



THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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OUR MAGAZINE

Communism has become the vital social and political belief of our times. Already one third of mankind has chosen the road to socialism under the leading banners of the Marxist parties. Everywhere else, millions of men and women press forward to their liberation, inspired by the parties of Communism.

In this, as in so much else, Africa lags behind the world. The forces of imperialism, which have made Africa the "dark continent", have also kept the people curtailed off from the liberating spirit of Communism.

This magazine, "*The African Communist*", has been started by a group of Marxist-Leninists in Africa, to defend and spread the inspiring and liberating ideas of Communism in our great continent, and to apply the brilliant scientific method of Marxism to the solution of its problems.

It is being produced in conditions of great difficulty and danger. Nevertheless we mean to go on publishing it, because we know that Africa needs Communist thought, as dry and thirsty soil needs rain.

To you, the reader, we say, comrade and fellow-worker, wherever you may be, read and study this magazine. Pass it on to other fellow-workers and form groups to discuss it. These groups may become the foundation-stones of great and important Communist Parties in many lands that will bring salvation to your country.

The first issue of "*The African Communist*" issued in October, 1959, has been hailed with joy by revolutionary workers and intellectuals in many parts of our great continent. It has been, one reader said, "like a ray of sunlight piercing through the dark."

It has also been met with hatred and anger by the reactionaries and imperialists. The White Supremacy Government of South Africa, headed by Nazi Verwoerd, had done our magazine the great honour of banning it in that country.

We are nevertheless sure that South Africa's heroic freedom fighters will find a way to obtain and read our magazine.

AVENGE THE MART

COALBROOK DISASTER

Four hundred and thirty five miners have been trapped and killed 600 feet underground at Coalbrook in the Union of South Africa—the worst disaster in the history of South African mining. The rock-fall which sealed them in is officially described as an “accident”. Yet every miner who has ever worked underground will know that even in a dangerous occupation like mining, ‘accidents’ on this vast scale are almost invariably the result of some human element—of callous disregard for the safety of the lives of working men, or of criminal greed for profit at any cost. To this general rule, the Coalbrook tragedy is no exception. Doubtless the caving of the roof was the result of tremendous natural forces, acting independently of men’s wishes; but equally doubtless, the scale of the disaster was the result of South Africa’s system of race and class oppression. Without apartheid things could not have happened as they did.

Consider the facts. The first rockfall took place at about 4.30 p.m. No one was killed or severely injured. While the rock still creaked and split, many of the African workers rushed from the underground shaft to the surface. They were ordered back to work. Those who protested or argued were given the South African Masters and Servants Act alternatives—obey or be arrested. Two who still refused steadily to return underground were arrested and locked up—to survive. 429 others were driven underground. At 6.30 the mine collapsed and buried them. No one escaped.

NO MINERS’ UNION

Where else in the world could such a scene occur. Except perhaps in the fascist dictatorships of Spain and Portugal, everywhere the miners’ own representatives, their shop-stewards, their trade union officers would have entered upon the scene. Everywhere the trade union would have intervened between the management and the workers, between the time of the first collapse and the first return underground.

Not in South Africa. There is no trade union of African miners. The trade union that existed before the great miners’ strike of 1946 has been systematically smashed. Workers have been sealed off in the mine compounds from all outside influences by an army of private mining-company police. Union organisers and union members have been weeded out by a wide network of spies and informers, sacked and blacklisted. There is *no* trade union.

S OF COALBROOK !

Nor is there any discussion ever between mine owners and African workers. There is no collective bargaining over wages, or conditions of work, or even over safety measures. Instead there are government appointed "Labour Officers"—allegedly to settle disputes between workers and the bosses. In practice their settlement measures are identical with those of the Verwoerd government; they order the workers to work, and whistle up the police at the first sign of refusal.*

To complement this police-ridden regime, there are laws. The Gold Law prohibits the holding of meetings on any land proclaimed for mining purposes—inside or outside the companies private boundaries. The Bantu Labour Act makes striking a criminal offence for African workers. The Masters and Servants Act makes refusal to carry out any order of a boss a crime. The Native Labour Regulation Act makes any breach of contract between an indentured labourer and his boss—including failure to complete the full contract of 270 shifts a year—a criminal offence. In case this is not enough, African miners specifically are exempted from any compulsory determination of minimum wages by the Wages Board which operates in other industries. And they are exempted, specifically, from even the minimal unemployment insurance of other industries.

"CIVILISED" LABOUR

What purpose can be served by such a massive repressive structure except the purpose of keeping wages as low as possible, almost on the 1930 level despite the astronomical rise in the cost of living? The African miner goes underground for 3/4 (three shillings and fourpence!) per shift, plus compound and food. Irrespective of length of service or experience or ability, he is virtually restricted to the work of unskilled labourer—and the wages of unskilled labourer. All skilled work—blasting, timbering, developing—is reserved exclusively for white miners by the Mines and Works Act. This is known as South Africa's "civilised labour policy".

"Civilised labour" is the other side of the coin—the white worker's side. The white workers have a trade union, tolerated, even encouraged by the bosses. By collective bargaining, the white workers have gained conditions and privileges miners in other countries may well envy—paid holidays, pension schemes, a forty

* On the very day that rescue operations at Coalbrook were abandoned Labour Officials supervised the arrest of 175 African workers for the crime of striking for better pay in a Natal textile factory.

hour week, subsidised housing, stop-order system and a closed shop agreement. The pay for civilised labour is over £3 a shift. "Civilised" labour is permitted to strike—legally—though the trade union leaders have bargained that right away in exchange for privileges. There is always something to be paid for privileges. The white workers pay for theirs by supervising the black workers, by taking over on themselves some of the burdens of management, by becoming finally a wage-earning part of the management of Africans, hangers-on of the bosses. When black workers strike, the white workers' trade union takes it on itself to organise white scab labour "to keep the mines going". When the roof collapsed at Coalbrook, six white miners were underground to 'boss-up' as they call it in South Africa, 429 labourers. This is the civilised labour policy.

It pays dividends to everyone except the black miners. The gold and coal mines of South Africa are controlled by the same half-dozen "Groups"—sprawling combines of financial, industry and mining corporations producing dividends to shareholders in South Africa and abroad, particularly in Britain and America. Millions more are tucked away in balance sheets under headings like 'Reserve Account' or 'Appropriation Account'. The year's work by some 340,000 black miners, which produced profits of nearly £100 million, equal to £294 for each worker. During the same year, 733 African miners died in accidents, many more were injured.

Here, in the middle of the twentieth century, in the year 1960, the year of African independence, we have a picture of classic imperialism; a vast, multi-millionaire monopoly combine, financed and controlled largely from outside Africa, extracting basic raw materials from Africa, making super-profits from the poverty and high rate of exploitation of the black workers, closely allied with the apparatus of state, with influence in banking and industry till none can say where one begins and the other ends. This, in our age, in an anachronism, a hangover from the pirate days of late nineteenth and early twentieth century imperialism. This monopolist combine is the largest employer of labour in South Africa—probably in all Africa. It sets the pattern for wages and conditions of work in all other South African industries; it dominates the state itself, and relies on the apparatus of state-police, labour officials and "Bantu" administrators—to maintain its flow of profits. Its basis is—and can only be, the constant provision of a flow of cheap, docile, black labour. The South African state's first function is to ensure that such a constant flow is readily available, and to oversee and control it.

MINING THE BACKBONE

South Africa's mining industry, then, is the backbone of the whole South African system of apartheid. And the state which

has grown up around it has become not only the most hated centre of racialism and reaction in South Africa but also a buttress of imperialism in Africa. When the imperialist authorities in Nyasaland forced the possibility of popular revolt, their first step was to ensure the readiness of South African troops to come to their aid. When the white settlers of the Central African Federation come face to face with the possibility of an African majority in the government, their first thought is to turn to the Union of South Africa for possible realignment against an independent Nyasaland or Northern Rhodesia. Thus South Africa becomes, more and more, the policeman of reaction for the whole continent.

The special feature of South African mining, which sets it apart from every other industry in the country—and for that matter in the whole of Africa—is that it is based not on South African labour, but relies heavily on “foreign” labour, recruited under contract from all parts of Africa. Today the majority of the industry’s labour force is recruited from other territories—from Angola and Portuguese East, from Tanganyika and Nyasaland, from Basutoland and Bechuanaland, from Uganda and Nigeria. Every year, almost a quarter of a million able-bodied males are drawn from their own territories to South African mines, thus depriving their own countries of their valuable labour and continuing the debilitating and wasting process by which the slave trade reduced Africa to inertia and backwardness.

A blanket of silence is drawn by the mining companies about this imported labour. No figures are revealed which will tell how many men there are at any time from each of the countries of Africa; no details are ever revealed of the arrangements between South Africa and other governments by which this traffic in men is controlled; no details are ever given of the conditions of pay and labour to which these men are subject. The tragedy at Coalbrook lifted a corner of that blanket. Of the 429 African dead, half came from the British Protectorate of Basutoland, half from Portuguese East Africa. For several days, neither the exact numbers of those trapped underground nor their names were known even to the mine owners themselves. Finally, two weeks after the disaster, a list of the dead was published, revealing that for many of the men only their Christian names were even recorded on the mine lists. No surnames were deemed necessary. In so far as the Portuguese workers are concerned, it is known that the convention regulating the recruitment from Portuguese territory places an obligation on the South African government to protect these workers from the influences of “communism”; in South Africa “communism” means everything from criticism of the ruling Nationalist government to trade-unionism and national liberation.

