

NATION-BUILDING OR NATION-DESTROYING: FOREIGN POWERS AND INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES IN AFRICA

by Eileen C. Hocker

The main effect of foreign intelligence agency activities, and indeed foreign activity in general in Africa, has been "nation-destroying" rather than "nation-building." The reason for this begins with the fact that intelligence agencies implement the foreign policies of their representative governments. Hence, whatever is in those representative governments' best interests, whether economically, geo-politically, or otherwise, is what will be carried out in a particular African country. If that particular country's own local policies, practices, and desires are not amenable to the intelligence agency's representative government, then action will be taken on the part of that representative government to correct the situation and put things in order according to its interests. In many instances, the local governments' policies, practices, and desires have been the major thrust behind the elements of nation building that they themselves perceived would be best for their countries. Much planning has gone into the development of these policies and much is at stake if these policies are disrupted. However, in those instances where these policies and practices were not in line with other governments' interests, then disruption has, in fact, occurred. Some of the major power nations referred to in this paper include the United States, France, Israel, the Soviet Union, and South Africa. The primary local African countries referred to include Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania, Zaire, Angola, and Nigeria.

This paper will cover a few of the major policies and practices that African nations thought would be in their best interests to pursue, both at the time of independence, when nation building was critical, and at other times in their histories since independence. It will be shown how the major power nations conflicted with these policies when they did not line up with their own national interests, and how these nations, often through their intelligence agencies, altered the conditions in these African countries to bring them back in sync with their own interests.

The elements of nation building, for the purpose of this essay, will be the following: 1) the emergence of charismatic leaders; 2) dominant political parties; and 3) the establishment of fundamental institutions.

Every nation, at the time of its birth, has national leaders and spokesmen who embody the nationalistic spirit of the citizens, and express this spirit through eloquent speeches and dynamic literature. At

the birth of the United States, there were Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Paine, author of *Common Sense*. In Tanzania, there was Julius Nyerere. In Kenya there was Jomo Kenyatta. And in Ghana, there was Kwame Nkrumah. Perhaps because Ghana was the first African country to gain its independence from colonial rule, Kwame Nkrumah also came to embody a pan-African nationalistic spirit for the whole continent. The fact that these people emerged on their national scenes is indicative of one of the three major elements of nation building, the emergence of charismatic leaders. During the time leading up to and in the years immediately following independence, these men played pivotal roles in the cohesion and direction of their countries.

Also, each expounded philosophies which came to form the foundational framework for their countries' development. In the case of the United States, the Declaration of Independence document was the result of the philosophies of Jefferson and many others. In the case of the African leaders, two common philosophies began to emerge, that of self-reliance and African socialism. These two philosophies were expressed, in one form or another, by leaders on all sides of the African continent. However, because these philosophies, if implemented would take the control or influence of the former colonial powers out of their hands, these powers were opposed to them right from the start.

In the beginning of African independence, there was the state of Ghana, with its charismatic leader, Kwame Nkrumah. After independence, Nkrumah, to ensure that Ghana would not be caught up in neocolonialism, pulled Ghana out of the British Commonwealth, and he nationalized businesses. He also withdrew Ghana from the West African Currency Board, the West African Frontier Force, the West African Airways Corporation, and the West African Cocoa Research Institute. His reason for leaving these organizations was that since they were set up by the old British colonial powers, membership in them was incompatible with Ghana's sovereignty.¹ Nkrumah's actions were very popular at that time with his people and also with the people of Africa. Furthermore, Nkrumah expanded his anti-neo-colonialist policies with the slogan that Ghana would not rest until all of Africa was free from colonial domination. Thus, he became a leader of Pan-Africanism. He influenced many with his call for a complete break-away from western imperialism. Also, the term "the African personality" came to be associated with Nkrumah and events in Ghana. In short, he was charting a whole new course for Ghana. Nevertheless, there were some problems on the home front. Nkrumah's critics pointed out that he put too much emphasis on African international events and not enough on Ghana's internal issues. Ghana had slipped into debt, and Nkrumah

critics pointed to corruption, mismanagement, and lack of foresight in his administration.

