

General plan for development in the Gold Coast.

Contributors

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GOLD COAST G.M.D.

No. II of 1944



GOLD COAST COLONY

General Plan For Development

in the

Gold Coast

Ordered by His Excellency the Governor to be Printed

GOLD COAST

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GOLD COAST

Governor's despatch No. 222 of the 26th July, 1944, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies

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26th July, 1944.

SIR,

With reference to your predecessors' Circular despatches of the 1st June, 1940 and the 5th June, 1941 (2), in which was pointed out the desirability of preparing a general plan of development for the Colony, in connection with which applications for funds granted under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act might be considered, I have the honour to inform you that, owing to the change in administration, the absence of an Economic Adviser (for whom I have asked), the pre-occupation of Heads of Departments and other officers with urgent problems arising out of the war, and the general shortage of staff regarding which I have made representations, it has not previously been possible to prepare any general plan of development on the lines suggested.

2. I assumed the administration of the Gold Coast in November 1941 and, shortly afterwards, I was transferred to Nigeria to act as Governor for a period of five months. As soon as I had made myself acquainted with some of the problems awaiting solution in the Gold Coast, I was faced by the growing seriousness of the shortage of staff in every department, not least in the Administrative Service. For example, a separate department for Social Services has been set up, but it has been impossible to staff it adequately and I have not even been able to spare an officer to under-study the Secretary for Social Services with a view to acting for him when he proceeds on leave. A Planning Branch has been added on paper to the Secretariat but it has not yet been possible to provide the necessary personnel for this much-needed organization, and, indeed, in the absence of an Economic Adviser (referred to in the preceding paragraph) the Planning Branch will be able to do little.

3. Nevertheless, in spite of the handicaps referred to above, and in the absence of any written comprehensive plan of development to afford a framework for future policy, this Government has not failed to initiate a number of projects and to prepare a number of development schemes of the utmost and most urgent importance to the future of the Colony. It has appeared to me desirable to put first things first and to proceed as quickly as possible with the working out of those schemes which are obviously and urgently necessary and which will certainly be included within the framework of any general plan.

4. In this despatch I propose to set out an outline of my general plan for the development of the Gold Coast. So little can be counted on with confidence in the future that I put forward with some diffidence proposals which must inevitably cover a number of years. We do not know, for instance, what will be the future of gold mining or of cocoa, the two major industries of the Colony (*see* paragraph 6 below), nor can we be sure of the response which the people of the Colony themselves will make to any plans formulated by Government. I do not believe that it is possible, at a time when the world is undergoing revolutionary changes in every direction, to plan ahead with any feeling of certainty, but, for what they are worth, I now submit to you my views.

5. It is obvious that future developments in social services in the Colony must be dependent to a considerable degree on the wealth of the people and the consequent revenue of the country. I am counting on assistance under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in respect of certain major schemes (*see* paragraph 72), but the people of the Gold Coast cannot expect to be subsidised indefinitely by the British taxpayer and must to a considerable extent in the future depend on their own resources. For this purpose it is essential that the economic development of the country should be a principal consideration in any scheme of development and I make no apology for considering it first.

6. The principal mineral exports from the Colony in 1938 and their values were as follows :—

Gold	£4,842,000
Manganese ore	908,000
Diamonds	548,000
Total	<u>£6,298,000</u>

During the war bauxite deposits have also been developed but I am advised that there is little prospect of Gold Coast bauxite being able to compete in the post-war world with supplies from Europe. The principal product apart from minerals was cocoa, the export value of which in 1938 was £4,541,000.

(Owing to high prices in the world markets the export value of cocoa in 1937 was £9,990,000, although the quantity exported was only 236,000 tons, as against 263,000 tons in 1938.)

The principal other exports were :—

Kola nuts	£88,000
Palm oil and palm kernels	49,000
Lime projects (juice and oil)	31,000
Raw rubber	29,000
and Timber (principally mahogany)	77,000
Total	<u>£274,000</u>

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

OLIVER STANLEY, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

The total value of domestic exports in 1938, the last year unaffected by war conditions, was—

Minerals	£6,298,000
Cocoa	4,541,000
Other exports itemised above	274,000
All other domestic exports	50,000
Total domestic exports	£11,163,000

These figures indicate, as pointed out in paragraph 4 above, the importance of the future of gold and cocoa in connection with any general plan of development for the Gold Coast.

7. In addition to the items mentioned in the preceding paragraph, and other minor products which are exported, there is a considerable amount of foodstuffs grown for local consumption, principally cassava, millets, maize, yams, plantains and groundnuts. (Palm oil is also extensively used in the coastal and forest areas). Owing to the existence of the tsetse-fly in certain areas and to the absence of water in others, there is a regrettable shortage of domestic livestock and quantities of cattle and sheep are imported regularly from the neighbouring French territories. There are practically no primary industries other than mining, agriculture, and fishing.

8. It is my belief that considerable improvements could be effected in agriculture, both in respect of export crops and in the production of foodstuffs for local consumption and these are referred to more fully in paragraphs 12-14. I have pointed out above the shortage of domestic livestock in the Colony and this matter is one that is closely connected with the important question of nutrition. A very large proportion of the people of the Gold Coast live almost entirely on vegetable products; the men who have served in the Army during the war have become accustomed to a diet in which meat fills an important part and, quite apart from the value of meat in the matter of nutrition, these ex-soldiers, when they revert to civil life, will wish to continue to eat the meat to which they have become accustomed in war-time. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the meat supply should be increased and this question is dealt with more fully in paragraph 18. Closely connected with the demand for meat is that for fish. A considerable amount of fish is got in the waters along the coast and this amount could be considerably increased if more modern methods of fishing were adopted; the curing of a proportion of the catch would facilitate the supply of fish to interior markets (*see* paragraph 19 below).

9. Quite apart from these primary industries, there are a number of small secondary industries which could, in my opinion, be developed to the benefit of the people, and I will refer more fully to them in later paragraphs. These include soap-making (*see* paragraph 23), the making of furniture, doors and windows (*see* paragraph 21), the making of wooden sleepers for the railway (*see* paragraph 22), the making of bricks and tiles (*see* paragraph 20) and cloth weaving (*see* paragraph 24). I am forced to await the arrival of my Economic Adviser before I commit myself to any definite proposals for these industries, but I feel convinced that considerable development in these matters could be effected.