IMPORTED LABOUR

When all Africa was under the control of imperialist administrations, it was understandable that the conditions under which

Africans were shipped to South African mines should be a matter of indifference. It cannot remain a matter of indifference today in countries where Africans have either achieved their independence, or participate in governments on the road to full independence. Even the fascist government of the Portuguese Empire, under pressure from public opinion, has been forced to take a critical view of conditions in South African mines, and to insist on its right to be represented at the inquiry which is to be held into the Coalbrook disaster. How much more attention should be paid by the Basutoland administration, now that the Basutoland Congress has won a majority of the elected seats? It is high time that throughout Africa the people's movements and the people's leaders press for an end to the recruitment of labour to South Africa, without a convention which guarantees those workers rights and liberties and conditions in keeping with a democratic, modern age.

In 1958, at the All-Africa People's Conference in Accra there was a decision taken to boycott South African goods as an act of solidarity with the South African people, and as a blow against this stronghold of reaction and race-hatred on the continent. But the key trade between South Africa and the rest of the continent is not in the export of consumers goods, but in the import of men. The key industry and prop of the South African system is not consumer-goods manufacturing, but mining. This the Accra Conference recognised, by adding to its boycott resolution a less publicised call to the independent states of Africa to develop their own economies, so that it will no longer be necessary for men from those countries to sign themselves on as labourers in the South African mines. This side of the boycott resolution, now repeated at the Tunis conference, is necessarily a task requiring time, and not capable of fulfilment overnight.

In the meantime, until it is possible to cut off the flow of indentured labour entirely, there is still much that Africa can do. It is possible, here and now, for the people of Africa to demand the publication of all agreements by which this trade is regulated; it is possible for the people of Africa to insist that—so long as recruiting continue—those who sign on be guaranteed civilised standards of work and wages, and fundamental rights to trade-union organisation and collective bargaining. And it is possible for the conscious and organised trade-unionists of Africa to set out to instil a militant trade-union spirit in all their countrymen who are headed for Africa, so that—while the traffic still continues—this annual flood of men to the gold and coal mines of South Africa will come as a source of strength and vigour to the people of South Africa, and not—as now—as a means for continuing their enslavement and holding their wages down to inhuman levels.

This at least Africa owes to the men who died at Coalbrook.

A Historical Step Forward

Background and Prospects of the New All-African Federation of Trade Unions

“Historically, the greater proportion of humanity living in the under-developed countries favour a Socialist form of Government. This is because the Capitalist system offers no attraction to them. And a Socialist Government can only succeed with the active participation of the working class, especially when the hitherto unchallenged claims and so-called rights of foreign monopolists are vigorously questioned, challenged and fought to a standstill.”

AFRICA'S WORKERS UNITE !

In the middle of May, 1960 a historical event will take place: the Constituent Congress of the All-African Trade Union Conference, at Casablanca, Morocco.

Of three million organised African workers throughout the Continent, nearly two million, or two-thirds, were either directly represented or sent assurances of support when the Preparatory Conference met at Accra, Ghana, November 5-9, 1959.

Three million trade unionists may not seem a great many in a vast continent like Africa with its teeming population of 220 millions, the great majority of whom are working people. But when the actual realities of the African situation are taken into account, it will be seen that this represents a wonderful achievement by Africa's heroic pioneer trade unionists.

THE COLONIAL HERITAGE

Until very recently, practically the whole of Africa was held in direct subjugation by a handful of West European countries—Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium and Spain. As a result of the first world war, Germany lost her former African colonies. As a result of the second world war, Italy lost hers. They were not handed back to their rightful owners—the inhabitants—but taken over by other imperialist powers.

The colonial situation is the mortal enemy of trade unionism. It was impossible for powerful, stable trade union movements to develop in conditions where:—

1. The imperialist Powers, using their African colonies for the production of raw materials, deliberately hampered

economic development, strangled industrialisation, kept living standards at starvation level in the interests of "cheap labour."

This meant that the industrial working class, the heart of trade unionism, is relatively small. Even when large industrial establishments were developed by the imperialists, for example the South African gold mines, migratory workers are indentured from all over the continent, segregated into compounds.

2. Relying on force and violence to maintain their ill-gotten conquests, the imperialists repressed every labour movement with the utmost savagery. Striking workers, fighting to improve their wretched wages, were met with clubs and bullets. Workers' leaders were arrested without trial, or on framed-up charges, imprisoned, deported and even murdered.

It is small wonder that, faced with such conditions arising from the colonial situation—to which must be added the illiteracy, exhaustion and malnutrition of the workers themselves, absorbed in the bare struggle for existence—trade unionism did not make greater progress in colonial Africa. The wonder is that, due primarily to the devotion, courage and ability of the pioneer trade unionists, three million Africans were nevertheless organised.

INDEPENDENCE AND TRADE UNIONISM

The present glorious period, when one after another the countries and peoples of Africa, are rushing forward to break the shackles of alien domination and to claim their birthright of freedom and independence, has naturally been a powerful stimulus to the trade-union movement—the more so since it is the organised workers themselves who in many cases have been the foremost leaders and fighters in the struggle for liberation.

Nevertheless, it would be a serious mistake to imagine that independence in itself has removed all the obstacles to the free and powerful growth of trade unionism. The undeveloped state of African economies, the heritage of imperialism, remains—though speedy and effective means can be found to overcome this through industrialisation. Also remaining are many other aspects of the imperialist heritage: the grinding poverty, illiteracy and backwardness of many workers, the tribal and religious divisions, servility and ignorance of working-class principles—all of which have been fostered and cultivated by the colonialists.

Also, by no means all the independent States of the new Africa are headed by governments which are sympathetic to the workers and peasants and the cause of the trade union movement. The military juntas, representing the landlords and bourgeoisie, in such countries as Egypt and the Sudan, have taken over from the colonialists all the hateful machinery of repression of independent working-class organisations, and in such countries trade union leaders who criticise the capitalist governments are likely to find themselves in jail.

WHERE COLONIALISM STILL RULES

In countries which still remain under the domination of imperialist powers, or of White minorities, African trade unionists still face terror and persecution. In the North, the French imperialists foully murdered *Aissat Idir*, general secretary of the General Union of Algerian Workers. In Angola, having bloodily suppressed a strike of African miners, Portuguese fascists (who sell 120,000 Africans every year to work in South African mines) have threatened to shoot many of the workers' leaders after a farce of a "trial" before a military tribunal.

In the Union of South Africa, the leaders of the Congress of Trade Unions, including secretary-general *L. Masina* and president *L. Levy*, have been arrested since 1956 on charges of High Treason, and the brave women's trade union leader *Elizabeth Mafekeng* has been exiled from her home and family.

In Kenya, the labour leader *Jomo Kenyatta*, after years of imprisonment on a frame-up charge, is still held in exile in a remote region.

Thus, the cause of trade unionism in Africa is still beset with many serious difficulties. It is in order to meet and unite against these difficulties that the All-African Trade Union Federation is being formed. Since the cause of trade unionism is part and parcel of the movement for the liberation of Africa, it is fitting that the inspiration came from the All-African People's Conference.

WHO IS BACKING THE A.A.T.U.F.

The Preparatory Conference at Accra opened with a speech by *Dr. Nkrumah*, Prime Minister of Ghana. He said:

"The trade union movement in Africa is indissolubly linked up with the struggle for political freedom, independence and unity of our continent. A trade-union movement on a colonial territory cannot divorce itself from the national struggle . . ."

Welcoming the delegates to the Conference, Mr. *Diallo Abdoulaye*, secretary-general of the steering committee of the All-African People's Conference, said:

"An African central organisation which—on the basis of the international character of the proletarian movement—maintains friendly relations with all the international trade union centres in the world on a footing of equality, will in future lead to the creation of sound conditions for the existence of a single trade-union international, on which all the workers of the world, without exception, will be represented."

In addition to his position in the secretariat, *Diallo Abdoulaye*

spoke as a representative of the *UGTAN** which under the able leadership of *Sekou Touré*, Premier of Guinea, unites over one hundred thousand workers in 8 territories (Sudan, Senegal, Guinea, Togo, Niger, Upper Volta, Dahomey and Mauretania).

The other national trade union federations represented at Accra were those of Morocco (the *UMT** with 650,000 affiliated members), Ghana, with 350,000, Algeria with 150,000, Egypt with 275,000, South Africa (*S.A.C.T.U.** with 46,000), Gambia, Sierra Leone, Uganda.

Messages of support were also received from Tunisia (the *U.G.T.T.**, with 225,000 members) the Kenya Federation of Labour (which also sent an observer) Nyasaland, Cameroun and the Belgian Congo.

I.C.F.T.U. SABOTAGE

The position of trade unions in Nigeria and also Kenya is rather complicated. To understand it, one must go into the activities of the so-called International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (*I.C.F.T.U.*) in the African continent.

I.C.F.T.U. was started as a breakaway from the World Federation of Trade Unions (*W.F.T.U.*) which—in the immediate post-war period—was the biggest and most powerful labour international the world has ever known. This breakaway was brought about by the leaders of the British *T.U.C.* and the American *A.F.L.C.I.O.* not in the interests of the working class, but in the interests of the foreign policy of the capitalist governments in the west.

I.C.F.T.U. collected a great deal of money from the workers in the metropolitan countries for the purpose of encouraging trade unionism in under developed countries, especially in Africa. This was a good purpose, but unfortunately the top leaders of *I.C.F.T.U.* have often used it in ways which would have shocked the workers who gave the money.

