



THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Towards Communism: A View of the Future

The 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was a great history-making event of our times.

The main business of the Congress was the adoption of a new Programme of the Party. Until now, the Party and the people of the Soviet Union, since 1917, have been engaged in the huge task of building socialism in their country. That task has been completed. The new, Third Programme is a programme for the building of Communist society in the Soviet Union.

Socialism is a great advance on capitalism. It has enormously raised the living, health, educational and cultural standards of the Soviet people. It has abolished class and national inequalities, and the exploitation of man by man. Under socialism a new generation has grown up of free, happy, cultured people, a generation free from the prejudices, acquisitiveness, selfishness and inhumanity which is bred by capitalist society, where man is a wolf to his fellow man. Socialism has tremendously developed the productive resources and techniques of the Soviet people, and laid the basis for an economy of plenty, of an abundance of all those things which are necessary for the people to enjoy a healthy, happy and cultured life.

These great achievements of the past forty-four years have laid the basis for the steady advancement to a yet higher stage of human society—the highest of all—a Communist Society. This society will be built on the principle “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

Communism is a classless social system, it has only one form of public ownership of the means of production, and full social equality of all members of society. The all-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of the productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology. It is a highly organised society of free, socially conscious working people. Public self-government will be established. Labour for the good of society will become the prime vital requirement of everyone, recog-

nised by one and all. The ability of each person will be employed to the greatest benefit of the people.

Moving towards this goal, the Soviet Union, over the next ten years, will become the richest country in the world, surpassing the United States in production per head of the population. It will have the shortest working day in the world, but production will nevertheless improve substantially both in industry and agriculture. All the people will be well housed.

Under capitalism, new production techniques, and particularly automation, are regarded with fear by the working people, for they must lead to unemployment. But in the Soviet Union, where unemployment is preserved only in the memories of the older people, for it has long been abolished, the new techniques will be used to improve working conditions and make them easier, to reduce the length of the working day, to improve living conditions, and eliminate hard physical work and eventually all unskilled labour.

The detailed economic plans—the basis for the advance to Communist society—are breathtaking in their scope. Industrial output will be increased $1\frac{1}{2}$ times over the next ten years. The rapid development of science and engineering, technology and the better organisation of work, of agriculture and methods of planning, will provide the basis for a leap forward in the living standards of the people. Health and social services will be improved.

In the next ten years, the country will go over to a six-hour working day. Free medical services will become greatly extended. Through public catering at work for industrial workers and collective farmers, very much cheaper meals, and eventually free meals at work will be provided. Boarding schools will be free, and hot meals free at day schools. At the end of the next two decades, the Soviet people can look forward to rent-free housing, to free public transport facilities, and all sorts of other public services free of charge.

Wages will be steadily increased, while retail prices will be reduced.

All taxes are to be abolished.

Not for Themselves Alone

“History is made by the people, and Communism is a creation of the people, of their energy and intelligence. The victory of Communism depends on people, and Communism is built for people. Every Soviet man brings the triumph of Communism nearer by his labour. The successes of Communist construction spell abun-

dance and a happy life to all, and enhance the might, prestige and glory of the Soviet Union," declares the Programme.

But it is not for themselves alone that the Soviet people are entering into the great task of the gradual construction of Communism. Following Marx's great slogan "Workers of all countries, unite!" the Soviet Communists believe that they are blazing a trail for all mankind. "The Party regards Communist construction in the U.S.S.R. as the Soviet people's great international task, in keeping with the interests of the whole world socialist system as a whole, and with the interests of the international proletariat and all mankind."

It is not by compulsion, it is by example that the peoples of the world will be persuaded to follow their Soviet brothers and sisters towards the goal of a Communist society. The Programme re-affirms the well-established Soviet policy of peaceful co-existence of states with differing social systems, and that it is against the export both of revolution and of counter-revolution.

"When the Soviet people enjoy the blessings of Communism, new hundreds of millions of people on earth will say: 'We are for Communism!' It is not through war with other countries, but by the example of a more perfect organisation of society, by rapid progress in developing the productive forces, the creation of all conditions for the happiness and well-being of man, that the ideas of Communism win the minds and hearts of the masses."

We are confident that this will be so. The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. is, of course, in the first place, a Programme for the Soviet people themselves. But it is of intense interest to every man and woman in the world. For—allowing for inevitable differences of local tradition and historical development in various parts of the world—it is also a blueprint of the future of all mankind.

ALBANIA AND THE STALIN CULT

Although the new Programme was the main business of the 22nd Congress, the capitalist newspapers preferred to focus the attention of their readers on other questions which arose at the Congress, particularly that of Albania and the Stalin Cult.

It is indeed a thousand pities that the leaders of the Albanian People's Republic, a small socialist country which owes a tremendous amount to the assistance and encouragement of the Soviet Union, should suddenly have adopted a policy of attacks and criticisms of the Soviet Union, which can only endanger the precious

unity of the socialist camp, and of the World Communist Movement.

The main criticism of the Albanian leaders is that the C.P.S.U., particularly since its 20th Congress, has resolutely condemned the shameful abuses, the idolatrous and un-Communist glorification of an individual, and the arbitrary methods of one-man leadership, which prevailed during the period of the Stalin cult. It was not pleasant, and is not pleasant, for the Soviet leaders to expose the evils that were permitted to flourish in so recent a period of the country's history. They have undertaken this painful task for one reason and one reason only—to ensure that such things should never happen again. And in so doing, they have performed a great service not only for the people of their own country, but for the whole of the working class movement throughout the world.

Why have the Albanian leaders attacked the C.P.S.U. for so unflinchingly carrying out this duty? Why are they, in fact, now reviving the cult of Stalin in Albania itself?

Nikita Khrushchov told the 22nd Congress that the reason why Enver Hoxha and Mehmet Shehu, leaders of the Albanian Party of Labour, are so bitterly resisting the exposure of the evils of the period of the Stalin cult in the Soviet Union, is that they themselves are practising exactly the same arbitrary and despotic methods of leadership in Albania to-day. "All that was bad in our country at the time of the cult of the individual manifests itself in even worse form in the Albanian Party of Labour. It is no longer a secret to anyone that the Albanian leaders stay in power by resorting to violence and arbitrary actions," he said.

Similar reasons lie behind the activities of the factional group in the C.P.S.U. which was headed by Molotov, Kaganovich and Malenkov. Both before and after the famous 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., at which the consequences of the cult of the individual were resolutely exposed, this group vigorously resisted the exposure. They did so, not only because they themselves were involved with, and agreed with such abuses and criminal methods of leadership which were practised at that time, but also because they thought they should be continued. "They wanted to push the Party, the country, from the Leninist path, wanted to revert to the policy and methods of leadership of the period of the personality cult."

It is not always easy for Communists and other friends of the Soviet Union abroad to understand properly the reason for the thorough-going debunking of the Stalin myth that is now taking place in the Soviet Union, the removal of his body from the Lenin

Mausoleum to an adjoining grave by the Kremlin wall, and the renaming of Stalingrad and other historic places. We remember Stalin as the brilliant and lucid teacher of Leninism and Lenin's theories on the national and colonial question; the tireless fighter against Trotsky and other renegades who sought to divert the Party from its huge task of building socialism in one country, in conditions of capitalist encirclement; the leader of the Soviet people in the war against fascism and in the tasks of peaceful socialist construction. He was made, wrongly so, the symbol of the C.P.S.U., the Soviet State and the Soviet people; the main target for attacks by bourgeois reaction and its agents of every type and hue, and much of our political life was devoted to defending him.

But, we should not forget that it is the Soviet people, and the Soviet Communists, who in the first place were the victims of the personality cult, and all the atrocious crimes and brutalities which were permitted to grow up and flourish in its shadow. We must understand the bitterness which they feel about it. And we must also understand the stern sense of duty and responsibility which has impelled them to expose this blemish upon the glorious record of the Soviet people's contribution to the cause of socialism and humanity. They have exposed these things in order to ensure that they shall never recur again in the Soviet Union. And, let us add, in the hope that the lesson will not be lost upon Communist and other peoples' movements all over the world. It is a lesson which must ever be borne in mind.

PERSONALITIES IN AFRICA

In the course of political struggle, the people produce seasoned, experienced and wise leaders, whom they learn to respect and have confidence in. Naturally, it is necessary for all progressive movements to uphold and defend these leaders against the incessant attacks which the reactionary enemy directs against them, as the representatives and spokesmen of the movement, the target for victimisation, malice and slander. But, we must never forget in this process that our leaders are only the servants, the elected representatives and spokesmen of the movements which they represent, and of the workers and the people as a whole. We must never allow ourselves to fall into the position of bowing in superstitious reverence before this or that leader, of endowing him with super-human qualities and powers, of treating his word as holy writ, above criticism. A true leader is the servant, not the master of his people. The essence of democratic leadership is that it is delegated,

not of right, by descent or personality.

It is this essential point which Nikita Khrushchov underlined when he said "Everything said about me should be addressed to the Central Committee of our Leninist Party.

"In collective leadership, collective solution of all fundamental problems, lies our great strength.

"However gifted this or that leader may be, however hard he may work, real and solid success cannot be achieved without the support of the collective, without the most active participation of the entire Party, of the broad masses of the people."

It seems to us that this is a truth which cannot be repeated too often here in Africa. There are good and beautiful traditions in our continent, and these should be carried forward and enriched in the future. There are also bad and reactionary traditions—such as the inferior position of women and its reflection in lobola and polygamy—which are not so much "African" as they are expressions of outworn feudal and pre-capitalist forms of society, which all peoples have at one stage experienced. They are out of keeping with the modern, free and progressive Africa of today and tomorrow. Much the same can be said of the functions of the Mbongo, the praise-singer of the tribal chief; the poets and composers of the new Africa should sing in praise of the people, their country and their future—not in idle glorification of this or that leader, whether he be hereditary or elected.

Of course, all of us in Africa are proud of the many outstanding and talented leaders who have sprung from the ranks of the people. We pay tribute to the staunchness, vision and courage of a great man like Jomo Kenyatta. We rejoice at the award of the World Peace Prize to Sékou Touré and the Nobel Peace Prize to Albert Lutuli—in honouring these great sons of Africa the world is honouring Africa itself. The people of Africa respect and love their outstanding spokesmen, defenders and patriots, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, and many others whose very names have become inspiring banners in our struggle for freedom.

It was in this same spirit that from the time of the Defiance Campaign onwards the brave patriots of South Africa have gone into action against apartheid with songs that embody the names of Lutuli, Kotane, Dadoo, Marks, Bopape, Sisulu, and many another hero of the people's struggle. It was entirely correct and healthy that they should do so, and they will continue to do so in future people's campaigns.

But the seasoned workers and fighters for freedom of South

Africa have never made gods or "supermen" out of their leaders or bowed down before them in abject and unmanly submission. We do not like one-man leadership, for however capable or brilliant he may be no man is infallible. We admire and respect our leaders insofar as they reflect and voice the collective wisdom and experience, the needs and the aspirations of the masses of the people—for it is the people themselves who are the true makers of history. They need no saviour from on high to deliver them—or to do their thinking for them. In the words of the great nineteenth century statesman and patriot, Moshoeshe, founder of the Basuto Nation: "Morena ke Morena ka batho"—a chief is a chief through (or, by virtue of) the people.

This mature and wise outlook is reflected in the type of leader who the democratic sections of the South African people have chosen to represent them. In sharp contrast to the loudmouthed bullies, braggarts and demagogues of the ruling Nationalist Party, the people's leaders are near to and identified wholly with those whom they represent. They lead by persuading and convincing, not by giving orders. Bold, defiant and dignified in the face of the brutal Verwoerd dictatorship; they are always modest and considerate towards the masses of the people.

These qualities are well personified by Chief Albert Lutuli, to whom we, in common with all South African democrats, extend our warmest congratulations on the occasion of the award to him by the Norwegian Parliament of the Nobel Peace Prize for 1960. Repeatedly elected President of the country's biggest organisation—the African National Congress which was banned in April 1959 and is still illegal—he would almost certainly be head of state if this country enjoyed democratic institutions. It is an office he would fulfil with distinction.

It perhaps might seem strange to some that we pay this tribute to one who, as is well known, is far from sharing the philosophical views and ultimate aims of Marxism-Leninism. To those we would point out that *unity between Communists and non-Communists in the national liberation struggle* is a cardinal principle of the South African Communist Party. We shall always strive to strengthen still further this unity, born of the comradeship and common sacrifices of the struggle itself. It is one of the great merits of Chief Lutuli that he has consistently and vigorously resisted attempts to introduce the sterile and harmful doctrine of anti-Communism into the liberation movement, and outspokenly reprobated the S. African Liberal Party for the anti-Communist clause in its constitution.

GHANA GOES AHEAD

The struggle against colonialism and the colonial heritage is not completed with the winning of formal independence. In fact, that is only the beginning. Unless the liberated countries proceed energetically to assert their independence externally, and to take internal measures to liquidate the heritage of colonialism, the masses will not taste the fruits of freedom, and independence itself will be only partial and in constant danger.

Ghana's experience over the past period underlines this truth, which has frequently been emphasised in these columns. One of the consequences of the colonialist past which has not yet been eliminated is, as in most underdeveloped countries, that agriculture is dependent on a single cash crop, grown for the "Western" market. In Ghana's case this is the monoculture of cocoa. Earlier this year the Western imperialists were able to bring about a crisis in the Ghanaian economy by depressing the cocoa price and announcing that their market was saturated. There was a deficit of £30 million in the balance of payments, and the imperialists were hoping that they could use economic pressure to curb President Nkrumah's outspoken anti-colonial policy, or even oust him. In this they relied on Right-wing elements within the government, especially the finance minister, as well as the reactionary British officers in the Ghana armed forces.

It is not long since the United States tried exactly the same blackmailing game in regard to Cuba's sugar crop. But in both cases the results were exactly the opposite of what they intended. Both Castro and Nkrumah responded by moving towards the Left, strengthening their countries' independence, and undertaking vigorous measures against local Right-wing, pro-imperialist elements.

Dr. Nkrumah's tour of the Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries has benefited Africa and strengthened his country's independence. In his own words: "My visit will reinforce our determination to crush imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism in Africa."

The stern economy measures necessitated by the economic crisis were hardly popular in the country—the more so as the corruption in high circles had become a national scandal, many of the leaders openly flaunting their great wealth in the face of the poverty and hardships of the workers and peasants. Unrest was inevitable, used skilfully by the colonialists who were undoubtedly busy behind the scenes in the Takoradi strike. Duncan Sandys and "Soapy" Williams

were rushed out to Accra, and there was a good deal of talk in the western press about a "rebellion". The London "Times" declared that "The Army and Gbedemah (the Finance Minister) had become the natural rallying point of anti-Nkrumah elements".

The rejoicing was premature. The healthy, Left and working class elements in the Convention People's Party rallied around the President. The strike ended peacefully. Gbedemah and other Right-wing ministers were removed and the running sore of corruption in public life and the amassing of personal wealth mercilessly exposed. The British Army officers were sent home to England, and it has been announced that 400 Ghana cadets are being sent to the Soviet Union for training as officers. A number of counter-revolutionary elements were detained.

Of course all this led to an uproar about "dictatorship" in the imperialist press and there was talk about cancelling the Queen's visit. That should not cause any alarm—when the imperialists start praising Ghana that will be much more alarming, and now the Queen has come and gone without much effect.

In fact Ghana is striding out sturdily on the road to true independence, national democracy and non-capitalist methods of development. And that road must lead increasingly towards the Left. That this is being more and more realised is shown, also, by the presence of a fraternal C.P.P. delegation at the recent 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Delegations also attended from the ruling parties in Guinea and Mali, marking the opening of a new phase of great significance in the development of African-Soviet friendship.

However, many and difficult struggles lie ahead before Ghana attains the goals she has set herself with such inspiring spirit and confidence. A tremendous source of strength in tackling these serious trials of the future would be the development of a devoted and dedicated group, within the national liberation alliance that is the C.P.P., but representing the independent interests of the working class and guided by the brilliant scientific and universal principles of Marxism-Leninism. Experience all over the world has shown that socialism cannot be achieved without the leadership of the most advanced, determined and incorruptible class, the working class, building its own Communist Party.

