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■  
**An Outline History  
of Africa**  
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## Chapter One

### ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS IN AFRICA

#### Africa in Antiquity

With a monumental history that reaches far back into the remote past, the large continent of Africa is, geographically speaking, in the centre of the world.

Her history is closely intertwined with world history. Archaeology has proved without a shadow of a doubt that in Africa human settlement dates from primitive times. Paleontological finds in Africa have enabled scientists to trace all the stages of man's evolution. It is quite possible that Africa is the cradle of the human race.

The primitive communal system emerged on the territory of Africa many millenniums ago, when the Atlas Mountains lay under a sheet of ice and the Sahara was a savannah. Ancient stone implements, similar to those found in the Mediterranean area and in the East, have been unearthed in Africa, indicating that there human settlement followed the same pattern as in Europe and Asia.

As time passed a chain of deserts formed a natural barrier between North and Tropical Africa, impeding intercourse between these two vast territories for long ages. Different conditions for

human life and activity and features of historical development took shape.

The African peoples and tribes traversed a long road of development, and the result of this evolution is that "Africa", as William Du Bois writes in *The World and Africa*, "has as great a physical and cultural variety as Europe or Asia".

In the course of many millenniums the African peoples fashioned their own culture: dress and dwellings, music and dances, songs and legends, a written language, architecture, and so forth. The great cultural legacy of past centuries was created by the labour and intelligence of the Africans themselves.

The great African civilisation that sprang up in hoary antiquity in the north-eastern part of the continent occupies a prominent place in this legacy. Through various circumstances the valley of the Nile saw the rise of one of the world's most ancient human civilisations. A state system and a highly organised economy were evolved here at the dawn of human history. This effectively emphasises Africa's outstanding role in world history.

In the fertile Nile valley and in the nearby oases of North-East Africa there were seats of economic activity long before man learned to use metal. In those areas men built their settlements first on the hills abutting the river valley. They hunted and fished and organised themselves into primitive communes. The transition to land cultivation and herding took place with the growth of population and improvement of labour methods.

Through the efforts of many generations the Nile valley became covered with a dense network of irrigation canals, which enabled man to harness the might of the river to his own needs. Primitive man learned to till the soil with the sharpened end of boughs, and then invented the wooden plough to which he harnessed oxen. This considerably facilitated and improved the cultivation of soil. Agriculture became one of the basic occupations in the valley of the Nile.

Various crafts such as the working of stone, clay and wood appeared side by side with agriculture. Weaving, tanning and other crafts were soon evolved. The discovery of metal ushered in a new epoch. Barter trade increased sharply with the development of crafts.

In social relations the growth of labour productivity witnessed the appropriation of an ever-increasing portion of wealth by tribal chieftains and their entourages. This engendered exploitation of man by man, which began to develop and give rise to class inequality and to the division of society into exploiters and exploited. The first form of class society was based on the division of society into slaves and slave-owners.

#### Ancient Egypt

A slave-owning system was firmly established in Egypt by about the 4th millennium B.C. By that time in the valley of the Nile there were about 40 small early-slave-owning states called noms. The



prolonged struggle between them led to the formation of two relatively large kingdoms: in the north and in the south. In approximately the 3rd millennium B.C. the Lower Kingdom was conquered by the Upper Kingdom, which was the more powerful of the two. This act gave the rulers of the Upper Kingdom not only new fertile farmland but also the lush meadows of the Nile delta. The Nile valley thus came under a single economic authority, which greatly improved farming and adapted it more effectively to the periodic floods. The unification of Egypt in a single centralised slave-owning state was thus completed.

The sharp class stratification and the low level of the productive forces led to the establishment of an absolute autocracy headed by a pharaoh. A handful of wealthy men ruthlessly exploited large masses of slaves and freemen and used outright force to subjugate the people.

War was the main source of slavery. Prisoners of war as well as freemen who fell into debt were made slaves. Wars were waged uninterruptedly, booty and slaves being the objective. This further enriched the nobility and intensified the stratification of society into classes.

A strong centralised authority was considered necessary to suppress unrest among the slaves and the poorest strata of the population. Furthermore, the irrigation system throughout the length and breadth of the valley likewise required a single authority and management.

By tradition the history of ancient Egypt is divided into the Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom and the Late Period. Moreover, Egypt's ancient history is usually periodised into dynasties, of which there were 30.

Pyramids, colossal tombs of the rulers of Egypt, including the famous pyramids of Cheops and Chephren, were built in the period of the Old Kingdom. Each of these edifices took many years to build and involved the labour of hundreds of thousands of slaves, who died in their thousands from this exhaustive work under the lash of overseers. The purpose of the pyramids was to perpetuate the belief that the rule of the pharaohs was eternal. Economically, the pyramids were completely useless.

In the period of the Middle Kingdom, the intensifying exploitation and the growth of class contradictions ultimately called forth an uprising against the aristocracy and the pharaoh. In about 1750 B.C. the rural communities overthrew the rule of the aristocracy. The insurgents seized the palace of the pharaoh and turned their wrath against the nobility and the well-to-do. Relating the events of this period, the author of an ancient Egyptian papyrus states: "The country span round like a potter's wheel"\*. The first recorded major class revolt, it shook the country to its foundations. But no

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\* *World History*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1955, Gospolitizdat, p. 285.

radical changes took place. The masses were not sufficiently organised. They did not know how to abolish exploitation, and the old system was soon re-established.

Shortly after this Egypt was invaded by the Hyksos, who came across the Sinai Peninsula. Egypt was ruled by the Hyksos for more than a century. The New Kingdom, in which slave-owning economy was further developed, arose with their expulsion.

In the period of the New Kingdom, Egypt was a strong military power which pursued an exclusively predatory policy. She was continuously sending out military expeditions with the object of capturing slaves. But these interminable wars drained Egypt of her manpower, the conquests enriching only a small group of the population—the nobility, the pharaoh and his entourage, and the priesthood—while the plight of the people remained grievous. The country's inner forces were reduced to such a state of collapse that when invaders poured across the frontier it was unable to beat them off. In the year 525 B.C. the Persians ravaged this once proud and powerful kingdom.

One hundred and ninety-three years later Egypt was conquered by Alexander the Great. A state of economic decline, which lasted for a long time, began in approximately the 2nd century B.C. In the year 30 B.C. Egypt became a Roman province.

In 395 A.D., when the Roman Empire was carved up, Egypt was incorporated into Byzantium.

The Byzantine period is characterised by the establishment of feudalism, then a new socio-economic system.

The ancient civilisation in the valley of the Nile played an extremely important historical role, for it was one of the most imposing and long-lived of human cultures. The people built a great irrigation network and created a written language and a literature. Agriculture was subordinated to the periodic overflowing of the Nile and this made people conscious of natural phenomena. They began to take an interest in astronomy and a calendar was worked out. The ancient Egyptians knew the decimal system and had an idea of algebra. To promote architecture they had to develop computations involving squares, triangles, circles and the volumes of simple and truncated pyramids. Their skill in medicine, as testified to by studies of mummies, covered the treatment of diseased skin tissue and bones with surgical instruments and the filling of teeth. They manufactured glass and earthenware articles, dyes and enamel, papyrus and a multitude of other items. Much of their writing and many of their works of fine art have survived to our day.

In the cultural field Egypt borrowed a good deal from her near and distant neighbours over the course of millennia, but her own influence over them was considerably greater.

## North-East and North Africa

Ancient Egypt is closely linked up with the history of the whole of North-East Africa, embracing Ethiopia and other adjoining African countries.

An independent kingdom called Napata arose in Nubia, south of Egypt, in the 8th century B.C. in the period of the New Kingdom. Somewhat later its capital was moved further south to Meroë, under which name it existed until the year 350 A.D., when it was conquered by the Axumite Empire which expanded rapidly along the ancient trade route following the shore of the Red Sea. According to historical sources this empire's principal port, called Adulis, was situated on the African shore of the Red Sea. The Axumite Empire reached the zenith of its prosperity in the early centuries of our era. Its capital, Axum, was celebrated for its wealth and sumptuous palaces and temples. The people developed a unique alphabet.

Egypt's links with Ethiopia date back to remote antiquity. One of the Egyptian dynasties was of Ethiopian origin. There was lively trade between the two countries, but now and again it was cut short by war.

Phoenician colonies were planted along the coast of North Africa in antiquity. One of these colonies, Utica, was founded in the year 1101 B.C., while Carthage arose in the year 814 B.C. By the 5th century B.C. Carthage became a mighty king-

dom with trading posts and towns spreading in a chain along the entire North African coast. In its time Carthage was antique Rome's greatest rival. The two empires fought a bitter war for supremacy in the Mediterranean and the antique world as a whole. To this day the ruins of the Carthaginian towns impress one by their grandeur.

That same period witnessed the rise of two large Berber empires in North Africa. These were Numidia and Mauretania. Territorially, Numidia occupied the eastern part of present-day Algeria, while Mauretania occupied its western portion and part of modern Morocco. At the close of the 3rd century B.C. they were united into a single empire by Masinissa and successfully upheld their independence against the claims of Carthage. During the Jugurthine War in 111-106 B.C., the Roman legions inflicted a series of telling blows at the Berber kingdoms. Later they were conquered by Rome, which turned this part of Africa into one of her provinces.

Rome tried to spread her influence deep into the African continent through Tingad, Volubilis and other large trading centres of North Africa. Great numbers of pots, glass articles, lamps, coins and other relics of Roman trade show that in those distant times trade routes led towards the Sahara. One of them began in the territory of present-day Libya and ran towards a locality in the vicinity of Gao in modern Mali.

Archaeological finds indicate that there was contact between North Africa and the interior of

the continent as well. A large number of rock drawing depicting chariots have been found in the Sahara. These drawings are believed to mark roads which are now known as Chariot Ways, that closely follow the principal caravan routes between the Mediterranean and the frontiers of the Sudan.

#### **South of the Sahara**

Very little is known of the ancient history of the territory south of the Sahara. Archaeologists speak of the regions adjoining Lake Chad as seats of extremely ancient cultural traditions. Similarly interesting data have been brought to light by archaeologists near Zaria in Northern Nigeria. In the first millennium B.C. this area was inhabited by farming communities. In addition to tilling the soil the people had developed pottery making and learned to smelt iron and shape it into implements and weapons. The terra cotta sculptures were distinguished for their peculiar style.

The region between the Senegal and the Niger rivers was likewise the focus of early African culture and statehood. In the beginning of our era this region, crisscrossed by trade routes and inhabited by a people called Soninkas, witnessed the rise of a kingdom named Auker or Ghana. Ancient Ghana's capital was Kumbi-Sala, situated 205 miles north of present-day Bamako. The chief occupations were irrigated farming and herding.

Gold and salt were produced, and in antiquity Ghana was known as the Land of Gold. The gold-fields belonged to the king, who also levied a tribute on the caravan trade. He had unlimited power, but succession was governed by matriarchal laws: the son of the king's sister was the heir to the throne.

In Equatorial Africa, embracing the regions between the Great Lakes, the Congo, Katanga and Southern and Northern Rhodesia the roots of culture reach back into the distant past. Little is known of the ancient history of these areas. Numerous relics await close study by archaeologists. In the north-east of Malawi and in central Tanganyika there are mammoth man-made terraces and irrigation systems.

The ancient history of East Africa harbours many riddles. Unquestionably, the deciphering of the numerous archaeological relics will unveil many stirring facts about the ancient history of the peoples who inhabited this area. In the 2nd century A.D., Ptolemy of Alexandria gave a fairly detailed description of the African coast south of Somalia. This part of East Africa was called Azania.

The heart of Africa witnessed the formation and migration of the Bantu peoples more than three thousand years ago. The most ancient Bantu tribes took shape in the region of the Great Lakes in Equatorial Africa. Moving west, east and south they assimilated or drove out other tribes. Spreading throughout the whole of Africa south

of the Sahara, the Bantus settled a considerable part of the continent, particularly the south-eastern regions.

In remote times the peoples of East Africa had trade and cultural relations with the Axumite Empire and also with India, Indonesia and Ancient Greece.

In appearance, language and culture, the population of Madagascar has much in common with the peoples of South-East Asia, particularly with the Indonesians. It is believed that the nucleus of the Malagasy tribes sailed to the island across the Indian Ocean in the 10th or 11th century B.C. These people intermarried with the local population, thus laying the beginning for the formation of the modern Malagasy nation.

It is thus obvious that in remote times the economic and social development of the African peoples reached a relatively high level. These peoples contributed substantially to the treasure-store of human culture, creating civilisations that influenced human progress in the distant past.

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## Chapter Two

### AFRICA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

#### North and North-East Africa

The early medieval history of this part of Africa is closely bound up with that of the neighbouring Mediterranean countries. North Africa was invaded by nomad tribes and shaken by numerous slave uprisings. Mighty empires disintegrated, and slave-owning social relations declined, giving way to feudal relations.

About three thousand years ago Arab tribes began to penetrate into Africa from Asia. By the 7th century they overran Egypt (639-641 A. D.) and in the 8th century conquered the whole of North Africa.

This radically changed the ethnic composition and cultural development of the North African peoples. The Egyptians (Copts), Libyans (Berbers) and other peoples were Arabised in the period between the 7th and 11th centuries. In the mid-11th century the Arabisation of the local peoples was accelerated by the mass influx of Banu Khilal and Banu Sulaim tribes. The Arabs converted the local population to Islam, introducing their language and planting their culture. Arabic became

the language of the dominant religion, business correspondence, trade and education, gradually supplanting the local languages. That finally brought the Maghrib countries—Morocco, Algeria and Tunis (sometimes Libya is also included)—into the Arab world.

In the 7th and 8th centuries Arab penetration was directed towards the Kenya coast and a substantial portion of East Africa. Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu and other seaboard towns became Arab strongpoints, trade centres and ports for the export of slaves. Arab sultanates arose in East Africa. The biggest of these was Zanzibar.

East Sudan was overrun by the Arabs in the 13th century, and by the 15th century they moved to the region of Lake Chad. In East and West Sudan the Arabs were assimilated by a number of peoples, who adopted their language.

At first the African territories conquered by the Arabs were incorporated into the Baghdad Caliphate, but feudal dismemberment and wars soon introduced changes.

Morocco and Tunis broke away from the Baghdad Caliphate in the 9th century. The Fatimids formed an empire in Tunis in the 10th century, conquered Egypt in the year 969 A.D. and founded Cairo. Three feudal kingdoms emerged in North Africa in the 13th century. Their frontiers were close to those of present-day Algeria (Zaianid kingdom), Morocco (Marinid kingdom) and Tunis (Khafsid kingdom).

In Egypt a state ruled by Mameluke sultans finally established itself after a series of dynastic changes. Instituted by the Ayyubid dynasty, the Mamelukes were a body of troops recruited from slaves of Turkic, Georgian, Cherkess and Abkhasian origin. In 1250 the Mameluke leaders appointed one of their own number Sultan of Egypt. Under the Mamelukes Egypt was an independent state with a developed system of feudal agriculture, a highly organised bureaucratic apparatus and a large code of laws.

Early in the 16th century Egypt was conquered by the Turks, and somewhat later the Osman Empire seized Libya, Tunis and Algeria.

Egypt and North Africa (with the exception of Morocco) were under Turkish rule until the 18th century, but at the beginning of the 19th century, with the decline of the Osman Empire, Maghrib and Egypt virtually freed themselves from its rule. Unfortunately these countries failed to push ahead with independent development. They became the booty of colonial powers, which held up the free development of the peoples of North Africa.

Early in the Middle Ages the territory of the ancient Meroitic kingdom, situated south of Egypt, saw the rise of the Christian kingdoms of Murrurra, Nuba and Aloa. The ruins of the churches and monasteries built in that period are mute witnesses of the one-time bloom of Christianity in this area.



All the above-mentioned kingdoms were swept from the historical scene by the Arab invasion. Mukurra fell in the 13th century, while Aloa held out until the beginning of the 16th century.

The mass movement of Arab and other Moslem tribes across Nubia led, as we have already mentioned, to the Arabisation of the peoples inhabiting the Sudan. A series of feudal states (sultanates) came into existence. The most powerful of these were Sennar, Wadaia and Darfur.

Ethiopia inherited the ancient culture of the Axumite Empire. The medieval history of Ethiopia gives a picture of incessant struggle to strengthen the central authority and drive back Moslem invaders, particularly Egyptians and the Osman Turks. In the 16th century the Ethiopian rulers appealed to Portugal for assistance. The Portuguese helped Ethiopia to drive out the Turks, but later the people had to rise up in arms to free themselves from Portuguese guardianship. Ethiopia found herself isolated from the rest of the world. Centrifugal trends temporarily gained the upper hand in the country, which began to disintegrate into individual feudal principalities. Unity was re-established only in the middle of the 19th century. This unification of Ethiopia was a cardinal factor in repelling imperialist aggression in the period of Africa's colonial partition.

#### West Africa. The Mali and Songhai Empires

In the Middle Ages the development of the countries south of the Sahara, in West Africa, led to the establishment of large kingdoms with a fairly high cultural level. This area became the scene of turbulent events in medieval times.

In West Africa the peoples with the highest level of development formed their own national states long before the appearance of Europeans. The king was usually regarded as the owner of all the land. He kept part of it for himself, but most of it was nominally in the possession of his vassals.

Feudal relations developed in a unique manner. The community continued to play an important role, and survivals of clan organisation showed their vitality in social life and in the state system. Society was becoming stratified into classes but matriarchal practices remained in the inheritance of property and power, and the distinctions between the different social groups were not clear cut.

The most advanced regions of this part of Africa were West and Central Sudan. A large number of kingdoms sprang up in this area. They included Tekrur, Ghana, Walo, Baol, Sini, Salum, Jolof and Gao. The most important were Tekrur and Ghana.

Economically, Ghana flourished in the 7th-8th centuries. She had a prosperous trade with North

Africa, and the capital, Kumbi-Sale, was a large city. The kingdom's bloom was cut short by fearful events.