For example, the *I.C.F.T.U.* offered aid to African trade unionists in many ways: money for rent and to pay organisers' wages, office equipment, and so forth. To struggling unions, at their wits' end to keep afloat, this assistance seemed to come as a godsend. Unfortunately, once they accepted and became dependent upon this aid, they soon found that there were "strings" attached to it: conditions which they had to fulfil. They had to affiliate to *I.C.F.T.U.* and break with *W.F.T.U.* They had to help "the fight against Communism". They had to accept *I.C.F.T.U.* advice on policy.

It is not such a bad thing when an experienced trade unionist offers the benefit of his experience. But "advice" that is accompanied by a threat to withhold funds is not advice at all but

* For an explanation of these initials, see "The Position At a Glance" in the panel on page 15.

orders. Often the western I.C.F.T.U. leaders in Africa have tried to give orders as if they were bosses. The "advice" they give is very often contrary to the interests of the African workers.

It is a strange thing to hear leaders of a body like the British T.U.C. telling African leaders to "keep out of politics"—when we all know that their own leaders are affiliated to the Labour Party in Britain! The truth is that African trade unionists, even less than their western counterparts cannot "keep out of politics" for the simple reason that the workers here are bound hand and foot by colonialism and colonial survivals and a trade unionist who does not fight with all his heart and soul for freedom and independence is a traitor to the interests of his members. The African workers suspect that when the I.C.F.T.U. leaders advise them to avoid identifying themselves with liberation movements, they are more worried about the interests of imperialism than those of the workers.

FOUL MEANS

The Nigerian workers' representatives at the Preparatory Conference, Goodluck, Oduleye and Ifedira, put it in a nutshell, when they said that the purpose of the I.C.F.T.U. was to "domesticate" the African workers, and to make them "sheepishly docile." They declared :

"The I.C.F.T.U. has used all means, fair and foul. It has depended on the Colonial Powers for its main support. It has lavishly spent money to commission individuals in our trade-union movements to carry out disruptive actions.

"It has been shouting "Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!" of "Communism" to scare off militant trade-union leaders who maintain that political freedom must be buttressed with economic freedom and fundamental human rights."

They accused the I.C.F.T.U. openly of intriguing in the Nigerian T.U.C., of buying over its leadership to its support with a subsidy of £200 a month, despite the expressed wishes of the overwhelming majority of the affiliated members.

Similar charges have been made against the I.C.F.T.U. by trade-union organisations in Gambia, Uganda and South Africa. The I.C.F.T.U. did its best to sabotage the Preparatory Conference at Accra by organising a counter "regional-conference" in Nigeria. Mr. Tom Mboya, the leading I.C.F.T.U.-man in Africa came under heavy criticism by attending the latter in preference to that of the A.A.T.U.F., and it is significant that his Kenya Federation of Labour sent observers but not delegates to Accra. Clearly the idea of African trade unions uniting independent of "control" from America and Britain is not welcome to the I.C.F.T.U. leaders.

But the net result has been that the I.C.F.T.U. has now lost nearly all its support on Africa. All the labour federations in the

free area of Africa have now broken away from it, and it is obvious that their remaining African affiliates (all of them in British colonies) will also get out as soon as their countries attain independence. This fiasco in Africa was the cause of the bitter quarrel which broke out between the British and American trade-union leaders at the I.C.F.T.U. Conference in December, 1959, when each group accused the other (quite rightly!) of seeking to further the imperialist interests of "their own" ruling classes.

IS THE A.A.T.U.F. ISOLATIONIST?

It would be wrong to assume that because the founders of the All-African Federation of Trade Unions seek to unite the organised workers of our continent in a single co-ordinating body, they are therefore "isolationist" and have dropped overboard the noble principle of the international unity of the workers of the world.

The communique of the Preparatory Conference announced that it sought "to establish relations for co-operation and solidarity with all the workers of the world"; and the secretariat was authorised to take all necessary measures in this direction.

There is no conflict between the aim of uniting African workers and that of building unity between all the workers of all continents. But it should be clearly understood that African workers refuse to be treated as poor relations or stupid people who do not know how, and are not to be trusted to handle their own affairs. A united African trade-union movement will enter the councils of world labour as a full and equal partner. As Diallo Abdoulaye put it in his address, an All-African co-ordinating body :

"Which, on the basis of the international character of the proletarian movement, maintains friendly relations with all the international trade-union centres of the world, on a footing of equality, will lead in the future to the creation of sound conditions for the existence of a single Trade Union International on which all the workers in the world, without exception, will be represented."

In this remarkably far-sighted statement, Diallo Abdoulaye correctly foresees that the establishment of the All-Africa Trade Union Federation can be a powerful factor in healing the tragic breach which the cold war has brought about in the ranks of the international working-class movement.

It is time to put an end to the superior, patronising attitude which "western" trade-union leaders adopt when condescending to give "advice" to their African counterparts. Their concept of a trade union is that of a smoothly-running bureaucratic apparatus, collaborating with—often almost merging with—the "labour departments" established by the bourgeois State. To them, a trade-union leader is not a militant organiser and agitator,

tirelessly arousing the proletariat at the point of production, but a tame office administrator, a "respectable citizen" who continually preaches pious platitudes about the benefit of conciliation and class collaboration. Such a conception is completely useless and harmful in Africa. As a writer in the Johannesburg monthly "*Fighting Talk*" puts it:

"The modern British or American trade union bureaucrats who come out to Africa to tell Africans how to run their unions have forgotten—if they ever knew it—the stormy beginnings of their own organisations, when every strike meant a pitched battle and every union man was a revolutionary."

As a matter of fact, this sort of unwanted advice is all the more ironical and impertinent in view of the fact that the vaunted "legality" and peaceful development of trade unionism and the labour movement in the imperialist countries has only been made possible by the harsh exploitation and bloody repression of the African and other workers in the colonies. As long ago as 1920 Lenin brilliantly foreshadowed this development (which has been carried forward tremendously in the past 40 years) when he wrote:

"Modern (twentieth century) imperialism created a privileged, monopoly position for a few advanced countries, and this gave rise everywhere in the Second International to a certain type of leader-traitors, opportunists, social-chauvinists, who look after their own craft interests, the interests of their own stratum of the labour aristocracy." (V. I. Lenin. "*Left Wing*" *Communism—An Infantile Disease*.)

Out of the super-exploitation of the colonial workers the capitalist ruling classes have been able to wring enormous super-profits. It is precisely these super-profits that have enabled these capitalists to provide certain bribes and concessions to the workers in the metropolitan countries—higher wages, trade-union rights, civil liberties and parliamentarism.

The *price* for these concessions has been abandonment by the tame labour leaders of socialism, and their *collaboration* in maintaining imperialism. Could be there any greater cheek, ignorance and irony for these self-same labour leaders to come along to their colonial workers, groaning under the burdens of imperialism, and preach to them the superior virtues of class-collaboration and legal trade unionism?

The Nigerian delegation at the Accra preparatory conference put the question with deadly accuracy, when they said:

"For many years the so-called saviours of African workers (I.C.F.T.U. and the "Christian" T.U. federation) have condoned the brutal exploitation of Africa and the African workers, while the tremendous profits accruing have both enriched their capitalist countries and rapidly raised the living standards of the working class there."

THE PATH OF AFRICAN TRADE UNIONISM

The vital and dynamic trade union movement in Africa cannot, and even if it could, should not, follow the path followed by the reformist leaders of the western labour movement. It cannot, because there are no further massive reserves of super-profits out of which the bourgeoisie can afford such a luxury as a bought and subservient labour aristocracy. It should not, because in truth the western labour leaders have sold the glorious heritage of labour, socialism, under which the workers shall inherit the earth and the future, for a mess of miserable crumbs from their masters' table.

The path that is being and should still further be followed by the organised labour movement in Africa is rather that of full and leading participation in public activities which meet the needs of the workers. In this first phase of the African revolution, that of completely emancipating the whole of this great continent, where vast territories still languish under the rule of European imperialist powers, or that of White minorities, of winning self-government everywhere, the trade unions will naturally be acting together with patriotic Africans of all classes for independence and democracy.

But formal independence is not enough. Africa, even with formal self-government, will remain backward and economically dependent, unless a vast process of transformation, reaching deep down into and stirring and changing the lives of the great masses of slumbering rural and tribal peoples, is rapidly set in train.

No other class is able to set in motion and give correct leadership to this vast and absolutely essential process of change except the working class. For the working class is the only class that is completely emancipated in its outlook, that is revolutionary to the very end.

Two essentials for the accomplishment of this historic destiny are : firstly, the absorption by the masses of revolutionary workers throughout Africa of a correct understanding of the most advanced and scientific social principles : the sharp weapon of Marxist-Leninist theory, which is the rich, concentrated essence of the experience of the international proletariat.

Secondly, the organisation of the working class into effective mass organisations, and their unity throughout our great continent on a basis of solidarity and mutual aid. Towards this, the foundation of the All-Africa Trade Union Federation is a notable and historic contribution.

THE POSITION AT A GLANCE

National Centres Supporting the All-African Trade Union Conference.

	Membership of Affiliated Unions
1. Members of Preparatory Committee :	
Ghana Trades Union Congress ...	350,000
Morocco U.M.T. (Union Marocaine du Travail)	650,000
U.G.T.A.N. (Union Generale des Trav- ailleurs d'Afrique Noire, represent- ing Sudan, Senegal, Guinea, Togo- land, Niger, Upper Volta, Dahomey and Maritania)	109,000
Algeria (Union Generale des Travail- leurs Algeriens)	150,000
Egyptian Trade Union Congress (E.C.L.)	275,000
Gambia Workers' Union (G.L.U.) ...	2,000
S.A.C.T.U. (South African Congress of Trade Unions)	46,000
Sierra Leone Council of Labour ...	24,747
Uganda Trade Union Congress ...	2,941
	1,609,688
2. Other Bodies Which Have Announced Support :	
Tunisia (U.G.T.T.)	225,000
Kenya Federation of Labour	40,000
Cameroun	18,000
Nyasaland T.U.C.	1,900
Congo	3,200
	Grand Total : 1,897,788

* To these figures must probably be added the majority of the 58,441 members of the Nigeria T.U.C., represented by an unofficial delegation.)

