

Africa Today

- MASHUARA OBOLO

"THE IMPERIALIST COLOURS OF THE POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA ARE RADICALLY FADING AWAY; AND SOON THE ARTIFICIAL BOUNDRIES WHICH DIVIDE AFRICA WILL BE COMPLETELY OBLITERATED.

"IN THIS MELTING POT OF CHANGE ONLY ONE SUB-LIME RESULT WILL EMANATE FROM THE POLITICAL FORGE: THE EFFECTIVE POLITICAL UNION OF AFRICAN STATES."

- PRESIDENT KWAME NKRUMAH -

It was in July 1961 when the late great Ghanaian statesman, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, uttered these words. Little did he realise that almost 20 years later some African states would still be under colonial domination, that is Namibia and South Africa. However, this does not mean that Africa has not made any progress during these past 18 years. So, in observing the 18th Anniversary of Africa Freedom Day we take stock of our progress and problems and highlight our urgent tasks.

O R I G I N

In 1958, Africa Freedom Day was observed for the first time; this was the time of Africa's awakening, when Morocco, Sudan, Ghana and Guinea won independence. The original date was the 15th of April. As an expression of its commitment to the liberation of the African continent, the vanguard of our oppressed but fighting people, the African National Congress, marked this day at the Alexander township stadium and the attendance by the masses of our people was tremendous. The birth of the decade of the 60s saw more African states gaining their independence. In 1960 alone 17 states appeared on the political map of Africa. Then on the 25th May, 1963, African statesmen met at Addis Ababa to form the Organisation of African Unity for the purpose of championing the noble cause of the total liberation of the African continent from colonialism. Since then May 25 has been marked by all progressive mankind as Africa Freedom Day.

The 18th Anniversary of Africa Freedom Day comes at a time when our continent has taken yet another giant step towards the achievement of our main goal. The decade of the 70s witnessed the rise to freedom of many African peoples. In 1974 the Ethiopian people under the leadership of patriots like Mengistu Haile Mariam toppled the corrupt feudalist regime of Haile Selassie. The armed liberation struggle by the peoples in the former Portuguese colonies have been crowned with great victories: in West Africa, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde Islands led by PAIGC, in Southern Africa, Angola and Mozambique led by the MPLA and FRELIMO respectively.

What is most significant in this new round of independence is the vigour with which these nations, almost without exception, are tackling their problems of living. In spite of the burdensome legacy of colonialism, they are taking measures to ensure that the masses share their countries' wealth; decisive industrial enterprises are being progressively nationalised in the interests of the masses and the land has been given to those who work it, the poor p e a s a n t s. The touching



Coffee harvesting in the People's Republic of Angola.

words of one of the greatest leaders of Africa and the Father of the Angolan nation, the late Dr. Agostinho Neto: "What is the use of so much bloodshed if at the end of it all we do not control the wealth of our country," are finding expression in concrete action.

The creation of mass organisations, trade unions, women, youth and pioneers' organisations-together with popular organs of power such as the People's Assembly in Angola, make it possible for the masses to run the affairs of their country. The

progress made by these countries in the spheres of health, the combating of illiteracy and education in general, culture, etc., is remarkable. The development, with its anti-imperialist content, in countries like Algeria, Benin, Congo, Libya, Madagascar, etc., is encouraging.

NEO-COLONIALISM

While the progress made by Africa brings hope to all of us, we should never turn a blind eye to the serious problems we are facing. Today, rich as she is, Africa is one of the continents with the highest number of diseases in the world. It is not uncommon to find children walking bare-footed with empty stomachs and the cause of these problems is not our 'laziness' or 'absence of a spirit of enterprise' as the imperialists would like the world to believe. The cause is the imperialists with their so-called aid, which rather than improve our situation, ensures that the bulk of the wealth of our countries fill the coffers of the Western capitals. That is why Africa must clearly differentiate friend from foe. Experience has proved that it is only those countries which have close friendly ties with the true friends of Africa - the socialist community headed by the USSR - that have been able to solve the problems of their people.

IMPERIALIST REACTION

The advances made by the people of Africa are viewed with hostility by the rulers of the imperialist world, the monopolists of Washington, London, Bonn, Paris and the rest. To them the poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance of our peoples are their source of profit. That is why the imperialists are always hatching plots to sabotage the African Revolution. Africa will never forget the bloody assassination of Patrice Lumumba and other beastly deeds of the imperialists in Congo.

Today the African countries, especially where the wealth is transferred to the people, have become objects of imperialist dirty manoeuvres ranging from the subtler methods like ideological subversion to direct open aggression. In the Horn of Africa bands of separatists, enemies of the people, are recruited, trained and armed by Washington, other Western countries and Peking. They are then sent from Somali, Sudan and other reactionary countries to hamper progress in Ethiopia. In Southern Africa the Pretoria fascists, employed and backed by NATO are daily committing acts of aggression against the People's Republics of Angola and Mozambique. The UNITA and FNLA

bandits employed against Angola and the so-called Mozambican Resistance Movement in Mozambique have proved inadequate. The imperialists have not abandoned their aims of toppling the peoples' governments in these countries and replace them with puppet regimes.