In the sequence of events in newly independent Ghana, external African international powers were not idle. Author Max Addo claims that in Ghana, the Chinese were responsible for "the organization and running of subversive camps to train African national to overthrow their own governments. . . ."2 Addo goes on further to point out that in Nkrumah's zeal to throw off any remaining ties with the former colonial powers, his new alliances with the Soviets, Chinese and the eastern bloc were creating new ties. He states that both ex-colonial and non-colonial powers were engaging in neo-colonialistic practices in Africa, and shows that military pacts and budget aid packages with nations on either side of the cold war were all "trappings and instruments used by neo-colonialists."³ In the end, we may never know how events in Ghana may have worked themselves out. Nkrumah's government was overthrown in a coup in February 1966 by the Ghanaian army and the Ghana Police Service. This event, too, is filled with allegations of outside, non-African influence. In fact, the authors of *La Piscine, The French Secret Service Since 1944* quite matter-of-factly state, while referring to another unrelated incident, that it occurred, "when the CIA toppled the nationalistic regime of Nkrumah."⁴

The overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah is a major example of interference in a sovereign nation's activities by another. Yet, these types of outside influence did not stop in Ghana. There are many instances in Africa where this major element in nation-building, the emergence of charismatic leaders, was not given a chance to develop to fruition. The reason for this is because these leaders were beginning to take their countries down paths that were totally opposed to the national interests of western powers. Yet, it may be useful at this point to draw a brief comparison between African nations and one western power in its early days—the United States.

In its infancy, the United States had several men who spoke out against British colonial power, such as Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Alexander Hamilton. They comprised the first element necessary for nation-building; they were the charismatic leaders of their day. After independence, the United States chose a path of development that was not, in many ways, in the best interest of its ex-colonial power. Yet, I have found no instances of outside influences attempting to change the U. S.'s course of action into something more beneficial to external powers. Indeed, the United States enjoyed a rare privilege of being able to choose its own course of development and follow it through to fruition.

In essence, this privilege is what many African leaders are pushing for. Kwame Nkrumah was one example; other examples of

leaders who expounded philosophies of nation-building and development, and who tried to lead their countries down the path of their own unique choosing include Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and Sekou Toure of Guinea.

Nasser, charismatic leader of Egypt, championed the cause not only of his country, but also of much of the Arab world. Thus, he incurred the wrath of Israel. His policies and practices, culminating with the nationalization of the Suez Canal, further incurred the wrath of both the British and the French. Nasser's reasons for the nationalization are addressed by Juma Aley in *Twenty One Years, Leadership, Contrast and Similarities*, who says that Nasser recognized that the Suez Canal could have been the greatest source of strength to Egypt, but that in actuality, it seemed to be Egypt's greatest source of weakness because it was not under local control and was not being used to benefit the nation itself. Aley illustrates Nasser's point of view by stating, "For the honey within the great hive was not for the bees—its natural lawful recipients—but for the caterpillars of imperialism."⁵

Here is a clear example of a clash between one nation which tried to determine and carry out policies which would have aided its nation-building and development processes, and other nations who were hurt and cut off by those same policies. In the case of Britain, France and Israel, they, again, did not sit idly by. In 1956, the intelligence services of these three countries met together to plan what to do about Nasser. Other meetings were also held that year between the French and the Israelis, which included Shimon Peres, Israeli Minister of Defense; General Moshe Dayan; and Golda Meir, Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs. One of the plans of action decided upon against Nasser, called "Operation Musketeer,"⁶ involved setting up a radio station to broadcast information towards Egypt that would counter the "Voice of the Arabs" broadcast in Cairo. The plan also involved a parallel military operation.⁷ Underlying all such plans against Nasser was the desire to assassinate him, and there were several attempts by the French secret services, known as SDECE, to do just that. These assassination attempts were carried out "with the cooperation of other countries, and in particular with the complicity of the Muslim Brotherhood."⁸

Sekou Toure of Guinea is another example of a leader who tried to take his country down a development path different from the desire of another nation, in this case France. Upon independence, Toure chose not to stay financially aligned with the former colonial power, many other francophone African countries did; instead he instituted socialist policies which would preserve some links with France, but in such a way that Guinea would be "proud, free and sovereign." However, there was much friction between Toure and the leader

France at that time, Charles de Gaulle. In the beginning, France provided subsidies to Toure, hoping either to buy him out, or that Houphouet-Boigny, of the Ivory Coast, would turn Toure around; neither happened. Also, as Faligot and Krop point out, Toure's integrity was underscored by the fact that he used the French subsidies not to make himself rich, but rather to develop his own party.¹⁰ Following these measures, France, through its secret service, engaged in a total destabilization program against Guinea that lasted for 20 years. The secret service disorganized Guinea's finances, and there were several plots to assassinate Toure himself, all of which failed.