HOW FOREIGN

In its founding debates of the All-African Trade Union Federation, a resolution was proposed opposing "all foreign ideologies". The resolution, which was amended, appears to have been aimed at Communism. It is a familiar line of attack. Outside of the socialist countries themselves, the warning that Communism is "foreign" is made over and over again. Communism, it is suggested, is somehow at home in Russia but "foreign" everywhere else. This most persistent anti-Communist device is now being peddled in Africa, not only by the imperialist agents, but even by others who should know better.

Hostility to foreign domination is now the main-stream of African thinking. It is perhaps understandable that, in an atmosphere of such hostility, unthinking people turn easily to hostility towards everything foreign—customs, ideas and cultural standards. The good and the valuable is rejected together with the bad. In this fashion, it is hoped, Africa can be persuaded to throw out Communism along with imperialist domination; both, so it is said, are "foreign". And it is hoped that having once so labelled Communism, it will be forgotten that the Communists have everywhere been the first to raise the slogans of national self-determination, the first to demand the complete independence of the colonies, the first to reveal to the world the real inner nature of imperialism, and the first to struggle resolutely against it even in the imperial countries themselves.

To understand instinctive African suspicions of all things foreign is not to accept or condone them. Unthinking, unreasoning anti-foreign attitudes are not far from the racial thinking and outlooks with which imperialist rule has covered Africa, and are often learnt from and taken over from imperialism. South Africa—as in all things racial—provides a good example.

At the start of the second world war, when there was a real need for struggle against the Nazi ideas of Aryan supremacy, blood-and-soil and the fuehrer-prinzip, patriotic mobs in the streets of Johannesburg ignored the steady spreading of these ideas through openly pro-Nazi, Afrikaner Nationalist newspapers, but systematically burned to ashes every German-made car they could find in the streets. In taking over the essential racialistic basis of Nazism, these patriotic, supposedly anti-Nazi, mobs only paved the way for the victory of neo-Nazi ideas in the Union of South Africa, and the final victory of a Nazi orientated government under Dr. Malan.

S COMMUNISM?

THE GROWTH OF IDEAS

Racialism is one of the worst offshoots of imperialism in the field of ideas. It would be a sad day for Africa were this racialism to be taken over by the opponents of imperialism, turned on its head to become anti-European where present racialism is anti-African, and used once again as a device by the enemies of African progress to cut our people off from the vast stream of social, political and economic theory which is the common heritage of mankind.

In some ways, every ideology of the twentieth century is partly 'foreign' to Africa. None of the great social, religious or political codes of our time have arisen independently on this continent as the native product of our own people and our own special thinking. Nor, for that matter, have they arisen exclusively in any other distinct portion of the globe. Protestantism, from its beginnings in Western Europe, borrowed from and adapted itself to Catholicism, which in turn borrowed from and based itself upon Judaism whose beginnings were in the Middle East. Mohammedanism contains elements of both Judaism and Christianity. The influences of North Africa and of Egypt, at a still earlier date, gave birth to Judaism. Which country or continent can lay claim to have founded the concepts of democracy, without having in turn to acknowledge that it was borrowed from, extended from and derived from others?

"Our whole Western way of life is descended from civilisations which once flourished in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Central Asia and the islands of the Aegean", writes Ivar Lissner (*The Living Past*.)

Only the research worker, the historian and the archaeologist can today separate out each national influence which contributed its part to the overall development of the ideas which are current. It has been fashionable, for a long time, to discount the contribution of Africa to the main-stream of man's ideas, to declare Africa to be the dark and backward continent which contributed nothing. The myth has served the purposes of imperialism well; it has justified the need for foreign rule over this 'backward', 'slothful' continent; and it has screened the inhumanities of exploitation and the slave trade in Africa from the commerce and intercourse of the rest of the world. But now, in the age when Africa is establishing its independence, serious research is for the first time beginning to reveal the real contribution of Africa to the culture and the thinking of the world.

“And what this new outline suggests is something neither “inferior” nor “mysterious” but a story of success and failure, disaster and resurgence and fulfilment, which is no different in its essence from the story of any of the major families of man. This re-discovery of Africa goes indeed towards the recognition of the essential unity of the peoples of Africa with the peoples of the rest of the world. The “lost islands” of African humanity are joined to the main.”

Basil Davidson (*Old Africa Re-discovered*)

FROM MAN'S EXPERIENCE

All ideas, in their way, are international, derived from wide experience, the products of ceaseless adaptation and enlargement. To this general rule the ideas of revolutionary communism are no exception. Marx and Engels never claimed—and never could have claimed—that their native Germany was the source of their ideas. Socialism as a new and better form of society than men have ever experienced has its origins far back in history. John Ball, the priest of Kent who roused the peasants to revolt five hundred years before Marx, was certainly drawing on even earlier thinkers when he cried :

“Good People, things will never go well in England so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villeins and gentlemen.”

Two hundred years before Marx, a left wing group, the Levelers, joined in Cromwell's revolt against the monarchy, contributed to Marx's own thinking the comment :

“Property divides the whole world into parties, and is the cause of wars and bloodshed and contention everywhere. When the earth becomes a common treasury again, as it must, then this enmity in all lands will cease.”

By the time Marx and Engels formulated the clear statement of revolutionary communist ideology in the Communist Manifesto of 1848, Fourier and Saint Simon in France, and Robert Owen in England had actually founded small colonies of followers to live—so they believed—under conditions of socialism without private ownership of property. Marx did not “invent” socialism any more than Newton invented Physics. Newton contributed the laws of gravity to the science of physics; Marx contributed an equally world-shaking proposition to the theory of socialism—the proposition that the modern industrial working class is the only class in capitalist society with the revolutionary ardour, the ability to combine and organise, which is necessary to carry through the change to socialism. To Marx, socialism was the society which will be created not just by men of vision, but by the revolutionary proletariat. Even for this, the basis was not to be found in Germany.

“Certain historical facts occurred which led to a decisive change in the conception of history” writes Engels. “In 1831 the first working-class rising had taken place at Lyons (France); between 1838 and 1848, the first national workers’ movement, that of the English Chartists, reached its height. The class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie came to the front . . . The new facts made imperative an examination of all past history.”

SOURCES OF MARXISM

This new examination of history, made imperative by the actions and the experiences of working people in many different lands, led finally to the brilliant formulation of the Marxist conception of history :

“That all past history is the history of class struggles; that these warring classes are always the product of the conditions of production and exchange, in a word, of the economic conditions of their time; that therefore the economic structure of society always forms the real basis from which, in the last analysis, is to be explained the whole superstructure of legal and political institutions, as well as of the religious, philosophical and other conceptions of each historical period.”

(Engels “*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*”)

Drawing on the vivid experience of the working class in both the British Chartist Movement, and in the seizure of power by the Paris Commune in 1871, Marx developed the ideas which suffuse the communist movement—the idea that working-class economic action falls short of what is required when it is not coupled with political action to conquer political power; that political organisation of the working class falls short of requirements unless it is coupled with the advance theory and understanding of militant socialism.

So it is with every aspect of Marxist theory. Marxist political economy is founded upon the classical political economy of Adam Smith and Ricardo; Marx’ theory of surplus value built upon and developed from their formulations of the labour theory of value. Half-a-century later, Lenin developed upon Marx’ foundations, adding the Marxian analysis of imperialism, “the highest stage of capitalism”, to the treasury of communist political economy. For his penetrating study of imperialism, Lenin learnt much from a British critique by Hobson, who drew considerably on the experience of imperialism gained from the British war against the Boer republics of Southern Africa.

Everything that Lenin added to Marxist theory, derived from the experience of the working class since Marx’ own time—not only in his native Russia, but in every country of the world. From India, China and the Russian colonial possessions, came the understanding of the national question which led to the Leninist

formulation of the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination, up to and including their right to secession from any imperial grouping of states. From the French working class in the Paris Commune and the Russian working class in the revolution of 1905 came the Leninist formulation of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the state form for the transition from capitalism to communism.

INTERNATIONAL ORIGINS

Thus Marxism has grown from international roots, from the experience of the proletariat in every country. Not every country or even every continent has contributed equally to the rich canvas of contemporary Marxism. Where capitalism developed first, there first developed the modern wage labourer. It is logical, therefore, that Europe, first homeland of capitalism, should have given birth to Marxism.

Only in fairly recent times have important new extensions of Marxist thought been made outside of Europe, especially in China. Here under new conditions, unknown even in Lenin's time, the working class is facing new problems, learning new experience and thus formulating new solutions to problems of our own time. Under the brilliant leadership of Mao Tse Tung, Marxism is currently developing an even fuller understanding and appreciation of the problems of the transition from colonialism to socialism, of the problems of linking the colonial national revolution with the socialist revolution. Though these problems come close to those of Africa, Africa stands now only at the beginning of its own experience; here the proletariat is only beginning to emerge (with small exceptions such as Algeria and South Africa) and accordingly Africa's own, special contribution to Marxist understanding is still in its very infancy.