In the 11th century a Berber Empire was established on the territory of Mauretania by the Almoravides sect. In 1076 Ghana was invaded and ravaged. The country was reduced to a state of decline and many of the vassal principalities broke away.

The principality of Mali existed in West Sudan between the Niger and the Bakoy long before the 11th century. In the beginning it was small and independent of the kings of Ghana. Early in the 13th century, Musa Keita, one of the rulers of this principality, founded the town of Kangaba on the Niger somewhat above present-day Bamako.

In 1230, Soumangourou, a Sininka king, extended his power throughout almost the whole of the former kingdom of Ghana. However, his troops encountered fierce resistance in one of the southern principalities ruled by the Keita dynasty and were defeated in 1235 near Kirin.

The victory won by the Mandingo tribes led by their legendary hero Soundiata laid the beginning for the might and prosperity of the kingdom of Mali. Cotton growing and processing became widespread in the reign of Soundiata. The broken up kingdom of Ghana was replaced by the Mali Empire, which gradually extended its rule from the tropical forest zone to the Sahara and from the shores of the Atlantic to the Middle Niger.

Mali owed her prosperity to trade, primarily

in salt, the principal commodity carried by caravans across the Sahara. Her most prosperous period coincided with the bloom of the towns of Timbuktu and Djenne. Timbuktu was the crossroads of the camel caravan trade routes across the Sahara, and Djenne, situated far inland, was the central market for Sudanese and foreign goods. Mali reached the height of her power in the reign of Mansa Musa in the first half of the 14th century, and then followed a period of gradual decline.

Early in the 16th century she was overrun by warlike Tekrur tribes and in 1530-53 the entire country south of the Senegal River was laid waste by them. A bitter struggle had to be waged against the Songhai tribes. In 1591 the country was invaded by Moors. In 1630 the uprising of the Fulbe and Bambara tribes forced Mama Magan, the last of the Mali kings, to abandon his capital. Forty years later the country was conquered by warlike neighbours.

The Songhai Empire was another West Sudanese state that came into prominence in the Middle Ages. With its domain embracing the territory somewhat east of ancient Ghana and Mali, this empire and its capital, Gao, were vassals of Mali, but gradually it superseded the latter as the supreme political power in West Sudan.

In the reign of the emperor Mohamed (1493-1528) the Songhai Empire reached the apex of its power, its possessions stretching from the Senegal to the upper reaches of the Black, the White and



the Red Volta. This empire was one of the greatest feudal states in the Sudan. The library at Sankor, the Moslem University, had one of the world's largest collections of Arab manuscripts.

At the close of the 16th century, when it was invaded by the Sultan of Morocco, this empire disintegrated into separate principalities.

The invaders sacked and destroyed Timbuktu, Djenne and Gao, but incessant uprisings prevented them from gaining a foothold in the country. Cut off from their own country, the invading hosts were finally dispersed, but the Songhai Empire never recovered from this incursion.

In Northern Nigeria, south of the Niger River, the Hausa people founded Kano, Katsina, Zamfara, Daura, Fano and other city-states. With their developed crafts and thriving trade, these cities were made vassals time and again by the more powerful neighbouring kingdoms. Much of the history of the Hausa cities remains to be studied. They showed remarkable vitality right until the Fulah invasion in the 19th century.

Feudal agrarian states sprang up in the region of Lake Chad. One of them was the kingdom of Kanem, which was succeeded by Bornu at the close of the 14th century. Another seat of medieval culture is linked up with the vanished kingdom of Sao. Bagirmi, another of the Lake Chad states, came into being in the 16th century. The Wagadugu kingdom was set up by the Mosi south of Bornu in the basin of the Upper Volta early in the 2nd millennium. It was divided into nine

provinces, each of which was ruled by a governor appointed by the king. The governors annually came to the capital city of Wagadugu with gifts for the king.

The kingdoms of Bano, Banda, Sumai and Hondja developed in the region of the Black Volta in the 14th-15th centuries on the basis of trade in gold and kola nuts.

In the 10th century the Fulahs came into prominence in West Africa. They extended their domains in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries, setting up many states.

#### **The Guinea Coast and Central Africa**

Economically, the region inhabited by the Yoruba was the most highly developed along the Guinea coast. The first states in this area date from the 11th century. The Yoruba civilisation reached the height of its power in the 13th century. Ifa, Oyo and other Yoruba cities had populations of over 50,000. The kingdom of Benin grew in power in the 14th-17th centuries. The art of bronze casting reached a high level of development. The kingdom's wealth was based at first on a thriving trade with the northern towns and tribes and then on the slave-trade with Europeans.

Other states, not as large as the Yoruba kingdom, arose on the Guinea coast. The best known of these were Ardra, Wida, Adjacha and Abomey (which subsequently became the capital of Daho-

meys). In the period when slaves were taken from this area, these kingdoms were the main slave markets.

The Ashanti kingdom rapidly rose to power on the Guinea coast at the close of the 17th century. Towards the beginning of the 19th century it became one of the most powerful states in this area. Early in the 18th century Abomey became the kingdom of Dahomey.

The Katanga Plateau likewise witnessed the rise of highly organised states. The kingdom of Luba emerged in the 15th century. The Baluba formed the bulk of the population, but the Basonga, who today inhabit the eastern part of Kasai Province in the Congo, were the ruling stratum. Subsequently the Baluba overthrew the Basonga and established their own state. This development is linked up with the kingdom of Lunda, which was established at the sources of the Kwanza, the Kwango, the Kasai and the Zambezi. These large states were bordered by numerous petty kingdoms and principalities.

The largest was the kingdom of the Congo, which was a powerful state already in the 15th century. In 1491 King Nzinga Ntinu adopted Christianity and the name of Don Juan. His example was followed by the provincial rulers, who hoped that the Portuguese would help them to become independent of the king.

In *The Golden Age of West African Civilisation* R.E.G. Armattoe writes: "Early in the 16th century it (the medieval African kingdom of the

Congo) became a Christian land, whose wealth and pomp dazzled all Christendom. Its emperors and courtiers vied in their splendour with the grandees of Spain and Portugal and its native prelates were ordained by Rome. Never again will an African kingdom exhibit so much refinement and so much grace. We have it on the authority of the ancient chroniclers that in their deportment and attire, in their manners and in their conversation, they had nothing to learn from the Illuminati of Europe."

In the 16th century the Congo was subjected to devastating raids by the Yaga, who inhabited the equatorial jungles. The Congolese rulers asked the Portuguese for assistance. The Yaga were defeated in 1570, but the Portuguese remained in the country as conquerors. They were finally expelled by a popular movement headed by Mbula Matadi.

The kingdom of Angola came into being in the basin of the Kwango River and its tributaries some time around the 14th century. At first it was a vassal of the Congo, but in the 16th century it became an independent early feudal state. The developing feudal relations in Angola were closely connected with tribal institutions. Power, titles and property were inherited under matriarchal laws. In 1578 the Portuguese built the town of San Paulo di Luanda, which became a springboard for their conquests and a large centre of the slave trade. After they had crushed a series of uprisings the Portuguese established themselves in most of

Angola. A major uprising flared up early in the 17th century. It was led by Queen Anna Ginga Mbanzi N'Gola, the last ruler of independent Angola. Declaring war on the Portuguese, she ruled the country from 1625 to 1655. Her warriors successfully fought the Portuguese and the warlike Yaga tribes. The Portuguese finally subjugated Angola only in the 18th century. In the course of several centuries Angola was the chief base of the Portuguese slave trade. Slaves were sold primarily in Brazil.

The Great Lakes area in Africa has been inhabited by man since remote times. One of the best known states of this area was the kingdom of Kitara. The size of the remains of structures and of the irrigation canals indicate that it had a large population. Several other kingdoms—Kiziba, Karagwe, Busingo, Ruanda and Urundi—took shape around Kitara towards the close of the 16th century.

#### **East and South Africa**

The writings of medieval Arab travellers and historians abundantly show that there were organised states in East Africa, including the territory of present-day Kenya as early as the 9th-10th centuries. Abul Hassan Ali Masudi, the Arab traveller who visited the Kenya coast in the middle of the 10th century, wrote that the people had their own king and a capital city, that their

weapons were made of iron and that they hunted elephants with the purpose of selling the precious tusks in other countries.

Since time immemorial the people of Kenya have traded with the Egyptians, Greeks, Indians, Chinese, Persians and Arabs, whose merchant ships sailed to East Africa.

Long before European colonisation, many of the Kenya tribes had developed the smelting of iron, the manufacture of iron implements and weapons, the production of ornaments made from metals, ivory and shells, the making of pottery, wickerwork, tanning and other crafts. Some of the tribes were relatively highly skilled farmers (Kikuyu) and livestock-breeders (Masai). There was a thriving trade between the tribes.

Arab penetration of the Kenya coast, as of a considerable part of East Africa, began in the 7th-8th centuries. They built Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu, Pate and other towns, using them as strongholds for their influence and also as ports for trade and the export of slaves. A number of Arab states—sultanates—were formed in East Africa, the largest being Zanzibar, which embraced the Kenya coast.

In 1498 the ships of Vasco da Gama appeared at Mombasa, ushering in the beginning of Portuguese expansion in East Africa. The Portuguese admiral gave the towns along the coast the alternative of swearing allegiance to the Portuguese crown, or of perishing in flames. Francisco de Almeida, who sailed to Africa after Vasco da

Gama, reduced the thriving East African towns of Mombasa and Kilwa to ashes. In a letter to the ruler of Malindi, the ruler of Mombasa described the desolation caused by the Portuguese invasion. Not a single person was left in the town. Everybody—men, women, old folk and children—who did not escape, was slain. At the close of the 16th century the Portuguese conquered most of the East African sultanates and established themselves on the Kenya coast. Fort Jesus, which they built in 1593, and subsequently used as a prison by the British colonialists, towers in Mombasa to this day as a sombre reminder of the Portuguese invaders.

Early in the 18th century the Portuguese were driven out of East Africa; they retained their position only in Mozambique. However, other colonialists—German and British—appeared in Kenya in the mid-19th century. The struggle between them ended at the close of the century in favour of the latter. The imposing ruins of Zimbabwe in Southern Rhodesia show that there was an ancient civilised kingdom in South-East Africa. Archaeological data confirm that the local Manomotapa kingdom had extensive trade relations with the Arabian Peninsula and even with South-East Asia. In the 16th century, torn by internal strife, the Manomotapa kingdom entered a period of decline. At the close of the 17th century it was laid waste by the warlike Rozwi tribes.

On Madagascar the powerful Imerina kingdom was formed in about the 16th century. Agriculture

flourished and handicrafts and trade were promoted. Feudal dismemberment and internecine wars disorganised the kingdom at the close of the 17th century. In the history of Madagascar this is known as a period of "war of one home against another". A united Malagasy state was established on Madagascar only towards the mid-19th century.

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In the Middle Ages, as elsewhere in the world, human progress proceeded unevenly in Africa, but as a whole it did not lag behind the development of the rest of mankind. Many kingdoms emerged and there were changes in the economy.

But this natural development of the African peoples was stopped by the invasion of European conquerors, by the establishment of colonies and by colonial exploitation.

Colonial pillage, conquest and exploitation expedited the development of capitalism in Europe.

Portugal and Spain were the first powers to gain possession of colonies. The voyages of Christopher Columbus in the Atlantic (1492) and of Vasco da Gama round Africa to India (1497-99) opened up unprecedented possibilities for the enrichment of the bourgeoisie and gave a powerful impetus to trade, navigation and industry. The struggle for supremacy on the seas and the seizure of colonies was joined by Holland, Britain, France and other powers. Over a long period they were

locked in fierce combat for colonial domination. Colonial empires and systems were created and repeatedly recarved.

### The Slave Trade

World trade was furthered by the great geographical discoveries. The market for European goods continuously expanded. European industrial goods were exchanged for sugar, cotton, spices, tobacco, precious metals and other commodities. The colonial conquests and the colonial system itself helped to increase the volume of trade and navigation. They ensured a market for the new industries in the European countries. The industrial might of the capitalist countries grew on the basis of colonial exploitation. Centuries of colonial exploitation by Britain, for example, enabled her to become the "workshop of the world."

In order to expand, industrial capitalism required the concentration of large sums of money in the hands of a few people and also the availability of huge numbers of "free" workers, i.e., people with no means of existence. A substantial role in this initial accumulation, that was so important for the birth of modern capitalism, was played by colonial plunder and the enslavement of the peoples of Africa and other countries.

"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in

mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production."\*

The extermination of the indigenous population of many regions of America and the development of large plantations in Spain's American colonies and also in Brazil imperatively demanded the importation of slave labour. Huge numbers of slaves were transported from Africa to America. A source of enormous wealth, the slave trade became a component of the initial accumulation of capital and the greatest calamity for the peoples of Africa. The African continent thus became a victim of emerging capitalism.

The close of the Middle Ages in Europe coincided with the swelling trade in African slaves. In Europe, capitalist relations began to develop, calling forth a mighty upsurge of the productive forces, the formation of nations and the rise of national bourgeois states. On the other hand, as a result of the slave trade, which went on for more than four centuries, Africa's development was reversed. The slave trade signified more than the export of slaves. The hunt for slaves gave rise to endless wars; tribal chiefs strove to capture people belonging to other tribes, village attacked village, neighbour warred against neighbour. This

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\* Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, p. 751.



situation excluded all possibility for the merging of tribes into nations and the formation of large centralised states.

Portugal was the first European country to begin a slave trade in Africa. The first cargo of slaves and gold was brought to Lisbon in 1441.\* Until 1580 the Portuguese held a monopoly in this dirty business. Then other European powers, fighting for supremacy on the sea, turned their attention to Africa. Britain, Holland, France, Spain, Denmark and, later, the United States of America became deeply involved in the disgraceful slave trade.

A chain of trade centres and strongholds for the collection and export of captives stretched along the entire western coast of Africa from Senegal to Angola. Gradually increasing, the slave trade reached its apex at the close of the 18th century when nearly 100,000 African slaves were transported to America annually.\*\* The principal slave markets were the Gulf of Guinea and West, East and Tropical Africa, while the Bight of Benin and the seaboard sections of the Gold Coast, the Congo, Angola and certain other regions were where slaves were exported.

The slave traders treated slaves with monstrous cruelty. They were chained with iron

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\* W. E. B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa*, New York, 1947, p. 97.

\*\* Jean Suret-Canale, *Afrique Noire Occidentale et Centrale*, Paris, 1961.

collars. The holds of slavers were packed tighter than sardine barrels. Overcrowding, emaciation, the hardships of the voyage, sickness and other scourges struck down thousands of slaves. The sick and dying were thrown to the sharks. Despite the heavy toll of life, the slave traders amassed huge fortunes. They paid 70-200 francs for a slave in Africa and sold him for ten or more times that price in America. Fabulous wealth was accumulated through robbery and the merciless exploitation of millions of Africans.

Slaves toiled on cotton and sugar plantations, in mines and quarries and at factories and mills. Millions of them were used on the most arduous work in Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal and the United States of America.

The archives of Liverpool tell us that the slave traffic from Africa acquired gigantic proportions. Increasing numbers of slavers plied the lanes between the ports of Europe, Asia and Africa. In the period from 1783 to 1793 no less than 900 flotillas were sent to Africa for slaves. During that decade more than 300,000 slaves were transported from Africa in ships flying European flags. The receipts from the sale of these slaves amounted to £15,000,000, while the clear profit added up to £12,000,000. Marx pointed out that Liverpool owed its affluence to the slave trade.

It is not easy to give a clear picture of the appalling devastation caused by this traffic. The number of slaves exported from Africa cannot be

determined by the size of the present coloured population in America. The Africans forcibly taken to America could not ensure a normal birth rate. The exhausting labour, the short rations, the unsanitary conditions of life and the brutality of the slave traders gave rise to a high death rate. The extinction of the slave population was prevented solely by constant replenishment.

Other victims of the slave trade must be added to the number of slaves transported to America. Account must be taken of the Africans killed during the countless raids and wars occasioned by the hunt for slaves, of the number of captives who died on the way from the depths of the continent to the coast and also of the number who died during the frightful voyages across the sea. It has been estimated that for every slave brought to America, five Africans died in Africa herself or on the highseas. The result of all this was that Africa lost a large part of her able-bodied population. Great numbers of Africans perished in the jungles and swamps, where they sought refuge from slave traders.

The total number of Africans who suffered from the slave trade (including the slaves sold in the East) has been assessed at 100-150 million. For a long time this prevented the population of Africa from increasing, while in other continents there was a sizeable increment.

The slave trade inflicted incalculable harm on Africa's development. One African nation was set

on another and hostility and internecine wars were instigated between them.

In exchange for slaves, traders brought Africa guns, gunpowder, alcohol, cheap textiles and ornaments. As a rule, European and American traders did not burden themselves with the task of hunting for slaves. Slaves were acquired from the Africans themselves. This was much more lucrative and entailed less risk. Drawing tribal chiefs and the rulers of some African countries, particularly in the coastal areas, into the slave traffic, the slave traders corrupted the ruling clique of African society.

In Africa the greatest profits were derived not from productive labour but from predatory wars and campaigns, not from creative endeavour but from the destruction of human lives and material values. Raids with the purpose of capturing slaves were a hazardous undertaking. Frequently, the hunters were made captive themselves and found themselves sent to a slave market in chains.

The continual alarm and fear, the incessant raids, the destruction of villages and towns, the disappearance of millions of people and the disruption of normal economic activity paralysed the development of the African countries and peoples for hundreds of years.

The dreadful consequence of the slave trade was that Africa's economy and culture declined. It held up the national consolidation of the African peoples, prevented the rise of large states south

of the Sahara and crippled the productive forces of the entire continent. In the long run, it was the reason for Africa's age-old political dismemberment and economic backwardness.

The slave trade greatly weakened Africa and in the period of colonial partition substantially helped the imperialist powers to carve up the continent and turn it into a downtrodden colony of imperialism.

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### Chapter Three

## IMPERIALISM AND THE TERRITORIAL PARTITION OF AFRICA

### Colonial Policy Under Imperialism

Colonies and colonial policies existed long before the rise of imperialism. But there is a palpable difference between the colonial policy of past ages and the colonial policy of the period of imperialism.