Recent events have also demonstrated how dangerous it is to place undue reliance and concentrate all powers in one man. The President is an outstandingly capable and inspiring leader; had he not returned when he did and acted as decisively as he did events

might have taken a very different turn, tragic for Ghana and for Africa. Therein, precisely, lies the danger. It is a matter of urgent necessity to develop a trained, collective leadership, capable of independent thought and action, and utterly devoted to the workers' cause.

The cult of an individual leader is destructive of independent thought and collective leadership. People learn to just chant slogans and praises and leave all the thinking to one man. It will be noticed that the very people who have now been exposed as careerists and racketeers were foremost in shouting the "Osyagefo-is-our-god; he-can-do-no-wrong" type of slogan which is so damaging to genuine political development and stifling to the initiative and creativeness of the masses.

Dr. Nkrumah is a highly intelligent and cultured man, a student of Marxism. He must find all this empty flattery as vulgar and offensive as we do. It is high time the healthy, progressive elements of Ghana rallied round him to put an end to this silly and idolatrous cult.

INDEPENDENT TANGANYIKA

By the time these lines appear Tanganyika Independence Day, December 8, 1961, will have come and gone, and a new Independent African State will have been born. It is indeed a joyous event not only for the people of Free Tanganyika, but for all Africa, and particularly for those of us who live under the cruel colonialism of White supremacy or Portuguese Fascism in her neighbours and near-neighbours to the South.

The planting of the Uhuru Flag on Mount Kilimanjaro is indeed the symbol of a great victory gained by the Tanganyika African National Union and the masses of people of the country in many years of persistent struggle. We are sure that from this victory they will gain fresh strength and vigour for the still harder struggles ahead, to reinforce their independence and raise the people from the low levels of illiteracy, landlessness, poverty and actual famine which many years of imperialist rule, first German then British, have reduced them to.

WELL DONE, LESOTHO!

Another event which has struck a cold chill into the hearts of the colonialists and their hangers-on, but joy into the hearts of African patriots and fighters for freedom is the announcement of the establishment of the *Communist Party of Lesotho* (Basutoland).

This small country, entirely surrounded by Verwoerd's White Republic, has for many years won admiration for its fierce spirit of independence. The way forward to establish that independence both from British political domination and South African economic domination is shown in the Draft Programme of the new Party, which is due for adoption at the coming inaugural congress at Maseru, and which we hope to publish in our next issue. Advocating "revolutionary changes" in order to "win complete independence and to raise the living and cultural standards of the masses of our people", and to "enable the sons of Basutoland to return to their motherland", from the Republic "where half the menfolk of working age are forced to sell their labour power," the Programme pledges the new Party to work in co-operation with the Lekhotla la Bafo, the Basutoland Congress Party and other patriotic forces in the country, and also to maintain close friendly relations with the South African Communist Party and the world communist movement.

Particularly to be admired and emulated by Marxist-Leninists of Africa is the way in which the Basuto Communists have gone about the task of organising their Party. For more than a year Marxist study groups have been working in almost every village. Discussing the *African Communist* and other Marxist literature, they have applied themselves to the study of their own country and conditions on the basis of which they have formulated their Draft Programme. This, too, is now being thoroughly discussed, and not only by the Party members but by wide circles among the workers, peasants and intellectuals. Thus the way to formation of the Party has been thoroughly prepared. It unites all the Marxist-Leninists of the country. Its policy is known to the people and cannot be twisted and distorted by the colonialists and other reactionary forces. This is very much better than the idea of hurriedly forming a "Party"—often confined to one area only, or to a group of personal friends—which some of our friends and correspondents have tried in other territories. When we build a Marxist-Leninist Party we are building something which must endure and unite and lead the people as a whole. Therefore the way must be thoroughly prepared, and any sort of split or division guarded against from the start.

We warmly welcome the establishment of the Communist Party of Lesotho, youngest addition to the world family of Marxist-Leninist Parties.

Violent and Non-Violent Transition

Forms and Methods of Struggle in the National Liberation Revolution

By A. LERUMO

With the most dramatic swiftness and historical suddenness a mighty tide of the national liberation revolution has swept through the vast Continents of Asia and Africa, comprising a majority of the world's population. Within a few short years—a fleeting instant of time, measured against the millennia of human history—the biggest Empire the world has ever known, the British Empire, has fallen to pieces; likewise those of France, the Netherlands and Belgium. On the eve of the second world war they ruled almost the whole of Asia and Africa with a rod of iron. Today the colonial governors and administrators have nearly all gone home. Their places have been taken by men who, yesterday, were rotting in prisons where they had been sent as “criminal agitators” and “terrorists” but today are presidents and cabinet ministers and honoured delegates at the United Nations.

The process is not yet completed.

It is not yet completed because there still remain areas of direct colonial rule—Angola, Mozambique and other African and Asian territories where Fascist Portugal still rules with Nato weapons; gallant Algeria still fighting her grim, long-drawn battle against the French yoke; British and French islands of colonialism in Asia, Africa and the Pacific; Ruanda-Urundi where the Belgians and Indonesian islands where the Dutch are still battling vainly to preserve the remnants of their colonial empires. And there remain, too, the wide stretches of Southern Africa—Verwoerd's Republic, South-West Africa and Rhodesia—where colonialism of a special type, maintained by White minorities against the vast majority of indigenous inhabitants, continues to hold its vicious sway.

It is not yet completed because, forced to abandon direct political rule, imperialism strives to retain control and domination by the direct ways of neo-colonialism. It commands dominating economic and financial positions in the former colonies. It employs puppet “presidents” of the Tshombe type to conceal the reality of continued domination behind a mask of fictitious independence. It

maintains its control by seeing that the upper ranks of the army, police and civil service remain in the hands of the former colonial officials, even though now under formally independent states. It demands as the price of independence that the former colonies remain within the folds of the "French Community", the "British Commonwealth"—ever-present reminders of the colonial past—that they accept imperialist military bases and garrisons on their territories—that they tie their economies and monetary systems to London, Paris or Brussels. They attempt to concede the shadow of independence and self-government while retaining the substance; "reserving" all sort of powers—foreign policy, "security", defence—in the hands of the imperial authorities.

New experts in the art of neo-colonialism have appeared on the scene in Asian and African countries. Especially from the United States, but also from West Germany, Japan and other aspiring neo-colonialists, come high-pressure salesmen. They are selling "aid to underdeveloped countries". The "aid" consists of offers to invest capital, at high rates of interest, for the exploitation of Asian and African resources and cheap labour . . . and for the benefit, not of Africa or Asia, but the profits of the foreign investors.

THE SWEEP AND DEPTH OF OUR REVOLUTION

But the national liberation revolution is sweeping on uninterruptedly to its completion with ever-increasing pace. Yesterday Nigeria, today Tanganyika, tomorrow Kenya. . . . It is difficult to keep pace with the speed and the sweep of the transformation.

Moreover, the national liberation revolution is developing rapidly in impetus not only in its geographical area but, yet more important, *in its depth of content*. There was a similar movement, in the nineteenth century, which swept through south and central America. It destroyed Spanish and Portuguese colonialism and established independent republics. But the movement, led by bourgeois nationalists, stopped short at the achievement of formal independence. The economic, cultural and social backwardness inherited from the Iberian empires remained. The result was that these republics fell an easy prey to United States imperialism, which employed the methods of neo-colonialism, subjected them to economic domination, and destroyed their independence in all but in name.

This was natural, for the Latin American revolution took place in an era where capitalism and imperialism, almost unchallenged, dominated the world. But the Asian and African revolutions are

taking place in a new era which was inaugurated by the October Socialist Revolution, an era whose main content is the transition, on a world scale, from capitalism to socialism. A world socialist system, comprising one-third of humanity, has come into being. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are a formidable barrier against the plans of the imperialists to start new wars, either internationally or wars of colonial conquest. The socialist countries stretch out a brotherly hand to the former colonies, offering them, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, the opportunity for rapid industrialisation and development to enable them to overcome backwardness and meet the world on equal terms. The fantastic progress and development of the socialist countries, made possible by workers' rule, agrarian revolution and common ownership of the means of production, have made a profound impression on the masses of African, Asian and Latin American people. The ideas of Communism, of Marxism-Leninism, have tremendous attractive force. To an ever-increasing degree it is not the bourgeois nationalists but the working class and peasantry, led by Communist Parties, who are providing the leadership and setting the pace in the national liberation revolution.

These factors account for the extraordinary richness and depth of content which the continuing African and Asian Revolutions keep on revealing. Not content with formal political independence, the countries of these continents are out to establish genuine independence and equality in every field. At one Afro-Asian and all-African Conference after another, the aims and methods of neo-colonialism have been stripped naked. The masses who have fought and sacrificed against colonialism are not content to see merely a clique of native exploiters and bureaucrats replace the former imperialists while poverty, exploitation and backwardness continue as before. They demand genuine states of national democracy: where every trace of colonialism and its heritage is destroyed—where sweeping land reform ends feudalism and gives the rural people land, food, freedom, education, human dignity and equality—where national industries are rapidly built up on non-capitalist lines—where every man and woman enjoys freedom of speech and organisation, and the nation enjoys self-determination and the right of all to take part in government.

Latin America, too, is stirring and entering into the national liberation revolution. Inspired by the glorious example of Cuba, her millions of poverty-stricken, oppressed people are being drawn into militant and determined struggle to break the chains of Yankee imperialism and its local agents, to win land and freedom, genuine

independence and national regeneration, firmly based on advanced, diversified, industrial economies. They are rapidly learning that the most suitable road to overcome backwardness is that of non-capitalist development, and that their staunchest friends and allies are the peoples of the socialist system and of resurgent Asia and Africa.

WHY WE ARE WINNING

The very swiftness and "suddenness" of the world-wide national liberation revolution has created the soil for widespread illusions which are energetically cultivated by the imperialists.

The chief among these illusions is that the imperialists have now undergone a change of heart; that they do not want colonies any more, and are now prepared to hand over power, freely and generously, to the colonial peoples. They even pretend that they never really intended to stay permanently in the colonies; that they came merely to spread enlightenment and to instruct the "natives" in the arts of Western Parliamentary democracy. "Now that you show you have learnt these lessons," they say, "we concede that you are now ready for self-government. Take it with God's blessing."

This pretty picture is nothing but a string of lies from beginning to end. When the imperialists came to the colonial countries—which had, quite adequately, been governing themselves for centuries—they came not to teach and uplift, but to rob and exploit. They destroyed the institutions of self-government which they found, or distorted them to serve as agencies for the indirect rule of colonialism. They did not develop the colonies, but arrested their natural course of development, ruined and impoverished them, resulting often in huge losses of population. They did not teach or civilise: going now, they leave behind them areas of the highest illiteracy and the greatest incidence of preventible disease in the world. Above all, *they are not giving up the colonies voluntarily; they are being kicked out by the struggles of the colonial peoples themselves; they are being forced out by the triumphant march of world history, by the inexorable laws of social development.* They have not lost their appetite for colonies. They strive by every means within their power to retain them, by blackmail, cunning and bribery, and also, when it seems profitable and there is a hope of success, by brute force, murder and massacres. If all these fail, and they have nevertheless to depart, they do everything they can to delay their departure; to see that the "independence" granted

is partial, conditional and illusory; to enmesh the newly-independent countries in new economic, military and diplomatic entanglements which will preserve as much as possible of the *essence* of colonialism—subordination of the interests of the people of the less-developed countries to those of the monopoly finance-capitalists of the “West.”

Many people believe the pretty myths of the imperialists and do not recognise these ugly truths behind them. This is because such people fail to understand the dialectical process of social development, the laws of historical materialism. They look upon each event as something isolated and detached in itself. Human history does not proceed merely as a gradual process of ordered evolution. Like all phenomena it knows sudden, abrupt leaps forward, revolutions. Such an abrupt leap forward, on an international, all-continental scale, is the vast Asian, African and Latin American Revolution, in the midst of which we are living today. But these revolutions cannot be understood unless they are studied in the light of the gradual build-up of contradictions and conflicts which gave rise to them.

The peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America vigorously resisted the attempts of the colonialists to conquer and dominate them, from the moment they set foot on their soil. They have never ceased to resist. The whole history of colonialism is a story of stubborn and heroic struggles by the African, Asian and Latin American peoples, taking now violent, now other, non-violent forms. It is to these stubborn struggles of the past that the people owe the freedom which they are winning today. Yet until quite recently, specifically until the end of the second world war, these struggles were mostly unsuccessful in dislodging the alien conqueror and re-establishing national independence. The imperialists were too strong, too well-armed, with powerful economic bases in the metropolitan countries. The peoples of the colonies lacked unity. The colonialists deliberately fostered linguistic, nationality, religious and other differences and played one group off against another—divide and rule. The people lacked modern types of organisation, trade unions, militant liberation movements, Communist Parties. They lacked a clear understanding of the aims and methods of their struggle in its relation to the world. They supported reformist bourgeois-nationalist leaders, many of whom were self-seeking careerists who could be bribed by the colonialists to sell their people out, or to call off the struggle for the sake of minor and illusory reforms. Even sincere men among such leaders lacked a revolutionary out-

look and patriotism broad enough to embrace their whole people. They respectfully petitioned the colonialist authorities for concessions within the framework of the Empire, whose continued existence they hardly dreamt of questioning, and for a modification of the worst excesses of the colonialists. The concessions which they so humbly requested usually consisted in the granting of greater opportunities to the native commercial, manufacturing or professional classes.

Many of these bourgeois leaders believed in and spread pacifist illusions. They preached that it was possible, through the sacrifices and sufferings of the oppressed people, to melt the stony hearts of the oppressors and purify their souls. Fearful of mass action, they preached a policy of non-violence, under all and any circumstances, even though daily the colonialists used the most atrocious violence and terror against the people.

Because of these factors a handful of West-European maritime nations were able to hold whole continents, with populations many times their own, in thrall for many years. Their wealthy classes grew even wealthier by looting African and Asian resources, and by exploiting cheap colonial labour at huge rates of profit. Out of this vast wealth they were able to satisfy some of the demands of their own working people for higher wages and for democratic rights.

The imperialists believed, and vigorously spread the belief, that their empires would last forever. If there was "trouble among the natives" their leaders could be bought, and if that failed the despatch of a gunboat full of marines would be sufficient to quell the "mutiny," and "teach them a lesson." All the imperialist countries openly spread the gospel of the "master race"—that the fairskinned were superior and born to govern, and the darkskinned inferior and born to serve. Many, even among the oppressed, impressed with the technical (and hence military) superiority of the Europeans came to believe this false gospel, to despise their own people and their traditions and achievements, to bow down in superstitious reverence before everything that came from the "West," and to lose all hope and confidence in the ability of their people to win and practise self-government.

The genius of V. I. Lenin, using the brilliant dialectical method and economic theory of Marxism, saw through and exposed this illusion of the permanence of the colonial system of imperialism. In his remarkable analysis "Imperialism—the Last Stage of Capitalism" and other works, he showed how, rent by its internal con-

traditions—the clash of hostile classes, and the furious rivalry for colonies between the different imperialist states—the whole system was inherently unstable and doomed.

Inter-imperialist rivalry exploded into the first world war of 1914-1918. The war caused frightful bloodshed and destruction on a scale hitherto unknown. It caused a world-wide revulsion against capitalism and imperialism, and shook the system to its foundations. It ended with the collapse of two great European empires, those of Austria-Hungary and Tsarist Russia.

Most far-reaching of all in its consequences was the socialist revolution in Russia on November 7, 1917, the greatest revolution in history. The victory of the Communists, with their bold denunciation of imperialism and racialism, their uncompromising demand for unity and equality of all and the self-determination of nations, had a dynamic effect throughout the colonial world, especially in neighbouring Asia.

New Parties, Communist Parties, sprang up among the colonial peoples, bringing fresh life and vigour to the struggle for national freedom. These parties were based not upon the capitalists but the working class. Guided by the most advanced social theory, they saw the struggle clear and saw it whole. They built up militant trade unions and peasant organisations. They aroused the women and the youth of the oppressed nations. They fought against division, for a patriotic united front of liberation. They rejected the pacifist illusions of the bourgeois leaders and demanded that all methods of mass struggle be employed, depending on circumstances, and where necessary meeting colonialist violence with the armed resistance of the people.

