J. A. Osei, with an annotation by Immanuel R. Harisch¹

7 My Impression of the German Democratic Republic [Life Itself Exposes Lies]²

Editor's note

J. A. Osei's report of his sojourn in the GDR, which is fully reproduced below, is to be found in J. A. Osei to Heinz Deutschland, Accra, July 22, 1964, SAPMO-BArch, DY 79/615. The original title Osei had chosen for his report – "My impression of the German Democratic Republic" – was crossed out by one (anonymous) member of the editorial board of the journal *Correspondence* and changed to "Life itself exposes lies". Ultimately, Osei's contribution was printed in *Correspondence* under the title "Reality exposes lies" without, to my knowledge, any further queries by the editorial board.³ *Correspondence* was the quarterly bulletin of the Faculty for Foreign Students⁴ at the Bernau college. From 1964 to 1966 it was edited and published in both English and French by the staff of the faculty, with the editorial team usually consisting of six to eight members. It was sent to all alumni of the trade union college and was "meant to report on your and our

¹ I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer as well as my colleagues and co-editors Eric Burton and Marcia C. Schenck for their encouragement and valuable comments on this annotation. My gratitude also goes to Esther Asenso-Agyemang from the University of Legon for discussing Osei's letters and for help in obtaining literature on the Ghana TUC, and to Nana Osei-Opare for sharing his manuscript on workers' discontent in Ghana with me.

² The undertaking to have African and Asian alumni write about their experiences in East Germany was linked to the fifteenth anniversary of the GDR. In June 1964, the Institute for Foreign Students (*Ausländerinstitut*) of the FDGB's trade union college Fritz Heckert in Bernau, close to Berlin (see Angermann, this volume), had actively contacted 42 alumni of the first three courses and asked them to send back a paper on the topic "I lived and studied 18 months in the GDR". Twenty-four former students, among them Osei, responded to the call. In 1964, a selected number of them were published in the third issue of *Correspondence* in both English and French. See Heinz Deutschland to Karl Kampfert, n. d. [1964], Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, Berlin (henceforth: SAPMO-BArch), DY 79/403.

³ See J. A. Osei, "Reality exposes lies," Correspondence. Informationsbulletin Nr. 3 der Fakultät für Ausländerstudium an der Hochschule der Deutschen Gewerkschaften "Fritz Heckert" Bernau (1964).

⁴ Also commonly referred to as Institute for Foreign Students.

activities. It is meant to convey aid and instructions to assist you in your further studies and to tighten the bonds of friendship connecting us forever."5

In order to give our readers an impression of the original source, Osei's report is reproduced here without corrections. Mistakes are not indicated with [sic!] so as to facilitate a smoother reading. I believe that the handwritten comments by the East German members of the editorial board of Correspondence, which are marked in the letter by square brackets and strikethrough, offer interesting insights into what the editorial board in the GDR deemed unacceptable and where they polished phrases for the final version.

In September, 1961 the Trade Union Congress of Ghana⁶ sent a number of students to be trained in the College of the Confederation of Free German Trade Un-

⁵ See "Editorial," Correspondence Informationsbulletin Nr. 1 der Fakultät für Ausländerstudium an der Hochschule der Deutschen Gewerkschaften "Fritz Heckert" Bernau (1964), 3. Digital copy in the possession of Immanuel R. Harisch. I thank the former director of the Institute for Foreign Students, Heinz Deutschland, for allowing me to digitize several issues of Correspondence.