It must not, however, be imagined that Marxism is a new theory only now beginning to find currency in Africa. In the Union of South Africa, for example, where modern industrial relations and a modern proletariat has existed for a considerable time, Marxism has long been a powerful influence and a popular creed amongst the working class. A Communist Party existed in South Africa since even before the founding of the Communist International. During its many years of active struggle the Communist Party established itself as the authentic voice of the African proletariat, as the most vigorous fighter for the black-white unity of the working class, and as the most outspoken opponent of Boer and British imperial oppression. The South African national liberation movement, now a powerful challenging force, arose and grew to maturity, under the crusading zeal and inspiration of the Communist Party.

NEW SLANT ON OLD SLANDER

It is not therefore easy to discredit Communism in South Africa merely by labelling it as "foreign". The politically aware masses have rubbed shoulders with Communism in every progressive struggle and in every democratic and anti-imperialist organisation. Many of the leading Communists have become leaders of the national liberation organisations; and equally, many of the leaders of the national liberation organisations have, to the public knowledge, become Communists. Thus, in South Africa, Communism is as indigenous a movement, as native in its origins, its thinking and its viewpoint as the liberation movement itself.

An attack on Communism in the Union of South Africa has therefore to be based on less obviously false grounds than that of "foreignness". In the current Treason Trial in Pretoria, a variant of the "Communism is foreign" cry is being used against the leaders of the campaign for national liberation, both black and white, communist and non-communist. This variant has been produced by Professor Andrew Murray of the University of Cape-town, the prosecution's 'expert on Communism'. Murray's evidence has been based on the proposition that every aspect of Marxism—its ideas, its slogans and even its language—is something special to Marxism alone. For Murray, Marxist thought belongs in a special category of its own, outside the main streams of all other human thought, and thus—in a sense—in the category of an ideology foreign to every other social and political creed current anywhere in the world. On this basis, this 'expert' has been able to pick a single phrase from a document, a single subsection from a long resolution or even a single word from a whole speech and brand it, unhesitatingly as "unadulterated Marxism".

Not even Dr. Verwoerd's selected 'expert' can make this proposition tenable. The defence of the Treason accused bases itself on the universally accepted view that no wide current of thought or belief exists in a sealed vacuum, out of touch with, untouched by or unaffected by contact with others. Every ideology leaves its impact and its mark upon men's minds; every new ideology builds upon, branches off from and extends, some part of an idea that has developed before.

Marxism, in this respect, is not peculiar. It is a part—admittedly a special part—but none the less part of the great humanist flood of man's thinking, inherited from the past; it has taken what is appropriate and worthwhile from other creeds and built upon it, extended and developed it. From German philosophy it has taken its dialectics, from French philosophy its materialism; from classical British political economy it has taken its economics, and from Darwin its views of nature and evolution. Who can say from a single thought or a single phase where Marxism begins and

other ideologies end? Only a Philistine or a Murray would attempt to categorise Marxism from anything less than its whole philosophy, its whole world view.

BOTH BORROWER AND LENDER

The traffic in ideas is not a one way current. Marxism borrowed, adapted and developed. But equally the world, even the anti-Communist world, has—knowingly or unknowingly—taken over much of Marxist thinking, adapted it and developed it for its own purposes.

“Marx” writes the frankly anti-Communist Professor H. B. Mayo (*Democracy and Marxism*), “was one of those pioneers, like Darwin or Freud, who changed the tenor of man’s thought; and every student of history and society must sooner or later come to terms with him . . . Marxism is, without question, one of the most influential systems of thought put forward in the last few hundred years . . . It is perhaps to Marx, more than to any other person, that we owe today our commonplace acceptance of the fact that economic influences extend in many devious ways throughout society.”

Amongst the most prolific borrowers from the treasury of Marxist thought have been the leaders and thinkers of the national liberation movements of Africa. Some like Nkrumah, openly admit to the influence Marxism has had upon their thinking. Others like Sèkou Touré use the Marxist method in their political work and draw upon Marxist theory for their political guidance. Others still, probably unwittingly, taken over into their work not only the language of the Marxist critiques of imperialism, but also the Marxist slogan of ‘the right of nations to self-determination’, and the Marxist recognition that imperialism is a manifestation of the monopoly stage of capitalism. Whether Africa is conscious of the fact or not, the independence movement of this continent has drawn heavily upon Marxist thinking for the inspiration and development of its various nationalist and liberationist ideologies. Far from being a foreign ideology, Marxism has become part and parcel of the native consciousness of this continent’s awakening.

It could not have been otherwise. At the present stage of world development, all forward, progressive-seeking mankind looks to socialism as the new form of human society. Over the past hundred years Marxism has emerged victorious over all the pious dreams and vague hopes of utopian socialists; Marxism, and the communist parties in the light of Marxist science, have already led a quarter of mankind to the successful construction of socialist societies. Nowhere in the world can there be people who think of social change and strike out to win it who are not influenced

and enlightened by the practical achievements of Marxism and Marxists. The equality of the manifold nationalities and races of the Soviet Union, the economic advance and self-confident happiness of the people of China—these stand as blazing beacons of inspiration everywhere amongst the oppressed nations of the world. Those who would be free look to and learn from the lands of socialism.

But to borrow, unconsciously and without understanding, fragments of Marxist thought, single disconnected pieces and elements of Marxism, is not enough to lead a continent to its liberty. To be masters of their own destiny and to make their own history precisely as they wish, those who lead the masses of the colonial world need the full consciousness and understanding which Marxism can give them.

Many years ago Marx perceived that revolutionary feelings arose spontaneously amongst the proletariat from the hammer-blows of life under conditions of capitalism. But revolutionary consciousness, understanding—these cannot arise spontaneously even amongst the proletariat. These are the fruits of a scientific understanding of the world, and of a scientific summing up of the experience of all its class struggles. Consciousness, understanding, Marxist theory, these have to be deliberately brought to the working class, and taught to them by advanced socialist thinkers.

It is for this purpose that Communist Parties, themselves studying their countries' problems in the light of Marxist theory, are so urgently required in Africa. The African proletariat, small though it be in numbers, is already everywhere revealing itself as the dynamic, revolutionary core of African liberation. To this vital group, Communist Parties can bring the consciousness which to-day is lacking, and enable this class to fulfil its historic destiny of leading the peasant and tribal masses of Africa into the new age of socialism. In doing so, the Marxists of Africa will fill the glaring gap that now exists, by adding to the living science of Marxism the experiences and the new theoretical extensions of Marxism which derive from our own experience and our own continent.

GUINEA SHOWS

On September 28, 1958, a new state was born in Africa—the Republic of Guinea. This birth of Guinea must be seen against the stirring historical background of our times—a period of great and fundamental social and political changes which are profoundly affecting the lives and future of the common people throughout the world. In 1939 there were only two independent African states in the whole Continent. To-day, there are ten. The prospects are that there will be fifteen by the end of 1960.

Yet, though it is part of a great world process of rapid change in our times, the Democratic Republic of Guinea is well worth studying in itself, for it is one of the most exciting and dynamic factors ever to emerge in Africa. As a part of the former French West African Federation, the interests of this small country of 106,200 square miles were sadly neglected and subordinated to those of French imperialism. The country's great mineral and other natural resources were partly neglected, and then only developed in a one-sided way, in the interests of foreigners. Of the population—between 2½ and 3 million souls—95 per cent. were illiterate. 80 per cent. lived in the rural areas. Like all people under imperialist domination and economic stranglehold, the people of Guinea were generally poor and living standards of the workers and toiling masses was very low indeed.

Consider these facts. During 60 years of colonial rule, the French authorities built only six schools in the Beyla Province (South Eastern Guinea). During eight months of independent rule, 14 schools were opened in the same province. In 60 years the French built less than 200 miles of roads, while the Republic built several hundreds of miles of roads in its first 8 months. Throughout the whole period of French rule, only four hospitals were put up by the French. The Government has already opened three new ones by June, 1959.

Since independence the Government has embarked on what President Sékou Touré refers to as a "huge programme of development of economy and society", or exploitation of the country's "immense natural riches", and "huge works of construction".

DE GAULLE'S REFERENDUM

All these great developments of the Republic of Guinea spring from their historic decision of 1958, when they voted overwhelmingly for separation from France and the establishment of an independent Republic.

THE WAY FORWARD

Poor, illiterate and backward as they may have been, the people of Guinea did great things; they knew their true interests and how to achieve their objectives. Thanks to the alertness and efficiency of their national organisation and its farsighted and politically mature and wise leadership, which saw through and correctly answered General De Gaulle's proposals, the people of Guinea attained their emancipation.

Relying on his imperialist-minded officials and African stooges to persuade the African masses to vote their masters' way, De Gaulle asked the peoples of the French African territories to choose between—

- * complete independence;
- * autonomy within the French Community; and
- * the status of a province of Metropolitan France.

More than a dozen territories, including French West Africa, the French Equatorial Africa and the island of Madagascar, with over 30 million inhabitants were vitally affected by and deeply concerned over these proposals. Only Guinea voted solidly (95%) for complete independence.

SEKOU TOURE AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF GUINEA

This was possible, and could only be possible, because the people were united solidly behind the Democratic Party of Guinea, a strong, alert and efficient organisation with a politically mature and farsighted leadership, at the head of which stood a remarkable man: a brilliant and bold political leader, a genius for organisation and a great administrator, **Sékou Touré**.

