Introduction
THE neo-colonialism of today represents imperialism in its final and perhaps its most dangerous stage. In the past it was possible to convert a country upon which a neo-colonial regime had been imposed — Egypt in the nineteenth century is an example — into a colonial territory. Today this process is no longer feasible. Old-fashioned colonialism is by no means entirely abolished. It still constitutes an African problem, but it is everywhere on the retreat. Once a territory has become nominally independent it is no longer possible, as it was in the last century, to reverse the process. Existing colonies may linger on, but no new colonies will be created. In place of colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism we have today neo-colonialism.

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.
The methods and form of this direction can take various shapes. For example, in an extreme case the troops of the imperial power may garrison the territory of the neo-colonial State and control the government of it. More often, however, neo-colonialist control is exercised through economic or monetary means. The neo-colonial State may be obliged to take the manufactured products of the imperialist power to the exclusion of competing products from elsewhere. Control over government policy in the neo-colonial State may be secured by payments towards the cost of running the State, by the provision of civil servants in positions where they can dictate policy, and by monetary control over foreign exchange through the imposition of a banking system controlled by the imperial power.

Where neo-colonialism exists the power exercising control is often the State which formerly ruled the territory in question, but this is not necessarily so. For example, in the case of South Vietnam the former imperial power was France, but neo-colonial control of the State has now gone to the United States. It is possible that neo-colonial control may be exercised by a consortium of financial interests which are not specifically identifiable with any particular State. The
control of the Congo by great international financial concerns is a case in point.

The result of neo-colonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world. Investment under neo-colonialism increases rather than decreases the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world.

The struggle against neo-colonialism is not aimed at excluding the capital of the developed world from operating in less developed countries. It is aimed at preventing the financial power of the developed countries being used in such a way as to impoverish the less developed.

Non-alignment, as practised by Ghana and many other countries, is based on co-operation with all States whether they be capitalist, socialist or have a mixed economy. Such a policy, therefore, involves foreign investment from capitalist countries, but it must be invested in accordance with a national plan drawn up by the government of the non-aligned State with its own interests in mind. The issue is not what return the foreign investor receives on his investments. He may, in fact, do better for himself if he invests in a non-aligned country than if he invests in a neo-colonial one. The question is one of power. A State in the grip of neo-
colonialism is not master of its own destiny. It is this factor which makes neo-colonialism such a serious threat to world peace. The growth of nuclear weapons has made out of date the old-fashioned balance of power which rested upon the ultimate sanction of a major war. Certainty of mutual mass destruction effectively prevents either of the great power blocs from threatening the other with the possibility of a world-wide war, and military conflict has thus become confined to ‘limited wars’. For these neo-colonialism is the breeding ground.

Such wars can, of course, take place in countries which are not neo-colonialist controlled. Indeed their object may be to establish in a small but independent country a neo-colonialist regime. The evil of neo-colonialism is that it prevents the formation of those large units which would make impossible ‘limited war’. To give one example: if Africa was united, no major power bloc would attempt to subdue it by limited war because from the very nature of limited war, what can be achieved by it is itself limited. It is, only where small States exist that it is possible, by landing a few thousand marines or by financing a mercenary force, to secure a decisive result.

The restriction of military action of ‘limited wars’ is, however, no guarantee of world peace and is likely to be the
factor which will ultimately involve the great power blocs in a world war, however much both are determined to avoid it.

Limited war, once embarked upon, achieves a momentum of its own. Of this, the war in South Vietnam is only one example. It escalates despite the desire of the great power blocs to keep it limited. While this particular war may be prevented from leading to a world conflict, the multiplication of similar limited wars can only have one end-world war and the terrible consequences of nuclear conflict.

Neo-colonialism is also the worst form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress. In the days of old-fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taking abroad. In the colony those who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neo-colonialism neither is the case.

Above all, neo-colonialism, like colonialism before it, postpones the facing of the social issues which will have to be faced by the fully developed sector of the world before the danger of world war can be eliminated or the problem of world poverty resolved.
Neo-colonialism, like colonialism, is an attempt to export the social conflicts of the capitalist countries. The temporary success of this policy can be seen in the ever widening gap between the richer and the poorer nations of the world. But the internal contradictions and conflicts of neo-colonialism make it certain that it cannot endure as a permanent world policy. How it should be brought to an end is a problem that should be studied, above all, by the developed nations of the world, because it is they who will feel the full impact of the ultimate failure. The longer it continues the more certain it is that its inevitable collapse will destroy the social system of which they have made it a foundation.

The reason for its development in the post-war period can be briefly summarised. The problem which faced the wealthy nations of the world at the end of the second world war was the impossibility of returning to the pre-war situation in which there was a great gulf between the few rich and the many poor. Irrespective of what particular political party was in power, the internal pressures in the rich countries of the world were such that no post-war capitalist country could survive unless it became a ‘Welfare State’. There might be differences in degree in the extent of the social benefits given to the industrial and agricultural workers, but what was
everywhere impossible was a return to the mass unemployment and to the low level of living of the pre-war years.

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, colonies had been regarded as a source of wealth which could be used to mitigate the class conflicts in the capitalist States and, as will be explained later, this policy had some success. But it failed in ‘its ultimate object because the pre-war capitalist States were so organised internally that the bulk of the profit made from colonial possessions found its way into the pockets of the capitalist class and not into those of the workers. Far from achieving the object intended, the working-class parties at times tended to identify their interests with those of the colonial peoples and the imperialist powers found themselves engaged upon a conflict on two fronts, at home with their own workers and abroad against the growing forces of colonial liberation.

The post-war period inaugurated a very different colonial policy. A deliberate attempt was made to divert colonial earnings from the wealthy class and use them instead generally to finance the ‘Welfare State’. As will be seen from the examples given later, this was the method consciously adopted even by those working-class leaders who had before
the war regarded the colonial peoples as their natural allies against their capitalist enemies at home.

At first it was presumed that this object could be achieved by maintaining the pre-war colonial system. Experience soon proved that attempts to do so would be disastrous and would only provoke colonial wars, thus dissipating the anticipated gains from the continuance of the colonial regime. Britain, in particular, realised this at an early stage and the correctness of the British judgement at the time has subsequently been demonstrated by the defeat of French colonialism in the Far East and Algeria and the failure of the Dutch to retain any of their former colonial empire.

The system of neo-colonialism was therefore instituted and in the short run it has served the developed powers admirably. It is in the long run that its consequences are likely to be catastrophic for them.

Neo-colonialism is based upon the principle of breaking up former large united colonial territories into a number of small non-viable States which are incapable of independent development and must rely upon the former imperial power for defence and even internal security. Their economic and financial systems are linked, as in colonial days, with those of the former colonial ruler.
At first sight the scheme would appear to have many advantages for the developed countries of the world. All the profits of neo-colonialism can be secured if, in any given area, a reasonable proportion of the States have a neo-colonialist system. It is not necessary that they all should have one. Unless small States can combine they must be compelled to sell their primary products at prices dictated by the developed nations and buy their manufactured goods at the prices fixed by them. So long as neo-colonialism can prevent political and economic conditions for optimum development, the developing countries, whether they are under neo-colonialist control or not, will be unable to create a large enough market to support industrialisation. In the same way they will lack the financial strength to force the developed countries to accept their primary products at a fair price.

In the neo-colonialist territories, since the former colonial power has in theory relinquished political control, if the social conditions occasioned by neo-colonialism cause a revolt the local neo-colonialist government can be sacrificed and another equally subservient one substituted in its place. On the other hand, in any continent where neo-colonialism exists on a wide scale the same social pressures which can
produce revolts in neo-colonial territories will also affect those States which have refused to accept the system and therefore neo-colonialist nations have a ready-made weapon with which they can threaten their opponents if they appear successfully to be challenging the system.

These advantages, which seem at first sight so obvious, are, however, on examination, illusory because they fail to take into consideration the facts of the world today.

The introduction of neo-colonialism increases the rivalry between the great powers which was provoked by the old-style colonialism. However little real power the government of a neo-colonialist State may possess, it must have, from the very fact of its nominal independence, a certain area of manoeuvre. It may not be able to exist without a neo-colonialist master but it may still have the ability to change masters.

The ideal neo-colonialist State would be one which was wholly subservient to neo-colonialist interests but the existence of the socialist nations makes it impossible to enforce the full rigour of the neo-colonialist system. The existence of an alternative system is itself a challenge to the neo-colonialist regime. Warnings about ‘the dangers of Communist subversion are likely to be two-edged since they
bring to the notice of those living under a neo-colonialist system the possibility of a change of regime. In fact neo-colonialism is the victim of its own contradictions. In order to make it attractive to those upon whom it is practised it must be shown as capable of raising their living standards, but the economic object of neo-colonialism is to keep those standards depressed in the interest of the developed countries. It is only when this contradiction is understood that the failure of innumerable ‘aid’ programmes, many of them well intentioned, can be explained.

In the first place, the rulers of neo-colonial States derive their authority to govern, not from the will of the people, but from the support which they obtain from their neo-colonialist masters. They have therefore little interest in developing education, strengthening the bargaining power of their workers employed by expatriate firms, or indeed of taking any step which would challenge the colonial pattern of commerce and industry, which it is the object of neo-colonialism to preserve. ‘Aid’, therefore, to a neo-colonial State is merely a revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master, passing through the neo-colonial State and returning to the neo-colonial master in the form of increased profits.
Secondly, it is in the field of ‘aid’ that the rivalry of individual developed States first manifests itself. So long as neo-colonialism persists so long will spheres of interest persist, and this makes multilateral aid — which is in fact the only effective form of aid — impossible.

Once multilateral aid begins the neo-colonialist masters are faced by the hostility of the vested interests in their own country. Their manufacturers naturally object to any attempt to raise the price of the raw materials which they obtain from the neo-colonialist territory in question, or to the establishment there of manufacturing industries which might compete directly or indirectly with their own exports to the territory. Even education is suspect as likely to produce a student movement and it is, of course, true that in many less developed countries the students have been in the vanguard of the fight against neo-colonialism.

In the end the situation arises that the only type of aid which the neo-colonialist masters consider as safe is ‘military aid’.

Once a neo-colonialist territory is brought to such a state of economic chaos and misery that revolt actually breaks out then, and only then, is there no limit to the generosity of the
neo-colonial overlord, provided, of course, that the funds supplied are utilised exclusively for military purposes.

Military aid in fact marks the last stage of neo-colonialism and its effect is self-destructive. Sooner or later the weapons supplied pass into the hands of the opponents of the neo-colonialist regime and the war itself increases the social misery which originally provoked it.

Neo-colonialism is a mill-stone around the necks of the developed countries which practise it. Unless they can rid themselves of it, it will drown them. Previously the developed powers could escape from the contradictions of neo-colonialism by substituting for it direct colonialism. Such a solution is no longer possible and the reasons for it have been well explained by Mr Owen Lattimore, the United States Far Eastern expert and adviser to Chiang Kai-shek in the immediate post-war period. He wrote:

‘Asia, which was so easily and swiftly subjugated by conquerors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, displayed an amazing ability stubbornly to resist modern armies equipped with aeroplanes, tanks, motor vehicles and mobile artillery.
‘Formerly big territories were conquered in Asia with small forces. Income, first of all from plunder, then from direct taxes and lastly from trade, capital investments and long-term exploitation, covered with incredible speed the expenditure for military operations. This arithmetic represented a great temptation to strong countries. Now they have run up against another arithmetic, and it discourages them.’

The same arithmetic is likely to apply throughout the less developed world.

This book is therefore an attempt to examine neo-colonialism not only in its African context and its relation to African unity, but in world perspective. Neo-colonialism is by no means exclusively an African question. Long before it was practised on any large scale in Africa it was an established system in other parts of the world. Nowhere has it proved successful, either in raising living standards or in ultimately benefiting countries which have indulged in it.

