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ISSUES:

NEO-COLONIALISM IN A WEST AFRICAN STATE:
THE CASE OF LIBERIA*

by

Dew Tuan-Wleh Mayson

I

The decades following the second imperialist war were marked by the rise of the liberation movements which in Africa, as in Asia and Latin America, waged an intense struggle for self-determination and the restoration of national sovereignty. In our Africa, at enormous costs and huge sacrifices to the peoples, this struggle has managed to achieve some partial victories as evidenced by the accession to political independence of some 47 African countries.

But these victories and these small successes have only brought into sharp relief the immensity of the problems which still confront us. To this day, large and immensely rich parts of our continent remain under colonial alien, minority rule. The ugly racist domination in the territories of South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe is facilitated through the active support of the imperialist countries headed by the United States of America.

Even in most of the so-called independent African countries, the acquisition of formal political independence has not brought an end to imperialist exploitation of African resources. In most of these countries, formal independence has resulted in what Cabral has called "flag independence". A new national anthem was composed, and a new flag hoisted, but imperialist exploitation and domination of the peoples and their resources continued unabated. In Ghana, the people, in derision, refer to this situation as "the same taxi, yah, only new driver." Nkrumah, on the basis of theory and bitter experience, characterized this situation as neo-colonialism, the last stage of imperialism.

How did neo-colonialism develop, and what are its dynamics and laws of motion? What are the class alliances which provide the political framework for the reproduction of this

*This paper has been prepared for the Commission on the Program to Combat Racism, P.O. Box #66, Geneva.

phenomenon? Most importantly, what contradictions are present in the neo-colonial situation, and how shall we take advantage of these contradictions to advance the struggle against neo-colonialism in our countries? These are permanent questions. They arise continually, confronting the peoples with an increasing degree of intensity. It is these questions that we propose to examine in this brief article. We shall draw on the Liberian experience, with which we are most familiar, to illustrate our analysis, but it must be noted that the implications have general validity in our Africa today.

II

We shall begin with the assumption that neo-colonialism today represents the predominant strategy adopted by imperialism in the specific new phase it entered following the second imperialist war. Recalling Lenin, we are reminded that this "new phase" is still the phase of monopoly capitalism in perpetual and accumulating terminal crises, marked by the feverish pursuit of domination, the plundering of resources, and the intense exploitation of the peoples.

But this is also the phase in which imperialism is confronted by a variety of forces hostile to its tentacles of exploitation, hostile to its very existence. The emergence of a potent and advancing socialist bloc, the spectacular development of the liberation movements and the new efforts poured into the building of national independence in the Third World, the resurgence of the working class and democratic movement within the very citadels of imperialism—all these forces confront imperialism today, threatening its existence and heralding its ultimate defeat.

From this point of view, neo-colonialism is a counter-revolutionary strategy deployed by imperialism the essential aim of which is two-fold: (1) to continue the domination of the working class in the advanced capitalist countries by bribing a portion of it with a part of the surplus secured from the exploitation of Third World countries; (2) to continue the domination of the economy and other aspects of national life in Third World countries through the creation and/or reinforcement of what Cabral has termed a "false bourgeoisie" which becomes charged with the task of facilitating the permanence of imperialist domination.

In exchange for making available the national arena in which foreign monopoly capital can exploit the economic resources, this "false bourgeoisie", in its dual capacity as a functionary of imperialism as well as the ruling class in a dependent Afri-

can country, is assured not only a part of the extorted surplus but also political and military support which bolsters its hegemonic and privileged position within the country. This, of course, results in a denationalization of the ruling class, weakening it and rendering it unable to resist the demands and pressures emanating from imperialism.

