

ETHNICITY AS A COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY FORCE IN AFRICA

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The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes turning from its home where it assumes respectable forms to the colonies where it goes naked.

— Karl Marx

It is not possible to enslave men without logically making them inferior through and through. And racism is only the emotional, affective, and sometimes intellectual explanation of this inferiorization.

— Frantz Fanon

ETHNICITY AS A PRODUCT OF IMPERIALISM

Imperialism is an exceedingly reactionary system. It can only be overthrown by the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed at a high level of political consciousness. All forces which tend to perpetuate its existence, militate against the imperative of revolutionary struggle, or hamper the development of a high level of political consciousness by its victims are counter-revolutionary forces. Their activities share one common characteristic. They enable the system to maintain and, in some cases, intensify its oppression and exploitation of its victims. In Africa, ethnicity is such a counter-revolutionary force.

Its reactionary nature arises, in part, from the eurocentric and racist conceptualisation of it in Africa as a primitive and barbarous mystique peculiar to the African.¹ "Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it."² The African is portrayed as a primitive savage during the précolonial times. His culture is portrayed as devoid of movement, and with no history.

Therefore, in the ideology of racist colonialism, tribalism represented the major link between this ahistorical, primitive and barbarous past in which no system of ethics and no principle of conduct were developed, and the "civilizing mission" and "white man's burden" of the colonial order. It

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1 Raymond Apthorpe. "Does Tribalism Really Matter?" *Transition*, Vol. VII (1968), pp. 18—22;
Archie Mafeje. "The Ideology of Tribalism." *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, 1971, pp. 253-262.

2 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove Press 1966, New York p. 170.

denied the ability of the Africans to undertake any civilized activity in the new order. Their survival depended on their capacity to act out of the colonially prescribed role of the "noble savage" and the "savage black hordes." This ideology reflected a eurocentric devaluation of African cultures and a corresponding inflation of the colonizers' world view, ethics and aesthetics. The unconditional condemnation of African culture was attended by the unconditional affirmation of European culture.

This reactionary conception of ethnicity survived the shifts in the colonizers' metaphysical world-view "from overall negation to singular and specific recognition"³ of the worth of precolonial African culture. "There is first affirmed the existence of human groups having no culture; then of a hierarchy of cultures; and finally, the concept of cultural relativity."⁴ The obvious function was the complete inferiorization of the colonized, enabling a better and more thorough domination and control of him. It was the illegitimacy of the colonizer and oppressor which necessitated the creation of the myth of the inferior as an instrument of domination. Frantz Fanon observed that the alienated colonized man existed only where there was a dominant culture that had reduced him to an inferior status. This was accomplished gradually through the process of his alienation from his culture and tradition, which involved self-hatred or, at least, a profoundly disturbed ambivalence. The rejection of the self came as a result of identification with the colonizer, and as a result of the acceptance of the latter's image of one's inferior status.⁵ Thus by conception, ethnicity in Africa was an instrument for the perpetuation of imperialism and, therefore, a counter-revolutionary force.

Ethnicity as a social force in Africa is also the product of colonialism. Apart from the bringing together of disparate pre-colonial political entities into one political unit, colonialism made no attempt to promote activities, goods and services relevant to the needs, taste patterns and consumption habits of the subject peoples. Nevertheless, it used various devices to exploit them for the benefit of the colonizing powers. Forced labour was used for building the railways in West Africa; on the plantations of East Africa, the Congo Free State and the Portuguese colonies; and in the mines of South Africa, Central Africa and Belgian Congo. The introduction of colonial currency and taxation forced the Africans to enter colonial activities in order to be able to raise the money to pay their taxes. And the conservative colonial regimes ensured that the local administration maintained huge surpluses every year whenever possible, even during the 1930—1935 economic depression, as a means of generating increased participation in colonial life. These four colonial policies — forced labour, alien currency, taxation and artificial scarcity — forced many members of the local population to migrate to areas of new colonial activity in order to subsist or enjoy a better livelihood.

3 Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*. Grove Press, New York, p. 31.

4 *Ibid.*

5 Irene L. Gendzier, *Frantz Fanon*, Wildhouse, 1973, London, p. 50.

It was in these colonial enclaves that the colonized African made contact with the colonial environment, the colonizer, and other Africans from different communal groups. The dynamics of this tripartite contact gave rise to ethnicity. In this contact situation, the African migrant could not meaningfully relate to or conquer his physical and biological environments. The unrelatedness of the resources used in the enclaves' dominant activities to his needs and consumption habits rendered him (the African) unable to adapt to the new environment, and impotent to manipulate it. At the same time, he was the victim of a complex international, national and local division of labour which thoroughly alienated him from the products of his work. He performed under the discipline and made the personal sacrifice necessary for creative production, but was denied the solace that comes from continuous mental contact with the picture of the final product of his activity. Under such conditions, labour ceased to be a liberating force and turned instead into an oppressive instrument. Such frustration and disorientation of the colonized African was reinforced by his humiliating relationship with the colonizer.

The latter dominated the commanding heights of the economy through his ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange; controlled the production relations which dictated the work roles; and expropriated the surplus from production. The exploited African soon also ran into the colonizer's racial prejudice and discrimination in the fields of jobs, remunerations, housing, sports and even churches and burial grounds.⁶ Having been uprooted from the precolonial setting which had valid meaning for him, in which history had effectively and organically integrated him with his local environment, and culture had produced salutary patterns of interactions with others, the African migrant found the door to the colonizer's glorified world securely barred to him. The resultant anomy and alienation affected his socio-economic and political activities.

Even in his interactions with his fellow Africans, he experienced tension, anxiety and insecurity. Disoriented, subjugated and humiliated by the colonizer, he directed his aggressive impulses against other colonized "natives" with whom he competed on the basis of equality. And the colonial enclaves constituted a fertile ground for destructive competition. There was no guarantee of employment, no provision for care of the old, compensation for sickness or accident was low, and the few existing pension schemes were quite meagre. Materialism, individualism, concentration on economic ends and an absorption in the exchange and market were so absolute and total that socio-economic insecurity was inevitable. As J.S. Furnivall correctly observes, capitalist market forces in tropical colonies act to create conditions of social atomization.⁷ It was the security provided by ethnic group solidarity that provided solace. Ethnic group affiliation emerged as a mechanism to

6 S.O. Osoba, "Intellectual Aridity in Nigeria," *Theory and Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1974, p. 51.

7 J.S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1943, Cambridge, p. 306.

overcome the pervasive insecurity of the colonial enclave.⁸ As J. Rex observes, although the colonial market system draws people together into a single social system, it also divides them into new dynamically related groupings.⁹

In Kenya, for example, before colonial rule, there was no enmity between the Luo and Kikuyu. But by the end of 1960, a strong one had developed. The precolonial enemies of the Kikuyu were the Masai although intermarriage among the two groups existed. Ethnic consciousness among the Kikuyu developed during the colonial period, not, as is popularly believed, primarily as a result of their loss of land to the white settlers, since the Masai and the Giriama lost equal or more land, but essentially because of forced Kikuyu participation in wage labour and trade which led to the growth of petty bourgeois fortunes among them. Divorced from their traditional mode of production and semi-proletarianized within the capitalist mode of production, the Kikuyu entered the colonial enclaves earlier than the other groups and therefore took advantage of new opportunities in the new economy out of proportion to their share of the total population. Other groups in competition for these opportunities began to resent this Kikuyu advantage, hence inter-ethnic relations in Kenya have been characterized by the hostility of all the other groups to the Kikuyu.

