

THE NEW AFRICA— CAPITALIST OR SOCIALIST?

AFRICA IS IN REVOLT. From East to West, from North to South, the peoples of this great Continent are arising to claim their birthright that has been stolen. The imperialist Powers and the White minorities are being forced to give up the land and the natural resources. Africans are uniting in powerful national liberation movements and trade unions. The imperialists are trying to prolong their rule. They send soldiers to shoot down the people. They try to bribe the people's leaders. When that does not work they arrest and deport them on framed-up charges. *They invent faked 'treason' charges and 'massacre' plots. They promise half independence, or self-government on the instalment plan.*

These methods cannot succeed. Africa is on the march for freedom, her people are awake, and nothing can stop them from reaching their goal: government of Africa by Africans, for Africans. The imperialist powers must quit Africa. The White minorities must accept the condition of equality and give up their ill-gotten privileges.

What shape will the new Africa take? Will it be capitalist, like Western Europe and America? Or socialist, like Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and China? That is something the peoples of this Continent will have to answer for themselves. It is a big question. The future happiness and well-being of our people and our children depend upon it. It is important that we should choose wisely.

Let us look at the two systems.

TWO SYSTEMS

We know capitalism in Africa. We have seen it and suffered under it.

Under capitalism, the land, the natural resources and the industries, built up by the hands of the workers, belong to private owners or companies. Each owner is producing not for the public good but for his private profit. He pays as little wages as he can and wants to take as much as possible for himself.

Take a capitalist who is making shoes in a factory. He is not worried about the people who are barefoot. He wants to make a lot of money and get rich. All the profit he makes comes out of the exploitation of

the workers, for all value comes from labour. Capitalism means the exploitation of man by man.

Socialism is different. All the means of production—the land, the mines, factories and so on—belong to the people as a whole. Production is planned. The aim is to see that everyone gets good food to eat, clothes to wear, houses to live in. The aim of production and of society, is to see that people are happy and comfortable, that they are highly educated and cultured. The worker knows that no capitalist profits from his labour. The country goes ahead quickly because development is properly planned. Socialism means the abolition of exploitation.

OVERCOMING BACKWARDNESS

Centuries of imperialist domination and robbery have left Africa backward and undeveloped. The European powers, Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium, have only been interested in taking as much wealth out of the country as quickly as possible. At one time they captured millions of our people, and deported them to Europe and America as slaves. Afterwards they enslaved Africans in their own continent, through forced labour on European-owned plantations, farms and mines, at starvation wages.

As a result of alien oppression and exploitation, Africa is the most backward part of the world. The great masses of her people live in terrible poverty, ignorance and disease. The first task of every African patriot is to liberate our Continent from alien domination, for without this there can be no progress. But to win and to keep true freedom we must also free Africa from backwardness. Her countries must be able to stand on their own feet economically, her people's living, health and cultural standards must be rapidly advanced.

Experience has proved that socialism is the most suitable method of quickly developing countries which are economically backward. Russia was formerly the most backward of the big European countries. Under socialism she has shot forward in forty years to become the most advanced, although many of those years were taken up in wars against imperialist intervention. In the last war, the Soviet Union was the only country on the mainland of Europe which successfully withstood Hitler's brutal armies and thus saved the world from Nazi domination.

It was socialism which gave Soviet industry the strength and her people the fighting spirit to resist and conquer. The Sputniks and the man-made planet prove that Soviet science and industry today are second to none.

In ten short years, socialism and Communist leadership have transformed China from a land of terrible backwardness, illiteracy and poverty, to a land of flourishing industry and agriculture, of advanced education and progress. India and China won freedom from imperialist rule at about the same time. But India chose the capitalist road; China the socialist road. Today China has far outstripped India in economic progress.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOCIALISM

Some people try to tell you there are different kinds of socialism. They like socialism, they say, but not the kind they have in the Soviet Union and China. The British Labour Party says it is in favour of socialism. So does the French Socialist Party. But if one studies these parties one will find that their socialism is only in words, not in deeds. Though the Labour Party was once in the government in England, the real power was still held by the big capitalists and imperialists. Private companies still own the big banks, industries and so on. The Labour Government continued to oppress the colonial people in the British Empire in the interests of big business. The French so-called 'Socialist' Party did the same. They support the French Government on the 'dirty war' against the people of Algeria.

