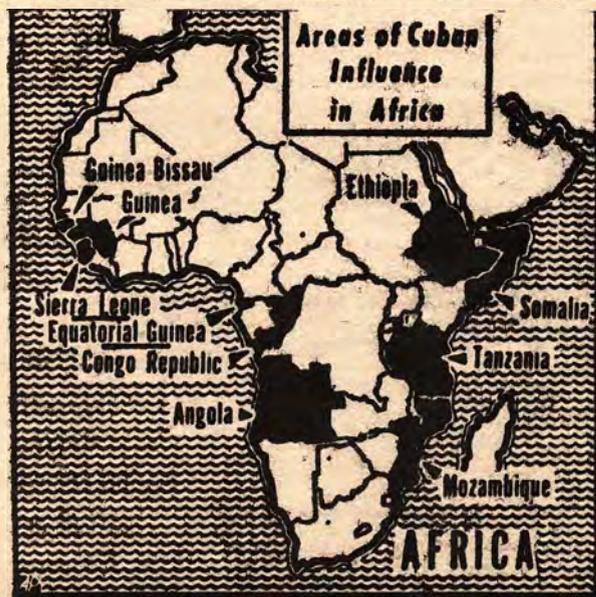


CUBA'S ROLE IN AFRICA

Satelite of the USSR

During a recent trip to Moscow, Cuban Premier Fidel Castro raised his vodka glass high and offered a toast to Soviet leader Kosigyn "Humankind will be eternally thankful for all that the Soviet Union has done not only in the interests of a better future for man but also toward preserving his right to security and survival, the most human of all rights" For those people around the world and in the US who still think of Cuba as a revolutionary socialist country, Cuba's actions in Africa come as a rude awakening Within the last year, Cuba has ---sent 15,000 mercenary troops to Angola to interfere in that country's civil war ---at the instigation of the USSR, trained and led a mercenary invasion of Zaire ---recently sent 100 "military advisors" to interfere in the internal affairs of the Ethiopian people ---unsuccessfully attempted to sponsor a "conference of progressive African countries" in an attempt to disintegrate the Organization of African Unity

In 1959 the Cuban people overthrew the Ba-



Unlike socialist countries China and Albania, Cuba has troops and military advisors stationed in various parts of Africa

tista government and ran US imperialism out of their island That great revolution will always stand in history as a milestone in the struggle against US imperialism Since the early 1970's, however, the Soviet Union has consolidated political, economic, and military control over Cuba In our Unity Statement published in 1974, ATM pointed out that Cuba is a satellite of Soviet Social Imperialism Whereas in the 1960's there were certain differences between Cuba and the USSR, today Fidel Castro puts it quite bluntly At the Cuban First Party Congress, he noted that Cuba's foreign policy is based " in the first place, on staunch friendship with the Soviet Union, the bastion of world progress " Let's take a look at the actions of the USSR in Africa

SOVIET PENETRATION OF AFRICA

Long under the hegemony of US imperialism, the African continent now faces a far slicker imperialist power While pretending to aid national liberation movements, the USSR has in fact econo-

mically plundered Africa From 1954 to 1974 the USSR has exported \$3 billion in capital to Africa, while extracting \$4.7 billion in food and raw materials during that time Engaging in classical imperialist unequal trade, the USSR jacks up the prices of its manufactured goods, while forcing down the prices of African raw materials From 1955-74 African countries lost \$2.4 billion in their trade with the USSR

The world knows that US imperialism must politically dominate a country in order to economically plunder it The same holds true for the USSR Only a little more than a year ago, Angola liberated itself from Portuguese colonialism, now the USSR has become a new colonial master. Angola is forced to ship coffee to the USSR at 38% of the world market price Soviet, Cuban and East German advisors control much of Angola's internal affairs including security services, information, customs and immigration, as well as banks and financial affairs (Peking Review #15, 1977) But the Angolan people are continuing resistance to the new imperialist Work stoppages on plantations have cut coffee production by 80% and rebellions continue both in central and northern Angola, including attacks on Gulf Oil holdings in Cabinda province

The USSR recently tried to coerce Zimbabwe liberation forces to accept a "multi-national" force (Cuban) to liberate their country The Zimbabwe liberation forces rejected this scheme and chose instead to rely on their own resources One African leader said, "To liberate Africa is Africa's task. We do not want our 'friends' from foreign countries to come to liberate Africa for us " (Peking Review #5, 1977)

FRONTING FOR SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM

The chubby old men who run the USSR have a hard time convincing anyone they are revolutionaries, not so for the leaders of Cuba Remembering the revolutionary history of Cuba, people of several African countries turned out in large numbers to hear Fidel Castro on his recent tour But rhetoric about "proletarian internationalism" cannot conceal a simple fact the USSR uses Cuba to carry out its military expansion into Africa

For many years the US felt free to send troops to Africa (e.g. to the Congo in 1960) and anywhere else in the world Since its defeat in Vietnam, the US economic crisis and pressure from the US masses has made it much more difficult to intervene militarily. The US relies more on economic penetration and use of other governments like South Africa to do its military dirty work Of course, when facing a big enough crisis, US imperialism will call out the Marines to protect its interests

The USSR, on the other hand, is weaker economically than the US and has fewer client states in the world The USSR is the more aggressive superpower and is increasingly using military aid and armed intervention It would be far too obvious to send white Russians to fight in the African tropics, so they force the Cubans to play that role Cuban troops are still fighting Angolan guerilla groups one full year after the "end" of the Angolan civil war. An estimated 12,000 to 20,000 Cuban troops and "technical" advisors remain in Angola There is an old joke about Czechoslovakia that now applies to Angola (Czechoslovakia must be the largest country in



Armed with Soviet made rifles, these Cuban mercenaries intervened in Angola's Civil War in 1975-6

the world. The USSR began withdrawing its troops in 1968 and still hasn't reached the border!"

Besides direct military intervention, Cuba is useful to the USSR for diplomatic maneuverings At the 1973 conference of Third World nations, Cuba isolated itself by supporting Soviet interference in the Third World Castro and seven other members of the Cuban Central Committee recently traveled to Algeria, Angola, Tanzania, Mozambique, Democratic Yemen, Somalia, East Germany, and the USSR Soviet President Podgorny just happened to drop by Africa at the same time Podgorny and Castro tried to set up more Soviet military facilities like the USSR already has in Somalia Castro wanted Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Democratic Yemen to form a "socialist federation" to counter the recent alliance of Egypt, Sudan and Syria. These and other schemes got no takers Tanzanian President Jules Nyerere pointed out that so far the USSR had given little aid to the armed struggle in Zimbabwe and Anzania, he suggested that future aid be channeled through the Organization of African Unity to prohibit the USSR from manipulating different forces. Of course, the USSR turned him down on that request

Increasing numbers of African countries are rejecting both superpowers Referring to the two superpowers, Sudan's Minister of Information, Bona Malwal, said recently, "I think their arm-twisting is the biggest problem in Africa today If they get their hands off, we can settle our problems " (LA TIMES, 5/9/77)

The liberation struggles of Zimbabwe are about to topple the Smith regime, mass demonstrations of students and workers in Anzania strike fear into the hearts of the racist rulers of South Africa. The African people are learning that there is no freedom when one imperialism replaces another Seventy-five years ago, the Cuban people learned that the "friendly" US Imperialism was a far worse master than Spanish colonialism Today, they are learning that Soviet Social Imperialism is no better than the US variety The Cuban people will certainly overthrow the domination of the USSR and continue their revolutionary struggle to true liberation