Marx predicted that the growing gap between the wealth of the possessing classes and the workers it employs would ultimately produce a conflict fatal to capitalism in each individual capitalist State.
This conflict between the rich and the poor has now been transferred on to the international scene, but for proof of what is acknowledged to be happening it is no longer necessary to consult the classical Marxist writers. The situation is set out with the utmost clarity in the leading organs of capitalist opinion. Take for example the following extracts from *The Wall Street Journal*, the newspaper which perhaps best reflects United States capitalist thinking.

In its issue of 12 May 1965, under the headline of ‘Poor Nations’ Plight’, the paper first analyses ‘which countries are considered industrial and which backward’. There is, it explains, ‘no rigid method of classification’. Nevertheless, it points out:

‘A generally used breakdown, however, has recently been maintained by the International Monetary Fund because, in the words of an IMF official, “the economic demarcation in the world is getting increasingly apparent.”’ The breakdown, the official says, “is based on simple common sense.”’

In the IMF’s view, the industrial countries are the United States, the United Kingdom, most West European nations, Canada and Japan. A special category called “other
developed areas” includes such other European lands as Finland, Greece and Ireland, plus Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The IMF’s “less developed” category embraces all of Latin America and nearly all of the Middle East, non-Communist Asia and Africa.’

In other words the ‘backward’ countries are those situated in the neo-colonial areas.

After quoting figures to support its argument, *The Wall Street Journal* comments on this situation:

‘The industrial nations have added nearly $2 billion to their reserves, which now approximate $52 billion. At the same time, the reserves of the less-developed group not only have stopped rising, but have declined some $200 million. To analysts such as Britain’s Miss Ward, the significance of such statistics is clear: the economic gap is rapidly widening “between a white, complacent, highly bourgeois, very wealthy, very small North Atlantic elite and everybody else, and this is not a very comfortable heritage to leave to one’s children.”

“Everybody else” includes approximately two-thirds of the population of the earth, spread through about 100 nations.’
This is no new problem. In the opening paragraph of his book, *The War on World Poverty*, written in 1953, the present British Labour leader, Mr Harold Wilson, summarised the major problem of the world as he then saw it:

‘For the vast majority of mankind the most urgent problem is not war, or Communism, or the cost of living, or taxation. It is hunger. Over 1,500,000,000 people, something like two-thirds of the world’s population, are living in conditions of acute hunger, defined in terms of identifiable nutritional disease. This hunger is at the same time the effect and the cause of the poverty, squalor and misery in which they live.’

Its consequences are likewise understood. The correspondent of *The Wall Street Journal* previously quoted, underlines them:

‘... many diplomats and economists view the implications as overwhelmingly — and dangerously — political. Unless the present decline can be reversed, these analysts fear, the United States and other wealthy industrial powers of the West face the distinct possibility, in the
words of British economist Barbara Ward, “of a sort of international class war”.

What is lacking are any positive proposals for dealing with the situation. All that The Wall Street Journal’s correspondent can do is to point out that the traditional methods recommended for curing the evils are only likely to make the situation worse.

It has been argued that the developed nations should effectively assist the poorer parts of the world, and that the whole world should be turned into a Welfare State. However, there seems little prospect that anything of this sort could be achieved. The so-called ‘aid’ programmes to help backward economies represent, according to a rough U.N. estimate, only one half of one per cent of the total income of industrial countries. But when it comes to the prospect of increasing such aid the mood is one of pessimism:

‘A large school of thought holds that expanded share-the-wealth schemes are idealistic and impractical. This school contends climate, undeveloped human skills, lack of natural resources and other factors — not just lack of money — retard economic progress in many of these lands, and that the countries lack personnel
with the training or will to use vastly expanded aid effectively. Share-the-wealth schemes, according to this view, would be like pouring money down a bottomless well, weakening the donor nations without effectively curing the ills of the recipients.’

The absurdity of this argument is demonstrated by the fact that every one of the reasons quoted to prove why the less developed parts of the world cannot be developed applied equally strongly to the present developed countries in the period prior to their development. The argument is only true in this sense. The less developed world will not become developed through the goodwill or generosity of the developed powers. It can only become developed through a struggle against the external forces which have a vested interest in keeping it undeveloped.

Of these forces, neo-colonialism is, at this stage of history, the principal.

I propose to analyse neo-colonialism, first, by examining the state of the African continent and showing how neo-colonialism at the moment keeps it artificially poor. Next, I propose to show how in practice African Unity, which in itself can only be established by the defeat of neo-
colonialism, could immensely raise African living standards. From this beginning, I propose to examine neo-colonialism generally, first historically and then by a consideration of the great international monopolies whose continued stranglehold on the neo-colonial sectors of the world ensures the continuation of the system.

**Neo-Colonialism, the Last Stage of imperialism**

Kwame Nkrumah 1965

**The mechanisms of neo-colonialism**

IN order to halt foreign interference in the affairs of developing countries it is necessary to study, understand, expose and actively combat neo-colonialism in whatever guise it may appear. For the methods of neo-colonialists are subtle and varied. They operate not only in the economic field, but also in the political, religious, ideological and cultural spheres.

Faced with the militant peoples of the ex-colonial territories in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, imperialism simply switches tactics. Without a qualm it dispenses with its flags, and even with certain of its more hated expatriate officials. This means, so it claims, that it is ‘giving’ independence to its former subjects, to be followed
by ‘aid’ for their development. Under cover of such phrases, however, it devises innumerable ways to accomplish objectives formerly achieved by naked colonialism. It is this sum total of these modern attempts to perpetuate colonialism while at the same time talking about ‘freedom’, which has come to be known as neo-colonialism.

Foremost among the neo-colonialists is the United States, which has long exercised its power in Latin America. Fumblingly at first she turned towards Europe, and then with more certainty after world war two when most countries of that continent were indebted to her. Since then, with methodical thoroughness and touching attention to detail, the Pentagon set about consolidating its ascendancy, evidence of which can be seen all around the world.

Who really rules in such places as Great Britain, West Germany, Japan, Spain, Portugal or Italy? If General de Gaulle is ‘defecting’ from U.S. monopoly control, what interpretation can be placed on his ‘experiments’ in the Sahara desert, his paratroopers in Gabon, or his trips to Cambodia and Latin America?

Lurking behind such questions are the extended tentacles of the Wall Street octopus. And its suction cups and muscular strength are provided by a phenomenon dubbed ‘The
Invisible Government’, arising from Wall Street’s connection with the Pentagon and various intelligence services. I quote:

‘The Invisible Government ... is a loose amorphous grouping of individuals and agencies drawn from many parts of the visible government. It is not limited to the Central Intelligence Agency, although the CIA is at its heart. Nor is it confined to the nine other agencies which comprise what is known as the intelligence community: the National Security Council, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, Army Intelligence, Navy Intelligence and Research, the Atomic Energy Commission and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

‘The Invisible Government includes also many other units and agencies, as well as individuals, that appear outwardly to be a normal part of the conventional government. It even encompasses business firms and institutions that are seemingly private.

‘To an extent that is only beginning to be perceived, this shadow government is shaping the
lives of 190,000,000 Americans. An informed citizen might come to suspect that the foreign policy of the United States often works publicly in one direction and secretly through the Invisible Government in just the opposite direction.

‘This Invisible Government is a relatively new institution. It came into being as a result of two related factors: the rise of the United States after World War II to a position of pre-eminent world power, and the challenge to that power by Soviet Communism...

‘By 1964 the intelligence network had grown into a massive hidden apparatus, secretly employing about 200,000 persons and spending billions of dollars a year. [The Invisible Government, David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, Random House, New York, 1964.]

Here, from the very citadel of neo-colonialism, is a description of the apparatus which now directs all other Western intelligence set-ups either by persuasion or by force. Results were achieved in Algeria during the April 1961 plot of anti-de Gaulle generals; as also in Guatemala, Iraq, Iran, Suez and the famous U-2 spy intrusion of Soviet air space
which wrecked the approaching Summit, then in West Germany and again in East Germany in the riots of 1953, in Hungary’s abortive crisis of 1959, Poland’s of September 1956, and in Korea, Burma, Formosa, Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam; they are evident in the trouble in Congo (Leopoldville) which began with Lumumba’s murder, and continues till now; in events in Cuba, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, and in other places too numerous to catalogue completely.

And with what aim have these innumerable incidents occurred? The general objective has been mentioned: to achieve colonialism in fact while preaching independence.

On the economic front, a strong factor favouring Western monopolies and acting against the developing world is international capital’s control of the world market, as well as of the prices of commodities bought and sold there. From 1951 to 1961, without taking oil into consideration, the general level of prices for primary products fell by 33.1 per cent, while prices of manufactured goods rose 3.5 per cent (within which, machinery and equipment prices rose 31.3 per cent). In that same decade this caused a loss to the Asian, African and Latin American countries, using 1951 prices as a basis, of some $41,400 million. In the same period, while the
volume of exports from these countries rose, their earnings in foreign exchange from such exports decreased.

Another technique of neo-colonialism is the use of high rates of interest. Figures from the World Bank for 1962 showed that seventy-one Asian, African and Latin American countries owed foreign debts of some $27,000 million, on which they paid in interest and service charges some $5,000 million. Since then, such foreign debts have been estimated as more than £30,000 million in these areas. In 1961, the interest rates on almost three-quarters of the loans offered by the major imperialist powers amounted to more than five per cent, in some cases up to seven or eight per cent, while the call-in periods of such loans have been burdensomely short.

While capital worth $30,000 million was exported to some fifty-six developing countries between 1956 and 1962, ‘it is estimated that interest and profit alone extracted on this sum from the debtor countries amounted to more than £15,000 million. This method of penetration by economic aid recently soared into prominence when a number of countries began rejecting it. Ceylon, Indonesia and Cambodia are among those who turned it down. Such ‘aid’ is estimated on the annual average to have amounted to $2,600 million between 1951 and 1955; $4,007 million between 1956 and 1959, and
$6,000 million between 1960 and 1962. But the average sums taken out of the aided countries by such donors in a sample year, 1961, are estimated to amount to $5,000 million in profits, $1,000 million in interest, and $5,800 million from non-equivalent exchange, or a total of $11,800 million extracted against $6,000 million put in. Thus, ‘aid’ turns out to be another means of exploitation, a modern method of capital export under a more cosmetic name.

Still another neo-colonialist trap on the economic front has come to be known as ‘multilateral aid’ through international organisations: the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (known as the World Bank), the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Association are examples, all, significantly, having U.S. capital as their major backing. These agencies have the habit of forcing would-be borrowers to submit to various offensive conditions, such as supplying information about their economies, submitting their policy and plans to review by the World Bank and accepting agency supervision of their use of loans. As for the alleged development, between 1960 and mid-1963 the International Development Association promised a total of $500 million to
applicants, out of which only $70 million were actually received.

In more recent years, as pointed out by Monitor in *The Times*, 1 July 1965, there has been a substantial increase in communist technical and economic aid activities in developing countries. During 1964 the total amount of assistance offered was approximately £600 million. This was almost a third of the total communist aid given during the previous decade. The Middle East received about 40 per cent of the total, Asia 36 per cent, Africa 22 per cent and Latin America the rest.

Increased Chinese activity was responsible to some extent for the larger amount of aid offered in 1964, though China contributed only a quarter of the total aid committed; the Soviet Union provided a half, and the East European countries a quarter.

Although aid from socialist countries still falls far short of that offered from the west, it is often more impressive, since it is swift and flexible, and interest rates on communist loans are only about two per cent compared with five to six per cent charged on loans from western countries.

Nor is the whole story of ‘aid’ contained in figures, for there are conditions which hedge it around: the conclusion of
commerce and navigation treaties; agreements for economic co-operation; the right to meddle in internal finances, including currency and foreign exchange, to lower trade barriers in favour of the donor country’s goods and capital; to protect the interests of private investments; determination of how the funds are to be used; forcing the recipient to set up counterpart funds; to supply raw materials to the donor; and use of such funds a majority of it, in fact to buy goods from the donor nation. These conditions apply to industry, commerce, agriculture, shipping and insurance, apart from others which are political and military.