Colonial expansion was sharply intensified during the latter half of the 19th century and became especially acute at the turn of the 20th century. The direct reason for this was that pre-monopoly capitalism developed into imperialism. Monopoly domination in the economy of capitalist countries leads to a savage struggle for colonial markets and for sources of raw materials. Analysing the colonial policy of imperialism in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin wrote:

"The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole



world, the more desperate the struggle for the acquisition of colonies.”\*

To the old pre-monopolist motives for the colonial policy, imperialism added the struggle not only for existence but also for sources of raw material, for the export of capital with the purpose of obtaining profits, for spheres of influence and for territory as such. Imperialism attached importance not only to known sources of raw material but also to all supposed sources. Scientific and technological progress provided the means of developing and utilising raw materials and mineral wealth that formerly could not be used. “Finance capital,” Lenin wrote, “...in general strives to seize the largest possible amount of land of all kinds in all places and by every means, taking into account potential sources of raw materials and fearing to be left behind in the fierce struggle for the last remnants of independent territory, or for the repartition of those territories that have been already divided.”\*\*

The transition itself of pre-monopoly capitalism to monopoly capitalism, to imperialism, is closely linked up with a heightening of the struggle between the major capitalist powers for the territorial partition of the world.

Until 1876 only about ten per cent of Africa “belonged” to the European powers. Penetration inland was not general.

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 260.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 262.

The major imperialist powers began the partition of the world in the 1870s and completed it at the turn of the 20th century. In just the period 1884-1900 Britain acquired “3,700,000 square miles of territory with 57,000,000 inhabitants; France, 3,600,000 square miles with 36,500,000; Germany, 1,000,000 square miles with 14,700,000; Belgium, 900,000 square miles with 30,000,000; Portugal, 800,000 square miles with 9,000,000 inhabitants”.\*

In the late 19th century colonial expansion proceeded chiefly in Africa. The struggle for Africa’s partition became one of the key factors of the West European powers’ foreign policy. The balance of power and the potentialities of the rival imperialist countries affected the results of this partition.

#### **Africa on the Eve of Partition**

The colonial partition of Africa was preceded by exploration undertaken chiefly in the 19th century, when the geographical picture of the continent’s interior regions was incomplete. Nobody knew where the sources of the large rivers were, what the outline of the lakes was like or the direction and features of the mountain ranges.

Exploration was started first in West Sudan, where most of the early 19th century expeditions

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\* *Ibid.*, pp. 255-56.

were sent. Then followed the exploration of the basins of the Niger, the Congo, the Nile and the Zambezi.

The region between the Niger and Lake Chad was investigated in detail by the German Heinrich Barth. In 1851-55 he journeyed across West Sudan in various directions, covering a distance of 12,000 miles. Some twenty expeditions were sent to Africa in the first half of the 19th century. In the decade 1851-60 their number increased to 27, in 1861-70 to 29, in 1871-80 to 47 and in 1881-90 to 84. Rivers, lakes and mountain systems were marked on the map.

Missionary activity and an expanding trade in manufactured goods on the basis on non-equivalent exchange were other forms of foreign penetration prior to Africa's partition. Ivory and slaves likewise attracted foreign penetration. The hunt for slaves continued in Africa even after 1815, when the slave trade was outlawed. This traffic was controlled by Arab and foreign traders. "The coming of American, British, French, German and Portuguese traders in the middle of the 19th century furnished the artillery for the worst period in this ivory-slave trade.... At its height 30,000 slaves were exported annually through Zanzibar, leaving more than 100,000 who had died on the way to the sea."\* In the period 1808-60 alone, nearly half a million slaves were smug-

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\* W. E. B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa*, p. 97.

gled out of Africa and taken to the United States of America.

It must be noted that many thousands of Africans perished together with the extermination of hundreds of thousands of elephants. Out of every five porters carrying ivory only one reached the coast alive, and there he was usually sold into slavery. That doubled the profits of the traders.

The ivory trade drew many explorers to Central Africa, where they usually followed the ivory routes. Richard Francis Burton, David Livingstone, Henry M. Stanley, Verney Lovett Cameron and other celebrated explorers followed in the footsteps of the ivory traders.

When partition was started, Africa found herself sapped of her strength. In those years the African peoples were unable to resist the colonialists effectively. Economic and political backwardness caused further discord between the Africans themselves. There was no solidarity among them. Colonialism was quick to take advantage of the passiveness of some nations and the internecine strife between others. What resistance was offered was soon overcome. There was never a united front of all Africans.

In the new period, slavery became outdated, but there was the promise of incalculable mineral wealth. This wealth as well as cheap labour and the possibility of turning Africa into a market for manufactured goods was what enticed the colonialists. The imperialist powers regarded Africa as an integral part of their "big policy".

## **British Colonial Empire in Africa**

Britain greatly stepped up her colonial expansion in Africa in the second half of the 19th century. The British had their eye on creating an unbroken chain of possessions stretching from Egypt to South Africa.

Egypt was given a prominent place in this plan. With the opening of the Suez Canal the shortest route to the East passed through the Red Sea, making the canal and the whole of North-East Africa strategically important.

At first, jointly with France, Britain acquired financial control over Egypt. This started a wave of protest, which resulted in an uprising directed against foreign interference. In 1882 the British imperialists declared war on Egypt with the purpose of turning that country into a colony. The Egyptian coast was blockaded and troops were landed in Alexandria. With the aid of traitors, British troops defeated the units defending Cairo. The leaders of the Egyptian patriots were arrested and many of them were executed. Punitive expeditions were sent to pacify the country, and in the course of a few years Egypt was, to all intents and purposes, turned into a British colony.

With Egypt in their grip, the imperialists deliberately held up her economic development. The area under grain and other crops was reduced to make room for cotton, which began to be grown for export. At the same time, Egypt, which grew

the best cotton in the world, was deprived of the possibility of building her own textile industry. The colonialists did not let Egypt utilise her hydropower resources. The whole of Egyptian industry began to stagnate.

Simultaneously with their expansion in Egypt, the British pushed into East Sudan. But their first attempts failed in the face of the federation of tribes and principalities, which united under Mohammad Achmad Mahdi to defend their independence. This put a temporary stop to British expansion in this area. However, the conquest of the Sudan was accomplished several years later.

The British provoked a war between the Sudan and Ethiopia in 1885-89. In 1898 a large British force led by Lord Kitchener started decisive operations. Machine-guns, which had just been invented, were used against the Sudanese troops. In the battle of Omdurman nearly 20,000 Sudanese were killed by machine-gun fire. The Sudanese army was routed and the country's capital was sacked. East Sudan lost her independence only in 1900 when the last remnants of the Sudanese insurgents were defeated.

Before West Africa was carved up, Britain had relatively small possessions there. They were small territories in the mouth of the Gambia, in Sierra Leone, on the Gold Coast and in Nigeria.

In West Africa the invaders were fiercely resisted by the Ashanti kingdom. The Ashanti people displayed staunchness and military prowess.

Of the seven wars against the Ashantis the British lost five—in 1805, 1811, 1814, 1824-31 and 1863. In the sixth war (1873-74) the Ashantis temporarily lost their capital, Kumasi, but not their independence. Their resistance was finally broken in the seventh war, for which the British had made careful preparations. In 1901 the Ashanti kingdom was incorporated into the British Gold Coast colony.

The British began their "acquisition" of Nigeria, their most densely populated colony in Africa, with the bombardment and capture of Lagos in 1851 and of Benin in 1897. In 1885 Britain turned the entire coast from Lagos to Rio del Rey and also the Niger valley into a trust territory. Treaties were signed with the larger sultanates in North Nigeria. This gave Britain one of her biggest colonies in Africa. The local sultans retained their privileges but became officials of the British colonial administration. The so-called system of indirect rule was based on compromises of this kind.

In East Africa the British obtained concessions from the Zanzibar sultans to rule their possessions on the Kenya coast. Towards the close of 1886 the activity of British and German colonial agents in East Africa brought about such an overlapping of German and British "possessions" that there was danger of a serious clash between the two imperialist powers. However, Germany's international position was not too secure in that period and to avoid exacerbating relations with Britain

she agreed to sit down to talks in order to demarcate the frontiers of British and German possessions in East Africa and to specify spheres of influence. These talks ended with the signing of an agreement in November 1886, under which the territory of present-day Tanganyika was recognised as a sphere of German influence while most of modern Kenya became a British colony.

By 1890 the Imperial British East Africa Company had signed a series of treaties with tribal chiefs for the territory of Kenya and assumed full control over that vast area. The sultan of Zanzibar, acting under pressure and fearing for his throne, gave the company a concession over his possessions on the Kenya coast, thus placing this area within the British sphere of influence. The company moved its headquarters to Mombasa, the largest port in Kenya, from where George Sutherland Mackenzie, the company's managing director, began the territory's "development". A similar concession was obtained by Germany from the sultan in her sphere of influence.

The final demarcation and legal consolidation of British and German East African colonies took place in 1890 with the signing of an agreement on the partition of East Africa. This agreement, which summed up almost a decade of struggle between two imperialist vultures, is known as the Heligoland Treaty. Germany obtained control of the territory of present-day Tanganyika and, as compensation for relinquishing other claims in East Africa, the Island of Heligoland in the North

Sea. Britain consolidated her hold on Kenya, Uganda and Zanzibar. When Lenin worked on *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, he made the following brief note about the Heligoland Treaty in his *Notebooks on Imperialism*: "1890: Treaty between Britain and Germany. (Heligoland was exchanged for part of Africa)"\*.

East Africa was thus carved up by the imperialists, with Britain seizing Kenya as her prize. The colonial frontiers ruthlessly chopped up tribes and kindred ethnical groups. Kenya was included in the system of imperialist exploitation and political enslavement by the British colonial empire in Africa.

The land was declared crown property. The British governor could distribute, rent or otherwise alienate crown land for any purposes on whatever terms he considered necessary. In 1902 a law was passed under which Europeans were allowed to "acquire" from the native population plots of land not exceeding 1,300 acres. These "acquisitions" were, of course, made under favourable terms. At first land was rented for a period of up to 99 years, but a law passed in 1915 extended that period to 999 years. In some cases the colonial authorities permitted the "sale" of plots of land exceeding 1,300 acres. The British colonialists encouraged the settlement of Kenya by Europeans, who developed the most fertile land in Central Kenya (White Plateau). Africans

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 39, p. 676.

were driven to barren areas, deprived of political rights and subjected to racial discrimination. A pass system was introduced and for many years native peasants were not permitted to grow profitable export crops such as coffee, tea and pyrethrum. A system of taxes and labour hire was introduced to compel Africans to work for the colonialists.

The dark night of colonialism descended upon the people of Kenya. For many years they were oppressed, exploited and robbed, and the brutal repressions took a toll of countless lives. At the same time, they were years of heroic struggle for freedom and national independence.

Britain got the better of her rivals—Germany and Portugal—and in 1890 established herself in Nyasaland and in 1894 in Uganda.

South Africa early became the target of European colonisation. Its convenient geographical position and favourable climate prompted the Dutch to establish a small colony as far back as 1652. Britain took advantage of Holland's occupation by the French during the Napoleonic wars and seized the Dutch Cape Colony in 1806. The Boers, descendants of the first Dutch settlers, moved to the territory between the Vaal and Orange rivers, and in 1852-54 formed the Transvaal and Orange republics.

Both the Boer and British penetration were resisted by the Africans. The African tribes in this area waged a long struggle against the Boers and then the British. In the half century between



1811 and 1858 the British fought six predatory wars (known as the Kaffir wars) against the Xosa tribes. The sixth of these wars most strikingly illustrates the situation that obtained at the time. The British marauders resorted to provocations in order to seize the territory held by the Xosa. In 1856, when the Xosa people were greatly weakened by the loss of huge numbers of cattle "prophets" appeared among them who foretold that in a year's time mighty chiefs of bygone days would rise from the dead and bring with them numerous herds that would be free of disease. But to allow this resurrection to take place, the "prophets" said, the people had to destroy their remaining cattle and also their entire harvest. The Xosa were tired of their hardships and yielded to this provocation with the result that more than 25,000 people perished in the ensuing famine, nearly 100,000 left their land and trekked eastward, while 40,000 moved to Cape Colony where they became semi-slaves of the British colonialists. In 1858, during this bitter time for the Xosa, the British started the sixth Kaffir war, attacking the Xosa moving to the east and driving them still farther to the north-east. Thousands of Bushmen and Hottentots were massacred and this made the southern Bantu tribes unite. An example of this unity was the Zulu Confederation, which staunchly resisted the invaders. The Anglo-Boer-Zulu wars were extremely savage. Britain's main objectives in this war were to exterminate the Zulus and seize their land.

Doing their utmost to utilise and fan the struggle between the Boers and the Bantu and sometimes perfidiously playing the role of champion of the local population, the British perseveringly developed their expansion deep into the continent. In 1885 they established themselves in Bechuanaland. The seizure of land from the indigenous population brought about numerous uprisings. The great uprisings of the Matabele and the Mashona in 1893 and 1896-97 were crushed by the British with ferocious brutality. The British provoked wars between the various tribes, thus disuniting and weakening them and then crushing their resistance.

The discovery of rich diamond fields and then gold in the territory controlled by the Boers gave the imperialists further incitement to proceed with their predatory aims. Britain directed her main military effort towards subjugating the Boers, who were her chief rivals in South Africa. She started military operations in 1894. The Boers resisted fiercely and won a series of victories. But while struggling for their own independence they strove to preserve their exploitation of the local population. Their resistance was finally broken in 1902 by the vastly superior forces of the British Empire. The Boer republics became British colonies and on the eve of the First World War they were incorporated in the Union of South Africa.

In South Africa, as an outcome of the energetic activity of representatives of British finance

capital headed by Cecil Rhodes, Britain seized extensive territories that became known as Northern and Southern Rhodesia. British imperialism put its hands on enormous diamond and gold fields and fertile land. Large numbers of British settlers were sent to consolidate these territories.

In the period of colonial plunder, the greatest popularity was enjoyed among the ruling circles of Britain by people like Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain "who openly advocated imperialism and applied the imperialist policy in the most cynical manner!"\*

Cecil Rhodes, who was a big businessman and imperialist, said to his friend Stead "colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists."\*\*

#### **French Colonial Expansion in Africa**

In Africa the north coast was the first territory to attract European colonisation. France seized the coastal strip of Algeria as early as 1830. But her further expansion deep into that country was

slow because of the stern resistance put up by the Algerian people.

The heroic struggle of the Algerians under Abd-el-Kader in 1832-47 contributed one of the most glorious pages in the history of the effort made by the peoples of Africa to stem the tide of foreign invasion. Abd-el-Kader implemented a series of administrative reforms and organised an efficient defensive system. The French repeatedly found themselves compelled to sign peace treaties with him. In 1847, by a sustained effort, they defeated the Algerian leader, but even after resistance was put down the country was shaken by uprisings time and again. Right until 1871 Algeria was administered through the army.

Land was expropriated from the Algerians and turned over to the French settlers. The privileged upper crust of the settlers seized huge tracts of the most fertile land. These people tied their fortunes up with colonialism and actively championed further colonial expansion.

The next victim after Algeria was Tunisia. Three French divisions crossed from Algeria into Tunisia in 1881. The bey of Tunisia was offered a treaty under which his country would be declared a French protectorate. When he learned that the French were negotiating with a local feudal lord, who had his eye on the throne, the bey accepted the French ultimatum unconditionally, becoming a puppet ruler. All authority was concentrated in the hands of the French resident-general, who occupied the post of prime minister of Tunisia

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 256.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 257.

and had the power to veto any of the bey's decisions. The officer commanding French troops in Tunisia was appointed Minister of War.

In the struggle to gain possession of Tunisia, France received the support of Britain against Italy, which also had her eye on the country.

Morocco remained independent for a relatively long time. Most of the country became a French protectorate only in 1912. North Morocco was seized by Spain. The rivalry between the imperialist powers for possession of Morocco led to each of them preventing the other from gaining control over that country. This struggle became particularly acute between France and Germany.

Germany wanted Morocco to become her principal military base on the Atlantic and Mediterranean coast of Africa, on the crossroads of the great sea routes. There were several special conferences to discuss the "Moroccan question". On two occasions Moroccan crises brought the imperialist powers to the brink of war. In the end, with British support, France won the day. Germany had to agree on a compromise. She recognised the French protectorate over Morocco in return for compensation from France in the Congo.

This was yet another imperialist deal at the expense of Africa. Seeking to expedite her occupation of Morocco, France sent 50,000 troops into the country. But the people fought the invaders, with the result that this predatory war dragged out for two decades. French generals called Morocco a "second front".

British colonial expansion in Africa pursued the goal of creating a solid chain of possessions stretching from Alexandria in the north to the Cape of Good Hope in the south, while French plans envisaged colonies extending from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east. Senegal, acquired by the French as far back as the 17th century, served as their main springboard for expansion south of the Sahara. Fort Medina, built 600 miles from the seacoast on a plot of land purchased from the local sultan, became the advanced post of colonial expansion into West Sudan.

Advancing slowly, building strongpoints and concluding treaties with local rulers to allow themselves respites, the French doggedly seized new territories. These seizures were heroically resisted by the Wolof, Malinka, Tukuler and other tribes.

When the imperialist invasion was launched, West Africa was in a state of dismemberment. There were several kingdoms between the Senegal and the Niger. One of them, with its capital at Segou, united the Tukuler, Banman and other tribes and was ruled by Ahmadu, successor of Omar al-Haji, who halted the French advance in the mid-19th century. Farther south was another kingdom with its capital at Bissandugu. It was ruled by Samory, son of an itinerant trader. Samory's kingdom was united by a community of ethnic interests. Most of the population belonged to the Mandingo group. Still farther south was the Kayor



kingdom, where the population consisted chiefly of the Wolofs. There were several Mohammedan emirates in the northern part of present-day Northern Nigeria, and also a number of kingdoms in the territory adjoining Lake Chad.