The second world war, ending with the collapse of the most reactionary and racialist section of the imperialists, the fascist "Anti-Communist" Axis of Germany, Italy and Japan, and the victory of the Socialist Soviet Union, struck a further powerful blow at the heart of the imperialist colonial system. It was followed by the choice of the people of a number of capitalist countries in Europe to take the socialist path charted by the U.S.S.R. and to abandon the camp of imperialism.

A new mighty blow against colonialism was the world-historic victory, organised and spearheaded by the Communist Party, of the great Chinese people, the most populous nation in the world. This vast revolution of an Asian people combined the features both of a social and of a national liberation revolution. For the Chiang Kai-shek regime represented not only the feudal and reactionary

groups of China itself; it was also the agent and running-dog of foreign imperialism, particularly United States imperialism.

Like coronary strokes, these successive convulsions sapped the power of imperialism and its ability to retain its hold on its colonies.

Together with the weakening of imperialism went a great strengthening of the forces of the colonial peoples. Wartime industrialisation in many colonial countries led to a big increase in the ranks of the working class, the most advanced class, far better able, ideologically and organisationally, to undertake the task, in alliance with the peasantry, of leading a united struggle of the nation for liberation. Japanese military victories over Western forces destroyed the myth of European military superiority—once the Non-European troops enjoyed the use of modern weapons. Anti-Japanese guerilla operations enabled Asian patriots both to gain possession of such weapons and gave them experience and skill in using them.

It is factors such as these—growing organically out of long-term historical developments—which explain the swift and brilliant triumphs of the national liberation revolution now in progress. It is not that imperialism has undergone a change of heart or a change of character. It is that the forces of imperialism have grown weaker and the forces of the colonial people have grown stronger.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF TRANSITION

History is a complex and many-sided process. While it is possible and necessary to see it from the grand perspective, to generalise about the broad main lines and tendencies of an era, living reality shows a rich diversity of detail. Within the broad sweep of the national liberation revolution there are important differences concerning the form, the methods, the depth and the pace of transition, as between one territory and another.

All the African, Asian and Latin American peoples are marching towards the same goal; a complete break with colonialism, genuine political and economic independence, national democracy and rapid development, an equal status in the world. But they reach that goal along different paths, and they are at different stages in their progress towards it.

For some colonial peoples the path to national freedom has been bitter and painful, involving long and violent struggles, the building of national liberation armies, and the conducting of guerilla warfare, savage reprisals by the imperialists and their agents, the death and

bitter suffering of tens of thousands of patriots. Such, for example, has been the experience of China, Cuba, Vietnam, Algeria, Angola, Kenya and the Congo.

For others, the transition has seemed relatively swift and peaceful. I use the word "seemed" on purpose, for it must not be forgotten that behind the apparent willingness of the imperialists to concede political independence without armed struggle, as in India, Ceylon, Guinea, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Tanganyika, lie the sacrifices of generations of brave Asian and African patriots who fought and died in the cause of colonial freedom.

Like the common people everywhere, the Africans, Asians and Latin Americans love peace and hate war. If they have a choice, they would prefer to achieve their emancipation by non-violent means. The imperialists take advantage of these sentiments to drive a hard bargain. The independence of India was granted at the price of the partition of the country along religious lines—repeating the pattern successfully imposed by Britain on Ireland after the first world war—and the retention in British hands of key levers in India's economy. Those African countries which accepted de Gaulle's offer of "independence within the French Community" received the outward trappings of independence but remain bound hand and foot, economically and politically, to French imperialism.

Yet it would be a serious mistake to imagine that when the imperialists negotiate concessions these are invariably nominal, not real. Even when that is their intention, they find that the colonial people make use of the opportunity to move further out of the orbit of imperialism; to adopt independent internal and foreign policies. Formal independence has proved a powerful weapon to intensify and deepen the content of the struggle against colonialism.

Why is it that the imperialists have, in many cases, conceded independence without armed struggle? And what are the factors which decide, in each case, whether or not they will fight to retain their colonies by force?

These are questions which cannot be answered in terms of the will of the imperialists themselves. "I have not been made His Majesty's First Minister," said Winston Churchill, "in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire." He meant to retain the empire by force, and that was also the intention of his successors, both Labour and Conservative. Yet within a few years the empire had been all but liquidated, and they were powerless to preserve it.

The British ruling class is the most experienced, cunning and

resourceful bourgeoisie in the world. Though, like all capitalists, they commit astonishingly stupid blunders (as in the Suez incident) they are flexible, capable of recognising a hopeless situation and taking bold initiative to save something out of the wreckage. Britain emerged from the second world war with her economy gravely weakened and strained, and her population exhausted and unwilling to undertake further military exertions—least of all adventures to impose on others the very yoke of foreign conquest which they themselves had been so arduously and bravely resisting. Asia, awakened to national regeneration in the course of the patriotic, anti-Japanese struggle, was seething with revolt. It was beyond the power of weakened British imperialism to conduct a series of colonial wars in Burma, Malaya, India, Ceylon and other Asian countries, against organised, armed and battle-seasoned opponents, all at the same time.

It was in these circumstances that British imperialism decided to cut its losses in India and negotiate a deal with Gandhi and Nehru—a deal that was increasingly to become the model and pattern for British colonies in the decade that followed. Not that the British had thrown in the sponge. They continued, with great brutality and ruthlessness, to fight colonial wars in Malaya, Kenya and elsewhere. But these proved ruinously expensive and ineffective. The era of the gunboat-and-a-party-of-marines has vanished for good. Every “punitive expedition” and “police operation” turned into a long-drawn and costly jungle war. Every attempt to put down colonial revolt by force in one territory destroyed the image, so laboriously created, of a benevolent “Commonwealth” conferring the gift of freedom on grateful subjects elsewhere. Of course, the vast propaganda resources at the disposal of the ruling class were set in motion to tell the world that the colonial insurgents were merely “bandits” and “terrorists”, to shock public opinion with dreadful stories of the “atrocities” of the “savages” (saying nothing about the really savage atrocities perpetrated by the imperial forces). Here, too, however, they had to learn that the world had changed; that the colonial national movements had themselves learnt the value and methods of presenting the truth to the world, through countries friendly to their cause and the United Nations. Even in the case of the Kikuyu resistance movement in Kenya, the so-called Mau-Mau, which suffered by being organised on tribal instead of national lines, by employing primitive weapons against firearms, by a complete lack of external contacts which could put its case to the world, the British found they had

embarked upon a full-scale military operation which dragged on month after month, which exposed the true nature of British imperialism to the colonial and outside world, and which solved not a single one of the real problems of Kenya, rather aggravating all of them. And meanwhile Britain's financial resources were being strained to breaking point, and British conscript lads from working-class homes becoming more and more restive at the dirty job they had been sent out to the jungle to do.

Factors like this forced upon Britain's rulers the realisation that there was indeed no alternative to the liquidation of the empire; and it is to their credit that they retreated in time, in good order, and with something like grace. There began the long procession of deputations of colonial leaders to Whitehall to negotiate the terms, degree and timing of independence of their countries.

With the French empire the picture differed in its detail; but in its essence it was the same. The French imperialists lack the flexibility and sensitiveness of their British counterparts. It took a series of staggering and humiliating defeats by Arab and Asian patriots over the French military forces (not really French at all, but consisting mainly of Nazi mercenaries recruited in West Germany) culminating in the brilliant victory of Dien Bien Phu, before the French bourgeoisie was forced to swallow the unpalatable truth that the game was up. They, too (with the exception of the special case of Algeria) decided to cut their losses and save what they could while there was yet time. The super-salesman de Gaulle was launched upon a lightning grand tour of Africa to offer surprised African politicians that which, only the day before, thousands of Vietnamese and Malagasy patriots had been butchered for demanding. Many of the African leaders whom he approached were compromising bourgeois nationalists or feudal aristocrats who had long accommodated themselves to collaboration with imperialism. Others, lacking experience or profound political understanding, seized the partial and limited independence that was being offered, not taking the opportunity to press for full and immediate independence. Only the astute Sekou Touré of the Guinea Democratic Party, trained in Marxism and the tough school of trade union organisation, had the wit to see that the imperialists were negotiating from weakness, and to press home the advantage for his people. He called upon Guineans to vote "No" in de Gaulle's referendum, and went ahead to establish a truly independent Republic of Guinea. France spitefully tried, by economic and other forms of sabotage, to undermine and wreck the foundations of

the young Republic. But she stopped short of war. She did not dare. And, with the aid of Ghana and the socialist countries, Guinea survived French sabotage and went ahead to build on strong and firm foundations—for each country which achieves freedom from imperialism is both a roadbreaker and a source of strength for those to follow.

It is not my purpose here to trace in full the history of the national liberation revolution—though that is indeed a tremendously important and urgent task—but rather to illustrate the complexity of the theme, and the danger of over-facile generalisations.

At the time of the first Pan-African Conference to be held in Africa, at the end of 1958, pacifist illusions were rife. Great influence was wielded by English clergymen and Indian Gandhi-ites who attended in force, and this influence was reflected in resolutions advocating “non-violence” in each and every circumstance, and “passive resistance” as the sovereign panacea for all political ills.

Since then, life and the facts of living history have taught the African people the fallacy and the danger of this over-simplified and schematic approach. We have seen, year after year, the brutality and ferocity of France’s “dirty war” against Algeria. We have learnt the rich lesson of the Congo where King Baudouin went out to hand over gracefully the *outward formalities* of independence—but the moment the Congolese attempted to touch the holy of holies, their own rich resources seized by the imperialists, just as in the case of the Suez Canal and the American monopolies in Cuba, the imperialist beast of prey bared its claws. The Congo was plunged into strife and bloodshed, Africa’s hero and martyr Patrice Lumumba was foully murdered, with many of his comrades; international imperialism joined in an unholy alliance to drown Congo independence in blood. We have seen, and are still seeing today, what the rabid Portuguese fascists have done and are doing in Angola.

The illusion of non-violence as a universal and unvarying principle has all but disappeared. Today almost everybody but the most unrealistic and dogmatic of pacifists acknowledges, in the words of President Bourguiba, that “*in the national liberation struggle all methods are respectable.*”

PRIVILEGED WHITE MINORITIES: A SOURCE OF ARMED CONFLICT

Certainly, it is *possible* for the transition of colonies to independence to be achieved by non-violent means.

This possibility is greatly enhanced by the existence and ever-

growing strength of the socialist camp, vigilant and on guard for peace and national independence. It is also enhanced by the swelling ranks of already independent states of Africa and Asia, generously extending the hand of solidarity to their brothers and sisters who still bear the colonial yoke.

The more militant, formidable, well-organised and united are the ranks of the people in any colony, the less likely are the imperialists to risk the perilous adventure of seeking to hold it in subjection by violence.

Yet, it would be folly to underestimate the readiness, even today, of imperialism to resort to armed violence to suppress national revolutions, to prevent politically independent countries from advancing to the further goal of economic independence, or even to attempt to set back the clock of history and re-colonise countries which have already advanced along the road to freedom.

It is impossible to predict with exactness the path of future developments. The future is uncharted territory; there is no map of all its hills and valleys. Yet the science of historical materialism, of Marxism-Leninism, furnishes us with a compass which shows us the general direction in which to advance, the main trends and features of this unmapped territory of the future.

We can see that imperialism is more likely to resort to methods of armed violence when the stakes are high enough to warrant the risk and expense; when their actual or potential investments and profits are large. "My crime," said King Moshoeshoe, when British and Boer imperialism combined to rob Lesotho of her lush western farmlands, "is that I have a rich and fertile country." That, too, was the "crime" of uranium-rich Congo, rubber-rich Malaya; of Egypt, when she dared to fortify nominal with real independence by restoring the Suez Canal to the nation.

Not only financial but also military and strategic considerations in relation to cold war plans and "imperial defence" also play their part in determining whether imperialism will embark upon the gamble of colonial wars. Hence the agony of Cyprus, France's standing insult to Tunis at Bizerta, and Britain's stubborn intransigence in Singapore. But nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles are fast making nonsense of the outmoded strategical conceptions involved in these bases, just as the collapse of the whole colonial system is making nonsense of the old-fashioned ideas of "imperial defence." It is becoming more and more obvious that the only real "defence" is total disarmament and lasting peace; if

there is to be world war the bases will be without military value, and a terrible menace to the populations around them.

An important factor impeding peaceful transitions to freedom and democracy in African countries and making them potential sources of bitter armed conflict, is the presence of large White minorities, with powerful vested interests, privileges and monopolies, enjoying strong links with foreign imperialism, and subjecting the African populations to ruthless oppression and terror. Such has been the position in Algeria and Kenya, in the Rhodesias and the whole of Southern Africa.

It is particularly the position in Verwoerd's White Republic of South Africa and its unjustly stolen colony of South West Africa. Here colonialism of a special type prevails, with a powerful monopoly finance-capitalist class of local Whites, enjoying the support, by and large, of a privileged population of three million, has very much the relation to the non-White majority that Western imperialist countries have towards their colonies abroad.

Is it possible, despite these formidable adverse circumstances, for non-violent transition to national liberation to take place in South Africa? Or are its people bound, inevitably, to go through the fires and suffering of civil war before freedom can be established?

In this article I have been concerned to sketch the general background and approach to this problem. I propose, in a further article in the next issue of this journal, to discuss the special aspects of the problem which present themselves in South Africa.

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Tropical Africa Before the Colonialists

A MARXIST APPROACH

By JEAN SURET-CANALE

This interesting article has been translated from the original in *Recherches Internationales*, a Marxist bi-monthly journal published in Paris.

The writer, Jean Suret-Canale, is head of the *Institute of Research and Documentation* in Guinea, and a prominent public figure in that country. He is also author of *L'Afrique Noire*.

In contrast to the Mediterranean and Far Eastern countries, Africa did not experience the successive stages first of slavery, then of feudalism. Whatever the peculiarities of their history, by and large the majority of the now colonial and semi-colonial peoples were at the feudal stage of their history when imperialist colonisation overtook them. From this point of view, there are certain common characteristics, over and above the differences, between North America, South and East Asia and South America; colonial exploitation was super-imposed on formerly feudal or semi-feudal regimes. The struggle for national liberation, therefore, is to a greater or lesser extent tied to the struggle against the survivals of feudalism. National Independence and Land Reform are the principal slogans of the anti-imperialist and agrarian revolutions in these countries.

In relation to this general picture, tropical Africa shows some important peculiarities.

PRODUCTIVE FORCES

Let us try to draw up a list of the essential elements which will enable us to define the level of the productive forces in pre-colonial tropical Africa.

(1) With rare exceptions (e.g. groups reduced to a few thousand individuals like the Pygmies of the Congo forest or the Bushmen of Southern Africa), the primitive phase, where hunting and food-

gathering supply the basis for life, had passed everywhere. Agriculture, sometimes cattle-raising, and in certain cases the combination under widely differing conditions of both agriculture and cattle-raising, supplied the material of production.

Contrary to the summary judgments made by some colonisers, African agriculture was not a primitive, unwieldy agriculture; it was relatively perfected, reflecting the experience of a thousand years, and adapted to the conditions of soil and climate. If, in sparsely populated areas where the cultivators had vast areas at their disposal, the methods of extensive agriculture they practised gave the area a disorganised appearance, this was not in itself a sign that agriculture was primitive. Extensive farming has the advantage—when sufficient land is available—of requiring less effort.

But extensive farming was by no means the only type practised in Africa. Where it was necessary, the African populations knew how to develop intensive farming systems, with crop rotation and the use of manure to enrich the soil. This was the case amongst the rice-growers of the Guinean coast and among some mountain peoples, as, for example, the peoples of the Atakora, and the Bamileke in the Cameroons.

The antiquity of African agriculture is shown by the fact that many cultivated crop species are of indigenous origin, such as sorghum, most of the varieties of millet (mabela), fonio and local varieties of rice. The plants imported from Asia or America have in many cases only been used as substitutes for local varieties which were less productive and have been abandoned.

It was because of their habits of work which were adapted to the conditions of tropical agriculture, that the black people of Africa were the victims of the slave traffic to supply the plantations of North America.

(2) Another important fact which characterises the level of the productive forces is the important and early development of the use of iron in tropical Africa. It seems that iron was the first metal used here, without an intermediary age of bronze or copper. There are natural reasons for this. Copper is rare in West Africa; iron ore, on the contrary, is very widespread.