From the viewpoint of the exploited classes--the workers and peasants--this situation leads to a deepening of their misery and a heightening of the oppression directed against them. New contradictions therefore appear, aggravated by the gross inequalities between the rich ruling class and the great majority of poor people within the country. Moreover, this neo-colonial situation itself contains an over-riding contradiction. On the one hand, the main objective of the imperialists is to retain neo-colonies in a dominated and exploited position within the unequal world capitalist system. On the other hand, however, the objective laws of this system banish the masses of the neo-colonies to increasingly harsh poverty in all spheres thereby generating fatal contradictions which are only resolved by a complete destruction of the capitalist mode of production implanted in the national territories and a withdrawal--total, if it is to sustain its proper significance--from the very unequal world capitalist system.

The case of Liberia is particularly illustrative of the neo-colonial situation which we have so far described quite abstractly. Embracing a land area of 43,000 square miles and a population estimated at 1.6 million, this West African state was the only one in this part of Africa to have escaped direct European colonization. Before the second imperialist war, the population of free slaves from the United States, installed in the country in 1821 by American imperialism, remained isolated from the rest of the population and pre-occupied themselves with "pacifying" the people--the so-called natives. As a result, the country remained relatively unexploited, with activities centered at Monrovia and the other coastal settlements.

Following the second imperialist war, the Liberian ruling class, again with the active support of American imperialism, adopted the "open door policy" designed to stimulate rapid economic growth. Vigorously pursued since then, this policy, by granting to foreign capitalists special tax concessions, large profit incentives, preferential treatment with regard to import and export duties, unmolested freedom to engage in foreign exchange transactions--by these extremely *laissez-faire* measures, the open door policy made available to foreign capitalists the economic resources of the country for unlimited and particularly ruthless exploitation.

Naturally, the intense and rapacious exploitation of the economic resources resulted in a relatively high rate of economic growth. By 1975, the Gross Domestic Product which in 1950 was less than \$50 million, had risen to \$662.0 million. But due to the outward-oriented nature of this growth process (its links to foreign trade) and the imperialist domination of the entire society, economic development did not ensue--only the development of underdevelopment and the further integration of the country in the world capitalist unequal international division of labor as a supplier of raw materials, (rubber, iron ore, forestry products) as a profitable and reliable area for the export of capital, (in 1974 foreign private investment was valued at \$655.4 million); as a secondary market for manufactured goods (in 1975, imports were valued at \$331.2 million); and as a bridgehead for imperialist aggression (the United States has a "mutual defense" treaty with Liberia and its propaganda network, the Voice of America, has its headquarters for Africa here.)

Without going into a thorough analysis of how this process has been carried out, we can easily state that the basis for this continuing exploitation and dependency lies in the domination of the Liberian economy and other institutions of national life by imperialist countries and their international corporations in close alliance with the Liberian state apparatus.

If we stop to examine the characteristics of this domination, we shall find that, first of all, the principal means of production in our country are owned and controlled by large international corporations based in the advanced capitalist countries. Indeed, Liberia holds the dubious distinction of having the largest number of foreign-owned business enterprises in Africa, and probably in the world. Five out of every seven business enterprises in the country are foreign-owned. Moreover, Liberia is particularly dependent on these enterprises for its annual production output and its growth thus manifesting one of the most obvious characteristics of an underdeveloped economy--structural, foreign dependence.

Iron ore, rubber, forestry and trade constitute the major elements of the Liberian economy, but all of these sectors are dominated by foreign capitalists.

With regard to the iron ore firms (LAMCO, Bong Mine, NIOC, all of which are based in the United States and Europe), their exploitation of the rich iron ore resources accounted for almost 42 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product in 1975 and a little over 74 per cent of the total export earnings of the country in the same year. The production of one of these firms, LAMCO, accounts for over 40 per cent of total iron ore production. Involving a total investment exceeding US \$200 million (62.5 per

cent of the shares being in foreign hands) LAMCO represents a veritable state-within-a-state. The Liberia Mining Company, dominated by American capital, has exhausted the rich ores at Bomi Hills to the extent that Bomi Hills has been transformed to ugly Bomi Holes: all the ores have been carted away to Europe and the United States, large volcano-looking holes are left in their place, and the people in the area, not to speak of the country as a whole, cannot show any meaningful benefit it has derived from this plunder of its resources. Now the company has left: 24th March, 1977.

