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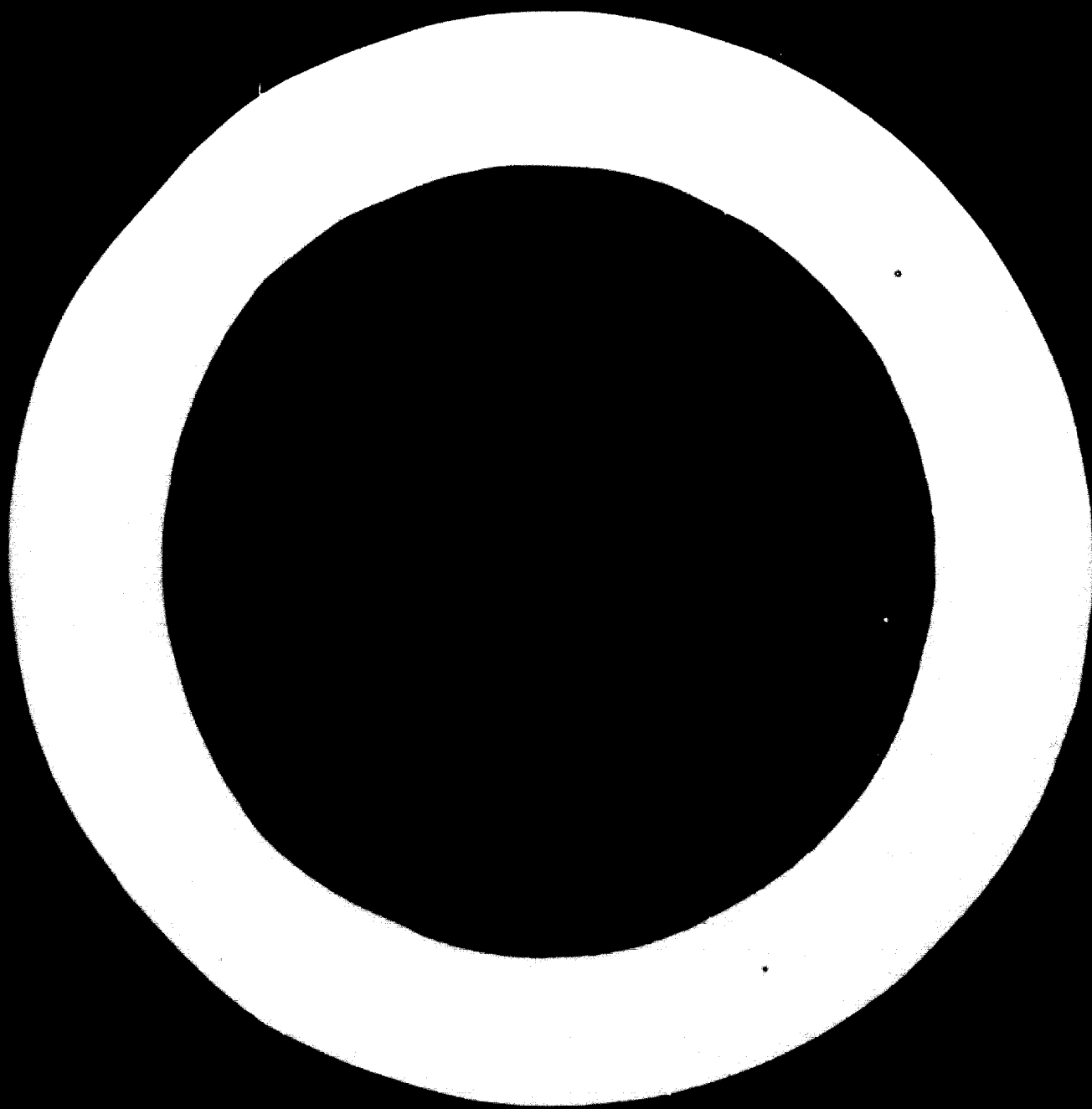
INDUSTRIAL INFORMATION IN KENYA^{1/}

by

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^{1/} The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the secretariat of UNIDO.

We regret that some of the pages in the microfiche copy of this report may not be up to the proper legibility standards, even though the best possible copy was used for preparing the master fiche.



Like other countries of Africa Kenya suffers from serious lack of information on industry. In our struggle for industrialization, information on the market demand for given products, technical skills, machinery, taxation, etc., is of vital importance.

EXISTING SOURCES

- a) Index of Manufacturers & Products: This is an annual publication by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It gives a classified index of manufacturers and their products. It is useful in that it attempts to give some idea of what is produced locally. But the information given therein is too shallow for practical use in implementing other industrial projects.
- b) Statistical Division of the Ministry of Finance & Planning
Although this division publishes from time to time, analysed statistical data on Kenya's economic life, the information provided is not specifically relevant to industry. The data usually refer to population growth, industrial or agricultural expansion, G.H.P., etc., etc. Though useful in general planning, it is not immediately useful to a potential industrial entrepreneur.
- c) Department of Statistics of the East African Community
- d) Import Statistical Report of the East African Community: This provides a useful guide to the level of consumption of given imported products. But the information provided is not immediately usable by an entrepreneur as in most cases the items quoted therein refer to classes of products rather than individual products.
- e) Private and Public Journals/Publications such as the Report on Industry and Trade. Not very reliable source of information.
- f) Institute for Development Studies: This is a research institute of the University of Nairobi. The information available therein on various aspects of Kenya's economic growth is fairly accurate. But basically the institute keeps such information for its own academic use.

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

A lot of research has been done in this sector with satisfactory results. Every important crop has got its own research centre and because of the flow of information from such centres, the performance of this sector has continued to improve year by year.

