

All the Fields and Mines of
 Africa are thick with mortgage columns.
 Bearing inscriptions stating that the
 Land on which they stand was pawned
 To such and such powers for so many
 Dollars, for so many
 Pounds, for so many
 Roubles, for so many
 Francs, for so many
 Yens, for so many
 Marks, for so many
 Liras, for so many
 Drachmas, and so on and so on.

Africa and her dispossed children
 Shall at this point be hell bounded
 With the international debtors cord.
 At this time not only will we be expelled
 From our homes and villages, but
 We will have to pay with
 our flesh
 our blood
 And our nationhood.

My commentary above is but the modest declaration of the powerlessness of Africa at this monotonous hour of her history to combat the formidable neo-colonialist military-economic penetration on the one hand and the continued presence of the white racist regimes willing uncontrollable powers on the mass of black people on the other hand. Neo-colonialism which excuses itself the loss of physical presence but in fact this type of colonialism is far more evil in its terms of reference because it is enforced indirectly and forcefully. Making use of the so-called 'peoples' representatives' to implement whatsoever orders are issued. Neo-colonialism is a blood relative of colonialism, always motivated by huge profits without wishing to reinvest a tiny fraction of the gains accrued. Neo-colonialist economic and military adventurism in Africa are being re-enforced every day by subtle and refined means. By total collaboration with a tiny but hard core power-elite, neo-colonialism aims have been fulfilled with speed. This time it wasn't a white governor of state but a black head of state who performs the true functions. These powerless men who can be dismissed by neo-colonialist emissaries will tour the world initialing financial documents, affixing their signatures to friendship treaties of all sorts and stamping their seal of office to ill-conceived projects which would give to them the usual ten percent and make their countries carry the debt. Neo-colonialism lays heavy responsibility on the traditional chiefs as well in Africa since the political system accords these hereditary heads with special powers. The absolutism of neo-colonialism operating within the circuit of capitalistic morality is completed by the law of supply and demand. Immediately the cheap African labour force realise that each time they step up production their bread is in jeopardy, each time the African worker looks around him he observes with fear the reserve army of unemployed waiting to take his place and so keep his wage down, in the light of his trade union organisation are formed. But the creation of Trade Unions breeds automatic repercussion. The neo-colonialist-capitalist

Neo-Colonialist Imperialist

list groups invoke the 'Sacred Law of Supply and Demand' and force the state through their economic advisers, ambassadors who have more power to display than the electorates, and with the threat of military intervention the state acquiesce to whatever demands the agents of neo-colonialists have mapped out. Ly Abdoulaye in a concise book about the use of French Africans as soldiers in Morocco, Vietnam and Algeria puts it brilliantly: 'African troops' became the instruments of imperialistic rivalries and above all of repression in order to conserve the system of exploitation (capitalist) in the colonies and the metropolis'.

'We have left almost nothing for the producer in return for the considerable riches our commerce. Almost nowhere are there any fixed riches'

This is a sample of imperialist morality. This exemplifies the way Africa is being repeatedly bled commercially, not for the benefit of those who toil in the arid fields to produce the raw materials that keep the economic machinery of Europe going, but the benefits and all profits find their way into the pockets of the overseas shareholders to generate european capitalism and to frustrate African development. Neo-colonialism is powerfully re-enforced with collaborators from within Africa. These are the new breed of men stationed in the barracks who would not hesitate to open fire on the workers. One has seen the effect of such display of reckless fire power in the recent uprisings in Western Nigeria and also the aftermath of the widespread strikes (1969) in the Ashanti Gold Mines. Neo-colonialism prefers decadence and confused mess to revolution because this is the climate suitable for the germination of huge profits. Neo-colonialism is bound to breed conflict, since any attempt to rescue the 'instrument of production' from the capitalist would breed exaggerated fears leading to a confrontation. When Patrice Lumumba pronounced the wealth of the Congo for the Congolese many a European capital fell in total disarray, for Lumumba has defied the pronouncements of King Leopold's circular to his district commissioners in the Congo of June 16, 1897. 'These peoples must submit to new laws of which the most imperious, as the most salutary, is assuredly the law of labour'.³ Lumumba's declaration to utilise whatever wealth the mineral resources yield is exclusively the sole property of the Congolese masses brought about his death. The