⁶ The predecessor of the Ghana TUC was founded in 1943 under the name of the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress (GCTUC) and was modeled after British industrial relations. In 1950, during the early struggle for self-government, the GCTUC organized a general strike which decisively shaped the outcome of the campaign for the benefit of the Convention People's Party (CPP) led by Kwame Nkrumah. During the 1950s, however, the CPP joined the British colonial office in the crusade against left-wing, Marxist trade unionists who sought to establish contact to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). Internationally, the GCTUC remained in the Western, anticommunist camp of the rivalrous International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Accra was host to one of the two ICFTU informational centers on the African continent as well as to the ICFTU's first African Regional Conference. With the passing of the Industrial Relations Act (IRA) in parliament in 1958, however, the Ghana TUC prepared the ground for its disaffiliation from the ICFTU in 1959 and was reorganized, now to consist of 16 industrial unions the Timber & Woodworkers' Union, of which J. A. Osei was deputy general secretary after his return from the GDR, being one of them. The changes due to the IRA, criticized by the ICFTU and International Labour Organization (ILO), were far-reaching: to be a member of the Ghana TUC became obligatory for workers; Ghana's industrial unions had to affiliate with the TUC central in Accra, where the TUC had built a new headquarters with money lent from the CPP government; the "check-off" system was introduced, which allowed the companies to deduct membership fees from the workers' salary; and the right to strike was severely curtailed. The Ghana TUC general secretary was a minister of the CPP government at the same time. As a result, the Ghana TUC became severely restricted in its agency, although it profited from a strong financial and organizational base after the integration into the CPP's political machine. See Douglas G. Anglin, "Ghana, the West, and the Soviet Union," The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science / Revue Canadienne d'Economique et de Science Politique 24 (1958): 161, 164; Imanuel Geiss, Gewerkschaften in Afrika (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1965), 197-

ions in Bernau/Berlin. I happened to be one of the luckiest chaps selected for this course.⁷ The time of our journey coincided with the closing down of the border between the East and West Berlin which happened on 13th August, 1961. [i. e. the erection of the antifascist protection wall].

It is an admitted fact that any attempt by any state to obstruct capitalist intrigues and wicked machinations, designed to undermine the progress and development of that state, is always repulsed by the capitalist press with vile and slanderous propaganda. Immediately after the closing down of this border, an attempt to safeguard the G.D.R.'s economy, the newspapers of the Western Al-

198; Ioan Davies, *African Trade Unions* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966), 174–180; John Kraus, "The Political Economy of Industrial Relations in Ghana," in Industrial Relations in Africa, ed. Ukandi G. Damachi, Dieter H. Seibel, and Lester Trachtman (London: Macmillan, 1979), 132; Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Pan-African Trade Unionism: Unity and Discord," *Transafrican Journal of History* 15 (1986): 182; Peter Blay Arthiabah and Harry Tham Mbiah, *Half a Century of Toil, Trouble and Progress: The History of the Trades Union Congress of Ghana 1939 – 1995* (Accra: Gold-Type Publications, 1995), 55–98; Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society. The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 432–438; Naaborko Sackeyfio-Lenoch, "The Ghana Trades Union Congress and the Politics of International Labor Alliances, 1957–1971," *International Review of Social History* 62 (2017): 194, 203, 213.

7 During his stay in the GDR, Osei acted as leader of the 13-person Ghanaian delegation, which was delegated by the Ghana TUC. Following a cooperation agreement with the East German national trade union federation Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (FDGB), the Ghana TUC dispatched between 10 and 15 students to study on each course at the trade union college in Bernau. Prior to his stay abroad, Osei had completed 10 years of primary and secondary schooling. At college in the GDR, the Ghanaian unionist graduated from an 18-months long-term course, taking political-ideological subjects such as "The socialist world system," "The revolutionary international workers' movement," "The national liberation movement" and "Inquiries into problems of socialist economics." The program was complemented by more practical lessons on "Problems of trade union organization" as well as by a polytechnic education and internships in GDR companies, an accordance with the students' interests. See "Jahresarbeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 1.9. Bis 31.12.1961," n. d. [January 1962], SAPMO-BArch, DY 79/83; "Lehrplan des 3. afro-asiatischen Lehrgangs 1962/63, "n. d. [1962], SAPMO-BArch, DY 79/271. For the traineeships see e.g. "Zur Auswertung des praktischen Einsatzes vom 12. – 26. Januar 1963," February 7, 1963, SAPMO-BArch, DY 79/2500, among others; for an analysis of the third course (1961-63) at the college, consult Eric Angermann, "'Ihr Gehört Auch Zur Avantgarde': Afrikanische Gewerkschafter an der FDGB-Hochschule Fritz Heckert (1961-1963)" (Master's thesis, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, 2018) and Chapter Two "Where do Correct Ideas Come From? The FDGB Institute for Foreign Students and the Coming of the Sino-Soviet Split" in George Bodie, "Global GDR? Sovereignty, Legitimacy and Decolonization in the German Democratic Republic, 1960 – 1989" (PhD diss., University College London, 2019). For a micro-historical analysis of African students' agency at the college and their attempts to set up an independent committee, see Angermann's chapter in this volume.

