

LETTERS

Dear Dr. Bay:

I would like to thank you, Dr. Lamoué-Smith, and Dr. Adell Patton for playing an instrumental role in making the African Studies Association's tribute to E. Franklin Frazier possible. Both the Saturday morning panel session on his life and work and the reception, which was held the Friday evening before the session, were successful.

Since the Baltimore meeting, I have become aware that my statement on Professor Frazier, "E. Franklin Frazier: ASA First African American President and a Son of Baltimore," has generated a debate as to whom the recognition of the first elected president of the association belongs. The principals on which the debate centers are Frazier and Dr. Robert Cummings, who was president of the ASA in 1985. The primary concern issues from an erroneous declaration that the African Studies Association elected Frazier as president in 1963. Factually, Frazier was elected to the office of vice president in 1962, a position from which under ASA's by-laws the incumbent automatically accedes to the presidency. Factually, Cummings was elected vice president in 1984 and served as president in 1985, making him the first African American to serve a term as president of the ASA.

The statement, which appears in the program for the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting of ASA, was not intended to diminish the accomplishment of my fellow colleague, Professor Cummings. Rather, it was an attempt to recognize the pioneering works of one of this country's foremost scholars on the African American experience.

Charles Jarmon
Howard University

Dear Dr. Bay:

We spotted an announcement in the newsletter a month or so back for your 1991 calendar, *Men and Women of Power: Africa in Historical Photographs*. We ordered two copies, one for a Christmas gift to ourselves and one for a friend.

To our surprise, on receipt of the calendars we leafed through them and came to July, discovering Eliot Elisofon's photo of the father and two brothers of one of our colleagues (and immediate past department chair) in the History Department at the University of Lubumbashi. He was born the year of the photo but immediately recognized which of his many brothers the two were. One has been a Zairian politician and lives in Kinshasa, the other back in the royal village. Our other friend lost his intended Christmas gift, as it seemed only right to give it to Professor Belepe.

For the sake of historical accuracy, we would point out an error — understandable for a visiting photographer — which Professor Belepe noticed so it can be corrected for any future use of the photo. There has been a confusion among three Kuba kings with similar names:

Mbop Mabiinc maMbeky, 1916-1919
Kwete Mabiinc maKyen, 1919-1939
Mbop Mabiinc maKyen, 1939-1969

As the date of the photo indicates, it is the third of these who is pictured here, and so the third name is incorrect, as is the beginning date of his reign.

We are delighted with the calendars and sincerely hope that the ASA will repeat the fund-raiser again in 1992.

J. Jeffrey Hoover
University of Lubumbashi

The following letter to James Baker, Secretary of State, was shared with us by Pearl T. Robinson, President, TransAfrica, Boston Chapter.

Dear Secretary Baker:

We in the Boston Chapter of TransAfrica are concerned that the US Government make the most positive contribution it can to the restoration of peace and security in Liberia and a transition to honest, competitive and open elections for a constitutionally legitimate government of that beleaguered country. In keeping with this concern, we emphasize the following beliefs:

1) The peace and transition plan being implemented by the ECOWAS states offers the best hope that the tragically abused people of Liberia have to achieve a reasonably prompt restoration of law and order and a peaceful, workable transition to democracy. The ECOWAS state should receive the commendation of the US government and whatever financial and diplomatic support we can give to ECOWAS to help it to carry the initiative to a successful conclusion.

2) As a central part of the ECOWAS transition plan and reflecting the choice of the broadest meeting yet held of the substantial political groups of Liberians, the Interim Government headed by Dr. Amos Sawyer, a person of proven integrity and competence, has now taken up residence within the country. We believe that the IG should receive the recognition and support of the US Government. The White House or State Department should immediately make that intention clearly evident.

3) Distribution of food and other relief supplies should not be made subject to political criteria. Donor agencies and organizations should provide such material and foodstuffs as they can to any other parts and regions of the country able to receive them. However, inspection by the

Interim Government or the ECOMOG forces of relief shipments coming into the country is a reasonable requirement, in our view.