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Belgians were willing to hand over political power, but not the economic tools because their influence elsewhere would depend largely on their total economic domination, it also indicates in the present day that any African leader who is bent on economic and political justice for his people must be ready to stake his claims by a 'military rear guard strategy'. Otherwise internal order would collapse, the economy would sag and neo-colonialist penetration would be unimpeded. At this stage it will be useful to question the capability of Africa to resist such back-stage indirect interference with the economy and political affairs. Is Africa competent to direct under combat the present erratic control of such negative leadership that robs the continent? Would Africa win under the Guardianship of characters like Hastings Banda, Ian Smith and Voster (racist prime ministers of S/Rhodesia and South Africa respectively) no Africa cannot win. Except with singular courage of leaderships like those of Guinea, Tanzania and Zambia can Africa see the road to a total liberation of the instrument of Government and Economics. The notion of total isolation by Africa in relation to dealings with the neo-colonialist powers is a feasibility. But this is not enough as a short term strategy. The long term policy for Africa should be towards developing increased cooperation between each neighbour state in matters of defense, economic strategy and political thought. Africa must unite now for any delay offers the enemy the chance to strengthen their defence and consolidate their neo-colonialist thrust.

While there have been notable failures of statesmanship, however, the larger problem arises from the incapability of some African leaders to see the true meanings of the grave responsibility that Independence and Self Government brought upon African.

- (1) Ly Abdoulaye, *Mercenaires noirs*, (Paris, 1957, p. 68.) (2) Abner Cohen, 'The social organisation of credit in a West African cattle market' (*Africa* XXXVI, pp 8-20.) (3) E. D. Morel 'History of the Congo Reform Movement!' (pp 3-17.) (4/5) President Kaunda's speech at Mulungushi 1969 (6) Kwame Nkrumah, 'Neo-Colonialism' p. ix. (7) Ahmadou Kouroubari, 'Histoire de l'Imam Samori' Translated from Maurice Delafosse's 'Essai de manuel pratique de la langue Mandé ou Mandingue.' (8) Frantz Fanon, 'Towards the African Revolution', (p. 100.)

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The New African / No. 53 / November 1969
 2 Arundel Street, London WC 2 / Editorial
 correspondence; 3 Macartney House, London SE 10
 Subscription for 4 issues: Africa 15s/ USA and
 Canada \$3.50 / UK £1 / Elsewhere £1.5.0
 per copy: Africa 3s / USA and Canada \$0.75 / UK 4s.
 Back issues: Vol 1-3 (1962-65) reprints \$10/£4
 per volume plus postage. Later issues as quoted.

nationhood. Also the incapability to respond in a balanced manner to a wide range of challenges and appeals, taking into account the density of tangible African interest and intangible international interests that often leads in conflicting directions. African statesmen and politicians alike strive to preserve a stable economy and democracy (with some notable reactionary cliques) the former they have failed to achieve, the latter they have not yet started to tackle. President Kaunda has said in these words the aims of capitalist exploitation⁴: "Today our society is being exploited very badly indeed by some unscrupulous men and women who are being driven to the extreme right by the 'profit motive'." Furthermore Kaunda's gift for dissecting the complex problem of legitimate African interest and capitalistic demand from without went on to say this:⁵ "The profit motive taken to excess leads us to the road of capitalism. On the other hand, whatever man does consciously or unconsciously has a strong element of profit motive. This, however, it should be pointed out could be 'profit motive' in the interest of society as a whole or 'profit motive' in the interest of an individual."