In 1883 the French reached Bamako, from where they launched military operations against the large kingdoms ruled by Samory and Ahmadu. The very first clashes showed that the struggle would be a long one. Samory was the stronger of the two, and in 1887, aiming to isolate the two kingdoms from each other, France forced Ahmadu to sign a special agreement which precluded the setting up of a united front.

The fact that Samory could move his people to new territory made the struggle against him all the more difficult. He could do this quite easily because there were no strong neighbours. His military forces were divided into three parts: one had the task of repelling the French, the second developed new territory and the third ensured the evacuation of the people and their belongings. These tactics enabled Samory to fight a large French army for nearly ten years.

In 1890 France began the conquest of the whole of West Sudan. Expeditionary forces moved along the Niger, setting up fortified posts along the entire route. To facilitate this expansion, the colonialists decided to build a railway linking up the Atlantic coast of Senegal with the interior of the country. In 1893 they captured Djenne and Tim-

buktu, after which they seized control of the whole country.

West Sudan was conquered by the most brutal methods: old people, women and children were not spared. Here is how a witness describes the invasion: "The siege was followed by an assault. The order to loot the town was given. Everybody was either taken captive or killed. Prisoners were herded together. The colonel began to distribute the booty. At first he jotted something down in his notebook, and then refused to go on with it, saying: 'Share it out yourselves.' While the sharing went on there were quarrels and fights.

"On the way back the troops marched 25 miles a day, dragging their prisoners after them. Children and everybody else who dropped with fatigue were clubbed to death with the butts of rifles or bayoneted....

"The roadside was strewn with corpses. One woman suddenly squatted. She was pregnant. She was prodded on with rifle butts and gave birth on her feet. She bit through the umbilical cord and threw the child away from her without so much as a backward glance....

"The Africans mobilised en route to carry sacks of millet went without food for five days. Those that took even as little as a handful of millet from a sack were given fifty lashes with a whip...."

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\* Jean Suret-Canale, *Afrique Noire Occidentale et Centrale*, p. 241.

In 1890-93 the French conquered Ahmadu's kingdom in a lightning campaign, after which they turned their attention to Samory, winning a decisive victory at the town of Kong in 1898. Samory was exiled to Gabon.

In 1900 the French seized the entire region around Lake Chad, conducting this campaign in a barbarous fashion. An eye-witness account says: "...There were gutted villages and human bones wherever one looked... human remains, which were being devoured by enormous, gaunt dogs, were strewn about the ground."\* The half-century-long resistance put up by the population of West and Central Sudan was temporarily broken.

In some places fighting continued for a number of years. Clashes with the Tuaregs, for example, flared up periodically right until almost the eve of the First World War.

The French advanced farther east, reaching Fashoda (Kodok) in the Nile valley in East Sudan. There the British troops moving from the north ran into the French, causing one of the most critical moments in the history of the colonial rivalry for the partition of Africa. It was thought that war between Britain and France was inevitable, but the latter power retreated, withdrawing her troops from East Sudan.

France united her African colonies into a single territory, calling it French West Africa and ruling it with an iron hand. The least action of the popu-

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\* *Ibid.*, p. 267.

lation against their enslavers was suppressed with monstrous cruelty. West Africa, including Mali, was enveloped by the dark night of colonialism.

Simultaneously with her war of conquest in the Sudan, France made every effort to conquer the countries along the Gulf of Guinea. Signing ambiguous treaties with the local tribal chiefs she shaped considerable colonial possessions first in Guinea and then on the Ivory Coast.

The most tenacious resistance to French expansion in this area was put up in Dahomey, which was a fairly strong kingdom with a standing army. When necessary, the rulers could mobilise the population. The clashes in Dahomey began in 1889, when the well-organised army inflicted a series of defeats on the colonialists. An armistice was signed in 1890, but the war was renewed two years later. Despite the dogged resistance, Dahomey was finally conquered at the close of 1892. In addition to facing an enemy who was better armed, Dahomey found itself acutely short of funds with which to carry on the war. For a long period the slave trade had been the main source of income for the rulers of Dahomey. When this traffic was stopped, the country, which was economically undeveloped, was deprived of the means of equipping its army and organising its defence.

In 1879-82 the French occupied Gabon, and somewhat later, signing a treaty which gave them special rights, they established themselves in the region of the Congo.

The Island of Madagascar, too, fell prey to French colonial expansion. When the French invaded the island the Malagasy tribes had reached a relatively high level of social development. The island was ruled by a centralised feudal monarchy, set up in the second half of the 19th century. Industry was beginning to be developed. Newspapers and books were beginning to be published in the Malagasy language. The French invasion brought this development to a standstill.

In 1883 France demanded control over Madagascar's foreign policy. To back up these demands she sent a squadron of warships, which shelled seacoast towns and coastal settlements. In 1885 Madagascar was compelled to sign an unequal treaty, which gave France Diego-Suarez Bay.

In 1895, after a respite and with Britain's consent, a large expeditionary force was sent to Madagascar where it captured Tananarive, the capital. In response to this, the population rose up in arms, time and again putting the French troops in a critical position. Until 1897 the colonialists were engaged in savage punitive operations. In order to crush the resistance of the Malagasy people they stirred up hostility between the different strata of the population and enlisted into their army former slaves, people who had no means of subsistence.

The seizure of colonies was invariably accompanied by increased exploitation of the population by the local nobility and the foreign colonialists.

Like the other imperialists, the Germans sought to create a colonial empire in Africa. Germany joined the race belatedly and this made the German imperialists all the more aggressive.

In 1884 the German Chancellor Bismarck announced that Germany would take the Angra Pequena region in South-West Africa under her protection. A German trader by the name of Franz Lüderitz "purchased" this region from the local tribal chief for the tiny sum of £80 and 200 old rifles.

The conquest of Togo and the Cameroons began in 1884 in almost the same way.

The German government turned Lüderitz's "possessions" into a protectorate and sent a fleet, which captured key towns on the African coast from the frontiers of Angola to the Orange River. Then the Germans moved inland, annexing a vast territory in South-West Africa extending to Bechuanaland.

There they introduced a ruthless colonial regime and expropriated most of the land belonging to Africans. Early in 1904 the Herrero tribes rose against German oppression. Towards the end of the year the Hottentot tribes joined the struggle. Thanks to their military and technical superiority, the colonialists inflicted a number of smashing defeats on the insurgents. British troops took part in the concluding stage of these operations. A

large part of the Herrero and Hottentot nations was exterminated. The remnants were resettled in drougthy and barren regions or turned over as labour to German farms. In 1907 the land of the Herreros and Hottentots was confiscated and their tribal organisation dissolved. Hendrik Witbooi, who led the insurrection, was killed in battle.

No matter what country they came from, the European troops treated the African population mercilessly. German army units drowned the Maji-Maji uprising in Tanganyika in blood. Prussian soldiers chopped off the arms of "disobedient" Africans, chained them to trees and set up concentration camps in the blazing sun.

The prisons, built by the Germans, stand to this day on the route from Usumbura, present capital of Burundi, where German garrisons were stationed, to the Indian Ocean. The German conquerors brought Africa a "civilisation" of prisons and concentration camps.

On the eastern coast the Germans annexed a huge territory in the region of Tanganyika, Ruanda and Burundi. The frontiers of this colony, called German East Africa, were defined by Anglo-German agreements signed in 1886 and 1890. In the German colonies forced labour was used, land was expropriated from the people and the population had to pay heavy taxes.

Within a short span of some fifteen years Germany seized immense territories with a population of over ten million.

In the last quarter of the 19th century many of the peoples of Central Africa were still at various stages of the primitive communal system. Some nations were in the stage of transition to class society. The large kingdom of the Congo arose in the mouth of the Congo River, but on the eve of Africa's partition it disintegrated into petty kingdoms.

The keen rivalry between the large imperialist powers brought the small imperialist country of Belgium to the forefront. No big power wished to see its main rival in this extremely rich region of the world. As a result, the leading role in enslaving the peoples of Central Africa was played by Belgian capital. Leopold II, King of the Belgians and one of the sharpest political adventurers in world history, set up what became known as the International African Association. On behalf of this Association, which was later reorganised into a syndicate under a somewhat amended name, the noted traveller Henry Morton Stanley and others signed nearly 450 treaties with tribal chiefs, establishing a protectorate over the territories controlled by them.

The Berlin Conference of 1884-85, convened by France and Germany, recognised the Congo as the private property of Leopold II. In 1908 Leopold II placed the Congo under Belgium's admin-

istration for a large compensation. An extremely brutal system of forced labour and oppression was introduced in the Belgian colonies.

Towards the beginning of the 20th century, Portugal had, in addition to small possessions, the two large colonies of Angola and Mozambique.

Spain annexed the western coast of the Sahara and several small regions in other parts of Africa in addition to part of Morocco.

The struggle for spheres of influence between the major imperialist powers enabled Portugal and Spain to retain their African possessions.

Italy too shared in the partition of Africa. In 1890 she united her possessions in North-East Africa into the colony of Eritrea. In 1895, without declaring war, Italian troops invaded Ethiopia but suffered a crushing defeat at the famous battle of Adua in 1896. Italy was compelled to recognise Ethiopia's independence when her attempt to turn that country into a colony failed. Together with Britain and France, she participated in the carve up of Somali. During the war with Turkey in 1912 she annexed Libya.

The United States of America emerged as the victor in the struggle for control over Liberia. In 1822 in exchange for a few barrels of tobacco, gunpowder and some trinkets the American Colonisation Society acquired a slice of land in Africa. A small group of Negroes, repatriated from America, was settled in this area, which was administered by an American governor until 1847. Then the Republic of Liberia was proclaimed. In

1892 the frontiers of this republic were considerably extended at the expense of inland regions. At the close of the 19th century, the U.S.A. beat off Britain's attempts to annex Liberia.

#### **Results of the Colonial Partition of Africa and the Beginning of the Struggle for the Redivision of Colonies**

Towards the beginning of the 20th century, the partition of the African continent was thus, in the main, completed, while in some regions a struggle was already going on for a redistribution of colonial possessions.

The peoples of Africa put up a dogged resistance. They struggled against colonialism not only during the period when colonies were being seized but also in the period that followed. Uprisings kept breaking out in the possessions of all the colonial powers. In the different African countries this struggle and these uprisings were on various levels of organisation. Ethiopia and Madagascar, for example, already had an established form of state organisation. They had standing armies equipped with relatively modern firearms. Considerable manpower and material resources were also mobilised. However, in the majority of cases the defensive struggle took the form of wars and uprisings of separate tribes. The history of this struggle is replete with heroic exploits.



The African peoples were unable to halt the continent's colonial partition. Their military unpreparedness was due to their inadequate socioeconomic level of development. The struggle was an unequal one: the European troops were armed with the latest weapons. Another major factor that led to the defeat of the Africans was their dismemberment, their lack of unity. The colonialists sowed enmity between the African peoples and took advantage of the internecine strife between the feudal lords and the tribal chiefs.

The colonial frontiers, demarcated as a result of bitter rivalry, arbitrarily divided historically shaped regions, disunited ethnically homogeneous groups of the population and disrupted the natural formation of the African nations. Land inhabited by a single people came under the rule of different foreign powers. In most cases the political boundaries fragmented whole nations. The territories of almost all the African peoples were carved up.

With the modern map of Africa showing some thirty-five sovereign states, it is hard to find at least one that has no territorial claims on another. Not only whole peoples but even separate tribes and nationalities found themselves disunited. Disunity is one of the bitter legacies of imperialism and colonialism. When Africa was partitioned the Ewe people, for example, found themselves ruled by Britain and Germany. After the First World War the territory of the Ewe was shared between Britain and France. As a result, part of

the Ewes live in Ghana and another part in Togo. Today the Masais live in Kenya and Tanganyika, the Malinkas in Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast, and the Wolofs in Senegal and Gambia. The Somali people have been sundered by the British, French and Italians.

There are many unsettled issues in West Africa and other parts of the continent. The frontier between many former French colonies remains unclear. An example of this is the claim of Dahomey and Niger to the island of Lette in the frontier region along the Niger River. Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in the continent, may be cited as another example of the arbitrariness of the colonialists. At one time it was included in the territory of the British colony of Kenya. Then Queen Victoria made a birthday present of it to the German Emperor Wilhelm I. The mountain was incorporated into Tanganyika, then part of German East Africa. Thus, without the Africans having any say in it, the colonialists proceeded with Africa's territorial partition.

A feature of present-day Africa is that there is an intricate intertwining of tribes, nationalities and states. This gave rise to a movement for the continent's unity.

Speaking at the Conference of Heads of States and Governments of Independent African Countries in Addis Ababa in May 1963, Modibo Keita, President of the Mali Republic, declared: "We must renounce our territorial claims if we do not want to institute what might be called 'black

imperialism' in Africa. African unity demands strict observance of the boundaries inherited from the colonial system."\* Diallo Telli, representative of the Guinea Republic in the United Nations, formulated this idea as follows: "The present frontiers between the African countries are arbitrary and unjust. But they should not be changed by force..."\*\* The Charter of the Organisation of African Unity, adopted at Addis Ababa, stipulates that disputes must be settled by negotiation. It must not be forgotten that conflicts may prove to be grist to the mill of the colonialists.

More than ever before, Africa needs peaceful frontiers. Acting under pressure brought to bear by the people, the Moroccan authorities, for example, were compelled to go to Bamako and sit down to negotiations on the cessation of hostilities on the Moroccan-Algerian frontier. The trend towards the peaceful settlement of frontier disputes manifested itself in Ghana, Togo, Dahomey, Niger and elsewhere. In 1964 the question of peaceful settlement was on the agenda of the Second Session of the Council of Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity. The peaceful settlement of frontier issues is part and parcel of the struggle for African unity and peace.

In Africa there has been a tremendous response to the Soviet proposal for the conclusion of a treaty banning the use of force in the settlement

of territorial disputes. "Welcoming this proposal," Arthur Ochwada, Deputy Secretary-General of the Kenya African National Union, said that it "fits in perfectly with Africa's present tasks."

Wholeheartedly endorsing the Soviet initiative, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah declared: "In Africa, where the frontiers imposed by the colonialists and imperialists are the most illogical and unlawful, the danger of frontier conflicts leading to the breakdown of our aspirations for African unity is extremely grave and ever-present."

Naturally, any examination of the question of relations between different peoples living in one and the same state must be completely voluntary and governed by renunciation of force with regard to other peoples big or small.

The imperialist powers partitioned Africa under conditions of bitter rivalry, in which Anglo-Germany, Anglo-French and Franco-German contradictions were supreme. The situation was rendered all the more complicated by the imperialist claims of the smaller pirates. Italy, Spain, Portugal and Belgium took advantage of the contradictions between the leading imperialist powers and hoped not only to consolidate but also enlarge their possessions.

British imperialism won the race for the seizure of the most promising and strategically important regions, annexing a territory of 4,700,000 square miles. British possessions proved to be rich in gold, diamonds, copper, lead, zinc and other

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\* *World Marxist Review*, No. 5, May 1964, p. 84.

\*\* *Ibid.*

minerals. Moreover, they were important suppliers of cotton, cocoa, bananas, copra and other tropical products.

The French colonial empire was somewhat smaller, 4,161,000 square miles. It was found to have large reserves of phosphorites, iron ore, manganese and non-ferrous metals and produced coffee, sisal, rice, rubber and other items on a large scale.

Belgium annexed a territory of more than 1,400,000 square miles. The German colonies embraced an area of about 1,500,000 square miles and the Portuguese established control over an area of more than 1,200,000 square miles.

None of the imperialist powers was satisfied with its share. It seemed to the imperialists that what they had was not enough. It was inevitable that a bitter struggle should arise between them. The Boer War of 1899-1902 was one of the first imperialist shambles for the redivision of partitioned territory.

Colonial rivalry and the struggle for spheres of influence drove the imperialist powers towards a world-wide conflict. That conflict was the First World War.

When the partition of Africa was completed, the colonialists began the "development" of their colonies, turning them into sources of raw material. The African continent began to be drained of its wealth and the people enslaved and exploited. Many tribes were forced into barren "reservations". At the cost of hundreds of thou-

sands of African lives the imperialists created plantations and built railways to transport the products of the plantations as well as minerals from the hinterland to the coast. The peasants were made to grow only one type of export crop. Togo and Nigeria, for example, became producers of palm oil, Gambia and Senegal of groundnuts, the Gold Coast and Ivory Coast of cocoa, Mozambique and Tanganyika of sisal, and so forth. The monoculture system, the monopoly over purchases, one-sided agreements and the gap between the price for raw materials and for manufactured goods made the colonies completely dependent on foreign capital. Back-breaking labour at plantations and mines, political oppression and a miserably low standard of life became the lot of the African masses. Colonial exploitation brought in colossal profits. In Africa the development of the productive forces was slowed down to such an extent that the continent, huge as it is, accounted for less than one per cent of the world's industrial product.

In the colonies most of the budget was used to strengthen the position of the invaders. Roads, bridges and ports were built in order to facilitate the exploitation of the colonies. The tax system served the same purpose.

During the First World War the imperialists drew heavily upon Africa's material and manpower resources, and many Africans were sent to the firing lines. The French army alone recruited 845,000 men from Africa.



Despite the slow economic development, new factories and roads were built and an African working class was gradually formed. The African proletariat first raised its voice at the turn of the century. The first strike was staged in Freetown, Sierra Leone, as early as 1874. In 1882 a hundred Africans downed tools at the Kimberley mines for two days in protest against a reduction of wages. In 1903 Liberian seamen went on for four months' strike. In 1915 a major strike was called at the Henda gold-fields in South Africa. There were working-class actions in Egypt and Algeria. The African proletariat became active in the national liberation movement. In 1917 South African workers convened their first conference. It was held in Johannesburg and laid the beginning for the League of Industrial Workers. Soon afterwards concerted action was taken by European and African workers. It became evident that the African proletariat had entered the arena of political life.