So-called ‘invisible trade’ furnishes the Western monopolies with yet another means of economic penetration. Over 90 per cent of world ocean shipping is controlled by me imperialist countries. They control shipping rates and, between 1951 and 1961, they increased them some five times in a total rise of about 60 per cent, the upward trend continuing. Thus, net annual freight expenses incurred by Asia, Africa and Latin America amount to no less than an estimated $1,600 million. This is over and above all other profits and interest payments. As for insurance payments, in 1961 alone these amounted to an unfavourable balance in
Asia, Africa and Latin America of some additional $370 million.

Having waded through all this, however, we have begun to understand only the basic methods of neo-colonialism. The full extent of its inventiveness is far from exhausted.

In the labour field, for example, imperialism operates through labour arms like the Social Democratic parties of Europe led by the British Labour Party, and through such instruments as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), now apparently being superseded by the New York Africa-American Labour Centre (AALC) under AFL-CIO chief George Meany and the well-known CIA man in labour’s top echelons, Irving Brown.

In 1945, out of the euphoria of anti-fascist victory, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) had been formed, including all world labour except the U.S. American Federation of Labor (AFL). By 1949, however, led by the British Trade Union Congress (TUC), a number of pro-imperialist labour bodies in the West broke away from the WFTU over the issue of anti-colonialist liberation, and set up the ICFTU.

For ten years it continued under British TUC leadership. Its record in Africa, Asia and Latin America could gratify only
the big international monopolies which were extracting super-profits from those areas.

In 1959, at Brussels, the United States AFL-CIO union centre fought for and won control of the ICFTU Executive Board. From then on a flood of typewriters, mimeograph machines, cars, supplies, buildings, salaries and, so it is still averred, outright bribes for labour leaders in various parts of the developing world rapidly linked ICFTU in the minds of the rank and file with the CIA. To such an extent did its prestige suffer under these American bosses that, in 1964, the AFL-CIO brains felt it necessary to establish a fresh outfit. They set up the AALC in New York right across the river from the United Nations.

‘As a steadfast champion of national independence, democracy and social justice’, unblushingly stated the April 1965 Bulletin put out by this Centre, ‘the AFL-CIO will strengthen its efforts to assist the advancement of the economic conditions of the African peoples. Toward this end, steps have been taken to expand assistance to the African free trade unions by organising the African-American Labour Centre. Such assistance will help African labour play a
vital role in the economic and democratic upbuilding of their countries.'

The March issue of this Bulletin, however, gave the game away: ‘In mobilising capital resources for investment in Workers Education, Vocational Training, Co-operatives, Health Clinics and Housing, the Centre will work with both private and public institutions. It will also encourage labour-management co-operation to expand American capital investment in the African nations.’ The italics are mine. Could anything be plainer?

Following a pattern previously set by the ICFTU, it has already started classes: one for drivers and mechanics in Nigeria, one in tailoring in Kenya. Labour scholarships are being offered to Africans who want to study trade unionism in of all places-Austria, ostensibly by the Austrian unions. Elsewhere, labour, organised into political parties of which the British Labour Party is a leading and typical example, has shown a similar aptitude for encouraging ‘Labour-management co-operation to expand . . . capital investment in African nations.'

But as the struggle sharpens, even these measures of neocolonialism are proving too mild. So Africa, Asia and Latin America have begun to experience a round of coups d'etat or
would-be coups, together with a series of political assassinations which have destroyed in their political primes some of the newly emerging nations best leaders. To ensure success in these endeavours, the imperialists have made widespread and wily use of ideological and cultural weapons in the form of intrigues, manoeuvres and slander campaigns.

Some of these methods used by neo-colonialists to slip past our guard must now be examined. The first is retention by the departing colonialists of various kinds of privileges which infringe on our sovereignty: that of setting up military bases or stationing troops in former colonies and the supplying of ‘advisers’ of one sort or another. Sometimes a number of ‘rights’ are demanded: land concessions, prospecting rights for minerals and/or oil; the ‘right’ to collect customs, to carry out administration, to issue paper money; to be exempt from customs duties and/or taxes for expatriate enterprises; and, above all, the ‘right’ to provide ‘aid’. Also demanded and granted are privileges in the cultural field; that Western information services be exclusive; and that those from socialist countries be excluded.

Even the cinema stories of fabulous Hollywood are loaded. One has only to listen to the cheers of an African audience as Hollywood’s heroes slaughter red Indians or Asiatics to
understand the effectiveness of this weapon. For, in the developing continents, where the colonialist heritage has left a vast majority still illiterate, even the smallest child gets the message contained in the blood and thunder stories emanating from California. And along with murder and the Wild West goes an incessant barrage of anti-socialist propaganda, in which the trade union man, the revolutionary, or the man of dark skin is generally cast as the villain, while the policeman, the gum-shoe, the Federal agent — in a word, the CIA — type spy is ever the hero. Here, truly, is the ideological under-belly of those political murders which so often use local people as their instruments.

While Hollywood takes care of fiction, the enormous monopoly press, together with the outflow of slick, clever, expensive magazines, attends to what it chooses to call ‘news. Within separate countries, one or two news agencies control the news handouts, so that a deadly uniformity is achieved, regardless of the number of separate newspapers or magazines; while internationally, the financial preponderance of the United States is felt more and more through its foreign correspondents and offices abroad, as well as through its influence over inter-national capitalist journalism. Under this guise, a flood of anti-liberation propaganda emanates from
the capital cities of the West, directed against China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Algeria, Ghana and all countries which hack out their own independent path to freedom. Prejudice is rife. For example, wherever there is armed struggle against the forces of reaction, the nationalists are referred to as rebels, terrorists, or frequently ‘communist terrorists’!

Perhaps one of the most insidious methods of the neo-colonialists is evangelism. Following the liberation movement there has been a veritable riptide of religious sects, the overwhelming majority of them American. Typical of these are Jehovah’s Witnesses who recently created trouble in certain developing countries by busily teaching their citizens not to salute the new national flags. ‘Religion’ was too thin to smother the outcry that arose against this activity, and a temporary lull followed. But the number of evangelists continues to grow.

Yet even evangelism and the cinema are only two twigs on a much bigger tree. Dating from the end of 1961, the U.S. has actively developed a huge ideological plan for invading the so-called Third World, utilising all its facilities from press and radio to Peace Corps.

During 1962 and 1963 a number of international conferences to this end were held in several places, such as
Nicosia in Cyprus, San Jose in Costa Rica, and Lagos in Nigeria. Participants included the CIA, the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), the Pentagon, the International Development Agency, the Peace Corps and others. Programmes were drawn up which included the systematic use of U.S. citizens abroad in virtual intelligence activities and propaganda work. Methods of recruiting political agents and of forcing ‘alliances’ with the U.S.A. were worked out. At the centre of its programmes lay the demand for an absolute U.S. monopoly in the field of propaganda, as well as for counteracting any independent efforts by developing states in the realm of information.

The United States sought, and still seeks, with considerable success, to co-ordinate on the basis of its own strategy the propaganda activities of all Western countries. In October 1961, a conference of NATO countries was held in Rome to discuss problems of psychological warfare. It appealed for the organisation of combined ideological operations in Afro-Asian countries by all participants.

In May and June 1962 a seminar was convened by the U.S. in Vienna on ideological warfare. It adopted a secret decision to engage in a propaganda offensive against the developing countries along lines laid down by the U.S.A. It was agreed
that NATO propaganda agencies would, in practice if not in the public eye, keep in close contact with U.S. Embassies in their respective countries.

Among instruments of such Western psychological warfare are numbered the intelligence agencies of Western countries headed by those of the United States ‘Invisible Government’. But most significant among them all are Moral Re-Armament (MRA), the Peace Corps and the United States Information Agency (USIA).

Moral Re-Armament is an organisation founded in 1938 by the American, Frank Buchman. In the last days before the second world war, it advocated the appeasement of Hitler, often extolling Himmler, the Gestapo chief. In Africa, MRA incursions began at the end of World War II. Against the big anti-colonial upsurge that followed victory in 1945, MRA spent millions advocating collaboration between the forces oppressing the African peoples and those same peoples. It is not without significance that Moise Tshombe and Joseph Kasavubu of Congo (Leopoldville) are both MRA supporters. George Seldes, in his book One Thousand Americans, characterised MRA as a fascist organisation ‘subsidised by . . . Fascists, and with a long record of collaboration with Fascists the world over. . . .’ This description is supported by
the active participation in MRA of people like General Carpentier, former commander of NATO land forces, and General Ho Ying-chin, one of Chiang Kai-shek’s top generals. To cap this, several newspapers, some of them in the Western world, have claimed that MRA is actually subsidised by the CIA.

When MRA’s influence began to fail, some new instrument to cover the ideological arena was desired. It came in the establishment of the American Peace Corps in 1961 by President John Kennedy, with Sargent Shriver, Jr., his brother-in-law, in charge. Shriver, a millionaire who made his pile in land speculation in Chicago, was also known as the friend, confidant and co-worker of the former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen Dulles. These two had worked together in both the Office of Strategic Services, U.S. war-time intelligence agency, and in the CIA.

Shriver’s record makes a mockery of President Kennedy’s alleged instruction to Shriver to ‘keep the CIA out of the Peace Corps’. So does the fact that, although the Peace Corps is advertised as a voluntary organisation, all its members are carefully screened by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
Since its creation in 1961, members of the Peace Corps have been exposed and expelled from many African, Middle Eastern and Asian countries for acts of subversion or prejudice. Indonesia, Tanzania, the Philippines, and even pro-West countries like Turkey and Iran, have complained of its activities.

However, perhaps the chief executor of U.S. psychological warfare is the United States Information Agency (USIA). Even for the wealthiest nation on earth, the U.S. lavishes an unusual amount of men, materials and money on this vehicle for its neo-colonial aims.

The USIA is staffed by some 12,000 persons to the tune of more than $130 million a year. It has more than seventy editorial staffs working on publications abroad. Of its network comprising 110 radio stations, 60 are outside the U.S. Programmes are broadcast for Africa by American stations in Morocco, Eritrea, Liberia, Crete, and Barcelona, Spain, as well as from off-shore stations on American ships. In Africa alone, the USIA transmits about thirty territorial and national radio programmes whose content glorifies the U.S. while attempting to discredit countries with an independent foreign policy.
The USIA boasts more than 120 branches in about 100 countries, 50 of which are in Africa alone. It has 250 centres in foreign countries, each of which is usually associated with a library. It employs about 200 cinemas and 8,000 projectors which draw upon its nearly 300 film libraries.

This agency is directed by a central body which operates in the name of the U.S. President, planning and coordinating its activities in close touch with the Pentagon, CIA and other Cold War agencies, including even armed forces intelligence centres.

In developing countries, the USIA actively tries to prevent expansion of national media of information so as itself to capture the market-place of ideas. It spends huge sums for publication and distribution of about sixty newspapers and magazines in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The American government backs the USIA through direct pressures on developing nations. To ensure its agency a complete monopoly in propaganda, for instance, many agreements for economic co-operation offered by the U.S. include a demand that Americans be granted preferential rights to disseminate information. At the same time, in trying to close the new nations to other sources of information, it employs other pressures. For instance, after agreeing to set
up USIA information centres in their countries, both Togo and Congo (Leopoldville) originally hoped to follow a non-aligned path and permit Russian information centres as a balance. But Washington threatened to stop all aid, thereby forcing these two countries to renounce their plan.

Unbiased studies of the USIA by such authorities as Dr R. Holt of Princeton University, Retired Colonel R. Van de Velde, former intelligence agents Murril Dayer, Wilson Dizard and others, have all called attention to the close ties between this agency and U.S. Intelligence. For example, Deputy Director Donald M. Wilson was a political intelligence agent in the U.S. Army. Assistant Director for Europe, Joseph Philips, was a successful espionage agent in several Eastern European countries.