In the midst of such a comprehensive destabilization program, how can a newly independent, yet still weak nation ever hope to grow and develop? In the case of Guinea, different relations would have been established with France other than what France had been accustomed to. However, this different path might not have necessarily been bad, as Toure did indicate he wanted to preserve the links with France. Yet again, as with the case of Ghana, it will never be known what kind of new relationship might have been forged between the two, because Guinea's nation-building plans were "nipped in the bud."

There were other charismatic African leaders against whom little evidence can be found of intelligence agency destabilization, yet whose policies are known not to have pleased the dominant world powers. One such leader is Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania. Probably more than anyone else after Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Nyerere has championed the rights of independent African nations to determine their own unique course of destiny and development, free of outside, non-African coercion. Also, Nyerere's life in public office affords us a great example in that he is one of the few African leaders who has ruled for a specific time period and then peacefully resigned. Truly, Tanzania has been built, in large part, by Nyerere's charisma, integrity, and selflessness. He is a true example of that first principle of nation-building, the emergence of a charismatic leader.

In 1967, Nyerere began a unique course of development for Tanzania with the emergence of the Arusha Declaration. This document declared that Tanzania's development process would be based on African socialism and self-reliance. The state would be in control of all businesses and industries, and wealth and resources would be redistributed to the population on an equality basis. Also, the policy of self-reliance meant that Tanzania would not cut itself off from the help of the outside world, but rather that it would determine how such outside aid would best be used to serve its own national interests. This self-determination was intended in particular to counter the tendencies of the aid-giving nations, who would have wanted to determine how it should be used.¹¹

As a result, many economic problems arose which thwarted Tanzania's progress toward its nation-building goals. Few international businesses invested in Tanzania; world market prices for agricultural products fell or fluctuated so drastically as to cause limited financial returns; droughts also wreaked havoc. As well, there was some degree of government and bureaucratic inefficiency. Whether any outside manipulation or destabilization was aimed at the Tanzanian economy is not documented, but it is common knowledge that there was always much friction between the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and Nyerere. Finally, in the 1980s, Tanzania began changing its policy a little to allow for more privatization in its economy.

Nevertheless, other criteria based on social indicators used for judging Tanzania's progress show interesting successes. First of all Nyerere was able to do what many other African leaders have not—to unite the many distinct ethnic groups in the country through a common language, Kiswahili, and through a common vision.¹² These factors have contributed to Tanzania's having probably one of the lowest levels of ethnic strife of any African country.¹³ Second, judging Tanzania's economic performance according to the Quality of Life Index (the three prime indicators of which are the infant mortality rate, life expectancy and level of literacy), as opposed to the orthodox economists' criteria of selecting key indicators (such as gross national product, industrial indices, and trade balances), reveals amazing results. Since Tanzania's independence, the infant mortality rate has dropped from 225 per 1,000 births in 1962 to 137 per 1,000 births in 1984, a decrease of 40%. The death rate has dropped from 22 per 1,000 in 1967 to 13 per 1,000 in 1982. Life expectancy has risen from 35 years in 1961 to 51 years in 1984, an increase of 50%. The greatest success has been in the area of literacy: "Before independence, only a handful of children went to school at all, and adult literacy had only just begun."¹⁴ However, as of approximately 1984, the national literacy rate is 85%.

These and other social successes are primarily hinged to one man, Julius Nyerere. His record and example of leadership and lifestyle afford us a good illustration of what can happen when a new nation is left alone and not burdened with excessive outside manipulation and destabilization activities.

The impact of dynamic, charismatic leadership upon the growth and development of a nation has been demonstrated. Yet, another important factor in the process of nation-building is that of dominant political parties. In this arena, there has been much outside influence that has stifled nations' natural processes of progress. In the early stages of nation-building in African countries, the main objective of political parties was the liberation and independence of their respective countries from colonial rule. After independence was won, there was

often a struggle to determine which parties or which personalities would control the new countries. It is in this vulnerable phase of nation-building that some of the strongest thrusts of foreign outside intervention has been felt.