10. It is my considered policy to build up the Co-operative movement in the Gold Coast, and steps have been taken to this end by the creation of a Department of Co-operation and the appointment of an officer experienced in this field as Registrar of Co-operative Societies. It is proposed to continue the conversion of existing marketing societies into general purpose societies for thrift, credit, purchase and sale, and generally for rural development. In the urban areas thrift and consumers' societies and in both urban and rural areas societies for the processing of local produce will be started as soon as possible. The necessary integration of primary societies into Unions and Central Societies will follow and finally a Gold Coast Co-operative Federation is envisaged, with Unions and Central Societies as members, to deal with export marketing, the provision of credit, the purchase of implements and other necessities, audit and supervision.

At the outset, before societies are sufficiently credit-worthy to obtain credit from banks or commercial institutions, Government will have to come to their aid by the provision of credits or guarantees and for this purpose funds may be required, but the credits or guarantees will be given on a strictly commercial basis and no consideration will be shown to defaulting societies.

It is not possible at this stage to foresee the extent of the development of co-operation as this will largely depend upon the people themselves and upon their realisation of the need for self-help and mutual help, but the ultimate aim is to educate the societies to look after themselves.

11. For those enterprises which cannot be suitably undertaken by Co-operative Societies I consider that the Government should assist local investors to form industrial development companies, but this is a matter on which I should require to have the advice of my Economic Adviser before making any definite proposals.

12. Even allowing for the importance of mining in the Gold Coast, the principal industry of the country is, and must continue to be, agriculture. The principal export crop is cocoa, which, as stated above, was valued at £4,541,000 in 1938. The future of cocoa has been threatened by disease which is now the subject of intensive research, but, in spite of this serious threat to the industry, it is likely that cocoa will continue to be for many years the mainstay of the Gold Coast farmer in the forest belt. The cocoa industry is well established but the need is to place it on a sounder footing. Apart from research in connection with the disease, sustained research over a long period will be necessary to investigate how cocoa cultivation can be combined with some form of mixed farming coupled with the production of other cash crops. Action is also necessary to encourage additional cocoa planting with a view to the maintenance of an export of 300,000 tons a year; in order to prevent the wholesale destruction of the forests this expansion will probably have to be regulated by Government. I consider also that plant for the extraction of cocoa fat should be installed for the disposal of low grade cocoa and the utilization of small beans. Perhaps the most important problem regarding

cocoa is that of marketing the crop in the best interests of the producers. This can be done to some extent through the medium of co-operative societies (*see* paragraph 10), but something more comprehensive will also be necessary and this question is receiving my attention.

13. Other export crops which need encouragement are bananas, copra and canned grapefruit. It will be possible to re-establish the banana export trade when cold storage facilities become available on ships, while the cultivation of coconuts should be developed as part of the farming systems in coastal areas and it should be possible to establish a factory for the canning of citrus fruit by co-operative growers. The future of the citrus lime industry, and citrus fruits generally, including oranges and grapefruit, is threatened by disease which is now the subject of research that will have to be intensified.

14. Steps should be taken to develop mixed farming in the Northern Territories on the lines already initiated, and encouragement should also be given to the increase in the number of livestock. Action on these lines will be extended to the dry coastal districts and to the area north of the wet forest area in Ashanti. During the war, to meet the demand for fresh vegetables by European soldiers, the Department of Agriculture has started a number of vegetable farms, and similar enterprises have been undertaken by co-operative societies in the Swedru and Nsawam districts; I hope that it will be possible to encourage the growing of "European" vegetables by African farmers, not so much for consumption by Europeans as to improve and vary the dietary of the African population.

15. You have already approved my proposals for an experimental dairy at Accra. The nutritive value of fresh milk, especially for children, is too well known to have to be stressed, and I consider that the time has come when the Gold Coast should adopt a long-term policy of milk production as a start in the general fight against mal-nutrition. Experiments have been made with cows imported from Nigeria, and, if the results of the Accra dairy are satisfactory, I propose to push on with the establishment of dairies in all the larger towns.

16. Soil conservation is an important matter, soil erosion being in evidence in the Northern Territories especially where the population is heavy. The measures being taken to combat soil erosion will be intensified. (*See* also paragraph 56). The aim is to incorporate anti-erosion measures into the system of mixed farming which is being developed rather than the building of protective works by the Government.

17. It will be necessary to increase considerably the agricultural services of the Government in order to carry out the proposals mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, and plans are being prepared for the training of a greater number of Africans for duty with the Agricultural Department.

18. In paragraph 8 I have referred to the shortage of domestic livestock and the need for increasing the supply of meat with a view to improving the dietary of the people. I consider that a determined effort should be made to increase the number of cattle in the Northern Territories in those areas which are not infested by the tsetse-fly and, by the elimination of the fly in other areas (*see* also paragraph 41), to provide additional pasturage. The coastal plain in Accra would also be suitable for the raising of cattle on a large scale if adequate water storage could be provided and, in this connection, I invite your attention to paragraph 53. Efforts should also be made to increase the stocks of poultry in the country. Perhaps the most important development in livestock breeding could be effected by a campaign for increasing the number of pigs raised in the country. The pig farms started during the war have demonstrated the possibilities of pig raising. I propose therefore to endeavour, through Co-operative Societies, to increase the number of pigs of good type for the production of pork, and to continue, through the existing bacon factory set up in Accra, to produce hams and bacon for local consumption.

19. There is a considerable amount of fishing done along the coast by the local fishermen in canoes, and a small portion of the catch is cured for transport to the interior markets. Both the catch and the amount of cured fish could be considerably increased by better organization, and investigations by a special officer have been made with a view to some development as soon as the war is over. A two-year period of experimental work has already been planned and approved by you. I hope that by the formation of Co-operative Societies among the fishermen it will be possible to conduct fishing from power-driven craft and, by the provision of proper curing facilities on the shore, to increase the marketing of dried fish.

