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AFRICA'S FUTURE: THE SOVIET VIEW

An abridgement of I. I. Potekhin's booklet
Afrika smotrit v budushcheye (Africa Looks Ahead)
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Foreward

Africa Looks Ahead, by I. I. Potekhin (Moscow, 1960, 86 pp.) is a valuable compendium of Soviet views on the problems facing African countries and peoples and on the ideals which they ought to set themselves. The main subjects dealt with are the prospects for socialism in Africa, and the type of socialism which should be aimed at; the degree of independence so far achieved by african countries; the correct measures to achieve economic independence; the problems of artificial frontiers, of multinational states, of the creation of nations, of moves towards larger groupings of states, and of African unity as a whole; Africa's cultural heritage, and the concepts of "African personality" and "negritude;" and Africa's contribution to the destinies of mankind and to the struggle for peace. The booklet may usefully be read in conjunction with Russia Looks at Africa, a brief survey of Russian writing on Africa from the 19th century to the present day, published by this Centre.

In prescribing the Marxist-Leninist theory of scientific socialism as the ideal solution for Africa's many problems Potekhin gives as an example of the successful application of this theory the Muslim republics of Soviet Central Asia and Kazakhstan. He omits to mention, however, that the spectacular material achievements of these republics have been and are still accompanied by some of the very same factors whose past or present existence in Africa he so strongly deplores. Of these factors the principal ones are, first, the continuance today of the same degree of paramount control over Russia's Asian dominions as was exercised in Tsarist times; political, cultural and economic control is maintained through the medium of the Communist Party, while military control is in the hands of the predominantly Russian Soviet Army, the republics having no defense forces of their own. Secondly, colonization of these republics by white non-Asian settlers from Western Russia has steadily increased during the past 40 years and, according

to the 1959 Soviet census, their proportion now ranges from 53 percent in Kazakhstan to 14.7 percent in Uzbekistan, the average percentage of non-Asians in the whole region being 27.6 percent.

In recommending Stalin's definition of the prerequisites for the formation of a nation -- community of territory, economic life, language and culture -- Potekhin also criticizes the political separation in Africa of peoples whose languages have an identical base. The same criticism could be made of the political separation of the ethnically and linguistically allied Tatar and Bashkir, and Kazakh and Kirgiz peoples, not to mention many similar cases in the Caucasus....

AFRICA LOOKS AHEAD

(Note: In the following abridgement of the booklet the headings, of which there are none in the Russian text, have been added.)

I. The Pattern for Marxism in Africa (pp. 3-29)

Direct European political domination over the peoples of Africa will soon be completely finished with. Looking to the future, all true African patriots are asking what is the best way to abolish the backwardness created by colonialism and to raise their material and cultural level. Capitalism is the system imposed on Africa by European and American imperialism; it is discredited in the eyes of the world, and the liberated peoples are thinking of other, progressive, roads of development.

The ideas of socialism are popular in a number of African countries. Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika has written of the need for a social revolution which will ensure that the welfare of the masses is the prime concern of the government. In Ghana the Convention People's Party has declared its intention of creating a state based on socialist principles; and the Ghana National Association of Students' Organizations, since its foundation in 1952, has made its main task the popularization of the ideology of scientific Marxism. Much has been done to propagate the ideas of socialism by the Communist Parties of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, the Sudan and South Africa, and also by the African Independence Party of Senegal, which has declared its adherence to the principles of scientific socialism. By various routes, despite the obstacles set by the colonialists, socialist literature reaches the reader in the most remote corners of Africa. Then there is the inspiration afforded by the socialist states of Europe and Asia, and notably the Soviet Union, whose victory over fascism won for the country of socialism the devotion of the best people of all countries and of Africa in particular.

The fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester soon after the end of the last war adopted Marxist socialism as its philosophy, according to Dr. Nkrumah, and the South African writer Peter Abrahams put forward the slogan "Forward to the union of socialist states of Africa!" At the Accra Conference of Peoples of Africa in December 1958 Prof. William Dubois told the delegates that there was no choice for them between socialism and private capitalism; private capitalism was doomed. Delegates at this conference and those at Tunis and Conakry in 1960 declared that Africa must follow the road of socialism. Leopold Senghor has written that, before the coming of the European colonizers, Africa was already socialist, and the task of African peoples today was to recreate the African socialist society on a new base. Dr. Nkrumah has pointed out that in the African villages communal landownership and cooperative cultivation prevail, and that the aim must be to bring these into the framework of a modern socialist society. President Nasir proclaims the ideal of building a "democratic, socialist, cooperative society." Jaques Janvier, Mamadou Dia and Leopold Senghor have advocated building socialism on the "Yugoslav pattern." Much is also said and published about "Israeli socialism."

Such are some of the ideas of Africans themselves about socialism. To evaluate them properly one must examine the history of socialist ideas and elucidate certain points. Marx and Engels distinguished many types of so-called socialism: "feudal socialism," used by the aristocracy as a false slogan in its struggle against the bourgeoisie; petty bourgeois socialism, which idealized the existing commodity production system and sought to perpetuate it; conservative or bourgeois socialism, which sought to remedy social ills only so as to strengthen the structure of bourgeois society -- a type of socialism with which the capitalists of the whole world are today in agreement; and utopian socialism, which, though honest in intention, is not based on the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat but on the philanthropy of the bourgeoisie. Such, until the appearance of the theory of scientific socialism, were the various notions of socialism with which the reactionaries sought to deceive the working masses and keep them in political and social servitude.