One such case is that of Zaire (formerly the Congo). Upon independence, Patrice Lumumba was Prime Minister; however, his "progressive ideas disturbed all the Western capitals."¹⁵ Over the course of the decade of the 1960s, the CIA, SDECE, KGB, and the Belgian secret services all were involved in various manipulation strategies (involving politicians and organizations) to try and have the combination of leadership that would best stay in line with their own national interests. Among the major interests of the Soviet Union and the United States in Zaire were its strategic geo-political position in Africa, and its raw materials and resources. During the course of this episode in Zairean history, Lumumba was tortured and assassinated, and Mobutu Sese Seko, the man the CIA supported from the beginning, came into power. In fact, Lumumba's assassination had been planned by the CIA, and the materials to be used in the assassination had already been shipped to the CIA Chief of Station in Zaire. Before the assassination was carried out, however, Lumumba "was murdered at the hands of a rival Congolese faction."¹⁶

Neither Lumumba's murder nor its surrounding factors went unnoticed among the rest of the African nations. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania made a brief statement about it that hints of deeper knowledge he may have had of the entire situation. Speaking at a meeting in February 1961, he said:

Mr. Speaker, sir, I feel it would not be fitting if I failed to express in this House the shock and the horror with which this Government has received the news of Mr. Lumumba's death. It would not be proper for me to express an opinion here on the rights and wrongs of the long chain of events that has brought catastrophe to the Congo, but it is proper for me to say that to the Government of Tanganyika all the circumstances surrounding the death of a man who was duly elected leader of a neighboring country are repugnant to every sense of decency and honorable conduct. It is indeed hard, sir, to see how anything but evil results can flow from the act of violence that has taken place in the Congo. . . .¹⁷

What has emerged in Zaire is a government which, from the early years of independence up until today, is largely controlled by the secret services and interests of an outside foreign power, namely the United States. No true locally-inspired vision or plan of development

has arisen. Indeed, there has been no chance. Thus, while Zaire is considered a stable regime by the United States, the issue remains a giant question in the eyes of the African community.

The case of Angola is another in which outside foreign powers have been intricately involved in the jockeying for position of the local leadership. Each outside power wants to make sure its party of choice achieves power. Thus, the MPLA is backed by the Soviet Union and also Cuba; and the FNLA and UNITA are supported by the secret services of France, Britain, the United States, and South Africa. It has become public knowledge that the CIA has been conducting massive covert action in Angola for years, and that covert action continues today. Again, the primary reasons for intervention are geopolitical strategicness and economics, chiefly having to do with oil.

Thus, although the MPLA is currently in power in Angola, the opposition continues to be active and will remain so if the support they receive from the CIA and others continues. Whereas a compromise settlement would ultimately be good for the peace and stability of this nation, in actuality, this compromise may never happen. Author René Lemarchand explains it well when he says:

In a number of cases the contacts established by African leaders with CIA operatives enabled them to raise their stock of resources as well as their expectations to the point where they felt sufficiently confident to create new parties, concoct plots and coups, or simply refuse to agree to a compromise which under different circumstances would seem the most rational option available.¹⁸

This statement could also be applied to the Soviet Union's KGB, or any other secret service. Under different circumstances, there would be no heavy outside interference, and all the parties involved would be able (to borrow a phrase from former President Jimmy Carter) to apply "African solutions to African problems."

Again, it may be useful to return briefly to the history of the United States to see examples of intervention by other powers which tried to achieve results that would have been more conducive to their own national interests. During its liberation war of independence from colonial Britain, the American colonies enlisted the help of France in its struggle. France obliged by providing troops, arms, supplies and funds, and training officers like Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben.¹⁹ Similarly, the British hired approximately 30,000 German mercenary troops of the Hessen-Kassel Corps to assist on its side of the revolutionary war.

Not only was there outside intervention in this war, but there were also extensive covert operations carried out by each side especially in the form of propaganda, to try and subvert the other:

plans. From the British side, the propaganda was aimed at the American Indians and the African slaves. The British tried to induce the Indians to join them by pointing out how ill-treated they had been at the hands of the American settlers, and promising the Indians better treatment. Another scare tactic the British used was the threat to incite slave insurrections, one which frightened the settlers. At one point, such an insurrection plot was discovered; thereafter, all the slave collaborators were rounded up, given eighty lashes, and had their ears "crap'd."²⁰ The American settlers also engaged in a propaganda campaign to subvert the German Hessen mercenaries. They offered the mercenaries land and other enticements if they would agree to settle peacefully in America like the other German settlers.²¹