THE PENTAGON

To make things worse, the Pentagon has been given the green-light to build military bases in Egypt, Somali and Kenya by the puppet authorities in these countries. Washington has made Diego Garcia Island their bridgehead in the Indian Ocean. This island was annexed from Mauritius by the British and they leased it to the US in 1966. This brings to more than 30 bases in which the Pentagon is operating in the Indian Ocean. The US' 'Rapid Intervention Force' has been created for the sole purpose of suppressing liberation movements or any popular uprisings that might occur wherever the Western monopolies' neo-colonial regimes are threatened in Africa. The subversive activities of the CIA & NIS (formerly BOSS) and other Western intelligence agencies are also a cause for concern. The CIA & NIS network recently uncovered in Mozambique is one example.

Thanks to the determination of the peoples of Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique, the firmness of their vanguard Parties and the unfailing brotherly support from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, these nations continue to defend their revolutionary gains and develop their countries along the path they have chosen in spite of the continuing imperialist sabotage.



SOUTHERN AFRICA

After a long, bloody and bitter armed liberation struggle, the Zimbabwean people have won their political independence. The victory of the Zimbabwean people is shared by our entire continent and especially our fighting people in Namibia and South Africa for whom this victory has further strengthened the possibility of achieving freedom in our own countries. The monopolists of the US, Britain and other Western countries are still occupying dominant positions in the economy of Zimbabwe, bent on getting richer at the expense of the Zimbabwean people. This makes it urgent for the Zimbab-

wean masses to resolutely struggle to control and benefit from the wealth of their country. This is an even more difficult stage in the revolution. This in turn requires maximum unity of the entire people against their common enemy, the imperialists and the fascist Pretoria racists, as well as determination to defend their revolutionary gains.

At the southern tip of Africa, the peoples of South Africa, led by our vanguard movement - the African National Congress - and of Namibia, led by SWAPO, are combating the fascist Pretoria nazis and their NATO allies. Today, it is because of the 'Western Contact Group' that a solution cannot be reached in Namibia. The solution that these countries want is the one that would suit them best, that of neo-colonialism in Namibia. The uranium and other strategic minerals of Namibia that are being exported to the West and US are the main things that make the imperialists to keep on manoeuvring instead of economically and militarily sanctioning the racists and bring about a genuine solution to the Namibia people's struggle.

Recently at the UN's Security Council meeting on the Namibian issue, most of the African states staged a walk-out in solidarity with SWAPO. This came about when NATO countries either abstained from or vetoed the UN's call to sanction South Africa both economically and militarily as this was the only decision reached upon.

With the intensification of armed liberation struggle in our country, we see the racists continuing with their cross-border attacks and bombing all the Front-line States, claiming falsely that they are "harbouring ANC terrorists." The People's Republics of Angola and Mozambique are the ones bearing the main brunt of these attacks. All progressive mankind should support the peaceful peoples of the Front-line States against the Pretoria fascists.

MK AND PLAN

Thanks to the material and moral support given to us by the socialist countries, we the peoples of South Africa and Namibia are able to intensify our armed liberation activities inside our territories. Our peoples' armies, Umkhonto we Sizwe and PLAN pledge to intensify these operations until our continent is free from colonial and imperialist domination of foreign monopolies. We of the ANC and its allies, urge the international community to intensify their solidarity with the struggling peoples of South Africa and Namibia against this internationally hated crime against humanity, Apartheid, for Africa

shall never be free as long as this monster of Pretoria is still in power. As Comrade President Oliver Tambo stated:

"Mozambique will never grow. Zimbabwe will never. For as long as there is oppression and racist domination in South Africa, we shall not know independence..."

These are the achievements and problems that our continent is facing on the 18th Anniversary of her Freedom Day. It goes without doubt that one day the sun will rise when the exploiters of African wealth together with their fascist boer watchmen shall be routed and destroyed by the people and the "effective political Union of African States" shall be formed as Dr. Kwame Nkrumah once said.

BANTUSTANS - Past and Present

- STEVE DLIWAYO

It is now almost three decades since the Pretoria fascist rulers have been forcing our resisting people to accept the genocidal bantustan scheme. Each successive Nationalist Party government has consistently maintained this policy. Under the pressure of the mounting struggle by our people led by the African National Congress against the entire apartheid system, the fascists have had to change their terminology. During the "fighting fifties" the apartheid regime moved from Bantu Authorities to 'Self-government', in the 70s they moved to 'independence'. What is common to all these labels is that they are all misplaced, and intentionally so. Furthermore all Nationalist Party governments have consistently maintained the fascist colonial stand of "keeping the kaffir in his place". This is clearly demonstrated by the grim reality of the bantustans.

THE INDEPENDENCE FRAUD

No matter from which angle one views the bantustan scheme, it remains a big fraud which cannot be camouflaged by any