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#### Chapter Four

### AFRICA IN THE PERIOD FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND WORLD WARS

#### World War I and Africa

The imperialists drew the peoples of Africa into the First World War of 1914-18. It devoured the labour of the African peoples and their national wealth. There were more than a million Africans in the armed forces of France, Britain, Italy and Germany. The war was carried over to a part of Africa herself.

In that period the imperialists were still able to reshape the map of Africa without taking the will of the people into consideration. The defeat of Germany and her allies deprived the Germans of their colonies. But the people of these colonies did not become free. Formally, the former German colonies became mandate territories of the League of Nations. But in reality they were shared between Britain (former German East Africa and part of Togo and the Cameroons), France (part of Togo and the Cameroons), Belgium (Ruanda-Urundi), the Union of South Africa (South-West Africa) and Portugal.

The exploitation of the African population was stepped up during the First World War. Forced

labour became more widespread and taxes were increased. Police and troops were used more and more frequently to put down revolts. In the period 1914-18 there were uprisings and disturbances in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, East Sudan and the German colonies. Service in the colonial armies gave Africans military training. During the war years more people began moving from the villages to the towns, and Africans from various countries came into contact with each other. Contact was also established between Africans and progressive people from the so-called mother-countries. The revolution in Russia and the turbulent revolutionary events in other countries awakened in Africans the hope that their struggle against the colonialists would be successful.

#### **Rise of National Awareness in Africa**

Dissatisfaction with colonialism increased sharply towards the close of the war, and continued to grow when the war ended. The policy of driving African peasants off land they had been tilling for ages called forth indignation and anger. The colonial tax policy began to meet with growing resistance. This policy was resented by the entire population with the exception of a small handful of feudal lords and those Africans who openly served the colonialists. The contradictions between the monopolies operating in the colonies and African traders began to intensify in

the period between the First and Second World wars. There was an exacerbation of the contradictions between the colonial authorities and the African farmers, who demanded to be allowed to grow crops that would bring them a greater profit. The emerging African bourgeoisie became insistent in its demands that the national economy be allowed to develop (they demanded credits for Africans, the establishment of African banks, and so forth). There was growing discontent over the deplorable state of public education in the colonies, the absence of public health services and the political inequality.

More and more Africans, chiefly officials and intellectuals, began to demand greater participation in the administration of their country, the Africanisation of the state apparatus and the return of all the rights of which they were dispossessed by the colonialists. People in Africa, particularly their leaders, began to realise that all these problems could be solved only if Africans took political power into their own hands. This idea gradually took root in the minds of the masses.

The Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 in Russia dealt the world imperialism an irreparable blow. The world's first state of workers and peasants came into being. The peoples of the oppressed countries saw that the imperialists and colonialists were not all-powerful, that people who rose in revolt could be victorious and win independence. The Revolution in Russia showed that the entire system of imperialism had grown

considerably weaker and, consequently, facilitated the freedom struggle in the colonial countries.

The fact of the October Revolution had a tremendous impact on Africa. The very first steps of the Soviet Government won moral support for Russia and for the slogans of the revolution. The anti-imperialist uprising in Egypt, the great strike movement in South Africa in 1918-20, the convocation of the First Pan-African Congress in 1919, the founding of the National Congress of British West Africa in 1920, the revolt in Dahomey in 1923, the protest movement in Kenya in 1921 and other events were undoubtedly echoes of the October Revolution.

"The Great October Revolution of 1917," said Modibo Keita, "brought a solution to the problem of the future of our Africa. . . . We must acknowledge that the Soviet people showed the colonial peoples the road to freedom." As soon as the Revolution was accomplished, Soviet Russia began to extend increasing support to all nations fighting for national emancipation.

The Pan-African Congress (1919 [Paris], 1921 [London and Brussels], 1923 [Lisbon and London] and 1927 [New York]), organised and held on the initiative of Dr. William Du Bois, played a major role in awakening Africa politically, uniting her progressive forces and helping her to establish contact with world public opinion. The demand for full political rights for Africans was made at the very first congress. True, in those days the achievement of these rights was regarded

as a remote prospect. Despite this fact, the congresses enabled representatives of various parts of Africa to meet and discuss the situation in their own countries and their common tasks in the struggle against colonialism. For the record it must be noted that in that period representation at these congresses was relatively weak. Most of the people representing Africa were African students studying in Europe or the U.S.A., or émigrés from Africa. Another factor was that the national liberation movement in Africa herself had not yet reached a mass scale. African national organisations limited themselves to demands for reforms and not independence. Nevertheless, the Pan-African movement of those years played an important role in that it drew public attention to Africa's problems. Besides, it brought forth African leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta and Azikiwe, and the congresses promoted and strengthened African solidarity.

The national liberation movement gradually acquired more sophisticated forms of organisation. There emerged the first political organisations, some of which had tens and even hundreds of thousands of supporters. Take, as an example, the events in Kenya.

A mass rally held in Dagoretti on June 24, 1921, gave birth to the Association of Young Kikuyu, which was the first large political African organisation. Later it was called the East African Association. Headed by Harry Tuku, it championed the rights of the indigenous popula-

tion. Although it did not go beyond peaceful struggle and propaganda, the colonialists arrested its leaders in March 1923, while in Nairobi, where the Africans held a protest demonstration, they opened fire on them, killing and wounding scores of people. However, in 1925 a new political organisation called the Central Kikuyu Association, with Jomo Kenyatta as one of its principal leaders, appeared on the political scene. It functioned until May 1940, when the colonialists invoked war-time laws and banned it, virtually dissolving it. This illustrates that the colonialists began to encounter not only increasing but also organised resistance.

In the period between the two world wars religious movements likewise expressed the discontent of the African peoples. Many of these movements were anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist in their aims. Most of them were headed by prophets, and many sought to win independence for African church communities. They included the Israelite movement headed by Enoch Mgijima in South Africa (particularly in 1941), the movement led by Mwana Lesa in Northern Rhodesia (1920-22), Kibangism and the Black Mission and Kitawala movements in the Belgian Congo (in the 1920s and 1940s), and the movement for a separate African Baptist church in the Cameroons. Some of these movements were accompanied by mass action, which dealt the colonialists telling blows. These actions involved mainly the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie.

The working class, too, has played a major role in the struggle for national liberation in Africa. Its actions were always directed against the imperialists and helped to draw wide sections of Africans into the struggle. The workers opposed various forms of persecution, intimidation and humiliation of the national and personal dignity of Africans.

Working-class actions steadily increased and involved ever greater numbers of workers. Trade unions and workers' political organisations sprang up in the course of this struggle. In 1919 there was a railwaymen's strike in Sierra Leone. In 1919-20 a series of major strikes, particularly those of longshoremen and railwaymen, were staged in South Africa.

In Nigeria workers went on strike in 1921. In 1921-22 workers in Kenya were active in the movement headed by the Association of Young Kikuyu. Railwaymen in Nigeria downed tools in 1925. In 1928 a revolt that spread to many regions of French Equatorial Africa flared among the builders of the Brazzaville-Pointe-Noire Railway. A strong anti-imperialist movement arose in Angola in 1928-30 on the initiative of port workers, who organised a general strike. In Gambia, a 62-day strike, which was supported by a 20-day general strike, was staged by seamen in

1929. In 1930 there was a miners' strike on the Gold Coast and five years later in Northern Rhodesia. General strikes paralysed Mombasa and Tanga in 1939. Most of these actions were crushed by the colonialists, but sometimes the struggle of the workers was successful. In Gambia, for instance, the authorities were compelled to raise the workers' wages and recognise their right to strike and set up a trade union.

As a whole, however, the African workers' movement of those years was at the stage of organisation. Its successes could not deal decisive blows at the domination of foreign monopolies and colonialists.

In the overwhelming majority of African countries working-class organisations were banned in the period between the two world wars. Where trade unions were allowed or where they existed semi-legally (Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Gambia, Nigeria, and in French colonies during the period of the People's Front in France), they were victimised and persecuted. The colonialists sought to undermine working-class organisations from within, persecuting trade union leaders and activists, throwing them into prison, blacklisting them and trying to bribe many of them to their side.

They took vigorous steps to prevent the spread in Africa of the ideas of scientific socialism and communism. The first African Communists and Socialists were relentlessly persecuted. Communist parties were founded in countries where the

working-class movement was the strongest. The Communist Party of South Africa, the first in the African continent, was founded in Capetown on July 29, 1921. The Algerian branch of the Communist Party of France was organised in 1920, and in 1936 it became the independent Algerian Communist Party. Communist organisations sprang up in the 1920s in Tunisia and Morocco; they were reorganised into independent parties in 1937 and 1943 respectively. There were Communist organisations in Egypt as well.

Side by side with all progressive Africans, the African Communists actively struggled against racial discrimination, against the reactionaries and against the threat of fascism, which became particularly menacing on the eve of the Second World War. Fascist racialism and hatred of mankind were rabidly preached by fascists from Germany, Italy and Spain, and also by fascist agents of the Verwoerd type.

#### **Anti-Imperialist Actions in the Period Between the Two World Wars**

The most powerful blows were dealt the imperialists in Africa when entire nations rose to the struggle. In the period between the two world wars the actions of the peoples of North Africa were the most energetic and organised in the continent.

In 1914, after World War I broke out, Britain declared Egypt a protectorate. British colonialists took over the key positions in the country, giving rise to discontent. After the October Revolution in Russia, the discontent in Egypt began to develop into a revolutionary situation. The people demanded complete independence. In March 1919 the British provoked mass demonstrations and strikes in Cairo. Police and troops fired on the people and this served as a signal for an uprising throughout the country.

National committees and peasants' councils were set up in some of the towns and regions. It was becoming obvious that the uprising would be successful. But the broad participation of workers and peasants frightened the Egyptian bourgeoisie and it refused to head the armed struggle. This gave the colonialists the opportunity to reorganise their forces and launch a counter-offensive. Towards the beginning of April 1919 they captured the main seats of the uprising, but sporadic fighting continued for a long time.

The colonialists had talks with the Egyptians on the conclusion of an Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, which would give formal recognition to Egypt's sovereignty but also guarantee "special rights" for Britain in Egypt. These talks, however, came to a deadlock. The people demanded independence. A new campaign was started against the colonialists and it soon developed into another uprising. British troops were sent against demonstrators in Alexandria and Tanta on December 23, 1921.

On the very next day all the big towns were gripped by a general strike, while fighting broke out in some of them. In the course of the week the uprising was quashed by the British, whose troops were supported by aircraft and tanks.

Nevertheless, the position of the British remained precarious. British goods were boycotted. Although the uprising was crushed the colonialists were compelled to recognise Egypt's independence. On February 28, 1922, Britain renounced her protectorate over Egypt and formally recognised her independence.

But the British had no intention of relinquishing their position in Egypt. Their attempts to impose on Egypt an unequal treaty "on special rights" finally succeeded on July 26, 1936, with the signing in London of a one-sided agreement, under which the Suez Canal and some other places in Egypt were occupied by British troops. The British obtained control over Egypt's foreign policy. The abrogation of this agreement became one of the main objectives of the struggle of the Egyptian people.

In the period between the two world wars the national liberation movement in other North African countries put the colonialists in a difficult position time and again. This may be illustrated on the example of the Riff Republic. Morocco was declared a French protectorate in 1912, but part of the territory was annexed by Spain. However, as a result of the resistance put up by the Moroccan people on the eve of the First



World War, France and Spain were able to occupy only the flat part of the country. During the war the occupation zone was again narrowed down. The French and Spanish colonialists got the opportunity to renew their expansion in Morocco only after the war.

The Spanish were particularly interested in the mountainous Riff region, its mineral wealth, to be more exact. An army corps of 20,000 men was sent to that region, but in July 1921 it was routed by the Berber tribes. This victory led to a federation of the twelve leading Berber tribes and to the proclamation of the Riff Republic headed by Abd-el-Krim. Later, the Berbers defeated a Spanish army of 100,000 men and liberated almost the entire "Spanish" zone of Morocco. The Riffian victories gave a further impetus to the national liberation movement in North Africa and threatened French conquests.

The French colonialists hastened to the assistance of their Spanish colleagues. But in May-June 1925 the French troops were defeated and the key French bases were surrounded by the Berbers.

This made the French and Spanish join forces in Morocco and conclude a military alliance. In July 1925 the French moved an army of 200,000 men against the Berbers. This army had the latest weapons, including aircraft, heavy artillery and tanks. The Franco-Spanish fleet blockaded the coast. At the close of August the Berber lines were breached by French troops and soon after

that French and Spanish troops joined forces. The Berbers continued their heroic struggle for another nine months. Abd-el-Krim capitulated only in May 1926. Brutal retribution was taken. Military operations continued until 1932 in the Grand, Middle and Anti-Atlas mountains and in the plateaux of south-eastern Morocco.

In 1912, after the war with Turkey, Italy seized Tripoli and Cyrenaica. But she found it much more difficult to conquer Libya than to defeat Turkey. During the First World War the Italians were confronted with a powerful anti-imperialist movement in Libya and were forced to withdraw their troops from the interior of that country and concentrate them in only four coastal towns. After the war Italy was forced to recognise the authority of the feudal lords in the interior of Libya. The colonialists calculated that the treaties under which this recognition was extended would make the Libyans relax their vigilance and give the Italians time to bring up troops. In 1922 the fascist colonialists renewed the war, scrapping all their treaty commitments. The war lasted for ten years, during which time almost half of the country's population was annihilated. In 1938 Libya was annexed to the Italian crown.

The imperialists went to all lengths to conquer the last of the independent states in Africa. Ethiopia fell victim to Italian fascism in 1935. The Soviet Union was the only country to support Ethiopia in the League of Nations, demanding condemnation of this act of aggression and strict

sanctions against the aggressors. But the imperialists of the U.S.A., Britain, France and Nazi Germany encouraged the Italian aggression. In May 1936 the Italians seized Ethiopia but were unable to defeat the people, who continued the armed struggle.

Thus, despite the heroic struggle of the African peoples only two countries—Egypt and Liberia—retained their formal independence by the time the Second World War broke out. But the treaty of 1936 made Egypt completely dependent on Britain, while Liberia was in fact a semi-colony of the U.S.A.

#### **Imperialist Exploitation of Africa in 1919-38**

How did the colonialists counteract the national liberation movement? Mainly by force. They drew on the support of their troops, gendarmerie and police and operated through their colonial administration and the feudal lords and tribal chiefs who supported them. Despite the difference in methods of administration, the objectives of the colonial regimes established by Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain were to squeeze the maximum profits out of the colonies and obtain strategic and political advantages in the struggle with imperialist rivals.

Take the policy pursued by Britain and France in West Africa. Britain had a system of indirect administration. In other words, she preserved the

old, traditional tribal forms of state organisation and administration, giving the African monarchs (much as Belgium in Ruanda and Burundi) an outward show of attributes of state power such as an administrative apparatus, courts, police and budget. In reality these monarchs were British puppets and fulfilled the orders of the colonialists. In the event of disobedience they were threatened with retribution, dethronement, exile or prison. This system enabled Britain to keep down her expenditures on colonial administration and helped her to enslave the colonial peoples for, while retaining a semblance of self-administration, it allowed her to put down disobedience with the hands of Africans themselves.

In West Africa the French utilised a system of direct administration. The reason for this was that having conquered the colonies by force of arms they destroyed the old state apparatus and exterminated almost the entire feudal upper crust. Discrimination was applied against the local inhabitants, but to draw the wealthy and the intellectuals over to their side the French passed a law in 1912 under which a certain section of Africans were allowed to acquire French citizenship. Towards the end of World War I the number of such naturalised French citizens in West Africa reached 24,997, of whom 22,711 were in four communes in Senegal (Dakar, Saint-Louis, Rufisque and Gorée). In 1936 this number rose to 78,373 in Senegal and to 2,136 elsewhere. The French employed many Africans in minor

administrative posts and frequently used the services of local chiefs.

These seemingly different systems pursued one and the same objective, that of consolidating colonial rule.

With that objective in view, the colonialists deprived the colonial peoples of all political rights. Practically the entire supreme legislative and executive power in the colonies was in the hands of governors or special representatives appointed by the government in the metropolis. Right until the end of the Second World War only a few colonies had representative institutions.

Up to the outbreak of the Second World War imperialists devoted considerably less attention to the exploitation and exploration of minerals in Africa than, say, in Asia. They preferred to exploit the labour of the African population engaged in agriculture. Where the climate favoured settlement by Europeans, East Africa, for example, the colonialists ruthlessly robbed the local population of land. In Kenya, the British seized more than 8,000,000 acres of the best land in the period up to the outbreak of World War II, driving away the local population and creating the so-called White Plateau.

Countries in East Africa began to be mercilessly exploited by the capitalists. Turned into sources of raw material, they were made to grow crops that they had never grown before: coffee, groundnuts, tea, cotton, sisal, rubber plants and so on. In Kenya, as we have already mentioned,

the local people were simply forced to resettle in a new place and their land was turned into large plantations. In Uganda the colonialists used economic and administrative compulsion to make the peasants grow various crops for export. In Tanganyika they combined these two ways of specialising agricultural production for export.

Until the Second World War the natural wealth in Africa, with the exception of separate regions and some kinds of raw materials, was hardly explored at all and little was done to develop it. This can be seen by the single fact that even in the mid-thirties, when Africa had about eight per cent of the world's population and 21 per cent of the earth's land area it accounted for only 3.1 per cent of the world's raw material output.

The colonialists sought to utilise and consolidate their colonies' economic dependence, making them monoculture countries. Capital was invested chiefly to facilitate the export from Africa of mineral and agricultural raw materials and also of tropical products. Foreign capital captured all the key positions and controlled all the gold and currency reserves.

"Development" in the colonies followed the line of preserving backwardness and illiteracy, and instilling in the Africans an inferiority complex, submission to destiny and worship for the white race.

Wherever possible the colonialists followed the line of "divide and rule", setting tribes and ethnic groups and different races against each other.