Thus, while the use of mercenaries and other outside intervention to gain one's own national interests has a long history, a major difference seems to exist between such activity during the U. S. revolutionary war and such activity in Africa today. As yet I have found no evidence of continued French or Hessen intervention in American affairs after the revolutionary war was over and liberation was won. Yet, in today's liberation struggles, the assisting foreign power has a tendency to stay on in the new country and try to orchestrate internal affairs to be conducive to its own national interest back home. African nations are well aware of this phenomenon. Perhaps General Obasanjo, once head of Nigeria, sums up this feeling of the African nations best when he points out that in many cases, the eastern bloc countries and the Cubans were the only source of effective support for their liberation struggles. Nevertheless, he goes on to warn:

[T]he Soviets and their friends [should] not to overstay their welcome. Africa is not about to throw off one colonial yoke for another. . . . If the Soviets seek to maintain their presence indefinitely, they run the risk of being dubbed a new imperial power, as indeed they are already being called even by those with whom they have had long associations.²²

Brief mention should be made at this point of two countries who have dominant political parties and who have been relatively stable in comparison to other African nations: Kenya and Tanzania. No evidence was found to confirm or deny that foreign intervention had been involved in the emergence of either KANU (Kenyan African National Union) or TANU (Tanzanian African National Union); both of these political parties have played major roles in the nation-building process of their respective countries. Also, each has furthered progress toward establishing fundamental national institutions. This could not have been

done if there had been excessive foreign intervention disrupting the natural process of events.

It is to the establishment of fundamental bureaucratic institution that we must now turn, for indeed, this is the third major element of nation-building. The one major organization that has initiated the desire to establish regional institutions continent-wide has been the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAU has stressed, among other principles, freedom from foreign and neo-colonial domination; the right of each nation to exercise its sovereignty; and continental cooperation in the areas of economics, public health, and security.

Ten years ago, the African heads of state of the OAU adopted the Lagos Plan of Action to provide a tool for building fundamental economic institutions and for furthering economic development. This document spelled out, in specific areas, the Africans' desire and plan for developing themselves. The emphasis was on self-reliance, self sufficiency, and joint regional economic cooperation.

In this area of economic development, Africa has been very hard hit by foreign powers. This has come not only through foreign secret services, but openly, through the foreign countries themselves. This issue has always been debated because, from a foreign viewpoint African economic resources are exactly what is needed to fulfill foreign national interests; in addition, the old colonial powers saw the development of key cash crops and key natural resources as the best way for African countries to emerge successfully on the world markets. Yet, from an African viewpoint, the involvement of foreign powers in their economic development has resulted in economic underdevelopment. Walter Rodney, in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, explains:

Under the normal processes of evolution, an economy grows steadily larger so that after a while two neighboring economies merge into one. That was precisely how national economies were created in the states of Western Europe through the gradual combination of what were once separate provincial economies. Trade with Africa actually helped Europe to weld together more closely the different national economies, but in Africa there was disruption and disintegration at the local level. At the same time each local economy ceased to be directed exclusively or even primarily towards the satisfaction of the wants of its inhabitants and (whether or not the particular Africans recognized it) their economic effort served external interests and made them dependent on those external forces based in Western Europe. In this way, the African economy taken as a whole was diverted

away from its previous line of development and became distorted.²³

In ancient African history, there were vast inter-trading systems, particularly among the ancient empires of West Africa and the Sahel, which were disrupted by European colonial and slave activities. Yet, it is this inter-African trading and economic integration that is desired by so many African leaders now. This desire is expressed in the OAU's Lagos Plan of Action.

Another major concern expressed in the Lagos Plan of Action is how other nations were allowed to naturally progress, whereas Africa is now compelled to "play catch-up."²⁴ This concern is underscored by the fact that many of the raw materials that helped boost the West's industrial revolution were extracted from Africa. One such material was copper, which was used in generators, electric locomotives, motors, and radios.²⁵ A major reason Africa could not experience a real industrial revolution was because these materials were not being used at home. As well, African infrastructure was developed not in the interests of the African states, but in order to facilitate the interests of the West. Roads and railroads were not built to connect other African towns and trading centers, but to facilitate the extraction and transport of resources out to the coasts and onward to Europe.²⁶

In light of these discouraging historical economic developments, African nations are today forging ahead with new economic institutions which cater primarily to their local interests. Two of these institutions or regional economic cooperation are SADCC (Southern African Development Coordination Conference) and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States). However, sad to say, these two organizations have also suffered difficulty at the hands of foreign powers, in one case directly through secret service intervention, and in the other through direct open competition.