Thus ethnicity emerged as a mechanism for the colonized to adapt to the colonial situation, contributing to the smooth functioning of the imperialist structures, to the perpetuation of these structures. It could not be antagonistic to the aims and objectives of imperialism. Soon, the most influential of the colonized built up extensive concrete interests in ethnicity. They organised the less privileged along ethnic lines and manipulated them to support their socio-economic and political ambitions. In their competition for the crumbs from colonial exploitation, they found they could rely on appeals to the ethnic sentiments of others. Michael Parenti has observed that in the Western type parliamentary systems operated by the colonialists, ethnically salient candidates tend to emerge and persist because of the political gains likely to accrue from appeals to ethnic sentiments; and their presence acts to ensure the persistence of ethnicity in politics.¹⁰ In 1941, the rivalry in Nigerian journalism between Nnamdi Azikiwe (Ibo) and Ernest Ikoli (Ijaw) split the Nigerian Youth Movement along ethnic lines. Azikiwe led the Ibo away from the organisation which then became composed essentially of Yoruba.

The pursuit of such concrete interests through appeals to ethnicity was reinforced by the tendency of the colonialists to choose administrative units

⁸ Okwudiba Nnoli, "Socio-economic Insecurity and Ethnic Politics in Africa," *The African Review*, Vol. 4 No. 1, p. 1-23.

⁹ J. Rex, "The Plural Society in Sociological Theory," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. X, 1959, p. 116-177.

¹⁰ Michael Parenti, "Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 61, September 1967, p. 725.

which coincided with the communal homelands of the ethnic groups and which, with the introduction of elective politics, became political constituencies. The resultant competition among the administrative units and political constituencies was enhanced by the uneven development inherent in imperialism. Colonial socio-economic projects were located in areas of gainful exploitation. They were not guided by the desire for inter-sectoral and inter-regional balance in socio-economic achievement. Ultimately, certain communal homelands became far better developed socio-economically than the others. This imbalance deepened antipathies between ethnic groups. In Nigeria, for example, the South achieved a higher level than the North. Similarly, the Baganda advanced further than the other Ugandan groups; the Chagga and Haya of Tanzania are ahead of the other Tanzanian groups; and the Kikuyu and Ashanti made more rapid progress than the other Kenyan and Ghanaian ethnic groups respectively.

A part of the relationship between ethnicity and imperialism concerns the efforts of the colonialists to ensure efficient and inexpensive colonial administration. In order to cut the costs of maintaining law and order so necessary for colonial exploitation, they were forced to depend to a greater or lesser degree on the pre-colonial African institutions, authority and personnel. Even the French who were not enamoured by the doctrine of indirect rule could not ignore the utility of these local forces; they tried to subordinate and Westernize them. In some cases, this policy actually meant the organisation of people into new communal units. Its net effect was to create and perpetuate a symbolic focus for the new urban population, thereby strengthening the ethnocentric component of ethnicity. Under such conditions, it was not easy to make a complete break with the communal homelands.

A similar effect was produced by the pervasive colonial bureaucratic requirement that official forms should contain information about the communal origins of the local population, and by the colonial nature of urbanization. The continual reminder by official forms and documents of his communal homelands constantly reinforced the ethnic sentiments and loyalty of the colonized. He feared that since he was regarded as a member of an ethnic group by others, he was likely to be discriminated against by them and would be lost in the struggle for socio-economic rewards if he did not identify with this ethnic group. Again, an urbanization process which is rooted in the organic relationship between the population and the local physical environment, ultimately arises from increased specialization of functions in the traditional pattern of economic activities and leads inevitably to the urban migrants' total break with the rural and communal homeland, essentially because of his economic irrelevance there. But the colonial urban process was divorced from the precolonial activities. The new urban dwellers remained closely linked emotionally, culturally, socially and even economically to their communal homelands. This link continually reinforced the parochial and primordial components of ethnicity.

Finally, ethnicity emerged in part as a mechanism employed by the colonialists to divide the colonized, and therefore, maintain domination over them. As a political line, the colonizers used it to curb African nationalism and maintain their power. For example, in 1920, when the National Congress of British West Africa was organized and demanded reforms in British West African colonies, Sir Hugh Clifford, the then governor of Nigeria, immediately sought to divide the nationalists by arguing that "The peoples of West Africa do not belong to the same stock and are not of common descent."¹¹ He contended that any suggestions of a possible future West African nation were "mischievous, because they are incompatible with that natural development of real national self-government which all true patriots in Nigeria ... should combine to secure and maintain ... It is the consistent policy of the Government of Nigeria to maintain and to support the local tribal institutions and the indigenous forms of Government ... which are to be regarded as the natural expressions of (African) political genius ... I am entirely convinced of the right, for example, of the people of Egbaland, ... of any of the great Emirates of the North ... to maintain that each of them is, in a very real sense, a nation ... It is the task of the Government of Nigeria to build up and fortify these national institutions."¹² Thus to the colonial governor, not only was the idea of a West African nation anathema, that of a Nigerian nation was inconceivable. True patriotism and nationalism were sentiments that must be directed to the "natural and self-contained" ethnic homelands.

Again the colonialists tried to check the march to independence by sponsoring reactionary political parties. But this strategy could only work if a political base could be created for the party of reaction. Often the ethnic base was adopted, with the colonialist manipulating the prevalent fears of ethnic domination, exploiting regional imbalances or preying on inter-ethnic hostility and tension. For example, in colonial Zaire, the pioneering nationalist activity of the Abako party whose leadership was dominated by the Bakongo led the Belgians to look for "moderate" political organisation among the Bangala. In Kasai, the radical articulation of the nationalist views by Albert Kalonji and Joseph Ngalula who are Baluba led the colonial administration to find renewed sympathy for the grievances of the Lulua who had always complained of oppression by the Baluba.¹³ In colonial Guinea, the administration first sponsored the Socialist Party headed by Yacin Diallo from the Fouta Djallon and later Barry Diawadou from the

11 Quoted in J.S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1958, p. 193.

12 Quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 193-194.

13 Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo*, Princeton University Press, 1965, Princeton, N.J. pp. 269-270.

Plateau region, both supported by the Fouta of the Fouta Djallon, to oppose the radical political party led by Ahmed Sekou Toure.¹⁴

In these various ways, ethnicity in Africa emerged and persisted either as a mechanism for adaptation to the imperialist system or as an instrument for ensuring a more effective domination and exploitation of the colonized. In both cases, it served the reactionary purpose of the system: the inferiorization of the African in order to facilitate his own exploitation. This was achieved through various means. At best, ethnicity diverted attention away from the foreign oppression and exploitation inherent in the imported socio-economic organisation, thereby consolidating the system. At worst, it constituted an instrument for channelling aggressive impulses arising from the frustrations of the colonial situation against fellow Africans. Thus between 1967 and 1970, Nigeria was consumed by a disastrous civil war arising essentially out of inter-ethnic animosity. In Kenya, the assassination of Tom Mboya in 1969 led to violence between the Luo and Kikuyu in Kisumu and Nairobi culminating later in the year, during President Kenyatta's visit to Kisumu, in the death of 11 Luo and the injuring of 78. The ascent of Idi Amin to power in Uganda was accompanied by a systematic liquidation of the Langi and Acholi ethnic groups within the Ugandan army and elsewhere in positions of authority and influence.

ETHNIC MASK OVER THE CLASS STRUGGLE

Richard Sklar has correctly observed that in Africa, ethnic movements may be created and instigated to action by the new men of power in furtherance of their own special interests which, time and again, constitute interests of emerging social classes. Ethnicity becomes a mask for class privilege.¹⁵ Again, B. Mugubane has convincingly argued that ethnicity impedes a serious effort to understand African societies because it ignores the ownership of the primary productive forces, the material basis of society, and the nature of the social system.¹⁶ Similarly, Archie Mafeje has noted that tribalism is not only an anachronistic misnomer which impedes cross-cultural analysis by drawing invidious and highly suspect distinction between Africans and other peoples of the world, but that it also over-simplifies, mystifies and obscures the real nature of economic and power relations among Africans themselves, and between them and the capitalist world.¹⁷

Ethnic consciousness in colonial and post-colonial Africa encourages an emphasis on the distribution of already acquired wealth rather than produc-

14 Gwendolen M. Carter (ed) *African One-Party States*, Cornell University Press, 1962, Ithaca, New York. See particularly L. Gray Cowan "Guinea," *op. cit.* pp. 159-162.

