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AFRICAN AGENDA

A Voice Of Afro-American Opinion

Vol. 2, No. 1

January, 1973

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Editorial



Vietnam: A Racist War

During the months of December and January, we witnessed the mad attempt of Richard Nixon to bombard the Vietnamese people "back into the Stone Age". This massive bombing campaign, unprecedented in the history of mankind, was met by the forceful resistance of the Vietnamese people and intense international opposition. These pressures forced the Nixon Administration to temporarily halt the onslaught. The U.S. bombing of North Vietnamese dikes, hospitals, homes and schools were manifestations of the worst kind of the racism and genocide inherent in Western capitalist society. These devastating acts prove that U.S. imperialism will resort to any means to accomplish its goals of worldwide economic and political control.

One of the many lessons that we can draw from these barbarous actions is the fact that the U.S. imperialists will not stop short of using these same genocidal tactics to maintain their economic investments and interests in Southern Africa. Southern Africa is one of the most important areas of the world to the U.S. imperialists since they control over 2 billion dollars worth of investments there and can exploit the cheap labor force and natural resources to boost

their profits. Already the U.S. government is supplying the Portuguese and South African governments with military equipment to suppress the African liberation fighters in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia. Green Berets are acting as military advisors in Angola. Nixon's 436 million dollar subsidy to Portugal (the Azores Agreement) represents more than half of the Portuguese military budget.

What will be the position of Black people and other oppressed nationalities in the U.S. if the U.S. imperialists create another "Vietnam" in Southern Africa? Could the liberation movements in Southern Africa sustain a forceful resistance as the Vietnamese are doing? Will the working class and progressive peoples of all complexions rally to support "Stop the bombing in Southern Africa"? Must we wait for these events to take place?

The liberation movements in Southern Africa (MPLA, FRELIMO, PAIGC, SWAPO, ANC, ZANU, ZAPU) are calling upon Black people and other progressive forces in this country to exert pressure on the U.S. government to withdraw support from the racist governments that are suppressing their struggle for independence and the right

to self-determination. The years of racist genocide being perpetrated in Vietnam and the likelihood of it happening in Southern Africa cannot be overlooked. We must demonstrate our support for the just struggles of the liberation movements in Southern Africa and prevent a "Vietnam" in Africa. We should take up the call of Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. while we celebrate his birthday this month when he said in regards to the Vietnam War, "The initiative to stop it must be ours."

Class and Race

By Kwame Nkrumah

The following article is from Dr. Nkrumah's book *Class Struggle In Africa*, published by International Publishers, N.Y.—Ed.

Each historical situation develops its own dynamics. The close links between class and race developed in Africa alongside capitalist exploitation. Slavery, the master-servant relationship, and cheap labour were basic to it. The classic example is South Africa, where Africans experience a double exploitation—both on the ground of colour and of class. Similar conditions exist in the U.S.A., the Caribbean, in Latin America, and in other parts of the world where the nature of the development of productive forces has resulted in a racist class structure. In these areas, even shades of colour count—the degree of blackness being a yardstick by which social status is measured.

While a racist social structure is not inherent in the colonial situation, it is inseparable from capitalist economic development. For race is inextricably linked with class exploitation; in a racist-capitalist power structure, capitalist exploitation and race oppression are complementary; the removal of one ensures the removal of the other.

(continued on page 4)

The National Question and African Liberation

In the December issue of the *AFRICAN AGENDA*, we discussed the nationalities question and Black liberation. Perforce, we cannot confine ourselves to the nationalities question in dealing with Africa, since many of the peoples of Africa have all five of the qualities necessary to become a separate nation, or a national republic in a multi-national state if they so choose. As we duly noted in the December article, we do not make an absolute of all national movements. While supporting the right of self-determination of all nations and nationalities, the exercise of such a right might be inadvisable at certain times. It is to be noted that the great multi-national state of the Soviet Union was not created until five years after the October Revolution (December 30, 1922—not December 22, 1922 as was erroneously stated in the previous issue). This postponement of the creation of the first multi-national state was attributable to the need for the centralization of the state machinery to save the Revolution as a result of the civil war and foreign intervention in the immediate post-revolutionary period.