lies carried false news perpetrated against the Sovereign State of the German Democratic Republic. One of such news was captioned: "Running from Hell to Heaven." This news gave horrible account of the G.D.R. as how the inhabitants were not free and how they could not get food sufficiently to feed themselves and their families, and therefore were escaping from East Berlin to the West and so on and so forth. Really, it was only the person who was determined in purpose who could defy those wicked propaganda to go to East Germany at that moment.

Determined as we were to train and harden ourselves to oust the final remains of capitalism from our new state of Ghana⁸ we were not disturbed at all by these news. Finally, therefore, on 6th September, 1961 we flew from the Accra International Airport to for Democratic Berlin and to hear, see and learn for ourselves what the European Capitalists had been saying of that country.

⁸ Osei's witty writing style and his socialist rhetoric were certainly shaped both by his stay in the GDR and by the socialist modernization project that Ghana's CPP, led by Kwame Nkrumah, was undertaking at the time of writing. That Osei strongly identified with the CPP's aims and policies becomes evident in his personal correspondence with the faculty's staff. See the correspondence between Osei and the director of the Institute for Foreign Students, Heinz Deutschland, in the signatures SAPMO-BArch, DY 79/615, DY 79/614, DY 79/615, DY 79/616 and DY 79/617, which contain thousands of letters between the mainly African alumni of the college and the institute's employees. Historian Sara Pugach has noted that these letters present crucial insights into the lifeworlds of the returning students in their home contexts. See Sara Pugach, "African Students in Cold War Leipzig: Using University Archives to Recover a Forgotten History," in Sources and Methods for African History and Culture: Essays in Honour of Adam Jones, ed. Geert Castryck et al. (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2016), 551-552. Works which have made use of these letters are Angermann, "Ihr Gehört auch zur Avantgarde" and Immanuel R. Harisch, "'Mit Gewerkschaftlichem Gruß!' Afrikanische GewerkschafterInnen an der FDGB-Gewerkschaftshochschule Fritz Heckert in der DDR," Stichproben. Vienna Journal of African Studies 18 (2018). For a look on the CPP's mobilization strategies for the "labouring masses towards work and happiness", see Kate Skinner, "Who Knew the Minds of the People? Specialist Knowledge and Developmentalist Authoritarianism in Postcolonial Ghana," The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 39 (2011). A recent panorama on the Nkrumah years can be found in Kwame Nkrumah 1909 - 1972: A Controversial African Visionary, ed. Bea Lundt and Christoph Marx (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016). For Ghana's relations with the USSR during the Nkrumah years, see Nana Osei-Opare, "Uneasy Comrades: Postcolonial Statecraft, Race, and Citizenship, Ghana-Soviet Relations, 1957-1966," Journal of West African History 5 (2019): 85-111; on workers' discontent with the CPP and the Ghana TUC, see Nana Osei-Opare, "'If You Trouble a Hungry Snake, You Will Force It to Bite You': Rethinking Archival Pessimism, Worker Discontent, and Petition Writing in Ghana, 1957–66," Journal of African History (forthcoming).

First Lie Nailed Down:

The Polish two engined plane which took us from Amsterdam touched the beautiful Berlin Schönefeld Airport at exactly 4.30 p. m. We were in a different country with different people with different language. Contrary to our expectations a member of the Airport Unit of the People's Police of the G.D.R., who could not speak English approached us and by his action seemed to ask as to whether he could help us. He was smart and neat, wearing a cheerful countenance which depicted his kindness. This gentle Officer led us through all the custom formalities without any of my Comrades encountering any inconveniences.

