

CHANGING AFRICA OUTDATES NEW BOOK FROM BEGINNING

There is a growing world interest in Africana. African studies are being added to the curricula of universities and new courses designed.

Organizations are busy arranging talks, discussions and seminars on aspects of African affairs. Publishing houses are producing more and more books about Africa, some written by African authors.

There is undoubtedly a new and welcome move to present Africa and the Africans to the world.

A recent publication in the field of Africana is "The New Africanas" (Paul Hamlyn \$7), a compendium written by fifty correspondents of Reuters News Agency and edited by Sidney Taylor.

It is, in a sense, a "Who's Who" in Africa. It provides information about prominent Africans and gives valuable information in condensed form about the countries of Africa.

Although the continent is made up of 50 countries, only thirty-three African nations are covered, the reason being that these are the nations which have won independence over the past ten years.

These are the six hundred African leaders "who have secured independence" for Africa.

Historically, this is inaccurate; the men described in this book are in fact those who assumed leadership when these countries emerged into independence, although a few are involved in the ground work.

Secondly, owing to the wave of military coups and assassinations which have occurred in Africa, some information is out of date; likewise some of the personalities featured are no longer in power.

Since there have been no less than fourteen military coups in Africa perhaps this is understandable.

Perhaps the best indication of whom the editors prefer is the number of words devoted to any particular person. Hence Mr. Arthur Wina, former up-and-coming minister

of finance in Zambia, gets about three times as much space as the man who last August defeated him in the UNIP elections, Mr. Elijah Mudenda.

Mr. Wina is called one of "UNIP's foremost intellectuals and one of the government's leading negotiators," while the man who negotiated him out of office is dismissed as a "technocrat."

Fortune has not always favored the selectors, as shown by Sierra Leone, but there are times when judgement also seems at fault. Normal political vision should have seen that Mohammad Ibrahim Egal the present prime minister of Somalia and excluded from the book, had some chance of success in his political future.

Not that some of the bets have not been hedged. Former President Nkrumah of Ghana dominates the Ghanaian section while Henry Chipembere, leader of the exiled former ministers of Dr. Banda's Malawi, is accorded greater rank than Mr. Aleke Banada, the country's present number two.

In Kenya the forecasting is even more difficult. Oginga Odinga, for several years the country's vice-president and now leader of the opposition, appears well down the list. But he is no worse off than the ministers, all of whom are a bad second to President Kenyatta. (All Mau Mau leaders are excluded.)

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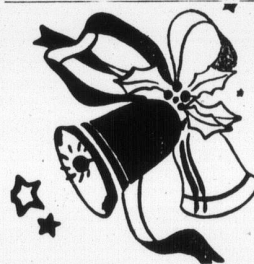
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