15 Richard Sklar, "Political Science and Political Integration" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1967, pp. 6-8.

16 B. Magubane, "Pluralism and Conflict Situations in Africa: A New Look," *African Social Research*, Vol. VII, June 1969, p. 538.

17 Archie Mafeje, "The Ideology of Tribalism," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1971, pp. 253-262.

tion of more wealth. This is reinforced by a conception of politics as the distribution of resources in society, a system of rewards, the struggle for the division of the national cake. State political power becomes an instrument for inter-ethnic socio-economic competition. It enables revenues, public works projects, factories and political patronage to be diverted to the ethnic homeland. There is no equivalent competition in production. This attitude hampers the drive toward human progress through the creative application of human labour to social production. Unless emphasis is put on production, it is difficult for the individual to maximize his creative potentials and, therefore, his basic humanity. Under such conditions, society degenerates or, at best, stagnates. The level of production fails to increase appreciably causing improvements in production relations to be arrested. Society cannot advance to a higher stage of progress and civilization.

When attention is shifted away from production, those forces which are inimical to the emancipatory, liberating and self-reproductive roles of human labour are no longer clearly identifiable. In Africa, the impact of imperialism on the alienation of labour is camouflaged. Africans lose sight of the adverse effects of the unequal international division of labour, so characteristic of imperial domination, on their flexibility to reorganise their society in ways which they deem necessary for their social progress. They remain confined to an association with the metropole in which the latter alone is organically related to the ultimate products of social production organized in accordance with this division of labour. For Africans subjected to the same rigorous production-oriented discipline, labour ceases to be a liberating activity and becomes an oppressive and alienating force.

Also by shifting emphasis away from production, ethnicity obscures the exploitation and dehumanization arising from the appropriation of the surplus from production along lines of relations of production. The alienation of labour is not confined to the psychological realm. It has a material dimension. Under imperialism, the worker hardly ever receives material rewards commensurate with the value of his labour. His reward is calculated relative to capital in a system in which capital is accorded greater weight and prestige than labour. Since labour is an extension of the worker's humanity and social self, its inferiorization by a productive force whose relationship with man's basic humanity is, at best, tenuous, leads to man's dehumanization and alienation. Therefore, the characteristic pattern of social rewards which greatly favours the owners and supervisors of capital over the real social producers of material product has anti-social effects.

Even with regard to its excessive emphasis on distribution, ethnicity is still a counter-revolutionary force. Such distribution is hardly seriously thought of in terms of the individual's role in production, his contribution to the reproduction of society through social labour, the real value of his labour power. Instead, it is conceived in bio-cultural terms: race, cultural and linguistic differences. In this way, it is easy to ignore the intense struggle between the nation and the metropole for the appropriation of the surplus

from production, and that among the various local classes for the appropriation of the local share of this surplus. It is only when attention is concentrated on production that the full extent of the imperialists' exploitation of local resources can be understood; and the myth of "we are all Africans" can be exploded, to the benefit of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Under circumstances in which the ownership relations are prominent, the negative impact of imperialism on the distribution of resources between the nation and the metropole, the size of the local market, the multiplier and accelerator in the local economy, and the innovation of technology in Africa becomes clearer to the anti-imperialist forces. The metropolises' usurpation of a superior place in the international specialization of functions causes the local economy to be import-export oriented well before the home market has become regional and national. Therefore, the local market must continue to depend on the metropole for capital, access to world market, and taste and consumption habits. This pattern of economic transactions hampers balanced growth among the different sectors of the local economy and segments of the population, the expansion of income-earning opportunities in agriculture, and it hampers an increase in the capacity of the industrial sector to provide in part its own needs for intermediate and capital goods, and to process the nation's products to a more valuable stage before exportation. While imperialism reaps the benefits of a world-wide market, the nation suffers the effects of a narrow local market.

In capitalist economies, the multiplier mechanism causes growth in production to be a geometrical progression. Primary investment has multiplier effects when profits drawn from it are reinvested on the spot in secondary industries. Under imperialism, such reinvestment does not take place in the local area but in the metropole where much of the profit is repatriated. This export of profit is the single cause which by itself cancels out in the end the real multiplier effect of foreign investment in the periphery of imperialism. Although foreign private investment initially raises the level of total income, economic growth does not become geometrical because the resultant benefits are exported thereby preventing the initial increase from yielding any meaningful formation of local savings. Similarly, the accelerator, a mechanism which ensures that an increase in consumption induces an increase in investment, does not operate effectively in the periphery. In the local economy, the high propensity to consume imported goods and services ensures that increased local income can only lead to investment in the productive industries of the metropolises from where these goods and skills are imported. Therefore, an increase in local consumption sets the accelerator working in the metropole.

In the area of technological transactions, the unequal division of labour between the periphery and metropole causes whatever technology that is transferred into the periphery to lag behind new developments in it. The nation can, therefore, never hope to be at the frontier of world technological advances. It must become imitative rather than innovative in its approach

to technology. In fact, foreign private firms have an objective interest in preventing the emergence of new, different and independent centres of technological innovations which hamper the spread of their products. They use their power to confine their most critical knowledge to the central office in the metropole.¹⁸

Ethnicity also obscures the struggle among the local classes, between those classes which have an objective interest in the preservation of peripheral capitalism under imperialist hegemony and those opposed to the imperialist exploitation and plunder of the nation. The local bourgeois, petty bourgeois and comprador elements have interests which are sharply in contrast with those of the overwhelming masses of the population, the peasants and workers. However, in their inter-class and intra-class struggles, they are able to obscure these differences by defining their interests in ethnic terms, purporting them to be similar to those of the oppressed classes. The latter fail to perceive their exploitation and oppression by members of the privileged classes who come from their ethnic group. In fact, they are willing to bear the brunt of the consequences of the socio-economic struggles of the upper classes for a division of the national cake. And during times of civil war arising from such competition, they constitute the bulk of the dead, wounded and starving. Yet they will have had little or no stake in the initial hostility. Thus, in Africa, ethnicity is an opium of the oppressed masses. Unless this mask over the local class struggle is removed, it is difficult for the oppressed to identify correctly their local enemies in the struggle against imperialism.

Again, although distribution follows biocultural lines, the foreign non-African cultural group is usually not regarded as part of the distributive equation. The inferiorization of the African relative to the European and the wide socio-economic gap between them make the latter rather remote and inconceivable as an object of socio-economic competition. Most of the competitive energy and resultant hostility are channeled against other local ethnic groups. Under these circumstances, extra African intervention in internal conflicts is readily sought and accepted. The cost of such intervention in terms of the destruction of life and property of fellow Africans is immeasurable. In this way, ethnicity not only allows the imperialists to seize the opportunity provided by local civil strife to re-establish or consolidate their hold on an African country, but it also leads to a cynical disregard of the life force and basic humanity of fellow Africans relative to non-Africans.

Finally, the biocultural emphasis of distribution tends to create a negative mentality of exclusionism. Unable to increase production in the respective countries, the African ruling petty bourgeoisie falls back on biocultural exclusionism as an instrument for increasing their share of the national cake. When, as in most African countries, production is not in-

creasing rapidly, the demands of one group for a larger share of the national cake entails a smaller share for some other group. First, members of the other ethnic groups are excluded, then other districts, clans, villages and families are excluded as the case may be. Individuals become important merely as objects for possible exclusion from the system of distribution. Their basic humanity is neglected if not denied. In the process, the solidarity so necessary for a concerted and successful anti-imperialist struggle fails to develop. The inherited colonial structures continue to prevail.