The period between the two world wars witnessed an intensification of the contradictions between imperialism and colonialism on the one hand and the African peoples on the other. The national awareness of the African peoples grew by leaps and bounds. Broad sections of the peasantry, the most numerous class in Africa, gradually joined the anti-imperialist struggle. It was joined also by the petty bourgeoisie, the rising national bourgeoisie, and the then numerically small but active African intelligentsia and African military personnel. In many cases the national liberation struggle was headed by the national bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia and military personnel. In those years the African proletariat was likewise active in the general national liberation struggle.

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#### Chapter Five

### LIBERATION STRUGGLE OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLES AND THE RISE OF NEW AFRICAN STATES

#### World War II and Africa

In one way or another all the countries of Africa were involved in the Second World War.

As in 1914-18, Africa was a major supplier of strategic materials and food. But in contrast to the First World War it played an incomparably greater role as a supplier of manpower resources. Several million Africans served in the armed forces and were mobilised as fighting men. African territory once again became a theatre of military operations.

The strategic materials and food supplied by the African countries contributed greatly towards victory over the fascist powers. In 1938 Africa produced 97.8 per cent of the diamonds in the world, 45.5 per cent of the gold, 75 per cent of the cobalt, 37.6 per cent of the manganese, 40 per cent of the chromium ore, 33.3 per cent of the vanadium, 21.3 per cent of the copper and 12.5 per cent of the tin.\*

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\*A. Shpirt, *Africa in World War II*, Moscow, 1959, p. 14

The supply of strategic materials and foodstuffs from Africa was of particularly great importance to Britain, which during the war obtained from her colonial possessions in Africa more than 80 per cent of her bauxite, nearly 87 per cent of her rubber, about 80 per cent of her iron ore, and over 75 per cent of her tungsten, to mention a few items. Lord Salisbury, a leading British colonial administrator, later admitted: "...it was only the existence of our African Colonial Empire, the essential materials that we could draw from it... it was only these which saved us from defeat."\*

Africa was the principal base for Free France. The U.S.A. likewise attached vital importance to supplies from Africa, particularly to uranium from the Belgian Congo.

Moreover, the African colonies served as sources of gold and foreign currency. This was of signal importance for Britain, France and Belgium. For example, the émigré Belgian government covered up to 85 per cent of its expenditures with currency receipts from the Congo.\*\*

After France's defeat in the summer of 1940, the Free French movement had only Africa to fall back upon. Towards the beginning of 1941 the

French Committee for National Liberation was recognised by almost the whole of French Equatorial Africa and the Cameroons. On November 2, 1941, Governor-General Boisson of French West Africa sent Pétain a secret telegram, informing him that he could not carry out his (Pétain's) orders because the population was hostile to nazi Germany and her allies. In February 1942 the Communist Party of Algeria appealed to the people to do everything in their power to prevent North Africa's resources being used in the interests of nazi Germany. In September of the same year it called upon the people to fight the nazis and the Vichy government. The struggle against fascism united all the progressive forces of the African peoples and promoted the growth of their political consciousness. On May 15, 1944, a conference held jointly by the Communist Parties of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco passed a decision to mobilise the Maghrib peoples for a struggle to destroy fascism.

Everybody knows of the tremendous contribution by African military units that fought directly on African soil. In Africa military operations were conducted in several regions. In North Africa fighting began in 1940 in Libya. In September of the same year Italian troops invaded Egypt. At Sidi Barani they were crushed by Allied troops, who cleared Egypt of the enemy, advanced into east Libya and entered Bengazi early in February 1941. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was sent to help the Italians. In March-April 1941 he drove

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\* A. Shpirt, *Africa in World War II*, p. 25. Quotation from *War and Peace Aims of the United Nations*, Vol II, 1943-45, Boston, 1948, p. 577.

\*\* J. Stengers, *Combien le Congo a-t-il coûté à la Belgique?* Brussels, 1957, p. 10.

the British out of Libya, but a British counter-offensive pushed the enemy back into Libya up to Agedabia and Bardia. In June 1942 Rommel mounted another offensive that carried him into Egypt, but he was defeated near El Alamein in the battle that lasted from October 23 to November 3, 1942. At the beginning of 1943 the whole of Libya was cleared of Axis troops.

In November 1942 British and American troops were landed in Morocco and Algeria. Military operations were started, as a result of which the whole of North Africa was liberated towards May 1943. Ethiopia, British and Italian Somali and part of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Kenya witnessed fighting in 1940-41. In the course of this fighting these territories were cleared of Italian troops.

African troops played an important role not only in the fighting against the nazis in Africa herself but also in Western Europe, the Near East, Burma and Malaya. Of the 400,000 men in the Free French Forces fighting in France, 260,000 came from Africa.

The African peoples contributed substantially towards the struggle against the Italian and German invaders. Special mention must be made of the partisan war waged by the Ethiopian people against the Italians.

The partisans destroyed roads and telegraph lines, and attacked Italian units. A partisan group of 25,000 men led by Gveresso operated only 20 or 25 miles away from Addis Ababa. Actually, the

invaders controlled only the large towns and the railways.

The Allies' victory in Africa was due in large part to the heroic struggle of the Soviet people, who pinned down the main body of German and Italian troops. The great victories won by the Soviet armed forces ensured the defeat of the nazi aggressors and decided the outcome of World War II.

During the war the rulers of the colonial powers did not stint promises to the African people. However, even at that time, when African soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with Englishmen, Frenchmen and Americans, the colonialists insisted on their policy of racial discrimination. Africans were not promoted to the rank of commissioned officers. They were not allowed to handle the latest weapons and continued to be mocked and humiliated.

Nonetheless, much was learned by the Africans during the period that they served in the armies of the imperialist powers. Their political views broadened out and they became more active in the struggle to defend their rights and dignity. They established contact with democratic elements not only in Western Europe but also throughout the world. After the war, African war veterans became active in the national liberation struggle. Kwame Nkrumah justifiably noted that "ex-servicemen who had taken part in the 1939 world war returned to the Gold Coast dissatisfied with their position after having been given the chance



of comparing their lot with that of other peoples, and they were prepared to take any line which would better their conditions. There was a general dissatisfaction with the British colonial policy ... especially the policy of indirect rule.... Again, the Russian Revolution and its aftermath had left its mark by spreading ideas of workers' solidarity, trade union movements, freedom and independence. Events in Asia also added a glow to the political awakening."\* These words apply to many other countries in Africa.

#### **Post-War Social and Political Changes in Africa**

The defeat of nazi Germany paved the way for the triumph of socialist revolutions in a number of countries in Europe and Asia. The world system of socialism, mighty bulwark of the anti-colonial movement, began to take shape and grow steadily stronger. The successes of the national liberation revolutions in Africa gave the African peoples the inspiration to struggle for independence. Imperialism was forced to beat a retreat. The colonial powers found their positions in Africa tottering. The entire continent found itself in the grip of an unprecedented upsurge of the national liberation movement.

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\* A. Shpirt, *Africa in World War II*, Moscow, 1959, pp. 62-63. Quotation from *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, London, 1957, p. 9.

The picture in Africa herself changed radically. The war and its requirements called forth the rapid development of certain industries, particularly mining. The flow of manpower into the towns increased, former communal links began to be shattered more quickly and more hired labour became available. The working-class began to grow. The position of the peasants continued to deteriorate, causing increased dissatisfaction. In the towns the petty bourgeoisie found it increasingly more difficult to compete with the monopolies. Artisans and small shop-keepers were faced with ruin. The new national bourgeoisie somewhat strengthened its economic position during the war, but it had no political rights and this brought forth protests. The numerically small African intelligentsia became more and more active.

This was a sign that major political and social changes had taken place in Africa. The peoples no longer wanted to live in the old way. They could not be satisfied with half-hearted reforms. After the war they became aware that the national liberation revolutions had to be accomplished.

The growth of political awareness and activity was mirrored in the creation of progressive political parties and organisations, which joined the struggle against colonialism and imperialism. The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons and the Kenya African Association (changed to the Kenya African Union in 1946 and the Kenya African National Union in 1960)

were formed in 1944, the Democratic African Association, the Democratic Bloc (later changed to the Sudanese Union), the Communist Party of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, the Democratic Movement for Malagasy Rejuvenation, and the Bataka Party in Uganda were organised in 1946, and the Convention People's Party of Ghana (Gold Coast) and the Democratic Party of Guinea were founded in 1949. The first post-war years witnessed the founding of a Communist Party on Reunion Island and Communist groups in Basutoland and on Madagascar. In the same period progressive parties were organised in Sierra Leone, Tanganyika, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and other countries. In the years that followed the number of these parties increased and their activity became known in Africa and abroad.

These large, patriotic organisations, despite their different programmes, united the masses against the domination of the colonialists, against imperialism and survivals of the past. They struggled to accomplish a national liberation revolution and win national liberation for their countries. They actively furthered the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism in Africa. The actions of the peasants, the working class, the petty bourgeoisie, the progressive intellectuals and the patriotic section of the national bourgeoisie merged into a single torrent of anti-imperialist, anti-colonial and anti-feudal revolutions.

### **Struggle of the Peoples of East Africa for National Liberation**

In the period after World War II the national liberation movement in East Africa progressed with marked success. An important role in achieving these successes was played by the large political parties, which united all the healthy forces of the people in their countries. These parties included the Kenya African Union (later called the Kenya African National Union), the Association of Tanganyika Africans (later called the Tanganyika African National Union), and the People's Congress of Uganda.

In 1947 the British started implementing their plan of setting up an East African Federation consisting of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda with the purpose of overwhelming the growing national liberation movement. The colonialists relied on "white" Kenya to perpetuate their rule in all three countries. However, led by their parties the peoples of these countries thwarted the plans of the colonialists and the East African Federation never saw the light of day.

The anti-colonial struggle became particularly acute in Kenya. As we have already mentioned, land was expropriated from the local population on an unparalleled scale. The demand for the return of land was therefore more vehement in Kenya than anywhere else in Africa. But there the colonialists held on more tenaciously to the expropriated land than in any other region in

Africa. That precipitated a war of attrition, which the colonialists gave out as police action against "Mau Mau terrorism".

On October 20, 1952, after the mysterious murder of Waruhiu, a Kikuyu leader, the colonialists declared a state of emergency and began an offensive against the national liberation forces under the guise of fighting the "secret Mau Mau" organisation. They arrested and convicted Jomo Kenyatta and five of his associates, and in the summer of 1953 they outlawed the Kenya African Union, instituted a reign of terror and began a regular war against the people of Kenya. The response to this was a widespread partisan movement, which the colonialists crushed only towards the close of 1956.

The colonialists realised that they would be unable to keep the East African countries and Kenya by force of arms and made repeated attempts to deceive the people by political manoeuvres. Aiming to perpetuate their rule, they tried to impose upon the people of Kenya, for example, the "Griffiths Constitution" (1952), the "Lyttelton Constitution" (1954) and then the "Lennox-Boyd Constitution" (1958) without lifting the state of emergency. But the people of Kenya continued the struggle for freedom.

Obedying their will, Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya and other Kenya leaders called for a boycott of the "Lennox-Boyd Constitution". The colonialists replied with repressions: Oginga Odinga and his associates were arrested, convicted

and thrown into prison. However, the people secured their release and, at the close of 1958, started a powerful movement for the release of Jomo Kenyatta. This movement was supported by the African Peoples' Conference in Accra. The colonialists were compelled to make another concession: early in 1959 Kenyatta was released from prison but exiled to a remote region. On January 12, 1960, the colonialists had to lift the state of emergency, but they continued in their attempts to protect their positions, trying to impose the new "Macleod Constitution" on the country.

However, the people of Kenya saw their tasks with increasing clarity. The credit for this was due mainly to the Kenyatta-led Kenya African National Union that was founded in March 1960. Under the leadership of that political organisation, the people of Kenya carried their struggle forward to victory: in the small hours of December 12, 1963 Kenya became an independent state.

A similarly heroic struggle for freedom was crowned with success in Tanganyika, Uganda, Zanzibar, Malawi and Zambia.

**Colonialist Tactics:  
from Classical Colonialism  
to Neo-Colonialism**

But the colonialists do not relinquish their positions without a fight. During the first years after the Second World War the imperialists made an attempt to combine the old methods of

suppression and force with concessions and social demagoguery. The following illustrates this point.

A demonstration demanding independence was held in Morocco in January 1944. French troops were called out to deal with it. They behaved with especial brutality in Fès, where hundreds of Moroccan patriots were killed and thousands wounded.

In May 1945, after the war ended, the French colonialists dealt summarily with Algerian patriots who dared to demand independence for their country. Nearly 40,000 people were slaughtered and all nationalist parties and organisations were banned.

When the war ended, the people of Egypt sought to secure the repeal of the one-sided agreement forced upon the country by Britain in 1936. A demonstration was held in Cairo on February 21, 1946, and it was fired on by British troops.

In 1947-48 the French colonialists carried on a war of extermination against the Malagasy people on Madagascar. They killed more than 100,000 Malagasy and incarcerated over 20,000 of them in prisons and concentration camps.

In February 1948 the rising cost of living caused disturbances on the Gold Coast. In Accra British troops fired on a demonstration organised by ex-servicemen. The disturbances that this called forth throughout the entire colony were suppressed by police and troops. In 1952-56, as we have already mentioned, an armed struggle

was carried on against the people of Kenya. More than 12,000 Kenyans were killed in this struggle.

In November 1954, the French started a bloody war against the Algerian people. The outcome of that inhuman war, which went on for many years, was, in the words of Ahmed Ben Bella, that the people of Algeria "lost a million and a half fighters and today have half a million widows and 350,000 orphans".

The colonialists banned patriotic parties and organisations, fought the trade unions and tried to intimidate, bribe or destroy leaders of the national liberation movement. Modibo Keita, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Mario de Andrade, Agostinho Neto, Djibo Bakary, Nelson Mandela and Antoine Gizenga were exiled. Attempts were made on the lives of Sékou Touré and Kwame Nkrumah. Gunmen hired by the colonialists murdered Felix-Roland Moumié and Ruben Um Nyobe (the Cameroons), Patrice Lumumba, Maurice M'Pollo and Joseph Okito (the Congo), and Louis Rwagasore, Prime Minister of Burundi. But force proved to be of little avail and more often than not had the opposite effect.

The abortive Anglo-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt in 1956 showed the whole world that the imperialists were no longer able to impose their will on the African peoples by force. With the assistance of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and with the support of the peoples of Asia and Africa and of progressive

forces throughout the world the Egyptians gave the aggressors a worthy rebuff.

The colonialists of the fascist states of Spain and Portugal were the most persevering in applying open force. That is a manifestation of the essence of fascism, of fascist dictatorship, which is founded solely on force with regard to the peoples of their own countries and, all the more, of the colonies. This is strikingly demonstrated by the events of recent years in Angola and Mozambique.

Force is not the only means by which the colonialists are hoping to hold on to their positions in Africa. During the war years many Western bourgeois political leaders became aware that the old forms of colonial rule had become obsolete. The colonialists began to change political and geographical terminology, trying to give new form to the colonial essence of their policy in Africa. The British Empire, for example, began to call itself the British Commonwealth and then simply the Commonwealth. The French Empire was renamed into the French Union and, in 1958, into the French Commonwealth. In 1951 the Portuguese colonies were turned into "overseas provinces". The change of names was accompanied by a change in some of the details of the mechanism of colonial exploitation. More and more often colonialism began to resort to manoeuvres and tricks. It hoped to divert the people from the struggle for independence with separate reforms and concessions.

Today neo-colonialism presents the greatest danger to the peoples of Africa. Its substance is the same as that of colonialism, but the danger is that it applies more camouflaged methods of colonial policy. It pursues a policy of establishing indirect control over formally independent countries.

In the economic sphere this policy aims to push the young African states to the capitalist road of development in order to preserve their economic backwardness and agrarian specialisation and keep them dependent on imperialism. The principal vehicle of this policy is the investment of private and state capital of the Western imperialist powers, imperialist "aid" in various forms, influence through the "sterling", "franc" and other zones, and the drawing of these countries into imperialist economic blocs (of the European Economic Community or "Common Market" type).

In passing it may be noted that towards the close of 1962 the investments of the imperialist states in Africa reached the impressive figure of \$22,000-23,000 million: \$7,500 million from Britain, \$6,500 million from France, \$4,000 million from Belgium, \$3,000 million from the U.S.A. and \$500 million from the Federal Republic of Germany.

In the ideological, political and military spheres neo-colonialism widely recurs to the bugbear of anti-communism, fans the reactionary trends of local nationalism and utilises the system of unequal treaties. In order to preserve its hold



in Africa, it is striving to use aggressive military blocs of the Nato type and draw the African countries into the Western military system through bilateral military agreements, the setting up of military groupings, and military "aid". An important role is assigned to puppet regimes. Differences between the African states themselves are turned to account. Frequently neo-colonialism uses the U.N. flag to screen its actions.

The U.S.A, the biggest and richest imperialist power, is the main force of neo-colonialism. Britain and France are actively applying neo-colonialist methods as are the imperialists of the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, Israel and other countries.

The imperialist armed intervention in the Congo at the close of 1964 placed that country's sovereignty and independence in jeopardy. This further act of imperialist aggression in the Congo was an obvious challenge to the African states, to independent countries and to peace-loving forces throughout the world. This act is a flagrant violation of the U. N. Charter and a threat to world peace and security.

The imperialists reckoned to break the resistance of the Congolese people, crush the liberation movement in Angola and Mozambique, save the racialists of Southern Rhodesia and the South African Republic and then deal a blow at the independent African countries.

However, the piracy of the neo-colonialists will bring the imperialists neither honour nor

glory. In response to this conspiracy against the peoples of Africa, all true fighters against colonialism and imperialism are rallying still closer together, and ultimately the imperialists will be swept out of Africa for good.

