

OBSERVATIONS

FROM THE SIDELINES

By Kathryn Hall Bogle

The equator cuts a blazing knife across its central core and the fearsome Congo river loops its waterways through the heart of it. That's Zaire. The country of Africa south of Nigeria, south of the Sudan and south of Ethiopia, too.

It used to be called the Belgian Congo—now it's called the Republic of Zaire. The river that was the Congo now is called the Zaire. The river is not any tamer than when it was known as the Congo, but its great power is being harnessed here and there by modern man for his own uses.

There are vast mines for Cobalt, diamonds and copper in the Shaba province of Zaire in its far southeast corner. For hundreds of years copper has been worked and used for currency in this country. Conservative estimates, according to Lars Engstrom, a project engineer, set the known reserve of Zaire copper at "about 20 million tons."

With all that wealth in mineral resources, what does Zaire need—or want? Power.

Power—electric power. Power to refine all that copper domestically. Up to the present time Shaba province, according to Engstrom, has obtained its electricity from local hydro generations whose capacity is now 500 megawatts, and a much larger block of base generation is essential.

Zaire turned to the West, (France, Belgium, Sweden, the U.S.A.), in a search for guidance and leadership in electric technology. The West heard and responded to the African overture. The Bonneville Power Administration was selected by the U.S. government to be one of the federal agencies to assist in planning and advising on construction of a suitable hydro-electric complex to serve Zaire's industrial needs. That was about 15 years ago.

Now the transmission of electric power can travel across a major part of the country to Shaba by the construction of the Inga hydro-electric complex, "strategically planned to utilize the maximum runoff of the Zaire River system."

In February 1973, the Zaire government agency, Society Nationale d'Electricite (SNEL) awarded the contract for the Inga-Shaba project to the consortium formed by Morrison-Knudsen International Co. of Boise, Idaho; International Engineering Co. of San Francisco; and Fischbach and Moore International Corp. of Dallas, Texas. These firms were responsible for the designing, engineering and construction of the transmission lines and terminals. Among the subcontractors have been ASEA of Sweden and General Electric of the U.S.

The construction workforce numbered more than 4,000, a majority of whom were Zairois. The construction itself required about 150,000 tons of material to complete. Freighters brought the material from the port of Matadi to Kinshasa, the capital. From there the materials were distributed along a tropical route by railroad where possible, by road (some miles of which had to be built for the passage, or by river barge if necessary. Other statistics reveal that a fleet of 300 heavy-duty trucks were used, 26 mounted cranes and four aircraft were brought into service. Helicopters were used often in routine checking at designated points for in-



A group of nineteen engineers from the African nation Zaire visited Bonneville Power Administration during a training mission to the United States.

Dr. E.C. Ogboubiri of BPA (front row, left) coordinated the Portland visit.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

spection.

Nineteen engineers and technicians from Zaire visited the Northwest in mid-September.

Guests of the United States government in cooperation with the government of Zaire, the engineers came to the United States to visit federal electric power administering systems in this country and to consult with U.S. engineers involved with power projects similar to their own.

Leaving Zaire in January of this year, the 19 engineers, headed by Kalonji-Ngoyi, a senior engineer, were first billeted for seven months at Loretto Height College in Denver. At this college, the men from Zaire were given further study in their profession and intensive instruction in English.

"English is not emphasized in Zaire's secondary schools," Mr. Kalonji said, "and with Zaire's increasing use of American technology and commerce, the Zaire government recognizes the value and benefit a facility in the use of English language would bring to the country."

Others among the 19 visitors expressed their happiness with the chance to learn English. Theirs is a French-speaking country, they said, and all of them on the study tour are fluent in this language. However, they also all speak Lingala, the mother tongue of Zaire's president, Mobutu, in addition to their own district's mother tongue, giving them each competence in four languages or even five in some cases.

Side trips to other areas of the U.S. were incorporated into the study tour. Smaller groupings of the original number spent varying lengths of time in Dallas, Texas, in Bismarck, N. Dakota and in Minnesota visiting federal projects in those areas before leaving Colorado for the Northwest.

In the Northwest, Bonneville Power Administration took over direction of the touring group. Dr. E.C. Ogboubiri, from the BPA of-

fices in Portland, accepted the appointment to complete the instructive planning for the travelers while in this area.

"In our offices," said Ogboubiri, "we arranged a training and orientation program in high voltage electric power system practices with special emphasis on problems they may encounter their systems, and also how BPA approaches problems in their own systems."

