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The demands of the liberation movements in Africa

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a. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

When the representatives of the countries of western Europe sat down at the Berlin Conference table to divide Africa into spheres of influence, they proved that underlying their disputes and dissensions was a basic unity and solidarity. Precisely because of these disputes and national differences, developing capitalism in the 19th century continued to unify its forces and follow the irresistible course of creating a world market and guaranteeing sources of raw materials and energy.

For African societies, also different in their traditions and in the form of their civilizations, but similar in regard to the degree of development of their productive forces, the impact of western capitalism was the same everywhere. The way in which these societies were splintered, in which

a new structure gradually replaced traditional forms, was also essentially the same. Liberation movements which were a necessary and inevitable reaction to colonial presence have also had a common origin, composition and purpose.

Morocco, because of its geographic position, has been both the first and the last to receive the blows of western imperialism. It was in Maghreb territory where Portugal, the first modern-day colonizer, initially tried its arms, followed soon after by Spain.

In 1912, after the first agreements among the European powers on the partition of Africa (Entente Cordiale of 1904 and the Franco-German Agreement of 1911), Morocco fell under French rule. However, it never stopped resisting during half a century of struggle that took on diverse forms: military, especially in 1925 with the Rif revolution under the leadership of Abd el-Krim al Khettabi; political, after the "pacification"; and finally, the form of popular armed resistance from 1952 to 1956, until Morocco obtained its independence.

This struggle was the undertaking of an entire people, not only that of a minority of bourgeoisie or intellectuals.

Morocco's liberation movement is the union of three basic forces: the peasantry, the urban medium bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The rural masses have been one of the basic elements in this movement. They were the first to suffer the effects of military operations, and later, expulsion from the land which sustained them. In less than 25 years the French colonists established themselves over more than one million hectares of arable land, one third of the nation's total farm land, by direct expropriation thanks to the complicity of Moroccan feudalism.

The urban population had, from almost the beginning, benefited from the means of communication, information and education that colonization necessarily brought with it and which gave rise to the factors of its own future destruction. It was then that nationalist political groups appeared.

In short, the industrial revolution carried out by French capitalism created a working class, large in number and conscious of its rights. The struggle of this class against the foreign bosses, protected by the administration of the Protectorate, was for this reason both political and economic.

Because of these factors, all Moroccan society has formed a united front against imperialism. Excluded from this national union are only those classes, vestiges of the past, which see colonialism as the guarantor of their doomed privileges. These are the feudal administrative or religious elements, auxiliaries of the Protectorate and a part of the mercantile bourgeoisie which with the establishment of colonial structures developed into an intermediary whose survival depends on maintaining these structures.

Thus, the deeply popular, progressive and broadly national nature of Morocco's liberation movement. These same features are also present in all the liberation movements of the African peoples, with masses of workers taking vanguard positions more and more each day.

The activities of this movement, which has grown especially in recent years, are already beginning to bear fruit. The year 1960 will witness the independence of many African states, whose birth we welcome here. But other peoples must still continue the struggle against a recalcitrant colonialism. Their cause is also ours. We should examine here with the greatest attention their situation and the conditions in which they are waging their just battle.

The methods of obtaining political independence have been imposed on every country by the methods used by the interested colonial power. It is this power that has forced the liberation movements to choose the path of violence and armed struggle. Negotiation is never refused when conditions exist capable of accelerating the materialization of national aspirations.

Our Conference should adopt specific resolutions to hasten the process of liberation, stimulating the dynamic forces in each country fighting for its independence and contributing with material and moral support.

The African countries that obtain independence possess, thanks to their national liberation forces, a considerable reservoir of energy and enthusiasm. The problem therefore consists of safeguarding this reservoir. What are the measures which should be taken to avoid the disillusion that has followed independence in almost all the countries of Asia and which is beginning to appear in some independent African countries? In other words, our concern should be knowing how to prevent the implantation of neocolonialism which represents a new form of foreign presence on our soil.

b. NEOCOLONIALISM AND DECOLONIZATION

Obviously, the proclamation of independence, which is only a political and legal fact, does not change the basic structures of a country that has been under colonial rule. Independence is the condition, the promise of liberation, not liberation itself.