Following at a distance the iron ore firms are the rubber barons (Firestone, B.F. Goodrich, LAC, etc.) whose production of natural rubber accounted for a little over 5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product and a little over 11 per cent of the value of exports in 1975. The Firestone Rubber Company of the United States, the largest of these firms, produces more than 53 per cent of the entire annual rubber output, and in alliance with the other rubber companies, it monopolizes the processing and marketing of the rubber produced by Liberian farmers (30 per cent of total rubber production).

Forestry, the third largest element of the country's economy, is again dominated by foreign capitalists. In 1975, this sector accounted for over 3 per cent of the value of exports and contributed about 3 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Finally, there is the trade sector, dominated by Lebanese and East Indian traders. This sector in 1974 contributed about 13 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Because of their isolated nature due to the fact that production is geared to satisfying the needs of the home economies, not the Liberian economy, the foreign iron ore, rubber and forestry corporations which dominate the Liberian economy have formed economic islands or enclaves which are not integrated one with another. That is why these foreign enclaves have failed to have any "developing effect" on the economy as a whole, that is, they do not stimulate and support new economic activities.

Typically, the international corporations dominating the mining, rubber and forestry enclaves in Liberia import the capital equipment, high and sometimes even middle level manpower, and materials and supplies required to extract the country's economic resources. Little or no processing is done in the country since the extraction of raw materials is done to cover the needs of corresponding industries in the advanced capitalist countries. As a result, manufacturing which represents, by and

large, a higher level of production, is limited, accounting in 1975 for only about 5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

As a further consequence of this pattern of economic production, the number of Liberians involved in the foreign export enclaves and benefitting from it has remained quite small. During the last two decades, although the economy registered an impressive growth of 7 per cent, wage employment grew only half that rate.

Meanwhile, the population growing at a relatively high rate of 3 per cent, was adding more and more workers to the labor force which the economy failed to absorb due to increased capitalization in the dominant mining enclave. A large disposable agri-industrial reserve army was thus created thereby ensuring a minimum wage rate which is relatively rigid and frozen in the export and other sectors of the economy.

Not surprisingly, this tendency in the Liberian economy to absorb only a small proportion of the labor force--and hence to benefit only a few--has resulted in a very unequal pattern of income distribution, both within the economic enclaves and in the country as a whole. In the mining sector, for example, in 1974, while the average monthly income of the Liberian salary worker was \$406 that of the expatriate worker was \$1247. The disparity in monthly income between the Liberian wage-worker and the Liberian salary-worker was on the average \$100. Similar disparities in income were to be found in the other enclave sectors of the economy. In the nation, on a per annum basis, 3.4 per cent of the Liberian population expropriate more than 60.4 per cent of the national income.

Of course, this inequality, itself an expression of, and a condition for, the power structure in Liberia and in the world capitalist system as a whole, has led to a distorted pattern of domestic demand, that is, very narrow markets for sophisticated goods and services which are imported by foreign enterprises or provided by protected, capital-intensive industries using advanced foreign-owned technology and imported inputs. The income tax structure, rather than helping to reduce this inequality, actually works to reinforce it. The rural masses whose disposable personal income is less than \$50 per annum have a tax liability of up to 25 per cent while the comparable liability on urban people is only 2 per cent, beginning at income \$1500 per year.

Aggravating this already dismal situation is the fact that the huge profits made by the foreign capitalist enterprises from the exploitation of the economic resources of the country are not re-invested in the enterprises and, even less, used in

founding new and different industries. Instead, these profits are exported to the home countries in the form of dividends, commissions, expatriate salaries, etc. Thus it has been established by a superstructure of the capitalist system--the World Bank--that of every dollar earned in the mining industry only about 16.5 cents remain in the country with government receiving 13 cents as revenue and payment to Liberian employees accounting for the remaining 3.5 cents.