Some USIA duties further expose its nature as a top intelligence arm of the U.S. imperialists. In the first place, it is expected to analyse the situation in each country, making recommendations to its Embassy, thereby to its Government, about changes that can tip the local balance in U.S. favour. Secondly, it organises networks of monitors for radio broadcasts and telephone conversations, while recruiting informers from government offices. It also hires people to distribute U.S. propaganda. Thirdly, it collects secret
information with special reference to defence and economy, as a means of eliminating its international military and economic competitors. Fourthly, it buys its way into local publications to influence their policies, of which Latin America furnishes numerous examples. It has been active in bribing public figures, for example in Kenya and Tunisia. Finally, it finances, directs and often supplies with arms all anti-neutralist forces in the developing countries, witness Tshombe in Congo (Leopoldville) and Pak Hung Ji in South Korea. In a word, with virtually unlimited finances, there seems no bounds to its inventiveness in subversion.

One of the most recent developments in neo-colonialist strategy is the suggested establishment of a Businessmen Corps which will, like the Peace Corps, act in developing countries. In an article on ‘U.S. Intelligence and the Monopolies’ in International Affairs (Moscow, January 1965), V. Chernyavsky writes: ‘There can hardly be any doubt that this Corps is a new U.S. intelligence organisation created on the initiative of the American monopolies to use Big Business for espionage. It is by no means unusual for U.S. Intelligence to set up its own business firms which are merely thinly disguised espionage centres. For example, according to Chernyavsky, the C.I.A. has set up a firm in
Taiwan known as Western Enterprises Inc. Under this cover it sends spies and saboteurs to South China. The New Asia Trading Company, a CIA firm in India, has also helped to camouflage U.S. intelligence agents operating in South-east Asia.

Such is the catalogue of neo-colonialism’s activities and methods in our time. Upon reading it, the faint-hearted might come to feel that they must give up in despair before such an array of apparent power and seemingly inexhaustible resources.

Fortunately, however, history furnishes innumerable proofs of one of its own major laws; that the budding future is always stronger than the withering past. This has been amply demonstrated during every major revolution throughout history.

The American Revolution of 1776 struggled through to victory over a tangle of inefficiency, mismanagement, corruption, outright subversion and counter-revolution the like of which has been repeated to some degree in every subsequent revolution to date.

The Russian Revolution during the period of Intervention, 1917 to 1922, appeared to be dying on its feet. The Chinese Revolution at one time was forced to pull out of its existing
bases, lock stock and barrel, and make the unprecedented Long March; yet it triumphed. Imperialist white mercenaries who dropped so confidently out of the skies on Stanleyville after a plane trip from Ascension Island thought that their job would be ‘duck soup’. Yet, till now, the nationalist forces of Congo (Leopoldville) continue to fight their way forward. They do not talk of if they will win, but only of when.

Asia provides a further example of the strength of a people’s will to determine their own future. In South Vietnam ‘special warfare’ is being fought to hold back the tide of revolutionary change. ‘Special warfare’ is a concept of General Maxwell Taylor and a military extension of the creed of John Foster Dulles: let Asians fight Asians. Briefly, the technique is for the foreign power to supply the money, aircraft, military equipment of all kinds, and the strategic and tactical command from a General Staff down to officer ‘advisers’, while the troops of the puppet government bear the brunt of the fighting. Yet in spite of bombing raids and the immense build-up of foreign strength in the area, the people of both North and South Vietnam are proving to be unconquerable.

In other parts of Asia, in Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, and now the Philippines, Thailand and Burma, the peoples of ex-
colonial countries have stood firm and are winning battles against the allegedly superior imperialist enemy. In Latin America, despite ‘final’ punitive expeditions, the growing armed insurrections in Colombia, Venezuela and other countries continue to consolidate gains.

In Africa, we in Ghana have withstood all efforts by imperialism and its agents; Tanzania has nipped subversive plots in the bud, as have Brazzaville, Uganda and Kenya. The struggle rages back and forth. The surging popular forces may still be hampered by colonialist legacies, but nonetheless they advance inexorably.

All these examples prove beyond doubt that neo-colonialism is not a sign of imperialism’s strength but rather of its last hideous gasp. It testifies to its inability to rule any longer by old methods. Independence is a luxury it can no longer afford to permit its subject peoples, so that even what it claims to have ‘given’ it now seeks to take away.

This means that neo-colonialism can and will be defeated. How can this be done?

Thus far, all the methods of neo-colonialists have pointed in one direction, the ancient, accepted one of all minority ruling classes throughout history — divide and rule.
Quite obviously, therefore, *unity* is the first requisite for destroying neo-colonialism. Primary and basic is the need for an all-union government on the much divided continent of Africa. Along with that, a strengthening of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation and the spirit of Bandung is already under way. To it, we must seek the adherence on an increasingly formal basis of our Latin American brothers.

Furthermore, all these liberatory forces have, on all major issues and at every possible instance, the support of the growing socialist sector of the world.

Finally, we must encourage and utilise to the full those still all too few yet growing instances of support for liberation and anti-colonialism inside the imperialist world itself.

To carry out such a political programme, we must all back it with national plans designed to strengthen ourselves as independent nations. An external condition for such independent development is neutrality or *political non-alignment*. This has been expressed in two conferences of Non-Aligned Nations during the recent past, the last of which, in Cairo in 1964, clearly and inevitably showed itself at one with the rising forces of liberation and human dignity.

And the preconditions for all this, to which lip service is often paid but activity seldom directed, is to develop
ideological clarity among the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, pro-liberation masses of our continents. They, and they alone, make, maintain or break revolutions.

With the utmost speed, neo-colonialism must be analysed in clear and simple terms for the full mass understanding by the surging organisations of the African peoples. The All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF) has already made a start in this direction, while the Pan-African Youth Movement, the women, journalists, farmers and others are not far behind. Bolstered with ideological clarity, these organisations, closely linked with the ruling parties where liberatory forces are in power, will prove that neo-colonialism is the symptom of imperialism’s weakness and that it is defeatable. For, when all is said and done, it is the so-called little man, the bent-backed, exploited, malnourished, blood-covered fighter for independence who decides. And he invariably decides for freedom.

**Neo-Colonialism, the Last Stage of imperialism**

**Kwame Nkrumah 1965**

**Conclusion**

IN the Introduction I attempted to set out the dilemma now facing the world. The conflict between rich and poor in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the
twentieth, which was fought out between the rich and the poor in the developed nations of the world ended in a compromise. Capitalism as a system disappeared from large areas of the world, but where socialism was established it was in its less developed rather than its more developed parts and, in fact, the revolt against capitalism had its greatest successes in those areas where early neo-colonialism had been most actively practised. In the industrially more developed countries, capitalism, far from disappearing, became infinitely stronger. This strength was only achieved by the sacrifice of two principles which had inspired early capitalism, namely the subjugation of the working classes within each individual country and the exclusion of the State from any say in the control of capitalist enterprise.

By abandoning these two principles and substituting for them ‘welfare states’ based on high working-class living standards and on a State-regulated capitalism at home, the developed countries succeeded in exporting their internal problem and transferring the conflict between rich and poor from the national to the international stage.

Marx had argued that the development of capitalism would produce a crisis within each individual capitalist State because within each State the gap between the ‘haves’ and
the ‘have-nots’ would widen to a point where a conflict was inevitable and that it would be the capitalists who would be defeated. The basis of his argument is not invalidated by the fact that the conflict, which he had predicted as a national one, did not everywhere take place on a national scale but has been transferred instead to the world stage. World capitalism has postponed its crisis but only at the cost of transforming it into an international crisis. The danger is now not civil war within individual States provoked by intolerable conditions within those States, but international war provoked ultimately by the misery of the majority of mankind who daily grow poorer and poorer.

When Africa becomes economically free and politically united, the monopolists will come face to face with their own working class in their own countries, and a new struggle will arise within which the liquidation and collapse of imperialism will be complete.

As this book has attempted to show, in the same way as the internal crisis of capitalism within the developed world arose through the uncontrolled action of national capital, so a greater crisis is being provoked today by similar uncontrolled action of international capitalism in the developing parts of the world. Before the problem can be solved it must at least
be understood. It cannot be resolved merely by pretending that neo-colonialism does not exist. It must be realised that the methods at present employed to solve the problem of world poverty are not likely to yield any result other than to extend the crisis.

Speaking in 1951, the then President of the United States, Mr Truman, said, ‘The only kind of war we seek is the good old fight against man’s ancient enemies. . . poverty, disease, hunger and illiteracy.’ Sentiments of a similar nature have been re-echoed by all political leaders in the developed world but the stark fact remains: whatever wars may have been won since 1951, none of them is the war against poverty, disease, hunger and illiteracy. However little other types of war have been deliberately sought, they are the only ones which have been waged. Nothing is gained by assuming that those who express such views are insincere. The position of the leaders of the developed capitalist countries of the world are, in relation to the great neo-colonialist international combines, very similar to that which Lord Macaulay described as existing between the directors of the East India Company and their agent, Warren Hastings, who, in the eighteenth century, engaged in the wholesale plunder of India. Macaulay wrote:
‘The Directors, it is true, never enjoined or applauded any crime. Far from it. Whoever examines their letters written at the time will find there are many just and humane sentiments, many excellent precepts, in short, an admirable code of political ethics. But each exultation is modified or nullified by a demand for money. . . . We by no means accuse or suspect those who framed these dispatches of hypocrisy. It is probable that, written 15,000 miles from the place where their orders were to be carried into effect, they never perceived the gross inconsistency of which they were guilty. But the inconsistency was at once manifest to their lieutenant in Calcutta.

‘... Hastings saw that it was absolutely necessary for him to disregard either the moral discourses or the pecuniary requisitions of his employers. Being forced to disobey them in something, he had to consider what kind of disobedience they would most readily pardon; and he correctly judged that the safest course would be to neglect the sermons and to find the rupees.'
Today the need both to maintain a welfare state, i.e. a parasite State at home, and to support a huge and ever-growing burden of armament costs makes it absolutely essential for developed capitalist countries to secure the maximum return in profit from such parts of the international financial complex as they control. However much private capitalism is exhorted to bring about rapid development and a rising standard of living in the less developed areas of the world, those who manipulate the system realise the inconsistency between doing this and producing at the same time the funds necessary to maintain the sinews of war and the welfare state at home. They know when it comes to the issue they will be excused if they fail to provide for a world-wide rise in the standard of living. They know they will never be forgiven it they betray the system and produce a crisis at home which either destroys the affluent State or interferes with its military preparedness.

Appeals to capitalism to work out a cure for the division of the world into rich and poor are likely to have no better result than the appeals of the Directors of the East India Company to Warren Hastings to ensure social justice in India. Faced with a choice, capitalism, like Hastings, will come down on the side of exploitation.
Is there then no method of avoiding the inevitable world conflict occasioned by an international class war? To accept that world conflict is inevitable is to reject any belief in co-existence or in the policy of non-alignment as practised at present by many of the countries attempting to escape from neo-colonialism. A way out is possible.

To start with, for the first time in human history the potential material resources of the world are so great that there is no need for there to be rich and poor. It is only the organisation to deploy these potential resources that is lacking. Effective world pressure can force such a redeployment, but world pressure is not exercised by appeals, however eloquent, or by arguments, however convincing. It is only achieved by deeds. It is necessary to secure a world realignment so that those who are at the moment the helpless victims of a system will be able in the future to exert a counter pressure. Such counter pressures do not lead to war. On the contrary, it is often their absence which constitutes the threat to peace.

A parallel can be drawn with the methods by which direct colonialism was ended. No imperial power has ever granted independence to a colony unless the forces were such that no other course was possible, and there are many instances
where independence was only achieved by a war of liberation, but there are many other instances when no such war occurred. The very organisation of the forces of independence within the colony was sufficient to convince the imperial power that resistance to independence would be impossible or that the political and economic consequences of a colonial war outweighed any advantage to be gained by retaining the colony.