#### **Collapse of the Colonial System in Africa**

The period of the Second World War and the first post-war decade were a period in which Africa mustered her strength and was engaged in vanguard battles. The foundation was laid for the victories that the African peoples won in subsequent years. Beginning with 1946 a total of 31 African countries have achieved independence.\*

The history of the proclamation of independence by African states is a history of the victories of the national liberation revolutions and of the defeats of imperialism and colonialism in Africa. For Africa the past few years have been characterised by the predominance of non-military methods of achieving independence. This became possible only thanks to the all-sided support given to the African peoples by the world system of socialism and thanks to the solidarity of the newly independent countries themselves. During a visit to the U.S.S.R. in May 1962, Modibo Keita said:

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\* The dates on which the African states proclaimed their independence are given in the addenda.



"We must pay tribute to the Soviet people for their contribution to the liberation of the African peoples and to the abolition of the disgraceful colonial system."

The struggle of the North African people played a key role in the liberation of the whole of Africa. The revolution of July 1952 in Egypt was a stinging defeat for British imperialism. Their agents headed by King Farouk were removed from power. The nationalisation of the Suez Canal showed the imperialists that the African people wanted more than only political independence. By liberating themselves, the Egyptian people helped the people of the Sudan in their struggle for independence. In 1953 the Republican Government of Egypt secured from the British Government the right of the Sudanese people to decide their own destiny following a three-year period of transition. In 1956 the Sudan became the first of the African colonies to achieve independence. It was followed that same year by Tunisia and Morocco. In 1962 Algeria won her struggle for independence.

The imperialists futilely reckoned that they would remain south of the Sahara for many years. Events destroyed these illusions. Ghana was the first to demonstrate how wrong they were. The people of Ghana united round the Convention People's Party under the slogan of "Independence at Once!" Force proved of no avail and the colonialists were compelled to make concessions. In 1951, a government was formed in which the

majority of portfolios was held by Africans, and Kwame Nkrumah became the Prime Minister. The government carried out a series of democratic reforms, introducing universal suffrage and Africanising the administration. A government consisting solely of Africans was formed in 1954, while on March 6, 1957, the Gold Coast colony became the independent African state of Ghana.

Another milestone was the victory of the people of Guinea. Early in 1956 the Democratic Party of Guinea, which headed the persevering struggle waged by the people, set up village committees throughout the country. These committees removed the local chiefs from power and the authorities were forced to recognise them. In December 1957 the institution of chiefs was officially abolished. When the colonialists held a referendum in the country under the Constitution of the Fifth French Republic, the people voted for independence. Guinea achieved independence on October 2, 1958.

In 1960, the "year of Africa", 17 colonies—14 French colonies, one British colony, one Belgian colony and the former British and Italian Somali—became independent states. Ghana and Guinea, which the colonialists regarded as exceptions to the rule, proved to be pioneers of the liberation of Black Africa. Their example gave confidence to all the peoples south of the Sahara. The colonialists were now apprehensive of starting colonial wars against the peoples of Equatorial Africa.

The triumph of the national liberation

revolutions caused the downfall of the vast colonial empires of Britain, France and Belgium. Italy's colonial empire crumbled during the Second World War.

Nevertheless, tens of millions of people in Africa are still living in direct colonial dependence on imperialism. Fragments of the former colonial empires are still intact. They include Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Mauritius Island, Swaziland, Southern Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique, Sao Tomé, Portuguese Guinea, Reunion Island, French Somali, Rio Muni, Spanish Sahara and South-West Africa.

The South African Republic is the bastion of colonialism in Africa, a nest of unbridled racism and unvarnished fascism. The Verwoerd administration has raised apartheid-racism and hatred of mankind—to the level of state policy. It is fighting the national liberation movement by fascist methods, committing crimes against humanity. In 1960 the government of the South African Republic banned the African National Congress and at the close of 1963 it framed up charges against Congress's leaders Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and G. Mbeki and sentenced them to prison terms. Early in 1964 it shocked the world by passing the death sentence on Vuyisele Mini, Z. Mkaba and Wilson Kayinga, leaders in the struggle for human rights. It upholds everything that is reactionary and the worst in Africa, supporting imperialist agents of the Tshombe type and the racialists of Southern Rhodesia, and

suppressing the freedom struggle of the peoples of South-West Africa.

That is why the peoples of Africa and all progressive mankind wrathfully condemn the South African racialists and justifiably regard their republic as a prison for Africans. That is why African states and many countries in the world are blockading the South African Republic economically and politically and rendering its peoples support in their just struggle against force, terror and racialism.

Modern capitalism will not leave Africa without putting up a fight. In countries which are still directly dependent on imperialist powers the colonialists are actively implementing the classical methods of colonialism: wars of extermination with the use of the latest weapons (the war against the people of Angola), undisguised force and police arbitrary rule (French Somali, Spanish colonies, the South African Republic), and various political manoeuvres. But the national liberation movement is forging ahead. The colonialist Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland collapsed, and Nyasaland became the independent state of Malawi. Northern Rhodesia became the independent state of Zambia on October 24, 1964. Despite repressions, the national liberation movement is gaining ground in Southern Rhodesia under the leadership of the banned African National Congress headed by Joshua Nkomo. The colonialists are running amuck in Bechuanaland, but they are powerless to stem the people's movement.

**Working-Class Movement  
in Africa After the Second World  
War**

In Africa the working-class and trade union movement has always been a powerful ally and component of the national liberation movement. Its growth is therefore an indication of the growth of the national liberation struggle as a whole.

Numerically, the African working class has multiplied rapidly during the past two decades. This is illustrated by the following table:

*Table I*

**Growth of the Number of Workers\***

Country	1938	1960
Angola	315,500	800,000
Ghana	63,800	350,000
Kenya	172,800	560,900
Congo (Leopoldville)	522,500	1,200,000
Nigeria	227,400	700,000
Northern Rhodesia	152,200	268,800
Tanganyika	207,100	439,100
Uganda	72,100	310,000
Southern Rhodesia	107,500	700,000

Moreover, there has been an improvement in its organisation and a growth of political awareness. Formerly, the colonialists had been able to prevent the setting up of trade unions or to disrupt

\* *World Marxist Review*, No. 7, 1962.

their activity. Then the time came when they had no alternative but to recognise the right of the African workers to organise their own trade unions. In 1939 trade unions were permitted in Nigeria, in 1940 in Sierra Leone, in 1941 in Tanganyika and the Gold Coast, and in 1943 in Kenya. When the war ended the French government drafted laws which provided freedom of activity for trade unions in overseas territories. True, these laws were passed by the French National Assembly only on November 23, 1952, after the general strike in French West Africa on November 3, 1952.

With the African proletariat now numbering nearly 15,000,000, the most important tasks before the African working-class movement are to expand the trade union movement and achieve trade union unity in each country and also on an all-Africa scale. At present the trade unions in Africa have a total membership of about three million. About two-thirds of this membership are in North Africa, while south of the Sahara there are less than a million trade union members. The reason for this is that the countries south of the Sahara won independence later and the colonialists did all in their power to hold up the development of the trade union movement.

The problem of trade union unity is likewise of major importance to Africa. This problem was discussed by the All-Africa Trade Union Conference in Dakar in 1947. A conference of trade

union delegates from all French colonies was held in Bamako in October 1951.

The earnest striving for unity in the working-class movement led to the founding of the General Union of Workers of Black Africa in Cotonou in January 1957. Two years later, at its first congress, the Union decided to convene an all-Africa conference.

This conference was held on May 25-30, 1961, in Casablanca and was attended by more than 300 delegates from 45 trade union organisations of 38 African countries. Its principal result was that it set up the All-African Trade Union Federation, which united over two million trade union members.

Next to appear, in January 1962, was the African Trade Union Confederation, which is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. It has 700,000 or 800,000 members.

The prospects of trade union unity on an all-Africa scale are now in sight and this unquestionably meets with the interests of all the African peoples.

The general strike staged in Nigeria in June 1964 was probably the most important recent action by the working class of Africa. Lasting for two weeks it involved more than a million workers. In addition to shedding light on the country's economic and social life, it pointed to many problems that still await a solution in many African countries.

It ended in victory, strikingly demonstrating the importance of unity of action by workers. Thanks to the strikers' determination, militant spirit, willpower and striving for unity, their demands were taken into consideration. Moreover, the strike was of great importance in the struggle against neo-colonialism. It showed that no government can administer a country if it ignores the growing working-class forces. By defending their vital interests and carrying on a consistent anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle, the African working class contributes towards the building of a New Africa.

#### **Africa and the Solidarity Movement**

In their struggle for independence, the African peoples make use of the movement for solidarity.

An important role is played by the Afro-Asian solidarity movement, which embraces socialist countries, non-socialist independent countries in Asia and Africa and also representatives of the peoples still fighting for independence. It was initiated by the Bandung Conference of 29 Afro-Asian countries in April 1955.

A notable contribution was made to this movement by the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conferences held in Cairo in 1958, in Conakry in 1960, and in Moshi in 1963. The next conference is to be held in Accra in May 1965.

A profound impact is being made on events in Africa by the African people's conferences. Their decisions have gone a long way towards intensifying the struggle for independence. The first of these conferences, held in Accra in 1958, put forward the slogan: "Independence in the Lifetime of Our Generation!" The second conference held in Tunis in 1960, demanded: "Independence at Once!" The third conference, held in Cairo in 1961, condemned all forms of neo-colonialism.

Progress in the political emancipation of Africa is giving an ever-increasing role to the conferences of Independent African states (1958 [Accra], 1960 [Addis Ababa], 1961 [Monrovia], and so on). The imperialists strove to split the unity of the African countries and sow hostility between them. These manoeuvres have created difficulties in Africa. Some countries have joined the Monrovia group (called after the 1961 conference), while others—Mali, Guinea, Algeria, Ghana, Morocco and the United Arab Republic—have formed the Casablanca Charter group. The situation was further exacerbated in September 1961 by the setting up of the African and Malagasy Union.

In spite of these difficulties, the idea of African solidarity is making headway. In June 1962 the Second Session of the African Political Committee, set up by the Casablanca Charter Organisation, came out in favour of unity with the Monrovia group.

The efforts to bring the independent African states closer together resulted in the Summit Conference of the Heads of State and Government of 30 independent African countries in Addis Ababa on May 23-25, 1963. The principal outcome of this conference was the setting up of the Organisation of African Unity. The conference defined the Organisation's objectives as follows: promoting the unity and solidarity of the African states, co-ordinating the increasing co-operation among them, defending their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, combating all forms of colonialism in the African continent and furthering international co-operation.

At the conference it was declared that all its participants would make every effort to help the countries still dependent to achieve independence, and would refrain from aligning themselves with any blocs.

The following structural pattern for the Organisation of African Unity was approved by the conference:

- Assembly of Heads of State and Government (supreme body, convened annually);

- Council of Ministers (consisting of Foreign Ministers, convened at least twice a year);

- General Secretariat;

- Commission for Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration;

- Economic and Social Commission;

- Educational and Cultural Commission;

Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Commission;  
Defence Commission;

Scientific, Technical and Research Commission;

Liberation Movement Co-ordinating Committee  
consisting of representatives of Ethiopia, Algeria,  
Uganda, the United Arab Republic, Tanganyika,  
the Congo (Leopoldville), Guinea, Senegal and  
Nigeria, with headquarters at Dar es Salaam.

The Addis Ababa Conference reaffirmed the  
adherence of the new African states to the aim of  
turning Africa into an atom-free zone. It sharply  
condemned the apartheid policy of the Republic  
of South Africa and set up a fund to combat  
apartheid. Acting upon the decisions of the con-  
ference, the African countries boycotted the  
Republic of South Africa and racist Portugal.

The Organisation of African Unity plays an  
important role in African political affairs. For  
example, it has helped to settle serious frontier  
conflicts between Algeria and Morocco, between  
Ethiopia and Somali and between Somali and  
Kenya. The Second Conference of the O.A.U.  
Council of Ministers, held on February 24-29,  
1964, in Lagos, examined the question of the  
peaceful settlement of frontier disputes, set up a  
Conciliation Committee consisting of 13 countries,  
reaffirmed the principle that Africa should be an  
atom-free zone and called upon all countries in  
the world to abide rigidly by the decision of the  
U.N. General Assembly and Security Council to  
apply economic, political and other sanctions  
against the Republic of South Africa. It supported

the idea of calling a U.N. international trade con-  
ference.

The Organisation of African Unity advocates  
greater representation from the African countries  
in U.N. organs. Its cardinal aim is to help the  
African countries resolve common tasks in abolish-  
ing the legacy of colonialism and also the tasks  
of the national liberation revolutions.

#### **Tasks of the National Liberation Revolutions in Africa**

The national liberation, anti-imperialist revolu-  
tions in Africa pass through several stages. At the  
first stage the task is to achieve political independ-  
ence. This stage has been passed by 32 newly-  
independent countries of Africa, which have put  
an end to direct domination by colonialists on  
their territory.

Then follows the problem of passing to the  
second stage, the main tasks of which are to  
strengthen national sovereignty on the basis of  
political independence, erase the legacy of colo-  
nialism, create a national economy and rejuvenate  
and develop national culture. Fulfilment of these  
tasks ensures the achievement of the cardinal aim,  
which is to abolish economic backwardness and  
dependence on world capitalism. With the fulfil-  
ment of these tasks the national liberation revolu-  
tion develops into an anti-capitalist revolution.



The advanced countries of Africa have already embarked upon socialist construction.

Capitalist development is one way of putting an end to Africa's age-old backwardness. But it is a long and painful road and gives no release from the domination of foreign monopolies. This is strikingly illustrated by South Africa and Liberia. On top of everything, this road of development benefits only a small section of the national bourgeoisie, bureaucracy and intelligentsia. It does not abolish exploitation of man by man, flagrant inequality and the poverty of the masses. That is making the African countries see the advantages of socialism over capitalism and they are making efforts to by-pass the capitalist stage of development.

It has been shown that the national liberation revolutions develop successfully where revolutionary measures are consistently carried out or prepared in the following spheres:

#### *Agriculture*

In this sphere the legacy of colonialism is to be completely eradicated, the peasants are to be given back the land wrested away from them by the colonialists, and the survivals of feudalism uprooted. Co-operatives are to be set up. They will help to improve the peasants' standard of life and preclude the ruin of small producers and the formation of a stratum of exploiters in the countryside. These measures are of the utmost importance because in Africa the overwhelming majority of the population are peasants.

#### *Industry and trade*

In this sphere the principal objective is industrialisation. However, in view of the aid from the socialist camp and the increasing co-operation between African states, industrialisation can begin with the development of the light and processing industries with the ultimate aim of building up a heavy industry when conditions are more favourable. Far from demanding further sacrifice and privation, this form of industrialisation will promote prosperity in Africa. It is greatly accelerated by the creation and consolidation of a state sector in the economy through the nationalisation of existing industrial enterprises and the building of new factories and mills by the state. The presence of a state sector in the economy and state monopoly or control in domestic and, particularly, foreign trade facilitate rational and effective planning.

#### *State development*

In this sphere special importance attaches to the promotion of democracy, greater political activity by the masses and the improvement of the state apparatus and all its main attributes.

The aftermaths of colonialism and the counteraction of neo-colonialism are obstructing the development of the new African states. Besides, some of these states have yet to achieve political independence.

Despite the enormous progress of the national liberation struggle of the African peoples, colonialism has not suffered final defeat. Most of the

young African countries have not broken loose from the system of world capitalist economy and continue to be economically dependent on the former metropolises and the leading monopolies of the world. To this day they are suppliers of raw material and foodstuffs and remain the object of semi-colonial exploitation.

Africa accounts for only one per cent of the world industrial product. The African continent has 8 per cent of the world's population, but in relation to the world income its income adds up to only 2.6 per cent. Colonialism has left it a legacy of illiteracy, disease and an acute shortage of cadres in virtually all fields of technology, science and culture.

#### **How to Eradicate the Legacy of Capitalism**

Africa is eager to surmount its present backwardness and build a new life. But what are the means by which this goal can be reached and are there conditions for reaching it? Yes, such conditions exist.

Most of the African peoples have become politically independent, i.e., they have taken power into their own hands, wresting it away from the colonialists. The African peoples are realising that by relying on African unity, which is becoming a major factor of the liberation of their continent, and on the assistance of the socialist camp, they can choose whatever road of develop-

ment they wish. More and more African nations are inclined to take the socialist road of development. That can be appreciated because socialism signifies liberation and happiness. Besides, the socialist road enables Africa to achieve its principal goal, that of rapidly overcoming backwardness and winning independence from imperialism.

Modibo Keita said: "If we had not resolutely taken the road of socialist development, if we had taken the easier road, which may be to the liking of African leaders who give no thought to the people, and if we had waited for the capitalists to ensure our economic development we would have had to wait a whole century."\*

The peoples of Algeria, the United Arab Republic, Guinea and Kenya have decided in favour of socialism.

Political independence and the consolidation of this independence is thus the prime condition for the transition to a new life. The leadership is another key factor in the choice of the road of development. The tasks of the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist revolution are carried out faster in countries where revolutionaries and democrats, leaders and parties expressing the interests of the whole people are at the helm of state. A special role in these countries is played by the progressive section of the national intelligentsia, and

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\* *Meeting Africa*, Moscow, 1964, p. 168.

national military cadres who correctly express the interests of their peoples. Such parties and leaders are in power in Mali, Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, the United Arab Republic and some other countries.

Unity of the people in the struggle for a new life, and the active support of the masses for all progressive measures undertaken by the government are another important condition for victory over colonialism and for the transition to socialism. In most countries south of the Sahara these conditions are easily satisfied: there class stratification is not very marked and, to all practical purposes, no local bourgeoisie has arisen; the peasants, comprising the vast majority of the population, are at the stage of tribal relations and far from having a propensity for private ownership appreciate and support the principles of collectivism. Consequently, in these countries there are real conditions for implementing measures of a socialist nature with the full support of the whole people.

This unity can and must lead to the consolidation of national independence, the strengthening of national statehood, and the creation of a national democratic state, i.e., a state founded on a bloc of all progressive, patriotic forces. These forces advocate full national independence, broad democracy and the realisation of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic revolution.

The co-operation and aid of the socialist camp, which is enabling Africa to counter the intrigues

and plots of the colonialists, is one of the most important conditions allowing for progress along the new path.