In contrast with the prosperity and high productivity of the foreign-dominated enclaves, the largest sector of the economy (subsistence agriculture, covering nearly 50 per cent of the land area and embracing close to 70 per cent of the labor force) remains backward and relatively stagnant in terms of productivity growth. During the period 1964-1972, growth in this sector was put at 2.7 per cent per annum--less than the natural growth of the rural population. Moreover, the subsistence sector has been degraded to the role of a supplier of cheap labor for the enclaves and of the means of subsistence for it. Understandably, therefore, the per capita income of this sector is horribly low, estimated in 1973 to be only \$70 per year while the comparable figure for the urban areas in which the foreign enclaves are located was put as high as \$600 per year. One result of these disparities in income (and available social services) is the high rate of migration out of rural areas, presently estimated at about 2 per cent, or nearly two-thirds of the estimated natural rate of population growth.

The considerably uneven productivity between the enclave and subsistence sectors in Liberia, the disconnected economic structure, and the structural, foreign dependence which we have already noted--all these factors define the characteristics of underdevelopment and the process of peripheral capitalist growth in our country.

We need to ask ourselves: what have been the results of this process of underdevelopment and peripheral capitalist growth? On the socio-economic level, this process has resulted in a specific phenomenon: the marginalization of the masses, that is, the exclusion of the majority of the people from economic and social progress. In spite of the poverty of the statistics, we can cite a few facts to illustrate this phenomenon: The vast majority (over 70 per cent of the population) who live in the rural areas wallow in mass poverty because of their subsistence livelihood which, as we have noted, brings them no more than \$70 per year. Illiteracy is widespread. Nearly 80 per cent of the people in the above 10-age group complete no grade at all. Even the education taught in schools is largely irrelevant to Liberian realities and ignores the real needs of pupils in the rural areas. Additionally, the educa-

tional system fails to produce "the educated and skilled manpower which the economy needs"—to use the words of a government publication. Unemployment is rampant, particularly among young people in the urban areas. The death rate of the population is high caused, among other factors, by the excessively high infant mortality rate, underestimated at about 137 per thousand. In circumstances such as these, it is not surprising that life for the vast majority of Liberians is harsh, poverty-stricken, undignified—and short.

The process of underdevelopment—and with it—the marginalization of the masses is, of course, not fortuitous. Moving with the inexorable force of logic, it is the very condition underlying the intergration of the Liberian ruling class within the world capitalist system; it is also the guarantee of increasing material and ideological support for this class which conditions its adoption of policies aimed at maintaining the political framework conducive for the reproduction of the capitalist relations of production.

But let us take a closer look at the class structure in our country. In the first place, there are the exploited classes and strata comprising (a) the poor peasants who constitute a majority of the population, live in the rural areas, are burdened by taxes and crushed by poverty because of their subsistence livelihood; (b) the small handicraftsmen whose livelihood has been threatened by penetration of the capitalist mode of production; (c) the working class who are numerically small due to the low level of development of the productive forces, badly organized due to the stringent anti-labor laws, and whose living standard is kept at a bare minimum by the low wage rate and the rising cost of living; (d) the mass of poverty-stricken employees in the public sector whose employment does not earn them an income which is up to a modest minimum and whose existence acts as a drag on the bargaining power of the workers in the better-paying sectors of the economy; (e) finally, there are those whom we may call the lumpenproletariat composed, on the one hand, of beggars, prostitutes, layabouts, etc., on the other hand, of all those who in increasing numbers are migrating to the urban areas, having no stable activity, eking out an existence here and there, and maintaining close relations with their rural villages.

On the other side of the major contradiction, and inspite of many secondary contradictions, the dominant class consists of (a) the "false bourgeoisie", comprising of administrative and para-administrative higher government officials who are not directly engaged in the process of production and lack the economic power on which a proper bourgeoisie is based; (b) the rich planters and large landowners who are themselves often government offi-

cials or former officials (c) the petty intellectual bourgeoisie (professors, teachers, doctors, engineers, technicians, university graduates) whose status is jeopardized by foreign domination of the economic sectors and the actual presence of foreign technicians and "experts"; (d) the big European, American and (increasingly so) Japanese corporations who, backed by their State, render support to the "false bourgeoisie" who, in turn, using the State apparatus, provides the necessary political climate which enables these corporations to continue their unbridled exploitation of the people and their resources; (e) the large foreign commercial companies (CFAO, PZ, OAC) who are linked to the World capitalist system through their import-export activities; (f) the middle commercial companies, consisting mainly of Lebanese and East Indians, used by and given a privileged position by dominant United States imperialism and who consider that their privileges and even their safety depend on continued foreign domination; (g) the small industrialists and local entrepreneurs for whom competition from the Lebanese and East Indians leaves them a restricted scope for profitable investment.