CONCLUSION

Thus ethnicity creates obstacles in the path of the anti-imperialist revolution in Africa. However, these difficulties are not insurmountable. The contradiction between the ethnic groups is not the principal contradiction in African societies. It is a contradiction at the level of consciousness. Of course, it arises from struggles in the course of production but generally it is not a conflict between various relations of production. And social life is not determined by consciousness. Rather it is social life which gives rise to consciousness.

Social life is governed by social production which depends on the material conditions determining production, what is produced and how it is produced. It is characterized by social movement which is a process of natural history governed by laws which are independent of human will, and consciousness. The first historical act is the production of material life itself. This is indeed an historical act, a fundamental condition of all history. Therefore, in any conception of social life the first requirement is to observe this basic fact in all its significance and implications, and to give it its proper importance. The counter-revolutionary problems posed by ethnicity are magnified out of proportion to their real significance when social reality is conceived in terms of objects of observation isolated from this practical human activity. There is empirical observation but it is not that of active men as they are conditioned by a determinate development of their productive forces and the intercourse which corresponds to these. Ethnicity is observed as fundamental reality. But the highest point that can be attained by this observation is the description of reality. It cannot be the basis for a change in reality.

As an element of the superstructure of society, ethnic consciousness can only be significant in social process to the extent that it is congruent with the production relations which form the infrastructure. Consciousness and existence are indeed distinct but they also form a unity. When the two are not congruent, consciousness does not change existence but rather is changed by it because consciousness is about existence. When it is not, it becomes false consciousness which cannot survive any serious confrontation with objective consciousness based on existence. Therefore, the task of revolutionaries in Africa is to confront ethnic consciousness with class con-

¹⁸ J.N. Bhagwati, (ed.) *Economics and World Order*, Free Press, 1972 New York; Stephen Hymer, "The Multinational Corporations and the Law of Uneven Development," *op cit* pp. 122-126.

sciousness. The experience of Amilcar Cabral is illuminating: "You may be surprised to know that we consider the contradictions between the tribes as a secondary one...Our struggle for national liberation and the work done by our party have shown that this contradiction is really not so important; the Portuguese counted on it a lot but as soon as we organised the liberation struggle properly, the contradiction between the tribes proved to be a feeble secondary contradiction."¹⁹

What is important is a realization that the struggle against ethnic chauvinism cannot be waged under the leadership of that segment of the population which benefits substantially and concretely from the inter-ethnic situation. They include the African businessman, big and small, rural notables, landlords, the top and middle echelons of the civil and military bureaucracy, university lecturers and students. Also, together with the advanced capitalist countries and foreign capitalists, they are the major beneficiaries of the inherited colonial economy. Opposed to the existing ethnic and economic conditions are the vast majority of Africans who have remained silent, remote from the political and economic seats of power and merely marginal to the realm of income distribution. They consist of the lowest echelons of the military and civil bureaucracy, the semi-skilled and unskilled workers, the unemployed, petty traders, and the middle and poor peasants.

While it is the former category which holds political and economic power in the inherited neocolonial order, it is the latter that must assume power if the continent is to pull itself out of its present interethnic quagmire and the root of its socio-economic underdevelopment. Progress toward a shift in the power balance from the former to the latter remains the major criterion for deciding whether an African movement is revolutionary or reactionary. Arguments which plead the pragmatic necessities of politics or the need to be realistic can no longer suffice as an excuse for not doing what must be done. Rather, they should be seen as an expression of the bankruptcy of the programmes of the movements which subscribe to them. And the colonialist and fascist myth that the masses cannot effectively take the reins of their government in their own hands should be countered with the argument that the masses have the right and will eventually seize the power to manage their own affairs. For right from the outset of colonization, all they have witnessed has been a mismanagement of their affairs by others.

¹⁹ Amilcar Cabral, *The Struggle in Guinea*, Africa Research Group Reprint, n.d. Cambridge, Mass., p. 436.

BALKANIZATION OF SOUTH AFRICA: POVERTY OR REVOLT?

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An examination of the nine Bantustans which are slated for independence in South Africa supports the contention that they will remain underdeveloped. As satellite states their only viable resource is labour and nothing else. A look at Table 1 shows that despite its large area, the Transkei has a large population density. The population density is higher than the average of the other Bantustans. High population density hampers economic growth in that people often settle on scarce fertile land that could be put to productive use. Needless to say that while the Transkei does not have known mineral resources, it is being prepared for independence. Its economic viability is questionable even to highly placed government officials.

Sir de Villiers Graaff, a Senior member of the opposition aired this position in a speech. Questioning the ability of the Transkei to create new jobs for its people, he asked:¹

How many opportunities for employment have been created in the reserves over the past six or seven years? A mere 1,000 in industry. It is estimated that within the next four years or five years, work will have to be provided for at least 39,000 new work seekers in the reserves each year. If the government policy is implemented and they try to decrease the Native population in the white areas at the rate of five per cent per year, Professor Sadie estimates that as from 1975, opportunities for the employment will have been created in the reserves for 180,000 new employees annually. What hope at the moment is there that the majority of the Bantu will ever be able to make a living in the reserves under that policy?

Recent data continues to indicate that jobs created in these areas fall far short of the population it is expected to support. For example, in the whole of South Africa, unemployment is rising at the rate of 100,000 people per year. To help stem this rise, Professor Jan H. Lange of the University of the Free State² argues that 69,000 new jobs must be created in the industrial areas and 75,000 in the Bantustans per year. A glance at the last two columns of Table I shows that over a period of ten years the government efforts have fallen short. The investment figures are due to expenditure by government, the Industrial Development Corporation and some private firms. We see that the area in which more jobs were created is Bophuthatswana. And these jobs represented more than half of the total for all Bantustans. The total investment of R23,800 in all Bantustans was meagre, suggesting the returns on capital in these areas is low.

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¹ Sir de Villiers Graaf speech in February 1969, in "South Africa: 'Resettlement' — the New Violence to Africans", p. 13.

² "Rising Black Unemployment", *Race Relations News*, Johannesburg, May 1973 in *X-Ray-Current Affairs in Southern Africa*. London, The Africa Bureau, 48 Grafton Way, Volume 3 No. 11, April 1973, p. 1.

Table 1: NUMBER OF MALES (15-64) ABSENT⁴

| Bantustan | Blocks of Land 1,2 | Proposed Consolidation ² | Area km ² | Total Permanent Population in each Bantustan ¹ | Density per km ² | Total absent at one time | Percentage of Bantustan Urban Population in so called White areas (1970) | Percentage of Urbanized in Bantustan ³ | Sum invested ⁶ R1000 | Jobs created ⁶ |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Transkei | 2 | 2 | 36,850 | 1,751,142 | 48 | 498,800 | 93.0 | 7.0 | 2,300 | 1,400 |
| Ciskei | 19 | 4 | 9,310 | 527,159 | 56 | 149,000 | 70.3 | 29.7 | 2 | 180 |
| Bophuthatswana | 19 | 6 | 37,670 | 887,318 | 23 | 311,200 | 87.9 | 12.1 | 17,400 | 3,984 |
| Kwazulu | 48 | 10 | 31,550 | 2,105,509 | 67 | 599,700 | 80.8 | 19.2 | 804 | 847 |
| Basotho-Qwaqwa | 1 | 1 | 460 | 24,833 | 54 | 322,800 | 98.7 | 1.3 | 86 | 109 |
| Lebowa | 14 | 5 | 21,480 | 1,087,095 | 51 | 241,700 | 84.7 | 15.3 | 2,500 | 866 |
| Gazankulu | 5 | 4 | 6,700 | 267,814 | 40 | 130,000 | 86.3 | 13.7 | 275 | 122 |
| Venda | 3 | 2 | 6,060 | 265,129 | 44 | 47,300 | 96.1 | 3.9 | 280 | 226 |
| Swazi | 2 | 1 | 2,120 | 118,126 | 56 | 101,100 | 95.4 | 4.6 | 78 | 114 |
| TOTAL | 113 | 35 | 152,200 | 7,034,125 | 46 | 2,401,600 | — | — | 23,800 | 7,818 |

***Sources:

- 1,2 A Survey of Race Relations, 1972, p. 168, Johannesburg, South Africa Institute of Race Relations, 1973, in *Racism and Apartheid in Southern Africa, South Africa and Namibia*, Paris, The Unesco Press, 1974, p. 70.
3. Official Yearbook of the Republic and South Africa, 1974, p. 306.
4. "Homelands: The role of the Corporations" in *the Republic of South Africa*, P. Smith, et al (eds.) Ferreirstown, Chris van Rensburg Publications (Pty) Ltd., p.17.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
6. *Race Relations News*, Johannesburg, May 1973.