4) Now that the Interim Government is in residence within the country, the US, after extending recognition, should resume its economic and emergency assistance to that country, working through the Interim Government. Further, working through the Interim Government, the US should unblock all non-lethal assistance provided for Liberia under any of the pending or previous authorizations of assistance, and, in fact, should expand its assistance program to help meet the acute needs for food and health relief, resettlement of refugees and displaced persons, and restoration of

basic services.

5) The US should assist in the immediate evacuation of refugees from Monrovia and elsewhere. There is especially a need to provide security and safe passage for the thousands of persons at the Presidential Palace, many of whom come from the former President's region or were associated with his regime and now fear for their lives. Safe passage and refugee camp arrangements would be needed until these people can safely return to their homes.

Liberia is too close and important a friend of the US, and has suffered too much already, in which suffering we are complicit, to merit being ignored or manipulated by our government in a period of such acute need and such

promise for renewal.

To continue to hesitate in supporting the Interim Government headed by Dr. Sawyer, and to continue to encourage fighting forces to believe that some better arrangement than the Interim Government offers might come to them through US influence, as we believe that some US officials have done, only prolongs the suffering of the Liberian people, and impedes real progress toward full democratic and constitutional government in that country.

We hope that you will give your most conscientious attention to the points we raise, and take appropriate action.

Pearl T. Robinson
TransAfrica, Boston Chapter

In Memoriam: Gwendolen Carter

Gwendolen M. Carter died in Orange City, Florida, on 20 February 1991. Her life spanned the extraordinary events and transformations of the twentieth century, and she was an active observer and participant in many of them. She reached out to people, and they, in turn, saw in her someone who would champion their causes and respond to their needs. Human beings rather than detached institutions or political structures were at the center of her political analyses. Her particular concern with Africa, and her in-depth involvement with South Africa, drew her into dramatic circumstances. She discussed politics with Kwame Nkrumah and saluted Nelson Mandela as he was led out of the courtroom to life imprisonment.

Gwen Carter was born in Hamilton, Ontario, and received the BA from the University of Toronto in 1929. She then went to Oxford University where she also received the BA in 1931. She was a member of the faculty of McMaster University at Hamilton, Ontario, from 1932 to 1935

before returning to Oxford to complete the MA degree in 1936. In 1938 she was awarded the PhD from Radcliffe College of Harvard University. She taught at Wellesley College from 1938 to 1941 and at Tufts College in 1942-43, before joining the faculty at Smith College where she remained from 1943 to 1964 and where she was named to the Sophia Smith Chair of Political Science in 1961.

In 1964 she was invited to become the director of the African Studies Program at Northwestern University and was appointed the Melville J. Herskovits Professor of African Affairs. In 1974 she agreed to join the faculty of the African Studies Program and the Political Science Department of Indiana University, and for the next ten years she enlivened the intellectual life of her colleagues and students. In 1984 she accepted an offer from the University of Florida, where she taught until 1987. Her international stature was recognized by the conferral of honorary degrees from 13 universities in the United States and Canada, the George V Medal for Public

Service in 1935, the Achievement Award of the American Association of University Women in 1962, and the Distinguished Scholar Award of the ASA in 1978. She was president of the African Studies Association in 1958-59, president of the New England Political Science Association in 1959-60 and vice president of the American Political Science Association in 1963-64. In the 1940s she became an American citizen and was frequently called upon as a consultant by government agencies and private organizations. She was a member of the board of the African-American Institute for more than 20 years.

Gwen Carter continued to publish and to be professionally engaged into her 80s. Her publications, which spanned a period of more than 40 years, are her enduring and impressive legacy to all of us as well as to future generations of scholars. Her work ranged from her first book in 1947 on the British Commonwealth to numerous other books, articles and essays. *The Governments of Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union,*