President Touré is a working-class leader, a veteran of the African Labour Movement. As far back as 1945 he was elected General Secretary of the Communication Workers Union, and in February, 1956, he became President of the General Confederation of Workers of Black Africa (UGTAN) which embraces Trade Union Federations in many countries besides Guinea as far afield as the Sudan. He has been Secretary of the Democratic Party of Guinea since 1952.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

The Democratic Party of Guinea is a popular and progressive national movement grouping together, regardless of race, religion or sex, all the forces bent on destroying colonialism, and establishing a truly democratic state in Guinea.

It is organised, conceived and orientated on different lines from the usual national liberation organisations. "While never forgetting past events and ever watching current trends", President Touré told the recent Party Conference held at Conakry in September, 1959 :

"The Democratic Party of Guinea is also absorbed in what must happen tomorrow. Indeed, it is precisely in the matter of what the party thinks its position tomorrow will be that it ought to avail itself, at the opportune moment, of all tendencies conducive to securing the happiest and the most prosperous future for the country . . ."

"The supporters of the Party who, relying on the present casts its programme in the future and for whom mistakes, far from disheartening him, far from dampening his resolution and energy, are, on the contrary, profitable elements because, once he has detected them through the help of external criticism and self-criticism, he will be able to avoid them and to perfect his action in the future. The leaders and the followers must know that action is the food of intelligence and that it is action which makes the thought of the party".

The Democratic Party of Guinea is based on the principles of democratic centralism. Organs of state are led by the Party; it is the Party that plans, formulates policies, chooses and decides strategy and tactics, and the Government approves and implements.

DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP

In the speech cited above, President Touré pointed out that every State form is in essence a dictatorship. "We should bear in mind that nations are democratic or non-democratic but that, no matter what their nature be, their trying to achieve purposes which have been fixed in advance necessarily implies dictatorship". But, Guinea being a democracy, the dictatorship which is exercised is that of the people as a whole. "It is the power of the people exerted by the people and for the people."

"The forces of progress are, dialectically, the peoples forces." Therefore says Touré "the Democratic Party of Guinea has chosen democracy, it has endowed the Nation with democratic institutions, it exerts on the national level a dictatorship of the people."

FOUR THOUSAND LOCAL COMMITTEES

The administration of the Democratic Republic of Guinea is founded on the population; the country is ruled through some 4,000 local committees which are elected on the basis of adult suffrage. Some of the political keymen in the administration of countries are said to be peasants, including women who have never been to school.

The function committees, on the level of the district, village, section and county, general assemblies and congresses, is to wage "any action deserving to be waged on behalf of the Republic of Guinea." They make vital decisions affecting the daily lives of the people and binding the nation.

In many political and social fields the leadership of the new Guinea has drawn on the experience of the Peoples Republic of China. Being a poor country, like all colonial countries, which have been left stripped and backward by imperialism, Guinea has little in the way of large capital reserves. But she is drawing heavily upon her main capital—the enthusiasm, energy, inventiveness and patriotism of the people.

A BOLD PROGRAMME

A bold and ambitious programme of economic and industrial development, social and cultural advancement has been decided upon. Independent Guinea and its Democratic Party are winning success on the economic and political fronts at home and in international relations; new industries are being built, agricultural and internal trade reorganised and developed. Thanks to the mass movement of volunteer labour teams over 8,000 kilometres of roads, 335 school-rooms and 672 bridges have been constructed, and 67 state-owned plantations and 2,440 jointly-owned fields—the income from which is used for public needs have been established. Production of bananas, coffee, rice, palm nuts, peanuts and other foodstuffs has increased tremendously.

The cost of living has been reduced while wages of the workers have been raised. The 1960-62 plan stipulates that 50% of all state funds shall be set aside for production purposes, 30% for social welfare and 20% for administration. Diplomatic relations have been established with a number of countries, including socialist countries, and agreements on economic, technical and cultural co-operation concluded with them. Students are sent out to foreign lands to acquire the required knowledge.

In his speech on the 14th September, 1959, President Sékou Touré told the world that they "expected to be able to resolve once and for all, before July 1st 1960, the important problems which are going to condition the perfect application of Guinea plan of mining, industrial, agricultural, handicraft and social development: Guinea money, the national bank, the bank of issue, investment laws, customs regime, etc".

AIMS OF THE PARTY

Of all emergent African independent states, Guinea is the only one that seems to be headed directly towards its social and economic objectives: to abolish poverty, hunger and backwardness, and to create a life of happiness for the people of Guinea. The Party appears to know exactly what it wants and how to get it. Generally it aims at—

- * Political independence, social and cultural advancement and economic development and happiness of the African people;
- * forming the people of Guinea into one national entity and eliminating all causes of “tribal, ethnic or religious rivalries” which have in the “past caused so much damage” to the country and its people;
- * decolonising political and legal institutions, the economy of the country, and the minds and attitudes of the people of Guinea;
- * re-educating the youths of the country and harnessing their energies, courage, faith and enthusiasm in the service of the country and society;
- * emancipating the women of the Democratic Republic of Guinea; and
- * instilling a spirit of willingness to work, and pride in the country and the community.

IMPORTANT THEORETICAL PROBLEMS

However, questions of complete national independence and the fundamental development of national economy and society are matters that raise some important and profound theoretical social and political problems. Under which social system are these really possible? There are two systems existing side by side in the world today: capitalism and socialism.

It is quite obvious that being a society based on private ownership of the means of production—land, industry and transport—a society which consists of hostile classes with antagonistic class interests, a highly competitive system whose sole urge and purpose is production for profit and for selfish personal interests, capitalism is utterly incapable of eradicating poverty, hunger and backwardness. The experience of more than three centuries has shown that nowhere in the world, even in such a rich country as the United States of America, and in rich and vast empires as the former British Empire and the French Empire, has capitalism succeeded in ending social misery.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOCIALISM

On the other hand, however, SOCIALISM—a social order based on Marxist-Leninist revolutionary and scientific philosophy of laws of social development, a society whose whole wealth and production are collectively owned by the public and devoted solely to the interests and well-being of humanity and to the enrichment and further development of society—HAS, within a short space of a few decades, already demonstrated its superiority to the whole world.

In all countries which have adopted socialism as their way of life, gigantic programmes of social and economic construction have been undertaken and successfully carried out. Chronic social problems, formerly regarded as natural phenomena, have been tackled and overcome, and cultural and living standards of the mass of people are constantly raised. From this it will be seen that it is only under socialism that poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance can be abolished.

ON THE RIGHT ROAD

The people of Guinea will only succeed in the social objectives that they have set themselves if they adopt the Marxist-Leninist teachings as their guiding principles. But it is clear from the following extracts from the speech of President Sékou Touré that the Democratic Party of Guinea recognises the importance of theory or guiding principles in the conduct of the nation's affairs:—

“With a deeply sincere desire to serve a just cause, but lacking a real conscience, knowledge or experiences, man may compromise the deep desire.”

“Responsible leader or militant member, man or woman, young or old, each person must develop the sense and conception of conscience of this high degree of political value, without which the Democratic Party of Guinea would be unable to undertake its labour of liberation, emancipation and rehabilitation.”

But perhaps this quotation from “World Marxist Review” of December, 1959, will more clearly illustrate this point:—

“Independence,” said Sékou Touré, “presupposes doing away with the economic structure which retarded the raising of living standards and the development of the people. But one cannot destroy one system without replacing it with another. The colonial system robbed us of our products, buying them for a mere song and re-selling them at high prices. The producers—the creators and the owners of these products—benefited very little; the products passed through the hands of numberless middlemen (transport companies, import-export dealers, agents or wholesale traders),

and the profits were pocketed by the colonialists. Were we to replace the colonial agents, middlemen and employers by native ones, the peasants would not get a single penny extra. This would mean substituting home exploiters for colonial exploiters, and although we are independent, would not abolish the evils of colonialism; the system and concept of colonialism would remain”.

FOREIGN POLICY

The attitude of the Republic of Guinea towards peoples of other lands, and her official foreign policy as outlined by her president, M. Sékou Touré, is that Guinea :—

- * believes in the policy of neutrality and peaceful co-existence;
- * seeks understanding with all countries, and alliance with all independent African and Asian states;
- * desires economic and cultural relations with other countries;
- * has no desire to oppress anyone;
- * is dedicated to combating hatred, racialism, selfishness, war and injustices;
- * has the whole of Africa constantly in mind, the freedom of Africa is a guarantee for the permanent freedom of Guinea; and
- * prefers poverty—in liberty to riches in slavery.

We are sure that no politically sincere and honest person will quarrel with any of the points listed above. They are nothing but sound and wise political statements based on democratic principles, principles upon which this little republic is rightly and justifiably proud of having been founded, and along which its people are resolved to shape their destiny and way of life.

DIFFICULT PROBLEMS

But Guinea has a number of difficult problems such as—

- * shortage of trained personnel : engineers, technicians and other competent staff in every sphere of the country's economic and social life, to ensure efficient and full exploitation of its “immense natural riches.”
- * Lack of more schools and other training institutions.
- * The evils of under-developed national economy—poverty, ill-health and backwardness.
- * Insufficient transport and communication system.

- * Inadequate hospitals, clinics and other allied social institutions.
- * Emancipation of women and fitting them into the new social order.
- * Disease : Malaria, Leprosy, sleeping sickness, etc.

However, in one way or another these problems are being energetically and enthusiastically tackled and important successes recorded in many spheres.

AN INSPIRATION TO AFRICA

Guinea is on the right road to real democracy and freedom, and she has millions of friends and well-wishers throughout the world. But she also has enemies; her enemies are imperialists and colonisers, the reactionary feudal elements and speculators, the 5% that opposed the nation's aspirations and decision and voted against complete independence. Another possible enemy could be swollen-headedness on the part of the leaders as a result of imperialist flattery and the respect shown and homage paid to Guinea by the great powers of America, Europe and Asia. But her greatest enemy could be failure to arm the working class and masses of people generally—the very people upon whom the foundation of the Republic rests at present—with the knowledge and understanding of the Marxist-Leninist theory of social, economic and political development.