According to a recent report by the Bureau for Economic Research on Bantu Development (BENBO)³ almost three-quarters of the Gross National Product of the Transkei amounting to R407 million in 1973 came from approximately 350,000 migrant workers who generally make up the most highly skilled section of the population. Added to this problem are the 26,300 Transkeian workers who enter the labour market each year. Hopes that the economy will absorb more of them fade when we realize that of the economically active people that remain in the Transkei, 78 per cent work in an otherwise primitive agricultural sector.

The dependence of the Transkei on South Africa is unavoidable and real. Part of the reason is that the Bantustans export only one commodity, and that is labour. Thus, there exists a structural imbalance between these economies and that of South Africa resulting from their overdependence on the export of labour. This will make them extremely vulnerable to the South African business cycle. Based upon their analysis of a country that exports a few primary products and is analogous to that of the Bantustans, Green and Seidman conclude: "An economy limited to specializing in the production of a few primary products for export is...highly dependent. Loss of markets can be catastrophic and sharp falls in the price of exports only a little less so. The national rate of growth will be no higher than the rate of growth in export receipts."⁴ Thus, while the Transkei's Gross National Income increased four-fold to R407 million between 1970 and 1974, this was inflated by the wages paid to migrant workers.⁵ This income cannot be expected to contribute to growth in that most of it is consumed before it gets to the Transkei. This situation is even worse for Bophuthatswana where over 86 per cent of her income is spent outside.

Bophuthatswana is regarded as the richest of all the other Bantustans, but it has similar problems. According to a recent survey by BEMBO⁶, 71 per cent of her economically active population works in the urban areas. Because Bophuthatswana has a high population density of 23 per km², more people will go to the urban areas as her population increases. According to the BENBO survey, her population increased by 76 per cent between 1970 and 1973. This problem is compounded by the fact that less than 7 per cent of her land is arable. According to the survey, 9100 jobs would have to be created annually to prevent an exodus of work-seekers to the urban areas. In the last two columns of Table I, we can see that only 3,984 jobs have been created over a period of ten years.

³ Tony Duigan "The Drain from a Land of Promise", in the *Johannesburg Star*, Saturday, March 1976, p. 15. * Unless otherwise mentioned, this refers to the Airmail Edition.

⁴ Reginald Green and Ann Seidman, *Unity or Poverty? The Economics of Pan Africanism* Baltimore, Penguin, 1979, in Richard Harris, op. cit., p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶ See "9100 jobs needed in homeland", *The Star*, Saturday, 15 November 1975, p. 20. Also see Tony Koenderman, "Only 10 per cent of Tswanas live off homeland", *The Star*, 22 November 1975.

An analysis of KwaZulu does not hold much promise either. She, too, has a lot of obstacles that might impede her growth. This area needs to create 30,400 jobs annually so as to stem the tide of job seekers to the urban areas. Over the last ten years, only 847 have been created. It does not seem likely that more jobs will be created. KwaZulu has a high leakage of purchasing power and it cannot be controlled. The reason is that KwaZulu is fragmented poverty.

It is also instructive to realize that because these places are dependent on the economy of South Africa, they will also be vulnerable to fluctuations in the economy. This phenomenon will especially be hard on the migrant and there exist pockets of white businesses between the fragments. In addition, only one-ninth of the income earned by migrants reaches KwaZulu. Migrant workers earn a total of R279 million but only R80 gets to KwaZulu.⁷ The migrant workers consist of 62 per cent of the economically active population. One of the greatest challenges for this area lies in the growing demand for work. Since 1974, an average of 23,597 KwaZulu residents have consistently been entering the labour market.

From the above discussion, it is clear that these areas will always depend economically on South Africa and that their major export will always be labour. They are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty. The official Tomlinson Commission estimated that these areas could support a maximum of 2.3 million people. However, they presently hold 6.9 million.⁸ People can hardly own cattle or other livestock. In the Ciskei, a third of the families have no land at all. And in the less densely populated Transkei, 95 per cent of the families own less land than the amount which has been officially estimated as the minimum on which to make a living. A survey of the Transkei showed that 85 per cent of households receive incomes that are below the poverty datum line.⁹ A survey of yet another Bantustan-Ngutu district in KwaZulu showed that the cash available per person in one week is forty cents. The Tomlinson Commission reported that if fully developed agriculturally, this area could support 13,000 people. However, it now has a population of 80,000 which is expected to reach 120,000 by 1980. These, according to the *Financial Mail*, are wasted people.¹⁰

All the areas that the government has designated as Bantustans are not economically viable. The population densities are very high and as a result they will not maintain viable agriculture. Land values will also increase as more people are resettled there. Because of this, more will be rendered homeless and they will have to leave the area again. Labour will remain the only natural resource which will have to relocate in the metropolitan areas as

7 Antony Duigan, "KwaZulu Jobs — The Vital Task," in the *Johannesburg Star* 20 December 1975, p. 16.

8 "Life in Resettlement Villages," *Financial Mail*, 15 June 1973, quoted in *X-Ray*, *ibid.*, p. 2.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

floating population are a common phenomenon in South Africa. Unfortunately very little is known about them, especially in the academic circles. Clearly, the Bantustans are going to produce more. The characteristics of this population can be inferred on the basis of studies made elsewhere. Usually, this population has low educational and technological qualifications, highly unstable employment, and great insecurity. Thus, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, referring to the floating population of the so called *callampa*, notes that "the worker of the callampa rarely has the security of a stable job; he faces the probability of a succession of badly paid jobs of uncertain duration".¹¹ A survey of Puerto Alegre, in Brazil, showed 40 per cent of family heads to "work with irregularity" and another 55 per cent to be entirely unemployed. These conditions generate such low levels of income that, according to ECLA estimates, the adequate family "model diet" as established by the Department of Food and Nutrition of the National Health Service of Chile would absorb 132 per cent and 121 per cent respectively of the incomes of Santiago's *callampa* dweller and worker.¹²

The people of South Africa experience a similar plight which might prove to be much worse if it were studied in detail. For example, over 80 per cent of the Africans live below the poverty line, meaning that the entire family earns less than \$25 a week. One half of the children born in the so called Bantustans die before reaching the age of five. This death rate is twenty-five times that of white children.¹³ Because the rate of malnutrition is high, the incidence of tuberculosis deaths is ten times higher among the African children than it is among the whites. This situation is aggravated by the fact that the whites earn over 76 per cent of the country's wealth while they are less than 20 per cent of the population. Thus, the average white income *per capita* is about fourteen times that of the average African — \$133 a month for every white person, man, woman and child; \$9.80 a month for every African.¹⁴

In addition, the Africans have a higher dependency burden compared to whites. This is a very important phenomenon because it means that their savings are very low when we take into account their already low incomes. The whites have a very low dependency rate, meaning that they are able to save out of their relatively high incomes. The dependency ratio is the number that gives us the dependency of the total population on its economically active members. In South Africa, this ratio is called the *adult male dependency burden (AMDB)* and is defined as the ratio of the number of

11 Quoted in Andre Gunder Frank, *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution — Essays on Underdevelopment and the Immediate Enemy*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1963 p. 279.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 280.

