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## EDITORIAL

### AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

LAST week-end in Khartoum, Sudan 22 African States signed the agreement establishing an African Development Bank. The bank, with a capital of nearly 90 million pounds (250 million dollars) is to be set up by July 19, 1965.

This welcome step forward in the direction of African unity has come about partly as a result of last May's Addis Ababa Conference and partly as the efforts of the Economic Commission for Africa which is an agency of the United Nations Organisation. The role of the United Nations in this venture has been further underlined by the decision to appoint the U.N. Secretary-General, U Thant, the bank's trustee to receive gold and currencies until the bank is established.

An important feature of the decision is that the bank is to be finally set up by mid-1965. It is obvious that the two-year period from now till it commences operation is meant to study more concretely and solve realistically the practical problems connected with this major project.

Africa's interest in the Development Bank is based on two related notions. The first is that the bank will promote Africa's rapid and all-round development. The second is that such development must be within the context of independence and not serve as yet another cover for subordinating Africa's interests to exploiting non-African interests.

It is a truism that a bank can promote or retard economic independence. Therefore, in order to make sure that the African Development Bank promotes Africa's economic independence, attention must be focussed on three vital issues.

Firstly, the share capital of the bank must be wholly or principally held by African states directly. It will be great folly to allow foreign interests to hold any sizable fraction of the bank's shares.

And, in this regard, it should be clearly understood that the World

## Behind Ben Bella's Accra Visit

# STEP-UP OF FIGHT AGAINST COLONIALISM

by Our Diplomatic Correspondent

THE CENTRAL THEME IN THE TWO-DAY VISIT OF HON. AHMED BEN BELLA, PRIME MINISTER OF ALGERIA, TO ACCRA HAS BEEN THE NEED FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE FORMULA FOR THE EARLY TERMINATION OF COLONIALISM IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH AFRICA. THE IMPRESSION WAS GAINED THAT THE UNANIMITY OF AFRICAN STATES AT ADDIS ABABA LAST MAY ON AN EARLY-INDEPENDENCE FOR COUNTRIES STILL UNDER COLONIAL RULE HAS NOT BEEN MATCHED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTION. ALTHOUGH THE GOAL HAS BEEN UNANIMOUSLY AGREED, THERE ARE SIGNS OF DISAGREEMENT ON THE PACE AND THE APPROACH.

As far as can be judged from the press conference given by the Algerian Premier in Accra yesterday just before he left for home, there are two main strands in the strategy Mr. Ben Bella

2. intensified all-out support for national liberation armies.

Mr. Ben Bella seems to base his demands on the view that the decision of Addis Ababa on freeing

ments should be taken seriously "because nobody will take us seriously if we fail to implement decisions taken at Addis Ababa". And in order to prove our adherence to the Addis Ababa decision, "our objective should be to give constant and effective consideration and assistance to all liberation movements in Africa."

Observers here believe that Mr. Ben Bella is not satisfied with the way the Liberation Committee at Dar-es-Salaam which was set up by the Addis Ababa Conference has been going about the task of helping the liberation movements in Central and South Africa, particularly in the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique. This is the interpretation placed on Ben Bella's remark that "I choose to come to Accra to hold discussions with my great friend, President Nkrumah" within the framework of the implementation of the Charter of Organisation of African Unity.

Mr. Ben Bella is clearly aware that the imperialists have embarked upon intrigues aimed at breaking "the United Front of ours".

His answer to this is that all African Heads of State should attend the next General Assembly of the United Nations. "Our presence", Mr. Ben Bella argues, "will enable us to determine the attitude of other nations in connection with African affairs". In parti-

cular he believes that the attendance of all African Heads of State will compel the Western powers to choose between friendship for Africans and friendship for Portugal and South Africa.

In this connection, it must be noted that only recently President Tubman of Liberia openly disagreed with the idea of using the U.N. to impeach a member state of that organisation. It is believed here that Mr. Ben Bella's scheduled visit to Monrovia on his way home is with the purpose of persuading President Tubman to change his stand on this matter.

In addition, the Algerian Prime Minister calls for "contributions financially, materially and physically to nations fighting for their independence". He maintains that this "formed the major part of the problems facing Africa".

Observers have been quick in drawing attention to the fact that Mr. Ben Bella, while calling for increased assistance to liberation movements, significantly does not mention sending such aid to the Liberation Committee based at Dar-es-Salaam. Speculation is therefore rife on whether the Liberation Committee is no longer considered an adequate machinery for handling the problem of assistance to African liberation movements.

In the past few weeks

there has been growing concern among freedom fighters about the efficacy of the Dar-es-Salaam committee

Undoubtedly the problem of rendering assistance to the colonial territories fighting for their freedom is now seen to require much more than merely constituting a Liberation Committee and asking independent African States to contribute money into its coffers. Fundamental issues are gradually coming to the fore. Should assistance be given to the most radical wing of the national liberation movement? Or should it be given to a united front on which is imposed the leadership of the moderates? Or should it be given to the moderates?

These are indeed issues of far-reaching importance which the handling of the Angolan situation has raised. And an immediate answer to them is imperative because from such answers one can get a pretty shrewd idea of the sort of independence these colonial territories will get.

Broadly, assistance to moderates only or to united fronts on which the leadership of moderates is imposed will lead, through negotiations with the colonial powers and their allies,

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to the replacement of colonialism with neo-colonialism. On the other hand, assistance to the radical wing of the liberation movements will lead to popular regimes which will rapidly follow the road of complete independence.

While they dread the second alternative, the imperialist powers are doing everything possible to push the struggle for the liquidation of colonialism in Africa along the first route. The big question now is which road must the Dar-es-Salaam Liberation Committee travel?

The Ben Bella visit to Accra shows that there is a growing realisation of the overriding importance of giving assistance to liberation movements in a way that will save the peoples concerned the agony of neo-colonialism.

It is obvious that this major problem is being very closely studied and that no final formula has yet been agreed upon. No doubt this is what led Premier Ben Bella to describe his visit as "brief and beneficial" quickly adding "I hope to be able to come back on another trip which will be longer".



AHMED BEN BELLA...

"We have a moral obligation to assist our fellow Africans in their struggle against imperialists".

la is canvassing among African leaders. The two strands are:—

1. major diplomatic action at the U.N.; and

the remaining colonial territories is not being seriously and realistically implemented. He maintains that assistance to liberation move-

Bank, far from being an agency of the United Nations, is in fact the agency of the imperialist powers. It must be pointed out that control of the African Development Bank by the World Bank reduces to control by the imperialist powers who hold some 70 per cent of the shares of the World Bank.

Secondly, the recruitment of the personnel of the new bank must be very closely watched and scrutinised. Should the Bank fall into the hands of so-called experts 'loaned' or 'seconded' by the big banks of the West alone, the

policy of the new bank will certainly reflect a strong pro-imperialist complexion. It will be just like expecting a truly nationalist policy from a civil service controlled and run by nationals of the former colonial power.

Thirdly, the loan policy of the new bank must be carefully formulated. If it merely borrows from world banks to reloan the rate of interest will be high and might constitute a drag on development. If it merely guarantees loans to specific projects made by world banks, the pattern of economic develop-

ment in Africa will be determined by international finance capital to our undoing. Africa needs to exert effective control over the volume and deployment of loans. Until this is done, no one can honestly talk of economic freedom.

Finally the point must be emphasised that political direction is needed if the African Development Bank is to become a lever for promoting the economic independence of African states. To leave it either without political direction or with a conflict of political objectives will quite conceivably convert the

bank into an instrument for the penetration and further enslavement of Africa by international finance oligarchies.

Let us hope that the two-year period between now and the establishment of the African Development Bank will be spent in studying these knotty problems. For the solutions we find to them will determine whether or not the bank will serve the best interests of Africa.

We have created an institution. We must make sure it is used by Africans in the interest of Africa.

### Ghana Government Statement on Nuclear Test Treaty

THE Government of Ghana has decided to become a party to the Nuclear Test Treaty signed in Moscow by representatives of the Governments of the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain, banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere, outer space and under water.

The Government of Ghana considers that this Treaty is only a small initial step forward. It does not fulfil the expectation of mankind for the abolition of nuclear warfare. The Government of Ghana has nevertheless decided to be a party to the Treaty because it believes that even such a little step as this has a definite value in itself, in that, it could lead to negotiations for the destruction of all existing nuclear weapons and for the renunciation of nuclear warfare itself altogether.

It would be a tragedy if the hopes raised by this beginning were destroyed by evasions of the Treaty or by the intensification in other ways and by other means of nuclear re-armament.

World peace, however, cannot be secured merely by the abolition of nuclear warfare. Its attainment is bound up with solving the basic causes of conflict in the world today. For this reason, nuclear disarmament and world peace must depend upon the total liquidation of imperialism and colonialism in all its forms and manifestations in all parts of the world.

The Government of Ghana expresses the hope that this Treaty will contribute towards a new era in the world in which plenty takes the place of poverty, national self-determination the place of projection and oppression and co-existence the place of racial intolerance and hatred.

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# BLACK ORPHEUS (2)

(Translated by G. L. Patterson from the original by Jean-Paul Sartre)

NEVERTHELESS the negritude that Negro poets seek to discover in the dim recess of their souls does not immediately reveal itself after an inward probing. The search is unrewarding; for indeed the herald of the Negro souls has sat at the feet of Western scholars. He has learnt the iron law that the oppressed may use no other arms, save those filched from the oppressor.

It is through the impact of the whiteman's culture upon him that the Negro's negritude has passed from the pre-occupation of immediate material existence, to the remoter realm of thought. But in the event, the Negro more or less renounced his negritude.

By the deliberate option of self-portrayal he has contrived a dichotomy which is not a true reflection of his former self. And conversely, being already an exile from self, he felt constrained to furnish proof of his identity.

## DOUBLE EXILE

Thus his starting point is exile—a double exile. The exile of his heart is magnificently mirrored in the physical exile of his body. In Europe most of the time he is in a cold climate, amidst drab crowds, dreaming of Haiti and Port-au-Prince. As if it were not enough to have been once in exile. In point of fact while in Port-au-Prince, he had had a foretaste of exile. The slave ships had torn his ancestors from Africa and scattered them afar. Hence all the poems in this book (except those written in Africa) exude something of the flavour of a geographical mystique.