During the first three years of independence, Morocco's economic dependence and backwardness in the administrative and technical fields continued and at times, even worsened.

- Its foreign trade has continued revolving around the French market.
- Its currency is still an ersatz French currency.
- The major part of the growing industrial sectors are still under the control of French capital which is free to transfer funds from Morocco to the franc zone.
- Modern agriculture, that is, the export crops, is dominated by powerful French settlers.

This is why 1959 was a decisive year for an independent Morocco. The Ibrahim government has brought up the problem as it really is; there can be no truly independent policy unless the country's economy is freed from a stifling dependence by means of:

- the creation of a national currency independent from the French franc;
- the establishment of an Economic Development Bank to encourage and guide investments in vital sectors;
- a Foreign Trade Bank to regulate the diversification of Morocco's trade with other countries;
- and finally, a generalized control over the transfer of capital.

With all these proposals our comrade Abderrahim Bouabid, Minister of National Economy, has laid the foundations for true economic liberation.

We should therefore warn all African countries of the danger represented by neocolonialism from the moment that independence is proclaimed, an independence which leaves

intact the colonial structure and all opportunities for imperialist exploitation. Any independence content while continuing under new labels the characteristics of colonial rule, is nothing more than a deception and a lure.

It is from this standpoint that we must analyze the problem of the presence of foreign bases and troops and the attempts to make us enter the cold war.

Because of their economic power, the ex-colonial countries are able to maintain large numbers of soldiers in our country. Capitalist investments and the presence of foreign colonizers, constitute both the justification and pretext for military occupation which forms part of the cold war's world strategy.

The pretext of instability resulting from the proclamation of national independence has been destroyed by the example of all the new African states. An atmosphere of national discipline was created immediately after independence, which guaranteed foreign communities the peace and prosperity that the police and militarist colonial administration was incapable of maintaining.

Foreign military forces of occupation, far from being a factor of stability, constituted a constant threat to the very existence of young sovereign states. In addition, these military forces use liberated territory as bases of aggression from which to wage colonial wars against neighboring peoples. Suffice it to mention the example of the dissidence of a Moroccan governor (Addi Ou Bihi) whose uprising, organized in the first year of our independence, by reactionary and antinational elements, was armed by the French troops stationed on our soil, a revolt which also served to strengthen, from the southern part of Morocco, the colonial war in Algeria.

This is why we have put the evacuation of foreign armed forces as the first national objective to be reached after independence.

This means not only the liquidation of the sequels of colonial occupation. Our greatest concern is in placing our country on the road to economic, political and social edification. This labor, which demands great effort, requires the establishment of a lasting peace and the keeping of our country outside of all military alliances and those inter-bloc disputes that do not concern us.

Our efforts in this sense have resulted in demanding the evacuation of U.S. bases. We will not cease to work for the evacuation of other forces —French and Spanish— to ensure the complete success of an independent foreign policy.

This policy should be followed systematically throughout all Africa which has the same problems as we regarding peaceful development and fruitful cooperation with all friendly countries.

This policy of non-dependence is all the more needed since the new concepts of the neocolonial circles of Europe consider Africa as a stake and a trump card in the policy of world equilibrium.

Within this perspective, Africa has always been considered by these circles as a reservoir of mineral and energy resources necessary to the economy of the industrialized countries of the West. All the projects tending to associate Africa to the European common market, to construct a Eurafrica or to create common investment organizations, attempt to make foreign capitalist interests the primary thing, and can only retard the harmonious and rapid development of Africa's economy.