Similar reasons can be given for the need to centralize the state machinery in Nigeria and other African states who have been victimized or are potential victims of neo-colonialist efforts to balkanize Africa through the ideological vehicle of bourgeois nationalism. Moreover, African territories struggling for their liberation from colonial rule in Southern Africa and Guinea-Bissau have to deal with the multi-national, multi-ethnic character of their constituencies to avoid being split by the neo-colonialists. All former colonial states consist of more than one nationality requiring immediate attention to the national question. In some directly colonized territories, national and social tasks are not as inextricably intertwined, making it possible and necessary to cement a unity between the nationalists and national democrats, e.g., Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, since many of them are still in the first stage, the national liberation stage, of struggle for independence and social progress. That is why the rapprochement between Holden Roberto, a nationalist, and Angosthino Neto, a national democrat, was so salutary in the Angolan liberation movement. Hence, the creation of the equality of nations, nationalities and ethnics in Africa is a necessary component to the creation of an advanced democratic state mechanism, which would lead to a greater unity of the peoples.

The issue of self-determination is an eminently democratic principle and

should not be confused with the petty bourgeois concept of "separation." All Marxist-Leninists recognize that oppressed nationalities have a right to self-determination. We can avoid playing into the hands of the bourgeois nationalists by heeding the advice of Lenin on the question of recognizing the right to self-determination: "this is childish nonsense, since the recognition of the right does not exclude either propaganda or agitation against separation or the exposure of bourgeois nationalism. But it is absolutely indisputable that the denial of the right to secede is playing into the hand of the most thorough paced reactionary Great Russian nationalism."



Of course, this general principle of Lenin cannot be applied mechanically, since some advocates of secession are anti-democratic, pro-imperialist, and anti-working class. They have no right to secede any more than the Southern slave-holders had a right to self-determination in 1861, a secession that was *against the interest of the working class* — the Black slaves and the poor whites. Hence, the Biafran adventure was appropriately proscribed, since their secessionist activities, if successful, not only would have weakened the state machinery of the most populous Black nation south of the Sahara, Nigeria, but also, consequently, would have strengthened imperialism. No reactionary class elements have a right to self-determination as Lenin noted: "the right to self-determination implies a democratic system of a type in which there is not only democracy in general but specifically one in which there could not be an undemocratic solution to the question of secession. Democracy, speaking generally, is compatible with militant and tyrannical nationalism. The proletariat demands a democracy that rules out the forcible retention of the nations within the bounds of the state."

In most national democratic struggles in Africa, progressive Africans instinctually support the unity of all nationalities and fight assiduously against efforts to split them on tribal and ethnic grounds. The extent to which they are successful varies directly with the ex-

Letter to the Editor

Dear Brother,

In the October issue of the *African Agenda* the statement was made that, "It would be a variety of neo-Kautskyite social chauvinism for the left. . ." This statement was in the article entitled "Proletarian Internationalism and Black Workers." Would you please explain the meaning of neo-Kautskyite social chauvinism.

Ibn Hassan
Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Brother Hassan,

Karl Kautsky was one of the key leaders of the Second International which collapsed during World War I as a result of its unprincipled compromise with nationalism and social chauvinism. Neo-Kautskyism would make similar compromises on such questions as supporting the export of capital to the neo-colonies in the world on the grounds that it will aid the "development" of developing areas.

Social chauvinism is the belief that your society's culture, traditions, and values are superior to another society. Therefore you are justified in imposing them on others, i.e. Americanization campaigns, Russification campaigns before 1917, or the belief that Afro-Americans should provide intellectual guidance to Africans in their liberation struggles. Social chauvinists also put the interests of the organized sections of the working class ahead of the interests of general social development, and more specifically, they attack the concept of an anti-imperialist front.