There is the hemisphere made up of three concentric circles. In the outer circle is Europe, the non-descript land of exile. Then follows the radiant circle of the Islands and of dancing childhood days girding Africa with a ring of round-slays.

The last circle is Africa, hub of the universe, fulcrum of Negro poetry; radiant

Africa, ablaze with heat, glistening like a serpent Africa of burning sun and pelting rain, hot and tangled; Africa, a phantom flickering like a truant flame, lying midway between being and nothingness, more real than "the endless avenues studded with cops"; Africa though absent real, with its dark huss that shatter the image of Europe; all this, yet invisible, beyond reach of eye or hand, a continent that exists in dreams.

Negro Poetry has had one matchless chance. In order to voice the anxious cares that vex the mind of the colonised native, she has had but to stretch out her hand and pluck great symbols that call for nothing more than the constant application of thought and meditations, like exile, slavery, the marriage of Africa and Europe, and the great division of the world into black and white, according to the Nanichaeon theory.

The exile of human beings from their ancestral home depicts that other exile in which the Negro soul denotes an Africa whence the Negro himself is banished, amid the austere buildings that express the whiteman's culture and techniques. He is haunted and obsessed by

IN the early fifties there were two intellectual age-groups in the French speaking countries of Africa. The first group was represented by Leopold Senghor, the great poet who is now the President of Senegal. The second group was represented by French speaking African students in Paris.

We are publishing series of articles on the views these two groups represent. The first three series are on Negritude. Though Leopold Senghor represents this ideology, Jean-Paul Sartre the great French philosopher, in his Black Orpheus did a lot to introduce the subject to the intellectual world.

After the three series on Negritude, we shall publish criticism of the subject by the second group of intellectuals. In certain parts of the second series, we shall discover the links between the Intellectuals of English speaking Africa and their counterparts in French speaking Africa.

Apart from the fact that the series provoke an intellectual exercise and show the development of intellectual ferment in French speaking Africa during the early fifties, we have decided to publish these articles because two things show clearly:—

1. How "Towards Colonial Freedom" by Kwame Nkrumah and the struggle of Ghana influenced some of the leaders of thought in French speaking Africa and
2. How, in French-speaking Africa, culture forms the basis of all discussions.

—EDITOR

negritude, ever-present but shy, sometimes gently grazing his fresh. He in turn strokes its silken wings.

## MORAL FORCE

It throbs, suffuming him like his own swelling memories, like the one thing he needs more than all also: his childhood buried and betrayed, the infancy of his race, the call of home like thronging instincts. Nature, simple and untutored, one and indivisible, the unadulterated legacy of his ancestors, the Moral Force to bind and heal his broken life. But if he but turns to take a look at negritude, it vanishes into thin air. The whiteman's culture, his learning and science, language and customs come between like grim partition walls.

"Give me back my black dolls, And with them let me play

The simple games my instinct craves. Oh that I could but nestle 'neath the shadow of its laws, Win back lost courage, assay the thrill of danger. Be once again myself, My former self, the self I was but yesterday: Simple, uncomplicated, the day just past, When struck the hour of my ravishing, When thieves defiled the space wherein I dwelt, And took it from me"

But some day the walls of the culture prison-house must be broken down, and the journey back to Africa made. So we find in the poets of negritude, an indissoluble bond linking the two themes of a return to their homeland and a descent into the dazzling underworld of the Negro soul.

More we have a quest, a systematic emptying of oneself, a process of asceticism, accompanied by a constant effort to probe beneath the surface. I apply the epithet "orphic" to this poetry, because the unwearying search the Negro makes into the secret places of his soul, reminds me of Orpheus braving the shades of Pluto's realm to claim back Eurydice.

## THE "CIVILISATION AND ANCESTRAL POET

And so, by a rare stroke of poetic good fortune, the Negro poet even as he surrenders to a trance or writhes like a soul possessed by self-made demons, voicing anger, regret or loathing, laying bare his wounds or revealing his life torn between "civilisation" and the deep layers of his ancestral past; in short, as he scales the heights of lyrical expression, he achieves great representative poetry.

He speaks of himself, and in so doing speaks for every member of his race. It is when he seems choked by the venom of our culture, that he appears most revolutionary, for then he sets out systematically to demolish what Europe gave him. This mental onslaught is a symbol of the great fight of the future, whereby the Negro will break his bonds asunder. One example is enough to illustrate this.

In the nineteenth century, most of the racial minorities while prosecuting the struggle for independence, strove hard to revive their national languages. If you are to claim to be an Irish-

The French language provides the Negro bard with a medium for securing the widest Negro audience, at least within the limits of French colonisation. It is a language, pallid like chicken fresh, pale and frigid like our skies, summed up in Pallarm's words as 'singularly neutral, since its genius insists upon toning down anything too flamboyant or myriad-hued.

Yet it is in that language, which as far as they are concerned is so chaste as to be almost half dead, that Damas Diop and Habearivele will pour out the molten streams of thought from their mental horizons and hearts. It is their only medium of expression.

## ADVERSARY'S THOUGHT OF MECHANISM

Like the scholars of the sixteenth century, who could communicate with one another only through the medium of Latin, the Negroes find common ground only when they set on this plane, studded with booby traps laid by whiteman. The settler has contrived to be a perpetual mediator between colonised peoples. He is always present at their most secret councils even when least seen.

And since words are ideas, when the Negro resorts to the French language to proclaim his rejection of French culture, he really takes back with one hand what he discards with the other. He plants the adversary's thought mechanism firmly within his breast, like a stone crusher. This would be quite immaterial, were it not for the fact that a syntax and vocabulary forged far away and long ago, to minister to

other needs and denote other objects, is obviously inappropriate as a medium for expressing his thoughts, anxieties and hopes.

The French language and indeed French thought are analytical. Supposing the genius of the Negro were primarily synthetic. The elegant term "negritude" is one of the few contributions Negroes have made to our stock of words. But then, if the concept of "negritude" is capable of definition or at the very least description, it should embrace more elemental concepts also, having a bearing upon the immediate pre-occupations of the Negro's consciousness.

## HAUNTING HEARTS

Where are the words with which to formulate them? Well do we appreciate the lament of the Haitian poet.

"This haunting heart of mine, That bears no kinship with my words or dress, Into whose pulses the borrowed thoughts and customs of the West Thrust and embed themselves, Like the curved hoods of a cramping iron. Pray, tell me, do you feel the smothering pain, Th' incomparable despair Implicit in my efforts to assuage With words of France, The Senegales heart of mine?"

And yet it is not true to say that the Negro expresses himself in a "foreign tongue" because he has in fact learnt French from his tender years, and can use it with perfect ease to give utterance to his ideas as a technician, scholar or politician. It would be more correct to speak of the discrepancy—slight it is true, but always present—that exists between what he actually says and what he would like to say, as soon as he begins to speak about himself.

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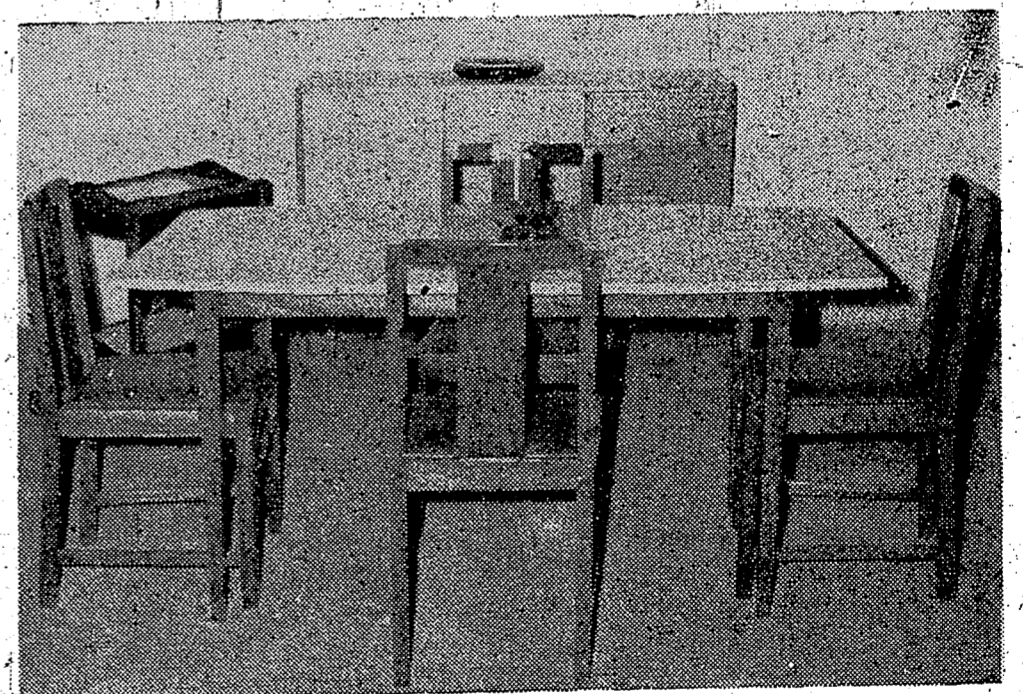
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APRES UNE DECISION REVOLUTIONNAIRE

# Ben Bella: NOTRE SAHARA APPARTIENT A TOUTE L'AFRIQUE

Par Roger Genoud

A LA fin de la semaine dernière au cours d'une déclaration faite à Radio-Mali le président Ben Bella a prononcé une petite phrase dont on mesurera bientôt l'immense portée: "L'Algérie doit mettre les richesses du sous-sol du Sahara à la disposition du Mali et des états africains, car les richesses de notre Sahara appartiennent à toute l'Afrique".

Il est évident que cette déclaration s'inscrit dans la nouvelle perspective de l'unité réelle de l'Afrique, qu'elle témoigne de cet esprit d'Addis Abeba qui se manifeste quotidiennement depuis le mois de mai. Elle fait aussi écho à la remarque du président Nkrumah qui, à la conférence d'Addis Abeba, déclarait que c'est par l'unité continentale seulement que l'Afrique pourra mettre fin à ses conflits frontaliers.