20. In connection with the large re-housing scheme referred to in paragraph 57, I am considering the use of bricks and tiles, rather than of concrete, for construction, which would result in a considerable proportion of the money spent on re-housing being retained in this country, and the employment, after the war, not only of workmen to erect the houses, but also of a large number of persons engaged in the making of the bricks and tiles required. I hope further that the experience gained in the making of bricks, and the construction of houses with them, would be applied in the scattered villages, to which Government re-housing schemes would not extend, and that brick houses would ultimately replace even in these remote places the present mud houses in which the bulk of the rural population now lives.

21. During the war a considerable amount of work has been done through the Forestry Department for the armed forces. The basis for this was the organized production of pit-sawn timber, supplemented by supplies from the Government Sawmill at Kumasi. This work is not concentrated but is carried on at numerous places in the accessible high forests of the Colony and Ashanti. Patterns of the articles required (tool handles, tent-pegs, chairs, tables, boxes, etc.) have been supplied by the Military authorities to the Forestry Department who have distributed them in numerous villages. In these villages the local carpenters have made copies of the patterns and, where the copies have proved satisfactory, they have been purchased by the Forestry Department for the Army. A high degree of copying skill has been shown by these village carpenters and their work has been most useful to the Military authorities and remunerative to them. I propose to follow a similar plan in the provision of doors and windows for the houses erected under the re-housing scheme referred to in paragraph 57. By standardizing the types of doors and windows it should be possible to provide the village carpenters with almost unlimited work in the production of the quantity

that will be required for the new houses and I hope that similar action can be taken when the demand for furniture, which will certainly follow the provision of better housing, becomes sufficiently great. An important object of this scheme is to keep the village carpenter from migrating to the town so far as this can be achieved without unduly increasing the cost of supervision which, in the early stages, is essential.

22. Another scheme which will keep local workers in their forest villages is the contemplated use of wooden sleepers for the railway instead of imported steel sleepers: these wooden sleepers can be prepared by pit-sawyers in the forest. In the case of the recent railway extension to the Bauxite deposits the Forestry Department arranged the supply of 130,000 pit-sawn sleepers and the contractors were well satisfied with the quality. The sleepers were not creosoted, but plans for future creosoting of sleepers are in hand.

23. A fair quantity of soap is now being produced by a number of small makers throughout the Colony. Few of the soap-makers are Africans and I consider that this industry should be encouraged among the Africans either through the Co-operative Societies or Industrial Development companies.

24. A start has recently been made with the production of cotton and the hand-weaving of cloth in British Mandated Togoland, and I hope that it will be possible to develop this small "home" industry. I consider that the Government itself could support the industry to a great extent by the purchase of the locally manufactured cloth for use in the Prisons and the Medical Department.

25. In the vicinity of most of the big towns all the suitable firewood has already been used up and the price of firewood for domestic purposes is becoming increasingly high. To meet this serious drain on the domestic budgets of the people and to provide for the future, I have submitted to you proposals for the starting of fuel plantations in suitable localities, the Government undertaking the planting of the reserves on land to be lent by the Native Administrations. After Government has recovered the expenditure incurred by the sale of firewood, the land with its growing timber will be handed back to the Native Administrations. This scheme will not only provide fuel for the people but in the end will be a valuable investment for the Native Administrations concerned.

26. I turn now to those developments in social services which I consider are of primary importance to the welfare and happiness of the people, and I propose to consider them under the following heads:—

- | | |
|---|---|
| (a) Medical (paras. 27-44) | (g) Anti-erosion work (para. 56) |
| (b) Education (paras. 45-48) | (h) Housing and Slum clearance (para. 57) |
| (c) Labour (paras. 49-51) | (i) Sewerage Schemes (para. 58) |
| (d) Water Supplies (paras. 53-54) | (j) Social Welfare Committees (para. 59) |
| (e) Electric Light and Power (para. 54) | (k) Prisons and Probation (paras. 60-62) |
| (f) Broadcasting (para. 55) | |

27. My final proposals regarding medical development must await the arrival in the Colony of the new Director of Medical Services but, subject to reconsideration after I have received his advice, I consider that we should proceed on the following lines. It is important that the prevention of disease should be regarded as the main function of the Medical and Health Departments, and every effort must be made not only to take such steps as will eradicate preventable diseases but to impress upon the people by education and propaganda the importance of preventive measures. At the same time it is necessary that adequate measures should be taken for the cure of those who are ill, and this involves the provision of considerable hospital accommodation and of health centres in towns or villages where hospitals do not exist. As regards hospitals and other public institutions I consider it of primary importance that a minimum standard of decency should be attained and that the public should not be shocked by the sight of overcrowded wards and insanitary surroundings in Government hospitals. While there can be no doubt of the great importance of preventive measures, public opinion will not be satisfied if those who are actually sick are neglected in favour of keeping well those who have so far been fortunate in escaping serious illness. It is small comfort to a patient and to his relatives to be told that he would not have become ill if the preventive measures advocated by the Health Department had been observed, and it will indeed make the people antagonistic to preventive measures if they find that Government attaches little importance to the cure of the sick. I stress this point because I observe a tendency to disparage Government's responsibilities to the sick (in hospitals and other ways) as compared with the importance of preventive measures. I am well aware of the greater importance of prevention but, especially among the more primitive tribes, the sense of proportion in this respect will be of slow growth and will be, if anything, retarded by any failure on the part of the Government to provide adequate medical attention for the sick and by so doing inspire the people with the belief in the good intentions of the Government and the efficacy of European medicine.