Others talk of a special sort of 'African' socialism. Some African leaders of independent countries also claim to be socialists, although they do not practise socialism and even suppress socialist and Communist literature and leaders.

There is only one kind of genuine Socialism in the world. That is revolutionary Marxism, Communism. The so-called 'different kinds' of socialism have been proved not to be socialism at all, but just different kinds of capitalism, wearing a socialist mask to try to bluff the workers.

WHY THEY HATE COMMUNISM

Nothing is so much hated and feared by the imperialists and their agents as Communism and the Communists. American officials are running all over the Continent of Africa offering dollars—if only people will help them against Communism. But we notice that the people who shout so loudly against Communism are often the people who are most bitterly opposed to African freedom.

Look at the Union of South Africa. Everybody knows that the Nationalist Government of that country, with its policy of apartheid, is a savage and ruthless enemy of African progress. That is where Africans are hunted for passes, flogged and murdered, sent to forced

labour on farms and mines, insulted and persecuted, simply because they are dark-skinned.

It is no accident that the first thing the Nationalist Government did, when it took power in 1948, was to outlaw Communism. They banned the Communist Party, which for thirty years had led the people in struggles for freedom and equality. Hundreds of Communists have been banned and banished, driven out of their jobs, forbidden on pain of jail to go to meetings or take any part in political and trade union movements.

Yet, belief in Communism lives on in South Africa. It is spreading throughout the Continent, although every day it is denounced and attacked by agents of United States, British, French, Portuguese, and Belgian imperialism.

They hate Communism because they know that the Communists are the bravest, most clear-headed and incorruptible leaders in the people's struggle against imperialism, for freedom and equality. They know that once the African workers and peasants have mastered the great ideas of Communism, nothing will stop them in their onward march to freedom, independence and socialism.

THEY TELL LIES

The imperialists and White supremacists pass laws to make it illegal to defend Communism. They try to shut the mouths of the Communists. They tell lies about Communism to deceive the people. They hope that, as they have silenced the Communists, there will be no one to answer their lies. But the truth is stronger than lies. Communism is today a great and victorious world-movement, embracing more than a third of the human race. You cannot shut Africans out from the outside world or prevent their learning what is going on elsewhere. Nor can you succeed in silencing the voice of Communism in Africa, for the Communists are part and parcel of the people of Africa. The African Communists will answer the lies of the imperialists.

Here are some of the lies:

- (1) 'That capitalism is democratic, and Communism means dictatorship.'

Africans are not likely to be bluffed by this lie. They have seen 'Western democracy' in action for too long. They have seen it answer the demands of the Africans for real democracy and self-government with bullets, terror and mass arrests. Certainly Communism means to suppress the imperialist agents, and the institutions of backwardness and slavery which they have encouraged and tolerated. Call that dictatorship if you like. But it is a people's dictatorship, used by the workers and peasants against their enemies. For the masses it means

much greater freedom and democracy than is possible in any other form of society. It means people's control of the wealth and resources of their own country. Under capitalism, even where people have the vote, the rich are always the real rulers. Those who control the wealth are the real controllers of the State.

(2) 'That Communism is out to suppress religion.'

That is not true, either. Marxism is not a religious philosophy. It believes that everything can be explained rationally, and that all religions are forms of superstition. At the same time, Communists respect people's religious beliefs and the rights of all to propagate all religious, or anti-religious, views. Certainly, if the imperialists use religion as a cloak for oppression and the master-race cult, they must be vigorously opposed. But no genuine church or religious group has any need to fear a Communist or socialist society.

(3) 'That Communists are out to replace Western imperialism with "Soviet imperialism".'

Another straight lie. There is no such thing as 'Soviet imperialism'. There is no capitalist class in the Soviet Union to profit by exploiting colonies. Communists believe in self-determination: that all people have the right to govern themselves, in the interests of their own people. They reject all theories of 'master races' and 'inferior races', and fight to end race discrimination. The Soviet Union is giving generous aid in the development of African countries, to establish their national independence on a sound basis. Even where these countries are led by anti-Communists, like Nasser and the Emperor of Abyssinia, the Soviet Union is helping them as much as possible, without any strings or conditions. Those who talk nonsense about so-called 'Soviet imperialism' should remember that under Communist leadership and with Soviet assistance, China's 600 million people have achieved a greater measure of freedom, independence and unity than ever before in its long history.

