



AFRICA in Today's World

By CHARLES I. WEST, M.D.

A CENTURY-OLD DREAM to connect Africa to Europe by a tunnel under the Straits of Gibraltar has been revived with the creation of a joint Spanish-Moroccan commission to investigate the feasibility of such a scheme.

Spanish and Moroccan ministers discussed the project in recent official conferences. Agreements to proceed with preliminary plans were signed several months ago. A center for permanent technical studies has now been set up under the Moroccan finance ministry. Important European financial groups are said to be interested in the scheme as a long-term venture.

Construction of a tunnel across the 18-mile gap between the two continents reportedly offers no more technical difficulties than the one to be built under the English Channel and proponents claim it would be less costly.

Prime financial backers of the project estimate that its cost would be paid off in 20 years through toll charges on motor car and railway traffic for the approximate 15-minute crossing. It undoubtedly would increase tourist, as well as freight, traffic to an enormous degree.

EMERGENCE OF AFRICA as "the continent of the future" probably had a lot to do with revival of the idea to "heal" the geological rupture in the earth's crust which joined the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea centuries ago. (According to Greek mythology, it was Hercules who tore the continents apart as one of his twelve "labors".)

Although the Arab countries of North Africa, together with Spain, would be the principal beneficiaries of the proposed tunnel, its long-range effect on the economy of all Africa cannot be discounted. The Common Market countries of Europe also would derive considerable benefit from such a project.

First Spanish efforts to launch a "Eurafrica" tunnel project date back to the 1860s but nothing much happened for some 60 years. In 1918, a comprehensive blueprint was drawn up by a Spanish engineer which placed the estimated cost of the tunnel at about \$20 million.

A PROPOSED ROUTE from Tangier in Northwest Morocco, west of the Straits, to Punte Valdevaqueras, Spain, included about 30 miles of tunnel, with 20 under water. Alternate routes were from Punta Al Boassa, east of Tangier, to Bolonia, Spain, (35 miles, more than half under water). These proposals failed for lack of financial backing.

King Alfonso of Spain named a commission to study new proposals in 1927 but the Spanish Civil War killed that venture after it was concluded that the best plan would be to build an 18 mile tunnel from Tarifa to a point near Tangier. This plan called for a tube 250 feet under

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EDITORIAL

A Project for 1965

THE YEAR 1964 was a momentous year for the colored people of the world, particularly those living in the United States of America.

Several new predominantly Negro nations emerged in Africa, the latest being Kenya on Dec. 14, and 35 independent African countries are now represented in the United Nations.

But the most significant development came right here in our own country when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Enactment of this latter-day "emancipation proclamation", together with President Johnson's almost total annihilation of Sen. Barry Goldwater, darling of the white supremacy advocates, gave new hope to millions of long-suffering American Negroes.

Proper and effective implementation of the new law will be one of the big jobs facing the water with a roadway and a double-track railway capable of handling 40 trains daily.

After the Civil War, it was proposed to build a 15-mile bridge over the straits between Valdevaqueras and a point east of Tangier for both road and rail traffic, but this plan was deemed impractical by most engineers. A tunnel now seems to be the logical solution for repairing the damage wrought by the legendary Hercules.

federal government and civil rights organizations in 1965. This may not come easily in some areas, particularly in the deep south, where the pattern of resistance has been established in recent decisions by U.S. Judges Sidney Mize and William Cox and U.S. Commissioner Esther Carter.

When Miss Carter stunned the Justice Department by freeing the 21 Mississippians implicated in the Philadelphia civil rights murders, government lawyers immediately moved to have Judge Cox convene a grand jury so they could seek indictments against the accused conspirators. When considerable time passed without anything happening, the government reminded Judge Cox of its request. "Oh, yes," Judge Cox replied, "I'll have to do something about that—but I don't expect it will be soon."

Here in Nevada, the Negro must press hard for meaningful civil rights legislation on the state level to supplement the federal law. This should be our No. 1 project in the early part of 1965. Resistance is expected, but we have a powerful ally in Gov. Grant Sawyer, who has pledged a strong appeal to the legislature for enactment of a realistic Nevada civil rights law.

It would be a good idea to start making your views known to our Southern Nevada legislators RIGHT NOW.

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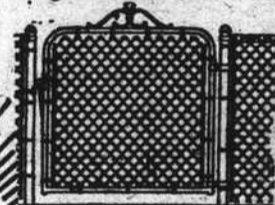
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