(3) The existence of a highly developed agriculture, and the development of such techniques as iron-working, imply in themselves a high level of productive forces and therefore of the possibility of a division of labour, which is itself a means to raise this level. Agriculture produced enough to ensure the subsistence of specialised artisans, such as blacksmiths, weavers, etc.

Alongside these positive elements we can cite a certain number of negative elements.

Firstly, the close inter-relation between agriculture and cattle-raising, which is characterised by the use of animal power in agriculture, did not exist; the plough and the swing plough (actually not well adapted to African soil conditions) were unknown. The basic agricultural implement was, and still is today, a hand tool—the hoe, or *daba* to use the local name. The wheel remained unknown, either as a means of transportation (wheelbarrow or cart) or as a means of irrigation (*noria*).

The limited development of commercial exchange did not encourage the raising of the level of the productive forces (and also reflected their weakness). This inadequate development is mainly shown by the absence of a currency which served as a general medium of exchange. Units of currency, such as weights of gold powder, cowrie shells, iron bolts (*Guinzées* from the forests of Guinea), and heads of slaves were used. At the same time units such as salt bars and pieces of cloth (Guinean) were used as articles of barter. The simultaneous use of different instruments of exchange and of inefficient currency shows that commercial transactions had a limited importance.

PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS

The state of production relationships corresponds to the level of these productive forces we have outlined above.

The most primitive phase, where hunting and food-gathering supplies man with the essentials of existence, corresponds in its production relations to *primitive communism*. The absence of any surplus product necessitates the solidarity of all the members of the group, and makes the exploitation of man by man impossible. With agriculture, sometimes cattle-raising, its metallurgy and artisans, pre-colonial Africa had almost everywhere passed the stage of *primitive communism*. Production assured more than just the minimum necessary for man's survival; it created a surplus.

But this surplus created only the possibility of the exploitation of man by man, not the necessity for it. It could be used as a reserve in case of war, famine or other catastrophe. It could be used to perfect the division of labour. On the other hand, its limited character was not very favourable to a marked development of production relations.

Thus we see that societies of pre-colonial black Africa, judging by the level of the productive forces whose contradictory elements

are described above, are forms of transition from primitive communism to class societies. We see powerful survivals of primitive communism in the strong solidarity of members of the social unit on the level of the patriarchal family, the clan, or the village; and particularly, we see powerful survivals in the absence of private ownership of the land, which continues to this day except in towns and those regions which have developed under the influence of colonisation.

However, side by side with these survivals of primitive communism, we see everywhere the beginning of social differentiation, and the formation of antagonistic classes. This differentiation shows itself in two ways: on the one hand, in patriarchal slavery; on the other in what we call "elementary feudalism". These forms did not arise everywhere, nor everywhere to the same degree.

Let us take the case of the Fang in the South Cameroons and Gabon. Before colonisation they did not practise slavery; in their language they had no word for slavery. In Guinea, the Coniagui and the Bessari did not begin to have slaves until the appearance of the European slave traders. Even then, they had practically no slaves; if they took prisoners and did not kill them, they sold them to the white slave-traders.

Elementary feudalism which we have discussed did not exist everywhere, nor everywhere in the same forms. To use the same examples: among the Fang, the Coniagui or the Kissi of the Guinean forest region, feudalism did not exist. Each village or patriarchal family formed a small, independent, political unit, without a ruler and without a chief in the feudal sense of the term.

We know, however, that in the regions of the Sudan more than two thousand years ago, the Empire of Ghana definitely had class distinction. There were slaves, and a hierarchy of dignitaries, which corresponds to what we have called elementary feudalism. The state had appeared, and functionaries of the Emperor collected taxes on the gold trade on his behalf.

THE PATRIARCHAL FAMILY

The mixed and transitory character of pre-colonial African society is shown in its basic organism, the fundamental cell of society; namely the patriarchal (or extended) family, a grouping of people related through either the male or the female line, who form an economic unit and work some particular piece of land under the direction of the patriarch—that is, the oldest man. In each village there is at least one, and generally several, patriarchal

families, who form a social unit and have rights to a particular area of land. In so far as class conflicts develop, they do so within the framework of the patriarchal society which has developed directly out of primitive communism.

The type of slavery particular to African societies was patriarchal slavery; the slave was not the property of the individual, as in the more highly developed forms of slavery, but was the collective property of the patriarchal family. Not only does he belong to the family, but he becomes integrated into it. Generally he is identified with the other members of the family, and with almost equal rights.

As for elementary forms of feudalism, these develop less as a function of individuals than as a function of family groups. From relationships of alliance and association between clans inherited from primitive communism, to relationships of subordination ranging from patronage to real serfdom, we can see numerous varieties and different stages of transition. But privileges or duties apply to the clan as a whole, or to the extended family.

INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS

Within those African societies which are relatively differentiated, class contradictions have an antagonistic character. But even in the least developed societies, a number of contradictions exist. Naturally they are not yet antagonistic and irreconcilable. Yet they are becoming more marked, and they prepare the coming of social classes. The class conflicts which result from them act in their turn on these various contradictions and give them new features.

Where class contradictions are not very highly developed, *non-antagonistic* contradictions often play a major historic role. Without going into detail, we will mention some of them. There are, for example, contradictions related to the division of labour, and in the first place—because we are dealing with the first form in which the division of labour manifests itself—contradictions between men and women. The dowry system (*lobola*), which has become more and more pure wife-buying, has helped to degrade woman's social position and has reduced her almost to a state of slavery. This contradiction develops with the individual economic superiority of the man.

Another major *non-antagonistic* contradiction is that between the young and the old. Almost everywhere the generations are organised into age groups, among which social functions and collective labour, both agricultural and military, are distributed. The

possibility of individual accumulation of wealth favours the old to an ever increasing extent, and encourages them to monopolise positions of power. The younger men, those under forty years of age, are reduced more and more to subordinate positions.

Again within the framework of the division of labour, we see contradictions between those who work the soil—that is, the majority—and the specialists (blacksmiths, witch-doctors etc.) who are sometimes organised into castes which do not intermarry. These contradictions are expressed in feelings of contempt and hostility.

On a larger scale we can see contradictions between agricultural and pastoral populations. Similar contradictions frequently exist between clans or tribes, and are often expressed by war.

In certain regions, there is a contradiction between the system of relationships and the economic reality on which the family is based. This is where relationships stem from the mother—that is, where the children belong not to the father's clan, but to that of the mother; the chief of the clan is the maternal uncle. Under this system, the fruits of a man's labour and that of his sons would not go to his sons on his death, but would go to his nephews—that is, his sister's sons. The contradictions arising from this system get more acute as the accumulation of wealth increases, and particularly the accumulation of the means of production, such as plantations etc.

These class contradictions are antagonistic in the sense that no compromise is possible between them. They are contradictions that exist in slave, feudal or capitalist societies.

It is obvious that, in pre-colonial African society, where there are classes whose interests are diametrically opposed—as, for example, slaves and freemen, lords and vassals or serfs—class contradictions *do* exist. But because of the strong survivals of primitive communism, these class contradictions usually remain undeveloped, and do not become acute. An example of this is in patriarchal slavery. As we showed earlier, the slave before the coming of the European slave trader was integrated into the family where his position was only slightly inferior to that of the real members of the family, and his duties were only slightly more onerous. To the extent that the surplus produced was small, there was little exploitation. Often patriarchal slavery came close to primitive communism. Among the Lobi, when a captive was brought into the family, a ceremony was carried out which was analagous to that performed when a baby was born. The captive was presented

as a new child. Between adoption which brings added manpower to the community and adds strength to the group, and exploitation of the captive for the profit of the community, there were many intermediate forms.

Another result of the survival of primitive communism is the fact that, while the patriarchal family uses the manpower of the captive, it also has the responsibility of ensuring his survival even during times of famine or other difficulty. This "insurance" was not without advantages for the captives, and helped limit the antagonism between masters and slaves.

In elementary feudalism we can observe the same kind of phenomena. Between relationships of alliance between clans—for the exchange of women necessitated by rules requiring marriage outside the clan, for working a determined area of land, or for military alliance—and the relationships of vassaldom or serfdom, all the forms of transition are found.

Little by little, the chiefs lifted themselves out of the primitive community. In many African societies there were no chiefs with permanent powers over the other members of the community. The functions of the land chief (who was responsible for the division of land between the families and the carrying out of religious or magic rites to ensure the success of agricultural undertakings) and those of the war chief—sometimes combined but often separate—were limited in nature and in duration. Aside from his functions, the chief was an individual like the others, with no rights over the other members of the community. If there were privileges, they often showed themselves in the form of prohibitions and obligations of a religious character, and were often exceedingly unpleasant.

For example, among certain groups of North Togoland, in mountains where it is frequently cold, chiefs were forbidden to wear clothes; often chiefs could not cross or look upon water—and thus could not move about—or could not eat in the sight of other people, etc. By disobeying these prohibitions, the chief or king would bring bad luck to the community. In time of catastrophe, such as drought, the chief who had the religious responsibility of ensuring good harvests was held responsible, and could be stripped of his position, or killed.

In some regions (e.g. Yoruba country) the kingship was temporary, and was usually terminated by the killing of the king, either at the end of a pre-determined period or when the responsible dignitaries decided that he was no longer able to carry out his functions adequately.

The chiefs did not live very differently from their subjects. The only difference in the majority of cases was that, aside from their military, political and religious duties, the chiefs were partly or wholly exempted from productive work. As long as there was no possibility of making a show of luxury, the chiefs had no reason to push the exploitation of their subjects and to try and increase the dues (in kind) designed to support them and their court.

We should note that this exploitation—as in the case of patriarchal slavery—had an opposite side to it; the authority of the chiefs or kings was a function of the splendour with which they treated their subjects, of the consumable or durable goods which they gave to them at the times of festivities. Tradition says that the royal family of Dahomey originally had its supremacy recognised by the splendour of the banquets it offered to rival families. Thus what the chief took from his subjects was destined to be redistributed to them during religious festivals, or in time of need. In this sense, there was as much circulation of wealth as exploitation proper.

THE RISE OF THE STATE

This incompletely developed character of the *antagonistic* contradictions is reflected in the forms of state. The state, which is a product of the antagonism between classes, did not exist everywhere in pre-colonial Africa. Some peoples, some areas, did not have any form of state until the colonial conquest. However, in some areas it appeared early—in the first millennium of our era in the case of Ghana.

The reason for the existence of the state is to dominate class contradictions in the interest of the dominant class. It also fulfils other functions which do not directly reflect class antagonisms. However, these antagonisms mark them more or less deeply and give them a state character: the management of the collective interests of the social group, defence against external enemies, organisation of public works, the management of reserves for use in case of need, etc. These functions which do not stem directly from class antagonisms have a special relative importance in the states of pre-colonial Africa, particularly before the fifteenth century. It is this which explains the stability of the African states before the fifteenth century. These states used the moral forces which assured the cohesion of the clan on a larger geographical scale. As a result, the apparatus of coercion was relatively small; a professional army does not appear before this time.

The contradictions of the societies based on the patriarchal communities have played a considerable historical role. Thus in the nineteenth century, the movement of Tidjania of El Hadj Omar can be explained to a large degree on the basis of the contradictions which existed at Fouta-Toro between the cadres of the patriarchal family (chiefs and patriarchs), and the young, the women and the ex-captives, who wished to free themselves. It was these elements who fled their countries in their thousands to join Tidjania in his great adventure. On the other hand, the chiefs of Fouta-Toro showed themselves irreducibly hostile towards him, prevented him from spreading his empire on the shores of Senegal, and called on Faidherbe's French troops for help against him.

In contemporary times, certain religious movements such as Mouridism in Senegal and Hamallism in the Sudan found their initial support amongst those sections of the population which bore the brunt of the double oppression of colonisation and the patriarchal system. In the same way, the youth and the women have often played a decisive role in the development and action of the R.D.A.*

INFLUENCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE

Finally, in order to explain the internal contradictions of pre-colonial African society exactly, we must stress the indirect but considerable effect of the slave trade from the fifteenth century onwards. Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries Africa did not experience direct colonisation except along its coasts. But in reality, though contact with Europe was indirect, it had profoundly disturbed the course of evolution. The results were essentially negative. This contact was expressed—so far as Africa is concerned—in the one-sided decimation of the most direct form of the productive forces—men, and particularly of the most robust and healthy who were exported as slaves to the American plantations.

By this means the development of the productive forces was held back. This was manifested also in another way; henceforth the most lucrative activity for those who wished for riches was no longer to work the land or to get others to work it—in other words, to carry out or encourage productive labour. The way to get rich was to make war and capture slaves. Thus the social differentiation

* R.D.A.: The *Rassemblement Democratique Africain*, a mass national liberation movement which existed in most former French colonies prior to the winning of political independence. Many of its former leaders today head the governments of African states in the areas once included in French Africa.

within African society developed not within the framework of a developing production, but in the framework of a destructive activity, with the growing loss of living forces of productive activity.

The slave traders brought nothing in exchange which could make good this loss. The goods they brought were almost valueless and without productive use (alcohol, shoddy small goods, etc.) or useful only for making war (guns, powder, etc.). The only positive effect of this contact—and that indirect—was the introduction of American cultivated plants to Africa. But of what weight is this one positive effect, when balanced against the growing insecurity of the cultivators, henceforth menaced not only by natural calamities but also by the unceasing raids of the slave hunters?

Thus, against a background of growing misery, the antagonisms within African society became accentuated—antagonisms between tribes, between clans or families, between oppressors and oppressed. The chief pre-occupation from this time on was to reduce adversaries or subordinates to the level of captives, and thus to be able to sell them to the slave dealers.

It is in this context that the disappearance of the great empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai is explained. Within these great states, the relative political stability which characterised the preceding centuries disappeared. From now on, each petty war chief or each leader of a band which is able to muster some guns will go and attack his neighbours rather than work the land peacefully. After having captured and sold his brethren, he will himself fall victim to the same fate, and find himself on the way to the slave markets with his feet in shackles. The stability of the great empires gave way to the break-up into many small chieftanships, and to incessant warfare.

In Europe during the same period, the contradictions also became more acute, and the position of the workers became more miserable as capitalist relations developed and spread. But at the same time—and this is the essential point—new techniques appeared; there was a tremendous development of the productive forces. The positive aspect was greater than the negative, and progress took place, a qualitative transformation, the passage from feudal to capitalist society.

But in Africa, the conditions created by the slave trade blocked the evolution which had begun in preceding centuries. With its contradictory effects—with the emphasis of the internal contradictions, but at the same time with ruin and depopulation—the slave trade froze African society in its primitive forms.

Africa and Communism

By R. PALME DUTT

May I at the outset express warmest greetings and congratulations to *The African Communist*, which is fulfilling such a great role in spreading the understanding of Communism in Africa.

There is no doubt that the ideas of Communism are taking deep root in all the countries of Africa today. Nevertheless, many misconceptions still exist. It may be helpful to try to clear some of these.

COMMUNISM AND NATIONAL LIBERATION

Some spokesmen of the national liberation movement try to counterpose Communism and national liberation, as if these were two opposing conceptions. This is unjustified.

Communism and the world communist movement from the outset, throughout the more than a century of growth and development since the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, has always fought in the forefront for the national liberation of all subject peoples oppressed by Western imperialism.

Marx said: "The nation which oppresses another nation forges its own chains".

While Western apologists of capitalism offered mythical pictures of the origins of capitalism from thrift and savings, Marx showed how the foundations of capitalism in Western Europe and North America were built on colonial slavery, the slave trade and the plunder of Asia and Africa.

"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalised the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. . . . The treasures captured outside Europe by undisguised looting, enslavement and murder, floated back to the mother country and were there turned into capital" (Marx, *Capital*, I. ch.xxxi).

Marx and Engels gave enthusiastic support to the militant national movement of revolt of the Irish people, expressed in Fenianism in their day, against British imperialism. Marx said that the British working class would "never accomplish anything" until Ireland (that is, the colonial people ruled by Britain) won independence. Thus the thought of Marx placed national liberation in the forefront for the fulfilment of the aim of the victory of socialism.