En fait, la portée de cette déclaration du premier algérien extrêmement importante. D'abord en raison de l'énorme potentiel économique représenté le Sahara et aussi parce que pour la première fois elle pose le problème saharien dans son véritable contexte africain, dynamique et révolutionnaire. En proposant de mettre les ressources du Grand Désert à la disposition des états africains le président algérien dépasse à la fois les stériles discussions de frontières (position traditionnelle, statique) et le cadre de la mise en valeur néo-colonialiste française (exploitation des ressources en pétrole et en gaz).

Pour bien comprendre la portée de cette décision il faut brièvement rappeler l'histoire politique récente du Sahara et décrire rapidement ce qu'est ce, que recèle le Sahara.

## De l'océan de sable au pactole pétrolier

Le problème des frontières du Sahara ou plus exactement des états "riverains" ne s'est posé qu'assez récemment. En fait surtout depuis la fin de la deuxième guerre mondiale et plus précisément encore depuis 1956, année au cours de laquelle le pétrole a jailli dans les sables sahariens. Début 1956: Edjeleh, milieu 1956: Hassi Messaoud, et fin 1956: Hassi R'Mel.

Jusqu'à cette époque et traditionnellement le Sahara était plus ou moins considéré comme un océan de sable à la fois séparant et reliant l'Occident arabe (Maghreb) et l'Afrique occidentale sub-saharienne (Soudan). Les importantes minorités noires du Sud du Magreb comme l'islamisation partielle de l'Afrique occidentale montrent bien — et mieux encore que les souvenirs et relations assez imprécises de la fameuse "route de l'or" — que le Sahara, malgré sa très faible population (moins de un habitant pour 2 km<sup>2</sup>) n'était pas une mer morte, mais au contraire une mer traversée de grands courants, commerciaux, politiques, spirituels. Mais, lieu de passage (à part les quelques oasis) plutôt que de résidence, le Sahara ne posait guère de problème de frontières. D'autant plus qu'à l'époque les problèmes de souveraineté se présentaient plutôt comme des problèmes d'allégeance à tel ou tel souverain que comme problèmes territoriaux.

Même à l'époque de la grande colonisation européenne, à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'importance du Dé-

sert et de ses frontières ne fut pas pleinement reconnue. L'attitude des dirigeants britanniques de l'époque est, à cet égard, assez révélatrice. Se satisfaisant de ses riches colonies côtières (en particulier le Nigéria et le Ghana actuel) la Grande-Bretagne laissa la France occuper les vastes étendues désertiques du Sahara. Si elle ne le fit pas volontiers, du moins elle ne manifesta aucune opposition et Lord Salisbury, premier ministre britannique, pouvait remarquer ironiquement en guise de commentaire à la convention franco-anglaise du 5 août 1884 (qui délimitait les zones d'influence des deux états impérialistes en Afrique): "J'ai laissé au coq gaulois le privilège de gratter le sable du désert pour s'aguiser les ergots".

Désert de sable (erg) ou de pierres (hamada), le Sahara n'excitait guère de convoitises et ne posait pratiquement pas de problème de frontières. Pourtant l'empire français procéda à un découpage administratif interne qui est à l'origine des frontières des états sahariens actuels. Quelle que fut la situation antérieure, au moment (1960) de l'accession des ex-colonies françaises d'Afrique à l'indépendance, le Sahara est partagé. La Mauritanie est purement et simplement un morceau, d'ailleurs gigantesque, de désert. Le Mali occupe de vastes espaces sahariens. De même le Niger, la Haute-Volta, le Tchad... En d'autres termes, les états riverains du Sahara, au Sud, sont pourvus de larges portions de territoire saharien. De même le Maroc et la Tunisie possèdent un Sud saharien. Il est vrai pourtant que les frontières sahariennes algéro-tunisiennes et algéro-marocaines n'étaient que des frontières provisoires et que ces deux états n'ont qu'une faible étendue de territoire saharien sous leur souveraineté et qu'ils ont par conséquent déjà fait des représentations dans ce sens, pour obtenir des rectifications de frontières qui leur soient plus favorables (le Maroc ne revendique-t-il pas la souveraineté sur la Mauritanie au nom des allégeances anciennes?). Cependant et quels que soient les découpages dus à la colonisation française, il est certain que l'Algérie possède de la plus vaste espace saharien et notamment cette région du désert où le pétrole a jailli. La seule région du désert où les recherches pétrolières ont été couronnées de succès à part la Libye.

## Les prétentions françaises du colonialisme au néo-colonialisme

C'est dans ce cadre historique rapidement rappelé que se sont manifestées les prétentions françaises à partir de 1956, l'année d'Edjeleh, d'Hassi Messaoud et d'Hassi R'Mel.

On se souvient que c'est en grande partie sur le problème du Sahara et de sa souveraineté qu'ont buté les premières conversations

algéro-françaises en vue d'un cessé-le-feu. Dans la meilleure tradition impérialiste, les Français contraints d'admettre que "l'Algérie (ce n'est pas) la France" s'efforcèrent dès lors de maintenir l'essentiel du point de vue économique: le Sahara. Indépendance pour l'Algérie, soit, mais souveraineté française ou, au moins, co-souveraineté (la France et tous les états "riverains" y compris l'Algérie, dans le cadre de l'OCS ou Organisation commune des régions sahariennes). Pour prouver sa thèse la France fit feu de tout bois. Le Sahara ce n'est pas l'Algérie: il y aura donc un ministre (socialiste, soit dit en passant) du Sahara; les programmes de géographie dissocieront l'étude du Maghreb et du Sahara dans les écoles secondaires... Appel à l'histoire: le Sahara c'est une mer, un océan (de sable), donc il ne peut, comme pour toutes les mers, n'y avoir que des états riverains, des eaux territoriales... Appel à la géographie et à la géologie: le Sahara se distingue fondamentalement du Maghreb; c'est une vaste cuvette primaire recouverte de couches sédimentaires plus ou moins épaisses alors que le Maghreb est atlatique, terrains beaucoup plus récents du type alpin... Les populations sont différentes: berbères islamisés ici, Maures là... etc., etc. Déchaînement d'arguments, scientifiques, historiques, géographiques et même une contrévérité flagrante que nous avons déjà indiquée ci-dessus: le Sahara ne fut pas tout entier administré avec l'Algérie proprement dite ou atlatique, puisque, comme nous l'avons vu, plusieurs autres états africains, au Maghreb ou au Soudan, se partagent de vastes portions du Sahara, quand bien même la plus grande partie est algérienne. Si l'on avait voulu suivre la thèse française jusqu'au bout il aurait fallu reconsidérer les problèmes de frontières de tous les états sahariens et non seulement de l'Algérie. Il aurait fallu, pour être logique, mettre en place un véritable "pool" saharien englobant les portions du désert de tous les états riverains: Algérie, Maroc, Rio de Oro (encore espagnol), Mauritanie, Mali, Niger, peut-être même Haute-Volta, Tchad et Tunisie; et peut-être même inviter la Libye, l'Egypte et le Soudan à se joindre à une véritable OCS!

Mais, bien entendu, il ne s'agissait pas de cela. Il s'agissait tout simplement de permettre à la France, grâce à une remarquable manoeuvre néo-colonialiste, de se maintenir au Sahara avec toutes les garanties de la co-souveraineté. Jouer les états sub-sahariens contre l'Algérie non encore indépendante à l'époque pour qu'au prix de quelques concessions et de quelques miettes la France puisse continuer d'exploiter le pétrole et le gaz sahariens, que l'énergie nécessaire au développement de l'économie française puisse continuer d'être payée en francs français plutôt qu'en devises fortes. Pour, surtout, que l'approvisionnement en énergie de la France ne soit

pas menacé (après le coup manqué de Suez on comprend bien, rétro-activement les inquiétudes françaises de l'époque).

## La technique et les capitaux européens et le pétrole africain

Dans son grand dessein saharien la France ne s'était pas seulement efforcée de mettre les états sub-sahariens dans son jeu, mais encore ses partenaires européens du Marché Commun. La position française est particulièrement bien exposée dans le rapport Lemaire à la Commission économique du Conseil de l'Europe, du 21 août 1958, qui propose la création de l'"Eurafrigaz".

Le raisonnement tient en deux points.

1. Pour l'Europe, et la France singulièrement, l'importance économique du Sahara, c'est le pétrole et le gaz. La France et l'Europe, mais dans une moindre mesure cependant, commencent à souffrir d'un déficit énergétique considérable. Le pétrole et surtout le gaz d'Edjeleh, d'Hassi Messaoud, d'Hassi R'Mel et des sources qui seront encore découvertes étant donné le stade des recherches actuelles et la nature probable des terrains, permettraient de compenser ce déficit.

Le raisonnement est très clairement exposé dans le rapport Lemaire déjà cité (paragraphe 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 et 13 notamment). On peut le résumer par le tableau suivant:

### BILAN ENERGETIQUE DE L'EUROPE OCCIDENTALE

	Production	Consommation	Déficit
1956	615	781	-165
1965	680 (x)	930 à 1000	-220 à -295
1975	750 (x)	1100 à 1300	-270 à -480

Unités: MTEC — millions de tonnes d'équivalent charbon;

(X) Sans tenir compte de l'énergie nucléaire qui, selon le même rapport, ne devrait pas atteindre une production supérieure à 25 MTEC en 1965 et à 80 MTEC en 1975.

La différence, il faudra l'importer et comme les Etats-Unis et la Grande-Bretagne doivent et devront eux aussi importer une partie de leur consommation d'énergie, l'importance du Sahara est considérable.

En effet, sur le seule base des gisements actuellement découverts et exploités on peut compter sur une production annuelle minimum de 15 milliards de m<sup>3</sup> de gaz, soit plus de 22 MTEC. C'est encore peu pour couvrir un déficit d'environ 220 MTEC en 1965, mais ce n'est qu'un début et il semble qu'on pourrait rapidement atteindre 40 milliards de m<sup>3</sup> de gaz, surtout grâce à Hassi R'Mel, soit environ 60 MTEC, soit autant que la production des charbonnages de France (59 millions de tonnes en 1957).