SADCC's members comprise the front-line states opposite South Africa. This economic body seeks, among other things, to promote collective production and inter-state transportation networks. The goal is to reduce these nations' reliance on South Africa for trade and for the transport of imports and exports. SADCC is described by author Reginald Green as a distinctly non-traditional, African-designed, political economic coordination process, "original and indigenous to the region."²⁷ Its establishment was not influenced by any foreign outside power, nor is it similar to any other regional economic institution such as the EEC (European Economic Community). However, South Africa, because it perceives SADCC as a threat to its interest of playing the preeminent economic role in the region, has engaged in activities both directly and through supporting the activities of UNITA (of Angola) and

MNR (Mozambiquean Resistance Movement) to destabilize SADCC. Much of these efforts at destabilization has been done covertly, by South African intelligence services, with the support of the CIA. The author quotes Mozambiquean president Machel as saying,

We are aware that the fundamental aim of the actions of destabilization against our countries is to render SADCC non-viable. . . .Ports and railways, fuel depots and pipelines, bridges and roads, communication systems and other development projects are the targets. . . .²⁸

ECOWAS has also had its share of problems, exemplified in the case of Nigeria. While Nigeria desires security in the West African region, it wants this accomplished without the reliance on "extra-African" measures. As a leading state and economy in the region, and as a leading member of ECOWAS, Nigeria's desire is to see African problems solved among the African states themselves. Nigeria sees the presence of non-African players in the region as a threat to its own national security and interests, and also as a threat to greater African security. In particular, Nigeria sees France, and its continuing relationship with the francophone countries, as a threat. For example in the economic arena, the establishment of ECOWAS falls in line with the general African-OAU desire for regional economic integration as outlined in the Lagos Plan of Action. However, France endorsed the establishment of CEAO (Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest), which is composed of the francophone West African states. CEAO is not only viewed as a rival organization to ECOWAS, but also as contrary to the desire to have an exclusively African organization as opposed to an organization with foreign ties. Author Emeka Nwoked points out that

the ideal of an integrated and self-reliant sub-regional market which ECOWAS hopes to attain should, were it to be realized constitute a more potent mechanism for combatting dependence by West African states on extra-African powers.²⁹

Thus far, much discussion has been given to economic institutions, which comprise a major component of nation-building. However, other fundamental institutions needed in this process are the military and security organizations. It is in the development of these institutions that foreign secret services have carried out their most wide sweeping penetrations. In the case of almost every African nation after independence, it has been the former colonial power which trained its armed troops and security personnel. In addition, many foreign officer

stayed over in the newly independent countries. The case of France provides the best example of military establishment. In the military arena, France had always been committed to aiding any of its former colonies should their security be threatened. Again, taking the Nigerian viewpoint as an example, author Nwokedi states that Nigeria was critical of the defense accords between France and its former colonies, as it seemed that France had established defense treaties with its colonies—to keep a contingent of troops in the area—in exchange for the granting of independence. Nwokedi cites a statement from a letter written by French Prime Minister Michel Debre to President Leon Mba of Gabon, July 15, 1960: "There are two systems which enter into force simultaneously: Independence and the Co-operation accords. The one does not go without the other."³⁰ This reliance on extra-African powers goes against Nigerian interests, which are to combat French influence in the region. Nigeria desires to set up some kind of defense accords with its West African neighbors under the auspices of ECOWAS; however, full-fledged defense treaties have not been reached. Even though Nigeria's desire is for France to be totally out of the region, it has not been as forceful as it could with the French, for fear of alienating Senegal and Ivory Coast which have maintained their close ties with France, and which Nigeria wants to support ECOWAS. Even though Nigerian interest would be achieved, as they express, by the removal of foreign intervention in African affairs, still, as the author admits, Nigeria itself is not self-sufficient in military hardware, and has to seek it from "extra-African" sources.