Just as we could [had] finish[ed] with the Airport and Custom Officials, a 6 foot tall and well built man arrived at the Airport and hastily came to us. He introduced himself as Comrade Horst Thomas, a lecturer of the Fritz Heckert College, where we were to go and that he was to be our guide. The simple but impressive receptions accorded [to] us by Comrade Thomas and the Airport Authorities were quite sufficient to disbelieve the lies told in the Western Press about the G.D.R.

At the College

After some minutes drive we arrived at the "Fritz Heckert Institute" [College]. Contrary to the assertion that the College is a "Concentration Camp" I found to my amazement magnificent buildings with beautiful surroundings; this environment alone is quite sufficient to satisfy the whims of any ambitious student.¹⁰

⁹ Unfortunately, I was unable to retrieve this particular report, allegedly from a media outlet in a Western capitalist country.

¹⁰ Since the Weimar Republic, the German Trade Union College (*Hochschule der Deutschen Gewerkschaften*) Fritz Heckert offered various courses for German trade unionists in Bernau, a suburb of Berlin. The college, which was inaugurated in 1930, was designed by the Swiss architect Hannes Meyer, director of the *Bauhaus* in Dessau. In 1933, the national socialists converted the school into a training center for fascist leaders (*Reichsführerschule*). From 1947 onward, the newly founded FDGB held seminars in the Soviet occupation zone. After the foundation of the GDR in 1949 and under the directorship of anti-fascist trade unionist Hermann Duncker, the college expanded to train union functionaries of the FDGB. In 1960, the Institute for Foreign Students was moved from Leipzig-Leutzsch to the site of the Bernau college where new facilities had been constructed and additional staff was hired. See Alfred Förster, "Zur Geschichte der Gewerkschafts-Schule in Bernau (1928–90)," in *Der Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund. Seine Rechte und Leistungen. Tatsachen, Erfahrungen, Standpunkte*, ed. Horst Bednarek, Harald Bühl, and Werner Koch (Berlin: Verlag am Park, 2006).

In the Institute's Dining Room both the Whites and the Blacks dined together. 11 The mixture of both Whites and Blacks in such a room reminds one of the keyboard of a piano. This completely relieved us of any fear that haunted our minds because of those obnoxious publications about the G.D.R.¹²

After seeing all these and many more I said to myself that "HELL" is an imaginary place of permanent torment of fire, (with apology to the Bible) and if one is to believe that the G.D.R. is a "HELL", as indicated by the Western Press, then to me Hell is a comfortable and happier place to live.

¹¹ As Yevette Richards has shown for the ICFTU's own trade union college, the African Labour College in Uganda's capital Kampala, the fact that a trade union college's dining room like the one in Bernau was shared by black and white students and staff was by no means universal in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the early period of the ICFTU college, the white personnel dined in the main dining hall of Kampala's exclusive Imperial Hotel while the black students, the Kenyan deputy principal Odero-Jowi, and the black U.S.-American teacher McCray sat at tables in another hall, close to the kitchen. In January 1959, when two African students were refused entry to the main dining hall and the white racist hotel management threatened them with expulsion, the students collectively refused to eat and asked for airline tickets home. They fiercely criticized the hypocritical ICFTU, which campaigned for "free trade unionism" and "democracy." See Yevette Richards, Maida Springer: Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 154.