In Struggle
Editor

★ ★ ★

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A Great Man Of Our Time

The Staff of the *African Agenda* wishes to honor the birthday of Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. (January 15, 1929) by quoting from a very timely speech he made in 1967.

"A Time To Break Silence"
(*Freedomways*, Vol. 7, No. 2, page 111)

"Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is being laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed, whose culture is being subverted. I speak for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as an American to the leaders of my own nation. The great initiative in this war is ours. *The initiative to stop it must be ours.*" (Editor's emphasis)

News Briefs

United Nations — Niger and Mali recently broke diplomatic relations with Israel bringing to five the number of African states to do so. This severance of relations followed similar breaks by Uganda in April, Chad in November and Congo Republic in December of 1972. Other African states are expected to follow suit.

These actions are manifestations of general trends toward the political and diplomatic isolation of Israel, which has refused to abide by the 1967 United Nations' resolution calling for complete Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territory illegally seized during the 1967 war.

Algiers — In a New Year's message, Amilcar Cabral, General Secretary of PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands) announced that Guinea-Bissau will be proclaimed an independent state at the first session of the National Assembly of Guinea-Bissau, to be held soon. PAIGC has succeeded in liberating about 80% of the territory from Portuguese control. A functioning state administration has been established in the liberated territory. The proclamation of Guinea-Bissau's independence will strengthen the liberation struggles in the other Portuguese colonies and strike another blow against Portuguese colonialism.

Moscow — Participants from FRELIMO of Mozambique, SWAPO of Namibia, ANC of South Africa, Mauritania, and Togo were among representatives of 230 national youth organizations and youth sections of trade unions from 113 countries at the World Meeting of Working Youth held November 10-15, 1972. The main topic was the role of youth in contemporary society.

All of the African delegates thanked the Soviet people for their moral and material support.

Mozambique — U.S. investments have recently increased in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique since the signing of the Azores agreement in 1972. This agreement has opened up a new rush of U.S. investments in which in 1972 Firestone rubber and G.M. signed contracts to set up production plants that will employ thousands of workers by 1975.

Recently in Tete province where heavy fighting is taking place between FRELIMO and the Portuguese and South African colonialists, Bethlehem Steel Corp. and two Portuguese firms have received provisional authorization from the Portuguese government to form a new company to prospect for minerals. Also in the same province Caterpillar Tractor Co. of the U.S. have recently sold more than 40 CAT to the government along with other equipment in helping to build the Cabora Bassa Dam.

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The National Question

(continued from page 2)

tent to which they have democratized the state apparatus. The progressive Africans are pursuing a policy that is leading to greater unity of all nation and colonial liberation movements and to a great unity with the socialist camp and progressive working class forces within the imperialist camp. This is especially evidenced in the move of Ghana, Tanzania, Nigeria, et. al, to deepen their economic relations with the new, most rapidly growing international division of labor, the world socialist system. Ghana has been negotiating cocoa agreements in Moscow to reverse the tendency toward a deterioration in terms of trade with the Western monopolists. This reorientation of markets by the African nations to the socialist countries is a *sine qua non* for national reconstruction in the developing areas and, hence, for the settlement of the national question, since national antagonisms are a by-product of capitalist development and its absolute law of uneven development. Thus, the independent African nations have to

undertake national reconstruction in the age of internationalism, making it mandatory that they reconcile their national interests with their international interests. Such reconciliation cannot occur unless their international relations contribute toward proportional and even development among nationalities within their respective multi-national states. Real equality of nationalities can only come with the evening out of the development of nations via the non-capitalist road of development, (See *AFRICAN AGENDA* — August 1972) in intimate unity with the socialist camp, led by the Soviet Union. Progressive Africans are choosing that path. We Afro-Americans can learn more from them politically than the Africans can now learn from us, as W. E. B. DuBois predicted in his latter years.

With typical prescience, Lenin wrote in 1921: "it is perfectly clear that in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe,

initially directed toward national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary part than we expect.

