

MEMORANDUM

In the period leading to the formation of the OAU, and as part of the concretisation and rationalisation of the anti-colonialist, anti-neo-colonialist struggle, African leaders tried to evolve a system of ideas, or an ideology more profound than the pan-africani nationalism which had given the anti-colonial offensive in Africa its tremendous unity and momentum. Such an ideology was essential because Africa was entering

upon a much more complex era of struggle - the struggle, not merely for freedom from political domination by a foreign power, but also for political independence made meaningful by the free exercise of acquired economic independence and cultural freedom; an era of continued struggle for the national liberation of the rest of Africa, of economic development of African countries, of the consolidation of the victories won in the course of the African revolution; an generally, an era for the building of an African continent not only capable of holding its own against the stresses and strains of international power-block relationships, but also able to survive these tensions and develop into a future of prosperity and happiness for the peoples of Africa.

In the absence of constant and adequate analysis of the nature, direction and interplay of forces in the over-all struggle, such political line as had been formulated to keep the objectives clear has become blurred and even seems distorted in places. In some very important centres of decision-making, the definition of the African revolution has become considerably amplified; it has been reduced to the simple fact of pointing a gun and pulling a trigger.

The mobilisation of the masses, their ideological and military preparation, the struggle to create and build up a solid revolutionary cadre capable of ensuring victorious struggle - all these techniques of revolution are excluded in the unfolding definition of the African revolution. Those who think in these simplistic terms ignore the classic injunction of President Sekou Toure: "Tout militant en tout lieu et a tout moment doit etre pret pour la Revolution". They must be prepared and put in a state of preparedness.

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Furthermore, this emerging definition presents the enemy of the African Revolution in terms which seem to lack revolutionary content, while at the same time giving the real enemy an undeserved advantage over the forces of revolution.

What provokes these comments is the fact that the jsisraxiHg planners and strategists of the African revolution appear to give the South African fascist regime a position of diminishing importance in their evaluation of the galaxy of imperialist forces operating in Africa against national liberation, and against the political and economic independence of African states.

Following is a summary of the main features of the South African situation and of its bearing on the rest of Africa.

1. THE SOUTH AFRICAN SYSTEM IS COLONIALISM, CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION AND RACISM, ALL INTERLACED AND ENMESHED INTO A COMPOSITE WHOLE

a) Colonialism

Between the years 1902 and 1910, there were four British colonies in South Africa. In two of these, Africans were citizens in name only.

In the other two, they were treated as virtual foreigners.

In 1910, Britain surrendered virtually all political power to the white

settlers under a constitution which formed the white-governed colonies into a self-governing state, but which specifically excluded the Africans

from any share in the exercise of political power within that state. In

relation to this new state - the Union of South Africa - the colonial

status of the Africans remained the same as it was before 1902 in those

areas where the war of resistance to European invasion had been lost.

Since the year 1910, the colonial status of the African has not improved.

Instead, it has worsened.

The difference between the South African type and the classic type of colonialism is that in the former case, the entire state machinery of

the colonial power - the legislature, judiciary, civil service, army and police - is based in the territory of the colonised. In other words, the South African territory carried an "independent" state of white people only, like any European state, which exercises unrestricted political power over a Black population that had no say whatever on how it is to be governed.

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The principles of decolonisation and anti-colonialist struggle are thus as valid in relation to South Africa as they are with respect to any other part of the world, and the fact of decolonisation will, as anywhere else, express itself in the transfer of political power to the African people.

b) Capitalist Exploitation and Racism

These two elements of the system are well-known. It is necessary only to emphasize -

1) that South Africa is a modern, highly-industrialised capitalist state;

2) that the racist element, as a component of the socio-political structure, ensures the super-exploitation of the African and hence the super-profits that in turn give all-round power to the all-white regime;

3) that deeply involved in this super-exploitation, and hence in the maintenance of this system, are the world's main capitalist powers, notably Britain, France, West Germany, USA and Japan.