According to the theory of scientific socialism, socialism must inevitably replace capitalism. A socialist society is one in which state authority is in the hands of the workers, the means of production are publicly owned, there are no exploiting classes or exploitation of man by man, and economic development is planned and subordinated to the main task of all-round satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of man. The scientifically based correctness of this theory is confirmed by the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

But, besides scientific socialism, many other very varying concepts of socialism exist today; some are the result of a sincere delusion, and others the result of a deliberate perversion of the ideas of socialism. Under "Israeli socialism" the Histadrut, the general federation of Jewish workers, manages industrial enterprises on its own account, but in fact the workers

in these enterprises do not regard them as in any way different from capitalist undertakings; in Israel the workers are oppressed by the monopolies just as in any other capitalist country. As regards Yugoslavia, the well-off peasants there continue to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor peasants, who are reduced to the condition of hired laborers; what kind of socialism is this?

In the West much is made of the distinction between private and state capitalism, according to the theory of "democratic socialism." It is claimed that the property and industrial and other undertakings belonging to the state are the possession of the people as a whole, that is to say socialist property. This is a complete delusion. Any bourgeois state always and invariably defends the interests of only one class, the capitalists, to the detriment of the interests of the workers. The undertakings belonging to a bourgeois state are capitalist, the collective property of the class of capitalists. The development of state capitalism creates preconditions for the transition from capitalism to socialism, but it is still not socialism. For state capitalist undertakings to become socialist it is necessary for state authority to pass from the exploiters to the exploited working masses.

There is also "cooperative socialism." Marxists have always considered that peasant cooperation is the only road to socialism in agriculture; it must not be enforced, but achieved by example and assistance. As the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have shown, socialism cannot be built without cooperation; but this does not mean that every form of cooperation is socialism. In a bourgeois society cooperation means collective capitalist enterprise, and no more. The character and role of cooperation depend on whether the state authority belongs to the capitalists or the workers, and on whether the policy of this state authority is directed to preserving capitalism or building a socialist society in which private property and exploitation will have no place.

The theory of "African socialism" has received wide currency in Africa. It is based on denying the existence of classes in present-day African society and on recognizing the special role of the peasant commune.

It is true that in the tropical countries of Africa the process of class formation is still not finished. But the exponents of "African socialism" underestimate the degree of class differentiation in African society. Except in some regions of Nigeria and Uganda, there is indeed no class of feudalists opposing the peasantry, there is no private feudal land ownership, and the land is in the possession of peasant communes. But the tribal aristocracy controls and disposes of the communal land in its own interests, adopting various methods of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation of the peasantry. Although this is not true feudalism, it is feudalism of the patriarchal type.

It is also true that the formation of an African national bourgeoisie, as a class in opposition to the proletariat, is

still far from finished. The domination of foreign monopolies prevented Africans from accumulating capital, and basically there is only an African petty bourgeoisie; there are virtually no large African capitalists, by European standards. But the supporters of "African socialism" are wrong in denying the existence of an African national bourgeoisie; and moreover such a class now has new opportunities of development in African countries which have acquired political independence.

For the transition to a socialist society the formation of a proletariat, and the growth of its class consciousness, is of cardinal importance. Unlike all other classes, the proletariat is interested not in the preservation of private ownership of means of production but in their socialization and in the abolition of exploitation. Concentrated in big undertakings, the working class is the great force which can lead the movement towards socialism. Whether or not a working class has yet been formed in the tropical countries of Africa can be disputed, but one cannot deny the existence of an army of many millions of Africans working for hire. Most of these are seasonal workers who have not yet broken their links with the land. But a layer of class-conscious workers, proletarians, forming the skeleton of a working class, already exists and is rapidly growing. Organized in trade unions, the working class is the most active force in the anti-imperialist struggle for independence. Participation in the international workers' movement accelerates the growth of its class-consciousness. Moreover, the existence of foreign-owned industries in Africa and the development of state-controlled national industry means that the working class will grow more rapidly than the national bourgeoisie.

However, even after independence, the exploiter of the working class remains the foreign imperialist bourgeoisie, not the national bourgeoisie; the latter's differences with the working class may indeed become more acute, but they both have the common task of strengthening national independence and overcoming the survival of colonialism. Thus the all-national character of the anti-imperialist movement may be preserved for a long time after independence; and it is not impossible that this movement will merge in a struggle to rebuild society on socialist principles.

So much for the question of classes in present-day Africa. As regards the question of the peasant commune, this is indeed still a feature of the tropical countries of Africa. What part can the peasant commune play in the transition to socialism. This question was much discussed in the 19th century in connection with the narodnik movement in Russia.

In Russia at that time there still existed the rural commune, collective cultivation, equal division of land holdings, common harvesting, etc. The Russian revolutionary democrats saw in this commune the embryo of socialism; they thought that it offered the possibility of a transition of Russia to socialism, by-passing the agonizing stage of capitalism. But the noble dreams of the Russian revolutionary democrats did not come

true; Russia proceeded on the capitalist road of development, the rural commune was destroyed and different classes arose among the peasantry, and the proletariat grew and led the struggle for socialism.