Because it lacks the economic power on which a bourgeoisie (in the proper sense of the term) is based (in the neo-colonial situation this economic power is retained only by foreign capital and the domestic working class) the ruling class in our country relies on the imperialist powers, principally the United States and its European allies, for political, economic, military and ideological support in exchange for which these powers, and the international corporations based in them, are assured continued domination and exploitation of the economic resources in our country. We have already seen how this domination--extended to all the economic sectors and institutions of national life--has resulted in the plundering of the national resources and the exploitation of the masses.

From the viewpoint of the ruling class, the primary function of the Liberian State is to provide the atmosphere conducive to the stimulation and profitability of Western capitalist investments. The extremely liberal investment code serves as an incentive for this investment, while the particularly vicious anti-labor policy ensures the presence of a cheap and docile labor force to facilitate the profitability of capital.

Political stability is therefore an obsession of the Liberian ruling class which is maintained by direct repression (stringent anti-freedom of speech and anti-strike laws have been enacted; members of progressive organizations (the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA)) and progressive newspapers (the *Revelation*) are harrassed and jailed; workers are beaten during

strikes and forced to return to work); by a relatively large security network of informers; by the conferral of a semblance of power on the army and police who are trained and advised by experts from the imperialist countries, particularly the United States, and who, in the absence of a well-organized political party, constitute the pillars on which the ruling class rests; by the mystification and even deification of the national leader who is placed above criticism and in whose shelter members of the ruling class acquire their wealth; by co-operation of various elements of the population (elements of the petty bourgeoisie—doctors, university professors, technocrats, etc.—are afforded relatively high salaries and various perquisites under the all embracing category of "fringe benefits"); by currying popular support through various public relations gimmicks and by the establishment of various public relations projects which in practice are merely political tranquilizers and ultimately benefit only the ruling class itself.

But contradictions are stubborn things and cannot be so easily resolved. They continue to mount; The poverty of the masses is accompanied by the spectacular wealth of the ruling class who spends this wealth in a equally spectacular fashion—on the purchase of expensive cars, villas, vacations in Europe and the United States, lavish parties, etc.

Within the ruling class alliance itself, contradictions have developed, in particular between the younger breed of technocrats and the old guard politicians for whom government is nothing else but the attempt to "keep things as they are". There are also the contradictions being felt by some elements of the petty bourgeoisie who resent the foreign domination of the country because it restricts their growth and the possibilities available for accumulation. At the same time, the educational system continues to throw on the labor market ill-trained people who cannot find any employment; the ranks of the lumpenproletariat and unemployed swell; and the lot of the peasantry and working class grows worse. Finally, the permanent contradiction between the imperialists' objective of retaining a neo-colony in the unequal world capitalist system and the objective laws of this system which prevent the independent economic development of the neo-colony grows with increasing intensity.

III

How shall we take advantage of these contradictions which are developing in all the neo-colonies to advance the struggle against neo-colonialism? More precisely, what are

the requirements of a strategy aimed at combatting neo-colonialism? Obviously, in a paper of limited size and scope such as this, it is not our intention to probe deep into this question for it concerns the definition and formation of a front and of a strategy aimed at combatting neo-colonialism by liberating our countries, freeing our peoples and restoring their dignity. Furthermore, our experience and the experience of other people have taught us that an anti-neo-colonialist strategy cannot be defined from the outside. It can only be moulded in the heat of struggle. We shall therefore approach the problem from another angle by restricting ourselves to an analysis of some actual problems which, on the basis of the Liberian experience pose particular difficulties for those engaged in the struggle against neo-colonialism. An analysis of these problems and of the growing contradictions in the neo-colonial situation makes it possible for us to define the guidelines for studying the possibilities available for struggling against neo-colonialism.