Marx devoted some of his principal writings to India in the early eighteen-fifties, before the Indian War of Independence of 1857, and predicted the victory of Indian national liberation from British rule already before the formation of the Indian National Congress.

Marx exposed British imperialism in China, and in 1850 predicted that, when the European reactionaries sought to find a final bastion of reaction in China, they would discover on the Great Wall of China the inscription: "Republic of China; Liberty, Equality, Fraternity". A brilliant prediction almost exactly a century before the final victory of the Chinese People's revolution, led by the Chinese Communist Party, against imperialism.

Lenin carried forward these teachings of Marx in the era of modern imperialism in the twentieth century. Lenin exposed without mercy the pygmy West European so-called "socialists" (really servants of imperialism) who confined their outlook to Western Europe and North America and looked disdainfully on the rest of the peoples of the world as "backward". Lenin on the contrary always brought into the forefront the struggle of the oppressed masses of Asia and Africa as representing the majority of mankind and the key to the future joint victory over imperialism. The victory of the Soviet revolution annulled all the unequal treaties of Tsarist imperialism and brought the first victories of national liberation of all the peoples previously oppressed by Tsarist imperialism. Lenin personally drew up the famous "Theses on the National and Colonial Question" of the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920. It was in Baku in 1922 that was held the first Congress of all the Oppressed Peoples of the East. The torch of the victorious Soviet revolution, and the inspiration of the teachings of Lenin and Communism, have swept forward the national liberation movement in all countries to new heights in our era and to the present extending victories.

Communists in all countries in the world, equally in the imperialist countries and in the colonial countries and newly independent countries still threatened by imperialism, fight in the forefront, in unity with all supporters of national liberation, for the complete victory of national independence, for the final defeat of all colonialism and neo-colonialism, and for complete economic and political independence from imperialism. This is no temporary tactical line, as enemies pretend. The record of the world communist movement over a century proves the contrary. British Communists, originally in the British Socialist Party in the eighteen-

eighties, and then in the British Communist Party since 1920, were fighting for the complete independence of India from British rule before even the leaders of the Indian National Congress had adopted this goal. The consistent Communist role in the forefront of the fight for national liberation from imperialism derives from the basic theory of Communism, which is directed to the aim of complete political and social and economic liberation of mankind through a classless society and sees national liberation as an essential step along this path.

COMMUNISM A WORLD THEORY

Critics sometimes say that Marxism is a West European theory, based on and applying to Western advanced industrial countries, but unsuitable for the very different conditions of African countries. This is an error.

When the Bolsheviks began to organise their party in Russia on the basis of Marxism, their critics used to say that Marxism was suitable for Western European industrial countries, but wholly unsuitable for a backward predominantly peasant country, like Tsarist Russia. The victory of the Bolshevik revolution proved them wrong.

When the Chinese Communist Party was founded at its first Congress of twelve delegates, including Mao Tse Tung, in 1921, their critics declared that Communism or Marxism was suitable for a European country like Russia, but wholly unsuitable for an Asiatic country, since Asian conditions and the "Asian soul" were different. The victory of the Chinese people's revolution twenty-eight years later, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, proved them wrong.

Unabashed by their defeats, some of these critics now try to argue that the victory of Communism over one third of the world is all wrong and contrary to the principles of Marxism, since Marx, they declare, taught that the socialist revolution ought to have begun in the advanced industrial countries of Western Europe. This argument only betrays their ignorance of Marxism.

Marx already in the eighteen-fifties, after the defeat of the 1848 revolutions in Western and Central Europe, declared that the development of capitalism on a world scale had now transformed the perspective. The victory of the revolution, he wrote, could no longer be seen in terms of "this little corner" represented by Western Europe, but must develop henceforth on a world scale, so that the revolt of the peoples of the world against capitalist domination would bring "the death knell of bourgeois society". Already in his

later years Marx was pointing to Russia as the starting point of the revolution: "This time the revolution will begin in the East" (Marx in 1877). Similarly Engels in 1890 declared that "Russia has become the vanguard of the revolutionary movement".

Lenin tore to pieces the West European and American falsifiers of Marxism, who pretended that Marx taught that the socialist revolution must begin in the most advanced industrial countries of Western Europe or North America. He showed that imperialism would break first at its weakest point, in Russia, where there was already an advanced organised industrial working class, even though limited in numbers, guided by Marxism, and not corrupted by imperialist bribery and opportunism as in Western Europe and the United States.

After the victory of the Bolshevik revolution, representatives of the West European distortion of Marxism, like Trotsky, preached that the Soviet revolution could only survive if the socialist revolution conquered in the countries of Western Europe, and that this must be the next stage of the international socialist revolution. Lenin mercilessly dismissed this banking on a speedy socialist revolution in the West as "a fairy tale". Assessing the prospects of the world socialist revolution, in the last article that he ever wrote, in 1923, Lenin declared that the next stage would see the victorious revolt of the oppressed masses of Asia and Africa, the majority of mankind, against imperialist domination, and that this would make certain the downfall of imperialism and the world victory of socialism:

"In the last analysis, the upshot of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe, and it is precisely this majority that during the past few years has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured" (Lenin, "Better Fewer, But Better", March 1923).

This is the true teaching of Communism on the path of the world revolution. The record of these past four decades has abundantly proved the truth of this prediction.

COMMUNISM A GUIDE TO ACTION

The fact that Communism is a world theory, whose principles apply to all countries, does not mean that Communism is a rigid formula to be applied to every country according to a single dogmatic scheme. There will be great variations according to concrete

national conditions. Communism is a living and creative scientific theory which draws its conclusions on the basis of the most careful study of concrete conditions in different countries. The Chinese Revolution did not exactly reproduce the Russian Revolution. The People's Democracies in Eastern Europe brought new features. In our time the Cuban Revolution is revealing new forms of development, of great significance for all countries engaged in the struggle against imperialism. New forms are arising in countries like Ghana, Guinea and Mali, where the ideas of Marxism-Leninism are winning wide attention and increasing influence.

On the basis of theoretical understanding and the experience of all countries Communism is able to demonstrate certain principles of historical development from the existing class society to the future classless society, which are valid for all countries, whatever the differences in the specific forms of their realisation. Such are the teachings on the role of classes and the class struggle, the democratic revolution, the character of capitalism and imperialism, the nature of the state, the necessity of the power of the working people or dictatorship of the proletariat in order to build socialism, and the advance from socialism to communism.

Communism is able to give present guidance at each stage of the struggle, however different this stage in different countries, on the basis of its social theory and analysis of the role of classes. On this basis Communism is able to explain why there arise African traitors like Tshombe, who may have black skins and be African by race, but in reality belong to the imperialists; why the national bourgeoisie often vacillates; why the working class, in alliance with the mass of the peasantry and the revolutionary intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie, constitute the most consistent anti-imperialist fighters for the complete victory of the national democratic revolution, and for the advance to the tasks of national economic reconstruction and the building of socialism.

UNITY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION AND THE WORLD SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Lenin said:

“Whereas formerly, before the beginning of the epoch of world revolution, the movement for national liberation was part of the general democratic movement, now, after the victory of the Soviet revolution in Russia and the beginning of the epoch of the world revolution, the movement for national liberation is part of the world proletarian revolution.”

The truth of this is demonstrated by the whole present epoch.

The understanding of this is vital for the success of every national liberation movement in every country.

Prior to 1917 every national revolt without exception was crushed by the overwhelming superior might of imperialism.

The victory of the Soviet revolution brought the first victories of national liberation, when the peoples formerly oppressed by Tsarism won their freedom and have today sped forward from the uttermost colonial backwardness, illiteracy and poverty to become industrially and culturally advanced nations in many respects on a higher level than many European capitalist nations.

The victories of socialism in the second world war, the establishment of the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe, and the victory of the Chinese revolution, extending socialism to one third of the world, have permanently weakened imperialism and made possible the sweeping victories of national liberation during the present period. Thanks to the strength of the socialist third of the world, the majority of former colonial peoples, whose previous revolts were always crushed, have now been able to win the establishment of politically independent states, even though in isolation they would be weak and helpless.

Today even tiny and weak newly independent States can successfully defy the threats and aggression of great imperialist powers, because the strength of the socialist camp stands by their side. This was shown in the Suez War, when the once all-powerful British and French imperialists had to abandon suddenly their aggression against the much smaller and weakly armed Egypt, following the Soviet Note to Britain (the so-called "Rocket" Note). Similarly, the heroic Cuban people were able to defeat the U.S.-organised invasion; and the mightiest imperialist power, the United States, has so far hesitated to launch full-scale war against little Cuba, not because they lack the strength or the will, but because they fear the firm solidarity of the Soviet Union and the anti-imperialist majority of the world on the side of Cuba.

Similarly, in the task of economic reconstruction after the victory of political independence the socialist countries are able to give practical help on an increasing scale to the newly independent nations to overcome the backwardness of colonial economy and build up their economic independence through industrialisation. Imperialism has always strangled the economic development of colonial peoples, holding them back as sources of raw materials and as markets to exploit, and hindering industrialisation. Nowadays the imperialists try to boast of their "aid" to newly independent states,

but an analysis of this "aid" would show that the overwhelmingly greater proportion of it is either military, to draw the newly independent states into imperialist military blocs, or subsidies to counter-revolutionary governments, to hold the people down, or expenditure to facilitate exploitation by the big imperialist monopolies. Only in the most recent period the example of socialist aid in industrialisation and reconstruction has compelled the imperialists to attempt a very little in this direction in competition; but the proportion of this is minute compared to socialist aid. Further, the terms of imperialist "aid" are always onerous and in practice accompanied by conditions to compel policies acceptable to imperialism, such as entry into imperialist military blocs or other imperialist combinations like the Common Market. Socialist aid enables the newly independent States to resist such blackmail pressure.

In all these ways the co-operation of the socialist countries and the newly independent States is vital for the success of national liberation and the maintenance of national independence of the new States.

IMPERIALISM'S MAIN IDEOLOGICAL WEAPON IS ANTI-COMMUNISM

Imperialism seeks in every way to disrupt the national liberation movement, and to disrupt the co-operation of the newly independent States and the socialist countries, that is, to disrupt the anti-imperialist majority in the world.

The resolution on Neo-Colonialism adopted by the Third All-African Peoples' Conference in March, 1961, exposes this new technique of imperialism, after recognition of independence, to seek to maintain "an indirect and subtle form of domination by political, economic, social, military or technical means".

The main ideological weapon of imperialist neo-colonialism is anti-communism.

This is always the familiar weapon of reaction. This was the principal weapon of Hitler and fascism, expressed in their "Anti-Comintern Pact". This is today the principal propaganda weapon of United States imperialism, expressed in their "cold war", which is the successor to the Anti-Comintern Pact and uses similar slogans.

The purpose of this strategy is obvious. If the national liberation movement can be divided into supporters and opponents of communism, then imperialism can win its aims by taking advantage of this division. Therefore the imperialists flatter the opponents of

communism, calling them wise and statesmanlike, and giving them every support.

Similarly, if the imperialists can disrupt the anti-imperialist movement of the world, by hindering the co-operation of the socialist countries and the newly independent States (using such fraudulent slogans as "Keep Africa Out of the Cold War" or "Beware of Russian Imperialism"), then the still weak newly independent States would be isolated and at the mercy of imperialism.

For this purpose the imperialists use all kinds of deceitful and sophistical arguments and slogans in order to conceal their real disruptive aims. They seek to distort the positive progressive slogans of the African liberation movement in order to give them a reactionary disruptive content.

For example, "Pan Africanism" as a term has been promulgated by such honoured leaders of African liberation as Dr. Dubois and President Nkrumah to denote the necessity of African unity against imperialism and to express the noble goal of a United Free Africa, replacing the artificial partition and balkanisation imposed by imperialism. But this great aim of All-African liberation, expressed by the All-African Peoples' Conference, is twisted by the agents of imperialism to mean a kind of isolationist African separatism or racial exclusiveness, such as would cut off the great African liberation movement from the world anti-imperialist movement, including the Asian, Latin American and socialist countries.

Similarly, the conception of the "African personality" or "African socialism" has been put forward by spokesmen of African liberation to denote the just aim of the re-emergence of African culture from the destructive suffocating stranglehold of imperialism and to indicate that the advance to socialism in Africa will correspond to concrete conditions and not simply reproduce the experience of European or Asian countries. But again the reactionary agents of imperialism seek to turn this just conception into a theory of African exceptionalism, that is, to argue that the scientific laws of social development, expressed in Marxism, which apply to all other countries in the world, do not apply to Africa. In this way also the attempt is made by reactionaries to conceal their policies of maintaining the old social order under empty phrases about what they are pleased to call "African socialism".

Again, the aim of non-alignment and positive neutrality expresses the just and united policy of the newly independent states to refuse to accept the policies of the imperialist cold war or be drawn into imperialist military blocs. But here also the attempt is made by the

spokesmen of imperialism to twist this just conception into the spurious theory of the so-called "Third Front" equally opposed to "both camps" or "both world blocs". This is a spurious theory, since it is only imperialism which seeks to draw the newly independent States into military blocs. There is no socialist NATO and CENTO and SEATO; the Warsaw Pact is only the common defence of the socialist states formed after NATO in order to meet its threats, and with the proclaimed proposal, constantly repeated, for the simultaneous dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact and their replacement by a European Security Agreement. Hence the propaganda of "equal opposition" to imperialism and socialism represents once again the attempt to disrupt the anti-NATO imperialist majority of the world for the benefit of imperialism.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

The immediate task before the peoples of Africa is not yet the construction of communism. This can only be the outcome of a considerable intervening development to create the conditions for it.

The immediate task is to win complete national independence from imperialism. Over wide regions of Africa, in Southern and Central Africa, colonial slavery still continues. In some regions, as in Congo, Angola and Algeria, imperialism still conducts the most violent armed aggression. The struggle of the people in these regions against imperialism is the common struggle of all African peoples. Also in the newly independent States imperialism still maintains many kinds of indirect influence, penetration or continuing exploitation, as shown in the All-African Peoples' Conference resolution on Neo-Colonialism. Thus it is obvious that the first task in Africa today is to win complete economic and military independence from imperialism.

The second task, bound up with the first, is the task of national economic and social reconstruction. This calls for a vast programme to end the backwardness and poverty of colonial economy, carry through agrarian reforms, develop industrialisation and raise the standards of the people.

All this can only be successfully accomplished if this reconstruction goes hand in hand with broad democratic development, not necessarily in the sense of western parliamentary institutions, but in the sense of drawing in all sections of the people into creative initiative and activity.

Such are the aims expressed in the conception of independent

national democracy, as set out in the 1960 Declaration of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties.

In this way, through the development of independent national democracy, of full independence from imperialism, the conditions are prepared for the advance to socialism.

All these tasks require a united national front, drawing in all progressive sections and classes ready to play their part in the cause of national liberation: the national bourgeoisie, working class, peasantry, students and intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie.

Does this mean that the question of communism and the formation of Communist Parties can only arise at a future stage of development?

No. Also in the present struggle for national liberation and for national reconstruction Communism and Marxism, the politics of the working class and the toiling masses of socialism, has a vital part to play. (1) to represent the interests of the working people at each stage. (2) to fulfil the role of the working class as the most consistent anti-imperialist fighter and combat all betrayals and surrenders to imperialism. (3) to help to guide the movement forward at each stage to the further aim of socialism.

The fulfilment of this essential task requires corresponding organisation. The essence of Marxism-Leninism is the unity of theory and practice. Communists are organised in Communist Parties all over the world. There are now over 80 Communist Parties in the world, covering most countries. The Communist Parties play their part in the common struggle and advance of their peoples: in the battles of national liberation in the colonial countries; in the common struggle against imperialism and for national reconstruction in the newly independent states; in the battles against imperialism and for socialism in the imperialist countries; in the construction of socialism in the newly established socialist countries; and in the transition from socialism to communism in the Soviet Union.

In several African countries Communist Parties already exist. In many others the conditions are becoming manifestly ripe for the formation of Communist Parties. Of course this does not mean that a Communist Party can be formed in a given country by a wave of the hand, without regard to the previous political conditions, the development of the national movement and working class movement, from whose midst it must grow. In some newly independent States the united national movement has developed in the form of a single Party, within which the ideas of Marxism-Leninism have increasing influence. In such circumstances it may

be that the evolution of such parties towards a programme of Marxism-Leninism can represent a special form of development. The question of a Communist Party is not the question of a name, but of the reality. For this further stage of political development the most careful consideration by every African has now become increasingly urgent.