We are convinced and confident, that the Democratic Republic of Guinea will triumph in its noble objectives and lofty ideals. But she will only succeed if she fulfils these three essential conditions—

- (a) if her working class and toiling masses are taught and given the correct working class theory and principles;
- (b) if the workers and peasants are alert and keep constant vigilance; and
- (c) if the workers and peasants remain the foundation and source of power and authority : if political and economic powers, as well as the direction of the nation's day-to-day affairs are kept in the hands of the country's working people.

The workers of Guinea must realise and clearly understand that today Guinea is an example to all the oppressed and exploited peoples of the continent of Africa and that all look expectantly toward the success of their experiment. A great duty and grave responsibility, therefore, rests on the heads of the working class and people of Guinea to see to it that they do not fail the sacred cause, the cause of African freedom and independence. They are to constantly assert their rights, and to jealously guard against any attempts to undermine their strategic and dominant position in the life of the country.

MARXISM AND A

It has long been the tradition of western imperialists to cover their robbery and exploitation in Africa under the cloak of some benevolent missionary work. When Britain, France, Belgium, Portugal and Germany carved up our continent and subjected the African people to oppression, exploitation and racial discrimination, it was under the pretext that they were bringing light to dark Africa, civilisation and economic upliftment to the barbaric people. Their motives, they claimed, were unselfish and laudable. In actual fact, once they had entrenched themselves and dispossessed the people, none of these benefits were forthcoming. The people were kept ignorant and poor. Tribal and other outworn institutions were deliberately preserved by the imperialists to facilitate the exploitation and oppression of the people.

The bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries, who in their own countries had led the struggle against feudalism, and rallied the masses behind the slogans of democracy and nationalism, became the defenders of feudalism and the enemies of democracy and nationalism in Africa. The high principles which were proclaimed as universal turned out to be only for Western Europe and North America. In Asia, Africa, and South America, the same principles were trampled in the dust, in the interests of colonial exploitation and super-profits.

Today, it is no longer possible to deny the African people democratic rights and independence. But the imperialist bourgeoisie is still up to its old tricks. They have appointed themselves the bodyguards whose mission is to protect Africa from Communism. Directly, through the European colonial administrators, through American diplomatic and consular offices, and indirectly, through such agencies as the so-called Moral Re-armament movement and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, a continuous stream of propaganda is launched amongst the African people, preaching the horrors and mortal perils of Communism.

It is not too difficult to discern the motives behind this massive propaganda campaign. Indeed, with naive self-exposure and contempt for the intelligence of the African people, they are continually giving the game away themselves, by re-iterating day-in-day-out that they are trying "to save Africa for 'the West'."

COMMUNISM AND NATIONALISM

In these circumstances, it is somewhat surprising that not a few leaders of national liberation movements, and even trade unions, in Africa have fallen for this propaganda—so obviously designed

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to preserve whatever can be preserved from the wreck of colonialism in Africa. One would have thought, perhaps, that so many years of bitter experience would have taught us to understand that when our colonial masters are anxious to warn us against some "grave danger", that "danger" is likely to be something which can help us in our demands for freedom and independence.

No doubt, some of the Africans who are so eagerly echoing the parrot cry of anti-communism, are nothing but stooges and paid interpreters of their masters' voice. But, when one hears patriotic African leaders thoughtlessly echoing the anti-communist trash produced for our consumption by the State Department and the various colonial offices, then one must realise that one has to face here a fundamental misconception.

They imagine that Communism is in conflict with African nationalism and the liberation of our continent, because they believe that Communism will divide the African people along class lines, and will introduce a remote or irrelevant issue—that of an unreal and academic dispute about our future economic system—when all our energies should be united and directed to a single purpose, the emancipation of our continent from alien rule.

That such gross misunderstanding of the nature of Marxist-Leninist theory, and the role of Communists, are seriously believed by responsible African leaders, shows only how well the imperialists have succeeded in screening Africa from the truth about the profound teachings of Communism, and in palming off their own grotesque distortions as the real article. It is high time, indeed, that a journal such as "The African Communist" made its appearance, so that our people can judge Marxism not by the slanderous allegations of the imperialists—the common enemy of socialism and African liberation—but by what the Marxists have to say for themselves.

Neither in theory nor in practice is there any basis for the allegation that there is some sort of clash or incompatibility between the aims and activities of African communists and those of other patriotic Africans seeking the emancipation of Africa from colonialism and racial discrimination, and the advance of her peoples to unity and equality among the nations of the world.

Certainly, Communists are internationalists, looking forward to a future of brotherhood of man all over the world. But that does not mean that any Communist who is a member of an oppressed nation can for one moment be indifferent to the sufferings and humiliations of his fellows, who daily feel the brunt of discrimination, and the denial of democracy and human rights. On the

contrary, he will participate, with all his heart and soul, in the struggle of his people for national salvation, as the key and the condition to all future advance. Any person who stands aloof from this struggle, who confines himself to preaching generalisations about socialism, is not a Marxist at all but a mere parlour-socialist. *The fact that a man is a Communist makes him not worse but a better fighter for the freedom of his people from national oppression.*

UNITED FRONT FOR LIBERATION

Marxism-Leninism, dialectical materialism, is not an abstract dogma, but a living historical science, which enjoins upon all its supporters to study the concrete historical situation in which they find themselves. In conditions of national oppression, of colonial domination, and racial discrimination, the first duty of every Communist is to fight *unconditionally and unreservedly* for a complete emancipation from all forms of domination and oppression, for the building of a *united front of national liberation*. Such a united front should consist not only of workers and peasants, but also of patriotic intellectuals, professional people, and even large sections of the capitalist class who are opposed to the oppression of their people. Working unselfishly and wholeheartedly to maintain and extend the strength and unity of such a national liberation movement, the Communists do so not only because it is the condition and the key to the future advance of socialism, but also because as sons of the toiling masses, they understand the burning needs of the people for national dignity, equality and freedom.

Sometimes it is asserted by the opponents of Marxism, that Communists merely attempt to "use" the national liberation and democratic movements for their own purposes. This unworthy slander is refuted not only by heroic sacrifices and contributions made to the common cause by Communists in Africa, and all over the world, but also by a consideration of the basic theory of Marxist-Leninism itself. The point is well expressed in the new textbook "Foundations of Marxism-Leninism" recently published by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the editorship of the veteran workers' leader Otto Kuusinen. It declares :

"It would be wrong to regard the democratic movements as a simple means for bringing the masses to socialist revolution. It would be wrong first of all because they are of tremendous importance as *independent* movements for the people in general and for the working class in particular. Is the struggle for peace, against nuclear destruction, to be regarded solely as a reserve means? Is it not one of the principle aims of the democrats and progressive mankind as a whole? The same is true of the struggle against fascism and the shameful colonialism . . ."

“ . . . Each Communist, each class-conscious worker, should never lose sight of the ultimate aims of the working-class movement. But this does not make him any less conscious and less selfless in fighting for the immediate interests of the people, for such demands as peace, democracy, national independence and sovereignty.

“ Not every democrat by a long way is a supporter of socialism. But every politically conscious fighter for socialism is a consistent defender of democracy, of all the democratic interests of the working people.”

“ You Communists ” say some of our ill-informed critics, “ seek to divide our people along class lines, whereas we should all be united as Africans.” It is not the Communists, but the inevitable march of history, which divides nations and peoples along class lines. This will always be the case until the achievement of socialism and a classless society. Instead of blaming the Communists for the inevitable process of history, the critics would do better to study concretely the nature and role of the various classes that exist in Africa. Naturally, conditions differ from one African territory to another, depending upon a number of factors, such as which European power has colonised a particular territory, the degree of white settlement and economic development, the extent to which the static, sleeping tribal societies have been disrupted and broken up. By making allowances for wide variations and local differences, it is possible to generalise broadly about the existence of various classes in our continent.

CLASSES IN SOCIETY

In general, we may say that the path of economic development and differentiation of classes has not taken exactly the same shape in Africa as it has in the classic countries of capitalism, West Europe and North America. This is because imperialism itself, for so many years, vital formative years, the dominating influence in by far the greater part of our continent, has deliberately retarded, distorted, and suppressed the normal economic and political development of the continent.

The colonisers have dispossessed the people from the land, and destroyed their traditional means of livelihood, in order to convert the African masses into cheap labour fodder for their mines, plantations and other enterprises, all of which were concerned merely with extracting the natural wealth of Africa and exporting it overseas, for their own use. Following their policy of divide and rule, they have maintained and perpetuated outworn institutions, which no longer have any real meaning for millions of people, in order to maintain “ indirect rule ” through tribal chiefs who often have become little more than officials of colonial powers. They have deliberately retarded and suppressed indigenous development and industrialisation.

As a result, we find the most numerous class in Africa is composed of millions of people, living on the land, but usually without any land of their own, trying to scratch a precarious living from the soil. Living to varying degrees in conditions of tribalism, ground down by ignorance, poverty and disease, preoccupied with the superhuman struggle for a bare existence, this vast class mass basis of the great army of African liberation; the soul of the regeneration of Africa. Its interests and its future are the interests and the future of the continent. Aroused, and given dynamic leadership, the Africans of the rural hinterland, will prove an invincible and determined army of freedom fighters. But, in the nature of things, we cannot often hope or expect to find the leadership of the African revolution emerging from the heartlands of tribal society.