Today in Liberia, the political development of the small working class remains stunted by the stringent anti-labor laws, the poor organization of the working masses, and the petty corruption of the trade union leadership itself. In addition, the still prevalent extended family system tends to minimize class cleavages and the antagonisms arising from them.

The low level of development of the productive forces has also rendered the working masses poverty-stricken, both economically and ideologically. Magico-religious beliefs are therefore prevalent resulting in the demobilization of a considerable portion of the popular masses. "Leave everything to God", they say; "He will take care"--forgetting that the Lord himself has said that He will help only those who help themselves.

Our peasantry, for its part, although burdened by taxes and severely exploited, is still not in the position of having only its chains to lose. Up to now, it has not been faced with mass starvation because of its subsistence existence and the low level of population density (does not exceed 39 persons per square mile). Moreover, in Liberia, as is the case in most West African countries, the peasantry has not generally been dispossessed of land although in some parts, particularly in the mining, rubber and forestry areas, and in some countries, particularly Bong and Montserrado, it has been deprived of the best lands by the foreign capitalists and gentleman-farmers of the ruling class.

With regard to the petty-bourgeois element of the ruling class which in the colonial and neo-colonial situation is suitably placed to play a major role in the struggle due to

the economic and ideological poverty of the working masses the petty-bourgeoisie in Liberia is for the most part very pleased with itself and its position within the ruling class alliance. Because within this alliance, the petty bourgeoisie, thanks to its possession of the required knowledge and skills, shares in the spoils and the exercises of state power through many lucrative positions which it occupies both in the public and private sectors of the economy. Needless to say, these positions are political tranquilizers which are intended to secure its loyalty within the ruling class alliance.

By emphasizing these few unfavourable factors which the socio-economic structure poses for the struggle against neo-colonialism, it is not our intention to diminish the importance of other unfavourable factors, such as the antagonisms between settler and native groups, and between different clan groups, nor can it be our intention to diminish the significance of the serious contradictions that exist within the ruling class alliance. We have already mentioned a few of these contradictions in connection with our analysis of the role of the class alliance in sustaining imperialist exploitation and domination. Indeed, these contradictions are very important, and they are developing quite rapidly.

Finally, by concentrating on the internal situation, we are not unmindful of the fact that the evolution of Liberia as a neo-colony cannot be abstracted from the social forces which have determined the global expansion of the capitalist mode of production. External factors have a role of major or even decisive importance in the struggle against neo-colonialism, but ultimately, what matters most is the strength of the popular class alliance which is guaranteed by the mobilization of the people and against which foreign aggression is rendered practically impotent.

On the basis of the above discussion, it is now possible for us to put forward some guidelines for studying the possibilities available for struggling against neo-colonialism.

Analysis of the Position of the Neo-colonial Country within the World capitalist system

At this stage, the following aspects need to be studied:

- a) the origin of underdevelopment in the country and the resultant consequences;
- b) the role of the dominant imperialism in the country, the role of the multinational corporations backed by this imperialism, in the underdevelopment

- of the country;
- c) the emergence of new social strata.

In the Liberian context, this means a study of

- a) the process by which the country has been transformed into a totally dependent, export economy;
- b) the mass poverty which has accompanied this transformation;
- c) the new social strata which have emerged, the role of United States imperialism and the multinational corporations backed by this dominant imperialism,

From this analysis, it should be possible to define the characteristics of underdevelopment in the country, the role played by foreign monopoly capital in the integration of the country within the unequal international division of labor, and the emergence of the new social strata.

Analysis of The Class Alliance

At this stage, the following aspects need to be studied

- a) the political and economic situation of the ruling class alliance, the ties it shares with imperialism, and the contradictions within this alliance.