The existence of all these favourable conditions and factors is enabling the countries that have taken the road of socialist reforms to map out and successfully carry out the tasks of the national liberation revolution.

The extraordinary joint session of the National Assembly and National Council of the Revolution of the Republic of Guinea ended in November 1964. It unanimously endorsed the important decisions aimed at bolstering the country's economy and strengthening the national democratic system and its links with the masses as submitted by the National Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Guinea and the Government of the republic.

The new reforms provide for the restoration of exclusive state monopoly over foreign trade, the exchange of trade patents, the reduction of the number of private traders down to the necessary minimum, greater repressions against persons smuggling goods out of the country or engaged in profiteering or currency manipulations, the purging of the state apparatus of elements compromising and undermining it by corruption, bribery and other abuses, the setting up of a special commission for checking up on and confiscating dishonestly acquired property, the strengthening of party organisations and leading organs of the Democratic Party of Guinea by banning the elec-

tion of merchants and persons with police records to leading posts, and other measures.

President Sékou Touré noted that these measures are an answer to the actions of counter-revolutionary, anti-popular and anti-party forces that aim to abolish the present regime and the progressive gains of the Guinean people. The purpose of these measures, he declared, was to "abolish the bourgeoisation as the primary form of exploiter capitalism and the natural ally of imperialism and neo-colonialism".

At the Sixth Congress of the Democratic Party of Guinea, held in December 1962, Sékou Touré declared: "We believe—and this is the time to state it—that the socialisation of world society is inevitable. Our experience is a new attempt at promoting socialist development in a predominantly agrarian country. Ours is a road of non-capitalist development. We will not turn away from that road because it is the only one that ensures the interests of the whole of society and frees each person from injustice, which is a feature of the exploitation of man by man."

#### **The Example of Mali**

Having embarked on socialist development the advanced countries of Asia have already achieved outstanding successes. The role of leader of the masses is carried out by revolutionary people's democratic, patriotic parties. One of these parties is the Sudanese Union. It unites all the healthy,

progressive forces of Mali. The general national, democratic tasks it has set itself are: to strengthen political independence, carry out agrarian reforms in the interests of the peasants, build and promote national industry, raise the standard of living, further democracy in social life, restrict and then drive out foreign monopolies, pursue a peace-loving, neutralist foreign policy, and strengthen economic and cultural co-operation with the socialist countries and all other friendly nations.

In September 1962 the Sudanese Union, the ruling party in Mali, declared in favour of building a socialist society in the country on the basis of the theory of scientific socialism. The Mali Government headed by Modibo Keita is reforming the country's economy with the purpose of dissolving the colonial structure inherited from the past. It is enlarging and strengthening the state sector in industry and trade. State transport companies have been set up and the Niger Office, centre of commodity farm production, has been nationalised. The government has opened two banks: the People's Development Bank and the Credit and Deposit Bank of Mali. Foreign trade is handled by Somiex, the state-run export and import company. Domestic trade is also controlled by the state. In January 1961 a restriction was placed on the export of capital; foreign firms have to reinvest 75 per cent of their profits in industries named by the government. The 1961-65 plan of economic and social development is being suc-

cessfully fulfilled. A national monetary unit, the Mali franc, was introduced in 1962.

Having set up various state companies, the people of Mali have, as Modibo Keita put it, become "the master of production and of their own finances". The socialist countries are tangibly helping Mali to strengthen her state sector and her entire economy. The Soviet Union, for instance, is helping her to enlarge the Niger Office, and Soviet geologists have helped to discover deposits of marble, gold and cement limestone and are prospecting for diamonds and petroleum. The Soviet Union is building in Mali a vocational training centre for 300 students. A tomato and mango processing plant has been built and placed in operation in Baginda with the assistance of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

Rapid advances have been achieved in setting up peasant co-operatives.

The Africanisation of cadres, including military cadres, has been completed and education is making swift headway.

The Mali people are successfully fulfilling the decisions of the Sudanese Union's 6th Congress. At this Congress Idrissa Diarra, the party's Political Secretary, described the plan of reforms as follows: "We are going through a phase of socialist reforms of the relations of production and exchange. This phase is characterised by a progressive transition of our economy from the colonial type to a semi-socialist economy. At this stage agriculture must be partially collectivised

and trade and crafts semi-socialised, a small processing industry must be built and the means found for building a heavy industry. This phase will take several years... Then we shall begin socialist construction. Progress towards socialism will be accelerated on the basis of the achievements of the first phase under the slogan of building industry in the full sense of the word and as a result of the utilisation of hydropower resources and, as far as possible, of mineral resources."\*

The economic achievements of the Mali people are enabling the republic to be more active in the world. Mali is exerting the greatest influence on her neighbours by force of example. In addition, she is taking an active part in the settlement of major problems of African and world affairs and contributing to the struggle of the peoples for a peaceful settlement of outstanding issues, for a relaxation of world tension and for the prosperity and happiness of all nations.

The domestic and foreign policy of the Mali Government and the Sudanese Union have the full support of the people. At the parliamentary elections on April 12, 1964, the Sudanese Union received 99.9 per cent of the votes, which means that the people of Mali want socialism.

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\* A. Vasyanin, *The Mali Republic*, Moscow, 1963, p. 68.



## Kenya Strengthens Her Independence

The people of Kenya are aware, as we have already pointed out, that the achievement of political independence is not the end but the beginning of the road to real freedom and happiness. It was therefore a well-considered step that in its Manifesto the Kenya African National Union, the ruling party, stated that its goal is the creation of a "democratic African socialist society". In a message that preceded the K.A.N.U. pre-election manifesto, Jomo Kenyatta declared: "Our achievement of independence, for which we have struggled for so long, will not be an end in itself. It will give us the opportunity to work unfettered for the creation of a democratic African socialist Kenya."\*

Like most of the countries south of the Sahara, Kenya is an agrarian country, the K.A.N.U. therefore devotes great attention to agrarian reforms. One of its prime tasks is to settle the question of returning to Kenyans the land that was seized from them by the colonialists. This is a very difficult problem but it is already being tackled. K.A.N.U. also plans to effect a gradual reorganisation in the countryside in order to set up co-operatives. The country's leaders attach great importance to the introduction of planning and broad "government control over the economy

in the interests of the nation". The Kenya Government headed by Jomo Kenyatta is abolishing the positions still held by the former rulers of Kenya.

The people of Kenya are working to eradicate three main evils: poverty, disease and ignorance. To uproot this abominable legacy of colonialism, the people have to unite and mobilise all their energy. Small wonder that the slogan of "Pull together!" is so popular in the country.

The republican form of administration, proclaimed in Kenya on December 12, 1963, still further strengthens that country's independence. The post of head of state, formally belonging to the Queen of England, has passed directly into the hands of Kenya herself.

In June 1964 Kenya made public her development plan, under which by 1970 she will be producing up to £364,000,000 worth of goods. In announcing this plan, Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta stressed that his country intends to utilise "all possible resources in order to achieve a steep economic rise within the next six years". There is to be a considerable increase in the output of tea, rice, sugar, sisal and timber. Cotton production is to rise by 800 per cent. Provision has been made for stepping up livestock-breeding, the building of irrigation systems and roads and an increase in the output of electric power.\*

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\* A. M. Glukhov, *Kenya: An Ultimatum to Colonialism*, Moscow, 1964, p. 109.

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\* *Za Rubezhom*, No. 34, August 22, 1964, Moscow, p. 20.



Kenya is receiving aid from other African countries and also from the socialist countries, with whom she has established good relations.

A Kenya Government delegation led by Ajuma Oginga Odinga visited the Soviet Union in April-May 1964. During the talks the Soviet Government agreed to give assistance to Kenya in building a textile mill, a fish cannery, a sugar refinery, a fruit processing plant, various types of agricultural enterprises and a radio station. In addition, the Soviet Union will help Kenya to train national cadres and present her with a fully equipped technical college with accommodation for 1,000 students. Another Soviet gift to Kenya will be a hospital with 200 beds and a polyclinic that will handle 100 patients a day. The polyclinic is to be staffed with Soviet doctors. All this will most certainly help to strengthen Kenya's independence.

In the Soviet-Kenyan Communique, the Kenya delegation declared its support for the Moscow partial test-ban treaty, which is an important step towards stopping the nuclear arms race, and also for other measures that are contributing towards a further easing of world tension, thus helping to avert a third world war.

Kenya is active in the struggle being waged by all independent African countries to drive the colonialists out of the continent, strengthen African unity, ban nuclear tests and settle all outstanding political issues.

Lately Africa has begun to play a much bigger role in world affairs. Her voice is heard more and more frequently and with ever greater effect at the United Nations and at world congresses and conferences. The African countries are participating in the settlement of all major world problems.

Africa is making a large contribution towards the settlement of the cardinal problem of modern times, the problem of averting the threat of another world war, of a world thermonuclear shambles. At the Addis Ababa Conference, for example, the independent African countries unanimously declared for general and complete disarmament and for the conversion of Africa into an atom-free zone. Further, they unanimously endorsed the Moscow partial test-ban treaty: by the time the treaty came into force on October 10, 1963, all the African countries with the exception of Guinea, the Congo (Brazzaville) and the Central African Republic, had signed it in response to the appeal of the Organisation of African Unity.

The fight for peace is popular in Africa. That is not surprising because the African peoples do not want to be involved in another world war, which would be catastrophic for the whole of mankind, including the African nations.

Moreover, the present tense world situation is forcing the African governments to draw upon their meagre means and spend considerable sums

of money on military requirements. This money is vitally needed for the development of the economy and for the betterment of the standard of living.

The upkeep of armies is complicating the problems confronting the young states and serving as a loophole for the imperialists, who are dreaming of recapturing the positions they have lost in Africa. By controlling the armies of the new states, the imperialists retain the possibility of interfering in their domestic affairs. The events in Gabon and East Africa can serve as an example.

The fact that imperialist powers have military bases in Africa draws that continent into the contradictions between the capitalist and socialist camps and turns Africa into a springboard for an attack against the socialist countries.

That explains why the African peoples are determined to see that the foreign military bases on their territory are dismantled. In this respect Mali has set the other countries an example: no bases exist on her territory. The people of Kenya have compelled the British to promise to dismantle their bases in December 1964. In many other regions of Africa foreign military bases have already been dismantled or are to be dismantled in the near future.

This struggle is showing that the African peoples are not begging peace from the imperialists but winning it. Therein lies the substance of positive neutrality, of the policy of non-alignment pursued by African countries. Today none of the

new African states is a member of an imperialist military bloc.

In their struggle for peace, the African countries are actively supporting the nations that are compelled to win independence by force of arms. Peaceful coexistence between capitalism and socialism is helping the colonies in their struggle for freedom. The socialist camp is preventing the imperialists from starting a war, and that is why the African peoples are supporting the peaceful coexistence line of the socialist countries.

The peoples of Africa want friendly relations with all nations. Friendship and co-operation is developing fruitfully between the African states and the countries of the socialist commonwealth. This friendship has a firm foundation.

Had it not relied on the vigorous and ever-growing support of the socialist camp, primarily of the U.S.S.R., the national liberation movement in Africa would not have scored such far-reaching victories. When the African peoples were fighting to achieve political independence, the socialist countries rendered them aid in the form of arms, food and medicaments and also moral and political support through the United Nations, sobering warnings to the colonialists, the conclusion of political agreements with the provisional governments of the rising states and de facto and de jure recognition of these governments.

Today, when Africa has embarked upon the second stage of the national liberation revolutions, economic and technical aid from the socialist

camp is of decisive importance. It is enabling the new African countries to strengthen their economic independence, develop evenly and raise the standard of life and the cultural level of their peoples.

Towards the close of 1963 the easy-term credits extended to African countries by the U.S.S.R. topped 1,000 million rubles. With Soviet assistance these countries have already built more than 60 industrial and other projects. Today the Soviet Union is helping to build 90 projects in the United Arab Republic (including the second section of the Aswan High Dam and a hydropower station), many industrial enterprises in Ghana (including a large-panel structures plant, rice and maize state farms, and a gold-concentrating plant with an annual capacity of 25 tons of gold), a radio station, a printshop, two hospitals and a boarding school in Somali, an oil-refinery in Ethiopia, grain elevators and food industry plants in Sudan, and a polytechnical institute, a stadium, a cannery, a meat-packing plant and a livestock-breeding farm in Guinea.

Other socialist countries are extending increasing aid to Africa.

As distinct from the "aid" from the imperialist countries, which is aimed at enslaving the African countries, at deceiving their peoples, aid from the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries is disinterested and promotes industrialisation and the development of agricultural production and the training of technical, scientific, cultural, medical

and other cadres. This aid is an important factor contributing towards the achievement of real independence by the African peoples.

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With the strengthening of real independence, the African countries will play an ever-growing role in the modern world. The time is not far distant when the last of the colonialists will be driven out of the continent in disgrace, and peace and constructive endeavour will reign throughout Africa.

The African continent has all the requisites for national rejuvenation, for the rapid and vivid bloom of democracy and for social progress. This is proved by the first convincing achievements of the new states of Africa. The whole of progressive humanity unshakeably believes in the prophetic words of Patrice Lumumba, hero of Africa:

"The day will come when history will speak. But it will not be the history which will be taught in Brussels, Paris, Washington or the United Nations.

"It will be the history that will be taught in the countries which have won freedom from colonialism and its puppets.

"Africa will write its own history and in both north and south it will be a history of glory and dignity."

# ADDENDA

*Table I*

## Achievement of Independence by Countries in Africa After 1950

Country	Date of proclamation of independence
1. Libya	December 24, 1951
2. Sudan	January 1, 1956
3. Morocco	March 2, 1956
4. Tunisia	March 20, 1956
5. Ghana	March 6, 1957
6. Guinea	October 2, 1958
7. Cameroon	January 1, 1960
8. Togo	April 27, 1960
9. Mali	June 20* (September 22**), 1960
10. Senegal	June 20* (August 20**), 1960
11. Malagasy Republic	June 20, 1960
12. Congo (Leopoldville)	June 30, 1960
13. Somali	July 1, 1960
14. Dahomey	August 1, 1960
15. Niger	August 3, 1960
16. Upper Volta	August 5, 1960
17. Ivory Coast	August 7, 1960
18. Chad	August 11, 1960

\* As part of the Mali Federation.

\*\* After the disintegration of the Mali Federation.

Country	Date of proclamation of independence
19. Central African Republic	August 12, 1960
20. Congo (Brazzaville)	August 15, 1960
21. Gabon	August 17, 1960
22. Nigeria	October 1, 1960
23. Mauretania	November 28, 1960
24. Sierra Leone	April 27, 1961
25. Tanganyika*	December 9, 1961
26. Ruanda	July 1, 1962
27. Burundi	July 1, 1962
28. Algeria	July 1, 1962
29. Uganda	October 9, 1962
30. Zanzibar and Pemba**	December 10, 1963
31. Kenya	December 12, 1963
32. Malawi	July 6, 1964
33. Zambia	October 24, 1964

\* Became the United Republic of Tanzania in October 1964.

\*\* United with Tanganyika in April 1964.

Dynamics of the Strike Movement in Africa

Country	Year					
	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
<b>Cameroon</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	9	6	2	3	—	17
Number of strikers . . .	1,091	622	151	226	—	2,083
<b>Central African Republic</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	—	14	4	10	4	—
Number of strikers . . .	—	2,203	334	2,187	460	—
<b>Chad</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	7	3	5	—	17	—
Number of strikers . . .	1,321	145	700	—	2,009	—
<b>Gabon</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	10	7	16	31	17	36
Number of strikers . . .	420	235	952	1,512	975	2,374
<b>Ghana</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	45	50	20	51	40	4
Number of strikers . . .	11,858	21,771	4,143	9,978	12,249	1,690

Country	Year					
	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
<b>Guinea</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	—	43	15	23	—	—
Number of strikers . . .	—	14,881	4,034	3,450	—	—
<b>Ivory Coast</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	32	—	14	30	—	14
Number of strikers . . .	5,750	—	2,875	1,673	3,230	2,970
<b>Kenya</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	77	96	67	232	167	280
Number of strikers . . .	21,954	21,315	42,214	72,545	26,677	132,433
<b>Malagasy Republic</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	16	7	12	13	18	29
Number of strikers . . .	8,134	1,818	3,021	2,915	1,718	3,758
<b>Mauritius</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	1	2	6	12	1	1
Number of strikers . . .	373	1,106	1,436	845	338	12
<b>Morocco</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	118	220	357	269	332	254
Number of strikers . . .	22,818	118,762	42,023	50,772	75,955	52,514

Country	Year					
	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
<b>Nigeria</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	49	48	51	54	65	58
Number of strikers . . .	21,797	24,660	20,968	23,250	36,677	18,671
<b>Northern Rhodesia</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	76	40	23	61	65	94
Number of strikers . . .	16,235	27,227	2,184	6,241	12,062	51,333
<b>Sierra Leone</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	3	7	5	2	4	22
Number of strikers . . .	1,644	1,706	4,148	1,078	318	4,042
<b>Republic of South Africa</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	119	74	46	42	81	55
Number of strikers . . .	9,634	8,179	3,703	5,500	4,991	2,146
<b>Southern Rhodesia</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	66	102	84	181	172	104
Number of strikers . . .	2,555	6,050	8,581	17,746	21,282	7,886

Country	Year					
	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
<b>Tanganyika</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	114	153	205	203	101	152
Number of strikers . . .	39,786	67,430	82,878	89,495	20,159	48,434
<b>Tunisia</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	63	45	21	11	23	11
Number of strikers . . .	5,405	1,412	1,416	1,080	885	393
<b>Uganda</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	35	44	64	53	72	161
Number of strikers . . .	3,013	5,873	13,249	30,877	21,070	25,563
<b>Upper Volta</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	5	9	9	10	8	6
Number of strikers . . .	5,404	8,593	837	1,279	792	145
<b>Senegal</b>						
Number of strikes . . .	—	—	5	4	—	—
Number of strikers . . .	—	—	7,646	148	—	—

Source: Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1963. Geneva, 1963, pp. 527-29.