They look for awakening, for enlightenment and leadership, to the people of the *towns*. Who are the people of the towns? They are, firstly, the capitalists; secondly the professional people and intellectuals; thirdly the working class.

In most parts of Africa, amongst the *capitalists* you will find a few big manufacturing and financial elements of the type which dominate the European or North American bourgeoisie. This is because the colonialists have been concerned to keep control of all large enterprises, particularly mining, manufacture and finance, in their own hands. Even in areas of relatively high industrial development, such as South Africa and Rhodesia, the European minority dominates all positions of importance in the capitalist world. Rarely does one find an African manufacturer who is not also working with his employees, who themselves are usually very few. The same applies to all or nearly all important positions in trade and commerce.

Few Africans have been allowed to become important figures as wholesalers or large-scale merchants. Usually one finds them only as petty traders, small shop-keepers and hawkers. Only in the north, in such countries as Egypt, can one find an indigenous class of big bourgeoisie. In most parts of Africa, one finds this bourgeois class playing an advanced and progressive role in the struggle against colonialism. Imperialism stands in the way of the development of the African capitalists as a class. The colonialists preserve jealously exclusive rights and privileges to all the best places in the sun for themselves, and prevent the nascent African capitalist from taking what he regards as his rightful place in society. The colonial system keeps the masses of people poor, retards industrialisation, and thus prevents the growth of an adequate home market.

Of course, I should add here, what is under discussion is not the behaviour and motives of each individual, but broad general trends existing amongst classes. Certainly, many Africans from a capitalist background have been and still are loyal and true sons

of Africa, activated by the broad interests of the suffering masses with whom they identify themselves, and not by selfish or class interests only.

The support of the patriotic element of the African capitalist class is essential for speedy victory against colonialism. But there are aspects of this class, and elements amongst it, which make it a very unsatisfactory *leader* in the African revolution. True, the support of the capitalist class, or the patriotic elements among it, is invaluable, for they can and do provide the financial backing which is needed to run properly organised offices and professional staff for the liberation movement, to open and maintain newspapers, and all the other things for which money is required. Also, as businesslike people, they are capable of providing the efficiency and attention to detail and daily routine which is so often sadly lacking in our movements.

But the capitalist elements are apt to be narrow the selfishly hide bound and conservative. They are apt to be guided not by the general interests of the masses but by their own special, minority, class interests. Often they are parochial, chauvinistic, tribalistic, and lacking in a broad vision. They are usually opportunist, tend to compromise with the colonialists for small gains at the sacrifice of principle, because they fear the revolutionary activities of the masses of workers and rural people. Also, it has been repeatedly observed, that certain elements amongst the bourgeoisie in a colonial country tend to compromise with imperialism and sell out to it.

While they share a common national outlook with the masses of African workers and peasants, they also share a common capitalist outlook with the colonialists. They are tied, sometimes, to imperialism by a thousand strings of dependence, and mutual interest. They share with the colonialists the destructive and vicious ideology of a morbid fear of Communism and the masses of the people. For this reason it has happened time and again in this period of history, that the compromising section of the bourgeoisie has sold out to imperialism and betrayed the interests of the masses of the people. These are some of the reasons which make the bourgeoisie an unsatisfactory leader of the colonial revolution.

PROFESSIONAL CLASSES

What about the professional classes and intellectuals? The doctors, lawyers, teachers and clerks and others who exist in every town in our continent? We must pay ungrudging tribute to the magnificent contributions which thus far have been made to the cause of African emancipation by men and women from this class throughout our continent. They have been the founders of our national liberation movements, and have carried the spark of enlightenment and rebellion from one end of Africa to the other. Many have studied abroad, even settled abroad, and then given

up a life of ease and comfort, and of human dignity let it be remembered, in order to come back and to share trials, hardships and dangers of the political movements amongst the masses of their people.

At the same time, it must be remembered that, considered as a *class*, this African "intelligentsia" does not constitute a stable and homogeneous group. It is not, properly speaking, an independent economic class at all. For from it have been drawn not only the revolutionary and patriotic leaders of our liberation movements, but also the cadres of colonialism: the clerks, interpreters, and officials, without whose aid colonialism would be unable to continue its rule and maintain its administration in Africa. In conditions of modern society, the intellectuals occupy a position midway between the rulers and the ruled, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Some of them have chosen, unhesitatingly, the cause of the working people, and stuck to it loyally come what may. Others serve openly and willingly the cause of the oppressors. They swallow uncritically, the ideology and outlook of the colonialists; they learn to have contempt for their own people; they even, as teachers, often do the dirty job of inculcating into young Africans the hateful principles of subservience and self-contempt. Many of these intellectuals vacillate between one camp and another, are always swinging helplessly between the oppressors and the oppressed. Amongst fellow-Africans, in the liberation movement, they pose as the most radical and uncompromising of revolutionaries, ceaselessly calling for action, for desperate adventures, and swearing to destroy the colonialists. Yet at different times, the very same people can be observed, hobnobbing with the most reactionary elements amongst the colonial officials, and shamelessly sneering at the alleged shortcomings of the African peoples.

Though we must pay the most sincere homage and tribute, therefore, to those many African leaders of great stature who have emerged from this group, we must remember that as a group it is inherently unstable and unfit for leadership. It is for the members of this group, each individually, and all of them together as a group, to choose which side they are on—that of the masses of workers and peasants, or that of the exploiters. Every great African leader who has emerged from the ranks of the intelligentsia, has achieved greatness only because he has unswervingly and completely aligned himself with the masses.

THE WORKING CLASS

Finally, we come to the African working class, the proletariat. Except in some of the areas of greater industrialisation, where African workers, miners, and landless farm labourers working on plantations, have come into being, the African working class is numerically small in most parts of our continent. Yet, it is the

class of the future, for every day it is growing in numbers, wisdom and maturity, as industrialisation spreads in Africa, disrupting the old sleeping tribal societies, and sending forth the sons and daughters of Africa as workers, people who have no means of livelihood, and nothing to sell except their labour power.

The conditions of its life and labour make the African working class the most revolutionary, dynamic and far-seeing group amongst all our people. The working class is homogeneous. Unlike sections of the bourgeoisie it looks beyond formal political independence. It does not seek merely to replace a group of white exploiters with another group of black ones. It looks forward to a life of greater happiness, if higher material and cultural standards, of progress and prosperity for all Africans, above all for the toiling masses also in the rural areas from which they spring. The African working class is the ideal leader in the great process and onward march of the masses to build a new Africa.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

But in order to fulfill this historic role, it is necessary that the working class should be organised and trained in most modern and advanced principles of social science. It should be organised, industrially, in trade unions which can be a powerful and indispensable weapon and partner in the movement for the national liberation of our continent. And they should be organised, in their own political party, a party based upon the wise and far-seeing scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism, a Communist Party.

The Communist Party is the highest form of working-class organisation. It selects only the best members of the working class, those who have proved their loyalty, courage and determination in political work. The party is highly disciplined. Every member is a student who learns more about Marxist theory and enriches this theory by studying local conditions and applying it to them. Every member of the Party is an activist who puts into practice what he learns and studies.

Membership of the Communist Party is not necessarily confined to members of the proletariat. This is particularly important in Africa where we have already said the proletariat is at present very small in relation to the other classes. A person may by trade be a worker and yet in fact be under the influence of bourgeois nationalist or other anti-working class ideology. Sometimes trade union leaders, for example, may become opportunistic in their outlook because of the need constantly to reach compromise agreements with the bosses, and because they lack training in the theories and principles of the class struggle. On the other hand, many people, of bourgeois, peasant or petty-bourgeois origin, can become valuable members of the Communist Party and firm supporters of

the working class if they accept the ideology of the working class and base their deeds on the policies and needs of the working class.

During the period of the struggle against imperialism the national bourgeoisie and even the feudal chiefs and princes may be the allies of the working class in the struggle against imperialism. However, after the overthrow of imperialism a section of the national bourgeoisie may have ties with foreign imperialism and may betray the national revolution, but may not seek a complete break with imperialism. The working class on the other hand will seek a complete break with imperialism and capitalist exploitation. They will seek to win the patriotic national bourgeoisie into a stronger and firmer alliance with the workers and peasants and isolate the treacherous section of the bourgeoisie which has ties with foreign imperialism. The working class will seek to win the broad masses of the revolutionary land-hungry peasantry in a way which will enable them to complete the agrarian revolution and redivide the land.

The need for a revolutionary vanguard which will lead the working class to destroy exploitation is as great in Africa today as it was in Asia. The treachery of the imperialists can convert the independence of African States into an empty symbol by granting political independence and continuing the ruthless exploitation of the peoples through the national bourgeoisie. It is this which the imperialists hope to do when they say they want to "save Africa for the West."

In struggling against imperialism the working class must always avoid two errors. The first is to allow the bourgeoisie in the movement to dominate their leadership. The second is to try and impose exclusively working-class leadership and programmes on the national movement. Both these errors would weaken the struggle of the working class for socialism. In the first instance the power of the national bourgeoisie will be used to curb militant forms of action because they fear that if this should happen the revolution might be carried beyond their interests. The second error is one of secretarianism, which undermines the unity of the various classes and is bound to create internal conflicts thus diverting the attention of the people from their common enemy—imperialism.

Guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism and the accumulated experience of the workers of the whole world, the Communist Parties in the various colonial countries and independent states can lead the African people against imperialism either of the old form or the "new" form, which the imperialists seek to maintain under the cloak of "protecting Africa from Communism".