But information on the technological aspect of agro-based industries is not yet adequate. For example, it is not easy to know whether there is more or less installed capacity for seed oil processing plants. However, the information available on animal husbandry is fairly reliable and adequate.

COLLECTION OF INDUSTRIAL DATA

From the foregoing, it is obvious that any efforts to provide industrial information in Kenya have not been on a co-ordinated basis. Moreover the information available has been very scanty and not for immediate practical use.

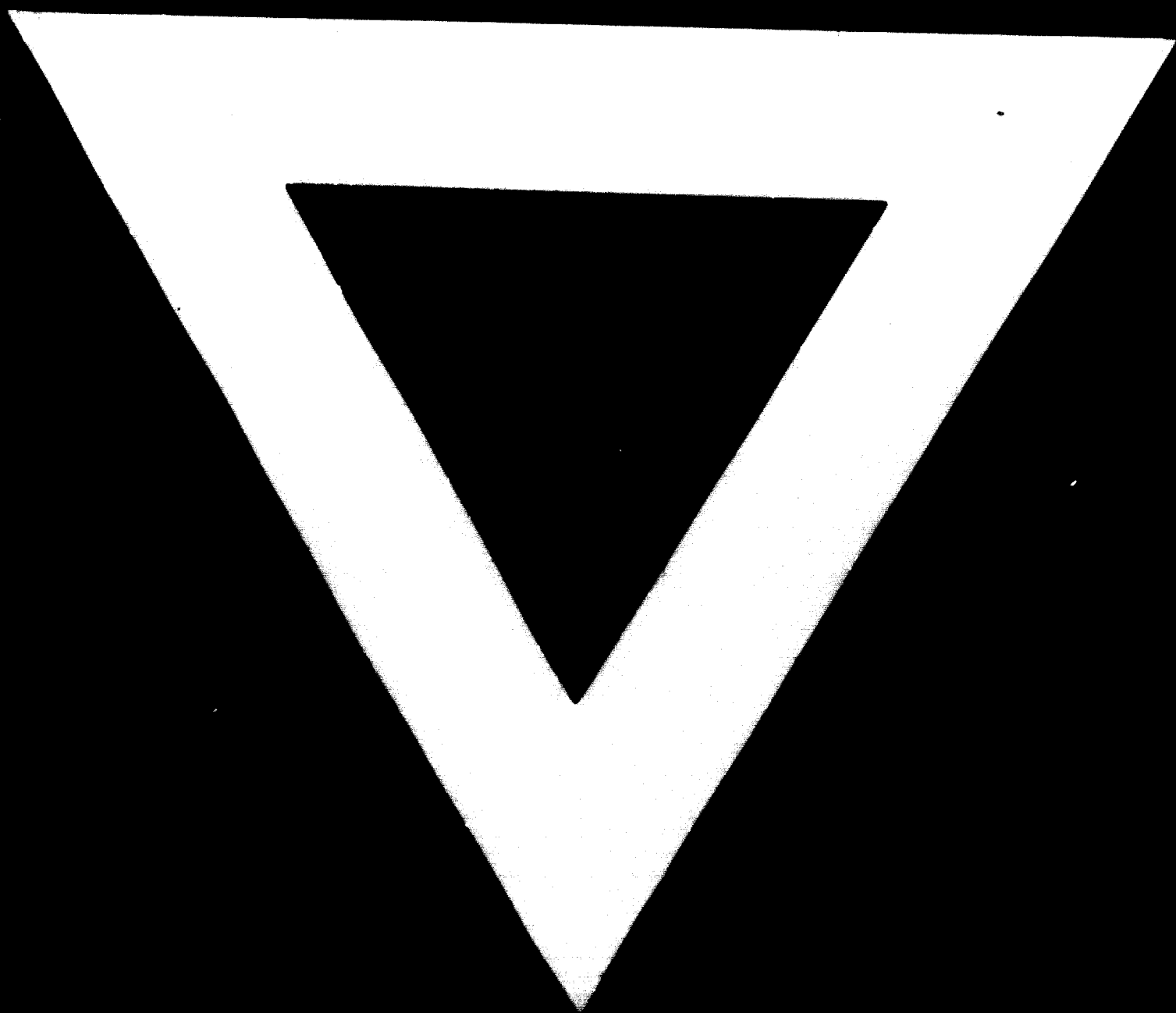
Thus an investor who would like to know the market position of a given product has had to move from one dealer to the other, trying to establish how much of the product is imported in a year and whether there is any local factory for same. The exercise is very frustrating and tiresome.

LARGE SCALE vs SMALL/MEDIUM SCALE INDUSTRIES

In Kenya industry has for a long time been owned by foreigners whose basic interest has been the profit margin and not the economic development of the country. Today the Government through the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation, Kenya Industrial Estates Ltd., and other agencies, is trying to promote participation by the indigenous people in the industry. Because of the usual selfishness of the big industrialists, and as they are never keen on ancillary relationship with the small manufacturers, efforts to obtain suitable industrial information such as installed capacities, number of shifts worked, labour strength, types and sizes of products produced etc., are usually frustrated.

SUGGESTED APPROACH

1. Setting up of a centralized Industrial Statistical and Documentation Bureau at national level.
2. Co-ordination of the existing industrial information agencies.
3. Dissemination of industrial information implies the need for government control of establishment of new industries and expansion of existing ones.
4. Encouragement of establishment of regional industrial information centres and co-ordination of such centres.
5. Training of information personnel probably by UNIDO and other international agencies.
6. UNIDO/ECA should co-ordinate such information services on continental basis and advise on technological changes. Local entrepreneurs should be brought in touch with foreign collaborators in joint ventures.



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