In the earlier chapters of this book I have set out the argument for African unity and have explained how this unity would destroy neo-colonialism in Africa. In later chapters I have explained how strong is the world position of those who profit from neo-colonialism. Nevertheless, African unity is something which is within the grasp of the African people. The foreign firms who exploit our resources long ago saw the strength to be gained from acting on a Pan-African scale. By means of interlocking directorships, cross-shareholdings and other devices, groups of apparently different companies have formed, in fact, one enormous capitalist monopoly. The only effective way to challenge this economic empire and to recover possession of our heritage, is for us also to act on a Pan-African basis, through a Union Government.
No one would suggest that if all the peoples of Africa combined to establish their unity their decision could be revoked by the forces of neo-colonialism. On the contrary, faced with a new situation, those who practise neo-colonialism would adjust themselves to this new balance of world forces in exactly the same way as the capitalist world has in the past adjusted itself to any other change in the balance of power.

The danger to world peace springs not from the action of those who seek to end neo-colonialism but from the inaction of those who allow it to continue. To argue that a third world war is not inevitable is one thing, to suppose that it can be avoided by shutting our eyes to the development of a situation likely to produce it is quite another matter.

If world war is not to occur it must be prevented by positive action. This positive action is within the power of the peoples of those areas of the world which now suffer under neocolonialism but it is only within their power if they act at once, with resolution and in unity.

*Governance in Africa, says the Chairman of the South Commission, must be improved for the continent's countries and people to build real freedom and real development.*
However, his definition of good governance is different from the one used by the rich countries in meting out aid to poor nations.

A few years ago, I attended a meeting of the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA) in Harare, Zimbabwe. It was chaired by the former President of Botswana, Masire, and attended by a substantial number of African Heads of State. From outside Africa, it was attended by the two Co-Chairmen of the GCA, Robert MacNamara from the United States and Ian Pronk from the Netherlands, and a large number of officials from the donor community.

At a certain point in the course of the discussion, the question of good governance in Africa came up. But it came up as a condition of giving aid to African countries. The manner of the discussion and the fact that this was an exchange between African Heads of State and officials from rich countries made me livid with anger.

**Notion of the 'Deserving Poor'**

It reminded me of the social history of Great Britain before the advent of the welfare state. The extremes of individual or family poverty within that country were dealt with through the philanthropy of rich persons to whom such human misery was unbearable. But their charity was given only to those
they regarded as the 'deserving poor'. This, in practice, meant that it was given only to those people regarded by the philanthropist as having demonstrated an acceptance of the social and economic status quo - and for as long as they did so.

As the world's powerful nations have not (as yet) accepted the principle of international welfare, they apply the same 'deserving poor' notion to the reality of poverty outside their own countries. 'Aid' and non-commercial credit are regarded not as springing from the principles of human rights or international solidarity, regardless of national borders, but as charity extended as a matter of altruism by richer governments to the less developed and very poor nations. However, the quantity of this 'official' charity being increasingly inadequate to meet the most obvious needs, one of the criteria for a nation being classified as among the world's 'deserving poor' came to be having 'good governance' as defined by the donor community.

And in practice that phrase meant and means those countries having multi-party systems of democracy, economies based on the principle of private ownership and of international free trade and a good record of human rights: again as defined by the industrialised market economy
countries of the North. It was in this kind of context that we in Africa first heard about 'good governance'; and this was the manner in which it was brought up at the Harare meeting to which I have referred.

It was this aid-related discussion of good governance, a matter between aid givers and aid seekers, and the arrogant and patronising manner in which it was raised by the aid givers, that discredited the whole subject in the eyes of many of us in Africa and other parts of the South. For used in this manner, good governance sounded like a tool for neo-colonialism. We have therefore tended to despise the concept even as, out of necessity, we try to qualify under it.

I am very far from being alone in rejecting neo-colonialism regardless of the methods adopted to bring it about or to enforce it or to define it! Yet we cannot avoid the fact that a lot of our problems in Africa arise from bad governance. I believe that we need to improve governance everywhere in Africa in order to enable our people to build real freedom and real development for themselves and their countries. And I allowed myself to be persuaded to be a 'convenor' of this Conference on Governance in Africa because I believe that it provides an opportunity for us to understand more about our past political and economic policy mistakes and see how we
can improve the management of our affairs as we grope towards the 21st century.

**Government vs Governance**

Governments bear the final responsibility for the state of the nation - its internal and external peace, and the well-being of its people. It is the distinction between the words 'governance' and 'government' which draws attention to the reality that, despite its enforcement agencies, government (in the sense of the executive authority) is not the sole determinant of whether those responsibilities are fulfilled. For there are always other forces within a country which, in practice, can help or hinder the effectiveness of a government, and which it therefore ignores at its peril.

Government is an instrument of State. Today there is a call, emanating from the North, for the weakening of the State. In my view, Africa should ignore this call. Our States are so weak and anaemic already that it would almost amount to a crime to weaken them further. We have a duty to strengthen the African States in almost every aspect you can think of; one of the objectives of improving the governance of our countries is to strengthen the African State and thus enable it to serve the people of Africa better.
One result of weakening the State can be observed in Somalia. There are many potential Somalias in Africa if we heed the Northern call to weaken the State. In any case, dieting and other slimming exercises are appropriate for the opulent who over-eat, but very inappropriate for the emaciated and starving!

Incidentally, the world has changed indeed! The withering of the State used to be the ultimate objective of good Marxists. Today the weakening of the State is the immediate objective of free-marketeers!

In advocating a strong State, I am not advocating an overburdened State, nor a State with a bloated bureaucracy. To advocate for a strong State is to advocate for a State which, among other things, has power to act on behalf of the people in accordance with their wishes. And in a market economy, with its law of the jungle, we need a State that has the capacity to intervene on behalf of the weak.

No State is really strong unless its government has the full consent of at least the majority of its people; and it is difficult to envisage how that consent can be obtained outside democracy. So a call for a strong State is not a call for dictatorship either. Indeed all dictatorships are basically
weak; because the means they apply in governance make them inherently unstable.

The key to a government's effectiveness and its ability to lead the nation lies in a combination of three elements. First its closeness to its people, and its responsiveness to their needs and demands; in other words, democracy. Secondly, its ability to coordinate and bring into a democratic balance the many functional and often competing sectional institutions which groups of people have created to serve their particular interests. And thirdly, the efficiency of the institutions (official and unofficial) by means of which its decisions are made known and implemented throughout the country.

**Ingredients for Democracy**

It goes without saying that all of the institutions must be rooted in and appropriate to the society to which they are applied. The machinery through which a government stays close to the people and the people close to their government will differ according to the history, the demographic distribution, the traditional culture (or cultures), and the prevailing international political and economic environment in which it has to operate. For 'democracy' means much more than voting on the basis of adult suffrage every few years; it
means (among other things) attitudes of toleration, and willingness to cooperate with others on terms of equality.

An essential ingredient in democracy is that it is based on the equality of all the people within a nation's boundary, and that all the laws of the land apply to all adults without exception. The nation's constitution must provide methods by which the people can, without recourse to violence, control the government which emerges in accordance with it and even specify the means for its own amendment. In shorthand, the constitution itself must be based on the principles of the rule of law.

It is inevitably the government which is responsible for upholding the role of law within the State. This, together with the making of laws, is one of the most important of its responsibilities to the people. But the government itself is subject to the constitution. All heads of state swear to honour and protect the constitution. this is as it should be; for the constitution is the supreme law of the land. We cannot respect ordinary laws of the State if we do not respect the constitution under which they were promulgated. A scrupulous respect for the constitution is the basis of the principle of the rule of law.
This is an area where we need to be very careful. Presidents, prime ministers, and sometimes all members of a government, seek to amend a constitution in their own favour even when they come to office through, and because of, the provisions of a constitution which they have sworn to honour.

Too often, for example, we have seen presidents seek to lengthen the number of terms they serve, despite the limit laid down in the constitution. This practice is wrong. It cheapens the constitution of the country concerned.

If and when experience shows that the restriction laid down in the constitution is too restrictive and needs to be changed (which in my view should be very very rare), the change should not lengthen the term of the current office-holder, who is bound in honour to observe the restriction under which he or she was elected in the first place. And in any case, and more importantly, the first president to be elected under a restricted term of office must never change the constitution to lengthen that term. If he or she does it, it is difficult to see how subsequent presidents can honour the new restriction.

Furthermore, if the provision of a limited term of office irks one president or prime minister, another provision of the
constitution could irk another president or prime minister. We might then expect the constitution of the country to be changed after every general election. This is a point which in my view needs great emphasis. No Respect for the Constitution leads to No Basis for the Rule of Law.

About the nature of government machinery - vitally important as that is to the maintenance (or establishment) of peace, justice, and the people's well-being - I need say little. A number of the previously circulated papers provide an excellent basis for serious consideration of this topic and its manifold implications for good governance. I would, however, like to emphasise one or two related points.

**Costs of Democracy**

All the institutions and processes of democracy and democratic administration cost a great deal of money to establish, to maintain, and to operate. That applies equally to official and spontaneous unofficial institutions - and to cooperation among them.

Further, to be effective all such structures rely heavily upon the existence of a politically conscious civil society, which is active, organised and alert. Such a civil society will have a good understanding about the existence and functions of the different institutions, and about both their powers and the
constitutional limits to their power. Dictators generally prefer an ignorant and passive or malleable population. It is easier to manipulate such a population and parade the result as Peoples' Participation.

Yet Africa is at present poverty-stricken. I am the first to admit that a country does not have to be rich in order to be democratic. But a minimum amount of resources is needed in order to meet some minimum requirements of good governance. In Africa today, even the high echelons of the civil service receive salaries inadequate to keep a family for a month, and the minimum wage is derisory; and all salaries (especially of teachers and health workers) are frequently delayed. Nor have the people in general been the beneficiaries at any time of a well-organised education system directed at enlarging public understanding of and active participation in modern democratic institutions and processes.

Poverty is an enemy of good governance, for persistent poverty is a destabiliser, especially if such poverty is shared in a grossly unequal manner, or is widely regarded as being unfairly distributed as the few who are relatively rich indulge in conspicuous consumption. Known or suspected corruption among the political leaders often makes the problem worse -
and corruption throughout the society more difficult to overcome. Good wages or salaries will not stop bad people from being corrupt; but miserable wages and salaries are not conducive to rectitude. Political instability, real or imagined, can be a source, and is often used as an excuse, for bad governance.

**Corruption**

But to say this is very different from saying that because Africa is poor, Africans do not deserve good governance. This continent is not distinguished for its good governance of the peoples of Africa. But without good governance, we cannot eradicate poverty; for no corrupt government is interested in the eradication of poverty; on the contrary, and as we have seen in many parts of Africa and elsewhere, widespread corruption in high places breed poverty.

Nor in saying this am I asking readers to accept the widespread belief that Africa has more corrupt, tyrannical, and power-hungry elites, than have other continents either now or historically. While avoiding the living and naming only a few of the dead, it is surely easy to see, in the past 75 years alone, our Mobutus, Iddi Amins, Bokassas, and military juntas, of Europe and elsewhere.
In all European countries where the term of office is not limited by the constitution, my fellow politicians there pride themselves on how long or how short they remain in power. The trouble is that our Amins and Bokassas and Mobutus are Africans; but the Francos, Hitlers and Mussolinis are Spanish, Germans or Italians; and Africa played no role in putting them in power.

Rather than conduct a post-mortem, we should try to help Africa and African countries to move forward from where we are now by addressing the central issue of building and strengthening the institutional framework of our continent and its countries. In doing so, to face the realities of Africa - all of them.

Those internal, where our theoretically sovereign nations find their freedom to act is obstructed by the depth of our poverty and technological backwardness. And those realities external to us and beyond our control, in relation to which we are like a collection of pygmies in a world where giants stalk, and from where modern and constantly changing technology floods outwards over the world like an irresistible tide.

