



THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

NUMBER NINE APRIL/MAY 1962

**Published in the interests of African
solidarity and as a forum for Marxist-
Leninist thought throughout our
Continent, by the SOUTH AFRICAN
COMMUNIST PARTY**

CONTENTS

Page

☆ EDITORIAL NOTES

VERWOERD'S THREAT TO AFRICA	1	
HEROIC ALGERIA	4	
THE OTHER FRANCE	5	
I.C.F.T.U.—NEO-COLONIALISM AT WORK	6	
CUBA'S REVOLUTION MOVES AHEAD	8	
HOW THE UNITED FRONT WAS WRECKED	10	
<table border="1"><tr><td>COMRADE AJOY GHOSH</td></tr></table>	COMRADE AJOY GHOSH	13
COMRADE AJOY GHOSH		

☆ TOWARDS A UNITED AFRICA

N. Numadé 14

☆ FOR A FREE ALGERIAN REPUBLIC 26

☆ MESSAGE FROM THE ALGERIAN COMMUNIST PARTY 41

☆ FORMS AND METHODS OF STRUGGLE—THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

A. Lerumo 43

☆ THE EFFECTS OF COLONIALISM ON AFRICAN SOCIETY

Jean Suret-Canale 52

☆ W. E. B. DU BOIS JOINS THE COMMUNIST PARTY

B. Pela 61

☆ MARXIST EDUCATION SERIES—V: COMMUNISM .. 68

☆ WHAT OUR READERS WRITE 75

EDITORIAL NOTES

Verwoerd's Threat to Africa

Verwoerd's Minister of Defence, Fouché, made a dramatic announcement in the all-White Senate of the Republic of South Africa. He had "information", he said, that certain unnamed African and Asian countries were preparing an "army of liberation" to invade South Africa. Following this statement, a full-scale campaign is being launched to spread war-hysteria and panic among the White population, as a background to transferring the country on to a war basis. The so-called "opposition" party, Sir de Villiers Graaff's United Party, which holds all but one of the Parliamentary seats not held by the Nationalist Party, has pledged its support to the Government in its "war effort".

"Citizens, and this includes women," screams the Nationalist organ, *Die Transvaler* (March 14th, 1962), "should realise that circumstances force them to take steps a country takes when its security and survival are threatened." Another Government paper, *Die Burger* editorialises on the same day: "We will be forced into permanent and total preparedness. . . . The entire able-bodied population will be integrated into the defence of the country. . . . We will live with the trowel in one hand and the sword in the other."

No well-informed person in South Africa believes that Minister Fouché really has any "information" about any planned invasion. Even the conservative English-language newspapers openly say that the whole thing is a gigantic bluff; a Nationalist stunt to stampede the White population behind the Nationalist government. The United Party Senator, Pilkington Jordan, said publicly that the government was adopting "terror tactics to try and stampede the people". (*The Star*, March 14th, 1962.)

What are the motives for this stunt of the Apartheid State?

Obviously, it will be used to stifle opposition within South Africa, to brand all criticism and protests, including wage-demands and strikes, as "disloyalty" and "treason" to the country "at a time of national emergency". Under cover of the "invasion" scare, South Africa will be transformed yet further into a fascist-type police state. Already a new wave of outrageous measures against freedom-fighters and trade unionists has been unloosed by the government.

Mrs. Lilian Ngoyi, President of the non-racial South African Women's Federation, has been confined for five years to the few square miles of the suburb where she lives, Orlando, a segregated African township near Johannesburg. Mr. Leon Levy, the President, and other officials of the Congress of Trade Unions, have—also for five years—been forbidden to attend all gatherings, restricted to the towns they live in and *barred from being on any factory premises*—making almost impossible their work as trade unionists. Similar residential restrictions have been placed on Adv. Joe Slovo and his wife, Ruth First, Transvaal editor of the weekly *New Age*, and many other democrats.

Secondly, the Nationalists will use the “invasion” scare to achieve the still greater militarisation of South Africa. Already Verwoerd's Republic has the biggest and best-equipped standing army on the continent. It is now greatly extending its military preparations. It is, with the help of the Western imperialist powers, acquiring new military aircraft and vehicles, automatic weapons and other equipment, and creating a local armament and munitions industry. A leading part in this armament production is being played by the millionaire “Progressive”, Harry Oppenheimer, at the head of the vast Anglo-American gold and diamond monopoly concern.

The standing army will be increased and the period of compulsory military training for young White men greatly extended. The network of local “skietcommandoes” (shooting squads) is being greatly augmented, with the addition of new “English-speaking” units to cover the sections of the White population hitherto excluded. White women all over the country are being encouraged to form pistol-clubs, and the civilian White population is armed to the teeth.

There is no military threat to South Africa. What then is the aim of this huge military build-up?

In the first place, of course, it is meant to put down by violence and terror the local non-white population in their strivings towards democracy and equality of rights and opportunities for all.

But the war fever in South Africa is not only a threat to the people of this country itself. It is a threat to peace throughout the Continent. It is a plan for war against Africa.

The whole world remembers how Hitler, under cover of arming against a so-called threat to the German Reich, planned and prepared for wars against Germany's neighbours, first against the Saarland, Austria and Czechoslovakia and then for the conquest of the whole of Europe, involving a terrible world war. All this with

the connivance and encouragement of the imperialist powers—Britain, France and the U.S.A.

Hitler has an apt pupil in his former admirer Dr. Verwoerd.

The real purpose of the huge military build-up in South Africa is not defence but AGGRESSION. An aggressive plan is being cooked up in Pretoria—against the people of South-West Africa. Against Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland. And, in league with the rabid White racialists of Rhodesia, and with the Salazar fascists of Portugal, against the peoples of Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola, to crush their strivings for freedom and independence.

If they are not checked in these mad plans the present members of the Pretoria-Salisbury-Lisbon Axis will menace the independence of every African state; they can, indeed, ignite a conflagration which will not stop short at the coasts of Africa, but may spread to other continents as well. There are plenty of madmen in Washington, Bonn and other Western capitals who, in their frenzy to check the tide of the world-wide anti-imperialist revolution, would seek to back Verwoerd and his racialist and fascist allies as part of a "crusade against Communism".

The peoples of Africa and all peace-loving peoples of the world must take a lesson from the history of Nazi Germany. They must stand together to check the aggressor before it is too late.

South Africa's neighbours should be on their guard. The peoples of the High Commission territories dare not rely on the imperialists of Whitehall to protect them against their rabid neighbour. Already Verwoerd's Republic has, in the case of Ganyile and his comrades, political refugees kidnapped from Basutoland, committed an outrageous act of aggression, without any effective action from Britain. It is high time that the Basuto, Bechuana and Swazi peoples stopped depending on Britain and took effective measures to train and equip themselves for self-defence.

The peoples of Africa should give vigorous support to the world movement for general disarmament. We know only too well against whom the armaments of NATO and other imperialist powers have been and are being used—it is against us; as the anti-colonialist fighters of Algeria, Angola and many other African and Asian countries know to their bitter cost. International disarmament will strike the weapons from the hands of the South African and other colonialist aggressors.

The people of the imperialist countries, of Britain, France, West Germany and Japan, of the United States and other countries who provide the capital, the munitions and the diplomatic support for

the race-crazy warmongers of Pretoria, must demand that their governments stop helping Verwoerd to oppress the African people in the Republic and to prepare aggressive war against Africa. What is the use of formal votes against apartheid at the United Nations when the very same countries continue in practice to provide the economic, military and diplomatic support without which the apartheid regime could not last a day?

The evil South African regime must be quarantined and isolated. It is a threat to Africa; a threat to world peace.

HEROIC ALGERIA

After seven and a half long years of bitter and costly civil war, the patriots of Algeria have at last achieved a major break-through on their road to freedom and independence. The brave fighters of the F.L.N. (the National Liberation Front) have compelled the de Gaulle government to negotiate a cease-fire on terms which will enable a new and Free Algeria to take its foremost and honoured place among the independent states of the New Africa.

Here in the far North, as in the extreme South of Africa, the presence of a large privileged White minority has been the major factor holding up freedom and independence. Today it is not so much the de Gaulle Government which blocks the road to peace and freedom of strife-torn Algeria as the last-ditch colonialists of the O.A.S.—the “Secret Army Organisation” which not only sabotages the peace of Algeria but also threatens France with the grim shadow of fascism.

It is not the undemocratic de Gaulle regime—itsself riddled with fascist agents—which has saved and is saving France and Algeria from this fate. It is the armed patriots of Algeria standing shoulder to shoulder with the French working class, headed by their great Communist Party. The great French demonstrations of recent months, when hundreds of thousands of workers, Comrade Maurice Thorez at their head, marched through the streets of Paris, arms linked, in columns forty wide; the trade union threats of a political general strike against any surrender to the Fascists; the grim and heroic resistance over so many years of the Algerian masses in the face of terror, torture and mass reprisals against civilians; the brotherly solidarity with Algeria of the African and Asian states—these, taken together, are the factors which have held fascism at bay. They are the factors which in the future can alone destroy reaction and fascism and open the road to a better future for the people both of a free and independent Algeria and of France.

There is an important lesson here for the peoples both of Africa and of the imperialist countries; a lesson pointed out by Karl Marx a hundred years ago when he stated that a nation which enslaves another is forging its own chains. The most vile forms of reaction grow and flourish in the fetid atmosphere of imperialist colonialism; the vicious enemy, alike, of the peoples of the colonial countries whose blood it sucks, and of the imperialist countries themselves. Just as a Franco arose in 1937 from the dehumanised officer corps of "Spanish" Morocco to oppress all Spain; just as Salazar and the Lisbon fascist autocracy maintain their hateful dictatorship over the Portuguese people through their colonial grip on Africa; so the would-be fascist dictators of France find their stormtroops and backing in the colonialist elements in Algiers, and the forces (including the sweepings of the Wehrmacht) which France has employed these many years to maintain its alien rule in Asian and African countries.

Brutal and inhuman methods of warfare against men, women and children have been their way of life as long as they can remember. Their minds have been poisoned by systematic inculcation of vicious racial and apartheid theories. Here, indeed, is suitable material for the powerful monopolist circles in France, seeking to find instruments to destroy the remains of the French republican and revolutionary tradition—already undermined by de Gaulle—and to establish a despotic regime patterned on those of Salazar and Franco.

In fighting colonialism, we the peoples of Africa are indeed the staunchest allies of the working peoples of Europe.

A notable part in the struggles of the Algerian people for national liberation has been played by the party of the Algerian working class—the Algerian Communist Party. We have no doubt they will play an equally important part in planning and building the Free Algeria of tomorrow. In tribute to these brave comrades, we publish in the present issue an article based on a publication issued by the Party on the recent occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary, and written by several different writers.

THE OTHER FRANCE

The common struggle of the African peoples of the former French colonies and of the French working class and progressive people against their common enemy, imperialism, will also find expression in another field: that of cultural co-operation, in terms of a discussion launched by the Marxist journal *Democratie*

Nouvelle and endorsed by a number of leading personalities in the intellectual world both of France and of Africa.

Announcing these discussions around the theme "How to develop French-African cultural exchanges in the spirit of struggle against colonialism and for friendship between all peoples", the journal invites workers, technicians, students, teachers and intellectuals of all shades of political opinion to help and take part in them.

"New Africa with its varying individualities, its rich traditions, will participate more and more in the development of world-wide culture," say the sponsors. "Progressive forces in France, as indeed in the rest of the world, have the duty to help in eliminating, in relations between nations, the effects of colonialism and of the neo-colonialists' activities."

It is in this spirit that fraternal cultural exchanges are proposed.

"Our people are aware that for them the national independence movement of the African people is a precious support for their struggle for civil liberties, economic and cultural progress. They know above all that knowledge about African civilisations will profit them and will make for mutual understanding."

We are sure that Africans, particularly those in territories where French is spoken, will respond generously to this initiative. Our people know that there is not only the France of the colonialists; there is another France of the working people, which seeks our friendship as comrades and equals in the struggle for a better world.

NEO-COLONIALISM AT WORK

The African working class won a great victory for unity in the cause of the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism at Casablanca, in May 1961, when the All-African Trade Union Federation was established.

Although they then paid lip-service to the cause of African trade union unity, the "International Confederation of Free Trade Unions" and its agents in Africa could scarcely conceal their disappointment and frustration at the achievement of the A.A.T.U.F. and the strongly anti-colonialist direction it took.

What is the "I.C.F.T.U."? In its essence, and particularly in its activities in Africa and other colonial and formerly colonial areas, it is nothing but *an agency of "Western" imperialism, of colonialism and neo-colonialism*. Some of the people who control this body have placed themselves in the service of Western governments, and their plans for economic penetration, political manoeuvres and military espionage. They work hand-in-glove with "labour attachés"

attached to United States and British embassies in Africa and throughout the world.

It is in the light of these hard facts that we must view the recent "trade union" conference at Dakar, Senegal, backed by the I.C.F.T.U. and aimed at establishing a "Confederation of African Trade Unions" in opposition to the A.A.T.U.F. The main purpose of this move was to split the African trade union movement and to undermine the hard-won unity won at Casablanca.

Who attended the Dakar Conference?

Nearly all of the African trade union leaders who came there and participated in this splitting manoeuvre were either directly in the pay of the I.C.F.T.U. or else so naive that they cannot understand that the dollar hand-outs they are accepting for their organisations are given as the price for betraying the African workers in their struggles for independence and unity. In either case they are unfit to remain as spokesmen and representatives of our working class.

Trade Union Congresses and Federations in Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Zanzibar and South Africa have condemned this "wicked machination of neo-colonialism, acting through the I.C.F.T.U. to split the African working class and pave the way for the infiltration of U.S. neo-colonialism". African workers are not so naive that they cannot spot the imperialist agents acting under the cloak of phrases about "anti-colonialism" and "non-alignment". As comrade Liu Chang-sheng, Vice-President of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, correctly writes: "The African working class cannot be humbugged. Through their struggle against imperialism and colonialism and for national independence, they have distinguished their real friends from their enemies. . . . The two Dakar conferences have both been rejected by the broad masses of the African workers."

The Dakar "Confederation" is a flop. It will not succeed in disrupting the All-African Federation of Trade Unions, as it is intended to do.

Nevertheless, it would be a serious mistake if African workers and trade unionists think that the I.C.F.T.U. leaders will stop attacking and undermining African trade union unity. They have an army of paid officials and "labour attachés", liberally provided with funds, and working night and day to penetrate African unions and corrupt their officials.

The utmost vigilance must be exercised against these imperialist agents parading in the garb of "trade unionists". The A.A.T.U.F.

itself is not sufficiently making its presence felt in Africa. Any lull in its activities will immediately be taken advantage of by the splitters and agents of neo-colonialism.

A great source of weakness is the habit which some of our African trade unionists have developed of continually looking for financial and other "assistance" from outside. It is true that our workers are poverty-stricken and unable to afford big subscriptions. This makes it impossible for most unions to employ many officials and organisers, to maintain big and well-equipped offices, expensive vehicles, and so on.

But the essence, the **heart and soul** of a trade union is not to be found in its offices, staff and equipment. It is the **organisation and unity of the rank and file workers on the job**. When the workers are united and ready to take militant action, such as strikes, in the fight for better wages and conditions, in the struggle for national freedom and democracy: then you have a genuine African trade union, a powerful fighting force against colonialism and its agents. What shall it profit the working class and the African people if their officials get dollar hand-outs at the price of losing the heart and soul of the union: the rank and file unity and struggle? Without such "aid" our unions will continue the struggle, however difficult, but once their leaders sell their independence and integrity to colonialist agents the unions will become worthless to the workers.

Let the workers tell their elected leaders firmly and clearly: **our unions are not for sale**. We shall contribute our own pennies to pay our organisers' wages; we shall do without expensive office and transport equipment; **but we shall never betray the cause of workers' unity, the cause of Africa**.

CUBA'S REVOLUTION MOVES AHEAD

Long ago, in the age of the flowering of capitalism, there were many bourgeois-democratic revolutions, such as the American War of Independence in 1776, and the French Revolution, which sparked off many another victorious struggle in Europe and in North and South America, for national independence and democratic rights. But once they had won formal independence and paper constitutions, these revolutions slowed down and then stood still. The local rich classes of capitalists and landlords took the place of the former foreign overlords or feudal aristocrats as the ruling classes. The masses of workers and peasants remained poverty-stricken and illiterate.

But, today, we live in a different age; the age of the flowering of socialism, inaugurated by the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 which established the Soviet Union. Today, even though they fight for the immediate attainment of national independence and democratic rights, the masses of the people in the "international slums" created by imperialism—Africa, Asia and Latin America—are no longer content with paper independence and the formal transfer of power to their own rich classes. In cases where the liberation fight is spearheaded by the true representatives of the workers and peasants, the way has been opened for the working people to take power firmly in their own strong hands; to end not only colonialism and feudalism, but also backwardness, illiteracy and landlessness and the exploitation of man by man. Such revolutions of our time do not "slow down and then stop". They move forward with ever-increasing momentum, from the national-democratic to the social revolution.

Such has been the experience of China where, under the leadership of the Communist Party, 650 million people have not only expelled the Chiang Kai-shek clique, the agents of foreign imperialism and local feudal reaction, but have gone ahead with leaps and bounds to build a new, socialist China.