Lenin also predicted at the time of the fusion of the national liberation struggle with the class struggle, there would be a unity between the capitalists of the oppressor nations and the capitalists of the oppressed nations. Are some Blacks destined to play a mediatory role in this process for U.S. neo-colonialism as social chauvinists forcing our blessings (meager though they be) on Africa under such supranationalist, imperialist slogans as Pan-Africanism in intimate unity with Zionists. That would be a tragic denouement to the Black liberation movement after having led the democratic struggle in this country for three centuries. We must stop the liquidators.

U.S. Supports Racism in the U.N.

The U.S. imperialists' three-prong attack of using South Africa, Portugal, and Israel for their expansionist aggression in Africa has been stated in a number of the *African Agenda* articles. Clear examples of U.S. imperialism supporting South African and Portuguese colonialism and racism were evidenced in the 27th General Assembly session of the United Nations which ended December 19, 1972. Herein the United States took consistent, reactionary positions on some very significant proposals concerning Africa which were introduced in the Assembly.

On the question of the Portuguese colonies, the General Assembly adopted a draft which held that the national liberation movements in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique (MPLA, PAIGC, and FRELIMO respectively) were the authentic representatives of the people of these territories. The draft stressed that Portugal should deal directly with these representatives. The U.S., South Africa, Portugal, and Britain voted "NO" to the draft. Nevertheless, it was passed.

The General Assembly also strongly condemned the South African government for its apartheid policy and reaffirmed its conviction that economic sanctions should be leveled against South Africa. All governments were urged to implement an arms embargo against the racist minority government. In addition, the forceable removal of the African people of South Africa to bantustans was condemned as well as the cooperation between certain African states and South Africa in the military, economic, and political fields. The U.S., South Africa, Portugal and Britain voted against these measures.

(continued on page 4)

Recommended Books

1. *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, by V. Lenin. An excellent study of the national question, and what is meant by the self-determination. Imported Publication. Price: \$.70.
2. *Racism—An Ideological Weapon of Imperialism*, by F. Leonidov. A good short discussion on how racism is used to divide the international working class. Imported Publications. Price: \$.40.
3. *Class Struggle in Africa* by Kwame Nkrumah. One of Dr. Nkrumah's best books on the importance of a class analysis for studying Africa. International Publishers. Price: \$1.25.
4. *Racism and Human Survival* by C. Lightfoot. A study of how racism is being fought in the German Democratic Republic, and the lesson for Black Americans. International Publishers. Price: \$1.50.
5. *Class and Colour in South Africa* by H. Simons. A good general history of the relationship between class and color in South Africa from 1850 to 1950. Penguin African Library. Price: \$2.50.

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In the modern world, the race struggle has become part of the class struggle. In other words, wherever there is a race problem it has become linked with the class struggle.

The effects of industrialization in Africa, as elsewhere, has been to foster the growth of the bourgeoisie, and at the same time the growth of a politically-conscious proletariat. The acquisition of property and political power on the part of the bourgeoisie, and the growing socialist and African nationalist aspirations of the working class, both strike at the root of the racist class structure, though each is aiming at different objectives. The bourgeoisie supports capitalist development while the proletariat—the oppressed class—is striving towards socialism.

In South Africa, where the basis of ethnic relationships is class and colour, the bourgeoisie comprises about one-fifth of the population. The British and the Boers, having joined forces to maintain their positions of privilege, have split up the remaining four-fifths of the population into "Blacks", "Coloureds" and "Indians". The Coloureds and Indians are minority groups which act as buffers to protect the minority Whites against the increasingly militant and revolutionary Black majority. In the other settler areas of Africa, a similar class-race struggle is being waged.

A non-racial society can only be achieved by socialist revolutionary action of the masses. It will never come as a gift from the minority ruling class. For it is impossible to separate race relations from the capitalist class relationships in which they have their roots.

South Africa again provides a typical example. In the early years of Dutch settlement, the distinction was made not between Black and White, but between Christian and Heathen. It was only with capitalist economic penetration that the master-servant relationship emerged, and with it, racism, colour prejudice and apartheid. The latter is the most intolerable and iniquitous of policies and race-class "systems" ever to emerge from White, capitalist, bourgeois society. Eighty per cent of the

population of South Africa is non-white and has no vote or political rights.