**The Ignored Truth**

Most countries of Africa are now once again 'coping' with the worst of their economic problems, and some are making
well-based progress towards better living conditions for their people. We hear little about such difficult triumphs over adversity in the context of such things as international recessions and violent changes in primary commodity prices.

Most of our countries are now living in a state of internal peace, and a peace which is deepening; we do not hear such peace unless it is broken. Despite the artificial and often unclear national borders of Africa, our States have very largely avoided violent conflict among themselves. Despite the histories of other continents, that accomplishment is ignored - even within Africa.

And although this important success has been achieved largely through the work of the Organisation of African Unity (which African States themselves established), the media and the international community generally refer to the OAU with derision - if at all. Our children's expectation of life, and all that those statistics imply, has greatly improved - except where countries became the direct or indirect surrogates in Cold War conflicts, or were for other special reasons among the countries involved in prolonged civil strife.

Africa does now have a core of highly educated and internationally recognised experts in different fields. Given
the number of technically and professionally educated Africans in our countries at independence, and the paucity of secondary or tertiary educational institutions at that time, the number of high-calibre experts in Africa is now much larger than could reasonably have been expected after this lapse of time. Perhaps we are misusing them, but they are there now. At independence, some of our countries had no trained people at all.

Finally, good or bad, the first generation of our leaders is fast being replaced by the second or even the third; most of these are better-educated, relatively free from the mental hang-overs of colonialism, and have had the opportunity to learn from the mistakes and the successes of their predecessors. With the help of work done at different fora, I am confident that African States, individually and in cooperation with one another, can step by step and in an ordered fashion, move towards Good Governance.

The OAU exists and assists in the maintenance or restoration of peace and cooperation within Africa, even if it too is severely weakened in action and capacity by its lack of resources. Some sub-regional organisations are making limited but useful contributions to stability, peace and economic progress in their respective areas.
The machinery of government and of unofficial institutions within African States can facilitate or hinder movement towards greater intra-African cooperation. And in addition, the all-African institutions, as well as those working on a sub-regional basis, may well be able to benefit by it - provided the actors bear in mind the prospective importance of the role these intra-African institutions can play in strengthening us all. - Third World Network Features

If any of us came to Cuba with doubts in our mind about the solidity, strength, maturity and vitality of the Cuban Revolution, these doubts have been removed by what we have been able to see. Our hearts are now warmed by an unshakeable certainty which gives us courage in the difficult but glorious struggle against the common enemy: no power in the world will be able to destroy this Cuban Revolution, which is creating in the countryside and in the towns not only a new life but also — and even more important — a New Man, fully conscious of his national, continental and international rights and duties. In every field of activity the Cuban people have made major progress during the last seven years, particularly in 1965, Year of Agriculture.
We believe that this constitutes a particular lesson for the national liberation movements, especially for those who want their national revolution to be a true revolution. Some people have not failed to note that a certain number of Cubans, albeit an insignificant minority, have not shared the joys and hopes of the celebrations for the seventh anniversary because they are against the Revolution. It is possible that others will not be present at the celebrations of the eighth anniversary, but we would like to state that we consider the ‘open door’ policy for enemies of the Revolution to be a lesson in courage, determination, humanity and confidence in the people, another political and moral victory over the enemy; and to those who are worried, in a spirit of friendship, about the dangers which may be involved in this exodus, we guarantee that we, the peoples of the countries of Africa, still completely dominated by Portuguese colonialism, are prepared to send to Cuba as many men and women as may be needed to compensate for the departure of those who for reasons of class or of inability to adapt have interests or attitudes which are incompatible with the interests of the Cuban people. Taking once again the formerly hard and tragic path of our ancestors (mainly from Guinea and Angola) who were taken to Cuba as slaves, we would come
now as free men, as willing workers and Cuban patriots, to fulfill a productive function in this new, just and multi-racial society, and to help and defend with our own lives the victories of the Cuban people. Thus we would strengthen both all the bonds of history, blood and culture which unite our peoples with the Cuban people, and the spontaneous giving of oneself, the deep joy and infectious rhythm which make the construction of socialism in Cuba a new phenomenon for the world, a unique and, for many, unaccustomed event.

We are not going to use this platform to rail against imperialism. An African saying very common in our country says: “When your house is burning, it’s no use beating the tom-toms.” On a Tricontinental level, this means that we are not going to eliminate imperialism by shouting insults against it. For us, the best or worst shout against imperialism, whatever its form, is to take up arms and fight. This is what we are doing, and this is what we will go on doing until all foreign domination of our African homelands has been totally eliminated.

Our agenda includes subjects whose meaning and importance are beyond question and which show a fundamental preoccupation with struggle. We note, however,
that one form of struggle which we consider to be fundamental has not been explicitly mentioned in this programme, although we are certain that it was present in the minds of those who drew up the programme. We refer here to the struggle against our own weaknesses. Obviously, other cases differ from that of Guinea; but our experience has shown us that in the general framework of daily struggle this battle against ourselves — no matter what difficulties the enemy may create — is the most difficult of all, whether for the present or the future of our peoples. This battle is the expression of the internal contradictions in the economic, social, cultural (and therefore historical) reality of each of our countries. We are convinced that any national or social revolution which is not based on knowledge of this fundamental reality runs grave risk of being condemned to failure.

When the African peoples say in their simple language that “no matter how hot the water from your well, it will not cook your rice,” they express with singular simplicity a fundamental principle, not only of physics, but also of political science. We know that the development of a phenomenon in movement, whatever its external appearance, depends mainly on its internal characteristics. We also know
that on the political level our own reality — however fine and attractive the reality of others may be — can only be transformed by detailed knowledge of it, by our own efforts, by our own sacrifices. It is useful to recall in this Tricontinental gathering, so rich in experience and example, that however great the similarity between our various cases and however identical our enemies, national liberation and social revolution are not exportable commodities; they are, and increasingly so every day, the outcome of local and national elaboration, more or less influenced by external factors (be they favorable or unfavorable) but essentially determined and formed by the historical reality of each people, and carried to success by the overcoming or correct solution of the internal contradictions between the various categories characterising this reality. The success of the Cuban revolution, taking place only 90 miles from the greatest imperialist and anti-socialist power of all time, seems to us, in its content and its way of evolution, to be a practical and conclusive illustration of the validity of this principle.

However we must recognize that we ourselves and the other liberation movements in general (referring here above all to the African experience) have not managed to pay
sufficient attention to this important problem of our common struggle.

The ideological deficiency, not to say the total lack of ideology, within the national liberation movements — which is basically due to ignorance of the historical reality which these movements claim to transform — constitutes one of the greatest weaknesses of our struggle against imperialism, if not the greatest weakness of all. We believe, however, that a sufficient number of different experiences has already been accumulated to enable us to define a general line of thought and action with the aim of eliminating this deficiency. A full discussion of this subject could be useful, and would enable this conference to make a valuable contribution towards strengthening the present and future actions of the national liberation movements. This would be a concrete way of helping these movements, and in our opinion no less important than political support or financial assistance for arms and suchlike.

It is with the intention of making a contribution, however modest, to this debate that we present here our opinion of the foundations and objectives of national liberation in relation to the social structure. This opinion is the result of our own experiences of the struggle and of a critical appreciation of
the experiences of others. To those who see in it a theoretical character, we would recall that every practice produces a theory, and that if it is true that a revolution can fail even though it be based on perfectly conceived theories, nobody has yet made a successful revolution without a revolutionary theory.

Those who affirm — in our case correctly — that the motive force of history is the class struggle would certainly agree to a revision of this affirmation to make it more precise and give it an even wider field of application if they had a better knowledge of the essential characteristics of certain colonized peoples, that is to say peoples dominated by imperialism. In fact in the general evolution of humanity and of each of the peoples of which it is composed, classes appear neither as a generalized and simultaneous phenomenon throughout the totality of these groups, nor as a finished, perfect, uniform and spontaneous whole. The definition of classes within one or several human groups is a fundamental consequence of the progressive development of the productive forces and of the characteristics of the distribution of the wealth produced by the group or usurped from others. That is to say that the socio-economic phenomenon ‘class’ is created and develops as a function of
at least two essential and interdependent variables — the level of productive forces and the pattern of ownership of the means of production. This development takes place slowly, gradually and unevenly, by quantitative and generally imperceptible variations in the fundamental components; once a certain degree of accumulation is reached, this process then leads to a *qualitative jump*, characterized by the appearance of classes and of conflict between them.

Factors external to the socio-economic whole can influence, more or less significantly, the process of development of classes, accelerating it, slowing it down and even causing regressions. When, for whatever reason, the influence of these factors ceases, the process reassumes its independence and its rhythm is then determined not only by the specific internal characteristics of the whole, but also by the resultant of the effect produced in it by the temporary action of the external factors. On a strictly internal level the rhythm of the process may vary, but it remains continuous and progressive. Sudden progress is only possible as a function of violent alterations — mutations — in the level of productive forces or in the pattern of ownership. These violent transformations carried out within the process of development of classes, as a result of mutations in the level
of productive forces or in the pattern of ownership, are generally called, in economic and political language, *revolutions*.

Clearly, however, the possibilities of this process are noticeably influenced by external factors, and particularly by the interaction of human groups. This interaction is considerably increased by the development of means of transport and communication which as created the modern world, eliminating the isolation of human groups within one area, of areas within one continent, and between continents. This development, characteristic of a long historical period which began with the invention of the first means of transport, was already more evident at the time of the Punic voyages and in the Greek colonization, and was accentuated by maritime discoveries, the invention of the steam engine and the discovery of electricity. And in our own times, with the progressive domesticization of atomic energy it is possible to promise, if not to take men to the stars, at least to humanize the universe.

This leads us to pose the following question: does history begin only with the development of the phenomenon of ‘class’, and consequently of class struggle? To reply in the affirmative would be to place outside history the whole
period of life of human groups from the discovery of hunting, and later of nomadic and sedentary agriculture, to the organization of herds and the private appropriation of land. It would also be to consider — and this we refuse to accept — that various human groups in Africa, Asia, and Latin America were living without history, or outside history, at the time when they were subjected to the yoke of imperialism. It would be to consider that the peoples of our countries, such as the Balantes of Guinea, the Coaniamas of Angola and the Macondes of Mozambique, are still living today — if we abstract the slight influence of colonialism to which they have been subjected — outside history, or that they have no history.

Our refusal, based as it is on concrete knowledge of the socio-economic reality of our countries and on the analysis of the process of development of the phenomenon ‘class’, as we have seen earlier, leads us to conclude that if class struggle is the motive force of history, it is so only in a specific historical period. This means that before the class struggle — and necessarily after it, since in this world there is no before without an after — one or several factors was and will be the motive force of history. It is not difficult to see that this factor in the history of each human group is the
mode of production — the level of productive forces and the pattern of ownership — characteristic of that group. Furthermore, as we have seen, classes themselves, class struggle and their subsequent definition, are the result of the development of the productive forces in conjunction with the pattern of ownership of the means of production. It therefore seems correct to conclude that the level of productive forces, the essential determining element in the content and form of class struggle, is the true and permanent motive force of history.

If we accept this conclusion, then the doubts in our minds are cleared away. Because if on the one hand we can see that the existence of history before the class struggle is guaranteed, and thus avoid for some human groups in our countries — and perhaps in our continent — the sad position of being peoples without any history, then on the other hand we can see that history has continuity, even after the disappearance of class struggle or of classes themselves. And as it was not we who postulated — on a scientific basis — the fact of the disappearance of classes as a historical inevitability, we can feel satisfied at having reached this conclusion which, to a certain extent, re-establishes coherence and at the same time gives to those peoples who,
like the people of Cuba, are building socialism, the agreeable certainty that they will not cease to have a history when they complete the process of elimination of the phenomenon of ‘class’ and class struggle within their socio-economic whole. Eternity is not of this world, but man will outlive classes and will continue to produce and make history, since he can never free himself from the burden of his needs, both of mind and of body, which are the basis of the development of the forces of production.