Indeed, this is the dilemma in which most African nations find themselves: reliance on colonial powers not only for hardware, but in the early days of independence, for military personnel as well. This was the case in Tanganyika in January 1964. Its army staged a mutiny and it was only through the help of British troops that order was restored. President Nyerere's frustration can be seen in his statements following the incident. Speaking to an emergency meeting of the OAU Foreign Ministers, he assured them that the mutinies were not inspired by outside forces—either communist or imperialist. Then he said:

Our national humiliation arises from the necessity of having non-Tanganyikan troops to do our work for us. . . . But the presence of troops from a country deeply involved in the world's Cold War conflicts, has serious implications in the context of African nationalism, and our common policies of non-alignment.³¹

Not only did Nyerere have to rely on foreign troops, but in later years, so did Mobutu of Zaire and the MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA of Angola, just to name a few. In Angola particularly, the CIA, France,

the Soviets, Cubans, South Africans, and mercenaries have come to form such a major component of the overall military institution, that the conflict there could conceivably go on for a very long time. The military network is so widespread over Africa that now, most of UNITA's officers are trained in the military schools of Morocco.³²

From the evidence, one can see that there is hardly one African ruler, one African political party, or one African fundamental institution that has not been touched, affected, penetrated, or manipulated by an outside major power nation or by an outside major intelligence service. This contact has been overwhelmingly detrimental to the natural growth and development process of the African nations. Surely there are reasons to justify these actions.

The most important reason given for American and CIA involvement in African countries is to curb the spread of marxism and communism that is infiltrating the new regimes and to push democracy and free-market economics to counter this spread. There is a problem, however, in their argument, and that is many Africans will reveal they are not interested in the communist life-style of the Soviet Union. Their reasons for involvement with the Russians and other eastern bloc countries are purely pragmatic. They needed military might to throw off the old colonial rule, and the needed funds to develop their own economies. These two factors undergirded the national interest at the same time, and their argument is that since military and economic support was not given by the West when requested, such support was sought elsewhere.

There are several other sources which counter this "fear of communism" argument. One is President Nyerere's explanation, using the example of Zimbabwe, that Zimbabwe would not become communist only because it received military arms from communist countries; rather Zimbabwe received arms from those countries only because they were willing to provide them. He pointed out that what Zimbabwean nationalists wanted most was arms to fight for their independence, no matter where these arms came from; there was no question of East and West as far as they were concerned.³³ Juma Aley expresses the philosophy behind this type of action more emphatically:

. . . [W]hen an oppressed person gasping for the breath of freedom asks for help, it is the help that makes him free which he needs, no matter where it comes from. The help is the instrument which he requires to help him break the chains. It is as simple as that, and yet through want of honesty, imperialists attempt to present it differently, making out they don't understand. But more than that, when they see us friendly with

some fairly strong power, they become nervous and wonder what we are up to.³⁴

Along this line of reasoning, it was said that the Carter administration recognized that Moscow, Peking, and even Havana held the advantage over the U.S. by always having been on the "right side" in southern Africa and on the side of the eventual winners. This does not imply that the African nationalists were "Communists," only that communist arms supplies were the only ones available.³⁵

Another source countering the "fear of communism" argument is found in Stanley Macebuh's article in *Foreign Policy*, "Misreading Opportunities in Africa." Macebuh points out the same thing as Nyerere, that the acquisition of arms from the Soviets is based purely on pragmatism. He states that once the liberation wars are over and the need for more economic aid arises, African countries will again look elsewhere for aid, as the Soviets are too poor to provide such aid. Interestingly, Macebuh says that this vacuum can probably be best filled by the United States, if the U. S. is willing to regard the sovereignty of the African states in the donation of the financial aid.³⁶ Finally, the CIA itself, through its Intelligence Directorate, has admitted that Egypt's Nasser and Ghana's Nkrumah were opponents of Western domination of the Third World, but certainly not agents of any international communism conspiracy.³⁷

