

IMPERIALIST COUNTER-OFFENSIVE IN AFRICA

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EVENTS in Africa over the past six months have demonstrated beyond any shadow of doubt that U.S. imperialism, shabbily aided and abetted by its partners-in-crime, especially Britain and West Germany, has passed over to a new counter-offensive in Africa. The attack on Stanleyville on November 22, 1964, was only the opening shot in a new imperialist move which now threatens the entire continent of Africa.

Intensified U.S. aggression in Vietnam. U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic. U.S. counter-offensive in Africa. All are part of a single imperialist pattern. Each action is a desperate American counter-thrust to the further advance of the people. For, make no mistake about it, the people are advancing. The American actions are but a counter-offensive to stop the people's march.

Just consider the significant strides made by the African people in 1963 and 1964. In August 1963 the puppet government of Fulbert Youlou was overthrown in Congo (Brazzaville) by the mass action of the people, and a new popular government came to power. In October 1963 a widespread movement of the people removed the reactionary government in Dahomey. A similar move in Gabon was only thwarted when French paratroops reinstalled the unseated government. In January 1964 a people's armed uprising overthrew the government of Zanzibar, only a couple of weeks after independence had been won. And in October 1964 the military régime of Abboud was overthrown by a general strike and other mass actions by the people of Sudan.

Thus, in little more than twelve months, five unpopular governments had been overthrown—in one case by armed action, in three by a general strike backed by mass demonstrations. Only in one case, that of Gabon, which had been more in the nature of a coup at the top than a wide movement of the people, had the imperialists been able to stage a comeback.

But that was not all. There had been a significant general strike in Nigeria, embracing nearly a million workers, followed a few months later by a general crisis in connection with the general elections. Huge demonstrations had shaken Senegal. The Liberation Army in 'Portuguese' Guinea, led by Amilcar Cabral, had made important gains, liberating nearly two-fifths of the territory, and

winning international acclaim. In Angola, the Movement of the People for the Liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.), headed by Agostinho Neto, had regrouped its forces, launched a new offensive, and won a measure of recognition and support from the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.). Armed struggle was openly launched in Mozambique by the liberation forces connected with the national movement, FRELIMO, in September 1964; and, a week later, the Sawaba Party announced the opening of armed struggle against the government in Niger.

Of equal significance had been the deep-going economic and social changes made in 1963 and 1964 in Algeria, the United Arab Republic, Ghana, Mali, and other African countries. What was clearly taking shape was the emergence of a group of six or seven African states which were beginning to cut themselves adrift from imperialism, to restrict the growth of indigenous capitalist forces, and so make possible a march towards socialism which would avoid the stage of full capitalist development. In addition, many states, including those in East Africa, had established economic and diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

These historic achievements of the African people had resulted in a further heightening of the people's understanding, and a growing opposition to imperialism and its neo-colonialist intrigues.

These developments filled the imperialists with alarm. It was to halt these advances that the latest imperialist counter-offensives have been launched.

Central to these intrigues has been the installing of Tshombe in Leopoldville, and the assault on Stanleyville. On February 19, 1965, the *Tribune des Nations* (France) spilled the beans. The landing of paratroops in Stanleyville, it wrote, was only part of Nato's strategic plan. The aim was 'a much vaster intervention which would transcend the frontiers of the Congo'.

Certainly, the last six months since Stanleyville bear this out. The counter-offensive has taken the following forms: assassinations of progressive leaders; plots to overthrow popular governments; military action to intimidate such governments; fresh attempts to divide the people by beating the drum of anti-communism; and measures to disrupt the O.A.U. and to isolate Ghana, one of the most consistently anti-imperialist states.

Take first the question of assassinations. On January 15, 1965, Pierre Ngendandumwe, Premier of Burundi, was assassinated—and the assassin proved to be a former employee of the U.S. Embassy

in that state. The murder of the Prime Minister was followed by a change of government policy towards the national liberation forces in neighbouring Congo (Leopoldville). In February 1965 three national leaders in Congo (Brazzaville)—the Chairman of the Supreme Court, the Prosecutor of the Republic, and the Director of the Information Agency—were kidnapped; shortly afterwards their corpses were found, shockingly mutilated. On February 24, 1965, one of Kenya's outstanding national leaders, Pio Pinto, was assassinated by gunmen outside his home; it is rumoured that others on the gunmen's list included the Vice-President, Oginga Odinga, the Minister of Information and Tourism, Achieng Oneko, and another well-known left-wing leader, Bildad Kaggia.