Such, also is the experience of the Cuban Revolution. Beginning as a straight-forward struggle of all classes for the overthrow of the intolerable regime of the United States puppet, Dictator Batista, the revolution has developed, step by step, impelled by its own inner dialectic. Today, under the leadership of the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals, Cuba is marching unconquerably towards socialism. Every attempt by Cuba's huge and powerful neighbour, the United States of America, using former Cuban landlords and capitalists, now turned traitor, to organise armed intervention and economic sabotage to halt the revolution, has met with disgraceful defeat.

At first the Cuban revolution was supported by all sorts of groups among the population. The most revolutionary and advanced elements were the workers and peasants, but there were also, as Fidel Castro* has pointed out: "bourgeois groups which simply wanted the fleecing of the people to be done not by Batista but by themselves." But, one after another, these bourgeois groups exposed themselves before the masses.

*All quotations in this article are from Fidel Castro's historic television and radio talk of December 1st, 1961, announcing the plan for the new, united socialist party.

Now a great new step forward has been taken by the merging of the three most revolutionary Cuban parties into a united Party of the Socialist Revolution. These are the P.S.P. (the Cuban Communist Party), representing the advanced working class, the July 26th Movement mainly of peasants formed around Castro's Rebel Army, and the Directorio Revolucionario, supported particularly by the revolutionary student and intellectual youth.

The new Party stands firmly on the tried and tested principles of Marxism-Leninism. "One thing is absolutely proved," says Fidel Castro. "The reality of history has confirmed the doctrine of Marxism and Leninism.

"When the revolution came to power in Cuba, it had two roads: either to stop short within the existing social regime or to go forward; to stay within the capitalist system and the orbit of imperialism . . . or to stand beside the exploited, oppressed and colonised peoples. . . . There is no middle ground between capitalism and socialism. . . . He who remains indifferent before the struggle of the Algerians is an accomplice of French imperialism."

How very deeply these words of Fidel Castro deserve the study of all of us in Africa today.

"There are some who think," he says, "the Cuban revolution ought to have got money from both the Americans and the Russians—a sort of blackmail policy. But this base and cowardly policy would leave the great imperialist interests here untouched. Such small glory would not be worth the death of a single Cuban."

There speaks a true Cuban patriot. It is a voice which should put to shame certain men in Africa who were placed in office through their people's struggle for freedom and independence—and have used their office to sell that very freedom and independence for imperialist dollars.

Fidel Castro has come to Communism, to Marxism-Leninism, literally through his own harsh experience, his identification with the masses, his uncompromising honesty. He frankly admits he had, at one time, prejudices against the Communists—"the product of propaganda and prejudice inculcated since childhood,"—but today, he says, "we are all comrades, we are all socialists." Marxism, he says, is "the only true revolutionary theory. . . .

"I say here with complete satisfaction and confidence—I am a Marxist-Leninist and will be to the last days of my life."

HOW THE UNITED FRONT WAS WRECKED

The South African United Front was originally formed abroad

in the grim months that followed the Sharpeville and Langa massacres of 1960, when the Verwoerd government declared a "state of emergency" and jailed 2,000 political leaders of all democratic tendencies for months without charge or trial. It was formed by representatives abroad of the African National Congress (A.N.C.) and the South African Indian Congress (S.A.I.C.)—long-time allies in the freedom struggle, of South-West African organisations (SWANU and SWAPO) and of the Pan-African Congress. Now it has been dissolved—and it is necessary to place the blame fairly and squarely where it belongs: on the splitting and wrecking tactics of the last-named body, the P.A.C.

P.A.C. originated in 1959 as a Right-wing, anti-Communist break-away from the A.N.C. Its main characteristics were a crude appeal to African chauvinism—Verwoerd's White nationalism in reverse—and unbridled slander of the leaders of the A.N.C. and its partners in the Congress Alliance, especially of the small courageous group of Whites in the Congress of Democrats who were, absurdly, depicted as the dominating partner.

The United Front never existed in South Africa itself, and any hope that it would develop here was dispelled by the attempts of the P.A.C. leaders in 1961, first to sabotage the historic Maritzburg Conference, and then their open call to the workers to scab on the national general strike of May 31st.

Nevertheless, in the belief that the cause of South African freedom would only suffer by the export of domestic disputes beyond the borders of this country, every effort was made by the A.N.C. and the S.A.I.C. to preserve a united front in presenting our people's cause to the outside world.

But all these efforts had to break down in the face of the endless and numerous intrigues and slanders of P.A.C. among the independent states of Africa and other friendly circles abroad. Its leaders in exile devote their main efforts to vilifying and belittling the A.N.C., which is carrying the brunt of the struggle at home, and painting an entirely false and exaggerated picture of the importance of their own little organisation.

For example, a member of this organisation is a member of the editorial board of the "Voice of Africa", a monthly magazine of African news and views published by the Bureau of African Affairs in Ghana. The result has been that readers in Southern Africa are no longer prepared to take this otherwise excellent and informative journal, because anti-Congress propaganda and the

P.A.C. line is contained in every article dealing with this part of the world.

One of the most flagrant and offensive of such articles is written, supposedly, about Basutoland, in the November 1961 issue of this journal, appearing over the signature of Mr. Molapo Qhobela, an official of the Basutoland Congress Party, an organisation which has a large membership of P.A.C. "refugees". Unfortunately, instead of dealing with Basutoland, Mr. Qhobela seizes the opportunity to make an all-out attack on the A.N.C., which he declares is "moribund or indeed defunct," and whose respected leaders he accuses of being "ideological stooges" of "a frustrated clique of white 'communist' racial supremacists". In contrast, the P.A.C. is praised to the skies and its president, Mr. Sobukwe, declared a "noble son of the soil". In another issue of the magazine a whole article was devoted to praising Mr. Sobukwe, while the A.N.C. is never mentioned in the *Voice of Africa*, except in the most unflattering terms. Even the award of the Nobel Prize to Chief Lutuli was passed over in silence, although this was a matter of great significance and gratification to all Africans.

South African fighters against apartheid are astonished to read this type of anti-Congress slander in a magazine coming from Ghana, a country which they much respect and admire. The great majority of the African people in this country are loyal supporters of the A.N.C., whose leaders have won the confidence of the masses in many years of militant struggle and sacrifice. They regard P.A.C. as a disruptive splinter organisation which damaged its prestige beyond redemption by its scabbing policy in the Republic Day strike; its president, Mr. Sobukwe, was unknown before his arrest in 1960, except as a university lecturer.

The mischief is that all sorts of well-meaning people *outside* South Africa are completely misled by this one-sided propaganda—whose publication in the *Voice of Africa* certainly does not serve the cause of African unity.

Even militant anti-imperialists and socialists are prepared to accept the image which P.A.C. tries to impose on them—that it is somehow a "more radical" alternative to the A.N.C. They are no doubt unaware of its obsessive anti-Communism, of its sinister links, through its breakaway trade union offshoot, "FOFATUSA", with the neo-colonialist agency, the I.C.F.T.U. and the colour bar Trade Union Council of South Africa.

One reason for this ignorance has been that hitherto, the A.N.C. representatives abroad, loyal to their undertakings to the S.A.U.F.

have refrained from hitting back against the ceaseless intrigues and slanders of the P.A.C.—which unscrupulously ignored its own undertakings.

Now that the Front has been wrecked by these very tactics there is every reason why the Pan-African Congress should be exposed for what it is: a group of saboteurs of the noble struggle against apartheid.

COMRADE AJOY GHOSH

The *African Communist* pays tribute to the memory of Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, who died on 10th March, 1962. An outstanding leader of the Indian workers and the world communist movement, Comrade Ghosh always upheld the cause of Asian-African solidarity and in particular fought against the vicious apartheid system in South Africa. His name will not be forgotten.

Towards a United Africa

by N. NUMADE

Africans all over our Continent, both in the independent states and in those still to achieve their independence, are strongly attracted towards the concept of a United Africa, beginning perhaps with regional federations or unions of existing states, but aiming ultimately at an All-African Commonwealth. There are many sound reasons why this noble concept should be so attractive to us. In order to safeguard and fully realise African independence we must carry forward the unity and solidarity which we achieved in the anti-colonial struggle. We are opposed to the "Balkanisation" of Africa—the creation of numerous small states within the artificial and often meaningless frontiers created by the imperialists on our Continent. We recognise the tremendous economic and other advantages to be gained by treating Africa as a single unit from the point of view of planning its development and the upliftment of its poverty-stricken masses of people.

Though our peoples are diverse, in language and custom, we share a common history of domination by colonialists, which has wrought untold damage to our peoples, keeping them backward and divided, subjecting them to terrible poverty and humiliation. We share a common aspiration to see the African peoples free, advanced and progressive, making a full and equal contribution to the family of mankind. This common background, and the knowledge that in unity is our strength, and our main weapon to achieve our aspirations, gives Africans from every corner of our Continent a powerful sense of kinship and brotherhood, transgressing all regional, linguistic, religious or other loyalties and giving us a powerful sense of identity. Here is the positive and progressive essence of what is often referred to as "the African personality".

Before African independence became a reality, this trend found its expression in the Pan-African movement inaugurated at the end of the First World War by the famous African-descended scholar, Professor W. E. B. Du Bois. In the present era of independent African States, it has found expression in numerous all-African and regional conferences of leading African statesmen, as well as of African liberation movements, and in the expressed aim of the evolution of a "United States" of Africa or a Commonwealth of African Nations.

THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY

One of the leading spokesmen for this concept has been Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. In his concluding address to the first All-African Peoples' Conference at Accra in 1958, Dr. Nkrumah said:

"If the Accra Conference (of Independent States) gave birth to the African Personality, this All-African People's Conference has laid the foundation for the African Community. From here we shall go forth with renewed strength and determination to join all our forces, having created a climate for unity between the independent states and those of us in Africa who still have freedom to attain.

"Two currents have therefore merged into one at this conference: *the current of independence and the current of interdependence*. The unity of action which Ghana and Guinea have started received the endorsement of this Conference. More than that you are going to give it your active co-operation and support. And most important, we look forward to the adherence to the Union of those of you who will shortly become free and independent."

CONCRETE PROPOSALS

The Conference did not confine itself to broad generalisations on this question of All-African unity of independent States. It put forward a number of concrete proposals.

The question of a Commonwealth of African States was a subject of a special Committee at the Conference, which had to deal with "Artificial boundaries in Africa". In its report under the heading of "Pan-Africanism" the Committee "took the view that the great mass of African peoples are animated with the desire for unity". The Committee recognised that "the unity of Africa will be vital to the independence of the component units, and is essential to the security and general well-being of the African people".

The Committee also took the view that "*the existence of separate states in Africa is fraught with the danger of exposing them to intrigues of imperialists and the danger of colonialism after attainment of independence unless there is unity among them*".

For this reason the Committee endorsed Pan-Africanism and suggested that "the *ultimate objective* of African nations should be a Commonwealth of African States".

REGIONAL GROUPINGS

As a step towards this objective of a Commonwealth of African States, the conference decided that the continent should be divided into five regional groupings: North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa,

The regional groups, it resolved, should be on the following principles:

1. "That only independent states and countries governed by Africans should come together."
2. "That adherence to any regional group *should be based on the wishes of the people ascertained by referendum based on universal suffrage,*" and
3. "That the establishment of these groups should not be prejudicial to the ultimate objective of a Pan-African Commonwealth."

Let us briefly examine the position in each of these groupings. In *North Africa*, even before the above-mentioned Conference, there had been moves towards a wider union. A conference of African states was held in Tangiers, and a North African Federation of States was proposed. Since then, very little has been heard of this proposal. Patriots in these countries have, perhaps, been preoccupied with the all-important issue of the independence of Algeria. It may well be, that with Algeria now at the time of writing appearing to be on the verge of a glorious victory, a powerful new impetus will be added to the moves for unity in this part of the world.

WEST AFRICAN UNION

In *West Africa*, the Union of Guinea and Ghana has since been joined by Mali. To what extent is this "Union" a reality? No doubt the will for unity is there. The preamble to the constitution of Guinea states that the country "unconditionally supports any policy directed towards the establishment of a Union of African States", and Article 34 declares that "the Republic may conclude agreements with any African State regarding association or community, containing partial or complete *renunciation of sovereignty* with the aim of securing African Unity." However much fruitful co-operation there may exist between the three States in the Union, there is, however, no evidence that there has in fact been any real renunciation of sovereignty by any of the members. There are formidable geographical and other obstacles to a true merging of these three states, and perhaps it was inevitable that at this stage their union should be little more than an inspiring demonstration and example. Perhaps the most formidable obstacle is the position of Nigeria and other West African States, but to this we shall return later.

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

The *Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa* (P.A.F.M.E.C.A.) has held a number of meetings and conferences,

and has now accepted affiliation of Southern African liberation organisations. One of its most prominent spokesmen is Mr. Julius Nyerere, leader of the Tanganyika African National Union, and first Prime Minister of Independent Tanganyika. He is a strong advocate of Federation. "I believe," he said, "the bigger the unit, the better.

"I have in mind the East African countries—Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar and Tanganyika, but there is no reason why within federation there should not also come Nyasaland and Northern and Southern Rhodesia.

"The people of Tanganyika want a bigger unit in East and Central Africa. There is no need for them to take their own separate independence if they can have independence as one political unit."

Nyerere's views on an East African Federation enjoy wide support amongst the leadership of the Kenya African National Union, the Malawi Congress in Nyasaland, and other East African countries. The rapid advance of independence in these countries may soon provide a practical basis for implementing some of these plans.

In *Southern Africa* the liberation movements have been too preoccupied with the difficult and dangerous underground struggle—in the Rhodesias and South Africa against white minority rule, and in Mozambique against Portuguese domination—for much detailed attention as yet to have been given to future state forms after liberation. Good relations prevail between the African National Congress and its brother organisations in South-West Africa and the British Protectorates, although difficulties have been created by the negative attitude of certain elements in the leadership of the Basutoland Congress Party, which have even gone so far as to condone British victimisation of African refugees from the Republic. The African National Congress is one of the pioneers of the idea of All-African unity, having been represented at Dr. Du Bois' original conference in Paris, and is wholeheartedly in principle in favour of the concept of a United Africa.

DIFFERENCES AND DIFFICULTIES

The idea of African unity is a progressive and challenging one, which evokes great enthusiasm amongst the ordinary masses of the African people and amongst their leaders at conferences. At the same time, enthusiasm and proclamations of belief in the "African Personality" are not in themselves sufficient to gain so great an objective. It would be idle to deny that serious difficulties and differences exist in the way of our goal.

No African leaders publicly oppose the idea of a United Africa. But many of them behave in a way which does not help unity, or support it with so many reservations that little real content of unity remains.

Even at the 1958 Conference, both Liberia and Nigeria objected to a West African federation, and one of the grounds was stated by Chief Anthony Enabaro of the Action Group who said that it was unrealistic to expect French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, the Camaroons, Togoland, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Gambia and the Federation of Nigeria, with a total population of over 60 million to "adhere" to a Union predetermined by Ghana and Guinea with a population of 6 million, in the formulation of which union their leaders had not been consulted. Chief Enabaro, however, said that he fully supported the idea of the evolution of a West African Federation, with the ultimate objective of an African Commonwealth of States.

"CASABLANCA", "BRAZZAVILLE", "MONROVIA"

The divisions which showed themselves at the 1958 Conference have not grown any less. Indeed they have tended to harden, with the emergence of three separate groupings of African states in West and North Africa—the "Casablanca", "Brazzaville", and "Monrovia" powers.

The "Casablanca" group consists of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, the United Arab Republic and the provisional government of Algeria. This is by far the most outspokenly anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist of the groupings. It is also the most ardently devoted to the conception of a United Africa. Representatives of the governments of these countries met at Casablanca in January 1961. They expressed support for Lumumba's policy in the Congo, condemned Western imperialism, and suggested the formation of an African High Command.

The so-called "Brazzaville" group consists of twelve former French colonies, the extent of whose economic and even political independence from French colonialism is dubious. Explaining why their first meeting was called, in October 1960 at Abijeljan, on the Ivory Coast, François Houphouët Boigny, the President of the Ivory Coast, announced:

"That the responsible leaders of African States *oriented towards France* [i.e., towards French imperialism—N.N.] must urgently meet and seek together a common solution of the problems giving rise to common anxiety."

In discussing problems of unity among themselves, these States

emphasised that "the purpose was *not* to create a political confederation which would infringe on national sovereignty". They did, however, state their aim to establish strong economic ties, common currency regulations, and a common policy on African and world affairs.

The "Monrovia" group originally comprised most of the West and North African States which were not in the other two. It takes its name from its first meeting at Monrovia, the capital of Liberia.

More recently, however, the so-called "Monrovia" and "Brazzaville" States have moved closer together.

At Lagos, Nigeria, in January this year the heads of twenty African states * met together and set up a "Charter of Inter-African and Malagasy States". The eight "Casablanca" States declined the invitation to attend, on the grounds that the convenors—the Nigerian government—had deliberately, in order to appease the pro-French imperialist sentiments of the "Brazzaville" group, decided to exclude the provisional government of the Algerian Republic.

It is doubtful to what extent the organisation established at Lagos will truly contribute towards the cause of a United Africa. Firstly, it is patterned after the United Nations Organisation, and that means that it will tend to preserve and accentuate rather than diminish the separateness and "sovereignty" of each of the members. Secondly, it excludes the most dynamic and forceful advocates of African unity—the "Casablanca" powers.

AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The differences between African states are not confined to arguments about the forms of unity, or the degree of "sovereignty" that should reside in each existing territory. Let us examine the voting record of African states at the United Nations General Assembly, on three matters which primarily concern the African people:

1. Recommendation for the recognition of the Kasavubu delegation as the Congo's legal representative in the United Nations.

For Senegal, Malagasy Republic, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Niger, Cameroon, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville).

Against Guinea, Ghana, Mali, U.A.R., Morocco, Togo.

The rest either abstained or were absent.

* These states were the Cameroon Federation, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Malagasy Republic, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta, Ethiopia, Liberia, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia.

2. A resolution on the Congo demanding the immediate release of all political prisoners, convocation of Parliament, withdrawal of all Belgian technical and military personnel and advisers.

For Guinea, Ghana, Mali, U.A.R., Morocco, Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya, Nigeria, Togo.

Against Congo (Brazzaville).

The rest either abstained from voting or were absent.

3. Draft Resolution recognising the Algerian people's rights to self-determination and providing for a referendum under U.N. supervision to determine the future of Algeria.

For Guinea, Ghana, Mali, U.A.R., Morocco, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Libya, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo.

The rest abstained from voting.

Here, clearly, is evidence of profound disunity between our states, all on matters which vitally affect the interests of the African people as a whole. And every student of African affairs is sharply aware of many other serious differences as well. No amount of vague philosophising about the "African Personality" can explain or conceal these differences.

Nor is it any service to the cause of African unity to try to conceal them. The only way to our goal is to bring them out into the open, to analyse and discuss them, above all to understand them. We all know there are unifying forces and trends in Africa. *There are also divisive forces and factors.* Only the sharp weapon of scientific socialist theory, of Marxism-Leninism, will enable us to isolate these factors, and thus to understand and work to overcome them.

DIVISIVE FORCES IN AFRICA

We know there are many differences among the peoples of Africa. These differences are of two types.

Firstly, we are aware of differences of language and custom, differences in the degree of cultural and economic development, historical differences, including those arising out of which colonial power occupied each country; differences of geography or climatic conditions. *None of these are differences which should divide us; all of them can be overcome without great difficulty.* They are all differences of a "non-antagonistic" kind.

For example, Guinea, Ghana and Mali are separated by geography and language. They have different colonial heritages—British and French. They achieved independence by different paths and at different times. Yet it was not difficult for them to come together, because each of them is *struggling vigorously against colonialism and neo-colonialism, each of them is advancing along non-capitalist lines towards National Democracy.*

Secondly, and far more important than these non-antagonistic differences of history, or language or geography, are the differences in the degree to which the new African states *genuinely fight for independence against colonialism.* An African State which is “oriented towards France” or towards Britain or the United States, or towards the “European Common Market” cannot at the same time be truly *oriented towards Africa*—towards African independence and unity.

Let us speak bluntly. The greatest single obstacle to genuine, not merely fictitious and formal, African unity is the fact that many of the new “African” governments are not truly independent either in fact or intention.

As long as we have “African Prime Ministers” and “Presidents” who permit imperialist war bases in their countries, who vote at the United Nations at the behest of London, Washington, Paris or Brussels, so long is talk of a United Africa with them illusory and formal. African States which do not safeguard and extend their independence, develop the national economy and raise the people’s living and cultural standards; which do not pursue independent and positive foreign policies based on the interests of their own and other African peoples—such “States” are a barrier to the closer union of our Continent.

UNDEMOCRATIC REGIMES

Another serious barrier to African unity is the existence of undemocratic and unprogressive regimes in certain countries in our Continent. We may find a basis for co-operation and co-existence in various spheres between African states irrespective of their internal regimes. But it is not possible to discuss the question of *Federation* or *Political Union* (as distinct from such co-operation) between existing African states without regard to the concrete social, economic and political conditions existing within each state.

Let us examine, from this point of view, the proposals advanced from time to time by Mr. Julius Nyerere. When he contemplates federation between, say, Tanganyika, Kenya and Nyasaland, after

the latter two have won independence, he is proposing something imminently practical and workable. For, under progressive leaders enjoying firm popular support, one should have no doubt that the new Federation, entered into with the enthusiastic agreement of the masses, would be a viable and democratic entity. But, when he tends, as he has sometimes tended in his speeches, to include Northern and Southern Rhodesia (under, presumably, their present undemocratic and autocratic governments) in such a federation, he is bordering on fantasy. As the experience of the British-imposed "Central African Federation" has amply demonstrated, there is no room in a democratic federation for a Roy Welensky, or for the economic predominance of vast imperialist mining monopolies such as we have in Northern Rhodesia and Katanga. The condition for the inclusion of "the Rhodesias" in an African community is the establishment of genuinely democratic majority government in these territories, based on the principle of "one man, one vote"; together with the bringing of vast imperialist-controlled monopoly concerns, which have huge weight in the economic life of the country, under public ownership.

Some advocates of East African unity include Ethiopia in their talks and plans for federation. One must express the gravest doubts as to the reality of such speculations. True, here we are not dealing with a White autocracy, such as is exercised in Salisbury or Pretoria. But is autocracy and the stifling of the aspirations of the masses any more acceptable because it happens to be imposed by fellow Africans? Will the Ethiopian feudal ruling class accept the principle of democratic elections, or trade union rights, of the right to form political parties, of freedom of speech and the press? And, if it will not, how can it take its place in a federation with territories which uphold these cherished principles?—unless the federation itself is to be but a formality and a mockery.

CLASS FACTORS FOR UNITY AND DISUNITY

In discussing our aspirations for a United Africa, we should look at the historical factors which have led to disunity in other Continents. We hope that Africa will be able to avoid the phenomenon of the existence of mutually antagonistic and often warring nation-states which has marked the development of other Continents, particularly that of Europe. In that case it will be necessary for us to examine the historical *causes* for the emergence of these antagonistic nation-states, to see if we can avoid the same experience here.

The nation-states of Europe emerged as the result of a specific

system—the capitalist system—under the leadership of a specific class—the capitalist class. The capitalist bourgeoisie of Europe carried out a great progressive role in history by destroying the innumerable feudal principalities into which the continent was divided, and creating new, larger state entities based, by and large, on communities of language, territory, economy and culture.

But the bourgeois-democratic revolutions stopped short at the national frontiers; they did not—except by way of empire building and conquest—rise to the conception of supra-national, of international communities on a voluntary and equal basis. Why was this? It is because bourgeois nationalism, by its very nature, the nature of the competitive trader, playing on national sentiment to capture the market—is incapable of looking beyond the national frontier to the broader unity of mankind. The capitalists see “foreigners” either as competitors or as objects for the forced “unity” of conquest and domination.

Here is a potent lesson for Africa. If we wish to avoid the path of Europe of antagonistic, warring nation-states, then we must avoid the *root cause* of this phenomenon in Europe—we *must avoid capitalism; we must seek the path of non-capitalist development.* We must base ourselves not upon the bourgeois class, with its competitive, restrictive and exclusive outlook. We must build the future on the working people of town and country, with their broad outlook of African and human brotherhood.

Is it historically possible for us to do this? Are we not bound by the same laws of social development as led to the division of Europe?

Yes, it is historically possible for us to traverse a different path from that of other Continents. Although the laws of social development are universal, it must never be forgotten that *Africa is entering the period of independence, of revolutionary upsurge, not at the phase which Europe did—the phase when capitalism held unchallenged sway as the most advanced social system.* Our African Revolution is taking place in an epoch of the transition of mankind, on a world scale, from capitalism to socialism; an epoch in which the world socialist system and the international working class, guided by Marxist-Leninist Parties, is the *decisive* and growing factor in all world events.

It is this all-important truth which above all makes the noble concept of a United Africa a practical possibility, and not merely an idealistic dream.

But if we wish to convert this concept into reality, we must decisively *reject* the capitalist way of development, which inevitably breeds antagonism between peoples and between states. We must reject the dominant leadership of capitalist, feudal, and pro-colonialist elements in the leadership of our new States; our national united fronts must be headed by our most progressive and advanced elements, who wholeheartedly support African and international unity—the working people of town and country, and the revolutionary socialist intellectuals who wholeheartedly identify themselves with the cause of the masses.

The experience of the Egyptian-Syrian Union is most instructive in this regard. The *idea* of such a union was warmly supported by the Syrian and Egyptian masses, and by all Arab peoples of Africa and the Middle East. But in practice, the big capitalists who control Egypt used the Union in order to establish their own economic stranglehold over Syria. The stifling Egyptian dictatorship, which bans political parties and trade unions, suppresses free speech and progressive ideas, was extended to destroy the democratic institutions of the former Syrian Republic. The “Union” became a shield to cover the reality—the imperialistic domination of Syria by the Egyptian bourgeoisie. Such a “union” was built on foundations of shifting sand—it was unable to endure. All sections of the Syrian population united to put an end to it.

NO UNITY BY VIOLENCE

It is impossible to build true and enduring unity of peoples by means of compulsion or conquest; it can only be achieved by the voluntary consent of all the peoples concerned. History is full of examples of this truth. Only yesterday, Hitler and the German Nazis attempted to “unify” Europe by force and violence. But the “unity” was fictitious; it fell to pieces as soon as Hitler’s Germany was overthrown. Only yesterday the imperialists tried to “unify” Africa by conquest. The African peoples have decisively rejected such unity.

We cannot approach this question of unity in a formal way. We do not want larger units merely for their own sake, but because of the practical benefits which they bring to the people. That is why the Nyasas have rejected Welensky’s federation. That is why Africans will fight tooth and nail against the attempts of Verwoerd to annex South-West Africa, or to reach out his greedy hands for Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland.

As was correctly pointed out at Accra, a cardinal principle of

closer union is that it should be based on consent—"on the wishes of the people ascertained by referendum" and universal suffrage.

But this in itself presupposes that the peoples concerned should enjoy democratic rights and freedom of speech. It also presupposes that they will be free from foreign imperialist domination and management.

The African peoples is the concern of the Africans themselves. It cannot be arranged or "negotiated" in Downing Street or Paris.

PART OF THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION

One of the great weaknesses of many of the exponents of Pan-Africanism is that they treat this question in general abstract terms, divorced from all the other burning and urgent questions facing the people; that they rely on vague slogans and philosophising instead of analysing the concrete difficulties and evolving a plan to overcome them; that they treat the question as a purely formal and constitutional one instead of analysing its profound social and economic implications.

Such an approach is bound to lead to disappointments and disillusionments.

A United Africa—it is a splendid and inspiring goal, one that is capable of realisation.

But to understand it properly, in all its richness and value, to fight for it purposefully and intelligently, we must view it in its proper context, as inseparably bound up with the strivings of the peoples of our Continent—indeed, of the peoples of the whole world—for peace, democracy, national independence and socialism; for a fuller and happier life.

This is not a matter of negotiations between statesmen. It is part and parcel of the strivings of our people for freedom, against colonialism and its heritage of economic and social backwardness.

The achievement of a United Africa is inseparably bound up with the continuation and the victory of the African Revolution; the victorious struggles of the masses of the people against colonialism and its African agents; against reactionary forces and classes in Africa itself; for higher living and cultural standards and rapid economic development along non-capitalist lines; for the eradication of imperialist economic domination in Africa; for agrarian revolution and industrial development; for democratic rights and national democracy; for a socialist Africa.

For a Free Algerian Republic

The 25th Anniversary of the Algerian Communist Party

"Communism is the yeast of the people."—Sheik Abdelhamid Ben Badis.

The Algerian Communist Party reaches its twenty-fifth anniversary at the time when the hopes of peace and of an independent Algerian Republic rise upon the horizon. The Party was born in October 1936, in a hall in Algiers, at a meeting of about 200 delegates. Poor fellaheen from Ain M'lila, masons from Oran and dockers from Algiers sat side by side. Their coming together was no accident of history, but rather the result of the real needs of the most oppressed and exploited sections of our people. Thus these oppressed and exploited had, for the first time, an organised Algerian national group standing in the forefront of their struggle, an *avant garde* Party of a new type which had grown out of the native soil.

The A.C.P., right from the beginning, had at its disposal methods of work and an ideology which had been tried and proved. The Party was founded by militants who came from the first organisations created in Algeria by the A.C.P.'s fraternal party, the Communist Party of France—organisations formed as a result of the world-shaking Soviet Revolution of 1917, which had roused all the peoples of the East, of Asia and of Africa from their long sleep.

Six years before the birth of the Party, in 1930, the colonialists celebrated the centenary of the "Conquest". They were convinced their rule would last for ever. They had expelled the Emir Khaled who had been supported by the Communists; they had suppressed the struggles of the communist organisations against colonialism, against the "native laws" (Code de l'Indigénat), against the wars in the Riff and Syria, and for political and trade union rights.

Nineteen-thirty-six was a year in which fascism menaced the world, and was strong in the province of Oran—supported by the

forerunners of today's Secret Army Organisation, and the large-scale French land-owners. But 1936 was also the year of the victory of the Popular Front in France, and of increased vigour of the workers' and peasants' struggles in Algeria. It was this resurgence which manifested itself in the formation of the Algerian Communist Party.

MESSAGE FROM SOVIET COMMUNISTS

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the creation of the glorious Algerian Communist Party, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union sends its fraternal greetings and its warm congratulations to the Communists of heroic Algeria.

During the twenty-five years of the existence of their Party, the Algerian Communists have been through tremendous difficulties and trials. They unrelentingly struggle for the liberation of their people from the colonial yoke, for the interests of the Algerian workers, for the cause of progress. For the past seven years the Algerian Communists have fought, together with the whole Algerian people, for the liberty and independence of their country. Through their courageous fight and their loyalty to Marxist-Leninist ideas, they won the gratitude of the Algerian workers.

The C.C. of the C.P.S.U. wishes their fraternal Party, the Algerian Communist Party, and all Algerian patriots, new victories in the struggle for the liberation of their country, in the struggle for a bright future for the Algerian people.

Long live the glorious Algerian Communist Party!

Long live friendship between the Soviet and Algerian peoples!

THE PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

A National Party. The A.C.P. was the only organisation to formulate a conception of an "Algerian nation", in contrast to the policies of those who were influenced by the assimilationists and denied the national character of Algeria, and in contrast to those

whose national conception was narrow. At the same time, the Party paved the way for the solution of the problem of the white minority within the framework of the nation, in order to prevent this minority from falling under the influence of the "ultras" and becoming a hindrance to Algerian liberation.

A Party of Struggle. The A.C.P.'s motto has always been: "The key to victory is the struggle on the national soil." During the past twenty-five years, there has been no activity aiming at national liberation, and no activity on bread-and-butter demands which the Party did not either initiate or support—from the 1936 strikes to the present war of independence, and including the underground fight against the ultra-colonialist Petain regime which it carried out alone. The Party always linked the struggle for freedom with the bread-and-butter demands of the people, and from 1954 onwards it linked mass action with the armed struggle. It also brought into these struggles European and Jewish workers.

A Party of Unity. The A.C.P. always takes up its position on the idea of national unity which it was first to formulate—that the liberation of the fatherland will not be the work of a single party, but of the unity without exception of all Algerian patriots. The Party took part in the Muslim Congress of 1936, and in the Algerian Front "pour le Respect des Libertés" created in 1951, despite the limited programmes of these bodies. It promoted the idea of the Independence Front in 1940, of the Committees for the Amnesty in March 1946, and of the Democratic National Front for an Algerian Republic in July 1946. Since 1954, the Party has supported the National Liberation Front (F.L.N.), of which it considers itself an integral part. It has called for trade union unity within the General Union of Algerian Workers (U.G.T.A.). It has integrated its "Liberation Fighters" into the national liberation army.

A Revolutionary Party. The A.C.P. has based itself on the most advanced theory of all time, Marxism-Leninism, which it applies to Algerian conditions with the support of the most revolutionary social forces of the Algerian people, the working class and the poor peasantry. It started the formation of Algerian trade unions. It was the first to formulate a radical land reform programme. It is the only Algerian Party which has publicised and popularised the ideas of scientific socialism, ideas which have influenced more and more Algerian patriots to think of a socialist future for the country after its liberation.

A Party of Peace between Nations. The A.C.P. struggled against the aggressive policies of Nazi Germany, against Algeria's joining NATO, for the Stockholm Peace Appeal and for the lessening of world tension (the National Liberation Front said in 1954 that world tension was creating favourable conditions for the Liberatory War). It is the only Algerian organisation which based its struggle, right from the start, on proletarian internationalism—that is, on solidarity with the international workers' movement, and solidarity of the workers' movement with the colonial peoples. From the time of the struggle against the invasion of Ethiopia to active solidarity with the people's struggles in Vietnam, Tunisia, Morocco and Korea, from the days of the Spanish civil war, in which a number of militant A.C.P. members gave their lives, to participation in the war against Nazi Germany from which all patriots today draw political benefit, the A.C.P. helped to broaden the horizon of Algerians, to give them more confidence, to strengthen their ties with the French working class, who are their natural allies, as well as with the socialist countries and the anti-imperialist and democratic forces of the world. It taught the Algerian people not to be deceived by the so-called "anti-colonialism" of the American leaders, to see clearly the class interests of certain Tunisian and Moroccan bourgeois circles which, though they support the Algerian struggle, do not support it fully.