"Dès lors, conclut le rapport Lemaire, il appartient à la puissance propriétaire du sol (sic) de

pousser rapidement l'exploitation, d'ailleurs peu coûteuse (par. 83)." Et encore (par. 84): "Au Sahara, d'autres gisements de gaz existent, et aussi de pétrole, et ici beaucoup plus près de l'Europe occidentale et beaucoup plus sûrs que le pétrole du Moyen Orient". Enfin le dernier paragraphe conclut le rapport par une proposition d'association des pays de la CEE à l'exploitation dans le cadre de l'Eurafrigaz.

2. Le deuxième point du raisonnement, et qui justifie l'association de la CEE à la France dans cette aventure, c'est que "l'effort (de mise en valeur) dépasse les seuls moyens de la France. Est-il quelqu'un pour en douter aujourd'hui?", notait G. Puaux, ancien Résident général de France au Maroc, dans un article du "Monde", le 30 janvier 1957 déjà.

## Le Sahara ce n'est pas seulement le Texas, mais aussi la Ruhr de l'Afrique

Le grand dessein c'est donc de pousser l'exploitation du gaz et du pétrole, parce que c'est un approvisionnement "peu coûteux", "beaucoup plus sûr que le pétrole du Moyen Orient", et aussi parce que "l'avenir énergétique de l'Europe conditionne son avenir sur l'échiquier mondial." (Rapport Lemaire, par. 85). Et c'est ainsi que "les découvertes sahariennes sont comme un

avec des entreprises spécialisées étrangères (européennes ou américaines) et il est plus difficile encore d'imaginer que l'Algérie et même tout le Maghreb et toute l'Afrique occidentale puisse absorber économiquement et immédiatement tout le pétrole et tout le gaz saharien, surtout si l'exploitation et les découverts de gisements s'accroissent. On peut, au contraire, très bien imaginer une phase limitaire au cours de laquelle l'exploitation des gisements pétroliers et de gaz sahariens permettraient (a) de fournir de l'énergie à bon marché aux pays "riverains", (b) d'exporter suffisamment de gaz et de pétrole pour financer les importations nécessaires de biens d'équipement pour l'industrialisation et la modernisation de l'agriculture, et (c) de jeter les bases d'un secteur industriel nouveau (installation de raffineries en Afrique et développement d'industries pétrochimiques en Afrique aussi).

Dans ce cadre et si ce cadre est respecté, c'est-à-dire si les bases du développement industriel de l'Afrique sont respectées, une certaine coopération avec des entreprises étrangères et pendant une phase limitaire peut être envisagée sans trop de craintes et ne constituerait pas une entreprise néo-colonialiste réclamer dangereuse pour l'Afrique.

C'est le premier point, mais il y a plus. Le Sahara n'est pas seulement un désert de sable et de pétrole. Ses ressources sont beaucoup plus vastes et plus variées.

Actuellement l'inventaire, très incomplet encore, des richesses est à peu près le suivant:

Sur le plan énergétique, outre le pétrole et le gaz, on a trouvé du charbon dans la région de Colomb Béchar réserves démontrées 30 millions de tonnes, réserves probables: 100 millions de tonnes).

Les matières premières ne manquent pas, même au stade actuel, peu avancé, des recherches: fer, cuivre, manganèse, plomb, étain, tungstène...

Le fer d'abord. A Tindouf (Algérie et à Port Gouraud (Mauritanie). Le gisement de Tindouf (découvert en 1952) d'une importance mondiale. Rien que pour la partie ouest du gîte les premiers travaux avaient permis de reconnaître l'existence de plus de deux milliards de tonnes de minerai titrant 50 per cent de métal. Celui de Port Gouraud (prospécté en 1948) avait d'abord révélé 100 millions de tonnes, mais des travaux ultérieurs démontrent que les réserves sont bien supérieures à ce chiffre.

A Djebel Guettara (Algérie) à 150 km Sud de Colomb Béchar on a découvert en 1953 un gisement de manganèse dont les réserves connues sont évaluées à 1,500,000 de tonnes. Le cuivre d'Akrouj (Mauritanie) est important: réserves: 9,500,000 tonnes de minerai oxydé et 18,500,000 de minerai sulfuré.

En outre, notamment dans Hoggar, on a trouvé du plomb, de l'étain, du tungstène, etc. et même de l'uranium et du thorium.


Et répétons-le ce ne sont là que les résultats de reconnaissances très partielles. Ce sont ces matières premières industrielles avec le pétrole et le gaz, mais pas seulement le gaz et le pétrole qui importent dans la perspective du développe-

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# AFRICA MUST UNITE TO

## SURVIVE

by A Correspondent

MANKIND has entered another era of exploration and scientific progress. Modern history dates from the 15th century, when Christopher Columbus in 1492 blazed the sea route to America, and when Nicholas Copernicus (1473-1543) established a new theory of the structure of the Universe and gave a decisive turn to modern scientific thought.

These two events, apart from their academic novelty, are of great and practical significance to those nations which have lost their lands and social stability as a result of an aggressive technological culture of Western imperialism.

Copernicus, a man of religion and science, would doubtless disapprove of the way knowledge is being used today to pollute outer space, to annihilate mankind, and as an instrument of political bigotry in establishing a false basis for racial inequality.

Columbus who was on the other hand a man of less religious scruples and scientific orientation than Copernicus at once prostituted his great exploration, by establishing slavery in the new world he discovered.

### WANTON WASTE OF LIVES

He was obsessed by the belief that non-Christian nations had no spiritual nor civil rights and that the souls of their citizens "were doomed to eternal perdition; their bodies the property of the Christian nation who should occupy their land."

Africa's benefit from the new discoveries of Columbus and Copernicus was, until this mid-twentieth century, comparatively negative.

In 300 years of unparalleled slavery in history, about 150 million souls were transported from Africa to America. But when slavery was abolished in the latter part of the nineteenth century, less than 5 million slaves remained to step into the light of American Jim Crow freedom.

The small remnant slave population is accounted for by the wanton waste of lives that accompanied the iniquitous trade. The millions of African lives which went into the building of Western capitalism far exceeded the number of lives lost in the two World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-45) of imperialist rivalry in which arms of mass destruction, including the atom-bomb, were used.

The abolition of slavery without its substitution by colonialism would have deprived capitalism of one of its essential conditions of growth, namely the existence of a large population in raw material producing countries which could sell cheaply its labour and at the same time consume at ruinous prices the products of capitalist industry.

### SLAVE DRIVER

Colonialism is in fact a refined form of slavery as could be seen from the description given on June 12, 1912, in the House of Commons of one who held the reins of oppression: "The position of the Colonial Secretary carried with it the powers, duties, responsibilities and anxieties of a practical and laborious despot controlled only by the forces of nature, by its own discretion and by the sporadic curiosity of friends or opponents inspired either by imagination or information."

If one compared the position of a British Colonial Secretary in the first half of the twentieth century, with that of an American plantation owner in the heydays of slavery one would conclude without hesitation that a British

Colonial Secretary was in fact a big slave driver.

The result of colonial domination and capitalist exploitation is the great gulf of progress and living standards which exists between Africa and the rest of the world. For example, the United Kingdom until lately the foremost capitalist country, commands in value twice the annual production of the whole of Africa.

If it is considered that those small European offshore islands have little natural resources apart from coal and iron, the explanation for this fantastic disparity between the economic output of a little capitalist country and that of Africa as a whole can be found in the high degree of many centuries of exploitation by Western Europe and America.

Africa every year sinks down the abyss of social and technological inequality as prices of industrial goods increase whilst prices of raw materials exported from the continent keep on falling.

### CYCLE OF EXPLORATION

In terms of human welfare the capitalist countries are increasing their standard of living whilst disease, hunger, poverty and ignorance still plague the people of Africa in the midst of plenty. Comparatively speaking, the progress of Africa has been stifled rather than enhanced in the course of modern history.

Mankind is again beginning another cycle of exploration and scientific progress. New routes are being charted to the planets and new forms of power (thermonuclear and solar) have opened wide vistas of human advancement. What is the role and status of Africa in this new rhythm of history?

The imperialists have already started setting up their Common Market trade posts and military bases on African soil. Thus the stage is being prepared for a greater drama of slavery and plunder, more grim and more inhuman than the first from which we are still struggling to be free.

I once saw a film in which slaves were exported from the earth to other planets to work in mines. The slave masters had their bases in their homes on earth and were supervising their workers and meting out punishments to them by means of remote controls.

Some may think it is a fiction of the imagination to imply that Africans may be sent into space as slaves. Many people, including some scientists, consider space travel impossible, and to them anybody who thinks of space slavery is on the fringe of lunacy.

### NEW ERA OF SLAVERY

According to history, the Greeks who lived two thousand five hundred years ago were the first to think of space travel and atom energy. If after these years men in our own age have been able to produce nuclear energy and send

space vehicles many millions of miles to the regions of the planets, is it not reasonable to imagine that space colonisation will be a certainty during the span of human existence? In fact, when Columbus thought of exploring a new sea route westwards, people of his time considered him impractical, and neither Columbus himself nor his contemporaries imagined that they were on the threshold of a new era of slavery in the new world.

Without stretching our imagination very far into the future, the establishment of foreign economic and military bases in Africa must serve as a signal for intensified imperialist exploitation of the human and material resources of our continent.

Imperialist philosophers contend that if Marx's dialectics of history were correct, socialism should have started in the industrialised countries rather than in Russia and China which were comparatively backward before the Revolutions. The capitalists have only so far gained a respite by continuing their exploitation of Africa.

When Germany was stripped of her colonies and her overseas economic activities were curtailed by the allied powers of the 1914-18 war, capitalist system in Germany virtually broke down and the exploiters fearing a takeover of the machinery of state by the masses, quickly propped up a villainously militarist government headed by Adolf Hitler which ruthlessly

suppressed the working class movement. German capitalism was restrained to the borders of its native country to wither away.