13 *Prosperity "For Whites Only": The Paradox of Economic Growth in South Africa*, New York, The Africa Fund, (Associated with The American Committee on Africa), Pamphlet, p. 1.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 1.

it gets better trained and seeks to maximize its opportunities. The families that will be unable to relocate will forever be exposed to a constant life of workers because they will be the first to be fired. The migrant workers or the persons under 15 years of age to the number of males within the age group of 15—64 years. This ratio represents a rough indication of the average number of minor dependants each male adult of employable age would be required to support if responsibilities for support were equally divided among the male adult population. Persons above the age of 64 years are excluded because they normally retire after that age. Females in the age group 15—64 years are also excluded, because responsibility for family support is normally that of males, while the income of the female members of a family often only supplements the income of the male head.

Table II: ADULT MALE DEPENDENCY BURDEN¹
SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONS, 1970

| Nation | AREA | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| | South Africa | White areas | | Bantu homelands | |
| | | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Whites... | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.5 | — | — |
| Coloureds... | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.9 | — | — |
| Asians... | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.6 | — | — |
| Xhosa — Transkei... | 1.6 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 3.0 |
| Xhosa — Ciskei | — | — | — | 1.6 | 3.2 |
| Tswana... | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 3.5 |
| North Sotho... | 1.9 | 0.7 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 3.9 |
| Shangaan... | 1.8 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 2.3 | 4.1 |
| Venda... | 2.0 | 0.6 | 1.3 | 0.6 | 3.7 |
| Swazi... | 1.9 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 0.8 | 3.0 |
| Zulu... | 1.9 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 3.3 |
| South Sotho... | 1.9 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 4.7 | 2.9 |

Source: Department of Statistics, Population Census, 6 May 1970. Reports Nos. 02-01-01 and 02-01-02 (calculations by Department of Economics, University of Pretoria), in *Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa*, 1975, p. 256. 1. Persons 0—14 years: males 15—64 years.

The AMDBs are much higher for the various African groupings than for the whites as the table shows. For example, in the case of the Venda, the AMDB for the population as a whole was 2.0 which implies that in 1970, ten employable male adults had to support twenty minor persons besides them-

selves, whereas in the case of whites, ten male adults had to support nine minor persons (1:0.9) besides themselves.

Inefficiencies and inequities permeate South African society as symbolized by migrant labour. The migrant labour system has been widely criticized for being uneconomical and wasteful both socially and economically. The Tomlinson Report estimated the loss of manpower involved in travel, periods of rest, unemployment, and relatively unproductive time spent in the reserves in South Africa alone. Out of a total annual potential of 1,400,000 man-years (one year's labour rendered by one man) available in the African areas (or somewhat less, if two or three weeks' leave per year is allowed for), only 480,000 man-years are economically used, and of this total, only 433,000 are applied in paid employment in the black areas. This means that there are on the average 600,000 man-years of labour available which are not economically applied. Also, migrants travel 370,000,000 man-miles per annum in addition to their normal daily journey to work.¹⁵ In contrast to Zambia this labour turnover is low, as indicated in Table III. This data refer to the mining industry.

Migrant labour tends to prohibit the requisition of skills, and to a great extent workers become forever undifferentiated units of unskilled labour. Most business managers regard them so, with the result that South Africa's industry has high labour turnover. The Tomlinson Report stated that large firms (apart from mines) in Johannesburg are credited with having a labour turnover of 117 per cent per year or a replacement of ten months. Other studies made in large South African cities point to the same high percentage.¹⁶

THE BANTUSTAN ELITE: ITS CREATION AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN STATE

A study of some of the African elite will reveal to us that indirect rule is well and alive in Africa. It is now called by new names, the most common being neocolonialism. We shall distinguish between the two and argue that the same process is being instituted with the creation of the Bantustans.

Indirect rule is a term most common in colonial literature. This form of control was used by the British¹⁷ to control their colonial possessions. It was a method which was perfected mainly in Nigeria and Uganda. Under this method, the colonialists used the traditional leaders as intermediaries in their exploitation of the indigenous people. The chief became the tax collector, the labour recruiter and an agent of whatever the colonialists wanted to have from the people. He also became the peace-keeper and something of a

15 "Tomlinson Report", in D. Hobart Houghton, *The South African Economy*, 2nd Edition New York, Oxford University Press, p. 87.

16 Ibid p. 89

17 See Lord Lugard, *Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, D. 8 xxi, 643. London, Frank Cass.

chief spy Those who refused to collaborate were replaced often by those who might be from the minor royal houses.

Table III: MONTHLY RATE OF LABOUR TURNOVER FOR THE MINING INDUSTRY OF ZAMBIA 1952—69

| Year | Black | White |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1952 | 5.98 | n.a. |
| 1953 | 4.64 | 1.8 |
| 1956 | 1.94 | 1.17 |
| 1959 | 2.5 | 1.4 |
| 1962 | 1.4 | 1.3 |
| 1964 | 0.7 | 2.1 |
| 1969 | 0.5 | 2.2 |

Notes: Turnover — monthly average of departures x 100.

2. The table refers to mines on the Copperbelt and in Broken Hill; 1969 is for the Copperbelt only.

Source: "Annual Reports of the Department of Labour", *Mining Yearbook of Zambia, 1969*; Francis Wilson, *Labour in the South African Gold Mines, 1911-69*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972, p. 126.

Neocolonialism achieves exactly the same purpose but in a sophisticated manner. The sophistication is due to new class structures, government machinery and market systems. The new classes are found in the third world as part of capitalist expansion. It should therefore not surprise us to see them emerge in the Bantustans. They are an instrument of control. Consequently, the governments representing exploitative multinational corporations will always see to and welcome the creation of such a class. This observation is also supported by Amilcar Cabral.¹⁸ Referring to the emergence of this class in Guinea, he pointed out that, "...The fundamental objective was to create a bourgeoisie where one did not exist in order specifically to strengthen the imperialist and the capitalist camp. The rise

18 Amilcar Cabral, "The Struggle in Guinea", in Richard Harris, et al, *The Political Economy of Africa*, New York, Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc., 1975, p. 22.

of the bourgeoisie in the new countries, far from being anything surprising, should be considered absolutely normal, it is something that has to be faced by those struggling against imperialism."

Generally, South Africa does not have an African bourgeoisie. However, it is deliberately creating it along with the Bantustans. For example, the most fertile lands that are being bought by the South African government as additions to the Transkei are being transferred directly to the Mantanzimas and other lesser chiefs as their personal properties.¹⁹ This seems to be a common tendency as has been observed by various people. For example, James Thomson,²⁰ Curator of the Nieman Foundation for Journalism, made the following observation after a recent visit to the Transkei: "Pretoria's black collaborators - the Matanzima brothers (Kaiser and George) - and their lesser-chief supporters in the Transkei National Independence Party, have established a mutually beneficial and highly lucrative relationship with Pretoria." Thomson adds, "The Mantanzimas are regarded by many of their own Xhosa subjects, as well as non-Xhosa blacks, as Uncle Toms or worse ... The Matanzimas' critics, inside and outside the Transkei — some white, but mostly black-perceive... a combination of self-enrichment and wishful thinking, or opportunism and greed. Their central and most searing charge is that the charade of independence will permanently deprive four million blacks of their birthright: an equitable share in the wealth and power of the South African nation—a nation in large part created and sustained by the toil of blacks."

