

DT025 - Native's longing for return of British rule

Reports indicate that the people of Sierra Leone strongly wish to return their country to the status of a British colony, so as to restore competent and honest administration. This takes me back forty years. On secondment from Whitehall in 1959-61, I found myself in West Africa as a constitutional adviser. James, my excellent steward from Nigeria, continually lamented the withdrawal of British rule.

Foolishly, James seemed to think I had some influence back home. He refused to believe that no notice would be taken if on return I told my Prime Minister that right required his Government to resume control.

Poor James was truly sincere about this. On many occasions when he pleaded with me, his eyes filled with tears. I felt ashamed that I could give him no reassurance.