It would of course be highly inappropriate in an article of this character to attempt to discuss the concrete conditions of development in each particular territory in Africa. These problems can only be solved by those engaged in the struggle on the spot. What is evident is that the extension of the understanding of communism, the study of Marxism-Leninism and formation of groups for the study of Marxism-Leninism or of such journals as *The African Communist* and *World Marxist Review*, and through these the developing of corresponding political organisation, whether finding its fulfilment in the immediate formation of Communist Parties or through the development of parties advancing to acceptance of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, has become a vital need for future political development in Africa.

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West Germany threatens world peace. The conclusion of a German peace treaty, designed to eliminate this danger, has become the issue of an important stage in the struggle for peace, now reaching its climax. This issue, and its significance for Africa, is discussed in the following article, specially written for The African Communist. The author is a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party in the German Democratic Republic.

The German Peace Treaty and Africa

By PETER FLORIN

The Potsdam Agreement concluded in 1945 was aimed at replacing the belligerent fascist terror regime by a democratic system which was to cover the whole of Germany. However, backed by the Western Powers, the same imperialists and militarists who had plunged the peoples of the world into the second World War have been able to restore their old power in West Germany. Seventeen monopoly groups, including Krupp, Flick, AEG, Siemens and IG-Farben, hold more than 80.3 per cent of the total share capital, thus controlling the West German economy. *The West German state is headed by a government, twelve of whose members, out of a total of eighteen, used to be faithful servants of Hitler.* The West German Federal Army is commanded by 160 ex-Hitlerite generals, including such notorious and convicted war criminals as Foertsch and Herzog.

For the German imperialist and militarist plans to conquer the world the nations had to pay with the blood of 52 million dead and an estimated cost of £450,000 million. Are they to pay with even far greater sacrifices for the new West German plans to conquer the world in a third World War—an atom war? Or would it not be much better to tame revived West German militarism by concluding a German peace treaty?

Some African politicians think that the struggle against West German imperialism and militarism is an internal affair of the German people—a “family feud” so to say—and that Africa is many miles away from Germany. But do not the West German

militarist atom war plans evoke an immediate and deathly danger for the African peoples as well? Many African countries have NATO bases on their territories. A war unleashed by the West German militarists against the socialist camp would inevitably involve these countries too and expose them to annihilation, against the will of their peoples.

As a first step the West German "Ultras" intend to swallow the German Democratic Republic, to liquidate the socialist achievements in the GDR and to swell and strengthen their war potential for the attack on the USSR and the other socialist states. From these plans springs their "theory" of the liberation of the GDR by means of a so-called little war. The Bonn rulers do not always admit their plans openly. They often try to conceal their intentions by hiding them behind arguments alleging that it is the division of Germany that mainly causes the tensions in Germany, and that it is therefore essential to re-unite Germany first through what they call "free elections".

The tensions are not caused by the existence of two German states. History has taught us that German imperialism waged wars even before Germany was united (the war against France in 1871, for instance) and that this was followed by even bigger wars, at a time when a united German Reich did exist. The question is rather, what *type* of Germany is to emerge—a peace-loving and democratic Germany or an aggressive and imperialist Germany? The imperialists and militarists in West Germany remember very well that, with the aid of so-called free elections, they succeeded in bringing Hitler to power in 1933 and in establishing their bloodthirsty fascist dictatorship over Germany. What they would like to see now is the GDR population overruled with the aid of such elections by those West German sections who are under imperialist influence, the GDR people being subjected to their power and the whole German nation abused for their war aims. But this is never going to happen.

The German people do not need a re-unification *under* the earth, as they would be sure to get it if the Bonn plans of "free elections" and "little war" were put into practice. What they need is a re-unification *on* earth, in a Germany which will secure peace, happiness and prosperity for its people. That is why we, in the GDR, say that, first of all, conditions must be created for re-unification: the taming of West German militarism. So the safeguarding of peace by means of putting a check on the West German "Ultras" has become the main content of the German problem. The beginning of its solution is a German peace treaty.

“WORLD WAR II NOT ENDED”

The opponents of a peace treaty allege that the Soviet and GDR proposals for an early conclusion of a peace treaty with both German states would aggravate the international situation. If this assessment were correct the international situation should have relaxed during recent years because of the absence of a peace treaty. But as a matter of fact, the very opposite has happened. The West German “Ultras” were encouraged in their plans and took advantage of the absence of a peace treaty for intensifying their rearmament. They stepped up their campaign of revenge, espionage and subversive activities against the GDR and the socialist countries, and have been more and more openly pursuing a policy aimed at invading the GDR and “settling accounts” with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

“World War II has not ended yet,” declared the West German War Minister Strauss in a speech in California, on July 25, 1961.

The West German militarists are trying to put into effect what Hitler failed to achieve. They want to realise the criminal expansionist aims of Hitlerite Germany, to set up their “new order” in Europe and throughout the world.

In this connection it is worth recalling a draft map issued by the nazi naval commander-in-chief on July 27th 1940 mapping out the German imperialist territorial claims in Africa. This draft map shows that the German imperialists claimed a huge area stretching right across central Africa and reaching from the Ivory Coast to Kenya, from Tchad and Niger to South-West Africa and Rhodesia. Places like Conakry or Duala in the west, Dar es Salaam and Mombasa in the east, are marked on this map as military bases for the German imperialists.

One of the main initiators for the drafting of these plans which were to establish the fascist colonial empire in Africa is Herr Hasso von Etdorf who, previous to his appointment as Bonn’s ambassador to London, used to be a high official (Ministerial-director) in the West German Foreign Office. He is one of those 84 per cent of leading officials in the Bonn Foreign Office who used to be members of the old nazi gang and who are still carrying on with their malicious practices.

Only a German peace treaty which will legally establish the results of the second World War on the basis of international law is a truly effective means for preventing the West German militarists from any further revenge-seeking and war preparations.

PEACE PLAN

The GDR proposals for such a peace treaty are in accordance with those published by the Soviet Union.

The Peace Plan passed by the People's Chamber (Parliament) on July 6th 1961 sums up the German proposals for a peace treaty. Its general aims are the military neutralisation of Germany and the realisation of the principle of peaceful co-existence applied to the relations between the two German states and to other nations.

The People's Chamber proposes:

1. to set up a German peace commission composed of representatives from the parliaments and governments of both German states.

The commission is to work out

- (a) German proposals for a peace treaty;
 - (b) an agreement of good will for improving relations between the two German states.
2. to transform West Berlin into a free demilitarised and neutral city on the basis of a German peace treaty.
 3. to form a confederation composed of both German states as the only realistic means for the re-unification of Germany along the lines of peaceful co-existence.

By proposing negotiations between the two German states for the purpose of preparing a peace treaty, the GDR has protected the German people's right of self-determination.

The Bonn rulers, however, by signing the Paris agreements, have sold the West German people's freedom of self-determination to the Western imperialists for the sake of getting support for their remilitarisation. West Germany was chained to NATO and subjected to foreign occupation, right up to the year 2005! Article 2 of the "German Treaty" concluded between the three Western Powers and the Bonn government on May 26th 1952 provides that the Western Powers will retain "the rights and responsibilities hitherto exerted or owned by them with regard to Berlin and Germany as a whole, including the re-unification of Germany and a peace settlement".

Article 4 of that same treaty provides that the Western Powers should "retain their rights hitherto exerted or owned with regard to the stationing of armed forces in the Federal Republic". By signing the Brussels Five Power Agreement on March 3rd 1948 the Western Powers have secured for themselves the exertion of this right for the duration of 50 years.

By imposing a ban on plebiscites in West Germany to be held in

connection with such vital issues as the question of a German peace treaty and the re-unification of Germany and its transformation into a peace-loving and democratic state, the West German militarists have once more trampled upon the German people's right of self-determination.

WEST GERMANY VERSUS AFRICA

The West German militarists are trampling upon other nations' right of self-determination as well.

For the "dirty war" of the French imperialists against the Algerian people, for instance, the West German militarists have so far allocated more than 3,000 million marks. Seventy per cent of the members of the French Foreign Legion in Algeria are West Germans. West German monopolies and scientists are taking part in the French nuclear tests in the Sahara. West German airports have served NATO as bases of aggression against the Congo. West Germany supplied the Portuguese colonialists with 10,000 machine guns for the brutal squashing of the Angolan people's right of self-determination.

Although the GDR in the first place advocates a peace treaty to be concluded with both German states and negotiations between the two German states, we leave no doubt about it that, in case the Bonn government continues to refuse a peace treaty and to further pursue its disastrous policy, it will be necessary to conclude a peace treaty with the GDR alone.

Even in this case a German peace treaty would be of great importance—why?

Because the peace treaty, even if only concluded with the GDR, will settle on the basis of international law the existing German frontiers as they are laid down in the Potsdam Agreement. This would deal an immense blow to the West German "Ultras" and also to those aggressive circles in the U.S.A. which are either openly or secretly supporting Bonn.

Such a peace treaty would strengthen the progressive forces in West Germany enabling them to force the Bonn government to change its policies. It will show these forces once more that the GDR is the only guarantor of the German people's national interests and it will inspire their efforts to bring the Bonn "Ultras" to their senses and to remove the obstacles in the way of a step-by-step rapprochement between the two German states and their ultimate peaceful and democratic re-unification.

So this peace treaty would not "cement" the split of Germany,

as it is alleged by Adenauer, Strauss and Brandt propagandists. It will help to overcome the division of Germany.

The German peace plan as it was passed by the People's Chamber proceeds from the point of view that under prevailing conditions an immediate re-unification of the two German states is not possible. It has therefore developed the idea of a German confederation with the object of preventing a further drifting apart of the German nation and with the aim of improving co-operation between the two German states.

These proposals are the only practicable way to solve the German problem in a peaceful manner. They are a continuation of the great efforts made by the GDR in the past to come to negotiations with the Bonn government.

WEST BERLIN

The peace treaty, even if only concluded with the GDR, will mark the beginning of the final solution of the West Berlin problem. West Berlin in recent years has grown into a great source of danger threatening the GDR and the socialist camp. The West German militarists themselves have cynically named this part of the capital of the GDR the "front city", the "cheapest atom bomb in the centre of a socialist state":

From there more than 80 espionage organisations representing the secret services of the whole imperialist world have been sending their agents into the GDR and the other socialist countries in order to undermine economic construction. West Berlin has been turned into a vast centre for trade in human beings, inducing or blackmailing citizens of the GDR to leave the Republic. Smuggling of industrial goods and foodstuffs from the GDR was organised on a huge scale. Skilled workers were enticed to leave their work and take up a job in the monopoly enterprises, or used as scabs against the West Berlin workers because they would work for lower wages. West German politicians of revenge were playing havoc in West Berlin, launching provocation after provocation against the GDR. The open border to West Berlin cost the GDR working people at least three-and-a-half thousand million marks a year.

This spell was ended on August 13th 1961. The GDR government measures have installed a "cordon sanitaire" around this morass of the front city and thus taken the West Berlin gunpowder magazine under control.

In face of our determined action the imperialists are bitterly complaining and shouting about a violation of their alleged rights in West Berlin. All this is of course pure hypocrisy.

Both the statement on the zones of occupation issued on June 5th 1945 and the declaration "concerning the control procedure in Germany" clearly define Berlin as inalienably belonging to the territory of the former Soviet zone of occupation which is now the GDR.

The presence of Western troops in West Berlin results from the fact that Berlin as capital of Germany used to be the seat of the Allied Control Council which had the task of securing the implementation of the Potsdam Agreement for the whole of Germany.

Contrary to this task, the Western Powers split Berlin and prevented the implementation of the Potsdam Agreement both in West Berlin and West Germany. In 1947 they prevented the transfer of the big companies into the hands of the people. They introduced a separate currency in the Western sectors in June 1948, set up a separate administration in West Berlin in September of that same year, and finally enacted the "little occupation statute" for that part of the city in May 1949. With the aid of this statute they are still—sixteen years after the end of the war—trying to prevent democratic development in West Berlin and to strengthen the positions of the militarists and fascists.

NO LEGAL FOUNDATION

By taking all these actions the Western Powers have themselves abolished any legal foundation which might serve as a justification for the presence of their troops in West Berlin.

The GDR's readiness to solve the West Berlin problem by peaceful negotiations was proved by her proposal for a compromise, which would transform West Berlin into a demilitarised free city, although it is situated on the territory and in the midst of the GDR. This city will no longer tolerate any revenge-seekers and incorrigible militarists. Its atmosphere should be clean and will guarantee the freedom of the West Berlin people to determine their own lives, including the possibility for free communications with any country they may choose.

To some of those "wise guys" who had the idea of transforming the whole of Berlin into a free city we reply unmistakably that Berlin is the capital of the socialist GDR and that no one in the world is threatened by its democratic part. It is West Berlin where the source of danger is located, and it will be removed!

Our proposals clearly show that we do not want war but negotiations. The Western Powers and the West German government had plenty of time for submitting proposals of their own. But instead, they preferred to rattle the sabre, time and again. They are stirring up war hysteria to the utmost trying to pretend that they

are strong. But the world today can no longer be deceived about the true balance of forces in the world. The great Soviet successes in the rocket field and the heroic deeds of the Soviet cosmonauts, Major Gagarin and Major Titov, have largely contributed to make this clear.

Anybody who likes to play with the fire of aggression against the socialist camp should remember that he would not only burn his fingers but extinguish his own life.

The safeguarding of peace and the struggle against imperialism and militarism are vital for the African peoples too.

We are convinced that ever increasing sections of the African people will support the just proposals and demands put forward by the Soviet and GDR governments. And the united strength of all peace-loving people in the world will secure peace in Europe, Africa and throughout the world.

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Sudan's Dictatorship

In the Service of Imperialism

by E. IPHRAHIM

Quotations in this article are taken from the booklet: "Two Years of Military Dictatorship in the Sudan" issued by the Communist Party in the Sudan. The booklet is dedicated "To the masses of our struggling people, and to the Sudanese working class. To those who have been murdered by the treacherous dictatorship, Ali Hamid, El Sadig Mohamed El Hassan, Abdel Badeia, Abdel Hameid and Kebeida. And to those whom reaction has engulfed in the prisons and concentration camps, Abdel Khalig Mahgoub, El Shafua Ahmed El Sheikh, Abdel Laheim Shana, Mahy El Dean, Abdel Harez and Abou Eldahah and their patriot comrades."

General Aboud's coup d'etat of November 1958 in the Sudan was above all a coup engineered for American imperialism. The country was in the throes of a political crisis, whose central issue was American "aid." The future of American imperialist penetration was at stake. The coalition government, headed by the Umma Party of the big landowners, was well on the road to trading Sudanese independence for American "aid." U.S. military men were secretly searching the country for suitable sites for the building of military bases; the paper Morning News wrote that "A small island which lies in the Sudan territorial waters of the Red Sea is going to be given to a foreign state to build a military base." Economic aid was becoming a full-scale invasion of Sudanese economy. People from every walk of life were awakening to the Yankee danger.

Even in Parliament, some members of the governing coalition were growing restive. The ratification of the U.S. Aid Treaty was debated, and despite pressure from the Umma Party, amendments were made restricting aid to the fields of agriculture, technical training and road building only. Amongst the people, opposition to imperialist domination through "aid" grew strong, shaking even the foundations of the Umma Party. On October 21st, the biggest

strike ever of Sudanese workers broke out, followed by demonstrations which spread throughout the country. The government shook before the popular anger. Members of Parliament, moved by the masses, began to declare that at the opening of the next session they would vote against the government and attempt to bring it down. That session was due to open on November 17th.

But the session never came. On November 17th, Aboud and his group of army officers seized state power. Theirs was not a revolution. It was a decision by the most reactionary group to hold state power by military dictatorship because they could no longer hold it by parliamentary means. "Feeling the danger which was threatening their interests and fearing that the popular movement might result in building a healthy democratic regime," said the Communist Party in the Sudan the following day, "the imperialists and the reactionaries handed over power to the reactionary leadership of the army." The Aboud regime has served the interests of American imperialism and Sudanese reaction well.