2. The Liberation Movement

This presents a long struggle for national liberation whose radicalisation in the early fifties started a dialectical process of action and counter-action between oppressor and oppressed which raised the level and intensity of the struggle beyond the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 to the massive national strike in 1961, when the entire South African army was called out and used force against the unarmed oppressed masses

Reacting to this new development, the people decided to resort to armed struggle. Thereafter, numerous sabotage actions were carried out

against enemy property, and hundreds of militants were selected and sent out of South Africa for military training.

3. Advanced preparations for armed uprising

In 1962, Nelson Mandela secretly left South Africa on a mission to the African states to mobilise material and other assistance for armed struggle. In the course of this mission he met the late Amilcar Cabral, Aquino Braganca and others in Rabat; and later, in the company of Oliver Tambo, was received by President Ahmed Sekou Toure in Conakry

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He returned to South Africa but was shortly arrested and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment for leaving South Africa illegally and for undergoing military training;

In the following year, the headquarters of the national and military command in South Africa was raided, the national leaders arrested and, together with Nelson Mandela sentenced to life imprisonment.

The fascist regime had discovered in the course of the raids and on subsequent investigation, that the preparations for an armed up-rising were advanced. The result was an unprecedented offensive aimed at the total eradication of the liberation movement and the terrorisation of the masses into total submission.

Fascism Fails

The brutal fascist offensive unleashed on the people in 1963 and subsequent years failed in its objectives.

The morale of the masses remained unaffected. The liberation movement survived the onslaught, but failed to mount a counter-offensive. It was in the face of this vicious struggle for survival and counter-attack that material support for the Ai.J started its rapid annual decline from the pre-OAU levels.

This necessarily slowed down the progress of the struggle towards armed conflict, thereby allowing the enemy much-needed time to heighten the sophistication of its repressive machinery.

5) New Victories for the People's Struggle

The armed actions in Zimbabwe during 1967 and 1968 involving the ANC and ZAPU combattants against Rhodesian and South African troops, the highly publicised trial of a number of ANC cadres in 1969 in South Africa,, the trial of Mrs Winnie Mandela and other ANC militants in 1970, coupled

coupled with a variety of clandestine forms of revolutionary activity inside South Africa - all these resulted in 1971 in an upsurge of militant political activity by the masses of the people, which is still in progress, and which is an attack on the policies of the ruling regime. This activity occurs at various social and class levels among the oppressed people, and has produced a marked effect among the white youth and intellectuals. In terms of the tactics of revolutionary struggle, it has opened up new opportunities for the mass mobilisation

of the people and the consequent extension and strengthening of the ideological and combative base for victorious struggle at the level of armed action.

Furthermore, this new development represents a tactical defeat for imperialism which should be fully exploited.

6) The Urgent Need for Centralised Control and Direction

These political activities are not necessarily co-ordinated, nor do they necessarily have, as their objective, the accomplishment of purposeful

revolutionary tasks. It is the urgent duty and task of the liberation movement to infuse these social forces with revolutionary dynamism and

co-ordinate, harmonise and direct them towards the speedy attainment of

revolutionary goals determined on the basis of a clear grasp of the concrete conditions of struggle. It is because the liberation movement has

to perform this task, and to do so without delay, that there exists an objective necessity for it to be accorded urgent and substantial material support.

7) A Few South African Factors Favouring Fascism

a) South Africa has a concentration of 4.7 million whites, virtually all of whom support the policy of white supremacy.

b) Its military and secret service budget runs upward of

US \$500,000,000 per annum.

c) The country, with hardly any forests, jungle or mountains, shares borders with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland - newly independent African states

with an average population of 0.75 million each, and which are either unable, like Lesotho, or unwilling, like Botswana, to play the role of a Zambia, a Tanzania or a Guinea vis-a-vis the revolutionary struggle in South Africa.

d) Because of the absence of friendly borders for the liberation movement

in South Africa and the difficult conditions for survival of national leaders within South Africa, the direction of the over-all struggle is at present based in Zambia, and faces severe problems of communication with

its militants and organisers operating in South Africa.