We should not forget that for a quarter of a century, as prices of manufactured products imported from Europe increased, the prices of raw materials sent from our continent decreased continually. The economic stability and expansion of the industrialized countries of Europe has been achieved at the expense of the underdeveloped countries, the sources of raw materials.

Faced with the liberation movements that are growing rapidly in Africa, the same imperialist interests are trying to perpetuate these relations of economic exploitation under false forms of cooperation. With increasing frequency, our countries are coming up against veritable blocs trying to dictate new colonial pacts.

The duty of our African countries, as that of the other developing nations in Asia and Latin America, is also to organize on the basis of common attitudes, to search for efficient formulas of cooperation and to be alert against all dangerous forms of exploitation.

This is the spirit in which to hold the economic conferences for Africa that are sponsored by the United Na-

tions, such as the ones meeting now in Tangiers. African popular organizations should act so that these conferences will make real a true cooperation which will allow the African countries to build their economy and increase their people's well being, instead of maintaining unequal relations and already obsolete privileges.

Our analysis of neocolonial manifestations in Africa would be incomplete if we fail to stress the danger constituted by national reactionary forces. Imperialism could not hope to survive in Africa if it could not hide itself under the interests of certain retrograde elements.

If we have stressed the popular and national character of the liberation movements in Africa, it is necessary to add here that with the conquest of political power, certain positions change in meaning and certain sectors of the population, which, during the period of struggle were neutral or in favor of the liberation movement, take a very different path once independence has been won. The rural feudal or pseudoreligious elements or those that live off them, become strengthened after independence and try to take the place of the weakened colonial power. Escaping elimination, they use the new power afforded them by democratic and parliamentary organizations to consolidate their privileges on new legal bases.

The forms of European-type political organizations, whose pluralism is not based in our country on the same economic and ideological realities, serve as a refuge for the antinational elements who try to corrupt political traditions. Sterile polemics, demagogic campaigns, sow doubt and skepticism and prepare the popular masses for submission to all kinds of dissimulated colonial exploitation.

These reactionary elements, instruments of neo-imperialism, even attack the working class whose unity had deepened during the national struggle. The vain attempts of creating artificial trade unionism are then nothing else but another form of neocolonialism.

Apart from these anti-national and reactionary elements imperialism has another ally:

The big mercantile bourgeoisie which obtains all its power from liberal economic policies, feels sudden solidarity with colonialism as long as it does not suffer injury from

the political hegemony of imperialism. It ferociously opposes all attempts to guide the economic and trade policies towards real independence, which would compel it to enter the production cycle or to disappear.

Finally, a large part of the intellectual and administrative cadres inherited from the colonial period who scarcely participated in the liberation movement, and who, thanks to their servility, suffer from a lack of imagination, enthusiasm and honesty which renders them incapable of efficiently serving popular aspirations and who soon find themselves under the thumb of those in power.

The danger threatening countries recently made independent is that the combination of these adverse forces could perpetuate an economic dependence and underdevelopment, which would make political independence meaningless. The alliance of a powerful and reactionary feudalism, a servile and cowardly bourgeoisie and an inefficient and corrupt administration, constitutes a regression even in respect to certain forms of imperialism.

In order to overt this danger, to combat this alliance, it is absolutely necessary that there exist a popular political and progressive force. This is the role of the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP) in Morocco. In our declaration of September 6, 1959, we exposed the failure of the bourgeois-structured parties that often resort to using the popular masses for their own purpose, as well as the failure of those years of vacillation and indecision which stifled popular enthusiasm. We have known how to attract to the UNFP all essentially popular forces concerned with the building of true independence and real democracy to tackle our real problems.

For Morocco the year 1959 was a genuine beginning. We became aware of all the dangers of neocolonialism today threatening us, of the obsolescence of traditional political groups, of the absurdity of an independence without meaning. We have decided to go to the roots, to pose our true problems and create a popular force capable of applying this policy and educating the masses within this framework.