ABOUD, ARMY AND AID

Aboud's first actions were to declare a state of emergency, to suspend the Constitution and dissolve Parliament. "The reason the country suffered so much," he declared, "is *wholly* due to the disputes of the political parties among themselves." [Our emphasis. A.C.] He informed the American embassy that "We don't bear any grudges to anybody!" And in the same declaration he banned all political parties, prohibited all meetings, gatherings or demonstrations, and banned all newspapers until further notice. These measures, designed to end the clamour against the American penetration and the coup, proved insufficient. The working class, who had been the forefront of the fight for national independence, remained untamed. Two weeks later a new decree outlawed all workers' trade unions and also the General Federation of Trade Unions. By April of 1959, new laws were decreed, depriving individuals of their rights and liberty. The Minister of the Interior was empowered to detain any person at any place for one month, and to extend that detention for any period of time he saw fit. He can expel any person from any region of the country, or confine him to any place for any length of time.

In this police state, Aboud's regime has openly used terror to facilitate American imperialist aims. A few days after the coup, the so-called Defence Law was published, carrying the death penalty for anyone who works for the formation of any political party,

or who calls for any strike, or who "spreads hatred" against the government. Following immediately on the announcement of this law came the statement:

"There is nothing in the American aid treaty which may hinder the independence of Sudan or injure the national prestige. Unfortunately the American aid treaty was in the past a target of party manoeuvres. The restrictions imposed on the treaty by the dissolved Parliament was an obstacle in the way of utilising the aid as it was planned for."

The restrictions placed by Parliament were accordingly removed. The door was thrown wide open for American (and subsequently British and West German) penetration, which—in the words of the Communist Party—"dominated the economic life of the country and mercilessly crushed the ambitions of Sudanese capital."

THE OPEN DOOR

The American aid treaty provided for American interference in the country's economy to the extent that the U.S. aid administrators control and regulate Sudan's export and import trade. The first item of the treaty, fixing Sudanese imports of foreign goods at up to 5.1 million pounds, absolutely prohibits any imports from socialist countries. Half of the almost 8 million pounds of "aid" money is to be spent on consumer goods, aimed at maintaining Sudanese dependence on foreign manufactures, and discouraging the establishment of local industry. All American personnel administering the scheme have diplomatic immunity, and are thus above Sudanese law.

From this position of power and influence over the subservient government, the American imperialists have entrenched themselves deeply in the economy. The U.S. dominated International Bank has advanced substantial loans for railway and Nile steamer transportation; an American millionaire has been given permission to establish a textile factory with £1 million capital (in which the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmed Khair, is said to hold shares). The American California Company has been granted prospecting rights for petrol and minerals in the Red Sea area and American banks have been encouraged to provide funds for the financing both of Sudanese banks and of large-scale industries which receive special privileges. "To accept the financing of local banks by the American monopolies," says a statement from the Communist Party in the Sudan, "means to give a free hand to American capital to influence the sources of local financing. It also means the control

of every industrial enterprise established in the future . . . (and) includes the financing of agricultural schemes through the agricultural bank."

As always, military penetration has gone hand in hand with economic. There have been discussions between the government and American military missions about the building of a military base in North-Eastern Sudan. Especially in 1959, there have been several American military missions in the country, and tentative steps were taken towards the Americanisation of the Sudanese army.

AGENTS OF IMPERIALISM

The Aboud government speaks unashamedly of itself as "a part of the free world"—to quote the words used by Aboud in a message to Eisenhower. And its actions bear out the fact that it is a friend and ally of the world of imperialism. When the French imperialists were under attack in Africa for testing atomic bombs in the Sahara, newspaper correspondents were warned by General Talat Faried, Minister of Information and Labour in the Sudan: "You have no right to speak about the explosion of this bomb, even if it was exploded in Butana (a district of Sudan)." He warned them, too, against attacking France for its massacres of the Algerian people.

In 1959, two Kenyan patriots passing through the Sudan to join their compatriots in Cairo who were campaigning against British domination of Kenya were arrested and fined. Similarly, two members of the African Congress of Uganda were arrested in Sudan and finally ordered back to Uganda where they faced imprisonment. Even more outrageous has been the Sudanese government's conduct over the crisis in the Congo. When the newly independent Congo state was under armed attack and invasion by Belgian forces, the Aboud government decided that Sudanese troops should be kept out of any intervention.

In a letter to the Belgian consulate, it referred to the Congolese independence movement as ". . . disturbances, anarchy and non-law-respecting movements. The Sudanese government," it added, "does not retain any unfriendly feeling toward the Belgian government." The Governor of the Equatorial Province went further, offering help to the Belgians in the neighbouring Congo territory. In a letter to the Belgians he expressed his ". . . sorrow for the sad incidents which were conducted by irresponsible people in the Congo against the Congolese."

In this happy hunting ground of imperialism, the conditions of the working people have grown steadily worse. By the end of 1959, the officially registered number of unemployed in Khartoum province alone reached 7,000; the actual numbers were undoubtedly more. The Ministry of Works dismissed many workers, and the Engineering Department of the Railways sacked thirty per cent of its workers. The peasantry fared no better. Real wages of agricultural workers have been lowered, and the basic price of cotton—the crop on which the majority of peasants in government agricultural schemes depend—was also lowered. Hundreds of peasants left private agricultural schemes when the cost of cotton picking was reduced from ten to seven piastres.

FIGHTING BACK

Despite the police terror, the working class and peasantry have fought back heroically against the government and the worsening conditions of life. The leaders of the trade union movement have never accepted the outlawing of the unions. In December, 1958, police raided the office of Taliaa, the newspaper of the Trade Union Federation, and arrested 14 trade union leaders including El Shafi Ahmed El Sheikh, the Secretary-General of the Federation. They were tried secretly by military court and sentenced to long periods of imprisonment. Despite this, by May of 1959, ten working-class leaders petitioned the government demanding trade union rights and legislation to protect the workers' standards. They also demanded that the army return to their barracks, and that democratic life be re-established, and the imprisoned leaders released. Two members of the delegation were imprisoned on the spot. In October of the same year, other leaders issued a similar petition, and they, too, were imprisoned. In protest, 225 railway workers in Khartoum struck work. They were all sacked. Nevertheless, when their secretary-general was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, Khartoum transport workers organised a general strike of thirty minutes. Peasants, too, struck work against the lowering of the cotton-picking tariff, and were imprisoned.

A steady regime of police terror has been instituted. By the end of 1959, 700 political workers had been imprisoned without indictment. Police stop people and search them in the streets without warrant, photograph and finger-print them. Political prisoners have been sent to isolated, unhealthy and remote prison camps. They are allowed no books or reading matter, and their food and conditions generally are worse than those of common criminals.

Several groups of prisoners have fought back against these conditions with hunger strikes, which have helped awaken the Sudanese people and world opinion to their fate.

The police net has been spread far and wide. Police spies and agents are active in all schools and colleges, and all student unions have been outlawed. The Sudanese Youth Union is illegal; its funds have been confiscated and its General Secretary, Mohammed Ahmed Suliman is in prison. The Sudanese Women's Union has been outlawed, and its night schools for combating illiteracy amongst women have been closed. The press, when allowed to resume publication after the coup, were told bluntly: "Do not write anything against the policy of the Government; do not criticise its steps neither in home or foreign fields; do not write about former parties and political sects; do not write commenting on or criticising the policies of other countries."

The police see that these prohibitions are obeyed. *El Medan* has been suppressed for attacking American "aid". *E Talia'a* has been closed for demanding trade union freedom. *E Ayam* demanded the right to publish reports of the case against the trade union leaders. *El Nil* and *El Zaman* demanded a return to democratic institutions. Other papers have closed down because they were unwilling to continue with the farce of publishing under such conditions.

UNREST IN THE ARMY

In its statement on the day of the coup, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party declared that the majority of the soldiers and officers of the Sudanese army stood against the Aboud clique, and opposed the coup. Events have proved them right. In March, in May and again in November of 1959, there were mutinies in the army. All failed for lack of adequate organisation, or for reasons of indecision by the leaders of the mutinies. The regime has handed down savage sentences on the leaders of these mutinies, including sentences of life imprisonment on two Ministers and members of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, death sentences on many, imprisonments of many more. The spirit of the army is overwhelmingly nationalist, anti-imperialist and therefore also anti-Aboud. The Aboud government, says the Communist Party, has ". . . succeeded in one thing: in securing the utter hatred of all our people; that is the secret of its weakness and the sign of its end."

In the front ranks of the fighters against the regime stands this party, the party of the Sudanese working class. The party was

formed in 1946. It was at the end of the second world war; the working class had emerged as a stable and substantial portion of the population, and the question of independence was on the agenda. "The question of political power and on whom it may rest became accordingly important," says the statement. "The organ by which a class takes power is its party; hence it was important for the working class to form its own party which represents its interests."

THE PARTY OF THE WORKERS

From its beginning, the Communist Party based itself on the revolutionary theories of Marxism-Leninism; it set itself at the head of the struggles of the working people. "The workers, led by the Party, waged their first struggles in Atbara in the years 1947-48 which were crowned by the endorsement of the labour law of 1948 which recognised the right of forming trade unions. That was a remarkable victory to the party and the working class. It marked a new era in the country, paving the way for a wide wave of organisations for other classes and sections including the high sections of civil service officials." Unity of the working class as the centre of national unity for independence has always been the core of the Party policy. "Our party, from the very beginning, pointed out that the road to happiness and prosperity of our people if freely developing and marching successfully to build socialism, required first and foremost the radical liberation of our country from the grip of imperialism and its remnants, the spreading and extending of democracy, and the building of an independent national economy by effective industrialisation."

The Party accordingly took an active and leading part, together with militants of other parties, in the struggle against the British-imposed Legislative Assembly. Hundreds of members were detained and imprisoned. Comrade Gurashi El Tayeb was murdered by imperialist bullets at Atbara. "Nevertheless, during that period of the struggle our party proved to be the real inspirer of the masses in their revolutionary struggles. . . . It boldly and confidently led these struggles till the Legislative Assembly was defeated."

"Those struggles made it possible for our party to find out that what our people missed was the unity of its ranks. From that time, the Party put the task of uniting all the national forces at the head of its tasks, regarding this unity as the only guarantee for the safeguard of the national movement against the reactionaries and the stooges of imperialism." The party's efforts to create a

“National Front” won it the regard of all honest Sudanese patriots, and inspired the popular unity which threatened to unseat imperialism in the November 1958 session of Parliament.

AFTER INDEPENDENCE

In 1956, a month after the declaration of formal independence of the Sudan, the Communist Party adopted a programme “For the Consolidation of Independence, Democracy and Peace.” This programme, detailing the tasks of the working class and the national front after independence, had a profound effect on the people and a great influence on the programmes of other political parties which drew on it for their inspiration. Guided by this programme, the Party headed and inspired a campaign for accelerated “Sudanisation” of the whole apparatus of state, in order to end the hangovers of imperialism. At the same time, it gave to the nation a realistic solution to the main problem before it—the problem of maintaining Sudanese national entity while at the same time solving the national aspirations of the people of the south, who were claiming independence from the north.

“The essence of the proposed solution was to restore mutual confidence between the two parts of the country and to strengthen the ties between them, thus to safeguard the security of the country against imperialism which was encircling the southern borders of our country. Our line was to give *‘local self-government to the South within the framework of the Republic and its Parliament.’*” Our party was well aware of the fact that the interests of our people and the preservation of its independence can be secured only if a foreign policy of anti-imperialist character which supports the national liberation movements, aims for mutual co-operation with all countries and defends world peace is adopted.”

From the time of its formation, the party threw itself into the struggle for widening democratic rights, which it saw not only as a means to easier organising of the working class, but also as a safeguard of the national movement and the national independence of the country. As a result, the mass movement for national independence always moved side by side with the movement for democracy. “Our people, led by the working class under the guidance of the party, were always on the alert and quickly responded to defend democratic liberties. From the start, the connection of the movement for democracy with the national movement is one of the characteristic features of the general movement in our country. Thanks to this, our people are now quite convinced that to speak

about the independence of our country without democracy is a sheer deception and a lie." The party was thus ready and prepared to meet the new turns in the struggle for real independence and democracy which were created by the reactionary, anti-democratic coup d'etat of General Aboud, and was neither tricked nor turned aside by its apparent "nationalistic" facade.

TO THE FUTURE

Despite its illegality, the Party has been a powerful rallying centre for the Sudanese people in these times. It calls and campaigns for ". . . a national democratic front; and through the unity of all opposition forces in a united national front the overthrow of the existing reactionary regime." It puts forward a five-point program—

- The liberation of the country and its economy from the domination of American and foreign monopolies.
- The return to Parliamentary life, according to a national democratic constitution.
- The release of all political prisoners, the liquidation of concentration camps, and compensation for all those who have suffered in them.
- The repeal of all anti-democratic laws and the 1960 Defence Law.
- An anti-imperialist foreign policy, for peace, peaceful co-existence and complete disarmament.

"The basis for this national front exists, and every day the vital importance of unifying all the opposition elements becomes clearer. The Communist Party, which has turned from the semi-legal conditions of work to the underground every day inspires the people and increases their confidence in their struggle. Its leaflets never stop, and its illegal press plays an important role in intensifying the struggles of the working class and all the people. The Sudanese working class has again secured the right of trade union organisations despite the law. . . . The national bourgeoisie feels the pressure of the rivalry with Western monopolies. . . . Commercial capital is going fast towards bankruptcy. . . ." Thus the conditions of crisis for the regime and of new advances for the national front develop.

"The members of our party," the Sudanese Communists proclaim with pride, "courageously struggled in defence of democracy in

spite of imprisonment, oppression and dismissals from their jobs, which they met also when they were struggling for national liberation. Our party proudly declares that the number of its members who visited the prisons of the Sudan . . . in defence of national independence and democracy exceeds ten times the number of imprisoned members of all other parties joined together." For people such as these, even the hardest tasks are capable of fulfilment.

In June 1959, the Political Bureau of the party summarised their tasks thus:

"History has bestowed the task of leading the struggle on our party. The parties of the national bourgeoisie have accepted to dissolve themselves. We have to march fast to take the leadership of the masses."

In the manner of their fulfilment of these tasks, the Sudanese Communists are proving themselves.

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Socialism

1,000 million people, a half of all humanity, are now part of the powerful world socialist system. For them the chains of bondage have been broken. Those who still live within the capitalist sphere are, by their experience, being made aware of the vast superiority of the socialist system.

On the one hand there is an intensification of class exploitation, a growing gap between the "haves" and the "have nots", a drive to war, a desperate attempt to maintain a grip on colonial peoples, an impoverished peasantry and a culture which has become ossified. On the other hand, in the socialist countries, man stands on the threshold of still greater achievement. Class exploitation is on the way out. The peasant has been given land. National oppression and colonial exploitation is part of the sordid past. The fight for peace is the basis of international relations. Culture and science are becoming the property, not of the parasitic élite, but of the mass of the people. Capitalism is in decay. Socialism is the inevitable future for the whole of humanity.

WHY HAS SOCIALISM DEVELOPED?

The history of mankind from earliest times is a history of exploitation, inhumanity, poverty, inequality and injustice. Why then has humanity only in the 20th century "come to its senses"? Only in this era has it begun to advance towards a system which abolishes all these evils. The answer is that history has its own objective laws which operate without regard to the emotions and ideas of a few thinking individuals. This does not mean that ideas play no part. But it does mean that for an idea to be turned from a utopian dream into a reality, the objective conditions must be such that it is capable of being realised. Without this prerequisite the idea will not flower and capture the imagination of those forces which bring about the change.

Many heroic martyrs, slave leaders, peasant leaders and other representatives of the poor and the downtrodden, have for thousands of years proclaimed the right to freedom, justice and equality for all humanity. But the conditions were not ripe for bringing about the desired change. The laws of social development stood in the way of the noble and courageous fighters. It is the genius of Marx and Engels which laid bare the process of historical develop-

ment and which made possible a scientific approach to man's never ending quest for a better life.

Socialism, like its predecessor capitalism, did not arise by accident, or because modern man is more aware of his oppression than his brothers of the past. Without the large-scale development of the productive forces; without the creation of a working class whose economic interests drive it to end capitalism and to establish the social ownership of the means of production, socialism is not possible.