But the octopus that German capitalism was, it struggled very violently for a living space. The big capitalist combines such as Krupps made the slogan "lebensraum" the war cry of Germany and armed Hitler to the teeth to plunge the whole world into the greatest war of capitalists rivalry ever fought in history, ending in the manufacture and explosion of the atom bomb.

### PENDING CATASTROPHE

In the postwar era when science has equipped industry with the process of automation, the working class in capitalist countries, is faced with mass unemployment, and the capitalists are finding it difficult to dispose of their surplus goods.

In order to avert the impending catastrophe which will usher in an era of socialism in Western Europe, the capitalists have designed a grand plan for a Euro-Africa. The main objective is to maintain the colonial economic status quo in Africa. This Euro-African plan has found its expression in the European Common Market.

As quickly as slavery was abolished, colonialism took its place. In our own time when the greater part of Africa is free and the whole continent is smashing the last stronghold of imperialism in Kenya, Central and South Africa, when mopping up operations against the oppressors of the masses in Portuguese

Guinea and other still dependent countries are assuring us of a free and united Africa, imperialism has again introduced a subtle scheme of domination to maintain its stranglehold in Africa for raw materials and for the dumping of capitalist goods on the continent.

It is a grave tragedy that some African leaders are so myopic as to be lured into pawning their countries into slavery. Economic internationalism signified by the Common Market is the precursor and the moulder of political internationalism.

There is no mistaking the fact therefore that the political freedom of the vassal African countries of the Common Market will be rendered illusive when the affairs of those African countries are "teleguided" from the NATO headquarters or by the Council of Ministers of the Western Powers.

### CONCRETE STEPS OF UNITY

I have succinctly outlined the dangers that face this Continent. If Africa remains politically divided and economically backward her people will not escape a frightful domination and subhuman degradation by merciless imperialism, which has at its elbow the most modern media of mass oppression.

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, has, in his monumental book **AFRICA MUST UNITE** and in his historic speech at the Addis Ababa Conference, laid down concrete steps for the political unification of Africa. The formula for all social problems lies in political

decisions.

The eradication of Africa's economic backwardness and her achievement of scientific parity with the rest of the world call for large scale planning and centralised execution. To cover a century's gap in each of the fifty African countries is an incomprehensible exercise which calls for a concerted continental effort. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in his speech at the Addis Ababa Conference warned:

*"If we do not approach problems in Africa with a common front and a common purpose, we shall be haggling and wrangling among ourselves until we are colonised again and become the tools of a far greater colonialism than we suffered hitherto."*

### PROGRESS OF MODERN MAN

And when ratifying the Charter of African Unity in the National Assembly, the President again stressed the urgency for a monolithic continental organisation in the following words:

*"Speed has become a new potent factor in the progress of the world. The progress of modern man, like the agile Kangaroo, leaps and jumps... We have to remove the gap between those nations (capitalist) and ourselves if we are to emerge from the grip of the economic imperialism that will retard us the longer it remains master, or even a part of our economy."*

*"We have to keep in mind, however, that the gap is not a static one, but that it grows as modern technology improves its productive capacities and output potentials increase. Thus the gap can widen seriously and new dangers threaten us, unless we hasten forward at a much accelerated speed."*

The Charter of the Organisation of African Unity which resulted from the Conference of African Heads of State and Govern-

ment at Addis Ababa is one step forward to the realisation of a unitary political institution for Africa.

It is the hope of all those who wish to see Africa take her rightful place along with the rest of humanity that the Charter of African Unity will be buttressed by a constitutional instrument which will give effect to a Continental Government.

### GENUINE DESIRE FOR UNITY

The interpretation and application of the Charter and other instruments of the Organisation depend first and foremost, on the sincerity of member states and on their genuine desire for unity. It is hoped, therefore, that member-states will not allow themselves to be used as instruments of reaction to divert the cause of the Organisation to neo-colonialist channels. Member States should be vigilant not to sacrifice our continental unity for regional affiliations and linguistic loyalties.

There is no doubt that geographical factors influence economic co-operation but when regional political entities are evolved as micro states within the African continental organisation, these regional affiliations are bound to create inroads in our continental unity and become blocs of conflict to the detriment of our cherished aspirations.

The quest for African Unity is a sacred duty we owe to ourselves and to posterity. It is only under the banner of a continental government that the dignity and progress of the people of Africa can be fully realised. The destiny of each country is bound up with the destiny of the continent as a whole.

Considerations of leadership and national pride should not be allowed to mar our achievement of unity. The glory of Africa appears on the horizon; it is for us to take the last step to unity and the haven of African renaissance. Our survival is at stake. **AFRICA MUST UNITE!**

# Ben Bella

Suite de la Page 3

ment industriel de l'Afrique. Le Sahara, pour l'Afrique, n'est pas seulement un Texas, un champ de pétrole à bon marché, mais aussi, pour utiliser encore cette comparaison, une Ruhr, c'est-à-dire matériellement de l'industrialisation de cette partie du continent africain.

Ce point est fondamental et c'est là que réside le véritable danger néo-colonialiste. L'exploitation poussée du pétrole et du gaz sahariens seuls correspond à une distorsion de la vocation industrielle de l'Afrique; c'est encore, et tout comme la monoculture agricole imposée aux colonies, organisation et l'exploitation de l'Afrique en fonction des besoins du marché mondial industriel. Sont développées les seules ressources qui importent pour le développement industriel de l'Europe ou du monde industriel en général. Celles qui assurent à l'Europe "une position sur l'échiquier mondial" celles qui sont "un signe providentiel pour la France".

Laisser les colonialistes mettre en valeur seulement le pétrole et le gaz du Sahara, et se satisfaire de quel-

ques millions par an de royalties comme les émirats pétroliers du Moyen Orient, c'est accepter une caricature d'industrialisation, c'est accepter de dépendre éternellement des pays industrialisés, c'est accepter de dépendre éternellement des pays industriels avancés, européens et américains, pour l'approvisionnement de l'Afrique en biens de consommation industriels. C'est véritablement capituler devant le néo-colonialisme.

Mettre en valeur toutes les ressources industrielles du Sahara, transformer l'océan de sables en une Ruhr africaine, c'est une autre affaire. Entreprise gigantesque, de longue haleine, sans doute, mais c'est la seule voie pour liquider le sous-développement économique et assoir à terme solidement l'indépendance politique des états africains sur une véritable indépendance économique (qui, soit dit en passant, n'a bien sûr rien à voir avec un quelconque autarcie économique).

Mais cette entreprise n'intéresse guère les puissances industrielles avan-

cées d'abord parce qu'elles peuvent encore se passer des matières premières industrielles sahariennes et ensuite parce que leur exploitation paraît dans l'ensemble peu rentables en termes strictement financiers. Principalement, parce que les gisements sont très éloignés des ports d'embarquement pour l'Europe ou les Etats-Unis. En effet les distances pour la plupart des gisements varient, du gisement à la côte, entre 500 et 1000 km. Parfois pus. Pratiquement, cela signifie, à la seule exception des matières stratégiques comme l'uranium par exemple, l'abandon pur et simple de la majorité des gisements. Par les entreprises étrangères.

Mais, précisément, le point de vue africain est diamétralement opposé. Pour deux raisons.

1o Parce que la rentabilité d'un gisement ne se mesure pas uniquement par un rapport financier investissements-profits, mais aussi en fonction de la rentabilité économique et sociale nationale ou africaine. C'est-à-dire, par exemple, dans quelle mesure l'exploitation de ce gisement permet-elle d'assurer les bases d'un développement industriel dans le pays qui permettra en retour de réduire les importations de biens industriels étrangers très coûteux, dans quelle mesure, à

long terme, l'exploitation de tel gisement permettra-t-elle de résorber le chômage. Et mille questions fondamentales que ne se posent pas, que ne peuvent pas se poser les entreprises industrielles capitalistes étrangères, parce que, logiquement, elles ne considèrent que l'entreprise en termes de rentabilité d'entreprise, financiers, étroits.

2o La deuxième raison, un peu plus technique, mais, vu le contexte général qui est d'une grande signification, c'est que les distances entre les gisements et les ports d'embarquement sont moins importantes pour la simple raison qu'il ne s'agit pas d'exporter du minerai brut, pour les usines des pays industriels avancés, mais précisément d'installer les usines de transformation en Afrique même. Il est intéressant de noter à ce propos que cette perspective avait reçu, en son temps, la caution de l'un des plus brillants technocrates européens, Louis Armand, qui en 1954 déjà, écrivait que "la solution consistait à acheminer les minerais non pas vers les ports d'embarquement, mais vers un centre industriel continental où ils seraient élaborés et transformés en produits semi-finis, susceptibles, en raison de leur valeur, de supporter les frais de transport". C'était encore dans une optique européenne, ou de l'

exploitation des ressources sahariennes dans le cadre économique saharienne intimement liée à l'Europe, à la France en particulier, mais la caution technique n'en est que plus valable dans la cadre d'une exploitation des ressources sahariennes par et pour l'Afrique.

Voilà ce qui fait toute la différence entre la conception néocolonialiste et la conception véritablement africaine de l'exploitation des ressources du Sahara; voilà ce qui fait toute la différence et quelle différence entre l'OCRS française et l'exploitation en commun des ressources du Sahara algérien par tous les états "riverains" et non seulement les états "riverains"; mais tous les états indépendants d'Afrique; voilà à quelle entreprise gigantesque de décolonisation réelle nous convie le président Ahmed Ben Bella dans sa récente déclaration à Radio-Mali.

Sans doute demain on ne raserait pas gratis en Afrique, mais l'exploitation en commun du Sahara par les états africains dans une perspective africaine ouvre la seule perspective véritable de développement dans un cadre qui n'est pas celui des illusions néo-colonialistes. Des miettes ou des royalties qui perpétueraient la dépendance économique et finalement politique de l'Afrique.



A REVOLUTIONARY DECISION

# Ben Bella: OUR SAHARA BELONGS TO ALL OF AFRICA

By Roger Genoud

AT the end of last week, when being interviewed by Radio Mali, Premier Ben Bella made a short statement the full meaning of which will soon be felt. He said: "Algeria must put the underground riches of the Sahara at the disposal of Mali and African States, for the riches of our Sahara belong to all of Africa".