Slavery and the master-servant relationship were therefore the cause, rather than the result of, racism. The position was crystallized and reinforced with the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa, and the employment of cheap African labour in the mines. As time passed, and it was thought necessary to justify the exploitation and oppression of African workers, the myth of racial inferiority was developed and spread.

In the era of neocolonialism, "underdevelopment" is still attributed not to exploitation but to inferiority, and racial undertones remain closely interwoven with the class struggle.

It is only the ending of capitalism, colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism and the attainment of world communism that can provide the conditions under which the race question can finally be abolished and eliminated.

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(continued from page 3) **U.N.**

The U.S. voted "NO" to a resolution calling for the right of colonial peoples to struggle for their liberation, and which requested colonial powers to remove their military bases from colonial territories.

The U.S. also voted against the General Assembly's condemnation of U.S. importation of Rhodesian chrome.

The General Assembly called for international demonstrations on May 25th, African Liberation Day; the U.S. abstained. The U.S. also abstained on a series of resolutions calling for the U.N. Secretary General to continue his activities against apartheid by utilizing radio, television and the press.

The U.S. imperialists are experiencing intense opposition in the international arena of the United Nations. This, in part, explains why the U.S. has been publicly minimizing the significance of the U.N. and has reneged on its previous share of financial contributions for the continuation of U.N. functions.

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AFRICAN AGENDA
P. O. Box 1941
Chicago, Ill. 60690

AFRICAN AGENDA

P. O. Box 1941 Chicago, Ill. 60690

Dear Readers,

As the Staff of the African Agenda prepared to go to press, we received the grave announcement of the assassination of Amilcar Cabral, Secretary-General of PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands) on January 20, 1973. The official announcement was made by President Sekou Toure of the Republic of Guinea who said that Cabral was assassinated "in a cowardly and horrible manner...by the poisoned hand of imperialism and Portuguese colonialism." The assassins were apprehended.



Amilcar Cabral
Secretary-General
of PAIGC

The African American Solidarity Committee joins progressive people the world over in expressing our compassion and solidarity with the heroic people of Guinea-Bissau and the courageous liberation fighters of PAIGC about the tragic loss of a great revolutionary leader, Amilcar Cabral.

Amilcar Cabral, one of the founders of PAIGC in September, 1956, led their forces through the extremely difficult political preparation that was essential to winning the masses of people to the national liberation struggle against Portuguese colonialism. Cabral spearheaded their movement from the unsuccessful peaceful appeals for political and social change in the 1950s to the armed resistance in 1963. At the end of 1972, PAIGC had liberated almost 80% of their territory from Portuguese control. Functioning state administration has been established in the liberated zones. Despite the desperate and barbarous acts of the Portuguese colonialists and their imperialist allies, PAIGC has come to be recognized in the United Nations as the only legitimate government of Guinea-Bissau and is on the verge of being proclaimed an independent country. The death of Amilcar Cabral will not be the downfall of PAIGC. Cabral prepared his forces well as can be perceived in these words that he spoke at the Third Conference of the African Peoples in Cairo in 1961:

Our enemies are determined to strike mortal blows against us and to turn our victories into defeats. To attain this goal, they use the most suitable instrument--African traitors. However, if we want to neutralize the delaying actions carried out by our enemies and their lackeys, we must strengthen the methods of action and the vigilance of the African revolution. Let us be precise: for us, African revolution means the transformation of our present life in the direction of progress. The prerequisite for this is the elimination of foreign economic domination, on which every other type of domination is dependent. Our vigilance means the rigorous selection of friends, a constant watch and struggle against enemies (both internal and external) and the neutralisation or elimination of all factors opposing progress.

We join PAIGC in reaffirming their solgan, A LUTA CONTINUA!
VENCEREMOS! THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES! WE WILL WIN!