28. I propose that the Gold Coast Hospital at Accra, and the new hospital which I consider should be erected at Kumasi, should be regarded as central hospitals to serve the Colony area and the area of Ashanti and the Northern Territories respectively. In these central hospitals newly appointed medical officers will receive further training in tropical diseases and practical experience of nursing will be provided for student nurses. To these hospitals also will be sent all those cases which cannot receive adequate treatment in the smaller hospitals. In view of the existence of a large hospital in the Takoradi-Sekondi area (at present used by the Military authorities), it will probably be desirable to use this institution also as a "central" hospital. In addition to these central hospitals there will be the existing district hospitals at various centres and I propose that a number of other small hospitals should be built in different parts of the country as indicated in the following paragraph. These existing and proposed hospitals will form centres of the general health effort, and they will treat all such urgent and minor cases as cannot more appropriately be dealt with in the larger institutions. The medical staff of the district hospitals will have to be adequate, not only for the work arising

at the hospital itself, but for the regular and frequent visiting of all the ancillary health centres. The medical officer in charge of each of the hospitals will be responsible for the health campaign throughout the surrounding areas and under his control will be "health units" consisting of sanitary inspectors, health visitors, community nurses, midwives, and dispensers stationed in outlying villages.

29. I have already submitted proposals to you for the establishment, over a period of years, of fourteen new district hospitals to be situated at, or in the vicinity, of the following places:—

In the Colony :

Ajumako or Swedru, Asankrangwa, Jasikan, Kpandu, Mpraeso, Nsawam and some town in the Krobo area.

In Ashanti :

Bekwai, Mampong and Wenchi.

In the Northern Territories :

Kete Krachi, Lawra, Wa and Zuarungu.

My original intention had been that two of these hospitals should be built each year so that by the end of seven years all fourteen would have been completed. Subject, however, to the necessary staff being available for these hospitals, I should like to increase the pace and to complete the erection of the fourteen hospitals within the next five years, and I propose to apply for assistance under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in respect of part of the cost of construction of these institutions. (See paragraph 72).

30. In the same way I propose to ask for assistance towards the construction of a central hospital at Kumasi to which all serious cases, which cannot be treated in the smaller hospitals in the Northern Territories and Ashanti, should be removed for treatment. In addition to the usual surgical and medical wards I propose that there should be separate accommodation within the grounds of the Kumasi hospital for sufferers from trypanosomiasis and persons suffering from incurable diseases or extreme old age.

31. Somewhere in Ashanti or the Colony (the actual site has not yet been selected), I consider there should be a mental hospital constructed on modern lines to replace the present most unsatisfactory mental hospital in Accra which is not only unsuitable in design but extremely overcrowded. For this mental hospital too I propose to apply for assistance under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act.

32. As regards leprosy we have no certain information of the present incidence of the disease. In an incomplete survey, abandoned in 1931, it was estimated that the incidence of leprosy was roughly one per mille of the population. The position, however, remains somewhat obscure. It is feared that the problem is greater than was at first thought, and I consider that a fresh survey should be undertaken as soon as staff conditions permit. Only then will we be able to appreciate the magnitude of the problem that lies ahead.

33. I am inclined to favour handing over the existing leper settlements and any new settlements which may be started to the care of missionary societies, some of which I understand would be prepared to undertake these responsibilities with financial assistance from the Government. I feel that this opens the way for the fullest co-operation in social welfare which some of the missions are desirous of giving, and further, in my view, the work among lepers is such as can only be successfully carried out by persons possessed with the real missionary spirit of self-sacrifice. I have been approached by the representative of one mission who is contemplating, if Government agrees, the starting of a general hospital in one small town where there is no Government hospital; I welcome this indication of the desire of the missions to co-operate with Government in this important matter.

34. One of the chief difficulties in connection with medical and health development is the serious shortage of staff, both medical and nursing. It is probable that even after the war the supply of doctors from the United Kingdom will be limited and for this reason, apart from other considerations, I am most anxious that the number of locally recruited medical officers should be considerably increased. I propose therefore to provide for a much larger number of scholarships under which suitable men can be trained for the post of medical officer.

35. Besides the staff required for the new hospitals which are contemplated, there is a serious shortage of African nurses in existing institutions. This will be, to some extent, remedied after the war by the return to civil duties of a number of male nurses seconded to the Army and by the employment of other male nurses who have been trained in Army hospitals during the war. It seems to me, however, that it is desirable for several reasons to increase the number of women nurses in the Colony and gradually to reduce the number of male nurses to a minimum. In the past the best type of African lady has been reluctant to adopt the nursing profession, partly because of the surroundings in which she finds herself as a probationer. To remedy this state of affairs and to improve the class of African nurses who are so essential to the future of the medical service, I have already proposed and received your approval for the opening of a Nurses Training School and Hostel at Kumasi. This scheme has been well received locally and I am confident that we shall secure as students a much better type of African womanhood and that the general status of the African Nursing Service will be considerably enhanced thereby. Legislation is being considered to provide for the registration of nurses, and this also will improve the status of the nursing profession.

36. I attach considerable importance to the regular medical inspection of school children and I have already received your approval in principle of a scheme for a School Medical Service which will consist of several doctors and dentists who will carry out a regular inspection of all schools throughout the Colony, together with the survey of the home conditions of children found to be below standard in health, and give advice to teachers and parents.

37. As you are aware, yaws is a very widespread disease throughout large areas of the Gold Coast, and you have already approved a proposal I have made for an experimental mass-treatment campaign, which has been begun in the Yendi area of the Northern Territories, designed to obtain data for a country-wide

campaign. The suffering and distress caused by yaws is so great that, when staff permits, I hope that the experimental stage will be expedited, so that the campaign against the disease can be more vigorously pursued.

38. The prevalence of tuberculosis and silicosis among mine-workers causes me great concern and from the reports of the medical officers engaged on the survey of these diseases I am convinced that drastic action is necessary. As soon as the necessary X-ray apparatus is obtainable and the necessary medical staff is available, I consider that legislation should be enacted making it compulsory for all underground mine-workers to be examined before being permitted to go underground, and at regular intervals thereafter, with a view to checking the spread of these insidious diseases.

39. Venereal diseases are very common in the Colony particularly in the coastal towns and measures to deal with this problem are under consideration. Fortunately syphilis is, as yet, not a common disease, but there is likely to be an increased incidence after the war and this possibility is not being overlooked.