It is obvious that this declaration is an example of the new line of a real Unity of Africa. It speaks for the spirit of Addis Ababa which has been demonstrated daily since the month of May. It also echoes the words of President Nkrumah who pointed out in his address to the Addis Ababa Conference that only a continental unity of Africa could end border disputes.

In point of fact, the meaning of the Algerian Premier's statement is extremely important. First because of the enormous economic potentialities of the Sahara and secondly because this statement for the first time places the Saharan problem in its true African context—a dynamic and revolutionary one.

By proposing to put the resources of the Great Desert at the disposal of the African states, the Algerian Premier is well above both the fruitless border disputes (traditional static position) and the framework of the French neo-colonialist development projects (exploitation of oil and gas resources of the Sahara).

To enable us thoroughly understand the implication of this decision the recent political history of the Sahara should be briefly recalled and a short description of what the Sahara and its potential riches are is necessary.

## FROM THE OCEAN OF SANDS TO FABULOUS OIL RESOURCES

The problem of the Sahara borders, or more precisely those of its border states, has arisen only rather recently, more precisely since the end of World War II and particularly since 1956 when oil was struck in the Saharan sands. Beginning of 1956: Edjeleh; mid 1956: Hassi Messaoud; end of 1956: Hassi R'Mel.

Up to that time, and by tradition, the Sahara was more or less considered an ocean of sands both separating and joining the Western Arab world (Maghreb) and West Africa (Sudan). The important black minorities in the South of the Maghreb as well as the number of Moslem converts south of the Sahara—and this even more so than the vague memories and description of the fabulous trans-saharan gold traffic—are evidence that the Sahara, despite its very scant population (less than 1 inhabitant per square mile), was not a dead sea but to the contrary a sea through which active commercial, political and spiritual streams flow.

But, being a place through which people moved (apart from the few oases) rather than a place where they settled, the problem of the Saharan borders was not a significant one. All the more so since at the time the problems of sovereignty were rather problems of allegiance to one sovereign or the other rather than territorial problems.

Even later, when the European colonial powers struggled to carve out their empires in Africa, in the last quarter of the XIXth century, the importance of the Desert and of its borders were not fully recognised. The attitude of the British government at that time is quite relevant. Satisfied with her rich coastal colonies (especially Nigeria and what is now Ghana) Great Britain let France

occupy the vast barren lands of the Sahara.

If Britain did not accept this wholeheartedly, at least she did not oppose France. And Lord Salisbury, then Britain's Prime Minister, was able to comment ironically on the agreement between France and Britain of August 5th, 1884, which defined the zone of influence of the two imperialist powers in Africa: "I have left the French Rooster the privilege of scratching in the desert sands in order that it may sharpen aimlessly its spurs."

Sands (erg) or desert of stones (hamada), the Sahara did not stir up much desire and there were practically no border problems.

However, the French empire did divide the desert into a series of administrative regions which are at the origin of the now existing borders of the Saharan States. Whatever the past situation, when in 1960 the West African former French colonies became independent, the Sahara was divided among them and the North African countries.

Mauritania is but a desert, and for that matter a big one. Mali stretches over vast Saharian areas. Similarly Niger, Upper Volta, Chad... In other words the Saharian border states to the South share large portions of the Sahara.

Similarly Morocco and Tunisia have their Saharian South. To be sure the borders between Algeria and Morocco and Algeria and Tunisia were only provisional limits (only dotted on the colonial maps) and both Morocco and Tunisia have only a small share of the Sahara and therefore have already asked for some changes to be made which would increase their Saharian territories (Everyone knows that Morocco even claims, on the ground of traditional ties and allegiances, sovereignty over the Islamic Republic of Mauritania).

However and whatever the responsibility of France in the peculiar distribution of the Sahara among its border states, it is quite clear that Algeria has the biggest share and moreover possesses that part of the Sahara where oil was struck. This is the only area of the Great Desert where oil prospectors have been successful except in Libya.

## FRENCH CLAIMS: FROM COLONIALISM TO NEO-COLONIALISM

It is within this historical framework which we have just recalled that French ambitions have developed since 1956, the year of Edjeleh, Hassi Messaoud and Hassi R'Mel.

It will be remembered that it is to a great extent because of the problem of the Sahara and its sovereignty that the first negotiations for a cease-fire between Algeria and France (Evian-Lugrin) failed. When they were forced to drop the "Algeria is France" pretence, the French in a typi-

cally imperialistic style decided to stick to what was essential from an economic point of view, viz. the Sahara.

If it can't be helped, let Algeria be independent, but French sovereignty over the Sahara must needs be preserved or, at least, co-sovereignty (i.e. France and all the border-states, including Algeria, within the framework of the OCRS or Common Organisation of Saharan Areas). In order to prove her point France made use of every possible argument. The Sahara should not be part of Algeria: therefore a Minister (a Socialist, by the way) of the Sahara was appointed; even down to the secondary school geography syllabus, the study of the Sahara was thereupon disconnected from the study of the Maghreb...

The historical argument was thought to be of some help too: the Sahara is sea, an ocean (of sand); there can therefore only be the border states, territorial waters... Similarly geographical and geological arguments were used: the Sahara is fundamentally different from the Maghreb. It is a vast primary depression covered with aqueous rocks whilst the Maghreb is part of the Atlas system whose soils are of a much more recent Alpine type...

Similar differences in population were stressed: here the Islamised Berber, there the Moorish etc. etc... A multiplication of arguments: scientific, historical, geographical, and even an open lie which we have already pointed out: it is not the whole of the Sahara that was ruled together with Algeria by the French, since, as we have seen, several other African States, in the Maghreb or in the Sudan, share large portions of the Sahara, even though Algeria has the biggest share.

If one had wished to follow the French stand to its logical conclusion one would have had to reconsider the border problems of all the Saharian States and not only Algeria's. It would have been necessary, to be logical with oneself, to set up a real Saharian pool including all the portions of the desert belonging to all border states of Algeria, Morocco, the still Spanish-ruled Rio de Oro, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, possibly Upper Volta, Chad and Tunisia. And why not also ask Libya, Egypt and Sudan to join in so as to lay the foundations of a true OCRS?

Of course this was not the idea. The only problem was to set up such an organisation that would enable France, thanks to a remarkable neo-colonialist manoeuvre, to remain all powerful in the Sahara with all the guarantees given by co-sovereignty; to play the sub-saharan states against Algeria when she was not yet an independent state so as to be able to carry on with the exploitation of oil and gas in the Sahara; to enable France to continue to pay in France instead of

hard currency her necessary supply in coal.

All that at the mere cost of a few formal concessions to France's African partners! The whole idea was above all to ensure France with a steady supply of oil and gas which would not be threatened by political insecurity (After the failure of the Suez aggression one can well understand that France might have been a bit disquieted at the time!)

For her great design, France did not only seek the support of the Sub-Saharan states but also that of her Common Market European partners. The French position is especially well stated in the Maurice Lemaire report to the Economic Commission of the European Council of August 21st 1958, where the proposal for an "Eurafri-gaz", that is a common European organisation to exploit the riches of the Sahara, was made. The argument is as follows:

1. For Europe, and France especially, the importance of the Sahara derives from its oil and gas. France and Europe, but the latter to a much lesser extent however, is now beginning to have a considerable energy deficit.

The oil and especially the gas of Edjeleh, Hassi Messaoud, Hassi R'Mel and of the other sources that might still be discovered, could help bridge the gap.

The argument is clearly set out in the Lemaire report already quoted (particularly paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 14). It can be summarised in the following table.

Energy Balance Sheet of Western Europe

Production	Consumption	Deficit
1956 615	781	-165
1965 680*	930 to 1000	-220 to -295
1975 750*	1100 to 1300	-270 to -480

Units: MTEC: millions of tons of coal equivalent

(\* Without taking into consideration nuclear energy which, according to the same report, should not exceed a production of 25 MTEC in 1965 and 80 MTEC in 1975.

The gap will have to be bridged by imports and as the US and the UK also must and will have to import their own energy consumption, the importance of the Sahara is therefore outstanding.

In point of fact, on the sole basis of oil fields already discovered the minimum production should amount to some 15 billion cubic metres of gas, or about equivalent of 22 million tons of coal. This is not much to make up for a deficit of the equivalent of 220 million tons of coal in 1965 but it is only the beginning and it seems that the production could rapidly be expanded up to some 40 billion cubic metres of gas, especially thanks to Hassi R'Mel, or to the equivalent of 60 million tons of coal, or as much as the total yearly coal production of France (59 million tons in 1957).

"Then," concludes the Lemaire report, "it remains to the power to which the soil belongs (sic) to expand rapidly the extraction, which besides is quite cheap" (para 83). And further at para 84: "There are other oil deposits in the Sahara and they are much nearer Europe and much more secure than those of the Middle East." Eventually, in the last paragraph, the report proposes that the Com-

mon Market countries associate with France to exploit together the Saharian oil resources, within the framework of "Eurafri-gaz"

2. The second point of the argument, and the one which justifies the association of the Common Market with France in this venture, is simply that "the effort (required to develop the potentialities of the Sahara) is far above the means of France alone: Is there anyone today who has doubt about this?" asks G. Péraux, former French Resident in Morocco ("Le Monde", January 30th 1957).

## THE SAHARA IS NOT ONLY THE TEXAS BUT ALSO THE RUHR OF AFRICA

The great design means therefore that the extraction of oil and gas must be expanded as much as possible, because "it is a cheap" source of energy "much more secure than the oil of the Middle East" and also because "the energy future of Europe will determine her future on the world scene" (Lemaire report para. 85). In this context "the Saharian oil discoveries are to be considered as such a providential (sic) sign that only fools would not understand its meaning" para. 86).

It could hardly be put in clearer terms. The position of Europe in the World, the solution of Europe's energy deficit... But where is Africa in all this?

The first answer to this question has been given by the firm Algerian stand on the Sahara problem and by

the fact that eventually the Algerian part of the Sahara has been maintained within the borders of the new Algerian Republic.