The foregoing, and the reality of our times, allow us to state that the history of one human group or of humanity goes through at least three stages. The first is characterized by a low level of productive forces — of man’s domination over nature; the mode of production is of a rudimentary character, private appropriation of the means of production does not yet exist, there are no classes, nor, consequently, is there any class struggle. In the second stage, the increased level of productive forces leads to private appropriation of the means of production, progressively complicates the mode of production, provokes conflicts of interests within the socio-economic whole in movement, and makes possible the appearance of the phenomena ‘class’ and hence of class struggle, the social expression of the contradiction in the
economic field between the mode of production and private appropriation of the means of production. In the third stage, once a certain level of productive forces is reached, the elimination of private appropriation of the means of production is made possible, and is carried out, together with the elimination of the phenomenon ‘class’ and hence of class struggle; new and hitherto unknown forces in the historical process of the socio-economic whole are then unleashed.

In politico-economic language, the first stage would correspond to the communal agricultural and cattle-raising society, in which the social structure is horizontal, without any state; the second to feudal or assimilated agricultural or agro-industrial bourgeois societies, with a vertical social structure and a state; the third to socialist or communist societies, in which the economy is mainly, if not exclusively, industrial (since agriculture itself becomes a form of industry) and in which the state tends to progressively disappear, or actually disappears, and where the social structure returns to horizontality, at a higher level of productive forces, social relations and appreciation of human values.

At the level of humanity or of part of humanity (human groups within one area, of one or several continents) these
three stages (or two of them) can be simultaneous, as is shown as much by the present as by the past. This is a result of the uneven development of human societies, whether caused by internal reasons or by one or more external factors exerting an accelerating or slowing-down influence on their evolution. On the other hand, in the historical process of a given socio-economic whole each of the above-mentioned stages contains, once a certain level of transformation is reached, the seeds of the following stage.

We should also note that in the present phase of the life of humanity, and for a given socio-economic whole, the time sequence of the three characteristic stages is not indispensable. Whatever its level of productive forces and present social structure, a society can pass rapidly through the defined stages appropriate to the concrete local realities (both historical and human) and reach a higher stage of existence. This progress depends on the concrete possibilities of development of the society’s productive forces and is governed mainly by the nature of the political power ruling the society, that is to say, by the type of state or, if one likes, by the character of the dominant class or classes within the society.
A more detailed analysis would show that the possibility of such a jump in the historical process arises mainly, in the economic field, from the power of the means available to man at the time for dominating nature, and, in the political field, from the new event which has radically changed the face of the world and the development of history, the creation of socialist states.

Thus we see that our peoples have their own history regardless of the stage of their economic development. When they were subjected to imperialist domination, the historical process of each of our peoples (or of the human groups of which they are composed) was subjected to the violent action of an exterior factor. This action — the impact of imperialism on our societies — could not fail to influence the process of development of the productive forces in our countries and the social structures of our countries, as well as the content and form of our national liberation struggles.

But we also see that in the historical context of the development of these struggles, our peoples have the concrete possibility of going from their present situation of exploitation and underdevelopment to a new stage of their historical process which can lead them to a higher form of economic, social and cultural existence.
The political statement drawn up by the international preparatory committee of this conference, for which we reaffirm our complete support, placed imperialism, by clear and succinct analysis, in its economic context and historical co-ordinates. We will not repeat here what has already been said in the assembly. We will simply state that imperialism can be defined as a worldwide expression of the search for profits and the ever-increasing accumulation of *surplus value* by monopoly financial capital, centered in two parts of the world; first in Europe, and then in North America. And if we wish to place the fact of imperialism within the general trajectory of the evolution of the transcendental factor which has changed the face of the world, namely capital and the process of its accumulation, we can say that imperialism is piracy transplanted from the seas to dry land piracy reorganized, consolidated and adapted to the aim of exploiting the natural and human resources of our peoples. But if we can calmly analyze the imperialist phenomenon, we will not shock anybody by admitting that imperialism — and everything goes to prove that it is in fact the last phase in the evolution of capitalism — has been a historical necessity, a consequence of the impetus given by the productive forces and of the transformations of the means of production in the
general context of humanity, considered as one movement, that is to say a necessity like those today of the national liberation of peoples, the destruction of capital and the advent of socialism.

The important thing for our peoples is to know whether imperialism, in its role as capital in action, has fulfilled in our countries its historical mission: the acceleration of the process of development of the productive forces and their transformation in the sense of increasing complexity in the means of production; increasing the differentiation between the classes with the development of the bourgeoisie, and intensifying the class struggle; and appreciably increasing the level of economic, social and cultural life of the peoples. It is also worth examining the influences and effects of imperialist action on the social structures and historical processes of our peoples.

We will not condemn nor justify imperialism here; we will simply state that as much on the economic level as on the social and cultural level, imperialist capital has not remotely fulfilled the historical mission carried out by capital in the countries of accumulation. This means that if, on the one had, imperialist capital has had, in the great majority of the dominated countries, the simple function of multiplying
surplus value, it can be seen on the other hand that the historical capacity of capital (as indestructible accelerator of the process of development of productive forces) depends strictly on its freedom, that is to say on the degree of independence with which it is utilized. We must however recognize that in certain cases imperialist capital or moribund capitalism has had sufficient self-interest, strength and time to increase the level of productive forces (as well as building towns) and to allow a minority of the local population to attain a higher and even privileged standard of living, thus contributing to a process which some would call dialectical, by widening the contradictions within the societies in question. In other, even rarer cases, there has existed the possibility of accumulation of capital, creating the conditions for the development of a local bourgeoisie.

On the question of the effects of imperialist domination on the social structure and historical process of our peoples, we should first of all examine the general forms of imperialist domination. There are at least two forms: the first is direct domination, by means of a power made up of people foreign to the dominated people (armed forces police, administrative agents and settlers); this is generally called classical colonialism or colonialism is indirect domination, by a
political power made up mainly or completely of native agents; this is called neocolonialism.

In the first case, the social structure of the dominated people, whatever its stage of development, can suffer the following consequences: (a) total destruction, generally accompanied by immediate or gradual elimination of the native population and, consequently, by the substitution of a population from outside; (b) partial destruction, generally accompanied by a greater or lesser influx of population from outside; (c) apparent conservation, conditioned by confining the native society to zones or reserves generally offering no possibilities of living, accompanied by massive implantation of population from outside.

The two latter cases are those which we must consider in the framework of the problematic national liberation, and they are extensively present in Africa. One can say that in either case the influence of imperialism on the historical process of the dominated people produces paralysis, stagnation and even in some cases regression in this process. However this paralysis is not complete. In one sector or another of the socio-economic whole in question, noticeable transformations can be expected, caused by the permanent action of some internal (local) factors or by the action of new
factors introduced by the colonial domination, such as the introduction of money and the development of urban centers. Among these transformations we should anticipate a progressive loss of prestige of the ruling native classes or sectors, the forced or voluntary exodus of part of the peasant population to the urban centers, with the consequent development of new social strata; salaried workers, clerks, employees in commerce and the liberal professions, and an instable stratum of unemployed. In the countryside there develops, with very varied intensity and always linked to the urban milieu, a stratum made up of small landowners. In the case of neo-colonialism, whether the majority of the colonized population is of native or foreign origin, the imperialist action takes the form of creating a local bourgeoisie or pseudo-bourgeoisie, controlled by the ruling class of the dominating country.

The transformations in the social structure are not so marked in the lower strata, above all in the countryside, which retains the characteristics of the colonial phase; but the creation of a native pseudo-bourgeoisie which generally develops out of a petty bourgeoisie of bureaucrats and accentuates the differentiation between the social strata and intermediaries in the commercial system (compradores), by
strengthening the economic activity of local elements, opens up new perspectives in the social dynamic, mainly by the development of an urban working class, the introduction of private agricultural property and the progressive appearance of an agricultural proletariat. These more or less noticeable transformations of the social structure, produced by a significant increase in the level of productive forces, have a direct influence on the historical process of the socio-economic whole in question. While in classical colonialism this process is paralyzed, neo-colonialist domination, by allowing the social dynamic to awaken (conflicts of interests between native social strata or class struggles), creates the illusion that the historical process is returning to its normal evolution. This illusion will be reinforced by the existence of a political power (national state) composed of native elements. In reality it is scarcely even an illusion, since the submission of the local ‘ruling’ class to the ruling class of the dominating country limits or prevents the development of the national productive forces.

But in the concrete conditions of the present-day world economy this dependence is fatal and thus the local pseudo-bourgeoisie, however nationalist it may be, cannot effectively fulfill its historical function; it cannot freely direct the
development of the productive forces; in brief it cannot be a national bourgeoisie. For as we have seen, the productive forces are the motive force of history, and total freedom of the process of their development is an indispensable condition for their proper functioning.

We therefore see that both in colonialism and in neocolonialism the essential characteristic of imperialist domination remains the same: the negation of the historical process of the dominated people by means of violent usurpation of the freedom of development of the national productive forces. This observation, which identifies the essence of the two apparent forms of imperialist domination, seems to us to be of major importance for the thought and action of liberation movements, both in the course of struggle and after the winning of independence.

On the basis of this, we can state that national liberation is the phenomenon in which a given socio-economic whole rejects the negation of its historical process. In other words, the national liberation of a people is the regaining of the historical personality of that people, its return to history through the destruction of the imperialist domination to which it was subjected.
We have seen that violent usurpation of the freedom of the process of development of the productive forces of the dominated socio-economic whole constitutes the principal and permanent characteristic of imperialist domination, whatever its form. We have also seen that this freedom alone can guarantee the normal development of the historical process of a people. We can therefore conclude that national liberation exists only when the national productive forces have been completely freed from every kind of foreign domination.

It is often said that national liberation is based on the right of every people to freely control its own destiny and that the objective of this liberation is national independence. Although we do not disagree with this vague and subjective way of expressing a complex reality, we prefer to be objective, since for us the basis of national liberation, whatever the formulas adopted on the level of international law, is the inalienable right of every people to have its own history, and the objective of national liberation is to regain this right usurped by imperialism, that is to say, to free the process of development of the national productive forces.

For this reason, in our opinion, any national liberation movement which does not take into consideration this basis
and this objective may certainly struggle against imperialism, but will surely not be struggling for national liberation.

This means that, bearing in mind the essential characteristics of the present world economy, as well as experiences already gained in the field of anti-imperialist struggle, the principal aspect of national liberation struggle is the struggle against neo-colonialism. Furthermore, if we accept that national liberation demands a profound mutation in the process of development of the productive forces, we see that this phenomenon of national liberation necessarily corresponds to a revolution. The important thing is to be conscious of the objective and subjective conditions in which this revolution can be made and to know the type or types of struggle most appropriate for its realization.

We are not going to repeat here that these conditions are favorable in the present phase of the history of humanity; it is sufficient to recall that unfavorable conditions also exist, just as much on the international level as on the internal level of each nation struggling for liberation.

On the international level, it seems to us that the following factors, at least, are unfavorable to national liberation movements: the neo-colonial situation of a great number of states which, having won political independence, are now
tending to join up with others already in that situation; the progress made by neo-capitalism, particularly in Europe, where imperialism is adopting preferential investments, encouraging the development of a privileged proletariat and thus lowering the revolutionary level of the working classes; the open or concealed neo-colonial position of some European states which, like Portugal, still have colonies; the so-called policy of ‘aid for undeveloped countries’ adopted by imperialism with the aim of creating or reinforcing native pseudo-bourgeoisies which are necessarily dependent on the international bourgeoisie, and thus obstructing the path of revolution; the claustrophobia and revolutionary timidity which have led some recently independent states whose internal economic and political conditions are favorable to revolution to accept compromises with the enemy or its agents; the growing contradictions between anti-imperialist states; and, finally, the threat to world peace posed by the prospect of atomic war on the part of imperialism. All these factors reinforce the action of imperialism against the national liberation movements.