But is the road taken by Russia the sole obligatory one for all countries? Does this mean that the rural commune cannot serve as the connecting link for a direct transition to socialism, by-passing capitalism? The reply of Marxism-Leninism is, it can, but under the proper conditions.

These conditions were defined by the founders of Marxism. Marx himself, whatever some proponents of "African socialism" may say, did not consider that the capitalist stage of development was inevitable for all peoples and all countries. He clearly denied that this was his view, and stated in fact that communal land ownership in Russia "can constitute the point of departure for Communist development." In the view of the founders of Marxism, such a development depends on who in the final analysis hold the power in their hands, and what party heads the government. Again, Lenin himself declared that, with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries could advance to Communism "by-passing the capitalist stage of development."

The correctness of this theory has been proved in practice in the Soviet Union. Of the many different peoples living in the USSR, some at the time of the October Revolution had passed through the stage of capitalism; the peoples of Central Asia were in various stages of the development of pre-capitalist, feudal society; and the peoples of the far north still lived under a tribal system without classes. Today all the peoples of the Soviet Union live in the conditions of socialism. This means that the peoples of Central Asia have passed from feudalism to socialism, by-passing capitalism, and the peoples of the far north have proceeded directly to socialism from a primitive communal structure. The development of the Mongolian People's Republic towards socialism, thanks to Soviet brotherly aid, affords another example.

Historically, the development of the peoples of Africa has been of a special kind, and a complex one. As a result of the European slave trade and of colonial enslavement they have lagged behind the peoples of other continents, and one may speak of an interruption of some centuries in their development. But, since independence, they are now developing in conditions of successful advance of the world socialist system and the decline of capitalism, and this will determine the course of their further development.

It is quite wrong to say, as do Western sociologists, that Marxists regard the universal historical process as a single straight highroad. Marxists only affirm that there is a definite sequence in the development of society, that one social and economic structure replaces another, that socialism comes forward to replace capitalism; this is a law of history. But the

modes of transition may be very different. The African peoples, like every other, will achieve the transition to socialism in their own way.

Some supporters of "African socialism" maintain that Marxist-Leninist theory of transition to socialism is not applicable to Africa because of the African peoples' particular historical development and present-day social and economic systems. But this individuality has not been due to any factors which apply only to the African peoples, but to the interference of European capitalism which enslaved the peoples of Africa. As regards the social and economic structure of the African peoples, this has its own peculiarities; their material and spiritual culture has its own specific forms; Africa has an appearance and individuality of its own, as have other countries and continents; but nevertheless, like the rest of the world, it is subject to the objective laws of historical development.

Marxist-Leninist theory takes into account the historical conditions under which this theory is to be applied. Lenin always insisted on a creative and not a dogmatic approach to the theory; he told the Communist organizations of the peoples of the East, at their congress in 1919, that they had the task of applying Communist theory in conditions which did not exist in European countries, conditions in which the main mass of the population was the peasantry and the struggle was not against capital but against medieval survivals.

The eastern peoples within the Soviet Union, guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, have accomplished a gigantic leap from poverty to prosperity, from ignorance to culture. In the Uzbek SSR per thousand inhabitants 13 have had a higher education and 234 a secondary education, and figures for other Central Asian Republics are comparable. Which of the developed capitalist countries has such a high level of national education? Yet before the Revolution the population of these eastern countries was almost wholly illiterate. The development of these countries shows that Marxist-Leninist theory can serve as a guiding star in the struggle for people's happiness under any social and economic conditions. Africa cannot be any exception.

However, all these are only reflections on the future. Today before they can freely choose their road to the future, the African peoples must first clear the way by putting an end to colonialism and consolidating their independence and state sovereignty.

II. The Prerequisites of True Independence (pp. 29-46)

The Conference of Peoples of Africa held in Accra in December 1958 was the first occasion in history when Africans from different countries met to discuss their common problems. The colonialists, with their policy of "divide and rule," had sought to set Africans against Africans, and to maintain, as Abdullah Diallo of Guinea said at the later Tunis conference, that the Yoruba of Dahomey was closer to Paris than to his brother in Lagos, that the Africans of the Lower Congo were Belgian if

they lived in Leopoldville and French if they lived in Brazzaville, and that the white Arab was the worst enemy of the dark-skinned African. This first all-African forum assembled to call for an end to colonial enslavement and for "independence in the lifetime of our generation." Political independence, Dr. Nkrumah told the conference, must be achieved first; only then could all other problems be solved.

In the year between this conference and the Tunis conference of January 1960 the national liberation movement made new advances. Belgium was obliged to agree to political independence for the Congo; dates were set for the independence of Togo, Somalia and Nigeria; a number of African countries in the French Community began to demand a greater measure of independence; there were stormy events in Nyasaland, Ruanda-Urundi, South Africa and other countries; and Cameroon attained independence, but not a genuine one, since French forces remained in the country and progressive national organizations were suppressed. The Tunis conference called for immediate and unconditional independence for all African peoples and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Africa.

In 1960, "Africa's year," all French colonies in Africa attained independence; Nigeria's independence, and decisions about Sierra Leone, British Cameroons and Gambia meant the ending of direct British imperialist rule in West Africa; Somalia became independent and united with British Somaliland. But in the Congo, when Lumumba's Government seemed about to achieve real independence instead of the fictitious independence desired for it by the imperialists, the latter under the UN flag organized an international conspiracy to restore their position; the USA played the leading role in this.

