CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS
AND THEIR LEGAL EFFECTS

General Observations

4.1. Since their earliest contacts with Africa, Europeans have turned out hundreds of thousands of articles, diaries, monographs, pamphlets and other topical works about that Continent, its cultural heritage, its peoples and their difficult but persistent struggle in search of security. And yet knowledge about Africa in certain European circles remains minimal; such interest as there is, on occasions, amounts to no less than inexcusable ignorance. The malaise stems from either apathy or a distortion of facts and figures.

Notwithstanding the gigantic strides taken by the information media since the turn of the century, the quality of information handed out about Africa and Africans remains sadly stagnant. There is no doubt that the quality of information on Africa must be up-graded if it is to serve any useful purpose within the context of present day developments.

The United Nations, together with its Specialised Agencies, has done, and is still doing a great deal in disseminating correct information about the Continent of Africa. But much more remains to be done in this sphere than has been achieved to-date. One has often been puzzled by the apparent lack of interest on the part of young African intellectuals south of the Sahara. In the past, it was enough for the young African graduates from Oxford or Cambridge invariably at the completion of their studies to make a triumphant return home and to a royal welcome from friends and relatives. These, often became so gratified with, and complacent about their initial attainments that no more self-improvement was considered relevant to their post-graduate lives. The Sorbonne, like its two counterparts on the other side of the channel, has also been the home of learning for a crop of Africans who, upon being released after graduation, returned home merely to qualify for the erstwhile envied status of "citoyen français." That, in those days required, without more, the acquisition of a massive air of self-importance.

E. C. Djamson, The Dynamics of Euro-African Co-operation
© Martinus Nijhoff. The Hague, Netherlands 1976
conspicuously divorced from the stark realities of their immediate environs. The era under review, however, did produce its great ones as well. These were the Nkrumahs, the Kenyattas, the Nyereres and the Senghors.

Today, as never before, Africa south of the Sahara has become the home of stately seats of learning renowned for their beauty and the cosiness of undergraduate life. These universities turn out annually, tens of thousands of graduates in the sciences and humanities. The real tragedy of our times can only be eradicated if the new talents acquired by our young graduates are mobilised and directed to productive targets in the overall interest of the fatherland. The new African must be self-reliant, dedicated and intent on reversing the iniquities of the past. It is to this new crop of young men and women of Africa and their counterparts the world over that this Chapter is particularly addressed.

4.2 It must perhaps be counted good fortune that the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries have been invited to the negotiating table by the European Economic Community at a time remarkable for change and excitement. The Community has of late been faced with internal problems, notably, the contention by Great Britain that its membership of the Community could be renegotiated. The leadership problems of West Germany, Belgium and possibly, France after Pompidou have also aggravated these internal problems. To this period, also belongs the Energy Crisis, the global effects of which still hang over the industrialised and developing countries in varying degrees. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it would appear that the real problem for the Community is not so much one of the harmonisation of the national laws of its Member States in so far as they are in conflict with the internal rules and regulations of the Community. It will be suggested that Europe’s real problem is one of political integration and how an integrated Europe might address itself to the Third World. Should a politically integrated Europe opt for a multilateral and global approach which accords to all the developing countries equality of treatment? Alternatively, should Europe adopt a policy of concentration towards the contiguous Third World at the expense of the countries of the Far-East and South America? These are pertinent questions which cannot be glossed over by the present Partners at the negotiating table. Whatever line of action is advocated by the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries would be closely studied and analysed by those Third World countries which are neither Associated States nor “Associables”. The African States must therefore resist any modus vivendi which is based on a teaming up with Europe against the rest of the Third World. Therefore, the concept of