The Party has paid heavily for its part in these struggles—from the deportation to South Algeria of its first militants, condemned under the "Native Laws", tied to horses' tails and dragged for several miles through the sand—to the heroes who resisted torture or died in the ranks of the Algerian Liberation Army, and including many condemned to death during the underground period of 1940 to 1943. Many of the Party leaders fell in battle—the Party Secretary Kaddour Belkaïm, the worker Bouali Taleb, the peasant Tahar Ghomri, the lawyer Laid Lamrani, all of them members of the Central Committee

PROUD RECORD

Every step of our history can be examined; it will stand up to that examination. History will confirm the farsightedness of the A.C.P. But our Party does not boast. It was not the only body—far from it!—to raise the level of the people's struggle. Let us repeat El Ghazali's words: "The A.C.P. makes no distinctions between the truth it discovers and the truths discovered by others." Other parties and organisations representing other classes and social

strata also made contributions to the struggle. It is necessary to recall this, since some patriots forget the facts, and think that the flame of November 1954 and the National Liberation Front grew out of nothing.

But contrary to other parties, our Party always told the truth to the people, even when it was unpleasant to do so. For example, on the union between Syria and Egypt, we wrote in 1959 that it was built on sand; and we spoke of mistakes and weaknesses in the Liberatory War, in order that they could be corrected in time, and so that they could not be exploited by the enemy.

Moreover, in order to aid victory over colonialism, the Party had to wage a constant struggle in its own ranks on matters of principle. This was sometimes a difficult struggle, particularly against the danger of deviations from our national policy, against dogmatism caused by underestimating national questions, and against national narrowness. In distinction to the nationalist parties, the A.C.P. does not hide from the people mistakes it may make. It publicises them, as it did in July 1946, in order to correct them with the aid of the workers, since a party guiding the people must also learn from the people, and since its only reason for existence is to serve the people's cause.

A quarter of a century has passed! What tremendous changes have come about in such a short period. In 1936, the only independent African state—Ethiopia—was the victim of annexationist attack by fascist Italy. Today, Africa has been almost wholly liberated. The programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for communism lights up a radiant destiny for the peoples of the world. The socialist camp together with the forces of national liberation and of peace are stronger than the forces of imperialism whose unity is constantly declining.

Since the historic call of the C.R.U.A., our people have gone forward together with their government and their army, their banners held high, along the path which was opened by the courageous militants of 1936. Our people will force successful negotiations on neo-colonialist de Gaulle. *As for the politically weakened "Secret Army Organisation", the combined efforts of the Algerian and the French people will put an end to them; of this, the tremendous success of the December 19th demonstrations in France is the proof.*

THE A.C.P. IN ARMED STRUGGLE

Faithful to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, and learning the lessons of the Chinese, Vietnamese, Tunisian and Moroccan ex-

periences, the Party always recognised that, at a certain stage, armed struggle could become the basic form of liberatory struggle, as it had been many times before in the history of our fatherland. Before 1954, the Party considered it useful that Algerians should undergo military service in the French army, because already it foresaw the need for training of cadres for the military struggle in Algeria.

The Party assessed the rising of November 1954 correctly, and explained its deep-lying causes. It supported this struggle simultaneously by political action, within the slender bounds of colonial legality, and by helping the fighters. Its most militant members in the war-stricken areas joined the "maquis". Despite some delays in its preparations for armed struggle, the Party trained its first armed units, called "Liberation Fighters" in June 1955. They undertook armed raids and sabotage in the big cities, as well as the first engagements in the Chelif and the Ténès area, where many Party militants fell. These were replaced by hundreds more in the ranks of the National Liberation Army. The "Liberation Fighters" were then integrated into the ranks of the Army, following an agreement between the National Liberation Front and the Party.

COMMANDER RABAH OUSSIDHOUM
(Commander in the International Brigades,
killed in Spain)

“ . . . When I met you again you were in command of the machine-gunners of the 10th Battalion at Torrelodones. The struggle for a free and independent Algeria led you to this land of Spain, where the liberties of advanced and progressive mankind were at stake. You were always the best among us. Your deep political knowledge and your military experience marked you out as our leader. We were proud to serve under you. One morning you fell on the Miraflores plateau. . . . ”

(Written by Captain Cazalis, who also fell in Spain)

In the city of Algiers alone, nine of our comrades were condemned to death and one executed. Out of forty members of our Central Committee, eight joined the Army, twenty-one were jailed or interned for their patriotic acts.

While the Party gave them its constant support, it also stressed

to the fighters the need for them to raise the level of their political understanding to give greater importance to the work of the political commissars, to use the methods of explanation and education in order to win the support of the masses, to link the armed struggle with the mass political struggle, and to avoid all actions which would harm our cause. This advice from a responsible political party, at that time misinterpreted by many patriots, has now been adopted by the whole Liberatory movement.

Through its work of raising the political level of the masses and of mobilising them in the big cities, the Party contributed to the mass actions in 1960 and 1961 which were a decisive help to the struggle of the heroic Algerian liberation army.

The birth and early years of A.C.P. are indissolubly merged with the class struggles of the workers and the poor peasantry.

Nineteen-thirty-six was the year of the mighty strike of the agricultural workers in the Soummam and Skikda areas of Oran Province, of the Mitidja and other areas of the Algiers Province. In the cork factories of Bougie and Jilelli, in the mines of Timezrit, in the Constantine quarries, on the building sites of Oran, Algiers and elsewhere, thousands of workers, on the initiative of our comrades, united and resolved to stand up against the colonialists and the exploiters, backed up by their police squads. After several weeks of struggle the workers won, in principle, the right to the same benefits under social welfare laws as applied in France, as well as trade union rights which until then had been reserved exclusively for European workers.

This victory proved the underlying unity of interests between our workers and the French proletariat, at that time pressing forward to the victory of the Popular Front.

These first struggles strengthened the confidence of the workers and the masses, contributing to the rise of the national movement, then under the sway of various trends among the petty and middle bourgeoisie.

It was with pride in their victory that the Algerian workers marched in the demonstrations of May the First and the 14th of July 1936.

The Algerian Communists who, until then, had been forced to live a semi-underground life, characterised by jail and deportation to the South Oran desert, were able at last openly to distribute their paper, *La Lutte Social* (The Social Struggle) published in French and Arabic.

Despite all difficulties the struggle of the working class went on :

from 1936 to 1939, against colonialism, and then, from 1939 to 1945 in the context of the great world struggle against international fascism, supported and allied with the colonialists, deadly enemy of all peoples and workers.

The nine years between 1945 and 1954, during which the national liberation movement arose and prepared for the final attack, saw an exceptionally rich contribution by the working class and our Party, in political and economic actions, both fusing in the common stream of the national struggle.

The workers particularly remember December 1947 when 100,000 strikers took part in demonstrations, marches and battles against the colonialist police.

The docks, the mines, the factories and other workplaces were the battlefields where our young working class measured up to its place within the nation and heightened its class consciousness. In the townships and shanty-towns, or at the farms in the grape-picking season, on the occasion of every action in support of their demands, the workers identified the trade union in their minds with the Communist Party. Thus they unconsciously honoured the A.C.P. which expressed and defended in the very course of the national struggle the immediate and future interests of the workers and the nation.

The Party made a powerful contribution to the training of trade union leaders and tested militants. In all these struggles the Party safeguarded the strengthening of trade union unity, as it does during the present war.

From 1954 onward, the glorious traditions of struggle of the Algerian working class have been carried forward within the Army of National Liberation, to which the workers brought the organisational spirit, the technical training and all the qualities that characterise the working class. At the same time, despite the suppression of trade union rights, they seized every favourable occasion to launch industrial struggles for demands linked with the liberation struggle, and to foster the U.G.T.A. (Algerian Workers' General Union).

These traditions also continued in the form of mass actions during the early years of the war. Thus in 1956, after a bomb attack by the "ultras" against the inhabitants of Thebes Street in Algiers, the Communist workers led workers of many trades, especially dockers and building workers, in mass protest demonstrations. The Communist Party also organised an action of the miners of Miliana against repression.

The actions in December 1960 and in 1961, which marked a decisive turn in the liberation struggle, found the workers in the front ranks. This was because the Algerian working class was prepared for the struggle by a glorious and long tradition, which our Party is proud to have implanted and fostered.

THE A.C.P. GIVES HOPE TO THE PEASANTS

Our country's history is rich in peasant struggles for land and freedom. The A.C.P. always contended that the national democratic revolution was in fact a peasant revolution. The peasantry forms the mass basis for the liberation struggle. The history of the A.C.P. is rich in unbreakable ties which have been forged in struggles waged together with the poor peasants.

In 1929, for example, an important struggle started, under the lead of communist militants, against the expropriation of the fellaheen (peasants) in the Blida area—a struggle which brought the poor peasants from Souma to Mouzaïa against the settlers.

The Communists were elevated to the leadership of the small peasants' unions by the fellaheen. The A.C.P. was also closely allied with the fellaheen in the great struggles at El-Oued, Tlemcen and Duperrè against the "Forest Laws", the heavy taxes, the system of "mixed municipalities" and the Caïds regime, in support of their demands for seeds, loans, and the distribution amongst them of certain land.

The Party was again amongst the fellaheen in their troubles following the Orleansville earthquake, where it lent its efforts to their struggle to get compensation, and also to expose the indifference of the colonialists.

It was side by side with the agricultural workers in the Mitidja district, in Descartes and in Ain-Temouchet for the raising of wages, and against the repression. To all the poor peasants, it explained the need for organisation, and the connection between their struggles and those of the town workers in the struggle for independence and agrarian reform.

These actions led to the development of Party organisation in a number of regions. Later, the armed struggle was to benefit from this, thanks to the trained and proved peasant cadres, ready to fight, who understood the social and national aims of the revolution—such cadres as Hilali, Moussa from Ifry, Hamma Lakhdar from El-Oued, and hundreds more who fell on the field of honour, whose memories still live in the hearts of the peasants of Aïn-Defla, of Chélif and of Aurès.

Thus from the struggles of the past, the peasantry have come to feel more and more strongly the need for an alliance with the working class, as well as for the strengthening of our Party and the national progressive front. These feelings grow as the time approaches when their desires for a radical land reform can be fulfilled, and in particular, when the 2,400,000 hectares of land of the large colonisation and the estates of the great feudal landlords—traitors to the national cause—will be given back to the poor peasants, the agricultural labourers, the “khammès” and the small fellaheen, together with the means for making those lands productive.

The A.C.P. believes that, in effect, the reality of our independence will be in direct proportion to the land area taken back from the colonisers and returned to the peasants.

YOUTH—A VIGOROUS FORCE OF OUR PARTY

The Algerian Muslim Congress, convened in 1936, gave our young people the opportunity of forming the “Chabab El Moutamar”, the first movement for struggle against obscurantism and pessimism, whose way had been prepared by the North African Muslim Students’ Association.

But this new movement had no internal structure, unsuitable leadership, and above all no programme of action fitting for great national tasks. Other organisations were formed, amongst them the Algerian Federation of Young Communists, which served to raise the spirit of the young people against colonialism.

After the Second World War, in the course of which young Algerians covered themselves in glory in anti-fascist struggles, they returned to find the country soaked in blood by the massacres carried out under de Gaulle’s orders in May-June of 1945. In this period, the Federation of Young Communists and later the Union of Algerian Democratic Youth played an important part in the struggles, together with the “Moslem Scouts” and the Moslem Students’ Association.

Besides its contribution to the general struggle for national liberation, the U.J.D.A. led broad campaigns for the demands of young people, against illiteracy etc. Dozens of young Algerian Communists were jailed because they fought against the colonial war in Vietnam, and against the French recruiting officers who were paid 100 francs per kilo for the cannon-fodder they recruited. Others were jailed for demonstrations of solidarity with the Tunisian people, such as the leader of the Sidi-Bel-Abbes section of the U.J.D.A.

Thanks to the efforts of the U.J.D.A., broad delegations of Algerians took part in the many Festivals and World Congresses of Democratic Youth; these delegations grouped together nationalists and Communists, Moslems and Europeans, workers, peasants and students, all of whom denounced the hypocritical slogan of "French Algeria", and prepared the ground for broad international youth support for our cause.

Nobody then will be surprised that the young Communists were amongst the most fervent, and plunged body and soul into the armed struggle for liberation. Nobody will be surprised that amongst the innumerable heroes of the war of independence there are reckoned young Communists like Rebbah Noureddine, former National Secretary of the U.J.D.A., Ahmed Inal, former Secretary of the Algerian Students in Paris, Abdelkader Choukal, Henri Maillot and many other members of U.J.D.A. who fell on the field of honour. Is it then surprising that a larger and larger number of young patriots are coming into the ranks of our Party?

FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

From its beginnings, the A.C.P. opened its ranks to women. It was the first of the national parties in Algeria to bring women into its leadership.

Many militant Communist women met with imprisonment, torture and conviction in court during the course of this war. One of them fell in the ranks of the partisans.

In the past, on more than one occasion, our Party led the struggles of the womenfolk for their rights as mothers, as workers and for the liberation of their homeland. For example: during the great dockers' strike in Oran in 1950, the Oran district of the A.C.P., together with the dockers' section and the women Communists, decided to enlist the dockers' wives in the strike.

For the first time in the history of our workers' struggle combined with the national struggle, the women of Algeria rose in their hundreds to wage an open struggle against the employers and the colonial administration. With extraordinary courage, they faced the police and *gardes-mobiles* in powerful demonstrations, defying the bullets, throwing paving stones at the police, and lying down in the road outside the police station where some of their numbers were detained, and unveiling themselves to enable them to act with greater efficacy.

This magnificent action of the dockers' wives in Oran contributed

strongly to their husbands' victory, and broke down a number of prejudices.

The struggle of the Oran dockers' wives, with our militants at their head, as well as the struggles of the women at Batna, of peasant women at Ouchba near Tlemcen, of working women in the salt factories, of miners' wives at Beni-Saf, of the women workers in silk-drying works and of charwomen in Algiers—all these paved the way for the heroic battles of the Algerian women after 1954, and also for their real emancipation.

IN PRISON—AND FACING THE ENEMY'S TRIBUNALS

When imprisoned by the colonialists, the Communists pursue the struggle; they resist torture and refuse to give any information to the enemy. In this fashion, Omar Djeghri, Maurice Audin and many others sacrificed their lives.

For the Communists, the fight calls also for an unswerving political attitude before the tribunals of the enemy, where they recognise no authority but that of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic.

“WE MUST GO WHERE THE MASSES ARE”

“If we want to have the masses with us, we must go where they struggle, where they suffer and hope.”

—KADDOUR BELKAIM, former Algerian Communist Party Secretary, who died in the colonialist prisons.

And even in the prisons, the obstinate efforts of the Communists to improve their cultural and political education, both individually and collectively, trains cadres for the future.

Finally, and above all, they wage a continuous and stubborn struggle in order to unite all patriots in common action and to compel the warders to respect their dignity as fighters. Here are a few examples:

In 1957, at the Serkadji prison (Algiers) there was a “Resistance Day in the Communist Section”. With the support of all other patriots, this resistance was aimed at preventing the police from again handing over the Secretary of our Party, Ahmed Akkache, to the paratroopers who had already tortured him.

At the internment camp in Bossuet, terror reigned. There, too,

the Communists led the mass of interned patriots into action. It was there that a Communist refused to obey the order which was given to all internees to undress. For setting an example to others, he was beaten and left for dead.

At Lambèze, after two years of terror, our comrades who were members of the "loudjna" (committee), a united group of nationalists and Communists, took the initiative in a powerful, unanimous and victorious strike of 2,200 patriots. Transferred to the terror camp at Boghari, these very comrades, with F.L.N. fighters, waged a hard struggle, successfully, against the infernal conditions imposed on them by the Legionnaires who were former members of Hitler's S.S.

Thus even in jail, the Communists played the role of "yeast". They listened carefully to all rumours of the battles going on outside, and tried to join those battles by escaping as soon as they could; in this, our comrades Ahmed Akkache and Henri Alleg succeeded, as did Boualem Kahalfa accompanied by two militants of the F.L.N.

THE ADVANCE GUARD OF MAGHREB UNITY

August 1954. While the Tunisian struggle is being waged in the east and the Moroccan in the west, the colonialists boast that they have kept Algeria "calm". But our Party struggles against the corrosive effects of a policy of "wait-and-see", and against the splits in the nationalist ranks; it organises solidarity actions, strikes etc., with the peoples of Morocco and Tunisia. These mass actions receive unprecedented support.

In the elections of 1951 and 1952, the Communist Party was ahead of all other national parties in certain villages and towns, particularly in the province of Oran.

The Party set out to mobilise the powerful energies of the people who were seeking an opportunity to express themselves. Dozens of Tunisian patriots were imprisoned in Orléansville. The A.C.P. launched a national campaign of solidarity with them.

Tens of thousands of small Tunisian flags were sold, collections organised and delegations prepared. Rank and file organisations, and even some leading nationalist organisations, joined in this powerful movement.

On the day decided upon, innumerable caravans carrying the people in solidarity, converged from all over Algeria on Orléansville, despite the many road-blocks set up by the "forces of order", who had also been mobilised on a grand scale.

The success of Orléansville was a clear indication that Algeria was anxious to take part, as soon as possible, in a united struggle for the complete liberation of the Maghreb.

THE A.C.P. AND PROBLEMS OF CULTURE

The A.C.P. has always believed that the struggle for a national culture is an integral part of the struggle for independence. The development of the war confirms the correctness of the struggle waged, since its beginnings, by the A.C.P. on this field, and in particular:

★ For the recognition and teaching of Arabic as an official language; against illiteracy; against closing the free "médersas"; against interference by the French colonial administration in the Moslem culture; for support of the efforts of the "Oulemas" towards an Arab cultural renaissance.