¹² In his report, Osei omits the fact that racist incidents did repeatedly happen in the socialist states of Europe and the USSR in the early 1960s. For scholarly accounts, see, for example, Ilona Schleicher, "FDGB-Offensive in Westafrika. Der Gewerkschaftsbund im Jahr Afrikas," in Engagiert für Afrika. Die DDR und Afrika II, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden, Ilona Schleicher, and Hans-Georg Schleicher (Münster: Lit, 1994), 89-90; Sara Pugach, "African Students and the Politics of Race and Gender in the German Democratic Republic," in Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World, ed. Quinn Slobodian (New York: Berghahn, 2015); Young-sun Hong, Cold War Germany, the Third World, and the Global Humanitarian Regime (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Daniel Branch, "Political Traffic: Kenyan Students in Eastern and Central Europe, 1958 - 69," Journal of Contemporary History 53 (2018); Maxim Matusevich, "Expanding the Boundaries of the Black Atlantic: African Students as Soviet Moderns," Ab Imperio 2012 (2012); Julie Hessler, "Death of an African Student in Moscow," Cahiers Du Monde Russe 47 (2006). Moreover, as leader of the Ghanaian delegation during his stay, Osei regularly attended the council of the delegations' leaders (Rat der Delegationsleiter), where the African delegates discussed xenophobic behavior of some shopkeepers in Bernau or anonymous letters sent to East German women telling them not to engage with the African students. See "Protokoll der Sitzung des Rates der Delegationsleiter am 10. April 1962", n. d. [April 1962], SAPMO-BArch, DY 79/2500. For the council of delegation leaders' meetings, see also the chapter by Angermann in this volume.

Care for the Foreign Students

All Foreign Students have the same right as the German students in the College. Every Foreign Student receives for every month, a stipend of 400 Deutsch [German Marks and it is made as follows: 150 D. M. for food and 250 D. M. for books and other minor expenses.

Major meals are served 3 times a day and in addition intermediate meals are served at every 10 a. m. between breakfast and lunch at 3 p. m. between lunch and supper.

Freedom of Movement

All foreigners, respectable of their color or creed, are free to move everywhere and see anything as any other German citizen. As students, who were willing to learn and know everything, we joined German families at week-ends in their homes. We found to our amazement that every average family has sufficient food to feed upon. They live in spacious flats at very low rentage.

The German Democratic Republic has no unemployment questions to solve. All and sundry work to earn a decent living. 13 I was mostly impressed to see graduated young women engineers in the "Sachsenwerk" Electric Motor Factory in Dresden. Their agile fingers doing and undoing parts on electric motors are delightful to the eye to watch.14

¹³ The idyllic picture Osei painted of the East German workers can be brought into dialogue with the concept of relative deprivation - "the idea that how one judges one's own situation and circumstances depends on the person or group to whom or to which one is comparing oneself." See Andrew I. Port, "'Awkward Encounters': East German Relations with the Third-World 'Other'," German History 35 (2017): 630. A 1962 report, written by two FDGB labor advisors who were dispatched to the Ghana TUC for eight months in order to act as Ghana TUC general secretary John K. Tettegah's right-hand men, stated that 65% of the workers and 36% of white-collar workers earned a salary below the minimum subsistence level as defined by the Ghanaian government. See "Bericht über einige Fragen der Entwicklung Ghanas und des Ghana TUC", Berlin, 11.1.1962, 54, SAPMO-BArch, DY 34/3475. Richard Jeffries has examined the declining real wages for Ghanaian railwaymen in detail; see Richard Jeffries, Class, Power and Ideology in Ghana: The Railwaymen of Sekondi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). To summarize, in Imanuel Geiss' words, the austerity measures introduced by the CPP in 1961 made the toiling masses suffer. See Geiss, Gewerkschaften in Afrika, 195.

¹⁴ Osei's admiration for the female engineers – expressed in the above paragraph with an erotic and somewhat belittling undertone - paralleled the CPP's progressive policies with regard to women in the Nkrumah years. Female traders had been a crucial pillar of support for Nkrumah's

Socialist Construction

In that modern model city of Eisenhuttenstadt¹⁵, which I call the city of "Socialism", we were highly impressed to see how every worker works willingly, freely and diligently without any emotion. Prior to the Second World War this city which is situated in a heart of a thick forest, did not exist. After the war the G.D.R. workers under the banner of the Socialist Unity PARTY built this industrial city with its most modern Steel Factory. The city is therefore the workers city. What I gathered from this city of Eisenhuttenstadt is the oneness of purpose with which the workers work and live. Workers families, previously unknown to one another, are joined together in a common alliance which is the mood of production. They meet in club houses to discuss how best they can produce and to produce abundantly to enable them to create more to improve their own living condition. "Each worker is not for himself and gold [god] for them all" as it is said in the Capitalist countries but rather every worker in this Steel Factory is his brother's keeper. This means that the concern of one worker is the concern of all workers. They are knitted together by the steel they produce and "behold how good and how pleasant it is for workers to live together in Socialism".16