Nevertheless, more than 20 African countries, with a population of about 60 millions, are still under colonial rule. Among these, Kenya is the keystone of British imperialism in East Africa. The Europeans in Kenya constitute not more than one percent of the population, but they are able through the Governor to exert direct political control over the African population. Under British plans for a federation of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda the bourgeois top layer of the European settlers of Kenya would have occupied the dominating position. The determined resistance of the African peoples of Tanganyika and Uganda frustrated these plans, but this only enhanced Kenya's role as the main citadel of British rule in East Africa. Kenya has a British military base, part of the NATO system. The brutal suppression of the Kenya people's liberation struggle in 1952-6 proves Britain's interest in preserving direct political rule in Kenya.

The British Government tries to explain its obstinacy by its anxiety about the British settlers in Kenya. A privileged position for them would undoubtedly rule out the restoration of the Africans' sovereign rights. The national organizations of Kenya have put forward the only possible and sensible solution -- equal political and economic rights, votes for all and single-

list elections. They have stated that after independence they do not intend discrimination against the European minority. Rejection of these sensible proposals only makes it more difficult to solve the question of the European settlers. It shows that the British Government is not concerned for their fate but only for its imperialist, monopolist and strategic interests.

The same may be said about Algeria; it must be governed by the Algerians, and the French settlers will either have to leave or stay and share the same rights and opportunities as the Algerians.

Southern Rhodesia also has been turned by the imperialists into a colony for European settlement. In 1956, out of a total population of 9,500,000, there were 178,000 Europeans, mostly second-generation settlers, and consisting basically of workers, urban petty bourgeoisie, farmers and officials; Southern Rhodesia has become their second homeland, and they do not want to leave it. The bourgeois top layer of the Europeans exercises direct political rule over the African population. The upper bourgeoisie is as imperialist as that of the metropolitan country. For a long time it has sought to extend its rule to Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland; but their peoples refuse to live in the "prison" of the Federation, for which there is no future. For Southern Rhodesia the only solution is equal political rights for the Africans and the settlers and the removal of all discrimination. With the aim of creating a "multiracial society" electoral laws are framed to give the Africans a certain representation in the government, while preserving real power in the hands of the colonialists; but there is an end to the possibilities of manoeuvre, and the Africans will not permit the indefinite postponement of a solution.

Racial discrimination in South Africa is not just an internal affair, as the South African authorities claim; the liquidation of the shameful system of racial enslavement is part of the international task of the abolition of colonialism. From the first the Africans fought against European colonization, but were defeated and enslaved. But the Africans do not demand the eviction of the Europeans, who now constitute about a quarter of the total population; they only demand the restoration of the rights taken from them, and economic and political equality with the Europeans. The government's senseless policy is fraught with grave dangers for the European population themselves. Brutal police terror cannot forever hold back the forces of the people's anger.

In the Portuguese colonies the African population is deprived even of those much curtailed rights which exist in fascist Portugal. Only in these African colonies is there still no massive national liberation movement, but this situation cannot long continue. The Committee of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola has called on the Portuguese Government to grant immediately political rights and liberties to the people and to call a round-table conference with all political parties of Angola.

Direct imperialist political rule in Africa is coming to an end; but does this really mean the end of colonialism? Some formally independent countries are still under the political influence of the former metropolitan countries, and still have imperialist forces or bases in their territories. The task of all new states is to turn formal political independence into real freedom, and this means above all the attainment of economic independence.

The former colonies were a source of raw materials for the metropolitan countries and a market for their manufactures; as the legacy of their colonial past they have inherited not simply a backward economy but a deformed one. Political independence cannot immediately change this situation. Mines, plantations and shipping are still in the hands of foreign monopolies; the vast profits they take out of the African countries, without making any equivalent return, represent in essence the same robbery which existed in the colonial period. Nationalization -- the nationalization of the Suez Canal is an example -- could put an end to this robbery; but such an operation is still not everywhere possible. Some states, such as Guinea, have curbed the foreign monopolies by control over foreign trade and currency operations. Ghana and other states have set about creating a mercantile marine.

Industrial development demands big capital investments, but in most countries national capital is small and dispersed. The imperialists exploit this need for capital so as to impose their political dictation on the young states and draw them into military blocs, which means the restoration of colonialism in new forms -- "neo-colonialism."

But this grave threat is being resolutely resisted by the African peoples. The programs of the governments of new African states are directed towards liquidating the economic effects of colonialism. Industrialization and cooperation are watchwords in Africa today. The development of heavy industry is not contemplated, but light industry to supply consumer requirements is called for; this, as Sekou Toure points out, will mean a saving in foreign currency, which will be used for the purchase of industrial and agricultural machinery and transport equipment. The conditions for creation of a machine industry do not yet exist, although the UAR with Soviet aid is building machine factories. The time will come even when Africa will export its own machines.

The need for rapid economic development, and the weakness of national private capital, has meant that the state sector has assumed a special role in industrial construction. All big enterprises are being built with state funds or with private capital under state control. The creation of a national state industry can play a big role in transforming the life of the African peoples.

Producer cooperation has existed for a long time in Africa, as a means of defense of the producer against the foreign monopolies' price system. Sometimes cooperation was initiated by

the colonial authorities to reduce the monopolies' expenditure on collection and marketing. Producer cooperation is making strides in the independent countries, but consumer cooperation is still not widespread.