If the repeated interventions and growing aggressiveness of imperialism against the peoples can be interpreted as a sign of desperation faced with the size of the national liberation
movements, they can also be explained to a certain extent by the weaknesses produced by these unfavorable factors within the general front of the anti-imperialist struggle.

On the internal level, we believe that the most important weaknesses or unfavorable factors are inherent in the socio-economic structure and in the tendencies of its evolution under imperialist pressure, or to be more precise in the little or no attention paid to the characteristics of this structure and these tendencies by the national liberation movements in deciding on the strategy of their struggles.

By saying this we do not wish to diminish the importance of other internal factors which are unfavorable to national liberation, such as economic under-development, the consequent social and cultural backwardness of the popular masses, tribalism and other contradictions of lesser importance. It should however be pointed out that the existence of tribes only manifests itself as an important contradiction as a function of opportunistic attitudes, generally on the part of detribalised individuals or groups, within the national liberation movements. Contradictions between classes, even when only embryonic, are of far greater importance than contradictions between tribes.
Although the colonial and neo-colonial situations are identical in essence, and the main aspect of the struggle against imperialism is neo-colonialist, we feel it is vital to distinguish in practice these two situations. In fact the horizontal structure, however it may differ from the native society, and the absence of a political power composed of national elements in the colonial situation make possible the creation of a wide front of unity and struggle, which is vital to the success of the national liberation movement. But this possibility does not remove the need for a rigorous analysis of the native social structure, of the tendencies of its evolution, and for the adoption in practice of appropriate measures for ensuring true national liberation. While recognizing that each movement knows best what to do in its own case, one of these measures seems to us indispensable, namely, the creation of a firmly united vanguard, conscious of the true meaning and objective of the national liberation struggle which it must lead. This necessity is all the more urgent since we know that with rare exceptions the colonial situation neither permits nor needs the existence of significant vanguard classes (working class conscious of its existence and rural proletariat) which could ensure the vigilance of the popular masses over the evolution of the
liberation movement. On the contrary, the generally embryonic character of the working classes and the economic, social and cultural situation of the physical force of most importance in the national liberation struggle-the peasantry-do not allow these two main forces to distinguish true national independence from fictitious political independence. Only a revolutionary vanguard, generally an active minority, can be aware of this distinction from the start and make it known, through the struggle, to the popular masses. This explains the fundamentally political nature of the national liberation struggle and to a certain extent makes the form of struggle important in the final result of the phenomenon of national liberation.

In the neo-colonial situation the more or less vertical structure of the native society and the existence of a political power composed of native elements-national state-already worsen the contradictions within that society and make difficult if not impossible the creation of as wide a front as in the colonial situation. On the one hand the material effects (mainly the nationalization of cadres and the increased economic initiative of the native elements, particularly in the commercial field) and the psychological effects (pride in the belief of being ruled by one’s own compatriots, exploitation
of religious or tribal solidarity between some leaders and a fraction of the masses) together demobilize a considerable part of the nationalist forces. But on the other hand the necessarily repressive nature of the neo-colonial state against the national liberation forces, the sharpening of contradictions between classes, the objective permanence of signs and agents of foreign domination (settlers who retain their privileges, armed forces, racial discrimination), the growing poverty of the peasantry and the more or less notorious influence of external factors all contribute towards keeping the flame of nationalism alive, towards progressively raising the consciousness of wide popular sectors and towards reuniting the majority of the population, on the very basis of awareness of neo-colonialist frustration, around the ideal of national liberation. In addition, while the native ruling class becomes progressively more bourgeois, the development of a working class composed of urban workers and agricultural proletarians, all exploited by the indirect domination of imperialism, opens up new perspectives for the evolution of national liberation. This working class, whatever the level of its political consciousness (given a certain minimum, namely the awareness of its own needs), seems to constitute the true popular vanguard of the national
liberation struggle in the neo-colonial case. However it will not be able to completely fulfill its mission in this struggle (which does not end with the gaining of independence) unless it firmly unites with the other exploited strata, the peasants in general (hired men, sharecroppers, tenants and small farmers) and the nationalist petty bourgeoisie. The creation of this alliance demands the mobilization and organization of the nationalist forces within the framework (or by the action) of a strong and well-structured political organization.

Another important distinction between the colonial and neo-colonial situations is in the prospects for the struggle. The colonial situation (in which the nation class fights the repressive forces of the bourgeoisie of the colonizing country) can lead, apparently at least, to a nationalist solution (national revolution); the nation gains its independence and theoretically adopts the economic structure which best suits it. The neo-colonial situation (in which the working classes and their allies struggle simultaneously against the imperialist bourgeoisie and the native ruling class) is not resolved by a nationalist solution; it demands the destruction of the capitalist structure implanted in the national territory by imperialism, and correctly postulates a socialist solution.
This distinction arises mainly from the different levels of the productive forces in the two cases and the consequent sharpening of the class struggle.

It would not be difficult to show that in time the distinction becomes scarcely apparent. It is sufficient to recall that in our present historical situation — elimination of imperialism which uses every means to perpetuate its domination over our peoples, and consolidation of socialism throughout a large part of the world — there are only two possible paths for an independent nation: to return to imperialist domination (neo-colonialism, capitalism, state capitalism), or to take the way of socialism. This operation, on which depends the compensation for the efforts and sacrifices of the popular masses during the struggle, is considerably influenced by the form of struggle and the degree of revolutionary consciousness of those who lead it. The facts make it unnecessary for us to prove that the essential instrument of imperialist domination is violence. If we accept the principle that the liberation struggle is a revolution and that it does not finish at the moment when the national flag is raised and the national anthem played, we will see that there is not, and cannot be national liberation without the use of liberating violence by the nationalist forces, to answer the criminal
violence of the agents of imperialism. Nobody can doubt that, whatever its local characteristics, imperialist domination implies a state of permanent violence against the nationalist forces. There is no people on earth which, having been subjected to the imperialist yoke (colonialist or neocolonialist), has managed to gain its independence (nominal or effective) without victims. The important thing is to determine which forms of violence have to be used by the national liberation forces in order not only to answer the violence of imperialism, but also to ensure through the struggle the final victory of their cause, true national independence. The past and present experiences of various peoples, the present situation of national liberation struggles in the world (especially in Vietnam, the Congo and Zimbabwe) as well as the situation of permanent violence, or at least of contradictions and upheavals, in certain countries which have gained their independence by the so-called peaceful way, show us not only that compromises with imperialism do not work, but also that the normal way of national liberation, imposed on peoples by imperialist repression, is armed struggle.

We do not think we will shock this assembly by stating that the only effective way of definitively fulfilling the
aspirations of the peoples, that is to say of attaining national liberation, is by armed struggle. This is the great lesson which the contemporary history of liberation struggle teaches all those who are truly committed to the effort of liberating their peoples.

It is obvious that both the effectiveness of this way and the stability of the situation to which it leads after liberation depend not only on the characteristics of the organization of the struggle but also on the political and moral awareness of those who, for historical reasons, are capable of being the immediate heirs of the colonial or neo-colonial state. For events have shown that the only social sector capable of being aware of the reality of imperialist domination and of directing the state apparatus inherited from this domination is the native petty bourgeoisie. If we bear in mind the aleatory characteristics and the complexity of the tendencies naturally inherent in the economic situation of this social stratum or class, we will see that this specific inevitability in our situation constitutes one of the weaknesses of the national liberation movement.

The colonial situation, which does not permit the development of a native pseudo-bourgeoisie and in which the popular masses do not generally reach the necessary level of
political consciousness before the advent of the phenomenon of national liberation, offers the petty bourgeoisie the historical opportunity of leading the struggle against foreign domination, since by nature of its objective and subjective position (higher standard of living than that of the masses, more frequent contact with the agents of colonialism, and hence more chances of being humiliated, higher level of education and political awareness, etc.) it is the stratum which most rapidly becomes aware of the need to free itself from foreign domination. This historical responsibility is assumed by the sector of the petty bourgeoisie which, in the colonial context, can be called revolutionary, while other sectors retain the doubts characteristic of these classes or ally themselves to colonialism so as to defend, albeit illusorily, their social situation.

The neo-colonial situation, which demands the elimination of the native pseudo-bourgeoisie so that national liberation can be attained, also offers the petty bourgeoisie the chance of playing a role of major and even decisive importance in the struggle for the elimination of foreign domination. But in this case, by virtue of the progress made in the social structure, the function of leading the struggle is shared (to a greater or lesser extent) with the more educated sectors of the
working classes and even with some elements of the national pseudo-bourgeoisie who are inspired by patriotic sentiments. The role of the sector of the petty bourgeoisie which participates in leading the struggle is all the more important since it is a fact that in the neo-colonial situation it is the most suitable sector to assume these functions, both because of the economic and cultural limitations of the working masses, and because of the complexes and limitations of an ideological nature which characterize the sector of the national pseudo-bourgeoisie which supports the struggle. In this case it is important to note that the role with which it is entrusted demands from this sector of the petty bourgeoisie a greater revolutionary consciousness, and the capacity for faithfully interpreting the aspirations of the masses in each phase of the struggle and for identifying themselves more and more with the masses.

But however high the degree of revolutionary consciousness of the sector of the petty bourgeoisie called on to fulfill this historical function, it cannot free itself from one objective of reality: the petty bourgeoisie, as a service class (that is to say that a class not directly involved in the process of production) does not possess the economic base to guarantee the taking over of power. In fact history has shown
that whatever the role — sometimes important — played by
individuals coming from the petty bourgeoisie in the process
of a revolution, this class has never possessed political
control. And it never could possess it, since political control
(the state) is based on the economic capacity of the ruling
class, and in the conditions of colonial and neo-colonial
society this capacity is retained by two entities: imperialist
capital and the native working classes.

To retain the power which national liberation puts in its
hands, the petty bourgeoisie has only one path: to give free
rein to its natural tendencies to become more bourgeois, to
permit the development of a bureaucratic and intermediary
bourgeoisie in the commercial cycle, in order to transform
itself into a national pseudo-bourgeoisie, that is to say in
order to negate the revolution and necessarily ally. In order
not to betray these objectives the petty bourgeoisie has only
one choice: to strengthen its revolutionary consciousness, to
reject the temptations of becoming more bourgeois and the
natural concerns of its class mentality, to identify itself with
the working classes and not to oppose the normal
development of the process of revolution. This means that in
order to truly fulfill the role in the national liberation
struggle, the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie must be capable
of committing suicide as a class in order to be reborn as revolutionary workers, completely identified with the deepest aspirations of the people to which they belong.

This alternative — to betray the revolution or to commit suicide as a class — constitutes the dilemma of the petty bourgeoisie in the general framework of the national liberation struggle. The positive solution in favor of the revolution depends on what Fidel Castro recently correctly called the development of revolutionary consciousness. This dependence necessarily calls our attention to the capacity of the leader of the national liberation struggle to remain faithful to the principles and to the fundamental cause of this struggle. This shows us, to a certain extent, that if national liberation is essentially a political problem, the conditions for its development give it certain characteristics which belong to the sphere of morals.

We will not shout hurrahs or proclaim here our solidarity with this or that people in struggle. Our presence is in itself a cry of condemnation of imperialism and a proof of solidarity with all peoples who want to banish from their country the imperialist yoke, and in particular with the heroic people of Vietnam. But we firmly believe that the best proof we can give of our anti-imperialist position and of our active
solidarity with our comrades in this common struggle is to return to our countries, to further develop this struggle and to remain faithful to the principles and objectives of national liberation.

Our wish is that every national liberation movement represented here may be able to repeat in its own country, arms in hand, in unison with its people, the already legendary cry of Cuba:

Patria O Muerte, Venceremos!

Death to the Forces of Imperialism!

Free, Prosperous and Happy Country for Each of our Peoples!

Venceremos!