

## OBITUARY

William O. (Bill) Jones, professor emeritus and former director of the Food Research Institute, died on June 17, 1993, in Palo Alto. He was 82. Jones was an authority on African marketing and farming systems. His specialty was manioc, also known as cassava, a root crop that forms a major part of the food economies of West and Central Africa, Southeast Asia, and Brazil. His book, *Manioc in Africa*, was published in 1959 and remains the classic in its field.

Jones was a pioneer in African economic studies. Perhaps his single most important article was "Economic Man in Africa." This essay helped change the way an entire profession thought about smallholder farmers in Africa. His views on the rationality and price responsiveness of African farmers were radical in 1960; 30 years later, his views had become the conventional wisdom.

Jones was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1910. He received his BA in anthropology at the University of Nebraska in 1932. After graduating he spent several years in industry and was a preflight instructor for the Army Air Corps during World War II. In 1947, he earned his doctorate in economics from Stanford and joined the Food Research Institute. From its inception in 1921, the Institute has described itself as "a body of cooperating scholars" engaged in the study of worldwide problems of food supply, distribution, and consumption. As scholar, teacher, and administrator, Jones contributed immensely to making that description a reality. Jones served as executive secretary of the Institute between 1955 and 1962. He became director in 1964 and held that position for eight years.

More than anything in his professional life, Jones was a writer and editor. He set the standard in the agricultural ec-

onomics profession for clarity of written communication. He was a great promoter of the Institute's journal, *Food Research Institute Studies*, which first appeared in 1960. From 1970 to 1975, he served as editor of *Studies*. Thereafter, he was an always-eager consultant to the journal. As an editor and writer, Jones was simply the best. The final issue of the journal, which ceases publication 1993, is dedicated to him.

Jones received many awards and acknowledgements for his contributions to the profession. Among others, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, was Stanford's representative to the governing body of the International African Institute in London, and served terms as president of the African Studies Association and the Western Economic Association. He received a Sc.D. degree (*honoris causa*) from the University of Nebraska in 1965. Jones also served as a consultant to the World Bank, the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, and the US Agency for International Development.

Jones and his wife, Kay, had a long and happy married life on the Stanford campus with their three sons—Stephen, Peter and Brian—all of whom survive him. They were remarkable parents who helped develop their sons' abilities, breadth of views, and love of nature and the outdoors. Jones will be missed sorely by his family, by his friends and colleagues at the Food Research Institute, and by development economists all over the world.

Walter P. Falcon, Stanford University  
Bruce F. Johnston, Stanford University  
Pan A. Yotopoulos, Stanford University

## LETTERS

Dear Editor:

The recent essay, "American Students and Researchers in Nigeria: Relationships with Host Institutions, Academics and Communities," by Lillian Trager and LaRay Denzer, raises a number of important issues with regards to American students and researchers coming to Nigeria. The authors strongly articulate their sense of discomfort regarding recent trips by Americans to Nigeria. They are concerned that some Americans have placed undue strain on Nigeria's academic community because they lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of Nigerian society and appear insensitive to their research site. If the observations made by Ms. Trager and Ms. Denzer are accurate then they have done us all a great service in writing their piece.

I strongly suggest that Trager and Denzer have provided a one-sided picture and that their description of "the harsh realities of the current Nigeria" is inaccurate.

They begin their essay with a brief discussion of how to affiliate with a Nigerian University and gain an entry visa for the country: "It is relatively easy for anyone with a legitimate project to be granted affiliation with a university department, and with such affiliation, to get a visa for Nigeria." Perhaps this was true in the past. Dealing with Nigerian universities and the Nigerian embassy and consulate in the US has now become particularly difficult. It has been my experience, and also that of others I know, that written requests for basic and general information commonly go unanswered and that passports and visa applications are lost for long periods of time. Moreover, official