

What our readers write

SINCE *The African Communist* has published the address of its London agent, letters have been sent to us from readers in many corners of our Continent. Many of these letters are indeed inspiring and moving; they bear out fully what was written in our first issue: "Africa needs Communist thought as dry and thirsty soil needs rain".

"I am very grateful for the copies of *The African Communist*", writes a reader in *Conakry, Guinea*. "The articles in it I found most useful and pertinent . . . With my earnest hope for the success of this important publishing venture".

The same reader makes a most important suggestion. "Has there been any thought given to a French edition of the journal?" he asks. "I am sure it would find a wide and interested audience here in Guinea and in other French-speaking areas of Africa. And it is most surely needed in places such as Senegal and Ivory Coast". We can assure this reader that serious thought indeed has been given to his most valuable idea; the editorial board is now working on plans to put it into practice.

A *Nigerian* reader writes: "I thank you immensely for the copies you have been sending me. Really it is very interesting indeed". And from *South-West Africa* a reader writes: "I am a regular reader of *The African Communist* and am profoundly interested. My interest has not been limited to myself. I have discussed the idea with my fellow men and we have formed a Marxist study group . . . In my country, as you know, Communism has been declared illegal by the South African fascist government, and it is difficult to obtain any objective facts about Communism".

An African peasant in *South Africa* explains that he is unable at present to send his subscription. "As we rely on land here I have been without work ploughing; that is why I look for job now. I am very interested in politics and have been trying hard to preach it. Although it is very dangerous because the government here is

persecuting everybody who takes an interest in politics — so long as he or she is a “Native”. With kind regards . . .”

From *Kenya* a local branch secretary of KANU writes : “I found that this magazine awakens me and tells me what I cannot know for myself. It even reveals most things that happen in East Africa . . . I am indeed interested in Marxism and Lenin’s teachings, but things out here are such that we are not given a chance . . . There is too much of colonialism and imperialism in East Africa, but we are doing all we can to eradicate them”.

Another African reader states “unequivocally” that the articles in *The African Communist* are “an inspiration for us who are still labouring under a White minority rule. I am quite aware of the risks that I undertake. There can be no suppression of ideas. My political philosophy and conviction will never be eradicated. I stand for socialism universally, as the only goal by which mankind could rid itself from exploitation of man by man, social discrimination and racial oppression. As an unemployed person I believe that you will receive with a warm heart my meagre sum of 6s.”. (We do, indeed).

From *Northern Rhodesia* a reader expresses his appreciation of the “noble and just course” pursued by our magazine. “I have read little about Marx and Mao. I need a lot of education in the whole philosophy, so do expedite in sending literature”.

NEWS FROM BAROTSELAND

A reader from *Barotseland* (N. Rhodesia) thanks us “very much for the very informative and educational” copies of our magazine. “The Statement and Appeal from the November, 1960 meeting is more like a textbook than a mere pamphlet to me. The fourth issue of the publication is, like all the others, a treasury of knowledge”.

The same reader sends some most interesting news about the campaign of the Barotse Anti-Secession Movement against the plan of the imperialists to separate Barotseland from the rest of Northern Rhodesia in the event of the Africans in the colony winning self-government.

“Barotseland at present comes under the same Central Government administration just like all the other parts of Northern

Rhodesia although, of course, it has a Resident Commissioner who helps the feudal Paramount Chief, Sir Mwanawina, to rule that Province. The Province is poor, without industries of any kind, no reliable roads and no markets at all. From political and economic considerations, secession would be detrimental to the people of the Province. The people oppose secession, but their dictator, Sir Mwanawina, pays no attention to reason and public opinion. It is feared that some skilful imperialist hand is behind this scheme, so that loss of the rest of Northern Rhodesia would be somewhat counterbalanced by imperialist exploitation of Barotseland”.

We wish to thank all the readers who have written to the *African Communist*; we only regret that lack of space prevents us printing all their letters. But we can assure readers that every letter is carefully considered and treasured by us. It is our aim to spread information and the truth about the Communist movement throughout Africa, through this magazine; we shall do our best to assist readers to improve their knowledge. However, it should not be forgotten that the South African Communist Party, which publishes this magazine, is itself a workers’ organisation, working under conditions of great hardship and illegality created by the fascistic Verwoerd Government. Many of you have, until now, been receiving free copies of this magazine, but we must appeal to all to pay for their copies, so lightening the burden we have to carry, as well as ensuring that you receive the magazine regularly in future.

CAPITALISM OR SOCIALISM ?

“Capitalism or Socialism ? The question becomes more acute with the growing successes of the U.S.S.R. and the growing disintegration of capitalism. In all capitalist countries power is in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Whatever the form of government, it invariably covers the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie”.

— Study Group Forum in the *Evening News*, Accra, March 2, 1961.

MARX ON NATIONAL OPPRESSION

“A people which enslaves another people forges its own chains”.

—Karl Marx.

(From a resolution drafted by Marx on the Irish Question, for the International Workingmen’s Association in 1869).