Capitalism gives birth to the very forces which are going to destroy it. Under capitalism the social character of production reaches a very high level. But the benefits are reaped by private owners. The social relations do not correspond to the social character of production. This brings into operation the law of history that relations of production must inevitably conform to the character of production. Under feudalism a point was reached when growing capitalist production was being hampered by outmoded social relations of the feudal type. So under capitalism, private ownership of the means of production conflicts with the social character of production. Thus the drive to socialism is part of the objective process of history.

But there is one respect in which Socialism is unique. Whereas all previous changes have brought about a change of exploiters, socialism aims to end exploitation for all time. The force which can achieve this is the working class and its allies, led by the Communist Parties of various countries. For the first time in history the poor and the downtrodden have shown what they are capable of achieving.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN FEATURES OF A SOCIALIST SOCIETY?

Socialism does not arise ready-made and in a vacuum. When the working class takes political power it is the beginning and not the end of the road. All the legacies of the past cannot be abolished by a stroke of the pen. Thus the rate of the consolidation of socialism and the specific manner of eradicating all that is worst in the past—economic, moral and intellectual—will depend upon the specific character of the country in which the change comes about. There can be no ready-made detailed formula which will apply universally in every country. But there are certain features which are common and which transcend national differences. What are the universal features of socialism?

CONTROL OF THE STATE

The political control of the state must be taken out of the hands of the capitalist class and placed firmly in the hands of the majority of the people led by the working class.

“The transfer of state power from one class to another class is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a revolution, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical, political meaning of the term.”
(Lenin: “Letter on Tactics”.)

Those who fear socialism because it spells the end of their life of luxury at the expense of the mass of humanity accuse the socialist countries of dictatorship and lack of democracy. Those gentlemen control the apparatus of Government and use it for their own purposes. The army, police, gaols and all the other instruments of repression are always ready to answer their call to put down the struggle of the people and to keep the capitalist class firmly in the saddle. Theirs is a dictatorship of a tiny minority. Even in those capitalist countries which are held out as models of “democracy” the whole state apparatus has been brought into play when the mass of the people show signs of threatening the existence of the capitalist mode of production.

In other words, although there are national differences which have historic roots, the basic feature of the capitalist state is that it is a dictatorship of the capitalist class. Communists do not blush to admit that the socialist system is a dictatorship. But it is a dictatorship of the majority against a minority.

The exploiting class does not give up its dream of restoring the capitalist system merely because a revolution has taken place. Their defeat ushers in a period of bitter struggle to get back their ill-gotten gains. It is therefore vital, in order to make the ousted capitalist class and its hangers-on impotent, to take out of their hands all the instruments of state power and to place them in the hands of the mass of the people led by the working class. Until the force and power of the exploiting class has been broken, the advance to socialism is hampered. It follows that only by a proper and effective use of state power after the revolution can the advance to socialism be assured.

Thus although the precise form in which the working class wields power after the socialist revolution may vary from country to country—depending upon the different conditions in which it occurs—the one fundamental common feature of all socialist states is that they are based on the dictatorship of the proletariat i.e. the use

and control of state power in the interests of the majority of the working people.

THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION

The socialist revolution places political power in the hands of the working people led by the working class. The first task of the socialist state is to break the economic power of the exploiting class. The basic means of production, the factories, mines, land, banks and transport are taken away from the monopoly capitalists. They become the property of the people by means of socialist nationalisation. The fruits of production are no longer expropriated by the privileged few but are used to advance the standard of life of all the people.

THE END OF EXPLOITATION

Exploitation of man by man is ended. The main feature of capitalist production is the existence of a mass of people who own nothing except their power to labour. Because of their control of the means of production the capitalists are able to force the mass of the working people to work for them in order to live. The sweat and blood of the majority means luxury and wealth for the few. Socialism puts an end to this exploitation. The means of production are now publicly owned and are operated in the interests of the people as a whole. Under capitalism the fruits of production are divided between wages and the surplus which is taken by the capitalist class. Under socialism the whole that is produced comes back to the workers in various ways.

It is an historical reality that the level of production under socialism will for some time be insufficient to give every person everything that they need. Thus the workers are still paid money wages and the amount they receive depends upon the individual contribution to social production. Thus socialism puts into effect the principle: "From each according to his ability; to each according to the work done."

What the worker does not get back in wages is used for his indirect benefit and for the benefit of society as a whole. This part of social production is used for social services which in socialist countries are free and available to all. It is used to administer the State and to defend it against those who want to restore the past. Above all it is used to expand socialist production which ensures a continuously rising standard of living. Thus the whole product of

a man's labour is directed to serve the immediate and future interests of the whole people.

PLANNED PRODUCTION

The chaotic and unplanned nature of capitalist production leads to crises, unemployment, slumps and poverty in the midst of plenty. This is so because the means of production are in the hands of a few owners whose only concern is their own private profit. The cruel spectacle of food being destroyed whilst people are starving is well known. The only consideration which determines what is to be produced and how it is to be produced, is not the needs of the people but the profit which will accrue to the privileged few. Each capitalist tries to get as much as he can for his product. The human needs of the people are quite irrelevant. He plans not for society, but for himself. He is engaged in a dog fight with every other capitalist in order to get a bigger share of the fruits of exploitation.

Socialism puts an end to this private greed and chaos. Production is planned so as continuously to improve the standard of life of all the people. There is an end to unemployment and poverty. In some socialist countries which inherited a backward economy the task of achieving spectacular rises in the standard of living may take some years. But the superiority of socialist planning over capitalist chaos is nowhere better illustrated than by a comparison between India for example and China. Both these countries achieved liberation at about the same time. Both were faced with tremendous problems because of the backwardness of their economies. India which was economically more developed is now lagging behind China in almost every field. The advance towards Socialism in China, based on planned production, has resulted in spectacular rises in the standard of living of the working masses. In India the overwhelming mass of the people are still living in conditions of extreme misery and poverty. This contrast demonstrates forcefully the superiority of the socialist system.

NATIONAL OPPRESSION AND COLONIALISM

Socialism means the end of national oppression and colonial exploitation. The relatively high standard of living of a section of the working people of countries such as Britain and the U.S.A. has been made possible firstly by the very bitter and costly struggle of the working masses of these countries and secondly the fact that the capitalist class of those countries could "afford" to compromise

with their own working people because of the super-profits obtained from the oppression and subjugation of colonial peoples.

It is of the very essence of capitalism that it develops into imperialism. The exploitation of one nation by another arises naturally from a system whose very lifeblood is the exploitation of the mass of property-less and rightless humanity. In the socialist countries there are no groups of monopoly capitalists who benefit in this way. The freeing from bondage of millions of nationally oppressed, colonial peoples who suffered under the yokes of the Czar and the class he represented is proof of what socialism means to those who are exploited by monopoly capitalists from so-called superior nations. The social basis for colonial exploitation does not exist under socialism. In its place there arises a system of fraternal assistance between nations.

In particular, assistance is given by those socialist countries, who because of peculiar historical reasons have achieved a more advanced economy, to those who are still relatively backward. Such assistance is based on a genuine desire to uplift the standard of life of the people. It differs radically from "assistance" by the monopolists, motivated by a desire to further their policy of neo-colonialism and dependence on the imperialist economy.

The disappearance of the class which feeds on the misery and exploitation of other national groups destroys the basis for conquest and war. This is why the socialist camp today stands in the vanguard of the struggle for peace.

DEMOCRACY

It is only under socialism that democracy has any real meaning for the people. The slogan "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" sounds hollow to the ears of the unemployed worker, the landless peasant, the property-less citizen who is deprived of all material means to make his voice heard. The slogan becomes a reality under socialism.

Freedom is not just the absence of restraint—every form of society demands a certain amount of subordination of the rights of the individual to the interests of the country as a whole. The more real and fundamental content of freedom is the presence of opportunity to exercise your rights and to fulfil your needs. Without this element the word "freedom" is a meaningless catchword. It is only under socialism that every human being is given the opportunity to develop himself fully. There is no longer only the theoretical right to education which in capitalist society is really

restricted to those who have the means to pay for it. The socialist youth have unlimited opportunities of education to the utmost of their abilities. At every important level the people take part in the administration of the country and in the active process of government. Before a major economic plan is adopted by the representatives of the people in a country such as the Soviet Union, every worker and peasant has an opportunity of contributing towards its formulation. This is real democracy, and not the empty right to put a cross next to a candidate's name every five years. The right to elect representatives is of course basic to real democracy. But under capitalism this right has got a limited meaning when it is borne in mind that the mass of the people have no say whatsoever in the running of the productive machine which controls almost every minute of the worker's life.

In socialist countries the care of the aged, the guarantee of employment, the opportunities for participation in the process of government, the control of the means of production by the workers, make for real democracy and real freedom. No people are free, no people are living in a democracy where the whole of the state apparatus is in the control of the capitalist class which monopolises it in its own interests and against the interests of the majority of the people. Where this control can still be assured by a monopoly of all the important instruments of propaganda such as the schools, newspapers, radio, etc., so-called "free" elections are permitted. But in a situation where the working masses manage to shed the influence of the capitalist propaganda machine and are no longer reliable voting cattle, the capitalist state unveils itself and reveals its true character. History has provided many examples of this process, for example fascism in Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

Socialism means a higher type of democracy, one which has real meaning for the people.

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

Socialism is only the first stage of transition from class to fully classless society which is known as communism. In our final article in this series we shall deal with the difference between the two and the fundamental features of a fully communist society.

What Our Readers Write

AN AFRICAN IN CHINA

From far-away China, an African reader Haroub Ungujanian has written a heart-warming letter to our magazine. He writes that he has found the articles in *The African Communist* have "not only raised my political consciousness but also, in many ways, have helped me in rousing my feelings and giving me inspiration and encouragement . . . Throughout the time I have been searching for Marxist literature on mother Africa, especially written by African sons themselves . . . It may take pages and pages if I have to express fully the benefits that "your" (but actually it is "our") magazine has given to me and many other friends here in Peking.

"Your party, though South African in name, has quite a good role to play in the rest of mother Africa, and especially south of Sahara. We find that most of our parts in Africa, and particularly in East and Central, have no Marxist-Leninist parties. That is because imperialism has built, and is building an 'iron curtain' in those parts of our world, making our people ignorant of the Marxist doctrine. As a result we have leaders with no progressive world outlook, cherishing illusions with the 'benevolence' of U.S. imperialism, regarding the sending of 'peace corps' to their countries as a great 'favour' done to them by multi-millionaire President Kennedy and see the USA, where millions of their brothers and sisters are denied the basic fundamental rights of a human being, as the 'heaven' on earth. Such leaders outwardly pose as the 'opponents' of Apartheid but in actual fact they deny protection to those who run away from that neo-fascism, neo-nazism, the barbarous apartheid. All these are caused by short-sightedness, one-sided outlook. Brother! You can see for yourself then that we, as the freedom-fighters and as Marxists upholding the banner of Marxism-Leninism, have a great task ahead of us."

AN IMPORTANT SUGGESTION

Comrade Ungujanian makes an important proposal. He refers to a suggestion in our issue No. 6 from a Guinea correspondent, asking us to consider publishing the magazine in French as well as English.

"This is a very good idea," he says, "and it has pleased me to note that you have been considering it for a time now. I hope

that the day is not far off when this will be realised. But that should not be the end of the thing! If it has to be read by the broad masses of the people, then doubtlessly it has to be put in the language which those people will understand. If we publish only in English and French, that means a very tiny section of our people will understand while the masses will be deprived of this noble opportunity. Our aim, after all, is to arouse the consciousness of the people and to make the working class understand that it has an important role to play. How can we then ask the working class to embark on its role without first arousing its class consciousness? And we can't do that except by propagating to the people in the language that they understand. Brother! I therefore ask you to consider putting into circulation also publications in Swahili, Hausa, Zulu and Arabic. I am quite aware that the task is great but we should also not underestimate the benefits that will be achieved. I also see through it that we can accelerate the speed for the realisation of our cause."

We are sure that this correspondent, whom we thank very much for his letter and also the donation which he enclosed with it, will be glad to know that some steps have already been taken in the direction he suggests. Our first French-language edition of *The African Communist* has already appeared. It consists of translations of many of the best articles that have appeared in earlier issues of our magazine. We have also taken the first step towards African-language editions of the magazine by issuing a Sesotho version of the article "Marxism and National Liberation" by N. Numadé. True, only one step—but in the right direction!

NIGERIA, MALI, GHANA, ZANZIBAR . . .

Many interesting and enthusiastic letters and reports continue to reach *The African Communist*. A correspondent in *N. Rhodesia* declares: "I don't believe in replacing white capitalism by black capitalism—the evils are the same whether committed by a white man or a black man." He reports that he is forming a study group for socialist education and that despite his many difficulties, "I am determined as ever to go ahead with the formation of this movement . . . so that the spirit of communism is kept burning in every determined soul." This reader also sends an interesting article on conditions in his country, newspaper cuttings and other written material. Unfortunately lack of space does not permit us to publish this information now. However, we will hold these for future use in *The African Communist*.

From *Nigeria* a reader tells us that "I am personally against capitalism in all its forms. I am one of those in this part of the world who want its total and permanent extirpation from the surface of this earth. In April, last year, a copy of *The African Communist* was sent to me. I carefully went through it. It stimulated my ideas." Another Nigerian reader writes about the formation of a socialist club in his town and of its plans and asks for more copies of *The African Communist*: "Please send me 50 copies instead of 12. Even 50 will not be enough for my members. State clearly how much the total copies will cost me." Readers who in the past have experienced difficulty in obtaining our journal should now approach locally appointed distribution agents and book shops. We would welcome suggestions from readers in those areas of Nigeria where *The African Communist* cannot be locally purchased.

We are also receiving letters from other parts of West Africa. A correspondent in *Ghana* writes that *The African Communist* is "the most wanted publication in our age here in Ghana among enlightened readers. Down with exploitation in Africa! Long live peace in Africa! Long live friendship among workers in all countries!" Comrade Tidiany Baidy, the representative of the African Independence Party of Senegal writes to us from *Mali* about the continued suppression of his Marxist party by the Senegal Government. He reports that "our first secretary Majmont Diop has been sentenced again, but the government does not know where he is. They are searching the whole of Senegal. Many of our militants (teachers, engineers, technicians and so on) have lost their jobs in August because the government is fighting our party." Despite these persecutions the African Independence Party continues fearlessly to struggle for the unity of the Senegalese workers and peasants on a programme of Marxism-Leninism, for the liquidation of the remains of French colonialism in Senegal and for complete independence.

Across to East Africa we have received enthusiastic letters from many readers. A correspondent in Dar es Salaam, *Tanganyika*, writes: ". . . Needless to say, I find the contents of the magazine both encouraging and extremely useful. Keep up the good work!" A student from the *Somali Republic* expresses his "high praise for your first, true and daring publication." From *Zanzibar* comes a letter: "Africa needs a teaching, a guide to advance its economic resources and ultimately become economically independent. We have seen capitalism at work. It is a rotten economic system. It does not fit Africa. What we in Africa need is the guidance and

teaching of Marxism-Leninism. Your journal is doing a great deal of good in giving the African masses the right type of teaching. Africa must be developed on the basis of Socialism. Down with colonialism, imperialism—and their rotten economic system—capitalism!”

We thank all readers who have written to us. We are always glad to hear from them. We welcome comments and suggestions—all this helps and encourages us.

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

Our journal is being published under conditions of great difficulty. The Verwoerd regime of South Africa continues to hound and persecute democrats and Communists. Despite this, we are determined as ever to go on advocating the great liberating ideas of Marxism-Leninism and to continue publishing *The African Communist*.

OUR READERS CAN HELP

However, there is one difficulty which directly concerns our readers: our financial position no longer permits us to continue with the practice of distributing complimentary or free copies. Here, our readers can help us and themselves (by ensuring that they receive the journal regularly)—

- ★ By paying for the copies of the journal they receive
- ★ By entering a yearly subscription—fill in the form below
- ★ By encouraging others to subscribe
- ★ By sending us a donation (no matter how small).

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Articles are invited for publication, as well as correspondence on all themes of African interest.

As our Party is illegal, all correspondence must be sent to our London Agent, whose address appears above.