This awareness is what explains the support given by the popular forces to our comrade Abdalla Ibrahim whom His Majesty King Mohamed V asked a year ago to assume the presidency of the Council. The efforts displayed during

1959 responded to the aspirations of the people in the fields of:

- economic and social liberation and the restitution of land expropriated by feudal traitors and French colonizers;
- maintenance of a policy of non-dependence;
- application of a policy of African solidarity.

These steps could not but revive the alliance between imperialist forces and feudal, reactionary elements.

Faced with local reactionary forces, which sooner or later join with imperialism to defend their common interests, who sow division in the ranks of the people and try to divert the people's interests to secondary problems such as formal democracy, thus leaving the door open to the real dangers of economic neocolonialism, who try to embroil us in disputes which are alien to us, it is necessary that the popular patriotic forces in each African country join and form a structural and unified political organization as an instrument of real African liberation.

c. AFRICA'S ROAD TO DEVELOPMENT

We have spoken of the dangers of neocolonialism which represent obstacles on the road to all our objectives, which are to develop the country, to create a prosperous and just society.

If we take into account the experiences of India and China, of the countries of Central Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America, we will reach the concept of a model of economic growth by scientific necessity. We have already passed the stage of academic discussions in this field.

We now know that liberal capitalism cannot under any circumstances be adopted as a system in our countries. For us, liberalism is no more than a pretext for reactionary forces.

We now know that in order to come out of underdevelopment we must undertake: a radical reform of the agrarian structure, real and rapid industrialization, and an efficient and profitable investment policy, according to a planning program that will establish our monetary objectives and eliminate the risks inherent in liberalism.

We now know that the chief means to arrive at these results on a national level consist of the incorporation of the masses to work and education, and on the foreign level, the search for economic and technical cooperation from abroad.

Morocco, in turn, has begun to forge the first links of this economic and social policy. With the economic measures adopted last October, this policy will be strengthened more and more each day and the five-year plan in preparation will have every chance of success.

Institutions such as the Office of Studies on Industrial Participation (BEPI) and the Agricultural Operations Office allow us to expect much in the industrial and agricultural spheres.

Investments such as those of the Italian Society ENI in the field of petroleum exploitation and refining, and those of the Berliet Society, offer us great possibilities of fruitful cooperation.

However, true international cooperation cannot be based only on the good will of private interests. This cooperation must also pass through the channels of interstate agreements. For this reason we should strongly favor the change beginning to take place in the competition among the great powers. The armaments race could be transformed into an aid race for the underdeveloped countries.

As part of this economic and social construction of a new Africa we should insist on the predominant role of the organized working class and peasantry. These two forces are the only guarantee and permanent bulwark of this policy, since the latter will be attacked by both foreign imperialism and their local agents. This building of the bases for a real democracy which alone will give independence true meaning, can result only from the action of patriotic, popular, progressive and conscious forces. We now know that the road to true independence and democracy is a long and difficult one, strewn with obstacles. Imperialism knows this too. This is why in Africa it does not offer such a tenacious resistance as it did before political independence, since with time it expects to keep its economic control.

We should be alert against letting political independence, a granted independence, become a weapon in the hands of imperialism, to make others defend their basic economic privileges. To oppose the alliance of imperialism with na-

tional reactionary forces, we should form an alliance with the liberal and progressive forces of the ex-colonized countries, and the union of national patriotic forces in all the African countries.

Only within this framework will the different unifying movements in Africa have meaning. These movements must be based on economic and political needs: they will be a defense against the unified imperialist interests in Africa.

On the basis of an independent economic policy founded on mutual cooperation and aid, a policy of peace tending to give new meaning to the competition between East and West and opposition against the alliance of imperialist and national reactionary forces, the trend toward the unification of Africa constitutes the chief factor of success in the building of our continent.