Communists in Africa are out to win full freedom and independence for African countries.

IS AFRICA 'DIFFERENT'?

Some people say: 'Communism may be all very well in Europe, or Asia, but Africa is different. There are no classes or class struggle in this Continent; all Africans are the same; and they have only one task—to get rid of imperialism.'

Let us answer these points one by one.

First of all, Africa is only 'different' because, as a result of imperialism, it is economically backward. As soon as industries develop, and private

property in land, the people will be divided more and more into capitalists, workers and peasants.

Already there are classes and class struggles. There are rich and poor. There are Africans who own property and exploit the labour of others; and there are Africans who have nothing to sell except their labour-power. There are the workers, the proletariat, as Marx called them: the landless and propertyless.

The proletariat is the most advanced class, the bravest and most clear-sighted fighters against imperialism. They have nothing to lose but their chains, and they will fight to the end against imperialism, even when the middle classes would like to compromise and accept minor concessions which will leave the masses little better off than before.

It is true that our first task in Africa is to get rid of imperialism. Communist ideas are weapons in this struggle. The policy of Communists in countries suffering from national oppression is to unite all classes in the common struggle for freedom. This struggle will be won quicker and more completely if it is led by the working class, guided by the scientific understanding of Marxism.

After imperialism has been defeated, the struggle will not be over. The countries of Africa will still be faced with the tasks of overcoming poverty, exploitation, disease and ignorance. These battles can only be won by marching towards a Communist Africa.

KARL MARX AND THE SCIENCE OF SOCIALISM

There were Socialists in the world before the time of the great German revolutionary, Karl Marx, who died in 1883, but these pioneers had merely seen that it would be more reasonable to organise production in a socialist way, rather than a capitalist one. To them, socialism was a beautiful dream of what the world could be like. Marx changed socialism from a dream into a science. He discovered the laws which determine change in human society.

Marx showed how society develops from lower to higher forms—tribalism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism—according to the development of the productive forces at each stage.

The Marxist philosophy, dialectical materialism, enables us to understand these laws. It gives us the key to understanding the world as it really is—and how to change it.

All progress comes through conflicts and contradictions. There is a conflict between what is new and struggling to be born, and what is old and dying.

Great leaders, like Lenin and Mao Tse-tung have shown how these laws can be used to transform society. They saw that the main force in

modern society which is struggling for a better life is the working class.

Under the banner of Marxism the working class in one country after another is triumphing over capitalism.

THE DUTIES OF AN AFRICAN COMMUNIST

The imperialists are trying to keep the knowledge of Communism from the African people. But they cannot succeed. More and more working people in the Continent are striving to learn more about Marxism.

The duty of a Communist is to study Marxism and the conditions in his own country, wherever he may be, and to teach others.

In Africa Communists have also other duties, if they are not merely parlour-socialists. They have to take an active part in the struggles of their people, as oppressed people, for national liberation.

National liberation is a task for the whole nation, not just for the working class. Therefore the Communists, everywhere in our Continent, will work to build a United Front of National Liberation, of all classes, workers, peasants, intellectuals and businessmen.

Within this United Front they will also work to see that the working class plays an independent and leading part. The workers should be organised, economically and politically. They should be organised in trade unions to get better wages and conditions. The workers also need their own political party. Starting with Marxist study classes, they should aim at building a powerful Communist Party in each region of Africa, a Party that will be an essential and vital partner in the United Front, the pride of the workers and oppressed people.

Only by building a true Communist Party will the workers of Africa be able to play their leading part in the emancipation of their great continent. A Party which is a true leading section of the proletariat and the people as a whole, which fights in the front line of every people's struggle for freedom, big and small; a Party which earns its right to leadership, not by engaging in petty quarrels for positions, but by playing a brave and worthy role in the fight for bread, land and freedom; for the overthrow of imperialism and White domination, for the advance of Africa to a glorious socialist future.