There are countless other reasons for the involvement of major powers either openly or through secret services, in Africa. These reasons include: the procurement and protection of natural resources and raw materials; the spread of language, culture and influence; and the winning of world allies. Nevertheless, perhaps the results of all this foreign contact would not be as horrendous if the national and best interests of the local African nations were taken into account. Who can number all the horrible incidents that have occurred at the hands of foreign intelligence services? The plot against Ben Bella of Algeria by the French SDECE;³⁸ the assassination of Amilcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau by the Portuguese secret services PIDE;³⁹ the coup in the Comoro Islands led by SDECE-backed mercenary Bob Denard;⁴⁰ the failed coup attempt by the South African secret services on the Seychelles Islands, thus resulting in the failure to have a base from which to destabilize the Tanzanian government;⁴¹ and finally, the allegation of Abdul Rahman Babu that Washington put pressure on Julius Nyerere in 1964 to merge with Zanzibar to prevent the Soviet Union from getting a base on the island⁴²: these are just a few of the numerous incidents that have occurred. And it is largely because of such activities that African-nation-building has been held back for so

long. Not only must this type of activity stop, along with the fear and paranoia that accompanies it, but also, if preserving national interests are the motivational factors behind the foreign intervention, it should be recognized that these interests will be best preserved by engaging with the African nations on a head-to-head equal basis, remembering to respect their sovereignty at all times.

Notes:

¹Max Addo, *Ghana's Foreign Policy in Retrospect* (Waterville Publishing House: Accra, 1967), pp. 14-15.

²*Ibid.*, p. 28.

³*Loc. Cit.*

⁴Roger Faligot and Pascal Krop, *La Piscine, The French Secret Service Since 1944* (Basil Blackwell Ltd.: Oxford, New York, 1989), p. 200.

⁵Juma Aley, *Twenty One Years, Leadership Contrasts and Similarities* (International Publishers Agencies Ltd.: Dar es Salaam, 1982, 1984), p. 6.

⁶*La Piscine*, p. 115.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 116-17.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 192.

¹⁰*Loc. Cit.*

¹¹Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, *The President Explains The Arusha Declaration, The Arusha Declaration Teach-In*, 1967.

¹²Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, "Dreams and Realities in Tanzania," *The Christian Century*, December 11, 1985, 102: 1151-52.

¹³Hunter R. Clark and James Wilde, "Making A Graceful Exit, Nyerere's Peaceful Departure Ends an Era in African History," *Time*, November 4, 1985, p. 43.

¹⁴"United Republic of Tanzania," *African Contemporary Record, 1985-86*, Vol. XVIII, p. B-349.

¹⁵*La Piscine*, p. 201.

¹⁶Loch K. Johnson, *America's Secret Power, The CIA in a Democratic Society* (Oxford University Press: New York, Oxford, 1989), pp. 27-8.

¹⁷Julius K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity* (Oxford University Press: London, 1967), p. 107.

¹⁸Rene Lemarchand, "The CIA in Africa: How Central? How Intelligent?" *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa* (ed.) Ellen Ray, 1982, pp. 19-20.

¹⁹"United States of America, History," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Macropaedia, Vol. 29, pp. 213-14.

²⁰Carl Berger, *Broadsides and Bayonets, The Propaganda War of the American Revolution* (Presidio Press: San Rafael, CA, 1961), pp. 103-104.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 122-3.

²²C. Legum, "African Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 57, No. 3, p. 640.

-
- ²³Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Howard University Press: Washington, D. C., 1974), p. 109.
- ²⁴Organization of African Unity, *The Lagos Plan of Action* (International Institute for Labour Studies: Geneva, Switzerland, 1981), p. 79.
- ²⁵*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, p. 178.
- ²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 209.
- ²⁷Reginald H. Green, "Economic Regionalism in a War Zone," *Africa Contemporary Record, 1985-86*, Vol. XVIII, p. A-106.
- ²⁸*Ibid.*, p. A-113.
- ²⁹Emeka Nwokedi, "Sub-Regional Security and Nigerian Foreign Policy," *African Affairs*, Journal of the Royal African Society, April 1985, Vol. 84, No. 335, p. 203.
- ³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 200.
- ³¹*Freedom and Unity*, p. 288.
- ³²*La Piscine*, p. 285.
- ³³Juma Aley, *Twenty One Years*, p. 52.
- ³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 61-2.
- ³⁵Russel W. Howe, "United States Policy in Africa," *Current History*, March 1979, Vol. 76, No. 445, p. 98.
- ³⁶Stanley Macebuh, "Misreading Opportunities in Africa," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1979, Vol. 35.
- ³⁷Victor Marchetti and John Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (Dell Publishing: New York, 1974, 1980), p. 259.
- ³⁸*La Piscine*.
- ³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 266.
- ⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 318.
- ⁴¹*Africa Confidential*, March 28, 1984, Vol. 25, No. 7, p. 8.
- ⁴²*Loc. Cit.*