with respect to housing amenities and other items relating to staff families.

The current Associate Director will be returning to the United States to be replaced by a Rockefeller employee who is presently Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural at Makerere University. There is a general presumption on the part of the staff that the new associate director will take a more definite interest in the scientific program of the Institute. There is some apprehension, however, based on rumors of poor relationships with both African and non-African staff at Makerere University. There is also a presumption that the new associate director will not be able to avoid substantial conflict with the Director.

At the same time there is one very positive comment to be made about the Institute administration. The attempt to organize the research program around interdisciplinary teams represent, in my judgment, a potential creative response to the more difficult decision making process that will exist at IITA. At an institute organized around a single crop at the IRRI, for example, this interdisciplinary interaction becomes almost automatic. Where the research program focuses on a number of crops and cropping systems a conscious effort needs to be made to avoid disciplinary fragmentation. It would seem that every effort should be made to strengthen the pattern that is now emerging at IITA.

My observations at IITA do lead me to the conclusion that both the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations must give serious attention to the transfer of the institutional competence developed in other locations to IITA or any subsequent institute development. The transfer of institutional competence and the adapting of earlier experience to new locations seems to me to be a prerequisite to the transfer adaption and development of effective technologies by the scientific staff.

Review Panel

In my judgment the IITA did do a good job of selecting the research panel. The various competencies and experiences of the three panel members complimented each other. I was particularly impressed by Dr. Melak Mengesha, Dean, College of Agriculture Haile Sellassie University, Ethiopia. I respect his capacity to assess a situation and come to firm and effective judgments. Dr. Jurion, former Director of INEAC in the Congo, brought a wealth of tropical professional experience to the Panel. He has the capacity to view the program in its broadest aspects. He did have some difficulty in committing himself to a position of judgment which he felt might not be appreciated by the IITA administration. Although the other two members of the panel did not have the same opportunity that was available to me to visit in depth with junior staff members they also came to a judgment, by the end of the week, that there are serious weaknesses in the IITA administration. It was our general judgment, however, that many of the administrative problems which we observed were outside the scope of references and could not be dealt with in our report to the IITA administration and board.