CPP during the anti-colonial struggle and since then had contributed considerably to its success through their financial and organizational efforts. During the CPP's rule, women entered institutions of higher learning in increasing numbers and soon gained access to male-dominated domains such as aviation and engineering. See Edzodzinam Tsikata, "Women's Political Organisations 1951–1987," in *The State, Development and Politics in Ghana*, ed. Emmanuel Hansen and Kwame A. Ninsin, (London: Codesria, 1989), 77; June Milne, *Kwame Nkrumah – a Biography* (London: Panaf Books, 2006), 109.

¹⁵ The East German model city of modernity, Eisenhüttenstadt (literally "ironworks city" in German, from 1953 to 1961 named Stalinstadt), which Osei called the "city of 'Socialism,'", was designed on the drawing board. It was founded in 1950 in order to provide the workers of the nearby steelworks with housing. Located in the state of Brandenburg close to the Polish border, the city had roughly 25,000 inhabitants by 1960.

¹⁶ Osei's idea of workers' unity is guided by a productionist language echoing the CPP's understanding of labor. Work was meant to "unite Ghanaians of all walks of life in the party-led and party-defined nation-building project." See Jeffrey S. Ahlman, *Living with Nkrumahism: Nation, State, and Pan-Africanism in Ghana* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2017), 116.

Seeing is Believing

We had the pleasure to visit the port of Rostock. This is the shipping port of the G.D.R. with its modern Harbour. It has also a fishing harbour attached and employs about 30,000 workers. The Workers of the German Democratic Republic have every cause to be happy. The Government and the people chose the socialist order of living and they are enjoying the fruits of their toils and sacrifices.

Many Holiday and Convalescent Homes are built for the workers and their families. After every 12 continuous months' work a worker chooses one of these Holiday Homes where to relax for just 30 D. Marks for the days of his leave. All kinds of entertainments and modern clinics as well as Post Offices are attached to each home. We had the opportunity of visiting and staying in some of these Homes; Klink-on the-Müritz near Waren in the region of Neubrandenburg and also in Friedrichsroda in the Thuringen Forest in the region of Erfurt.

We had [also] trips also to Heringdorf at the Baltic Sea near the Polish border. There we met thousands of workers and their families from many Socialist countries enjoying their holidays together with the G.D.R. workers.¹⁷

Our trip also took us to the Spreewald in the District of Cottbus. This is one of the most interesting places for tourist's attraction. The cruise on the long, narrow, winding stream offers a frolic spree [for] fine recreation. And least I forget: The voyage on the Muritz Lake through series of canals to the village of Plau cannot be short of enjoyment. These and many others are reserved for the workers

¹⁷ Here Osei affirms the official script of socialist internationalism, the idea of one socialist community made up of socialist brother countries. With regard to the recreational sphere, the FDGB's holiday service (see note below) aimed at providing its members with affordable enjoyment as a constitutive part of its mission to raise overall productivity. In Ghana, the CPP perceived the trade unions as the vehicle of the government's productionist dreams within the discourses of development and progress. The TUC also engaged in a number of socio-economic activities for its members, like workers' recreational centers with sports facilities, cinemas and bars, vegetable farms, housing projects, and two professional dance bands "for the entertainment of workers in compliance with the Convention People [sic!] Party's slogan of 'WORK AND HAPPINESS'." See Arthiabah and Mbiah, *Half a Century of Toil, Trouble and Progress*, 127–37. While Ghanaian workers, grosso modo, could secure some social and security benefits, real wages, however, stagnated and the CPP government cracked down on the right to strike and to protest in the early 1960s, most prominently after the 1961 strike. See Osei-Opare, "'If you trouble a hungry snake," 36, and Jeffries, *Class, Power and Ideology in Ghana*, 71–101. See also footnote 13.

and [the] people of the G.D.R. for their enjoyment.¹⁸ Who then can say that the citizens of the G.D.R. are not free? Can there be any other freedom and liberty more than these? Away then! Mr. Capitalist, with your intrigues and wicked machinations. We have seen and we bear testimony of the good things in the German Democratic Republic.