"Although we recognize that Zaire's immediate need is the knowledge of the engineering operation and maintenance of their two direct current high voltage converter terminals and the direct current transmission link between Inga in the north and Kolwezi in the south, a distance of over 1,056 miles, the training at BPA was broadened to include aspects of electric power generation and transmission systems with which they may become involved in the future." Ogboubiri pointed out that the country of Zaire will have the longest direct current transmission lines in the world when the link between Inga and Kolwezi is completed.

The study tour took the young men (their ages ran from 23 years to 38) to the Dalles Dam and to the Celilo Converter Station where BPA's Howard Farrington arranged a close-up of these installations. Farrington, who has worked in Zaire as a consultant on-the-site, also arranged that the visitors see the BPA Conservation Pilot Project: Wind Power. Located at Goodnoe Hills near Goldendale, Washington, three Mod 2's (wind turbines) cost \$13 million to fabricate and install. They are the nation's first "wind farm." They, combined, will feed 7.5 megawatts of power into the transmission network of BPA.

From the Dalles Dam site, the 19 engineers were escorted by Ogboubiri to the Grand Coulee dam in Washington State where they spent a full day with engineers operating the Grand Coulee.

Ogboubiri also arranged "in-

house" workshops having to do with special communications and control systems as well as field maintenance, procedures and practices.

In free time, the visitors took short sight-seeing trips around Portland. They found shopping for stereo equipment and other electronics an exciting part of their visit and thought that prices were generally lower than they had anticipated.

Preparing to fly directly home to Zaire, many of the study tour group expressed a wish to return someday to America.

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MEMBER OF UNITED FRANCHISES

Local group offers repertoire

by Nathaniel Scott

The Sojourner Truth Readers Theater and Dance Troupe founder and director, Nyewusi Askari, said, "The purpose of the theater is the elevation, preservation and presentation of the Black performing arts."

STRDT began in April of 1981 and currently has seven adult performing members: Nyewusi Askari, founder/director; Ruby Burns, choreographer and dance director; and Ayanna Maisha, Evelyn Crews, Pam Smith, Vernon Ambers and Ajani Taylor.

The theater also has a youth readers/dance troupe that consists of ten nine- and ten-year-olds whose first presentation, "The Rhythm Of The Children," written by Askari, will be performed in the near future for parents and select members of the community. Time, date and place

will be announced in advance.

The folding of the Black Repertory Theater in Portland left the Black community with a gap. A gap that vastly curtailed the Black performing arts. Askari, while reflecting upon that, said, "We are not a non-profit business. We operate as a business and have applied for a business license."

The theater will present the works of local artists, including actors and directors, but, "Most of the things we will be dealing with are local things that the people of Oregon can identify with," Askari said.

"If you have a situation and are going to support us on this, we will write, produce and perform the skit."

He said the skits will be performed in 30- and 60-minute segments at a cost of \$250 and \$400 respectively, and can be utilized by schools, businesses, churches and

social groups as educational entertainment attractions for whatever event they may be holding.

Askari has written six plays over the past eight years, including "Blues in Z Sharp," and "Tomorrow Where You Be?," numerous poems, and has been a featured writer in the Black Collegiate Magazine and a staff writer for the *Portland Observer*. He said, "The theater's youth will develop reading skills, character and self-confidence. We stress that they are role models for the youths and we will also train other youths in the community that don't have anything constructive to do to be technical people."

For additional information and/or the theater troupe's presentations, STRDT can be reached at 286-2799.

Let's hear it for the Sojourner Truth Readers Theater and Dance Troupe.

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From the Front Door

by Tom Boothe

From the Front Door, it is very important that American people learn to live with a better understanding of relationships, if they are to maintain a true sense of freedom.

I believe that all American citizens can prosper, even in today's economy if they would only understand that each body in nature is built to support its own weight. We must learn to carry our own weight.

In order to prosper, and not be dependent you must have a clear-cut purpose; you must be prepared to work, you must know your direction, and not be deterred; and you must be consistent in your drive toward your purpose, and the main objective of your purpose must be to carry your own weight plus a part of those who are unable such as small children and senior citizens.

Your spirit should radiate a positive attitude; your mind should think only of good and fair treatment toward your neighbor; you should work toward an understanding of your present situation and live within your means. You should work from a base of Truth, Honesty and Wisdom projected through the Power of Faith for the good of others beyond yourself.

On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM at Exodus located at 17th and Alberta streets in Portland, Oregon, I will be speaking on "The use of Truth and Wisdom" the main power source to self sustenance and life control.

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