★ To make our national cultural heritage known and loved (by means of its journals in Arabic and French, its magazine "Progrès", and its series of conferences on Algerian history, and so on).

★ For encouraging the meritorious efforts of young writers in the French language—Kateb Yacine, Mohammed Dib, Malek Haddad etc., in order to create a young literature with a national and revolutionary content.

★ For taking our theatre, stifled and hamstrung as it was, out of the cities into the village halls and homes, and for opening classes in classical music at the Algiers School of Fine Arts.

★ For orientating our students towards scientific studies for future use, and securing their participation in the peoples' struggles.

At the outbreak of the war, the A.C.P. supported the students' strike of 1956-57, though it considered its prolonged extension to be harmful to the youth.

During the war of liberation, the A.C.P. distributed literary works which were patriotically inspired; it helped to make known to French public opinion the cultural heritage of Algeria, against de Gaulle who denied Algeria a history and a past. The Party published a number of political pamphlets, one of them about the Algerian nation, as well as a political and theoretical magazine etc.

Our Party believes that our cultural revival is not a matter of simple contemplation of the values of the past, but an enrichment and rebirth of these values for a genuinely national, progressive, popular and scientific culture.

By its struggles from 1936 on, by managing to keep alive in the tempest of this war, the A.C.P. contributed considerably to this great advance. Every step in the Party's progress has advanced the national cause. We are proud of our young and gallant Party. On

this twenty-fifth anniversary, we repeat that the strengthening of our Party ranks is a worthy and highly patriotic task.

May the Algerian Communist Party live and develop, for independence and peace, for land, bread and freedom! May the A.C.P. live and grow, so that an Algeria free from colonialism may take the bright road to socialism.

LONG LIVE THE ALGERIAN COMMUNIST PARTY!

Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of
the Communist Party of Great Britain

Monthly 1s. 6d.

Subscription rates: 6 issues 10s. 6d.; 12 issues 21s.

Order from:

CENTRAL BOOKS LTD., 37 GRAYS INN ROAD
LONDON, W.C.1

Message From the Algerian Communist Party

In a message to the Editorial Board of "The African Communist", Comrade LARBI BOUHALI, General Secretary of the Algerian Communist Party writes . . .

I have learnt with great pleasure of your intention of publishing in the next number of your Review an article devoted to the 25th Anniversary of the Algerian Communist Party. This will represent homage paid not only to our Party, but also to our working class and the whole of our people which, with the proclamation of the Cease Fire, has just won a great victory over the imperialist forces of war and national oppression. I wish, therefore, to express to you our ardent thanks.

It is true that the liberation war of the Algerian people has been very hard, and we believe that few peoples will have paid so dear a price for their liberty and their national independence. However, it has brought benefits not only to the Algerian people, but also to all the African peoples and to all the forces of liberty and peace throughout the world which, during more than seven years, have not ceased to demonstrate their active solidarity with the Algerian people. It has made a great contribution to the development and strengthening of the liberation movement in Africa, it has aroused among the African peoples the will to unite against their oppressors and exploiters, and it has struck important blows against imperialism.

Despite the great successes won by the African peoples, their struggle is not yet finished, and this includes those who have already achieved national independence. In fact, already the principal danger for the peoples who have succeeded in winning their independence lies in the neo-colonialist policy of the imperialists in general and of the American imperialists in particular. In order to face this danger, and to liquidate all the survivals of colonialism in Africa, our peoples must be vigilant, they must strengthen their national unity and their struggle in the form which is most appropriate for each people, and they must build a powerful African anti-imperialist front. It is very clear that it is the task, above all, of the African communists to guide their peoples along this road.

For our part, we believe that the Algerian Communist Party has played a great role in the liberation struggle of the Algerian people.

This not only during the war, when it made a heavy sacrifice for the national cause, but also before the war, notably during the ten years which preceded it. As the conscious *avant-garde* (forward section) of the people, the Algerian Communist Party has not only disseminated broadly in our country the great human ideas of socialism, but it has also organised and led forward the masses in great political battles, and battles for their demands, which are inseparable from the general struggle for the total elimination of the colonial regime. These struggles constituted an invaluable preparation of our people for the armed struggle, which it carried out without wavering for seven and a half years. Naturally also, while maintaining its political and organisational autonomy, our Party took part in all aspects of the war, and gave its resolute support to the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic. During the course of its twenty-five years' existence, and still today, the dominating pre-occupation of the Algerian Communist Party is its policy of unity, and of the bringing together of all the patriotic and democratic forces without exception.

The successes which our Party has been able to win during its lifetime it owes to its unwavering attachment to the invincible Marxist-Leninist teaching, to the fraternal assistance of the great French Communist Party, and, above all, to the lessons drawn from the unparalleled experiences of the glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Algerian Communist Party remains unshakably faithful to Marxist-Leninist principles and to proletarian internationalism, to the 1957 and 1960 (Moscow) declarations of the Communist and Workers' Parties, and to the Marxist-Leninist theses of the 20th and 22nd Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This is the indispensable condition for bringing our support to the international unity of the Communist and working-class movement, and for our helping forward the advance of Algeria on the road to peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

The Republic of South Africa, where a minority of colonialists exercises a racist and terrorist dictatorship over the majority of the people, presents certain analogies with Algeria. But, as in our case, we are convinced that, spurred forward by the heroic South African Communist Party, the people will finally sweep away the oppressors.

Long live the anti-imperialist front of the African peoples!

Long live national independence and peace!

Long live Communism!

Violent and Non-Violent Transition

Forms and Methods of Struggle—the South African Democratic Revolution

by A. LERUMO

“The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means in our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom” (from the Manifesto of “Umkonto We Sizwe”, December 16, 1961).

It is not necessary in the present article to dwell on the burning necessity for sweeping democratic changes in South Africa. The very name *apartheid*—the vile form of oppression practised by the ruling White minority—stinks in every corner of the world. The formal concessions advocated by such bodies as the United and Progressive Parties will satisfy neither the people of South Africa nor world opinion, since they would leave 87 per cent of the land and all the dominant sectors of the economy in the hands of foreign and local White monopolists. In any case, even such concessions are bitterly resisted by the ruling Nationalist Party which has declared it will maintain a “granite wall” against any democratic reforms and continues to intensify its policy of discrimination and oppression with every year that passes.

The great majority of South Africans are determined upon a clean break with apartheid and racialism. They demand a South African Democratic Revolution, whose main content will be the national liberation of the African people from White colonialism. They demand, in the words of the Freedom Charter, which represents the will and the decision of all the main democratic organisations of the country: that the People shall Govern; that All National Groups shall have Equal Rights; that the People shall Share in the National Wealth; that the Land shall be Shared among those who work it.

There are no serious differences among South Africa’s 13-million-strong majority of oppressed non-White people about these goals

and aims of the Democratic Revolution. The question that really faces us is that of the forms and methods of struggle by which they are to be achieved.

THE TRADITION OF "NON-VIOLENCE"

For many years, ever since the Campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws in 1952, the Congress Alliance, which is the national liberation front in South Africa, laid great emphasis on *non-violent* methods of struggle. Basing themselves on this slogan and also the similarity, in many respects, between the Defiance Campaign and Gandhi's campaigns in India, some observers have attempted to saddle the Alliance with the Gandhian pacifist philosophy of *satyagraha* (soul-force). But this analogy is incorrect. The Defiance Campaign differed both in its methods and its goals from the Indian pattern of passive resistance. It is true that some of the leaders of the South African Indian Congress, which was a partner in the campaign, were Gandhians, but many others even in the S.A.I.C. were not, for example, the outspoken Communist and revolutionary Dr. Y. M. Dadoo. The senior partner in the Alliance, the African National Congress, never accepted pacifism as a philosophy. Chief Lutuli, A.N.C. President, said bluntly that in adopting non-violence, "*one is not guided by pacifist considerations but by practical considerations.*"

What were these "practical considerations"? Naturally, every people's leader prefers peaceful to violent methods, for in the hardships and sacrifices of war, including civil war, it is inevitably the masses of the people who are the principal victims. Then, in South Africa, in particular, no-one is ever allowed to lose sight of the fact that the State, representing exclusively the White minority, is armed and organised for civil war. Apart from the regular army and the police, who in this country are furnished with such unusual equipment as armoured cars and sten guns, the country is covered with civilian units (*skietcommandos*—literally "shooting squads") openly designed against possible African insurrection. Even women are encouraged to form pistol-clubs for training in the use of firearms, and the proportion of White civilians in possession of licensed private firearms must be among the highest in the world. On the other hand, Africans are strictly forbidden to own firearms or other "dangerous weapons". Even possession of a knife whose blade is more than three-and-a-half inches long is a criminal offence which can involve the African caught with it in a jail sentence of up to six months.

It is not surprising that in conditions such as these the African and other oppressed peoples should seek every possible path to achieve their aspirations by peaceful means. This preference arises neither from timidity nor from a national tradition of pacifism. Indeed, the African peoples of South Africa have a great military tradition in the struggle for national liberation.

THE AFRICAN MILITARY TRADITION

From the time when White invaders spread eastwards from the Cape of Good Hope, grabbing the Africans' land and cattle, they met with vigorous armed resistance. Though the invaders had fire-arms, horses and wagons the Xosa people, inspired by such legendary leaders and generals as Nqgika, Ndlambe, Hintsá and Makana met them in the battlefield with shield and spear, and held them at bay for a century from the year 1778. The brilliant military tradition of the Zulu nation, created by that genius of the battlefield Chaka, and developed further by famous men like Dingane and Cetywayo, for long held the White invaders at bay; as late as 1906 the Zulu martial spirit flared up again in the "rebellion" headed by Bambata.

From his mountain fastness at Thaba Bosiu the father of the Basuto nation, Moshoeshe, combining astute diplomacy with outstanding battle-tactics, defied the joint and separate efforts of British and Boer colonialists to conquer Lesotho. British treachery cost Lesotho the lush farmlands west of the Caledon River, but the heartland of the country was never conquered. It was not force of arms but the duplicity of imperialist emissaries, abetted by undermining activities of missionaries and Basuto traitors, which were responsible for the loss of most of Basutoland's independence. Indeed, all over the Transvaal and the Orange Free State one may find historic battlegrounds of the past, testifying to the stout resistance of the Tswana, Pedi, Griqua and other peoples to the invaders on their northern treks.

Two great main factors led to the conquest of Southern Africa by the White invaders. First was the disunity that prevailed among the indigenous African defenders. Time and again, Moshoeshe sent ambassadors to appeal for a common front of resistance. But his appeals were in vain; the colonists were able to fight the inhabitants tribe by tribe, indeed, tragically often, they were able to make use of "Native Auxiliaries" and Coloured troops from the Cape, in their wars of conquest.

Second, the invaders were enormously assisted by superior weapons and transport, the fruits of a more advanced economy. Time

and again they were out-generalled and out-manoeuvred by their African opponents. But, inevitably, over the long run, the rifle prevailed over the assegai. Disunity and backwardness of African societies opened the road for White domination in South Africa.

It has been the aim of the White rulers, ever since, to perpetuate both disunity and backwardness as a means of preserving their conquest. It has been the aim of every African patriot to overcome both so as to regain for his people their right to freedom and self-government.

It is not surprising that in seeking this aim the African people should have sought political rather than military means. The point has been put with admirable clarity and simplicity by Chief Lutuli:

“In the days when our forebears tried to defend their lands, the wars ended disastrously for us, and perhaps our forebears felt that as the white man was better armed it was no use challenging him by violent means.”

SITUATION HAS CHANGED

This year, 1962, sees the fiftieth anniversary of the African National Congress.

For half a century, Congress has striven for the interests of the African majority of South Africa. Innumerable struggles and campaigns have been waged not only by the A.N.C. but also by the Communist Party, the trade unions, the Indian Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the Coloured People's Congress and other fighters for liberation against the citadel of White domination.

It would be incorrect to assert that these struggles and campaigns have been fruitless. Far from it. In the course of defiance, pass-burning and other campaigns, strikes, demonstrations, boycotts and other forms of non-violent mass action, the political consciousness of the masses has been tremendously raised. Steeled and disciplined fighters for freedom have been developed and trained. The atrocious crimes of apartheid and baasskap have been exposed on a world scale. The South African people have created a powerful united front of national liberation—the Congress Alliance—with its own inspiring and well-defined programme—the Freedom Charter.

But all these protracted and bitter struggles, waged with skill, imagination and unwearying determination, have not wrung a single concession from the Nationalist Government. On the contrary, that Government has announced the policy of the *granite wall* against the demands of the people. It has driven the principal organisations of the people's resistance, first the Communist Party

and then the African National Congress, underground. Hundreds of peoples' leaders have been ordered, without charge or trial, and for periods, in many cases, of more than ten years each, to abstain from attending all gatherings, to resign from all progressive organisations, to confine themselves to a particular area of the country. Others have been exiled far from their homes and their families. Democrats of all races are continually raided and searched by the special political police, spied upon day and night, their letters opened and their telephones tapped. There is no freedom of speech; in most African residential areas meetings are forbidden, publications are constantly being banned.

A turning point was reached following the Sharpeville and Langa massacres of 1960 when a "state of emergency" was declared and 2,000 political prisoners detained for months without charge or trial. The so-called "emergency" has continued in parts of the Transkei until the present time. The Government is relentlessly intensifying its policy of repression to the point where every possible door to peaceful and constitutional protests and methods of change is slammed in the faces of the people.

The Government is openly preparing for civil war.

All these things add up to a major shift in the political situation in South Africa, where no further progress is possible along the traditional paths or by adhering rigidly to the non-violence slogan in a situation where every democratic demand or criticism is treated as an act of rebellion and treason.

THE QUESTION OF POWER

The African people have passed the stage of fruitlessly asking for concessions or reforms from a Government which declares hysterically that any concession would mean "suicide for the White race" and whose Minister of Defence openly declares: "*We are arming in order to shoot down the Black masses.*"

The people have openly raised the question of a transfer of State power from the hands of a colonialist minority into those of the masses. That is the central meaning and significance of the historic African People's Conference at Maritzburg on March 28th, 1961, for a new *National Convention*—a constituent assembly fully representative of the whole population, with sovereign powers to promulgate a new, democratic, non-racial Constitution for South Africa.

Essentially, that is a demand for revolution.

That is not to say that the representatives of the people gathered

at Maritzburg had abandoned all hope of bringing about the revolutionary transfer of power into the hands of the people by peaceful methods. On the contrary, the first stage of struggle for a National Convention took, once again, a non-violent form—a three-day general strike.

And, once again, against this peaceful withdrawal of labour, the Nationalist Government mustered all the force and violence at its disposal, so that its declaration of a “Republic” on May 31st took place in the atmosphere of virtual martial law.

UMKONTO WE SIZWE

It is against this background of a people which has, for half a century, exhausted every possible non-violent means to assert its just demands and human rights, that we must view the emergence on Dingane’s Day, December 16th, 1961, of a new organisation in South Africa, *Umkonto We Sizwe* (“Spear of the Nation”). On this day, units of this new, independent organisation which was formed by Africans but includes members of all nationalities, carried out, on a nation-wide scale, a series of planned attacks with explosives against government buildings, particularly those connected with the implementation of apartheid.

The attacks were not very many, and except in Port Elizabeth have not thus far been continued. Some explosions were ineffective. One African, comrade Petrus Molife, was tragically killed by a premature detonation in Johannesburg. Benjamin Ramoutsi, who was seriously injured in the same explosion, was arrested by the police and is facing charges. A number of arrests were also made in Port Elizabeth, and a number of men, including Govan Mbeki, Harold Strachan and Joseph Jack are at the time of writing imprisoned and facing trials.

However, it would be a serious mistake to judge the effectiveness and potential of this organisation by this first “pilot” operation. A manifesto pasted on the walls of Johannesburg simultaneously with the operation makes it clear that this is but the first move in a long-term plan of campaign.

Referring to the non-violent policy hitherto pursued by the national liberation organisations, the manifesto declared:

“ . . . the people prefer peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations without the suffering and bitterness of civil war. But the people’s patience is not endless. . . .

“The Government has interpreted the peacefulness of the movement as weakness; the people’s non-violent policy has been taken as a green light for government violence . . . without any fear of

reprisals. *The Umkonto We Sizwe marks a break with that past.*

"We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people. The government policy of force, repression and violence *will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only. Umkonto We Sizwe* will be at the front line of the peoples' defence. It will be the fighting arm of the people against the government . . ." [My italics, A.L.].

At the same time, *Umkonto* makes it clear that it is not being established in opposition to the recognised political movements for national liberation. It will, it declares, "complement the actions of the established national liberation organisations. *Umkonto We Sizwe* fully supports the national liberation movement and our members, jointly and individually, place themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement".

Nor does the new movement, despite its military character, abandon the hope and prospect of non-violent revolution in South Africa.

"We of *Umkonto We Sizwe* have always sought—as the liberation movement has sought—to achieve liberation without bloodshed and civil clash. We hope—even at this late hour—that our first actions will awaken everyone to a realisation of the disastrous situation to which the Nationalist policy is leading. We hope that we will bring the government and its supporters to their senses before it is too late, so that both the government and its policies can be changed before matters reach the desperate stage of civil war. We believe our actions to be a blow against the Nationalist preparations for civil war and military rule."