Now look at anti-government plots, and military intimidation. In Tanzania, President Nyerere announced a few months ago the discovery of an anti-government plot in which, it was alleged, U.S. Embassy officials had been involved. In Congo (Brazzaville), the deposed president, Youlou, was smuggled out of the country to Leopoldville, at the end of March 1965, in preparation for a new plot to restore him to power. In Malawi, all the progressive ministers were forced out of government or compelled to flee, and the country is now openly being run under British control, with British officers running the army, police force and intelligence services, and with British officials guiding all the key departments of State.

From their base in Congo (Leopoldville), U.S. planes attached to the Tshombe forces have attacked neighbouring Uganda and violated the frontiers of Sudan. In a strong statement to the Uganda Parliament, the Prime Minister, Dr. Obote, openly accused the United States of complicity in the attacks; at the same time, a special Cabinet meeting of the Kenya Government felt it serious enough to warn the United States and to declare that the Kenya Government was ready to give 'every support to the Uganda Government in defence of her territorial integrity and sovereignty'. In recent weeks, too, Portuguese forces have launched attacks from 'Portuguese' Guinea across the frontier of the Republic of Guinea (former 'French' Guinea).

So dangerous has the situation become that President Nkrumah, in an address to the Ghana Parliament on March 22, 1965, declared:

The Government of Ghana has unmistakable evidence that plans are in an advanced state of preparation for the overthrow of the progressive government of the Congo (Brazzaville) and other states by certain powers. Ghana will go to the assistance of the government and people of Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Kenya and others in the event of aggression.

He added that he had held recent discussions with presidents Sékou Touré (Guinea), Modibo Keita (Mali) and Ben Bella (Algeria), during which they had agreed to 'continue to maintain great vigilance against increasing penetration of imperialists and neo-colonialists in Africa'.

A major effort is now being made by the imperialists to disrupt the unity of the African people. Anti-communism has reared its ugly head in Kenya again, and outstanding national leaders such as Odinga, Oneko and Kaggia have been made the subject of virulent attacks because of their steadfast refusal to abandon their championship of the people, or to compromise with imperialism. Equally serious is the attempt to split the O.A.U. In February of this year, fourteen French-speaking states in Africa met at Nouakchott, and set up a new body, the Afro-Malagasy Common Organisation (O.C.A.M.). The formation of such a separate body is, in itself, a virtual violation of the O.A.U. Charter. Worse still, since the formation of O.C.A.M., a number of statements have been made by the states associated with the new body, accusing Ghana of 'subversive' activities, and threatening not to attend the O.A.U. Conference due to be held in Accra in September. A key rôle in all this diplomatic activity has been played by Tshombe, whose reappearance on the African scene since last year has itself been a lever in the hands of the imperialists to disrupt African unity. Acceptance or non-acceptance of Tshombe has now become a central issue at all O.A.U. gatherings. It is significant that *Congo-Africa*, the pro-Tshombe new bulletin published in London by the E. D. O'Brien Organisation, in hailing the support given to Tshombe by certain African states, has recently written:

The result has been a revolt from within against the O.A.U. and the revival of something similar to the 'Monrovia' group of nations, which was originally formed to counter the extremism of the 'Casablanca' group. The core of the 'Monrovia' group was the U.A.M. (*Union Africaine et Malgache*) of fourteen French-speaking nations. This was a political and defensive union of 'moderates'; but under pressure from the extremists of the O.A.U. it was wound up over a year ago and replaced by a purely economic organisation (U.A.M.C.E.) without any political influence. Now, as a result of the Nouakchott Conference, the former union has been re-born as the O.C.A.M. (*Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache*) and its natural allies are the same countries that belonged to the old 'Monrovia' group, such as Liberia, Nigeria, Sierre Leone and Ethiopia. Their combined votes are sufficient to sway the decisions of the O.A.U. and effectively to block the extremists (No. 79, March 11, 1965).

The warning is clear enough. With the aid of a number of states whose rulers are ready to play the rôle of neo-colonialist puppet to

their masters in Washington, London and Bonn, the imperialists are preparing new offensives against Africa. The other part of these moves is the holding of the 'Zambesi line'—that is, the retention of Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa, and the formation, official or otherwise, of an alliance of these states to bar the way to further African advance and to launch fresh assaults against those who refuse to play the imperialist game.

The danger has been well expressed by President Nyerere: 'I think that we are at present passing through the stage of a second invasion of Africa'.

The maximum effort and understanding will have to be displayed by the African people, and the maximum solidarity expressed by the British people, in the struggle now unfolding to defeat the 'second invasion of Africa'.