40. The widespread incidence of malaria requires considerable expenditure on drainage and reclamation works and a considerable amount of work has actually been done in the areas of Accra and Takoradi. These works have been initiated in these particular areas largely because of the existence of airfields and the importance of eliminating both yellow fever and malaria bearing mosquitoes from the neighbourhoods. The works, which are mainly earth drains, will, when completed, entail considerable expenditure on maintenance, and it may well be argued by residents in other areas of the Colony that an undue proportion of Colonial funds is being expended for the benefit of the citizens of Accra and Takoradi. I doubt whether drainage works on this scale will be financially possible in other localities, but a great deal can be done, and will be done, when staff is available, to improve matters in other towns.

Of great importance in combating malaria is the provision of cheap prophylactics and I contemplate a considerable extension (when the drug again becomes available) of the former practice of retailing quinine at cost price at every possible centre throughout the Gold Coast. This sale of quinine by the Government is greatly appreciated by the people who take the fullest advantage of it. In those areas where the people cannot afford even the cost price of this valuable drug, arrangements are made at the expense of the Native Administration authorities for it to be distributed at a price well below cost.

41. The prevalence of trypanosomiasis, especially in the Northern Territories, makes this disease a serious menace to the health of the people. Areas available for farming are restricted and the prevalence of the tsetse fly endangers the cattle industry. Both these factors, again, have their reactions on health by limiting the diet of the people.

It is intended to elaborate existing schemes and to bring areas already cleared, and mass treated, on to a maintenance basis at the earliest possible moment to permit the extension of similar operations to other areas. This will permit the processes of survey, treatment and clearing to be extended more rapidly to other districts, until a full knowledge of the incidence of the disease over the whole area of the Gold Coast has been obtained. Again, *Glossina submorsitans* appears to be extending its range widely, and entomological research into this factor will be necessary. The details of a five-year anti-trypanosomiasis campaign are now being worked out and I hope shortly to address you on the subject.

42. The possibility of dealing with such diseases as hookworm and schistosomiasis, where prevalent, by mass-treatment methods coupled with appropriate health measures, is being kept in mind. Onchocerciasis and trachoma will also require investigation. Much will depend on the success of the anti-yaws campaign (referred to at paragraph 37) at present in its early stages in the Yendi district, where valuable experience will be obtained.

43. The question of increased food production and of nutrition generally is referred to in several paragraphs of this despatch, (see 8, 14, 15, 18, 41 and 53) but it is considered that a short resume of the position can appropriately be made in this part which deals with the prevention and treatment of disease. In the Coastal Area I am advised that there is not much fault to be found with the diet of the economically stable section of the community. In the Forest Belt the absence of high class protein is the outstanding defect; this can be rectified by the increased importation of fish from the coast, which is, again, dependent on the extension of the fishing industry. An increase in the breeding of small livestock will play an important part in the future. Again, the increased cultivation of groundnuts and, if possible, of the Soya bean would be of great assistance.

In the North, an increased production of common foodstuffs is required, and the adoption of new intermediate crops to tide over the period of shortage; the importation of red palm oil should be increased.

I consider that the betterment of the diets of the peoples of the Gold Coast should be regarded as being of paramount importance. Disease factors in a people when well nourished lose many of their worst effects, often without actual direct remedial measures, and the Gold Coast will be no exception to this general rule. It is said that people, when economically stable, will balance their own diets on the basis of supply and demand; this aspect of the problem is not being lost sight of.

44. Medical research, also, cannot be neglected. It may be true that research is well ahead of actual achievement, but the desirability of the presence of an active Research Branch of the Medical Department can hardly be over-estimated. In the years of progress that, we hope, lie ahead, the guidance of expert, scientific advice will be increasingly necessary. This matter is receiving consideration.

45. The policy of the Government towards education is set out very fully in the report of the Education Committee 1937-41 which has been accepted by the Gold Coast Government and approved in principle by you, and there is no need in this despatch to go into the detailed recommendations of the report. It has been

decided to implement practically all of them and I set out below the action taken in respect of the principal recommendations, and other action taken :—

- (a) The amount provided for grants to existing schools has already been increased and it is proposed that these grants should be progressively increased year by year. The increase in the current financial year includes a sum of £25,000 as annually recurrent grant to be paid through Native Administrations and to be so expended that these Administrations are encouraged to augment their own expenditure on education by developing their own treasuries and systems of taxation.
- (b) The Education Department in collaboration with the Political Administration is engaged on a survey of the Colony, Ashanti and Southern Togoland, to ascertain the number of infant junior and senior primary schools required to provide universal education of six years' duration for all children and a senior primary course for a substantial proportion of them. The educational units have been invited to submit their plans for the extension of their work during a ten-year period following the end of hostilities. The infant-junior schools are steadily increasing in number and the opening of several new training colleges to provide the necessary teachers is contemplated. A number of visiting teachers to assist in improving infant-junior schools have been appointed and it is intended that many more should be trained for this work.
- (c) The grants to secondary schools have been substantially increased. Preliminary plans for the establishment of a new secondary school at Kumasi have been completed. The opening of further new secondary schools is under consideration. The number of Government scholarships for secondary education has been increased.
- (d) A plan for the development of agricultural education has been submitted to you.
- (e) Girls' education is being treated as a special problem. Some development has been possible, but much more is contemplated. The Methodist Church has begun to build up a secondary school for girls. The opening of new senior primary girls' boarding schools is also contemplated.
- (f) I have appointed a small committee to submit a scheme for the organisation of a mass education system designed in accordance with the recommendations made in your Advisory Committee's Report on Mass Education in African Society.
- (g) The grants to existing teacher-training colleges have been augmented and their enrolment has been increased to the maximum which their present staffing and accommodation permit. A new training college to provide (for women) the new two-year post-primary course for teachers for infant-junior schools has been established by the Scottish Mission with full financial support from Government. It is hoped that it will be the forerunner of numerous other colleges of this type.
- (h) A new Government Training College for teachers for Northern Territories infant-junior village day schools has been opened at Tamale. The duplication of the Government senior primary school at Tamale is beginning. The opening at Tamale of a senior primary boarding school for girls is contemplated.
- (i) The question of providing pensions for teachers in assisted schools is being examined by a committee and the salary scales of these teachers are also being reviewed.
- (j) An increased number of scholarships to permit of students being educated at British Universities is being provided. A scholarship scheme has been instituted to reinforce the staffs of training colleges and secondary schools and of supervisors of schools with men and women who have undertaken university and other higher studies at Achimota, or in the United Kingdom or in both. The scheme includes provision for professional training.
- (k) Several District Education Committees have been established and arrangements for the establishment of others are being made.
- (l) A scheme for the improvement of the teaching of English, especially in the training colleges, has been submitted to you.