APPROVAL OF THE MASSES

There can be no doubt that the appearance and activities of *Umkonto We Sizwe* met with the fullest approval and support of the masses of the people of South Africa. The slogan and the era of "non-violence" is over and past; it served its purpose, but not a single voice among the democrats of South Africa was raised to propose its continuance or its revival in a situation where even the blind can see that today to restrict the movement to peaceful methods alone means nothing less than surrender to the Government. Of course, peaceful methods will continue; strikes, demonstrations, and other mass actions will be even intensified, despite the conditions of illegality and terror which make it ever more difficult and dangerous to organise them. They remain, at the present stage, the *main* form of activity of the freedom movement.

But they will not be the *only* form. The Government will have

to reckon with a new factor—the knowledge that future violence and atrocities against the people will meet with stern reprisals from the side of the people. They will have to learn that they are no longer able to count on easy “victories” when they can sit in armoured cars and shoot down unarmed men, women and children with machine guns. In *Umkonto We Sizwe* the people have created the nucleus of an army of national liberation, an organisation which will enable patriots of the freedom struggle to obtain arms and train themselves in their use and the art of military science.

Until now it has been the Nationalist Government alone which thought and spoke of settling the future of this country by violence. The sort of violence they had in mind is the suppression of every peoples’ movement for liberation and democratic change by means of the army and militarised police, with the aid of a mass mobilisation of part-time White civilians, armed and organised for civil war by the State. Although the Whites constitute only 3 million out of 16 million South Africans, this did not seem a difficult task in view of the fact that the African and other non-White people are neither armed nor organised for guerilla warfare.

It is very doubtful whether this enthusiasm of the White colonialists for forcible solutions would continue in a situation where the people were organised and equipped to fight back, to conduct a protracted guerilla war which would exact casualties, not on one side only, and have profound effects on the economy of the country and aggravate immensely its already grave international relations. There, indeed, lies the sole prospect of forcing the colonialists to reconsider their adamant and intransigent attitude towards peaceful transition to a non-racial, democratic society. In a word—before the racist oppressors can be made to listen to reason their ears must be opened *by speaking to them in the only language they can understand.*

So long as the prospect of such reconsideration remains open, the armed struggle of *Umkonto We Sizwe* will remain the supplementary, not the main form of struggle, while the people continue, as before, to attempt by every means in their power to win democratic changes by peaceful methods of mass action. The possibility, however, is not to be excluded that, headed by the fanatical Verwoerd junta of Nazi herrenvolk ideologists, the South African state will continue to turn a deaf ear to the warnings of the people’s leaders and to the ominous rumblings of the explosions which have already begun.

In that case the likelihood is that the armed struggle will become the principal form of struggle in South Africa.

WHITE COLONIALISTS WILL BE DEFEATED

Should they commit the country to such a course, the colonialists are doomed to defeat.

Umkonto We Sizwe, now in its earliest stages, may seem small and relatively ineffective. No doubt its cadres lack experience and adequate equipment. But it enjoys the support of the masses of the people at home and the sympathy of the overwhelming majority of mankind outside South Africa. These factors are bound to tell increasingly in the long run, while the colonialists, however powerfully and energetically they may continue with their present policy of militarising the White population, are placing their confidence in inherently limited and shrinking resources. However long and bitter the struggle, therefore, the people are bound to win.

Experience, particularly in Cuba and Algeria, has shown that it is an academic and mistaken approach for revolutionaries to observe events in a detached spirit awaiting the situation where "conditions are ripe for insurrection". While adventurism and "playing with revolution" are always to be avoided, the overwhelming lesson of events in these countries is that the *starting* of the building of people's armed forces, however small to begin with, is *in itself* a tremendously important factor, helping to ripen and mature the revolutionary crisis, to *create* the conditions for victory, to act as the *detonator* of repercussions and reverberations far beyond the calculations of those who forget the revolutionary spirit of the masses, who attempt to gauge the outcome of a people's struggle against tyranny merely by counting the size and fire-power of the units which each, at the beginning, is able to put in the field.

In this article and the previous one (*African Communist*, No. 8) I have been concerned to analyse some of the factors, both international and in South Africa itself, governing the probable forms of struggle which will lead to the victory of the people's revolution in South Africa. But these factors themselves are constantly changing—and changing in favour of our people and against their oppressors. With every advance of the strength and unity of the socialist camp, the world movement for peace and disarmament, the national liberation movements of Asia and Latin America, and above all of the African Revolution for freedom and complete independence and unity, the doom of the White colonialists of South Africa and the victory of the oppressed people of this country comes nearer and more certain.

The Effects of Colonialism on African Society

by JEAN SURET-CANALE

In his article "Tropical Africa Before the Colonialists" ("African Communist" No. 8) Professor Suret-Canale showed how the conditions created by the slave trade arrested and set back the normal development of African societies. The present article continues this study by examining the impact of modern colonialism in Africa. It is translated from the original in "Recherches Internationales".

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, imperialist colonisation introduced a new, disturbing element into the development of African societies. Colonisation came to West Africa against the particular background of a land already depopulated and ruined by several centuries of the slave trade.

Before going further, it is necessary to briefly restate the characteristics of contemporary imperialism. The role of the colonies in the imperialist system is to supply raw materials to the industries of the industrial metropolis, and to serve as an outlet for the manufactured goods of the metropolitan industries. This was also the role of the colonies in the period of mercantile colonisation, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, which in Africa appeared almost exclusively in the form of the slave trade. To this role and functions, not in themselves new, contemporary imperialist colonialism brings new elements.

Firstly, the exploitation of the colonies is no longer for the benefit of certain special groups of merchants, but for the benefit of the monopoly capitalists who dominate the political and economic life of the industrial metropolis. Instead of the simple creation of settlements, there is the political possession of territories, with the aim of imposing on the population of the conquered territory exploitation by the monopolies with protection from foreign rival imperialists.

But above all, contemporary imperialism gives a new function to

the colonies—that of a market for the placing of surplus capital. The purpose of the colonial regime is to create conditions which will bring exceedingly high profits on this capital, such as the granting of free or semi-free land, and cheap or even free labour through a system of forced labour.

CASH CROPS AND CAPITALIST RELATIONS

In the lands of tropical Africa where natural economy predominated (e.g. weakness of systems of exchange, characterised by a lack of money), the first effect of imperialist colonisation was the development of cultivation of cash crops for the market, and particularly the introduction of money forms. We must note that, with some exceptions, this cultivation for sale is materially different from production for self-consumption. We call the first “export cultivation”, and the second “consumption cultivation”.

Lacking economic incentives, the colonisers fell back on administrative methods to push cultivation for export—such as a money tax, which obliges the peasants to grow cash crops in order to earn the necessary money, and also the compulsory delivery of crops. Thus until recent years, the peasants of Oubangi (now Central African Republic) were obliged to deliver a fixed quantity of cotton annually to the societies which had the buying monopoly. Monitors, known as “cotton-boys”, who were in the service of these private societies but who had administrative powers, were charged with the job of delimiting the areas where it was compulsory to cultivate cotton. Elsewhere the system varied a little, but the principle remained the same.

The development of cash crop cultivation accentuated the contradictions within the patriarchal community; it introduced into it the germs of its decomposition and in some cases led to its dissolution. The patriarchal community was founded on self-consumption of the produce it cultivated; exchange or sale of the surplus was infrequent and limited. Goods acquired and accumulated as a result of these rare transactions—such as gold, cattle, loin-cloths etc.—were managed by the head of the family and only spent or consumed for collective purposes such as festivities or ceremonies, dowries, and supplies in times of scarcity.

As the head of the family now, in the period of cash crops, has this supplementary product at his disposal in the form of *money* which is more easily handled, he is led to use it for personal ends. On the other hand, the members of the community—particularly the youth—will kick against having to work for the head of the

family, when they would be able to buy some sort of imported merchandise if they sold the products of their labour on their own account. They will object even more when the products of their labour are used to satisfy the caprices of the old who no longer respect their traditional obligations, as, for example, when the old buy extra wives for themselves, while the young for whose they should have paid, remain celibate.

FROM OLD TO NEW

As long as the traditional economy of self-consumption remains predominant, the patriarchal community—though shaken—exists as an economic reality. Only in some of those areas which were the first to be affected by colonisation has the process of dissolution of the patriarchal community been completed. Here the patriarchal community has disappeared as an economic reality, and made way for small-scale, individual cultivation.

A second result of colonisation is the introduction of capitalist relations. The exported capital is intended to create capitalist enterprises, great commercial firms, plantations, mines, public works and so on. But we should note two interesting points. At the beginning, this capital remains outside African society; the Africans supply only the labour; capital is in the hands of the colonisers. The second step—the introduction of capitalist relations—was only carried out on an extremely limited scale in the case of West Africa, for reasons we will discuss later.

A third result of colonisation was the progressive destruction of the old forms of class antagonism of pre-colonial society which was based on patriarchal slavery or elementary feudalism. Colonisation did not use brutal suppression of the former social relations because its conduct was based on contradictory motives. Economically it stood to gain by liquidating slave or feudal relations; politically, it could be in its interests in some regions, or in some particular circumstances, to maintain these relations as a means of dividing the population. In practice, economic pressure destroyed these relations, except in regions scarcely touched by modern economy, such as Mauritania and the Sahara regions.

As far as slavery is concerned, things were quite clear. Supported by the humanitarian sentiments of the peoples of Europe, the colonial businessmen opposed and actively worked against slavery—often in opposition to the politicians, soldiers and administrators. Some explained crudely, departing from the usual humanitarian prattle, that slavery as practised in West Africa (i.e. patriarchal

slavery) "breeds laziness". Slaves worked for their African masters who were thus more or less exempt from productive labour. Slavery should be abolished, not to help the slave, but to force everybody—ex-slaves and ex-masters—to work for the benefit of the colonisers.

In so far as feudal relations were concerned, we see the same phenomenon. Relations were altered and transformed because the colonisers sought to keep the entire surplus for themselves, leaving only the crumbs to the African privileged class, and only to the extent that these latter were reduced to the role of auxiliaries of the colonial regime. Other colonial countries have known a lasting association of feudalism and the colonial system—namely the consolidation of feudalism by colonialism. British India is a good example. But in those territories under French domination, for political reasons, the traditional feudal rulers were not consolidated to form a class of great landowners. The principle of the administration was usually to destroy the great chieftainships, and reduce the former chiefs to such purely administrative roles as, for example, district heads—positions that could be revoked at any time by the administration.

NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF COLONIALISM

We have said that colonisation, for economic reasons, tends to bring about the disappearance of pre-colonial class relations, but that this tendency is hindered by the slow rate of growth of an economy based on the sale of commodities. It is also hindered for political reasons. Thus in West Africa, the colonial regime banned the slave trade (i.e. the buying and selling of slaves) although belatedly; but the institution of slavery itself was never formally suppressed. It continues to exist today, protected by the colonial administration in Mauritania and some other regions. Feudal relations were debased; rents became the chief's recompense for his services to the colonial administration.

The development of cultivation of cash crops and the very limited introduction of capitalist relations, did not have the progressive character in Africa that it had in Europe. In its imperialistic phase, capitalism has ceased to meet the demands of man's economic and social progress; it is unable to solve the problems which confront it, and has become an obstacle in the way of progress. As the aim of colonisation is to enable monopoly capitalism to overcome, at least temporarily, the contradictions in which it finds itself, all its negative aspects are emphasised in the colonial countries.

In Europe, despite its negative results which were less important,

the development of capitalism and the accumulation of capital gave a tremendous stimulus to production, and created conditions in which socialism becomes possible and necessary. The colonial system, however, does not allow the accumulation of capital in a colonial country. The total surplus, and sometimes even a part of what is necessary for the physical existence of the population, is confiscated by monopoly capital.

Capitalist production is usually born and develops out of small-scale, individual cultivation. But the individual peasant in Africa has no possibility either of accumulating capital, or of improving his farming methods. He is obliged to sell his produce at prices fixed by the monopolies; and these prices often do not even enable him to re-plant what he has reaped. His land becomes exhausted, and he does not have the means to preserve its fertility. Colonisation has made Africa a "dying land".

The breakdown of the patriarchal system, and the absence of any hope of improvement in the conditions of the peasants (except in some privileged areas), has caused a mass exodus from the countryside. But this exodus is without its usual complement, which is the development of an urban industrial population. In Africa, the uprooted peasants flock to the cities which are growing out of all proportion; they live in shanty towns without any productive work. As in all periods of social crisis, the breakdown of the traditional framework of society—in this case the patriarchal community—makes nonsense of the moral code that has grown up with it. There is created an atmosphere of unbridled individualism and unscrupulousness, without, however, any real prospect of success.

CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN SOCIETY

From what has been described above, it can be seen that amongst the population of black Africa—at any rate amongst those who were once part of the French Empire—social differentiation is not very highly developed. The class antagonisms which existed in the pre-colonial period have been debased and pushed into the background. The antagonisms which have been produced by colonialism are mainly on the level of contradictions between imperialist capital and the mass of the population of the colonial countries. Let us look briefly at the classes and social strata which make up present-day African society.

The working class, the most direct victim of colonial exploitation, is still very small because industrial development is extremely limited. The peasant masses, victims of the commercial monopoly

of the big companies, are also directly interested in putting an end to colonial exploitation. They form 80 per cent to 95 per cent of the population. The majority of them are still organised within the economic and social framework of the patriarchal community. Internal social differentiation is generally not highly developed.

It must be clearly understood: among the African peasants, whether they are still within the framework of the traditional patriarchal community, or whether they have become small-scale individual cultivators, there are differences in wealth according to regions, and also as between families and individuals. But as a general rule, these are differences only of wealth, not differences of class.

The feudal elements or their remnants do not form a socially important force. Before colonisation, such feudal elements only existed in certain regions, and their importance varied greatly. The French system of direct administration deprived them of all independence. The chiefs, whether they were descendants of the old feudal families, or whether they were the creatures of the French Colonial Administration, soldiers, interpreters or cooks of an influential governor, were all only the passive tools of the colonisers. Their income did not come from ownership of the land, since the system of collective ownership of land remained in force almost everywhere.

The chiefs drew their income from feudal dues and from forced labour done by the peasants on village lands. These dues and forced labour were tolerated by the colonial administration, although theoretically they were forbidden by law. Officially the chiefs lived on their salaries as civil servants, and on a percentage of the taxes they collected for the government. This explains why the abolition of the administrative functions of the chiefs in Guinea also did away with them as a social force; deprived of the force which permitted them to demand dues and forced labour without any recognised legal basis, they lost both their legal and their illegal sources of income.

The institution of chieftainship is declining everywhere. In Niger, where chiefs played a decisive role in imposing a "Yes" vote in the referendum, they are no longer allowed to collect their traditional dues. In Senegal, chiefs still receive their salaries but their administrative functions have been removed. The chiefs are thus isolated from the masses of the population, because for more than half a century they have been the instruments of colonial exploitation. They are therefore cut off from the economic base on which

they could have built land-owning empires. (To this there are some exceptions in particular areas where the chiefs have become identified with the planter class.) Only in some economically undeveloped regions, such as the North Cameroons, have the feudal structures been preserved intact, and are used by the colonialists to maintain their hold on these countries.

AFRICA'S BOURGEOISIE

To what extent can we talk of a bourgeoisie? We have seen that colonisation, by developing cash-crop production, sowed the seeds of the breakdown of the patriarchal community, which disintegrates and gives way to small-scale, individual production. It is from this that capitalist production normally develops. But the capitalist monopolies have prevented any real accumulation of wealth by individual peasants; they have taken for themselves all the agricultural surplus and even a part of the minimum necessary for survival.

Only after the Second World War, in some particularly rich areas (e.g. the forest regions of the Ivory Coast and the Cameroons) did a class of African planters employing hired labour develop. This class is geographically localised. Most of them employ only seasonal labour, and even among the big landowners workers are paid not in money but in kind.

In the commercial sector, the monopolies have left little place for Africans. Trade is in the hands of Lebanese immigrants (or Greek, or Portuguese in East Africa). Peddling is the only thing that is left for Africans. Some pedlars, mainly in the Ivory Coast, have become rich and own shops and lorries; but their role is limited, as they only sell goods on behalf of the Lebanese or the large companies which allow them the necessary credit.

As for industry, the little that exists is entirely in European hands.

For the moment, the African planters and pedlars are only the embryo of a national bourgeoisie; the petty-bourgeois elements predominate, and their ties with the peasant masses are still strong. In so far as a feeling of class identity exists, it is directed mainly against the great capitalist monopolies. There are, however, some conflicts of interests between this class and the peasant masses; the colonial regime tries to use these differences in its own interest, although the possibilities are limited.

Some observers say that the *new class* which will be called on to take over from the colonial regime will be the neo-bourgeoisie, the civil servants and intellectuals.

Under the colonial regime, when 95 per cent of the population was illiterate, the main if not the only purpose of the schools was the training of clerks for subordinate positions in the colonial administration and in commercial firms. This group of intellectuals and civil servants—those who are able to read and write—supply the present political cadres. But this group does not form a class. It is a social layer of relatively well-paid workers. They are subject to conflicting influences; on the one hand most of them come from the peasant class and are attached to it by family ties. Because of their subordinate position in the colonial administration or business firms, they have also been subjected to the humiliations of colonial oppression. Many of them have become devoted and enlightened members of the anti-imperialist mass movements, and also trade unionists. On the other hand, their purely French education has uprooted them from their environment; their role as officials of the colonial regime has helped to cut them off from the masses, and to make them susceptible to pressures and corruption.