To increase the productivity of African agriculture and to extend the area under cultivation agricultural implements must be modernized. To clear new ground is heavy work beyond the capabilities of the individual peasant, for whom machines, ploughs and tractors are out of the question. The formation of cooperatives is the answer.

The existence of communal landownership and collective work in African countries assists the development of producer cooperatives, but is not by itself sufficient for the establishment of cooperative production; leadership and assistance must come from the state.

With the aim of lessening their economic dependence on the former metropolitan countries, the new African states have developed relations with states with which during the colonial period they had no relations; they have formed state banks, and some have introduced their own currency systems. But economic independence is still far from achieved. The former metropolitan countries, and the American imperialists, willingly provide "aid," but this only strengthens economic dependence. American "anti-colonialism" is only an attempt to replace one form of colonialism by another which is less evident and therefore more dangerous. The existence of the world socialist system is important for the economic development of the young African states. Soviet construction of the metallurgical works at Bhilai in India and of the Aswan High Dam in the UAR afford examples of disinterested Soviet aid. The second Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference condemned Western aid as an attempt to saddle the Afro-Asian countries with the economic difficulties of the great powers, and praised the assistance given by the socialist countries, especially the USSR, as promoting industrialization and economic independence.

III. Frontiers, Nations and Groupings (pp. 46-65)

As a result of colonialism, ethnic and state frontiers in Africa do not correspond. When the imperialist partition of Africa began nations had not yet formed, since the peoples were not yet at the stage of capitalist development. Certain feudal kingdoms existed, as in Ethiopia, West Africa, Buganda, etc., but the fact that there were no formed nations and national states meant that colonial frontiers were drawn regardless of ethnic factors. The imperialist plunderers competed to carve up the living body of the African continent. Frontiers were drawn according to degrees of latitude or longitude. As an example, the Nilotic tribes -- Shilluk, Dinka, Nuer, Turkana, Masai, etc. -- who number about one and a half million and whose languages, as the Soviet Africanist D. A. Ol'derogge has shown, have an identical base, could in favorable circumstances have formed a single nation; but they were divided among the Sudan,

Uganda, Kenya and the Belgian Congo, and some live in southwestern Ethiopia. Similarly the Azande were divided among the Sudan, where they were taught English in the schools, and the Belgian Congo and Ubangi-Shari, where they were taught French. With these, as with other African peoples, the colonizers in no way encouraged the development of a national language or a national culture, which prevented peoples from becoming nations.

Among the Ewe people, living in French Togoland, British Togoland and the Gold Coast, the feeling of national unity was highly developed; they formed their own national organizations, and for a long time struggled for unity in one state. This problem still remains unsolved. The fate of the peoples of the Cameroons was even worse, as was explained by their representatives in the UN General Assembly, demanding the reunification of the eastern and western Cameroons. Again, in West Africa ethnic boundaries, coinciding mainly with climatic ones, run from east to west, whereas the colonial frontiers were drawn from north to south. Thus a peoples like the Mandingo live in Senegal, Guinea, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Portuguese Guinea and Liberia.

The different colonies have become independent at different times, and the new states arise within the colonial frontiers, being therefore multinational states, or, since the process of nation-forming is not yet completed, states of a complicated ethnic composition.

In the Sudan rather more than half the population, in the north, speak Arabic; in the south live the Nilotes, speaking quite different languages. In Ghana the Akan live in the south, while other Akan live in the Ivory Coast; the many northern tribes of Ghana spread across into Upper Volta and the Ivory Coast; and the Ewe live in the south-west, and also in southern Togo. In Guinea live the Susu, Mandingo and Fulbe. Similarly complicated is the ethnic composition of Nigeria and the Congo. This is the general pattern for all African countries south of the Sahara.

People speak of nations -- the Nigerian, Cameroonian, or Sudanese nations, or even in general of the African nation. The question arises, what is a nation. Webster's Dictionary gives various definitions, one scientific, the others loose and vague, so that you can take your pick. The American sociologist H. Kohn says that in the idea of nationality the basic element is the desire to form a nationality; nationalities are the product of historical forces and are impermanent and fluid. Mamadou Dia was perhaps influenced by this conception when, rejecting the Marxist definition of a nation, he said that in forming a nation the prime element was the general will to do so.

Our understanding of the national question is that a nation has definite attributes, which are the result of its historical development and cannot be created or destroyed by people's will. Stalin defined these attributes as community of territory, of economic life, of language and of culture. The multinational Soviet Union affords an example of the application of the Marxist theory of the national question.

Lenin stated: "A nation is the inevitable product and inevitable form of the bourgeois epoch of social development." Now the African peoples, when European colonization began, had not yet reached the stage of capitalist development and had therefore not yet succeeded in forming nations. Some people see in the assertion of this fact almost a discrimination against the African peoples, a disparagement of their national dignity. But the Russian people, the level of whose development was not lower than that of the African peoples, finally formed a nation not earlier than the beginning of the 19th century. In the recognition of this fact we see no discrimination. Apart from this, one must point out that the stage of ethnic development through the bourgeois nation is not absolutely obligatory, as is shown by those peoples of the USSR which have formed nations in the period of socialism.