Recognition of these needs is the way to put an end to deceptions, to the disappointments that may follow a dearly-bought independence which at times does not live up to its first promises.

d. CONCLUSION

While political independence is not an end in itself, while it is not sufficient in itself, it is, in spite of all, the necessary condition for the appearance of the changes that will destroy the colonial structure. This is why this conference of African peoples should take all the steps necessary so that the peoples still struggling for their independence may obtain it. African unity, the construction of Africa's future, demands the liberation of all Africa.

When French imperialism was bleeding in Indochina embroiled in a hopeless war, "good-hearted" people launched the slogan: "Let's get out of Asia so that we can stay in Africa." They believed that they still had many years of peaceful exploitation before them. It was the Toussaint rebellion in 1954 that marked the death of these hopes in Africa. It seems today that these same "good" people are applying the policy of "Let's abandon everything in Africa so that we can stay in Algeria." Whatever the stubbornness of the French government, whatever the skill of French diplomacy, which consists of recognizing, after five years

of struggle and suffering, the right of the Algerian people to self-determination, but rejecting the basic guarantees that must accompany free elections, we know perfectly well that French imperialism will end up by leaving Algeria as it has left its other Asian and African territories. But we should do everything possible to hasten a solution to this conflict, whose horrors we have contemplated through numerous testimonies and even in the reports from the Red Cross.

This blind stubbornness of imperialism is also reflected in the French government's decision to explode an atomic bomb in the center of the African continent, defying world public opinion, and ignoring the reiterated protests of the Moroccan government, the protests of the African peoples and the condemnation of the UN General Assembly.

This aggression should encourage us to strengthen our determination in demanding the evacuation of foreign military bases and in particularly supporting the struggle of the inhabitants of the Sahara for their liberty and right to dispose freely of their own destiny.

In order to hasten the liberation of these territories, still under colonial rule, and to consolidate already-acquired independence, we should join on the basis of the profound aspirations for unity which we know exist in every part of Africa.

Especially in the interior of each country, all the progressive, trade union, political and intellectual forces should unite to draw up and apply a policy in keeping with our aspirations. The long and difficult struggle that is beginning today, which consists of making up for centuries of backwardness and of giving our countries a modern and prosperous economy, requires the union of all forces and the abandonment of all types of partisan, egoistic and sterile sectarianism.

This process of concentrating forces should take place throughout all Africa.

As a response to the solidarity of the colonizers, we should foster the solidarity of the African peoples which will strengthen our struggle, internally, against the reactionary forces, and externally, against the maneuvers of imperialism.

As a response to the economic blockade imposed by the colonial powers, we must create a form of economic and commercial aid and cooperation, capable of freeing our economic relations from the control of imperialist monopolies.

To study profoundly and seriously our problems, our experiences, our successes and at times, our failures, we must encourage all forms of cultural cooperation, the only way to educate people in the mystique of African unity.

In this respect, we salute, as a great step forward, the now normalized relations established between the different trade union organizations of Africa. These will unite, we are sure, on occasion of the Africa trade union conference to be held soon in Casablanca.

Finally, this solidarity should be extended to all the liberation movements in the world, in particular those authentically progressive movements in the West which have the same fundamental objectives as we have: the material well-being and dignity of man.

Colonialism has not been a scourge of the colonized peoples only because of the struggles for economic influence that it has occasioned, or because of the dissensions and wars that it has inevitably provoked, it has also been nefarious for the peoples of the colonizing countries themselves. We believe that Africa, now in the process of liberation, is working for both itself and a world in which justice and peace will reign, a world where there will be no causes of conflict and exploitation.

The first signs appearing here and there, in the East and West, denote more of a change toward peaceful cooperation and competition than towards an arms race and the struggle for hegemony that we have witnessed up to the present. We would like to believe that Africa will be the first to benefit from this trend which we expect to see accentuated.

The unity of progressive forces in the interior of each of our countries, in Africa and in the world, will be the guarantee of the future of the mutual aid, cooperation and peace that we so strongly desire.