Like in other parts of the third world, we will anticipate the emergence and crystalization of several class structures in the Bantustans due to this process. Ledda has identified these classes.²¹ They are (1) a comprador element (present during the colonial period) which serve as middlemen for the foreign import-export firms; (2) local entrepreneurs who are either associated with foreign capital or involved in housing, internal transportation, contracting, etc.; (3) the bureaucratic bourgeoisie composed of top administrative and military officials as well as government ministers, members of parliament, judges, etc.; and (4) rural bourgeois elements such as local planters, feudal landlords, and large farmers who are involved in the production of cash crops.

It is not apparent that the Bantustans will have all of these subdivisions of the bourgeois class to any significant degree due to their lack of economic potential. They will not be able to attract foreign investors of any consequence.

19 "Transkei Farms Outcry", in the *Johannesburg Star*, Saturday, 17 April 1976, p.2.

20 Quoted in David Sibeko, "The Sham of Independence", *Africa Report* Volume 21 Number 3, May-June, 1976, p. 15.

21 Romano Ledda, "Social Classes and Political Struggle in Africa," *International Socialist Journal*, August 1967, p. 565.

As a result, the class that is being clearly created is that of the bureaucratic bourgeois. This class is composed of administrative and military officials, government ministers, members of parliament, judges and the police. This group, as we have already inferred, will have a solidified relationship with the South Africa state on whom its livelihood depends. It is this group which Frantz Fanon has so ably studied and analysed. Calling it the "national middle class," he says the sole purpose of this group is not to transform the nation. Instead, it is pleased with playing "the role of the Western bourgeoisie's business agent" and serving as the local instrument of neo-colonialism. By so doing, the national bourgeoisie shall have discovered its historic mission: that of intermediary.²²

It will assume this role because of lack of raw materials, engineers and technicians. Unlike the Western bourgeoisie, it will be unable to pioneer and to invent. Its tragic situation is that it is starting at the end compared to the international bourgeois. Fanon states that this group, "...lacks something essential to a bourgeoisie: money. The bourgeoisie of the underdeveloped is a bourgeoisie in spirit only...Consequently, it remains at the beginning and for a long time afterward a bourgeoisie of the civil service...it will always reveal itself incapable of giving birth to an authentic bourgeois society with all the economic and industrial consequences which this entails."²³

It is already apparent that the South African state will require the new ruling classes in the Bantustans to assume the role of the national bourgeoisie elsewhere. That is, they will be required to work for and fulfill the interests of the state and the corporations it represents. For example, chiding the Chief Minister of KwaZulu, Chief Buthelezi, the Minister of Bantu Education, Dr. Andries Treurnicht commented that the Bantustan leaders owed their existence to the whites and that they were expected to be thankful.²⁴ In addition, this elite group does not have independent decision-making power of its own. For example, Professor H.W.E. Ntsanwisi, Chief Minister of Gazankulu stressed this point recently. He feels that all decisions affecting the homeland are made in Pretoria. He adds: "A homeland government was a government in name only, if it could not make decisions it wanted to make. In spite of the laws in the statute book, the 'real thing,' namely the decision-making power, had not yet been delivered."²⁵ He also lamented the fact that if he wished to have discussions with another homeland leader, he first had to consult the authorities in Pretoria. He felt the need for free and direct contracts between homeland leaders.²⁶

22 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York, Grove Press, Inc., 1961.

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 178-9

24 *The Johannesburg Star*, March 20, 1976, p. 4.

25 John Barratt et al. *Accelerated Development in Southern Africa*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1974, p. 171.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

Clearly, the ruling elite of the Bantustans will have very little room to manoeuvre. Without an independent existence of their own, they will become true allies of the state against their own people. Since these areas have only labour as their primary resource, they will intensify its recruitment under nationalist banners and other means. They will be encouraged in their endeavours by tax receipts which they will receive from the companies per recruit. Again, these tax receipts will be justified in the name of economic development. Recent experience has shown that labour exporting economics tend to export more labour over time and especially so after attaining independence.

Kwame Nkrumah has pointed out that alliances such as the one described above, tend to emerge between the new ruling elite and the former colonial masters. He argues that the African government shields the corporations from the resistance of the working class, and bans strikes or becomes a strike-breaker, while the corporations strengthen their stranglehold of the African economy, secure in the knowledge that they hold government protection. In fact, the African governments have become the policemen of imperialist, multinational corporations.²⁷

As we have indicated above, it is already apparent that some people among the new ruling class in the Transkei have turned their back against the masses of the people and that they are working for their own interests. Some of the Bantustan leaders acknowledge this fact. Referring to recent changes in South Africa, Mr. C.K. Mageza, a politician from Gazankulu, declared that these changes that were taking place were aimed at the elite uppercrust of Blacks who are in the minority and not the Black masses who counted most where the country's peaceful welfare was concerned.²⁸ His tone is suggestive of the fact that he and others who think the way he does, might set themselves up as spokesmen for the poor and the neglected.

If we follow the experience of colonialism elsewhere, there will emerge other classes which will be antagonistic to the one that we have already identified. One will be a class of small businessmen and intellectuals, otherwise known as the petty bourgeoisie. They will consist of school teachers, university dropouts, small merchants, traders and other salaried employees. This group will be bitter because it will be unable to share in the already limited pie that the Bantustan has to offer. Unlike in other parts of Third World, this group will not be bought off because of limited resources. They will not become the labour aristocrats that Arrighi has so precisely identified in other parts of Africa. Of this group, Arrighi says: "The 'labour aristocracy'... owes its very existence and consolidation to a pattern of in-

27 Kwame Nkrumah, *Class Struggle in Africa*, New York, International Publishers, 1970, pp. 55-56.

28 Yesef Nazeer, "The Blackman's View of South African Changes," *The Johannesburg Star*, 22nd May 1976, p. 14.

vestment in which the international corporations play a leading role. The displacement costs involved in the disengagement from international capitalism have to be borne mainly by the 'labour aristocracy' itself. The most important consideration, however, concerns the reallocation of the surplus that is necessary for the mobilization of the disguised saving potential of Tropical Africa. Such a reallocation directly hits the 'labour aristocracy' which has most benefited from the present pattern of growth without development, and whose consumption therefore has to be significantly curtailed."²⁹

Clearly, because these areas are labour exporting and whatever industry there is, is negligible, this class will remain rudimentary and militant. Consequently, we can see it taking up leadership of a sort where it allies itself with the unemployed in the Bantustan urban areas with the purpose of undermining the ruling class elite.

Urbanization in the Bantustans should be seen as a real and growing phenomenon. Not only do urban populations have an impetus of their own, but in the Bantustans there are other factors favouring their growth. High population densities are one factor and the growth of rural aristocrats and competition for land another. Frantz Fanon calls the urban unemployed the lumpen proletariat. Of its growth he says: "The constitution of the lumpen proletariat is a phenomenon which obeys its own logic, and neither the brimming activities of the missionaries nor the decrees of the central government can check its growth. This lumpen proletariat is like a horde of rats: you may kick them and throw stones at them, but despite your efforts they'll go on gnawing at the roots of the tree".³⁰

The Bantustans are urbanizing quickly. For example, in 1960, there were 49,855 people concentrated in 31 Bantustan towns. However, by 1970, there were 207,327 concentrated in the same number of towns. An increase of 315 per cent. Of all Bantustan towns, one in KwaZulu increased from 25,481 to 154,324 over the same period. Under the Group Areas Act, which involves forced removal of people from the so called white areas to the Bantustans, new towns sprang up over the same period. The new towns arose mainly in KwaZulu (13), Bophuthatswana (14) and Lebowa (13) with total populations of respectively 81,185, 124,000 and 58,963³¹.