In the Liberian context, this means a precise analysis of the elements within the ruling class alliance that are most conscious of imperialist exploitation and domination and can therefore be galvanized in the struggle against neo-colonialism; the exact role that United States imperialism has assigned Liberia within its overall strategy in Africa.

- b) the political and economic situation of the exploited classes.

In the Liberian context, this means a determination of the specific characteristics of the workers, the peasants, and the lumpenproletariat. This analysis will enable us to determine which elements among the exploited classes are the most conscious of existing oppression and therefore readily receptive to being mobilized against it.

From this analysis, it should now be possible to define the characteristics of the various classes and their interrelations, appraise their relative strengths and weaknesses, and formulate a correct strategy for mobilization against imperialist domination and exploitation.

Finally, as Nkrumah reminds us, neo-colonialism represents the last stage of imperialism. The struggle against neo-colonialism therefore heralds the death of imperialism through the destruction of the deformed capitalist structures it has erected in our countries and through which it is able to plunder our resources, exploit our peoples, and submerge our countries in absolute dependence.

That is why we can have no illusions: the struggle against neo-colonialism in our countries will never be a dinner party affair. Repression, brutalities, demagogueries—all these and many other acts of violence will be brought to bear against the forces fighting against neo-colonialism. This much we have learned from the immortal Che Guevarra.

But if we are able to overcome our ideological deficiency, that is to say, our criminal ignorance of the national realities we are pledged to transform and formulate a strategy for liberation based on a compelling understanding of our realities; if we are able to overcome the political sclerosis which paralyzed the progressive forces in our countries and renders them incapable of confronting imperialism and its running dogs faithful servants; if we are able to mobilize our class friends and isolate our class enemies—if we are able to take these small, first steps, then, and only then, shall we be able to wage a successful struggle against neo-colonialism and thus signal the death of imperialism.

Bibliographical Notes

1. Our general thesis on neo-colonialism derives from the works of Marx, Lenin and Nkrumah and from our own participation in the struggles of our people. For Marx, see his *Capital*, Vol. I, II, and III; for Lenin, see his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*; for Nkrumah, see his *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. See also the writings of Che Guevara (*The Writings and Speeches of Che Guevara*); Amílcar Cabral (*Revolution in Guinea*); D. Wl Nabudere (*The Political Economy of Imperialism*); Samir Amin (*Neo-colonialism in West Africa*).
2. Data on the Liberian economy are obtainable from the Economic Surveys of Liberia, published annually by the Liberian Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs. The data in this paper are based on the Surveys published in 1974 and 1975. A detailed analysis of the development in Liberia is provided in the author's forthcoming study, *Why We Continue to Catch Hell? Patterns of Dependence, Underdevelopment and Possibilities For Liberation in Liberia*. See also the author's recently published work, *Which Way Africa? Notes on the Present Neo-colonial Situation and Possibilities for*

Struggling Against It, and his Putting Economic Analysis at the Service of the Working Class, Notes on the Liberian Economy and the Question of Wages, Prices and Inflation.

3. The recent upsurge in progressive activity among the Liberian people has resulted in the establishment of a number of Progressive organizations and the publication of a spate of progressive writings: the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and its monthly, MOJA NEWS, P.O. Box 1559 Monrovia, Liberia; the All Peoples Freedom Alliance (APFA) and its monthly, APFA-FANGA; P.O. Box 3282, Monrovia, Liberia; the Progressive Alliance of Liberia and its periodical, THE REVOLUTION, P.O. Box 240, Adelphi Station, Brooklyn, New York 11238, USA; the Committee Against Political Repression in Liberia (CAPRIL) and its publication RICE AND RIGHTS, P.O. Box 6237 Syracuse, New York 13210, USA. See also the writings of Albert Porte, a veteran of the struggle against injustice in Liberia. A few titles: *Glimpses of Justice in Liberia: Liberianization or Goblin Business: and Speaking Out*, obtainable from the Clearinghouse for Liberian Literature, P.O. Box 6237, Syracuse, New York 13210, USA.

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