SUMMING UP

We have briefly described the categories which existed in those parts of black Africa which were part of the French colonial empire. It would be unwise to generalise our conclusions. Without going into detail, we can say that the situation in many other countries is very different. In those areas of West Africa which were, or are, under British domination, the policy of indirect administration consolidated the feudal elements. These elements form a fairly important social force, and tend to become a land-owning class with some feudal characteristics. Examples of this are Ghana and Nigeria. In addition to this, the early development of export crops—such as cocoa in Ghana—has emphasised social differentiation and has created an African bourgeoisie of planters and merchants. We are not able, however, to estimate the numerical importance or the economic role of this class.

In the former Belgian Congo, the situation is again different. Here capitalist relations were introduced on a very large scale. In the Congo basin and the mountainous regions of the east, there are large plantations belonging to colonial capital or to private European settlers. In the south—South Kasai—monopolies have developed the mining industry. Because of this development of capitalist relations, we find a large working class. Thus we have peasants and a proletariat, but, as in the ex-French territories, no

real development of an African bourgeoisie. Almost all capital remains in the hands of the monopoly societies or the European settlers.

LABOUR MONTHLY

Founded 1921

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

A Marxist commentary on political events with an international reputation over 41 years in the cause of national liberation and socialism.

1/6 monthly — 9s. half-yearly

DEPT. AC., 134 BALLARDS LANE,
LONDON, N.3. ENGLAND

W. E. B. Du Bois Joins the Communist Party

by B. PELA

Dr. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, the father of the modern Pan-African freedom movement, long-time crusader for Negro rights, world-renowned fighter for peace, and outstanding scholar, has joined the Communist Party of the U.S.A.

This would be a remarkable step for any man at the age of ninety-four, but in the case of Dr. Du Bois his action has a special significance. He has gone into the ranks of the Communists at a time when the ruling class of the U.S.A. has all but outlawed the Communist Party, when the powers-that-be falsely accuse every American Communist of being a "traitor" and "criminal conspirator", and Communists face penalties of up to five years' imprisonment for *each day* that they fail to register that they accept under oath this outrageous description. By so registering a Communist deprives himself automatically of the right to hold a passport or a job in any firm which has contract work with the government. As an "active Communist" Dr. Du Bois will face prosecution under the notorious Smith Act, under which the Communist leaders were jailed in 1949. In these circumstances Dr. Du Bois' action is no less than heroic.

Nor is this all. By expressing his will to be an active fighter for Communism, Dr. Du Bois has crowned his long life of service and struggle on behalf of his people and of all peoples.

I

Dr. Du Bois' decision was not fortuitous, nor was it impulsive. In his application for admission to membership of the Party, he said: "I have been long and slow in coming to this conclusion, but at last my mind is settled." Life is the greatest of all teachers, and it is a life of selfless struggle that has convinced Dr. Du Bois that the future belongs to Communism, and that by joining the Party he will help to bring about that glorious future.

He was born on February 23rd, 1868, only three years after the close of the American Civil War, and in the year in which the freed Negro men in the South got the vote for the first time. Had

it not been for the continuing oppression of the Negro people in the United States which was early thrust upon him, Dr. Du Bois believes that he would "have probably been an unquestioning worshipper at the shrine of the social order and economic development into which I was born".* He keenly watched race developments throughout the world, and the recurrent horror of lynchings were like a scar upon his soul. From 1885 to 1894 during Du Bois' college days 1,700 Negroes were lynched in the U.S.A. During Du Bois' sixteen years as a teacher nearly 2,000 Negroes were publicly killed by mobs and not a single one of the murderers was punished. At the same time Negroes were being increasingly subjected to "Jim Crow" laws, which made them a subordinate caste.

Dr. Du Bois became determined to make a scientific study of whole question of race, and, in particular of the status of the American Negro. In 1896 he published his work *Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the U.S.A.*, and during the thirteen years that he was Professor of Economics and History at Atlanta University (1897-1910) he poured forth a series of studies on such topics as Negro mortality, urbanisation, the effort of Negroes to improve their lot, Negro artisans, Negro businessmen and Negro crime. These publications formed a current encyclopaedia on American Negro problems.

However, Dr. Du Bois soon realised that he could not be a cool, calm and detached scientist while Negroes were being lynched, murdered and starved. He therefore became an active participant in the fight for Negro rights. His open agitation on behalf of his people soon brought him into conflict with such "moderate" Negro leaders as Booker T. Washington, who decried political activities among Negroes and who advised the Negroes to acquiesce in their lot. Eventually, Du Bois convened a Conference to oppose Booker T. Washington's methods of strangling criticism, and to organise the Negro people. As a result the "Niagara Movement" was organised in 1906, which propagated some of the plainest and strongest demands which had ever been voiced by Negroes, including a demand for the abolition of all distinctions based on race or colour.

By 1910, the "Niagara Movement" had been merged into a new organisation, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (N.A.A.C.P.). From the outset, Du Bois became one of the leading members of the N.A.A.C.P. and its Director of Publications and Research. From 1910-33 he was editor of a journal *The Crisis* which maintained a platform of radical thinking on the

* *Dusk of Dawn* by W. E. B. Du Bois (1940), p. 27.

Negro question and which influenced many minds. His unpopular ideas were bitterly attacked and once the government suppressed the journal. It was as a result of the work of Du Bois and others that the U.S. Supreme Court was forced to restore democracy in the South and finally outlawed discrimination based on colour in public services.

While Du Bois was still a student the British, French, German and Belgian imperialists were pushing, looting and murdering their way into Africa. At first he did not question the picture which the capitalist press presented to the world of the advance of "civilisation" into darkest Africa. At that time he did not understand that the struggle of rising imperialism to grab the gold and diamonds of South Africa and later the copper, ivory, cocoa, tin and vegetable oils of other parts of Africa was determining political action in Europe and America.

Later, however, he saw clearly that the history of the turn of the century could be summed up in one word—imperialism. He saw white Europe dominating black Africa and yellow Asia through political power built on the economic control of labour, income and ideas. The echo of this imperialism in the United States was the expulsion of Negroes from democracy, their subjection to racial discrimination and wage-slavery. This led him to the conviction that the struggle for Negro rights in the U.S.A. and for the freedom and independence of Africa, was a common struggle against imperialism. He felt especially close to the struggles of the African peoples, because his great-great grandfather had come to America in the eighteenth century as an African slave.

So it was that he became a staunch supporter of the movement for African independence. When he learnt that the problems of Africa and the colour bar were going to be discussed at the Peace Congress after the First World War, but that no provision had been made for the Africans to speak for themselves, he determined to call in Paris a Pan-African Congress. He organised the Congress in February 1919, in the Grand Hotel, Paris. Fifty-seven delegates, including sixteen American Negroes, twenty West Indians and twelve Africans, and officials from France, Belgium and Portugal attended the Congress. The results of the meeting were small, but it had some influence. The Congress threw Du Bois into direct contact with the real crux of the problems of his time: the fight against imperialism.

Du Bois organised a Second Pan-African Congress from August 29th to September 6th, 1921, which attracted world-wide attention

and was better attended than the first Congress. There were 113 delegates from twenty-six different groups, including thirty-nine delegates from Africa itself. A third Pan-African Congress was attempted in 1923 and a fourth was held in New York in 1927, yet neither of these was as successful as the Second Congress.

These Congresses, planned and organised by Du Bois, were the historical forerunner of the mighty All-Africa Peoples' Conferences which have been held since 1958. From its small beginnings, Du Bois' idea of Pan-African unity has grown into a mighty force which is sweeping aside imperialism.

Du Bois has always regarded himself as a Socialist. In college he heard the name of Karl Marx, but read none of his works, nor heard them explained. At the University of Berlin, he heard much of those thinkers who had definitely answered the theories of Marx, but again he was not taught what Marx himself had said.

Nevertheless, he attended meetings of the Socialist Party and considered himself a Socialist. On his return to America he taught and studied for sixteen years. He explained the theory of socialism, but had still neither read nor heard much of Marxism.

Then he came to New York as an official of the N.A.A.C.P., and found that this was a capitalist-orientated body which expected support from rich philanthropists. But the N.A.A.C.P. also had a strong socialist element in its leadership. Following their advice he joined the Socialist Party in 1911, but he resigned the following year because he found himself unable to vote for the socialist ticket in the elections.

For the next twenty years he tried to develop a political way of life for himself and for his people. He attacked the Democrats and the Republicans for monopoly and for disfranchisement of Negroes; he attacked the Socialists for trying to segregate Southern Negro members; he praised the racial attitudes of the Communists but opposed their tactics in certain cases, and their advocacy of a Negro state.

At the same time he began to study Karl Marx and the Communists: he read *Das Kapital* and other Communist literature. He hailed the Russian Revolution of 1917. Finally, in 1926, he began a new effort. He visited the Soviet Union and reported that "never in my life have I been so stirred as by what I saw during two months in Russia".† He was deeply inspired by the spirit of the Soviet people to go forward in the face of all obstacles and establish a government of men, such as the world has never seen.

† *ibid*, p. 287.

He revisited the Soviet Union in 1936, 1949 and 1959. He saw the nation develop. He visited East Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia. He spent ten weeks in China. In 1961, he rested for a month in Rumania.

The Great Depression and the Second World War disillusioned Du Bois of his belief that there might be some different solution half-way between capitalism and socialism. He reached the firm conclusion that capitalism is doomed, that it cannot reform itself,

W. E. B. DU BOIS, Ph.D., LL.D., Hist.Sci.D.

W. E. Burghardt Du Bois has received honorary degrees from Atlanta, Fisk, Howard, Wilberforce, Charles University of Prague, University of Moscow, University of Sofia and other institutions.

Professor of Greek and Latin, Wilberforce University, 1894-96.

Assistant Instructor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 1896-97.

Professor of Economics and History, Atlanta University, 1897-1910.

Director of Publications of N.A.A.C.P. and Editor of *Crisis*, 1910-33.

Head of Department of Sociology, Atlanta University, 1933-44.

Head of Department of Special Research, N.A.A.C.P., 1944-48.

Vice-Chairman of Council of African Affairs, 1949-54.

Chairman of Peace Information Bureau, 1950-51.

Editor of *Atlanta University Studies*, 1897-1911.

Founder and Editor of *Phylon*, 1940-44.

Recipient of International Peace Prize, 1952.

Recipient of Lenin International Peace Prize, 1959.

Fellow of American Association of the Advancement of Science.

Founder of Pan-African Congresses.

Member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Knight Commander of the Liberian Order of African Redemption.

Editor-in-Chief of the *Encyclopædia of the Negro*, 1933-45.

Head of the Ghana Secretariat for planning the *Encyclopædia of the Negro*, 1961.

Author of many progressive books.

that it is heading for self-destruction. He became convinced, in his own words, that "Communism—the effort to give all men what they need and to ask of each the best they can contribute—is the only way of human life".

For Africa, too, Du Bois became convinced that socialism and

Communism is the only path. In his inspiring message to the All-Africa Peoples' Conference in Accra in December 1958, he said:

“ . . . I would emphasise the fact that today Africa has no choice between capitalism and socialism. The whole world, including the capitalist countries, is moving towards socialism, inevitably, inexorably. You can choose between blocs of military alliances, you can choose between groups of political union, you cannot choose between socialism and private capitalism because private capitalism is doomed.

“ . . . Today [the West] offers a compromise, but one of which you must beware. She offers to let some of your smarter and less scrupulous leaders become fellow-capitalists with the white exploiters if in turn they induce the nation's masses to pay the awful cost.

“Strive against it with every fibre in your bodies and souls. A body of local private capitalists, even if they are black, can never free Africa; they will simply sell it into new slavery to old masters overseas.”

Dr. Du Bois is filled with a burning conviction that Communism will triumph all over the world. To help bring about that day he has joined the Communist Party.

II

The Smith Act and the McCarran Act are part of a concerted attack by the American reactionaries in the first place against the Communist Party, but also against all progressive forces.

Last year the U.S. Supreme Court decided by a majority of five to four that the McCarran Act should be applied against the Party. This Act is used to order the Communist Party to register as an “action organisation” which is an “agent of a foreign power”. Upholding these slanders against the American Communists, the Supreme Court has ordered the Communist leaders to list members and officers. For every day that they continue to refuse to register they are liable to the penalty of a prison sentence of five years and a fine of £3,365 *per day* (\$10,000). Only a week need pass for more than a life term to accumulate. The Smith Act, which holds that every “active Communist” intends to teach the forcible overthrow of the U.S. government, is once again being applied to the Communists.

Du Bois has joined the Communists and other progressive forces in exposing these lies. On his ninetieth birthday he described contemporary American imperialism as follows:

“Today we are lying, stealing and killing. We call all this by finer names: Advertising, Free Enterprise and National Defence. But names in the end deceive no one; today we use science to help us deceive our fellows; we take wealth that we never earned and

we are devoting all our energies to kill, maim, and drive insane, men, women and children who dare refuse to do what we want done. "No nation threatens us. *We threaten the world. . .*"

Kennedy's brother, the U.S. Attorney-General, in attempting to suppress the Communist Party, is acting as a millionaire to protect the millionaires, he is paving the way for a new attack on all progressive and peace forces in the U.S.A. But the U.S. Communists proudly joined by Comrade W. E. B. Du Bois are fighting these attacks with heroic courage.

We African freedom fighters can also do something: we can send resolutions and delegations to U.S. Embassies and telegrams to President Kennedy; above all, we can organise the African peoples into revolt against U.S. imperialism. Communists, trade unionists, and all fighters for liberation can throw their energies into a campaign of support for the leaders and members of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. In doing this, they will be making a contribution to the cause of freedom in Africa and throughout the world by undermining the U.S. imperialists.

* * *

Every thinking fighter for his country's liberation will be deeply inspired by Comrade Du Bois' decision to join the Communist Party. Countless thousands will follow in his footsteps, building great Communist Parties which will lead the struggle for a free, socialist Africa. They will join Comrade Du Bois in the noble vow which he made on his ninetieth birthday:

"Socialism progresses and will progress . . . I believe in socialism; I seek a world where the ideals of communism will triumph—to each according to his need; from each according to his ability. For this I will work as long as I live. And I still live."

IN THE SESOTHO LANGUAGE

MARXISM LE TOKOLOHO EA AFRICA

(Marxism and African Liberation)

A Sesotho version of the well-known article by N. Numadé and published in an earlier number of *The African Communist*.

Price (post free) 1 shilling

Send your order with British postal order to:

ELLIS BOWLES, 52 PALMERSTON ROAD, EAST SHEEN
LONDON, S.W.14. ENGLAND

Marxist Education Series—V :

Communism

Communism is a classless social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society; under it the all-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of the productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology; all the springs of co-operative wealth will flow more abundantly, and the great principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", will be implemented.

Communism is a highly organised society of free, conscious working people in which public self-government will be established, a society in which labour for the good of society will become the vital requirement of everyone, a necessity recognised by one and all, and the ability of each person will be employed to the greatest benefit of the people.

—Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The supreme goal of every Marxist-Leninist Party in the world is to achieve the highest form of human society—communism.

There is no country in which this aim has yet been achieved. In October 1961, the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the most advanced socialist country, adopted a new programme: a programme for the building of communism. It envisages that in the current decade—that is, by 1970—the material and technical basis of communism will have advanced to such an extent that the Soviet production per head of population will surpass that of the strongest and richest capitalist country, the United States, with a high standard of living for all, good housing for all, the abolition of hard physical work and the shortest working day in the world.

In the second decade—that is, by 1980—production will have developed to an extent which will ensure an abundance of material and cultural values to the whole population. Soviet society will be approaching the stage where distribution according to needs will

be instituted and instead of two forms of social ownership, as at present, where industry is state owned but most farms collectively owned by the farmers, there will be a gradual transition to a single form—public ownership. *A communist society will, in the main, be built in the U.S.S.R.*

That is the meaning of the inspiring new programme.

Why, it may be asked, could the Soviet Union not, either in the past, or now, proceed directly to the building of communist society without the intervening stage of socialism?

In the previous article we noted that the level of production under socialism will for some time be insufficient to give every person what he needs. Hence the principle which guides socialist society is "From everyone according to his ability to each according to the work done". The Socialist form of society, although the most advanced which mankind has yet lived under, is therefore limited by historical reality.

The fundamental difference between utopian dreamers and scientific thinkers is well demonstrated by the different approach to the problem of achieving an ideal society in which there is equality in every sphere.

The utopian dreamers, motivated by the noblest of ideas, thought that if only men were made to realise the irrational basis of class society they would overnight advance to a completely communistic system in which there are no classes and in which there is complete equality. However sincere these thinkers were they lacked the scientific, historical understanding of the laws of social change which were so brilliantly elucidated by Marx and Engels.

Without a material basis, without taking into account historical reality, communism can never be built. Just as the system of Feudalism or Capitalism or Socialism arose in situations where the material basis for the existence had developed, so it is with Communism. Communism is not an exception to the objective laws of social change.

At one stage—the very first stage—of mankind's existence, people throughout the world lived under a system known as primitive communism. The character and level of productive forces were such that in order to survive men had to work together on the basis of equality. There was no class of exploiters and the social product was shared between all members of the community. Does this mean that primitive man was more advanced and more civilised than we are? We know that this is not so. What then is the explanation for the existence of co-operation and equality in the early stages of

history? It is that the level of technique was so low and the productive forces so underdeveloped that if there was no co-operation on the basis of equality the forces of nature would have conquered man. It was an equality arising out of necessity.