As a result of the colonial brake on their development, most of the peoples of tropical Africa have not yet formed nations; tribal structures persist, and tribal antagonisms fanned by the colonialists have been a hindrance to unity in the independence struggle. It was in this sense that the Accra conference passed a special resolution condemning tribalism. The nation-forming process in Africa is still continuing, and has its own special difficulties.

Among the problems of nation-building in Africa is the problem of a national language. There are many hundreds of languages, but not yet any national languages which might be a means of communication for people of different tribes and which might serve for the development of a national literature and culture. In all the new states of tropical Africa English or French are the state languages. The majority of the population are illiterate and do not know these foreign languages. However, they are taught in the schools, widely used in social and political life, by African writers and poets, and by the press and radio; and with the spread of literacy more and more people will speak, read and write these languages. Nevertheless, they cannot provide the linguistic foundation for the formation of African nations. Only in its own language can a people express truly its own spirit. The colonialists relegated African languages to the background, but this situation must be reversed. The Rome Congress of African Writers and Poets in 1959 passed a resolution which stated that "Black Africa" (author's note: an expression with racist connotations, which is to be condemned) must not adopt any foreign language, European or other as a national language; that one of the African languages must be chosen for this; and that a group of linguists must provide this language with the terms necessary for philosophy, the sciences and technology. In principle, such a formulation of the problem is correct and timely. But one can hardly agree that any one African language should be chosen, if only because the African languages belong to different linguistic families.

Another and more pressing problem affects the relations between African states and peoples: how to remove the harmful influence of the non-correspondence of political and ethnic

boundaries. This question has already caused tension between Ghana and Togo and between Ghana and the Ivory Coast, and can lead to complications between Ethiopia and Somalia and in the future between other African states also.

The Accra conference passed a resolution which denounced the artificial non-ethnic frontiers created by the imperialists, and stated that these were "unnatural" and not conducive to peace, and must be "liquidated or revised." To solve this problem the conference recommended forming regional federations, according to geographic, economic, linguistic and cultural considerations, to be formed only between independent African states, and to be decided by popular referendum; the final end of such movement toward union was to be a union of African states, or a United States of Africa.

The first practical steps towards a "United States of Africa" were taken by Guinea and Ghana. The Guinean Constitution declares that the Guinean state supports the creation of a union of African states and that, with the aim of African unity, Guinea can conclude a union with any African state involving partial or complete renunciation of its sovereignty. The new republican Constitution of Ghana contains similar clauses, and a government memorandum of the constitution states that it affords the possibility for peoples now outside Ghana's frontiers but ethnically linked with her peoples to unite with them in a single united state.

The idea of a union of African states is particularly popular in former British territories, but is less widespread in former French territories, in which influential political circles prefer association with France. At the first Conference of African Peoples delegates denounced the idea of union with the former metropolitan countries; delegates from Nigeria and South Africa condemned union with the British Commonwealth, and progressive delegates from Senegal declared that the French Community was a form of neo-colonialism.

In May 1959 Sekou Toure and Kwame Nkrumah signed a document on the basic principles of union between their countries: common union citizenship for citizens of both states; a common defense policy; common diplomatic representation, where required; an economic council of the union, and a common bank of issue.

of independent African states the representative of Ghana spoke in defense of the idea of a union of African states, but the representatives of Nigeria and Liberia considered the matter premature.

The creation of a union of African states is a progressive undertaking, deserving support. Such unions have all the advantages compared with small states, if they are formed in a democratic manner on the basis of a voluntary union of peoples, and if the latter enjoy identical rights and opportunities. Khrushchev has pointed out that the union of different states is a complex question, and must not be undertaken in a hurry or against the will of the peoples concerned. (Editor's note: In this statement, made to an Iraqi delegation, Khrushchev was speaking of Nasir's views on the union of the UAR with Iraq -- see Pravda, 17 March 1959.)

It is not impossible that in the future Africa may form a union, but at present there are serious difficulties in the way. Some African states belong to the French Community or the British Commonwealth, or are otherwise linked with the imperialist powers, and belong to either the franc zone or the sterling area or the dollar area. Another difficulty is the absence of economic links between the African countries themselves. Thus the economic stimuli to union are lacking. Nevertheless, union might help to overcome such economic difficulties.

An argument sometimes brought up against an African union is the cultural difference between the peoples of the former French colonies and those of the former British colonies. This is unfounded. The cultural influence of Britain or France only affected an insignificant stratum of the population, living in the towns and industrial centers, and the masses of the people preserved their own cultural values; the future belongs not to British or French but to African culture.

The formation of regional federations, recommended by the Accra conference as an initial step towards an African union, is also a progressive idea and at the present time seems more realistic. Regional federations prevent difficulties between neighboring states over the national question, and promote economic independence and the consolidation of national sovereignty. In addition to the union of Ghana and Guinea, there is the Federation of colonial countries; the Central African Union, formed by three member states of the French Community; the Mali Federation, broken up in 1960 through imperialist intrigues; the project for a Maghrib federation; the idea of a West African federation, the aim of the patriotic forces of member states of the French Community; and the idea of a wider West African federation embracing both former French and former British colonies. In May 1960 Julius Nyerere and Dr. Hastings Banda together proposed the formation of a Federation of East and Central Africa. But the achievement of regional federations, despite the progressive character and popularity of the idea, encounters serious difficulties. The imperialist powers oppose such federations, since they prefer to deal with small and weak states. In the

African states themselves unpatriotic forces put their local private interests before the interests of the peoples, and petty rivalries break out between political leaders. But the peoples demand that their leaders should find a solution of this problem at the state and national level. A principal obstacle to federations, which must first be removed, is the fact that half of Africa is still in a dependent status. As President Bourguiba said at the Tunis conference, in a long road the best thing is to proceed by stages; the struggle for unity of the continent will be easier when the prejudices and ignorance inherited from colonialism have been eradicated; but, even so, the aim of achieving regional groupings need not be put aside. The future will show how the African peoples will resolve the complicated national problems that are a legacy of colonialism.

