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U F A H A M U

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THE EDITOR'S QUILL

The guest theme of this issue is "political economy." The quotation marks express the "nefarious" connotations any reference to "politics" and "economy" in the context of the Third World tends to bring into focus. The question, therefore, what we mean by political economy becomes also a thematic task.

We understand by "political economy" a body of scientific knowledge of laws determining the production and exchange of material subsistence in a definite economic system. And since our point of departure is the examination of the specific operation of economic and political laws in the Third World, "political economy" for us amounts to a statement of our ideological viewpoint. We think it unnecessary to repeat in words here what, in deference to this viewpoint, the activities of our ideological friends have convincingly proved to be "seditious" in the eyes of fascism and neo-colonialism by proxy.

We have in mind the tragic events that have recently taken place in Lebanon and Kenya, to mention only those two. What is common in both cases is the brutal character of the aggressive and repressive means by which the status quo has been re-established. But recourse to force to enforce moribund 'order' is the best-expression of the invalidity of that "order". In Lebanon, the whole world has witnessed Zionism commit naked genocide against the Palestinian people, whose right to exist simply has to be granted for there to be peace in the Middle East. There is no other way. The good old method of solving "native" problems by eliminating them physically, as was the case with American Indians and the Australian "Aborigines" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries does not and cannot work in the twentieth century. Hitler himself failed to "solve" the Jewish question by dissolving Jews in their own blood. And by the strength of that fact alone, no amount of force, modern or otherwise, can eliminate the Palestinian people from the face of the earth. Their plight is the plight of all the oppressed people in the world, and an inspiration to the liberation movements in the Third World.

The Kenyan drama surprises nobody, except perhaps the advocates and disciples of "Nyayo", that existential 'philosophy' of tracing Jomo Kenyatta's footprints. The issue is not whether or not we are for or against the attempted coup d'état. We do not advocate coup d'états against any government no matter how much we may loathe some governments. What happened in Kenya was a simple case of what *Le Monde* (August 3, 1982) calls "the end of a myth." We know only too well what that myth is: it is the myth of capitalism in Kenya. In this respect we are publishing in this issue two closely-linked articles by Willy Mutunga, one of the victims of President Daniel Arap Moi's repressive measures

against anti-imperialist Kenyan intellectuals. At the moment, Willy lies languishing in detention, along with Maina-wa-Kinyatti, Al-Amin Mazrui, David Mukaru Ng'ang'a, Michael Koigi wa Wamwere, Edward Oyugi, John Khaminwa and Kamoji K. Wachira, to mention just a few prominent lawyers, university lecturers and parliamentarians.

In "Commercial Law and Development in Kenya," Willy analyses three component parts of commercial law: Sale of Goods Law, Hire-Purchase Law and Agency Law, to show how commercial law and, therefore, law in general -- is orchestrated to consolidate neo-colonial grip on Kenya. In an uncompromisingly rigorous examination of these laws, he comes to the conclusion that these three branches of commercial law play the role of a decadent superstructure to protect imperialist interests in Kenya.

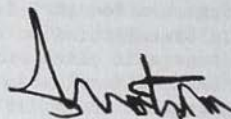
In the second article, "Finance Capital and the So-called National Bourgeoisie in Kenya," he takes this role played by commercial law to task and shows how it operates concretely in the form of a corporation: the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation, ICDC. Closely tied to this role is an ideological role played by bourgeois class analysts: Van Zwanenberg, Nicola Swainson, Colin Leys, Gideon Mutiso, Cyrus Makau and others. These he correctly diagnoses as apologists for the status quo in Kenya. He points out conclusively that, contrary to the teachings of these "class analysts", no capital "accumulation" by the petty-bourgeoisie is possible under a neo-colonial set-up, at least not in Kenya. The only accumulation taking place is by finance capital, by multinational corporations.

On the political side of our theme we have had the honour to lay our hands on an article entitled "The Current Crisis in Guyana," by Clive Thomas, a close friend and comrade-in-arms of the late Walter Rodney. In the article, Clive traces painstakingly the political developments in Guyana leading to the "Triumph of the Will", i.e., the subjugation of Guyana by imperialist forces locally represented by Burnham's "People's National Congress", brought into power in 1964 by Anglo-U.S. political machinations. His revelations solve the "mystery" of Rodney's death. To read what has happened to Guyana is to know what is happening to those countries under imperialist control.

Two other articles address themselves to the same theme from different angles. "The Greening of Capitalist Agriculture in Nigeria" by R. Ayo Dunmoye deals with the negative impact of agribusiness in Nigeria, showing how subsistence crops have suffered assault by cash crops, which has led to the shortage of food in the country. "The Theory of Human Capital Formation: Implications for Developing Countries," by Joseph N. Ngu looks into the gaping holes of this theory as it applies to the developing countries. He concludes that it is unproductive for a Third World country

to import and apply blindly a theory developed by and for the industrialised countries to serve their own particular economic needs, which do not necessarily correspond to those of the importing country.

The common denominator in all these articles is the general denunciation of imperialism. And that is our ideological statement. The rest belongs to our enemies, those powerful regimes and individuals who describe us as "radical", "Marxist" and "seditious", but lack the gumption to challenge us in kind. They may have the means to oppress and suppress those opposed to them, but theirs is a lost battle. In case they have missed the point, we repeat: the future of humankind belongs to the oppressed and the exploited. To our enemies we are also saying, as the cover illustration of this issue emphasizes, given the nature of imperialist exploitation, the people can only liberate themselves through the armed struggle. Hence A Luta...!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. L. L.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

IN MEMORIAL

RUTH FIRST, 1925-1982

With her murder, 17 August 1982 in Maputo, one of the most eloquent voices against the apartheid system and white minority rule in South Africa was abruptly silenced.

From her university years until her death, she was a tireless, devoted opponent of the South African government, its policies and its politics. Along with her husband, Joe Slovo and 154 others, she was a victim of the infamous Treason Trial of 1956-1961. In 1963, she was detained in solitary confinement for many months, out of which she wrote *117 Days*. A series of "bannings" followed and in 1964 she went to England.

When Mozambique became independent in 1975, First and Slovo returned to Southern Africa. She was granted a teaching position at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, and it was there that a parcel bomb ended her life.

But the stilling of her body, only testifies to the validity and effect of her revolutionary activities. Her writings continue to speak against apartheid, against the racist, repressive South African government and inspire confidence of the liberation struggles now in action in Southern Africa.

The entire editorial board of *Ufahamu* salutes this valiant and selfless daughter of progress who has chosen to die for the just cause of the people. Our condolences to her family and friends take the form of the revolutionary battle-cry:

A LUTA CONTINUA! VICTORY IS CERTAIN.

Anita Pfouts