Whenever a Government in a newly African Independent Nation fails to produce good economic results law and order starts breaking down. Mass unemployment and severe suffering creates near revolutionary atmosphere. But the leadership in some of these countries because of fear and unwillingness fail to take the necessary measures to radically reform the out-dated colonial economic structure. The industrialists and powerful landowners and foreign business agencies gang up against any change that would alter their position. At this alarming stage the flight of capital caused by the psychological effects of political and social instability generates a rapid depreciation of currencies rendering worthless whatever savings the workers had made. (Value of Ghanaian Cedi in 1965 dropped from the internationally recognised rate of ten shillings to six shillings and eightpence). Economic and political disequilibrium have now paved the way for military intervention sometimes by mercenaries or the deployment of paratroopers based on African soil (notably French military presence in Tunisia, Senegal Malagasay, Gabon, etc) and lastly the use of indigenous African troops. In the absence of political cadres wholly committed to defeat reactionary forces within the army, bourgeois reactionary demands have succeeded through incompetent officers who by virtue of their possession of arms have turned oppressors overnight. It is this new breed of barracks agitators who are causing more harm than the Nkrumah's and Keibas. In his famous book Dr. Nkrumah states:⁶ "The essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it, is in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty while in reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside." The neo-colonialist powers from without are the sole possessors of the colossal African labour force, while the life span of the African is being shortened under the damp mining pits of the Diamond Mines in Yengena and Sefodu (two areas of concentrated diamond mining operations in Sierra Leone controlled by the SLST)

Europe continues to build more planes and missiles intensifying the arms manufacture to militarise Africa and keep the populace in total confusion. It is this last commodity, arms of all descriptions, which is making neo-colonialist continued presence felt. Africa has the shortest possible time to re-organise her affairs, in this light regional alliances leading to a continental union must be the theme song in order to combat effectively the blatant neo-colonialist greed. Up to the period of 1897 - 1899 when the seven years war between the French and Samory the true intentions of colonialism were seen in clear perspective, by Samory one of the great patriots of Africa. In a dispatch to the Sultan of Sokoto and Ahmadou, Samory expounded on the virtues of alliances and the ills of fragmentation in these words: "If you continue to make war on your own, the whites will have no trouble in defeating you. I have already undergone the experience in trying my strength against them. Let us therefore unite. You will hit the French from the North, I will harass them in the South and we will certainly manage to get rid of them."⁷ It is true that the African political revolution is still groping for a clear sense of its purposes, it is also true that Africa's eventual scope for political maturity is enormous. What is not true is that Africa could rid herself overnight of all the external pressures that disengage her from having a clearer insight of the many tricky equations that beset her path.

African states should search for unifying elements instead of over-estimating the divergencies. Frantz Fanon in his book *Toward the African Revolution*, chides the international left movement in these words: "What we ask is that their action be stepped, not in an atmosphere of diffuse sympathy, but in the doctrinal rigor of an authentic anticolonialism".⁸

Africa will only accept external and friendly advances if and only if they are punctuated with purity of motive with regards to whatever project they wish to undertake. Cooperation is possible but only on the terms which Africa will stipulate. Belligerency between African states must come to a halt since these are skilfully manipulated as to enable the neo-colonialist designs to thrive on African soil. Africa is now working within a limited time cycle to rectify and correct the persistent frustration of the development of the continent as a whole. Self-delusion and irresponsibility by some African leaders will only hasten the way to disaster. Africa should be able to strike a path of her own. Africa can walk with the big powers without being drawn into their neo-colonialist-capitalist military complex. In many ways Africa is a research station where most of the complex problems which the twentieth century has bred could be observed, studied and the solutions tested. Africa could win and achieve total victory if there is total continental mobilisation aimed at defeating neo-colonialist encroachment. The seeds of determination have started to sprout, but this gain should be exploited further by seeking to strip from Africa the neo-colonialist yoke. Unity would bring a total realisation of the dreams for economic, political and social freedom. All Africa must unite now.