"Some people went to the G.D.R. to sit and stink; But we went there to sit and think."

Respect of Colour

The people of the German Democratic Republic are kind and loving. Wherever we went during our 18 months' stay, either in groups or in singles, either officially or privately, we were accorded with warm reception and hospitality.

In the drinking bars, restaurants and in the dancing rooms too, the Black is as well welcome as the White. Unlike the capitalist countries in Europe, people of all races are regarded as equal.

Peace Loving

The German Democratic Republic is a peace-loving country. The Government and people of this country have endured series of provocations from the people of West Germany without reiteration. This patience of the people of the G.D.R. has saved the whole world and mankind from what would had flared up to another dangerous World War. One could recollect the cold murder of the G.D.R. soldiers on the Jerusalem Strasse on the Border in East Berlin [to West] and other places.¹⁹ The killing of the Prince of Sarajavo [Sarajevo] in 1914 kindled

¹⁸ The FDGB, as the umbrella organization of all trade unions in the GDR, also played a crucial social and cultural role. The FDGB's Feriendienst (holiday service) provided roughly half of the GDR's population with recreational facilities for their holidays, like the holiday villages in Waren-Klink at Lake Müritz. A series of canals connects Lake Müritz with Lake Plauen with the village Plau on its Western shore. See Fritz Rösel, "Der Feriendienst des FDGB," in Der Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund. Seine Rechte und Leistungen. Tatsachen, Erfahrungen, Standpunkte, ed. Horst Bednarek, Harald Bühl, and Werner Koch (Berlin: Verlag am Park, 2006); Bodie, "Global GDR?," 45-48.

¹⁹ Here Osei is probably referring to the killing of GDR soldier Reinhold Huhn at the Berlin Wall in June 1962. Huhn was patrolling the German-German border in the center of Berlin. From the West Berlin side, the frequent border trespasser (Grenzgänger) Rudolf Müller and his aides dug a tunnel to a cellar in East Berlin with the aim to bring Müller's wife, their two children, and his

the first World War and would not the killing of more people by another people justify a Great War? But the G.D.R. Government bore these provocations cooly and collectedly for the interest of mankind. This alone is a living testimony that the Communist detests war.

Friendliness

The large number of German Students of the College of the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions and friends and families from many parts of the country who saw us off on Sunday March 24th, 1963 at the Berlin Schönefeld Airport, wailing and weeping because of the friends they would perhaps see no more is a good sign of the friendliness of the people of the German Democratic Republic.

I have never stop[ped] recollecting the happy days I had in this wonderful country and I have every ambition to visit this country in the near future to pay homage to my Alma Mater and to meet also friends and families of auld langsyne.

I have every hope that the German Democratic Republic will grow in strength and might to accomplish its ultimate task of building complete socialism where continuous abundance will flow for the people and their dependents and where greed, avarice, fraud and exploitation will never exist.

I. A. Osei

Deputy General Secretary Timber & Woodworkers Union of T. U. C. (Ghana)

sister-in-law to West Berlin. After Müller had picked up his family at a meeting point, the group was examined by Huhn on their way to the entrance of the tunnel. Müller pulled a pistol and shot Huhn in the chest. Huhn died and Müller's family managed to escape. In the Federal Republic, Müller denied that he had shot Huhn; the West German court closed the investigation in November 1962. The case was reopened after German reunification in 1996 and Müller confessed to shooting Huhn. Müller was sentenced for involuntary manslaughter in self-defense, which, was changed to homicide upon appeal at the Federal Court in 2000. See Hans-Hermann Hertle and Maria Nooke, *Die Todesopfer an der Berliner Mauer 1961–1989. Ein Biographisches Handbuch* (Berlin: Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam und der Stiftung Berliner Mauer, 2009) and Dietmar Arnold and Rudolf Müller, *Kein Licht am Ende des Tunnels. Berlin 1962. Die tragische Flucht einer Familie* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2018).

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