

## BIOS IN AFRICA

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A Preparatory Committee for the formation of a Biopolitics International Organisation Ghana Chapter, has been instituted with an interesting response. We are grateful to Dr. Vlavianos-Arvanitis for this laudable idea and pray that it will grow in strength in Africa, other developing countries, and worldwide.

Biopolitics is one of the greatest things that human beings can use to sustain what God has given us - bios (life). It is difficult to discuss bios in Africa because of the many different political arrangements. Therefore, we need to refer to the national levels.

Fortunately in Ghana, measures are being taken to give a new lease of life through programmes to improve the environment, nutrition, health and educational needs of the people. On the health front, we have the Primary Health Care programme (PHC) under which it is expected there should be good health for all by the year 2000. Under this programme, intensive efforts are being made to eradicate communicable diseases like tuberculosis, and water-borne diseases such as guinea-worms and bilharzia. Closely-linked with the above measures, which cater more to adults, is the move under which we have the inoculation of children against what are commonly known as the "six killer diseases". In Africa, inoculation is normally carried out on Independence Day, March 6, and other public holidays, free of charge.

Also vigorously pursued is an Environmental Protection Programme which has become very important because of the threat of dumping toxic waste in developing countries. A special "Task Force" has been set up to undertake this assignment and to police our continental shelf to ensure no such wastes are dumped around our coasts. The Task Force has already embarked on a public education programme and fishermen are being put on the alert to report any violations.

Currently, in almost every village, workshops for masonry, carpentry, home science, crafts etc. have been constructed. Threats to the environment are endangering bios and since local problems cross national boundaries, I call on all governments to co-operate in the detection of the dumping of such wastes.

Today, toxic chemicals, nuclear and acid rain contamination, threaten health. They are endangering mankind and the environment, particularly in Africa. More than ever before, it has become imperative to human survival and progress that our resources be used in a sustainable manner so as to enhance the well-being of our people.

With concern to education in Ghana, more emphasis is being placed on the continuation of the Junior Secondary School Programme. For some time this programme has been practised on an experimental basis with the aim of placing a purely theoretical system of a Secondary and Higher educational programme which will continue theory and practice in all fields. It is hoped that by the time children leave school, they can improve life by acquiring the "do-it-yourself" spirit and attitude making them appreciate the value of self-reliance.

In Africa, the imbalance created by the exploitation of the natural environment cannot, and must not, be easily measured. Daily, we destroy vegetation in order to earn foreign exchange and to supplement developmental efforts. We need to come together as a continent and find a solution or at least a way of reducing this situation.

Today there is a growing alliance among people everywhere within varied cultures. They are demanding that we stop the dissipation of our resources and work for security and prosperity through the wise usage of our treasures. With dedication this will lead to policies and practices which are more humane and considerate of the future rather than those which have created the present critical situation. I hope we focus our vision on that aim for a better future for mankind.

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