IV. The African Personality (pp. 65-81)

Africa's anti-imperialist revolution means not only political and economic liberation from colonialism but also spiritual rebirth. In a verse by the Guinean poet Ray Autra the African turns to the colonialist, to whom he is simply a savage, and angrily declares: "I am a man." By the colonialists the negro was taught that he was not a real man; he was half-man half-animal, and therefore the white man had a complete moral right to force the negro to serve him and to humiliate and insult him. The colonialists traded in African slaves as in beasts of burden, and found moral justification for this trade in the Christian religion; it was "God's will" that the African population should submissively serve the white man.

Every African people has its own history, but the colonialists declared that these peoples had no history, and tried to force them to forget their past; for the colonialists and for Africans in their schools the only history was that of imperialist conquest in Africa. To Rhodes, Gordon and other "knights" of colonialism monuments were erected, but not to Samori, Chaka or Lobengula. African fighters for independence were declared to be tyrants, bandits and usurpers.

African peoples have created their own culture. Each people has its own musical instruments, its legends, songs and fairy tales, its pictorial art. In this art is expressed the soul of the people, its philosophy, thoughts and yearnings. The pre-revolutionary Russian art expert V. Markov said (The Art of the Negroes, St. Petersburg, 1919) that it was untrue that Africa had no past; its legends, monuments and antiquities showed that it had a very rich past; "in the creation of world beauty it occupies an honorable place." Europe of course knew of this rich cultural heritage of the Africans; it plundered the rich treasures of African sculpture, but took care to see that their true value was not properly appreciated in Africa itself. African culture was "primitive;" in missionary schools African children were punished if they sang their folk songs or performed their favorite dances. The African was made to feel inferior. In the course of many generations this could not but

leave a trace in the consciousness of Africans; oppression by European colonialists could not but arouse mistrust and even hatred towards people with white skin.

None of the races of mankind has been subjected to such humiliation and insults as the negro race. A man can be a genius, but if he has a black skin then in none of the bourgeois countries is he free from insults; in London, Paris and New York he is shunned by whites, cannot rent a flat in any central district, and may be refused admission to a restaurant -- even if he is a member of his country's government. A white woman who marries a negro is ostracized. The lynch law is still in force in the USA; a negro can still be hanged by a brutalized crowd simply because he is a negro.

Regular and mass contacts between the white and black races began only in the capitalist era; the white capitalists exploited and enslaved the black peoples. The development of capitalism was in its time a progressive phenomenon for peoples of white race, but for peoples of black race capitalism meant slavery and humiliation. A new type of relationship between white and black races, a relationship of equality and brotherly collaboration, began to form with the victory of the new social system, socialism.

When speaking of the task of eliminating the survivals of colonialism, one must not lose sight of the psychological legacy of the colonial past. As S. W. Allen has written ("Le Negritude et ses rapports avec le Noir americain," Presence Africaine April 1959, p. 17): "The African is locked in the cultural prison of the Western world, which has for centuries treated him with a scornful sneer; his task is to get out of this prison, to assert his personality, to restore his human dignity... to restore that world in which he could again realize his ego and not be ashamed of it." To get out of the "cultural prison" of the imperialist West is one of the basic tasks of the cultural revolution in Africa. The tasks of cultural construction are immense, but the African peoples have already achieved their first successes in this direction.

In the newly independent countries -- in Guinea, for example -- mass campaigns to abolish illiteracy have been started. But this is only the beginning of the great work to raise the cultural level of the population and create an intelligentsia. Until recently scientific research on Africa was the monopoly of Europeans; this monopoly has to be broken. African authors are now writing on the history of their countries; they realize that it is their task to dispel the myth that Africa has no history, and to depict this history without prejudices and bias. One is obliged to point out, however, that some African historians, proceeding from the most noble intentions, have taken a wrong line. Mbonu Ojike in his book My Africa asserts, without any grounds for this, that the ancestors of his people the Akan came from Mesopotamia, and that the history of the Akan begins in ancient Sumeria. These attempts to prove a kinship between African peoples and famous peoples of the past do not raise but lower the true worth of the peoples of negroid race.

The names of many talented African poets are already widely known outside Africa. Modern African poetry is an angry protest against colonialist humiliation and a stirring call to battle. The Senegal poet David Diop, addressing his toiling and oppressed fellow African, cries: "O my brother with eyes full of fear and pain, rise and exclaim 'No!'" The Ivory Coast poet Bernard B. Dadier tells his people: "You are the king of the factories! You are the king of the fields! You are the people, and that means that you are the master!"