The second answer has just been given by Premier Ben Bella in his interview with Radio Mali. The truth is that the great design of France and Europe was not only and is not only (for the whole matter is not yet definitely settled) a neo-colonialist undertaking because the sovereignty of Algeria over a part of its land was opposed, or because European investors take out considerable profits.

This is only one problem and of for that matter only a small one. In point of fact, at the current stage of economic development of Algeria and Africa in general, it is difficult to imagine how the extraction, transport and commercialisation of the Saharian oil could be undertaken without co-operation with specialised foreign firms (either European or American) and it is even more difficult to imagine that Algeria and even the whole Maghreb and the whole of West Africa could immediately and economically absorb all the oil and all the gas of the Sahara.

Especially if extraction and discoveries are to increase. One can, to the con-

trary, quite easily imagine a first stage in the course of which the extraction of oil and gas would permit (a) the supply of cheap energy to all border countries, (b) the export of enough oil and gas to finance the necessary imports of capital goods for industrialization and for the modernization of agriculture, and (c) the laying of the foundations of a new industrial complex (oil refineries to be set up in Africa and development of petrochemical industries in Africa also).

Within this framework, and if it is respected, that is if the basis of an industrial development in Africa is respected, some kind of co-operation with foreign firms during a first stage of development could be considered without too much fear and would not automatically be a very dangerous neo-colonialist threat to Africa.

This is the first point to be stressed. But there is more. The Sahara is not only a desert of sands and an oil field. Its riches are very diversified.

At the moment the riches inventory, though far from being an exhaustive one, is roughly as follows: Energy: Beside oil and gas, coal has been found in the Colomb Bechar area (Proven reserves: 30 million tons, probable reserves: 100 million tons).

Raw materials are not lacking either. Even now, that is at a very early stage of soil prospecting, there is iron, copper, manganese, lead, tin, tungsten...

Iron abounds at Tindouf (Algeria) and at Fort Gouraud (Mauritania). The Tindouf deposit (discovered in 1952) is world important. Prospecting organized in its western area revealed more than 2 billion tons of ore containing 50% of metal. The Fort Gouraud deposit (prospected in 1948) revealed first that there were 100 million tons, but later estimates proved that the real figure should be much higher. At Djebel Guettara (Algeria) 150 kilometres south of Colomb Bechar manganese was discovered in 1953 (Reserves estimated about 1,500,000 tons). The copper basin at Akjouj (Mauritania) is important (Reserves put at 28,000,000 tons of ore).

On top of this, and especially in the Hoggar mountains, lead, tin, tungsten, etc., and even uranium and thorium have been discovered.

Let us once more emphasize that these are the findings of very limited prospectings. These industrial raw materials, and oil and gas—but not only oil and gas—are the backbone of the industrial development of Africa. For Africa, the Sahara is not merely a Texas, i.e. a cheap oil field, but also a Ruhr, i.e. a gigantic source of industrial raw materials, the material bases of industrialization in this part of the African continent.

This point is essential and therein lies the real neo-colonialist threat. The privileged and exclusive exploitation of oil and gas in the Sahara represents a distortion of the industrial fate of Africa. It is just like the agricultural monoculture that was forced upon the colonies behind which was the idea of the organization and exploitation of Africa according to the needs of the world industrial market. Only those resources which are important for further industrial development of

Europe or of the industrial world in general are developed. Only those which ensure to Europe "a position on the World political scene". Only those which are a "Providential sign for France".

To let the colonialists and neo-colonialists develop the exploitation of oil and gas and of those products only in the Sahara, and be content with a few millions in royalties (the way the oil kings of the Middle East do) means that one accepts to put up with a farce in lieu of real industrialization. It means that one accepts dependence for ever on the advanced industrial countries, European or American, for one's supply of industrial consumer goods. It is, in truth, capitulation before neo-colonialism.

On the contrary, to develop all the industrial riches of the Sahara, to change the ocean of sands into an African Ruhr, is an altogether different story. To be sure, it is a gigantic affair and one which will take a long time to bear fruits. But this is the only way out of under-development and the only way to complement the political independence of the African States with real economic independence, (which, by the way, must not be confused with any kind of economic national self-sufficiency).

But the advanced industrial powers have no interest in such a venture. First, because they can still manage without the industrial raw material to be found in the Sahara and; secondly, because the development of these riches appear as something which, by and large, is not profitable if measured in strictly financial terms.

Mostly because the deposits are quite far from the sea port from where they could be shipped to Europe or to the U.S. In point of fact the distance between most deposits and the nearest sea ports is usually between 500 km. to 1,000 km. Sometimes even more. By and large this means that with the only exception of strategic ores such as uranium for example, such deposits will not be exploited by foreign capitalist firms.

But the African point of view is precisely the exact opposite. For two reasons:

1. Because the benefit to be derived from the exploitation of any deposit is not to be measured by a simple financial relation between the investment and the expected profits, but also in its relations with the economic and social benefit for the country, or in its relations with the development of Africa as a whole.

The question is, for example, what role would the exploitation of such and such deposit play in the industrialization of the country (which in turn would permit it to reduce the expensive imports of industrial goods)? What effect in the long run would the exploitation of a given deposit have on the problem of employment etc., etc.? A hundred questions, and indeed fundamental ones, that foreign capitalist industrial firms do not consider, and cannot consider because, in their logic, they do and can only take into consideration the benefits of these undertakings in narrow financial terms.

2. The second reason is a more technical one but is quite relevant. The problem and cost of transport will not have such an inhibitive effect as mentioned before because the problem is no longer one of bringing the ore to the coast to be shipped to the industrialised

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12th July, Friday:

**GHANA:** The Executive Secretary of the ruling Convention People's Party, Mr. N. A. Wetbeck, reminds students and observers attending the West African Students Confederation Seminar of the great responsibilities awaiting them in the future as leaders of Africa.

**NYASALAND:** The Nyasaland Legislative Assembly approves the first reading of a bill to enable the Government to operate and control broadcasting services throughout the country.

**EGYPT:** Work on the Aswan High Dam Project is half-way finished.

Drilling of the upper part of the six tunnels has now ended and 280,000 cubic metres of granite has been removed, 47 per cent of the total granite will be shifted.

13th July, Saturday:

**KENYA:** Kenya's preliminary constitutional talks have been adjourned in Nairobi after discussions on procedure.

Talks will resume a week later until the final independence conference in London late in September.

**GHANA:** The Deputy Regional Fisheries Officer of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (F.A.O.) for Africa, Mr. H. Rambaud, says that international organisation engaged in fishery development and co-operation in Africa, have more to do in the fields of fishery development planning.

15th July, Monday:

**NIGERIA:** The people of the proposed Mid-West Region voted a massive "Yes" for the creation of their new state, securing more than 60 per cent of the total votes as required.

**CONGO (Leopoldville):** Delegates from Nigeria, Guinea, Uganda and Congo begin discussions to persuade rival Angolan Nationalist Movements based in Leopoldville to create a unified group through which aid can be channelled.

The rival Angolan Nationalist Movements are: The Front National de Liberation de L'Angola (F.N.L.A.) led by Senator Holden Roberto and the Front Democratique de Liberation de L'Angola (F.D.L.A.) led by Dr. Augustinho Neto.

**SUDAN:** Firemen have fought a successful 36-hour battle with fierce fire which broke out in the Swedish freighter "Christine Goudou" at Port Sudan. There has been considerable damage to the ship's cargo, mostly lorries.

**LIBERIA:** At a reception to welcome him home from the Addis Ababa Summit, President Tubman declares to his people: "The Addis Ababa Conference will play a significant role in the annals of African history."

16th July, Tuesday:

**NIGERIA:** The Nigerian "Morning Post" warns Ghanaian Political Refugees in Nigeria to refrain from using Nigeria as their base for political propaganda.

**KENYA:** Mr. R. A. Achieng Omondi, Kenya's Minister of Information in a special statement warns the press against any attempt to provoke disunity, slight the premier or other members of the Government in any way. Such attempts will not be tolerated. Kenya's Press should co-operate with the new Government in helping to build a happy, prosperous nation, he says.

**ETHIOPIA:** In a communique issued in Addis Ababa, Kenya and Ethiopia have agreed to work together for the maintenance of peace and stability in East Africa.

17th July, Wednesday:

**NIGERIA:** The Nigerian Federal Premier, Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, predicts that Nigeria will have a Unitary form of government.

**SENEGAL:** The Senegalese President of the National Assembly leaves for Mexico at the invitation of the Mexican Parliament.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** A 16-year-old African boy has been jailed for 10 years by a Pretoria court for allegedly belonging to the African National Congress.

**ALGERIA:** The Algerian Prime Minister, Mr. Ben Bella, attacks the French press for trying to make people believe Algeria risks sinking into anarchy.

17th July, Wednesday:

**SUDAN:** Mr. Sayed Abdel Magid Amed, Sudan's Minister of Finance, opens a meeting of financial experts from the 32 Independent African States.

They are to prepare the agenda for the forthcoming African Finance Ministers Conference.

18th July, Thursday:

**GHANA:** A British clerk of works at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Mr. Sidney Charles Shalders is to stand trial at the High Court on August 19 on two counts of conspiracy to forge and utter forged Ghana currency notes.

**CONGO:** The Congolese National Army Commander-in-Chief, General Mobutu, has assured the U.N.O. that no further troubles will erupt in the Congo if the United Nations troops leave the Congo. General Mobutu reveals that Court Martials have been set up in the Congo's big towns to deal with offending soldiers.

**ZANZIBAR:** The Zanzibar Prime Minister, Sheikh Mohammed Ali Shamto Hamadi, announces that Britain has agreed to an independence conference late in September. Zanzibar will be independent by October 7, he adds.

18th July, Thursday:

**MOROCCO:** Twenty-five African countries are expected to send experts on statistics, economics and nutrition to participate in an eight-day international meeting in Rabat.

**SENEGAL:** Senegal has broken consular relations with Portugal. This forbids any aircraft or ship flying the Portuguese or South African flag to fly over Senegalese territory.