46. A Commission has visited West Africa to inquire into the question of higher education and, until its report is received, it is not possible to make any comment on the prospects of a university education in the Gold Coast.

47. The West African Institute of Arts, Industries and Social Sciences has been established, with its headquarters at Accra, with funds provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. I believe that the Institute will be of great value in the development of this Colony.

48. I am not satisfied with the accommodation provided, nor the supervision, at the Boys Industrial Home at Kintampo, and steps are being taken for the erection of suitable buildings in a locality which will permit of regular inspections by senior officers. The appointment of Probation Officers, referred to at paragraph 60, may reduce the number of boys sent to the Home.

49. The Gold Coast Government was the first in West Africa to establish a Labour Department and considerable progress has been made in the improvement of labour conditions. In the Gold Coast the greater part of the wage-earning labour is to be found in the Colony and Ashanti, the people in the Northern Territories being mainly peasant farmers who devote their time to the growing of crops for their own consumption or for local sale. Most of the gold and diamond mines are in the Colony or the southern part of Ashanti, and, before the war, these mines employed some 40,000 workers. A considerable number of men are engaged by cocoa farmers as labourers, most of these coming from the North and from Togoland, and the expanding timber industry has employed an increasing number.

50. In 1939 the policy was adopted of building camps along the labour routes to accommodate men moving from the Northern Territories to the districts where they could obtain work and there is no need at present for any development of this scheme. I have in mind, however, improvements in the system of recruiting labour for the mines. A great number of men travel over the long road from north to south to seek employment in the mines who are medically unfit when they start for the arduous work of mining. Their sufferings along the road are considerable and many even of those who start in good health are debilitated by the time they reach the mines or other centres of employment. Being unable to find employment in their weakened state and being physically unable to undertake the return journey, they hang around the mining camps and in the towns, dependent on the charity of their fellow tribesmen, and become a burden on the general community. To obviate this state of affairs it is desirable that intending labourers should be engaged after medical examination in the Northern Territories and that those who are engaged for work in the mines should be transported by lorry to their places of employment. This will necessitate the identification and registration of labour, a scheme for which has already been drawn up.

51. The Trade Unions Ordinance came into force in 1941 and steps are being taken to develop trade unions along proper lines. Men with experience as Trade Union officials in the United Kingdom have been engaged as Labour Officers, for special duty in this connection.

52. Further geological research is desirable, not only for the location of valuable minerals, but also for the selection of suitable clay deposits for brick and tile making (*see* paragraph 20), and in connection with the work of the Temporary Water Supply Department referred to in the next paragraph. It will probably be necessary to increase the Geological Survey Department for this purpose.

53. The lack of water throughout the country is very serious, in spite of the fact that in most parts the rainfall is adequate. In the Accra Plains for instance, the provision of water supplies would benefit not only the human population but would permit of the keeping of large herds of cattle in an area close to a considerable market; the bearing of this problem on nutrition is obvious. In the Northern Territories the lack of water in the dry season is responsible for most of the evils from which the people in the Protectorate are suffering. For the larger towns the Public Works Department is preparing plans for water supplies which, in most cases, will be associated with electric power development (*see* paragraph 54). But, in the smaller towns and villages and in rural areas, it is necessary for a special department to undertake the finding and storage of water, and you have approved of recommendations that I have made to you for the setting up of a Temporary Water Supply Department for this purpose, and assistance is being granted under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act towards the cost of this department. I am confident that the result will be the increased health and happiness of the people, the increase of domestic animals, and the prevention of the erosion which, in the Northern Territories, is ruining the land (*see* paragraph 56).

54. I contemplate, as soon as war conditions permit, that electric light and power should be installed in five more towns, namely, Asamankese, Dunkwa, Nsawam, Oda, and Swedru, where the probable consumption will undoubtedly make such schemes economically sound. In addition, the installations at Accra, Kumasi and Tamale will require extensive alterations and additions. Consideration is also being given to the possibility of installing electric light and power in six other towns. In most cases where electric power can be made available it is also possible to consider a town water supply and this will be provided in the five towns mentioned, while an improved supply is proposed for Tamale, the headquarters of the Northern Territories.

55. The Gold Coast is fortunate in possessing an excellent broadcasting service in most of the larger towns, and I consider that this service should be extended to other places which have not yet had this amenity both by the establishment of further rediffusion stations and by the provision of receiving sets at community centres or other public institutions.

56. In certain parts of the Northern Territories people and cattle are crowded together in those few areas where water can be found throughout the year, with the result that these areas are often insufficient for the crops needed and are overgrazed by the cattle. The result of this may be seen in the sheet erosion which is ruining great tracts of land and, by increasing the run-off of surface water, is leading to a lowering of the water-table. I hope that the activities of the Temporary Water Supply Department referred to in paragraph 53 above will check this dangerous erosion and, when staff permits, I propose to appoint a special officer to supervise measures against erosion.

57. Perhaps the most urgent need in the Gold Coast is that of re-housing the people and eliminating the slum conditions under which so many of them live. I have submitted to you and received your approval of a large re-housing scheme involving the expenditure over four years of £800,000. In these four years it will only be possible to deal with a few of the larger towns and considerably more expenditure will be necessary in later years if the policy of improving the housing of the people is to be continued. The scheme contemplates the setting up of local housing committees which will be responsible for the erection of two types of housing in the areas for which they are responsible. The first type will consist of "grade houses" to be sold to individuals on a 30-year purchase plan similar to that already in force in Accra. The second type will consist of blocks of labourers' rooms which will be rented to labourers at a very low rate. It is estimated that the first type of housing will in the course of 30 years repay the whole capital cost plus a low rate of interest, and that the second type will similarly repay in 30 years the capital cost but not the interest on the money invested. I contemplate the use in the construction of these buildings of local material which will provide employment for a large number of artisans and others. The making of bricks and tiles, and doors, windows and furniture will, I hope, provide useful work for returned soldiers after the war. (*See* paragraphs 20 and 21).