8) No Insurmountable Difficulties

The factors enumerated above, and others not mentioned which give strategic

and tactical advantages to imperialism, are problems of the revolution which, like any others, can and will be solved. They are simply an invitation to the revolution to work harder, sacrifice more and give generously!

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They are elements in the dialectic of revolutionary struggle.

9) Strategy Vis-a-vis South Africa

a) The calculations of World Imperialism

Imperialism acts in accordance with a global, all-embracing strategy.

Its local and regional operations are closely and systematically co-ordinated, and harmonised. It compensates its losses or setbacks in one area by advancing its position in other areas. It adjusts the strength of its operative forces in any given region in accordance with the strategic and tactical demands of its global position. Thus, for imperialism, Cape Verde and South Africa, Angola and Rhodesia, Namibia and Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Vietnam are all part of a co-ordinated and interlinked system of strongholds, the development in any one of which are evaluated in relation to the situation in all the other strongholds. President Sekou Toure speaks with greater clarity on the issue;

"L'imperialisme est froide, logique, rationnel, absolu et coherent dans la defense de ses interets propre qui ont pour nom: le pillage et le viol des Peuple".

There can thus be no doubt whatever that for imperialism, the events in Mozambique, the succession of blows inflicted by the PAIGC in the field of combat and in the diplomatic offensive by the OAU, have a direct bearing on the situation in other parts of the globe, and gives rise to counter-moves designed to neutralise imperialist losses. Certainly, it seems inconceivable that imperialism should hold the view that South Africa has no strategic or tactical relevance to the changing patterns of the African revolution or to the shifting balance of forces in other areas of social conflict.

b) The Majority View Among Africa's Strategists

Africa's approach to this issue, as reflected in the decisions of the OAU Liberation Committee, is that because of the strength of the South African regime, the struggle in that country must await the defeat of Portugal in Mozambique, the achievement of African Majority rule in Zimbabwe, and/or the liberation of Namibia from South African racist domination. The South African revolution, it is argued, would then be assured of friendly neighbours to serve as revolutionary bases. Therefore, the liberation movement in that country is in need of no assistance for the present. Other variants of the case leading to this

conclusion are:

* that the ANC "is not fighting";

* that there is no struggle in South Africa, the ANC is doing nothing; assistance should be given to those movements only which are "fighting";

* that the Africans in South Africa have no fighting tradition, and in any case have been brainwashed into acquiescence.

Some of these statements are not worthy of comment. But, equally, what

the OAU has contributed to the South African struggle in terms of material assistance through the ANC is not worthy of mention. The most plausible inference to be drawn from this fact is that the South African situation, whatever it is, has been assigned a place outside Africa's strategic and tactical sphere of revolutionary action. The colonialism, national oppression and racist exploitation practised by the fascist regime, its expansionist designs against Independent Africa, and its widely publicised and growing military and economic involvement in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola - all these well-known manifestations

of imperialism seemingly combine to justify an approach which regards the South African situation and struggle as unrelated to the African struggle against imperialism. The basis for this view of the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa is extremely difficult to understand. L'imperialisme est un, l'Afrique doit être une, la Révolution mondiale doit s'unir et fortifier ses bases¹. This is what President Sekou Toure says.

What is Esther surprising is the prevailing concept of the meaning and content of revolutionary struggle, and of the objective role and function of a national liberation movement in a situation that has all the known characteristics and components of a classic conflict between one social class and another, between a revolutionary movement of the people and an internationally notorious fascist regime. To equate revolutionary struggle with carrying a gun all the time and with nothing else; to define it in terms of enemy property or personnel destroyed or captured; to decide on the quantum of financial assistance by reference to the frequency and number of armed attacks carried out, and to withhold available assistance to those unable to produce a dead enemy soldier, whatever the objective needs and scale of their activities*is, at the

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very least, quite unusual. Here again Ahmed Sekou Toure comes in handy -

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how redeeming it is to read his workd/

"Le Peuple fait le Parti Le Parti est une realite

objective et morale. Une foece sociale fondee sur 1*unite d'action des hommes en vue de realiser des objectifs choisis collectivementn.