19th July, Friday:

**TOGOLAND:** A four-man Ghanaian delegation headed by Mr. A. K. Onwona-Agyeman, Deputy Minister of Finance and Trade has arrived in Lome for discussions with Togolese financial experts. They will also discuss financial and economic problems connected with the reopening of the Togo-Ghana border.

**ETHIOPIA:** Officials of seven African states meet in Addis Ababa to draw up the rules and regulations of the "Organisation of African Unity" as established at the recent Addis Ababa Summit.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** The South African representative at the Afro-Asian Writers Executive Committee, Mr. H. M. Basner, exposed the ambitions of imperialism towards Africa and the brutal rule by imperialist-backed racials in South Africa.

20th July, Saturday:

**SOUTHERN RHODESIA:** Mr. Joshua Nkomo, Southern Rhodesia African nationalist leader wins his appeal against conviction and sentence on false charges of assaulting and resisting or obstructing police in the execution of their duty.

**CONGO (Brazzaville):** People living in Northern Congo have been asked to help in a search for a missing Congo Armed Forces plane. Three days search by spotter planes has failed to find any trace of the plane or its three-man crew.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** A former African banned Attorney, Mr. Harold Wolpe, who was detained for several months during the

# Africa and the Moscow Treaty

By

X-ray

THE question of how to safeguard world peace has again come to the fore as a result of the recent discussions in Moscow which centered around a ban on nuclear tests. The Soviet Prime Minister, Mr. Khrushchev, personally opened the talks and thus underlined the importance of the talks to the whole of mankind.

After nearly a fortnight of talks involving Mr. Gromyko for Russia, Mr. Averell Harriman for U.S.A. and Lord Hailsham for Britain, a draft test ban treaty was initiated in Moscow on the 25th of July. The Foreign Ministers of U.S.A., Britain and U.S.S.R., Mr. Dean Rusk, Lord Home and Mr. Andrei Gromyko formally signed the nuclear test ban treaty in Moscow on 5th August.

World reactions to this test ban treaty started off by being enthusiastic, but have gradually become cool with the growing realisation of the severe limitations of the Moscow treaty which provides only for an end to nuclear testing in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.

## MANKIND AND NUCLEAR DISASTER

We have to see this limited agreement as something welcome because it shows that, given the goodwill, the big powers can agree on measures to save mankind from nuclear disaster. On the other hand, the fact must be faced squarely that the treaty is far from what is required if world peace is to be maintained. It will be fatal therefore if the signing of the Moscow treaty lured the peoples of the world in general and of Africa in particular into believing that the threat to world peace is over.

Let us examine the Moscow treaty in the light of Africa's own stand on the vital problem of maintaining world peace. At the Addis Ababa conference of African Heads of State and Government, concrete decisions were unanimously adopted for securing world peace which is seen as a necessary condition for the complete freedom and rapid progress of the African continent. The Resolution on Disarmament calls for three concrete steps to be taken in the interest of world peace. In the words of the Resolution, these steps are:

1. To declare and accept Africa as a denuclearised zone, the banning of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests, the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the ban-

ning of the manufacture of nuclear weapons;

2. The destruction of existing nuclear weapons;

3. The removal of military bases from Africa and disengagement of African countries from military pacts with foreign powers.

To what extent, we must ask, has the Moscow treaty met the position of all African countries on the question of nuclear armaments?

## SHORT COMINGS OF THE TREATY

Firstly, the Moscow treaty provides for a ban on nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and in water. It does not provide for a ban on underground tests. But the Addis Ababa Resolution demands a ban on all tests.

Secondly, the Moscow treaty is silent about Africa being declared a denuclearised zone. Africa demands that the nuclear powers do not test their weapons in Africa. In addition Africa demands that such weapons be not stored in or transported through African countries. Unfortunately the Moscow treaty falls short of Africa's expectation on this aim too.

Thirdly, whereas Africa's position demands an end to the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the Moscow treaty makes no provision whatsoever for this.

Fourthly, Africa demands the destruction of existing nuclear weapons. Yet the Moscow treaty, by ignoring this important aspect of the problem, again falls far short of the demands of all Africa.

Fifthly, the Addis Ababa Resolution calls for the use of nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes. Here again the Moscow treaty contains no declaration along these lines.

In the light of all this we must conclude that the Moscow treaty has fallen short of the demands of Africa. Accordingly, we can only see it as a beginning—a very humble beginning—to the key problem of safeguarding world peace.

Some important developments since July 25 have tended to reduce almost to vanishing point what could be described as the advantages of the Moscow treaty. In particular, the declared position of France threatens to render the Moscow treaty entirely useless. France, who is not a party to the Moscow talks, has openly declared that she will not be bound by the treaty. She plans to continue efforts towards hav-

ing an independent nuclear strike force.

But, what is even worse, the United States has announced her readiness to supply France with secret data on nuclear weapons. If this move is carried out—and there is no reason to doubt it will be carried out since the statement came from President Kennedy himself—if this move is carried out, then the Moscow treaty would have been reduced to a comical farce. The treaty would have been dead even before the ink had dried over the signatures of the countries taking part in it.

There was a time when peace-loving people thought that a restriction of nuclear know-how to a few countries would guarantee world peace. It is a pity that such a notion is gradually being shattered by world events, the greatest blow to it being the decision of the U.S.A.

to supply France, who is not bound by the Moscow treaty, with secret data on nuclear armaments. Once America takes this line, Russia will be free to disseminate nuclear data among the socialist countries. And we are back to precisely where we were before the Moscow treaty.

## STRAINS ON THE ECONOMY

It is beginning to look as if the only way to prevent nuclear war is to let every country—or at least the bigger ones on both sides of the ideological dividing line—possess nuclear data and nuclear weapons. The world will then be saved from nuclear war through precisely the same formula that saved it from gas warfare during the second world war.

This may not be a very sound position. It will im-

pose severe strains on the economy of nations. It will undermine the standards of living of the people. But it might, in the end, be the only way to guarantee the freedom and independence of vast areas of the world.

Africa's duty in the present circumstances is clear. We must refuse to be complacent over the Moscow Treaty. On the contrary, all Africa must continue its efforts aimed at banning all nuclear tests, at destroying all stocks of nuclear weapons, at using nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes and at turning the whole of Africa into a denuclearised zone. And we must approach these problems in a way that will safeguard the independence of free nations and accelerate the demise of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism which are the root cause of international tensions and world wars.

## BEN BELLA

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countries but the problem will be to build the industries in Africa.

It is worth noting by the way that this was also recommended by one of the brightest European technocrats, Louis Armand, who as early as 1954 thought that "the solution would not be to bring the ore to the sea ports but to a continental industrial centre where it would be transformed into semi-finished products that could bear the further costs of transport because of their increased value."

The problem was still considered from a European point of view or rather in the perspective of exploiting the Saharian riches in the framework of a Saharian economy intimately linked with Europe and with France more particularly. But the suggestion would be all the more relevant in the new perspective of the development of the Saharian riches by and for Africa.

This makes all the difference between a neo-colonialist conception of the riches of the Sahara and a truly African one. This makes all the difference—and what a difference—between the French sponsored O.C.R.S. and the development of the Saharian resources jointly undertaken by all the border states and not only the border states, *stricto sensu*, but all African states.

This is the gigantic and real process of decolonisation that Premier Ahmed Ben Bella is proposing in his Radio Mali interview.

Obviously, all problems will not be solved overnight in Africa. But the joint exploitation of the Sahara by the African States, within an African perspective, will give rise to a veritable development within a context devoid of any neo-colonialist illusions, and will nullify any financial crumbs in the form of royalties which would perpetuate Africa's economic dependence and ultimately its political dependence as well.

## Black Orpheus

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He has the impression that his spirit of the North is filching his thoughts and giving them a gentle twist, so that they only partially represent his ideas. He feels that his thoughts are swallowed up by the words of the whiteman, as blood is absorbed by sand.

If he were suddenly to pull himself up, reflect or draw back a little, he would see the words lying before him in strange, unfamiliar forms, partly symbols, partly objects. He will never succeed in expressing his negritude in clear, precise effective terms that strike home with unerring accuracy.

But, it is common knowledge that this sense of failure we experience in our efforts to use language as a medium of direct repression lies at the root of all poetic experience.

The speaker's reaction to the inadequacy of prose is exactly what Batsille refers to as the holocaust or words. As long as we persist in believing that the relations between word and being are governed by predetermined rules of harmony, we shall continue to use them instinctively, with a blind, implicit faith. They will resemble sensory organs like our mouths or hands.

## SIXES AND SEVENS

They will be like windows on the world. But at the first rude shock of disappointment, words fall apart and assume an independent existence. We see the world of verbal imaginery for what it really is a run-down mechanism at sixes and sevens, frantically ploughing the sands.

At once we realise the futility of assigning names to objects. We realise that language is essentially prosaic, and as such doomed to failure. Being stands before us like a silent tower, that can be stormed and taken only by a silent manoeuvre, "seeking with stu-

died vagueness to revive the silenced, object by oblique, allusive terms that aim at reproducing the object's silence."

Nowhere also has the fact been better expressed, that poetry is an attempt to produce an incantation suggesting being in and through the very absence of the vibrant force of words. In trying to improve upon his utter helplessness with words, which he invests with a quality of wild extravagance, the poet takes us in imagination beyond their self-affacing strife, into deep lush, silent pastures. Since we cannot still our tongues, we must use them to create silence.

## BLACK EVANGELISTS

It strikes me that the chief aim of French poetry from Mallarme to the Surrealists, has been just this self-affacement of words. A poem is a dark room, where words jostle one another like mad. They collide in mid air, ignite, then fall apart like tongues of flame.

That is the context in which the effort made by the "Black evangelists" should be set. They counter the settler's artifice by a similar type of artifice in the opposite sense. Since the oppressor makes his presence felt even in the language the Negroes use, they are prepared to use it in such a way as to compass its destruction. The contemporary European poet tries to strip words of their human qualities and give them back to nature, pure and unadulterated.

The Negro prophet-hard is bent on divesting them of their Gallic overtones. He is prepared to break them up, under their customary association, arbitrarily compel them to produce a new breed of thought.