This historical fact demonstrates the truth of Marxism that at all stages the social system arises out of the objective material situation. The growth of classes and privileged groups could only come about when the level of production had reached the stage when a surplus could be produced. The development of class society reflected the changes which had come about in the system of production.

Now that the productive machine—especially under socialism—has reached such a tremendously high level and the state is directed by the organised working class led by the Communist Parties, why is it not possible for communism just to be proclaimed? Of course it can be proclaimed. But the proclamation would not be worth the paper it is written on. Social systems are not proclaimed and those who think that this can be done would be disillusioned very quickly. Before communism can be “proclaimed” certain material historical conditions must be brought about.

The creation of the socialist state is the first stage—a transition stage—in the advance towards communism. As soon as the working class gains power the conscious advance to communism can be planned and increasingly steps can be taken to bring into existence features of communist society in various spheres.

As was stated by N. S. Khrushchov in his report to the Twenty-First Congress of the C.P.S.U.:

“Notwithstanding all the difference between the communist and socialist phases there is no wall separating these two stages of social development. Communism stems from socialism, as its direct continuation . . . the transition from socialism to communism is a continuous process. . . .

“Communist forms of labour and industrial organisation and also such forms of satisfying the requirements of our people as public catering, boarding schools, kindergartens and day nurseries, are already developing on an increasing scale. There are many features of communism in our society and they will continue to develop.”

The fundamental feature of communist society is that everyone will make a maximum contribution to society and that he will in turn receive what he needs. This is illustrated by the well-known principle which characterises communist society: “From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs.”

Before this can be achieved a number of economic, social and political changes have to be brought about.

THE LEVEL OF PRODUCTION

One of the tasks confronting a socialist state is to advance production to such a level that enough can be produced to satisfy the needs of all the people. A society of abundance must be created. The productive machine inherited by the socialist state from the capitalist past is not capable of catering for this sort of society. Socialism abolishes class and national inequalities but it cannot provide complete social equality in every sphere. The social product is shared out on the basis of the work done. Although far in advance of any previous social system, and although exploitation of man by man has been finally abolished, socialism is not yet in a position to distribute according to the needs of each person. When the economic machine reaches the level where it is capable of producing enough to satisfy everyone's needs, economic inequality (even in the limited sense in which it is forced upon the socialist state) gradually disappears.

These people who may be living in a society in which the sole incentive for contributing towards its welfare is economic gain, may find it difficult to understand how human beings will accept a form of society in which the less able live as comfortably as the more able. This brings us to the next important prerequisite for a communist society.

THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW COMMUNIST MAN AND WOMAN

The cultural and ideological heritage of thousands of years of class society based on individual gain is an obstacle to the establishment of communism. The socialist revolution does not of itself bring into being the ideal communist man. In every sphere of life ignorance, backwardness and prejudices which have been inculcated by the previous system shows itself. In preparing for the communist stage it is therefore the duty of the socialist state not only to create an economic machine capable of providing the people with their needs but also to create a new communist man and woman whose mental outlook is completely divorced from the ideas of class society.

Of course the very abolition of the old relations of production and the creation of new socialist relations assists in changing the outlook of people in the socialist state. In the long run ideas tend to reflect the basic economic set-up in society. But ideas do not automatically die out with a change in economic relations. They tend to linger on and act as a brake on the new society. Hence

a mere change in economic relations—although it lays the basis for the flowering of new ideas—is not enough.

The socialist state therefore embarks upon a deliberate policy of eradicating the old ideologies, through mass education and propaganda, for a higher, socialist morality.

MENTAL AND MANUAL LABOUR

The harnessing of science to create a society which can produce in abundance all human needs requires mass education on an unprecedented scale. The application of the most advanced techniques to production such as automation, nuclear power, electronics etc., makes possible the reduction of the working day and enables the masses for the first time to have enough leisure for the acquisition of knowledge, for cultural development, for sport and recreation. This lays the basis for the gradual breaking down of the differences between mental and manual labour. Thus the gulf which separates the “intellectual” from the mass of the people is gradually narrowed and equality has more than just a theoretical meaning.

The type of man which socialism endeavours to create and who will become the new communist man is well described by Emile Burns in his *Introduction to Marxism*:

“. . . on the basis of changes in material conditions which socialism brings, vast changes also take place in the development and outlook of men and women. They will be people with an all-round development, an all-round training, people who will be able to do everything!

“. . . the self-seeking individualist outlook, brought by capitalism, will have been gradually replaced by a really social outlook, a sense of responsibility to society. As Marx puts it ‘Labour has become not only a means of a living but is the first necessity of life. . . .’ In communist society there will no longer be any need for incentives or inducements to work, because the men and women will have no other outlook than playing their part in the further development of society.”

A SOCIETY WITHOUT CLASSES

In communist society there will be no classes. The introduction of socialism does not of itself do away with economic classes. Apart from hostile remnants of the capitalist class, two great allied classes, the workers and the peasants, or collective farmers, form the mass of the population. The essential difference between town and country and between industry and agriculture persists for some time after the workers take power. The gradual elimination of these

differences and the full integration of agriculture into a planned socialist economy lays the material basis for the complete disappearance of economic classes. The traditional backwardness of the countryside will then disappear and the amenities for education, leisure and all-round development of man will be no less in the countryside than in the town.

THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

We have seen in a previous article that the state emerges at a period in history when society becomes divided into economic classes who stand in different relations to one another as regards the means of production. The dominant class controls the state and exercises a dictatorship which enables it to continue to rule. We have also seen that under socialism the state continues to exist in order to ensure the dominance of the working class in alliance with the peasant masses. Once the stage has been reached when classes no longer exist there is no longer any basis for the existence of the state. Thus under communism the state will "wither away" and to quote Engels' famous phrase:

"The government of people will be replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production" (*Anti-Dühring*).

Already, in the Soviet Union, many functions of the State are tending to disappear. Serious crime is rare, and petty offences are dealt with less and less by the Courts and more and more, in a neighbourly way, by fellow-workers or collective farms organised in factory or residential committees or on the farms. There is not much work for lawyers and Courts! Public, as opposed to State, administration is becoming more and more a feature of Soviet life.

Does this mean that communist society will be a sort of formless, anarchic, undisciplined community? On the contrary: modern productive techniques, the very backbone of the communist society, require a very highly-organised and disciplined community. But the discipline will rest not on State coercion but voluntary and conscious action of every member; public self-government will replace the element of dictatorship which is the essence of every state, even the most democratic.

Of course, there are some functions of the Socialist State which cannot be expected to "wither away" so long as aggressive and predatory imperialism exists in the world. The armed forces and the security services are essential to defend not only the people of the

countries of socialism and their achievements, but also the great cause of world peace and national liberation.

However, we live in a period of transition, on a world scale, from capitalism to socialism and communism. With every year that passes, the forces of socialism and national liberation are growing stronger, and those of capitalist imperialism weaker. Already one-third of mankind, under the leading banners of the Marxist-Leninist Parties, has chosen the road to socialism and communism. Already most of the peoples in the vast continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America are breaking away from the chains of imperialism, and are advancing to fortify political independence with economic independence and social progress.

There may be stern battles ahead; but the decisive victories have already been won. The future belongs to the working people of town and country; to socialism and communism.

Communism is the bright future of all mankind.

(Concluded)

WORLD MARXIST REVIEW

English edition of

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

(published in Prague)

Published Monthly *Price: One Shilling and three pence*

Write for a free sample copy to the distributors:

CENTRAL BOOKS LTD.

37 Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.1, England

What Our Readers Write

A RHODESIAN MANIFESTO

WE continue to receive inspiring letters from many parts of our great Continent, showing the powerful impact which The *African Communist* and Marxist-Leninist ideas are making among the revolutionary African workers and youth.

A group of readers in Northern Rhodesia have come together to form a socialist movement, and have sent us their Manifesto, adopted on December 3rd, 1961. Proclaiming their belief in the principles of Marx and Lenin, the Rhodesian Socialists dedicate themselves to winning independence for their people, in unity with the mass movement for national liberation, and "to respond to all cases without exception of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter what class is affected."

The movement proclaims that it will work unceasingly against imperialism, neo-colonialism and feudalism, for the creation of a new African society free from all tribal ties; it will fight after independence for

the consolidation of our political independence, the carrying out of agrarian reforms in the interests of the peasantry, the elimination of the survivals of feudalism, the uprooting of imperialist economic domination, the restriction of foreign monopolies and their expulsion from the national economy, the creation and development of a national industry, improvement of the living standard, the pursuance of an independent and peaceful foreign policy, and the development of economic and cultural co-operation with the Socialist and other friendly countries.

In their struggles the N. Rhodesian Marxists undertake to "exercise the art of collective leadership and eradicate any inclinations to the cult of 'one-man-ism'."

Writing to us, the President of the new group states: "It is a small movement, but I think we will organise ourselves. . . . I will not be ashamed to make mistakes to begin with for I think these mistakes will be part of our experience."

Our Northern Rhodesian comrades also comment on the formation of the Communist Party of Basutoland and the fact that for well over a year Basuto Communists met in study groups in almost every village, applying themselves to the study of their country before formulating their draft programme and setting up their party. They write: "We agree it is a very good approach which we could

with success adopt." They congratulate our "Basutoland friends, and in particular their organisation in the rural areas."

We wish all success to our N. Rhodesian comrades in their noble work.

RHODES'S ROBBERY AND DECEIT

A member of the N. Rhodesian socialist movement, Comrade Waddy Mullin, sent us interesting background material on the present constitutional crisis in his country. He explains that the early history of N. Rhodesia is "one of imperialist robbery, plunder and swindle". He cites the so-called "treaty" between the British imperialist, Cecil John Rhodes, and Chief Lobengula made in 1888 whereby "minerals, metals and land covering an area of 75,000 square miles were surrendered to Rhodes for £100, 1,000 rifles and ammunition and a promise of a gun-boat which was never fulfilled". Other chiefs were similarly "bullied and swindled" until the whole country became virtually the property of imperialist enterprises like the British South Africa Company. This prepared the way for British political rule in 1924.

"The embryo of our political ideas," writes Comrade Mullin, "are to be found in the first contacts our people made with the British South Africa Company.

"Since 1924, the African people of N. Rhodesia have become increasingly conscious of their past and present and therefore it is now easy for us to detect the fraud of the imperialists even where it is concealed under their pretentious schemes and acts. The imperialists realise this and are rushing through scheme after scheme to subdue our aspirations for self-determination. The purpose behind these treacherous schemes is the fear that the African people, if left to determine their own destiny, will fall prey to communism. But for goodness' sake! what is wrong with communism? Can we ever forget that about half of Africa's population has been exterminated by capitalism and imperialism".

NIGERIAN BAN IS LIFTED

At last the Government of Nigeria has lifted the disgraceful ban on communist literature imposed by the British colonialist authorities. But one Nigerian reader was already suffering in prison when the new law was passed. "After fifteen days in the cell the Government of Nigeria announced that Nigerian citizens are free to read any communist literature. The news was brought to me in the cell. When the news came I thought I would be released, but I was not right. In the Alikili's Court, three days after the announcement

by the Federal Government, I was charged for holding a meeting without a permit. For this I was sent to prison for four months. It was in prison that I celebrated both the Independence and Christmas."

How disgraceful that an African State should continue to treat patriots the same way as the colonialists did before them! Still, our brave reader is not discouraged.

"I am back home now," he concludes his letter. "My plan is to call back all my members to sit down and put everything into place. I must tell you that I am pleased to become an agent for *The African Communist*; send as many copies as you can."

COLONIALIST REPRESSION

If such things can happen in Independent Nigeria, it is not surprising to hear what happens in countries under colonialist or white-minority domination.

"I am visited time and again by government Special Branch," writes another *Northern Rhodesian* reader. "Nevertheless I will not give up. . . . I shall bring to my people the teachings of the great Marx and Lenin. I know the solution to our problems is in the hands of the Socialists . . . please send my best love and best wishes to all men, women and children of good will."

"I am very worried," writes a Kampala bookseller, "that I cannot sell *The African Communist* in my bookshop because it is not allowed in British Uganda. I came to know after I gave you the order."

And a member of the *Kenya* Legislative Council regrets that it is not possible to proceed with "our mutual arrangement for the sale of copies of *The African Communist* in this country . . . as the *Kenya Government* has declared the publication prohibited." We trust that it will not be long before the writer of this letter and his colleagues succeed in getting this disgraceful ban revoked and in winning democracy and independence for Kenya; in the meantime we thank him warmly for his assurance of "brotherly co-operation at all times".

"NO PUBLICATION WE VALUE MORE"

"There's no publication we value more than *The African Communist*," writes an agent in Accra, *Ghana*. He already receives 500 copies, and adds, "We are only determined to get them sold as quickly as possible".

Some Ghanaian readers are worried because they are under the impression that the import control regulations prevent their subscribing. But we understand that under the import control regulations it is still possible for individual subscribers to obtain British currency or postal orders to pay for magazine subscriptions.

Another reader in Ghana declares he has read *The African Communist* “. . . with great interest . . . well worth reading.” And from *Nyasaland* a member of the Malawi Congress Party, declares: “Having read *The African Communist* I have been moved with such interest that I feel it necessary not to waste time in posting you the enclosed postal order for 15s.”

We continue, also, to receive heart-warming letters from readers outside Africa, from as far afield as *Australia*, whence Mr. P. Collins writes for a year's subscription “to your excellent magazine”, and the *Soviet Union*—where a Tanganyikan student expresses his joy at reading our articles “especially those about our continent of Africa”.

From Birkenhead, *England*, a reader writes that “the latest issue in my opinion is one of the best so far. . . . There is some first-rate material to get to grips with”. He informs us that some docker friends of his and other waterfront workers have sold copies of *The African Communist* to African seamen, including South Africans—“so your journal must have quite a wide readership”.

To all these readers and all others who have written to us, many thanks. From here in South Africa, where we are absorbed in the grim struggle against Verwoerd and his Nazi apartheid laws, it is wonderful for us to know that we are also able to hold up a torch of enlightenment for our brothers and sisters in the North. Young Africa, shaking off the chains of the colonialists that have bound our countries, is also shaking off the mental chains of lies and ignorance that have fettered our thoughts, and opening our minds to the living truths of Communism.

NEO-COLONIALISM IN ACTION

“I referred in my Statement to the *Company's position as the owner of the Northern Rhodesia mineral rights, until on September 30th, 1986, these pass, under the 1950 Agreement, to the government of that Territory.* You may well ask me how that position will be protected in any new Constitution that may be adopted. I am glad to be able to tell you today that I have, from the Secretary of

State for the Colonies, a firm assurance in writing that, in the proposed new Constitution for Northern Rhodesia, Her Majesty's Government will retain sufficient powers to prevent any breach of the 1950 Agreement on the part of the Northern Rhodesia Government."—From the Report of Lord Robins, Chairman, to the Shareholders of the British South Africa Company (*Financial Times*, March 23rd, 1962).

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

In the last issue we asked all our readers to enter subscriptions immediately and to send us donations. We are heartened by the response.

We again urge our readers and our many friends to help us widen the circulation of the journal.

- * **Enter a yearly subscription—fill in the form below.**
- * **Encourage your friends and fellow workers to subscribe.**
- * **Send us a donation.**

FROM.....
.....
.....
.....

I enclose British postal order/cheque for 6 shillings (15 shillings by air mail) for one year's subscription (four issues)

Send to:

**ELLIS BOWLES (London Agent), 52 PALMERSTON ROAD
EAST SHEEN, LONDON, S.W.14, ENGLAND**

NOW AVAILABLE IN FRENCH

EDITION SPECIALE EN FRANCAIS

LE COMMUNISTE AFRICAIN

Table Des Matières :

- * La Nouvelle Afrique, Capitaliste ou Socialiste?
- * Le Marxism et la Liberation Africaine
(par N. Numadé)
- * Les Nouveaux Problemes d'un Continent en Revolte
- * Les Etats-Unis et L'Afrique

Et autres matières . . .

Prix: N. Fr. 1.50; U.S. \$0.50

Faites votre commande à:

ELLIS BOWLES, 52 PALMERSTON ROAD, EAST SHEEN
LONDRES, S.W.14. ANGLETERRE

*(Les Libraires et Agences de Distribution peuvent commander
en gros au rabais, en baisse)*

Introduction to Marxism

Emile Burns

Explains the fundamentals of Marxist theory and practice

5s

Dialectical Materialism

Maurice Cornforth

A clear exposition of materialism and the dialectical method

7s 6d

Socialism and Religion

Archibald Robertson

An essay by the author of *The Origins of Christianity*

3s 6d

A Prospect of Peace

J. D. Bernal

A world-famous scientist shows what modern science can achieve

3s 6d

Empire Today

Idris Cox

A concise and factual study of Britain's colonial empire

2s 6d

Ten Days that Shook the World

John Reed

The famous eye-witness account of the Russian Revolution

15s

*Distributed by Central Books Ltd., 37 Grays Inn Road
London, W.C.1*

LAWRENCE & WISHART

Copies of THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST will be sent to any part of Africa for one shilling and six pence (British Postal Order) each, or twelve shillings a dozen. The subscription rate is six shillings a year (four issues) or fifteen shillings by airmail. Send British Postal Order to our London agent:—

**Mr. Ellis Bowles,
52 Palmerston Road,
East Sheen,
London, S.W.14.**

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.