Elsewhere he says:

"D'abord 1'imperialisme y a de nombreuses tetes de pont, telles que 11 administration colonial fasciste et raciste de l'Afrique du Sud, de la Ehodesie, des colonies Portu- gaises de la Guinee-Bissau et des lies da Cap Vert, du Mozambique, de 1'Angola, de Sao Tome et Principe." Conti- nuing, he declares:

"Mais dans tous les pays ainsi domines, les Peuples organises ont engage contre 11imperialisme une lutte de liberation acharnee, lutte dont nous avons le devoir d'analyser les conditions de succes".

c) As the Vorster Regime Sees It

Forster sees South Africa as a bastion of "western civilisation" in Africa, a permanently white-ruled state which independent African countries must learn to live with. He sees Africa as a vast economic empire for v/hite South Africa, dominated by his regime economically, militarily and scientifically, and subject to South African political influence. In these calculations, Vorster has the good wishes and the assured backing of imperialism.

But the immediate tasks of the fexiHK Vorster regime are -

1) To contain the revolutionary movement in South Africa and wage unrelenting struggle against its growth if, as experience has shown, it cannot possibly be destroyed. In the performance of this task, the regime cannot but hopefully look to the OAU

persisting in its current attitude towards South Africa.

2) To help suppress or contain the revolutionary forces in terri- tories to the Rorth of South Africa, and for that purpose to pour men and materials into these territories; to engage in economic ventures aimed at justifying massive intervention

in support of its Portuguese and Rhodesian allies, and to consoli- date this alliance at numerous levels and in numerous ways.

3) To play for time, whilst striving to further consolidate its

position in South and Southern Africa, and to this end, to pursue the implantation of its strategy for the perpetual enslavement of the Black people. Of key importance in this connection is the Bantustan policy which aims, inter alia, at eliminating the effective majority of the Africans by dividing them up into small, weak and rival tribal entities, undermining the role of the liberation movement by promoting Bantustan "Heads of State" and offering them up to Africa and the world as the real leaders of the people. Vorster no doubt reckons that this exercise will drive severe and crippling divisions into the OAU and plant sharp contradictions between the liberation movement and some African States.

k) In the end result, Vorster hopes to persuade or compel Africa and the progressive world to disengage from all hostile and unfriendly involvement in the South African situation, and in due course establish or resume normal relations with the apartheid regime.

5) The Concern of the ANC

There is a disturbing identity between the intended objectives of imperialist designs vis-a-vis the South African regime and the predictable or likely consequences of current African thinking on the strategy and perspectives of the African revolution. There is evidence of a campaign by friends and brothers. There is also evidence of a campaign by agents and servitors of imperialism.

The two campaigns spring from irreconcilable motivations, but they compliment one another to the sole and exclusive benefit of imperialism. However, the historical process is irreversible. Therefore, imperialism will fail. Indeed, hard times are

in the making for the fascist regime and the ANC will yet again take command of the situation. Nevertheless, the timing and tempo of these campaigns give cause for concern, not so much for their effect on the ANC as for their meaning for Africa.

10) THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OAU - A REQUEST TO THE P
RESIDENT

The facts canvassed in this memorandum indicate a need for a critical, analytical review of the strategy and tactics of the

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African revolution in the ten-year period following the historic formation of the OAU. Such an analysis, grounded on firm revolutionary theory, could provide an indispensable set of guidelines enabling the Anniversary Summit to elaborate and put into effect a new and well-orchestrated offensive for the defeat of imperialism in Africa.

President Sekou Toure is eminently suited to direct, commission or personally undertake the performance of this vital task. His study and conclusions, made available well before the Summit, could become a lasting and invaluable determinant of future revolutionary thinking in Africa.

Conakry,

February 1973.

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Undermine its essence and show it up as a sham?

Discourage attendance except as to a
Plant the seeds of internal opposition
to regime

Mobilise tight opposition and hostility
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