58. Plans which were made some years ago for a sewerage scheme for certain parts of Accra have been held up by the war, but it is proposed to proceed with the work as soon as possible. In the meantime, both in those parts of Accra not affected by this scheme, and in other places, septic tanks have been installed, and it is intended that, as soon as materials are available, the installation of the septic tank system of sanitation

should proceed as fast as possible. Plans are being worked out for the installation of modern sanitation in houses to be built under the re-housing scheme referred to in paragraph 57; it is estimated that the small additional charge that will have to be borne by occupants of these houses for this amenity will be less than they would pay for the alternative (primitive) arrangements now generally in force. The improvement that will result from these proposals in health and comfort is obvious, and it is hoped that the general standard of living will be raised.

59. I referred at paragraph 2 of this despatch to the appointment of a Secretary for Social Services and I think it desirable to explain briefly the organization which I have already set up for the development of social welfare and the complete organization which I envisage when staff permits. A Social Services Department has been established under the control of the Secretary for Social Services and includes Welfare and Probation Officers in addition to other staff. The Secretary for Social Services is the Secretary and Executive Officer of a Central Welfare Committee of which the Governor is Chairman, and which includes the Heads of those Departments engaged in social welfare and such members of the general public as are selected because of their interest in these matters. In addition to the Central Committee, provincial and district committees have been set up consisting both of official and unofficial members to co-ordinate the work of the various departments and to encourage social welfare development in the areas for which they are responsible. As soon as an Economic Adviser is available I propose to set up a parallel committee to be known as the Economic Development Committee which will consist of the heads of those departments responsible for economic development and suitable unofficials. The Secretary and Executive Officer of this committee will be the Economic Adviser. The two committees in question will together form the Central Planning Committee which will co-ordinate plans for the development of the economic resources of the country and for the development of social services on an adequate scale.

60. Steps are being taken to amend the law so as to provide for the establishment of juvenile courts and for Probation Officers to be attached to these and other courts and I am considering a proposal for extra-mural employment of selected offenders as an alternative to imprisonment in certain cases. I propose also to establish a prison farm camp, which will be constructed very largely by prison labour, in the neighbourhood of Kumasi. All of these schemes will, I trust, remove the necessity for the building of additional prisons and relieve the congestion in those now existing.

61. I am anxious to establish a Borstal Institution for the training of such young offenders as cannot be looked after effectively by Probation Officers, and, as a preliminary step, I have approved of the conversion of certain buildings at Sekondi into a young offenders detention institution which will be ready for occupation this month. Although the establishment of this institution is no more than a compromise, it will, nevertheless, enable the Prison Administration to train the nucleus of a Borstal staff for the permanent institution contemplated, and it will be under the direction of an officer who was formerly a housemaster in a Borstal institution in England. Moreover, the new prison will allow of the removal of some seventy youths from the bad influences of the ordinary prison.

62. With a view to helping discharged prisoners, and particularly those who are serving a sentence for the first offence, I have set up a Discharged Prisoners Aid Society; it is proposed to employ three whole-time salaried agents to this committee and funds are being provided to cover such necessary expenditure as may be incurred. As an encouragement also to good work and conduct in the prisons, I approved some months ago of a scheme for the payment of a trifling wage (2s. a month) to selected first offenders who perform work in excess of a fixed task. Half of the wages received is kept for the prisoner until his release and he is allowed to spend the other half for the purchase of tobacco in the prison canteen. The experiment has been so successful that I have authorised its extension to well-behaved recidivists.

63. The Gold Coast now possesses about 500 miles of railway, the main line running from the port of Takoradi to Kumasi and thence to the coast again at Accra. In addition to this there is a line which taps the Central Province: this line has not proved an economic success. In my view there is no opening for any further railway development.

64. The road system of the Gold Coast is fairly extensive but could usefully be developed. Work is already proceeding on a road from Esiama to Half Assini which will open up the south-western part of the Colony which up to now has been practically undeveloped, and another road is being constructed from Kumasi to Bibiani which will provide a useful link in the road system. In the past, in order to direct traffic to the railway or to particular ports, gaps have been deliberately left in the road system; with this policy I do not agree and I propose to connect up various roads which are, in some cases, separated by only a few miles. There are numerous other roads which could be constructed to the advantage of the local inhabitants and the improvement of the system as a whole, and I have already had the lines for these proposed roads surveyed in order that work on them could be commenced at any time without delay. A contemplated road of particular importance is that connecting Gambaga in the Northern Territories with Bawku which would permit of access to the north-eastern corner of the Gold Coast at all times of the year; in the rainy season the road from Bawku to Bolgatanga is closed for many weeks, as two rivers along this road are quite impassable. It has not been possible during the war to keep up a high standard of maintenance of the existing roads, which have had in some cases to carry very heavy traffic for which they were not designed: considerable expenditure on improvements and maintenance will be required in the next few years.

65. In addition to the large airfields at Accra and Takoradi, there are several smaller landing grounds in Ashanti and the Northern Territories. I propose that these should be improved and maintained with a view to the establishment of local air services which will facilitate inspections by administrative and technical officers responsible for development.

66. Plans have been approved by you for the development of telephone and telegraph services in the mandated territory of Togoland, and I contemplate further the modernisation and extension of existing services throughout the Gold Coast, and the placing of wireless sets in those areas where the amount of traffic does not justify the installation of telephone lines.