In the independent African countries there is a wide and passionate controversy about the ways of development of African culture. At a conference held in Rome in February 1960 representatives of bourgeois European culture insisted that Africans should adopt so-called world, universal cultural values. Representatives of African culture very amicably replied to them: what you call universal values are in essence European values; they emerged in Europe and correspond to the way of life of European peoples, but they do not suit our way of thinking or our way of life, and we have our own cultural values. These arguments recall the controversy of the Slavophiles and the Westernizers in Russia in the 19th century. The Russian people found then the only correct solution; it placed its national cultural heritage at the basis of its culture, and borrowed from the more developed countries of Europe all that was most advanced and progressive. African peoples will also find their own solution of this problem.

The Society of African Culture founded in Paris in 1946 is carrying out much theoretical work in this direction, and has published many books by African authors, as well as the speeches of Sekou Toure and Leopold Senghor, and the interesting work by Majhemout Diop, Contribution à l'Etude des Problemes Politiques en Afrique Noire; the latter is the first book by an African -- with the exception of works by Communists -- which attempts to apply Marxist-Leninist theory to Africa.

Everywhere in Africa today people are speaking and writing about the "African personality." In these words there is a deep meaning for Africans; they are the natural reaction of Africans to the contemptuous attitude of the colonialists. A section of the African intelligentsia, mainly in the French Community countries, prefer the term "negritude;" this is in essence an expression of the same noble desire to restore the human rights of the African. Alioune Diop says: "Negritude is our modest but resolute striving to...show the world what it has insistently rejected -- the dignity of a man of black race." However, the term "negritude" cannot be considered a happy one. It does not apply to all the peoples of Africa, but only to peoples of negroid race, although in Africa live peoples of other races -- Moroccans, Egyptians, Ethiopians and others. "Negritude" also suggests the unity of the negroid peoples of Africa with the Negroes of America. There is indeed a certain community of interest between the two, deriving from their common experience of racial discrimination everywhere beyond the bounds of the socialist system. African traditions and even languages are

alive in parts of America. The first pan-African conferences were in essence pan-Negro, and the American Negro William Dubois is the patriarch of pan-Africanism. But it is obvious that the fight against colonialism demands the unity of all the peoples of Africa, of whatever race, and not only the unity of the peoples of negroid race.

The imperialists try above all to drive a wedge between the peoples of "black" Africa and the so-called "white" or Arab part of Africa. But the peoples of Africa, as their representatives have declared at the all-African conferences, reject the imperialist divisions of "Africa south of the Sahara" and "Africa north of the Sahara;" as Dr. Nkrumah observed, "in the past the Sahara separated us, but now it unites us."

In the noble cause of African unity against colonialism the working class is called on to play a special role. The best representatives of the African workers' movement long ago made it their task to abolish the split in the trade union movement and to establish an All-African Federation of Trade Unions. But the disruptive activity of agents of ICFTU and the reformist trade unions of Britain and France create difficulties which as yet have not been overcome.

The term "negritude" is sometimes interpreted as meaning that all negroes everywhere have a common psychological cast of mind and a single world outlook and ideology; this means that it is not a man's social milieu or way of life that makes him think as he does, but the color of his skin. But this is a form of racialism which can be used by the opponents of peaceful coexistence to bring the black and white races into conflict. It can become a source of extreme forms of nationalism. However, Africans themselves do not attach such a sense to the term "negritude." Progressive people of Africa do not confuse peoples of white race with the colonialist aristocracy. They know very well that African peoples always had friends in countries inhabited by peoples of white race. Public opinion in Europe and America protested against the slave trade, and progressive people in European imperialist countries opposed the colonial wars in Africa. In the fight against colonialism the African people were never alone. The working class of the whole world and its Communist Parties and progressive people in all countries have always given them moral and political support, and continue to do so. The destiny of the peoples of Africa is inseparable from the present and future of all peoples of the world. The unity of the peoples of Africa with all the progressive forces of the world ensures that an end will be put to colonialism and imperialism for ever.

V. Africa and the World (pp. 81-86)

Lenin forecast in 1919 that the peoples of the East, instead of having their fate decided for them by imperialism, would come to participate themselves in deciding the fate of the whole world. In our age no peoples can live isolated from the rest of the world. Compare the Berlin Conference of 1884, which decided the partition of Africa, with the UN General Assembly session of 1959, at which the Cameroons question was

discussed with the participation of Cameroon representatives, who were strongly supported by the then 10 African members of the UN. It is now no longer possible to decide African questions without the participation of Africans themselves; and this is an achievement not only of the African peoples but of all the progressive forces of the world. Today in all world organizations -- the UN, trade union, women's and youth organizations and cultural conferences -- Africans play an active part.

The African peoples' entry into world politics finds a situation in which the socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union are struggling for peace and complete disarmament and the immediate abolition of colonialism, while the imperialist powers and above all the USA continue the arms race and try to draw African countries into their military blocs. The peoples of Africa do not want war, which can bring a restoration of colonialism. The colonial system is maintained by wars and military measures, as events in Algeria, Kenya, the Cameroons, Nyasaland, Angola and the Congo prove. The all-African and Afro-Asian solidarity conferences have denounced military pacts and blocs. The Soviet Union's peaceful policy finds support among all the patriotic forces of Africa.

The complete abolition of colonialism and all its remnants, the strengthening of state sovereignty and vigilance against imperialist intrigues -- this is what should enable the peoples of Africa to pursue an independent foreign policy, to reconstruct their national economy and culture, and to build a new life in their own way in conditions of lasting peace.

NOT TO BE MICROFICHED