



Your Money's Worth

By SYLVIA PORTER
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Editor's note: Sylvia Porter is on vacation. During her absence a column by Ralph McGill is being substituted. McGill is currently on a tour of African nations, about which he is writing.

West Africa: After the First World War there was a popular song titled "How You Gonna Keep 'em Down on the Farm after They've Seen Paree?" One thinks of it often today as the cities of the world become daily more crowded.

Guinea has made an attempt to control it. The method is interesting and, to some, dismaying, because it restricts freedom of movement. The Guineans do not contest this. Their plan frankly is designed to slow down movement to their capital city, where there already is some unemployment.

The regulation requires a person wishing to leave his district to obtain a permit. If granted he must establish six months residence before being eligible for a job. To the government this is a more practical approach to a problem than permitting the city to fill up with persons unable to find work. An already pinched budget cannot take on the burden or relief. In rural Guinea there are fruits and every village has vegetables. Rice may be in short supply, but no one would starve.

Here we have an example of one of the new nations, with its industries not yet developing at a rate requiring additional labor and with an agriculture being called upon to produce more, trying to meet an immediate problem. It cannot really afford to support large urban unemployment. So it restricts freedom of movement. Some Westerners see it only in this aspect. Others view it as an act of necessary realism suited to a peculiar problem.

The United States can afford to provide relief for several million of urban unemployed. The new nations cannot. In the long run neither can afford it. The problem of both is the same — to produce economic growth which will eliminate jobless persons.

Statistics are not readily available. Those at hand show that Dakar, Senegal had 30,000 resident in 1926. In 1955 there were 230,000. Today there are more. In 1936 Conakry, Guinea, counted 13,000 persons. There are more than 100,000. Leopoldville was a town of 39,531 in 1930. The census of 1955 gave it 299,806. Today there the count is higher. It is a world dilemma. The cities grow. But jobs rarely keep pace — not even in the older, industrialized countries. This fact is an indictment of our failure to see what was — and is — coming, and to plan.

One sociologist, writing about the problem of the jobless African, removed from a culture of village and family and placed in one unfamiliar and unrewarding, spoke of the "discontinuities between their antecedent and urban settings." This covers it with a professional jargon. But the key word is "discontinuities." There are many discontinuities for those who move from village to town.

The African problem differs from a Western one in many ways. The family customs are strong. Even a remote cousin, coming to the city and not finding work, can, and does, move in with any employed relative. There are examples in the West African countries of one person with a job supporting ten or more jobless relatives — some very, very distant.

This soon puts the worker in debt. The custom is breaking down in the cities, but only at the edges. It still prevails to an extent seriously to affect the urban economy. There is something kind about this family custom. But it encourages the lazy and aimless. It does not fit into an urban society. In time it will die. The young already rebel. Meanwhile, it is but one more reason to try and keep 'em down on the farm.

STAR GAZER**

By CLAY R. FOLLAN

Your Daily Activity Guide According to the Stars.

To develop message for Tuesday, read words corresponding to numbers of your Zodiac birth sign.

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