67. It is essential, if these and other schemes are to be carried out at a reasonable cost, and in order to reduce the general expenses of administration that an increasing number of Africans should be trained to perform duties which would otherwise have to be left to Europeans. For this reason I attach the greatest importance to the provision of adequate training facilities. I have referred, at paragraph 17 above, to the training of Agricultural staff, at paragraphs 34 and 35 to proposals for the training of doctors and nurses, and in paragraph 45 to the training of teachers. The technical schools which were closed down during the war will be reopened as soon as possible, and a scheme has already been approved for the establishment of a training school for technical staff of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. A sub-committee of the Central Advisory Committee on Education is considering the whole question of technical education. Plans are also being considered for a training school for prison warders. In addition to these local training institutions, the policy has been adopted, and, I consider, should be proceeded with, of sending selected persons to England for university and other training.

68. Full consideration is being given to the problem of the demobilised soldier. In my view a large proportion of discharged soldiers will return to their own villages and resume their former occupations, and in this connection it must be remembered that many of the soldiers serving in the Gold Coast Regiment come from adjoining countries. For the rest, every opportunity must be taken to provide them with work. For the ordinary soldier (unskilled except as a fighting man) work can be provided without much difficulty, for some years at any rate, on road-building and other construction schemes (see paragraph 64), while artisans and other more qualified men will find employment as nurses (see paragraph 35), in the building of hospitals (see paragraphs 29 to 31), in the large re-housing scheme referred to in paragraph 57 and in other development projects. My main objective will be to prevent the discharged soldiers from congregating in the larger towns, and special efforts will be made to have them demobilised as near as possible to their homes.

69. I turn now to the financial implications of the various proposals referred to in this despatch. The present surplus balances of the Gold Coast amount to approximately £4,255,648, exclusive of a sum of approximately £1,036,307 in the Supplementary Sinking Fund. This Supplementary Sinking Fund, together with the statutory Sinking Fund which amounts to about £860,000, is earmarked to pay off the 6 per cent Gold Coast loan, which matures next year. This loan amounts to £4,000,000, and a sum of approximately £2,000,000 will be needed, over and above the amounts in the two Sinking Funds, to pay it off completely; I propose that this gap should be bridged by fresh borrowing.

70. Against the surplus balance of £4,255,648 mentioned above, I envisage the following capital expenditure, but you will appreciate that the estimates can only be provisional, as staff does not permit of detailed investigation of all of these schemes, and the cost of building after the war is still an unknown factor:—

	£
New district hospitals (paragraph 29)	924,000
Central hospital, Kumasi (paragraph 30)	400,000
Mental hospital (paragraph 31)	250,000
Anti-trypanosomiasis campaign (paragraph 41)	75,000
Water supply in six towns (paragraph 54)	370,000
Electric light and power schemes (paragraph 54)	220,000
Re-housing in first four years (paragraph 57)	800,000
Road development (paragraph 64)	500,000
Telegraph and telephone development (paragraph 66)	250,000
Total	<u>£3,789,000</u>

The other proposals referred to in this despatch involve no considerable capital expenditure, and I feel that the revenues of the Colony should meet such expenditure as will be incurred. It is impossible at this stage to estimate the maintenance costs of all these proposals.

71. In addition to the capital cost of developments mentioned in the preceding paragraph, there is other expenditure which may have to be incurred, in respect of which I am not yet in a position to give you any details, but which cannot be ignored in a general calculation. These are:—

	£
Purchase of buildings erected during the war by the fighting Services	250,000
Harbour improvements at Takoradi	500,000
Railway improvements	400,000
Agricultural credit and marketing (exclusive of cocoa; see paragraph 12)	250,000
	<u>£1,400,000</u>
Add development expenditure (paragraph 70)	£3,789,000
Total	£5,189,000
Surplus funds available	£4,255,648
Balance to be met	<u>£933,352</u>

72. From the above figures it will be seen that the Colony's reserves will fall short, by some £933,000 of the amount which I contemplate must be spent in the next few years on general developments, and this allows no margin for working capital or as a buffer against possible deficits in the annual budgets. While

The present budget position is satisfactory, thanks to the introduction of income tax, the future is too uncertain to count on a continuance of this happy position, and, moreover, the developments mentioned in this despatch must inevitably increase the annual recurrent cost of administration. In these circumstances I feel justified in suggesting that some assistance should be given from Imperial funds, under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, in respect of the proposed new hospitals and the anti-trypanosomiasis campaign. The cost of these hospitals, as shown in paragraph 70 is estimated at £1,574,000, and I suggest that about two-thirds of this figure, say £1,000,000, should be defrayed from this source, over a period, as indicated in paragraph 29 of at least five years, and that the whole of the cost of the trypanosomiasis campaign, namely £75,000, should also be provided from Imperial funds over a period of five years. If the Gold Coast Government could count on this degree of assistance I consider that future expenditure on development could be faced with a reasonable amount of confidence, and in making this suggestion I have taken into consideration the probable post-war budget. I estimate that the total "ordinary" annual expenditure on all services will be in the neighbourhood of £4,250,000 as against the average annual pre-war figure for the period 1935-36 to 1939-40 of £2,690,000. The average annual pre-war revenue over the same period was £3,669,000; to this must be added the estimated annual proceeds from income tax, some £800,000, giving a total of £4,469,000. There will therefore remain an annual balance of about £219,000 which may be used for Public Works Extraordinary and other special departmental expenditure.

I propose to make formal applications for assistance when I have obtained a firm estimate of the cost of the proposed hospitals and of the trypanosomiasis campaign.

73. The Central Welfare Committee, which has had the opportunity of considering the draft of this despatch, is in general agreement with it.

74. Before I close this already over-lengthy despatch I feel that I must once again emphasise the great handicap under which this Colony (like others) is labouring owing to the shortage of staff. The difficulty of obtaining materials is, of course, serious, and prevents a start being made on buildings which are badly needed, but the main problem is the shortage of staff. Not only has the normal wastage from deaths and retirement not been made good, but numbers of officials are employed on special war work and are not available to carry out their normal duties. Senior officials are so burdened with routine duties and the additional work thrown on them by war conditions that they are unable to spare the time necessary for long-range planning. The Gold Coast is fortunate in having in its Civil Service a high proportion of loyal and efficient officers who are carrying on under great difficulties which are not always fully appreciated. But the shortage of staff must seriously delay the detailed planning and the implementing of development schemes.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

ALAN BURNS.

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