The high tempo of urbanization cannot be over emphasized. Census figures show that in 1936, 18.5 per cent of the African population lived in the urban areas and this percentage had increased to 27.8 in 1951 and 33.1 in 1970. When we break urbanization by Bantustan category, we find that, according to Table IV, it is highest for the South Sotho at 42.6 per cent and for

29 Giovanni Arrighi, "International Corporations, Labour Aristocracies, and Economic Development in Africa," in Robert T. Rhodes (ed). *Imperialism and Underdevelopment*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1970, p. 256.

30 Frantz Fanon, op. cit. p. 104.

31 *Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa*, 1975, p. 258.

the Tswanas at 38.9 per cent. It is least for the Venda at 17.8 per cent and the North Sotho at 23.6 per cent. The reason for the high urbanization of the two former groups is that lands in their so called homelands are almost entirely owned by whites, suggesting that in order for the Bantustan scheme to succeed, whites almost have to buy themselves out of South Africa so as to make room for the Africans.

Table IV. PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION URBANIZED, 1970

| Nation | Urban Population as Percentage of Total Population | Percentage of urban population in | |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| | | White areas | Homelands |
| Xhosa-Transkei | 28.4 | 93.0 | 7.0 |
| Xhosa-Ciskei | 37.3 | 70.3 | 29.7 |
| Tswana | 38.9 | 87.9 | 12.1 |
| North Sotho | 23.6 | 84.7 | 15.3 |
| Shangaan | 24.1 | 86.3 | 13.7 |
| Venda | 17.8 | 96.1 | 3.9 |
| Swazi | 34.9 | 95.4 | 4.6 |
| Zulu | 31.1 | 80.8 | 19.2 |
| South Sotho | 42.6 | 98.7 | 1.3 |

Source: *Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa*, 1975, p. 258.

The table also reveals that the African populations are still predominantly concentrated in the so called white areas. Thus, 98.7 per cent of the South Sotho urban population lives in these areas. It is followed by the Venda which is 96.1 per cent.

Increasing urbanization suggests that a potentially explosive situation is being formed. And, as Frantz Fanon has suggested, no legislation will stop this explosion from happening. He saw it happen in Algeria and we are today seeing it happen in Soweto³² and other urban areas. But the significant thing about it happening in the Bantustans is that the Bantustans ruling elite will have its hands full. Almost invariably, most of them will be weak to maintain their governments and outside help will be solicited. But with unrest spreading, this will broaden South Africa's defense line thus spreading her resources thin. Should the urban population in the so called white areas react at the same time, the water will go through the dike against the exploitative forces.

Simultaneous action, whether planned or unplanned, should be expected in the future. We saw it happen in 1960 and this year too. Over time, these riots can be expected to reach new levels of sophistication. The reason for this is that Bantustan people will learn to use firearms through affiliation to their own army and police forces. Some of these people will filter through to work in the so called white areas after their tours of duty in their Bantustans. This tendency will result in a core of people who are able to handle sophisticated weaponry. It is these people who might play a decisive role in subsequent riots.

32 See *The Christian Science Monitor Eastern Edition*, No. 176, Thursday, 5 August 1976, p. 4 and *The New York Times*, Volume CXXV, No. 43,293 Thursday, 5 August, 1976, p. 1, 3.

A projection of the future of Bantustans should suggest to us that in about fifteen years, they will be South Africa's Vietnams. They will be difficult to contain because they are so numerous and fragmented that they will serve as refuge for nationalist guerrillas. Added to this is the fact that it will be very difficult to trace them to a particular Bantustan or identify them with any. Travel and identity documents will also be easier to forge. Thus, the Bantustans will be a definite and a positive factor against oppression in another fifteen years.

This assessment does not suggest that the struggle will stagnate. Instead, attention will be focused on the urban areas which are already restless. It seems as if South Africa is faced with a future of permanent violence and the Bantustans can only escalate it.

It is difficult to rationalize how the state can successfully limit interaction between the Africans through the Bantustans when, despite where they spend the night, they all work at the same places. In addition, they group together even in hostels against what they perceive as a hostile world. They come together irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds. They also belong to the same churches and social organizations which would make it impossible to prevent interaction. In addition, all the African universities are in the heart of the Bantustans. This means that the students in the so-called white areas will continue to go there. Thus the link between these two groups will continue. The question may be: "Should separate urban universities be established on a regional basis as another alternative?" This may not be a far-fetched idea. But, duplication of services is no solution either.

It is safe to say that the Bantustans will not form mutually antagonistic groupings as some people have feared and others have hoped. Instead, they will act collectively in order to protect their self interests against the South African state. We have already seen African colonies do this against metropolitan Europe during the struggle for independence. This happened despite the fact that colonial powers tried to exploit ethnic differences. Consequently, pressure against South Africa will continue to mount.

Another point to consider is that the state will never abandon the Bantustans ruling elite no matter how inefficient it might be. It will have to support it financially and militarily. Failure to do so might make militants out of this class. For example, the possibility of this happening became apparent in a recent statement by the Ciskei's Chief Minister, Mr. Lennox Sebe when he said that Bantustan development spending could spell a death knell to separate development. He continued by saying that the 'homeland programme' had been forced on to the people and that they had reluctantly accepted the crumbs as the fastest way to improve their lot under the circumstances. He resented the fact that after these crumbs had been given to them, they are now being taken away. "This is the surest way of turning people into revolutionaries," he said.³³ Making an analogy he said: "It is

³³ "This could be apartheid's death knell", *The Johannesburg Star*, Saturday, 7 April 1976, p. 5.

like feeding a dog meat everyday. Then suddenly, you just show him the meat but withhold it. He will grab for it by fair or foul play. He will bite the hand that once fed him... There will be a free for all if spending is cut."³⁴

When this group is pressed hard enough, it can also use the lumpen proletariat toward its own end. According to Frantz Fanon, the lumpen proletariat will always answer the call to rebellion...³⁵ Consequently, there will always be a fear of defection and the State will have to always come up with money to keep this group loyal.

The burden of supporting the ruling bureaucrats of the Bantustans will increase every year. A lot of money is already being funnelled into some of these areas. This money has gone mainly for construction of match-box-like homes, a \$1.8 million dollar palace for the Transkei leader, and other infrastructure such as government buildings and prisons. These expenditures are not related to growth. They are a face lifting that will leave the people as poor as they were before. Clearly, one cannot enrich a poor person by merely putting him into sparkling government corridors. As Mr. C.K. Mageza of Gazankulu said, the issue among the masses is that of bread and butter and the scraping of all unjust laws.³⁶

The comparison between public and private expenditures for the Bantustans is significant. For example, the share of government expenditure as a percentage of the total was 75 per cent in 1967. It was over 50 per cent for the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana and more than 40 per cent for KwaZulu. These figures do not only tell us how underdeveloped these areas are, but they also suggest to us the amounts that South Africa will continue to transfer to these areas. These payments are high (better than \$400 million in 1973/74) and South Africa cannot continue to make them without finally meeting opposition from the white electorate.

The Bantustans do not have the support of the people of South Africa to justify their creation. Their support is limited to a few unyielding diehard racists and opportunists, both black and white. When the Transkei receives her independence in October, she will do so under a state of emergency which was declared in 1960. A few weeks ago, she arrested the entire parliamentary opposition in preparation for independence. The Bantustans do not merit any support from the international community. Not only are they a glaring symbol of racism, but they are also an example of the deliberate creation of poverty by an indifferent and disinterested state. In addition, their creation and support promises more violence and loss of life in the future. This can be avoided if all efforts can be concentrated on achieving an equitable egalitarian society under the current geographic whole.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 5.

³⁵ Frantz Fanon, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

³⁶ *The Johannesburg Star*, 22 May, 1976, p. 14.