

I have been following events in Ghana very closely. The economic situation is very serious, but it is not beyond recovery if action is taken quickly. Recently, Sierra Leone has shown the world how a corrupt military-police dictatorship can be removed, and constitutional government restored. Those who carried out the removal of the military junta in Sierra Leone were not even high-ranking officers. They were from the lower ranks of the army.

But they possessed the necessary ingredient for complete victory: true patriotism and the confidence of knowing that they were fulfilling the wishes of the vast majority of the people.

I have not been wasting my time in Conakry. I have been working, studying and drawing up plans for the reconstruction of our country. I am able to tell you, as a result of my very deep study of the economic situation, that it would be possible to put Ghana on the road again towards meaningful economic progress in a matter not of years, but a few months.

You will not expect me to tell you in any sort of detail of the plan I have worked out. To do so would open the door for foreign vested interests to prepare new sabotage. Your own common sense will tell you that things have gone basically wrong in Ghana, and that a completely new approach is needed.

I would like everybody to organize in secret groups. Organize in the villages and in the localities in the towns. Organize at your work places. Organize in your trade unions. The power of the people is irresistible once it is organized. Nothing can withstand it. The majority of the army and police are behind me and long for my early return to Ghana. Tribalism should not be allowed to confuse the issue.

The NLC must be overthrown now. There is no other way, than by force, to liberate our country from neo-colonialism and its stooges. Only then can the great work of national reconstruction again begin, and Ghana once more assume its true role in Africa and in world affairs.

Long live Ghana, and long live Africa's total emancipation and unity!

THE SPECTRE OF BLACK POWER

To

ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

BEN BARKA

MALCOLM X

We could mourn them

but they don't want our tears.

We scorn death knowing

that we cannot be defeated.

INTRODUCTION

Pan-Africanism has its beginnings in the liberation struggle of African-Americans, expressing the aspirations of Africans and peoples of African descent. From the first Pan-African Conference, held in London in 1900, until the fifth and last Pan-American Conference held in Manchester in 1945, African-Americans provided the main driving power of the movement. Pan-Africanism then moved to Africa, its true home, with the holding of the First Conference of Independent African States in Accra in April 1958, and the All-African People's Conference in December of the same year.

The work of the early pioneers of Pan-Africanism such as

Sylvester Williams, Dr W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and H. George Padmore, none of whom were born in Africa, has become a treasured part of Africa's history. It is significant that two of them, Dr Du Bois and George Padmore, came to live in Ghana at my invitation. Dr Du Bois died, as he wished, on African soil, while working in Accra on the Encyclopedia Africana. George Padmore became my Adviser on African Affairs, and spent the last years of his life in Ghana, helping in the revolutionary struggle for African unity and socialism.

The close links forged between Africans and peoples of African descent over half a century of common struggle continue to inspire and strengthen us. For, although the outward forms of our struggle may change, it remains in essence the same, a fight to the death against oppression, racism and exploitation.

Most of Africa has now achieved political independence. But imperialism has not been vanquished. International finance capital appearing now in its new guise of neo-colonialism seeks to maintain and extend its stranglehold over the economic life of our continent. Imperialists and neo-colonialists are resorting to every kind of stratagem to achieve their purposes. They have allied with reactionary elements in our midst to organize military coups and other forms of direct action in an attempt to halt the progress of the African Revolution. They are at the same time working in more insidious ways to undermine our morale and to divert our attention from the main purpose of our struggle – the total liberation of the African continent, an All-African Union Government and socialism.

The Organization of African Unity has been rendered virtually useless as a result of the machinations of neo-colonialists and their puppets. Yet it is being preserved as an innocuous organization in the hope that it may delay the formation of a really effective Pan-African organization which will lead to genuine political unification. Encouragement is being given to the formation of African regional economic organizations in the knowledge that without political cohesion they will be ineffective and serve to strengthen, not weaken, neo-colonialist exploitation and domination.

All manner of red herrings are being used to distract and deflect us from our purpose. There is talk of 'African socialism', Arab socialism, democratic socialism, Muslim socialism, and latterly, the 'pragmatic pattern of development', their advocates claiming they have found the solution to our problems.

Just as there is only one true socialism, scientific socialism, the principles of which are universal and abiding, there is only one way to

achieve the African revolutionary goals of liberation, political unification and socialism. That way lies through armed struggle. The time for speechifying, for conferences, for makeshift solutions and for compromise is past.

Similarly, with the emergence of Black Power in the United States of America, the liberation movement of African-Americans has become militant and armed. But as in Africa, the movement is having to be on its guard against the internal as well as the external enemy. There must be a closing of ranks and tenacious, united effort to carry the struggle through to a successful conclusion.

THE SPECTRE OF BLACK POWER

With a decisiveness and force which can no longer be concealed the spectre of Black Power has descended on the world like a thundercloud flashing its lightning. Emerging from the ghettos, swamps and cotton-fields of America, it now haunts the streets, legislative assemblies and high councils and has so shocked and horrified Americans that it is only now that they are beginning to grasp its full significance, and the fact that Black Power, in other manifestations, is in confrontation with imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, exploitation and aggression in many parts of the world.

In America, the 'Negro problem' has been a more or less polite conversation piece since the first African slaves were landed in James Town in 1619. For three hundred and fifty years, however, the subject of 'slave revolts' has been tabooed and eliminated from text-books. For the past thirty years stringent efforts have been made to whitewash and obscure the real issue of the United States Civil War: whether African slavery should be continued or not. Indeed, it is no longer considered proper in the United States to mention the 'Civil War'. Polite references are sometimes made to the 'unfortunate war between the states'.

After the Civil War, the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution did abolish African slavery and granted citizenship rights to the freed men. Immediately, the majority of states passed laws nullifying these rights, and in general, public opinion all over the country supported their action. There were some legislators who pointed out the injustice and even dangers of this course, and in 1875 Congress passed a mild Civil Rights Bill for the freed men. But in 1884 this Bill was repealed by the United States Supreme Court. And so, down through the years, people of

African descent in the United States of America have been petitioning, pleading, going to court and demonstrating for 'rights' freely granted to every naturalized immigrant.

As the United States grew richer, more powerful and imperialistic, as it expanded and extended its influence and control throughout Latin America and the islands of the Caribbean, its racialism, oppression and contempt for the peoples of African descent became accepted as an American way of life.

Russia's October Revolution did not penetrate the masses of African-Americans. A few intellectuals, however, did hail it as a triumph of the oppressed and the exploited, a proletarian socialist victory. Some travelled to the newly established Soviet Union. Several remained there, and contributed their strength and skills in building the world's first socialist state. But those who returned found no means of applying what they had seen to the situation in the United States. Meanwhile, white workers were agitating for better working conditions. But until the organization of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) and the Second World War, African-Americans were regularly excluded from labour organizations. The need for increased manpower during this period encouraged immigration from the South of thousands of black workers who crowded into northern cities finding jobs, but no place to live except in slums amid conditions far worse than the rural shacks they had left in the South.

In spite of the long and untiring work in education and organization of the pioneers of 'Civil Rights'; in spite of the painstaking efforts made by African-American citizens of the United States to educate their children, and by hard work to achieve 'acceptance' in American society, African-Americans have remained only barely tolerated aliens in the land of their birth, the vast mass of them outside consideration of basic human justice.

This is a fact which is now being called to the attention of all those who through the years have had in their power the means to order and fashion the world according to their interests. White interests controlled the economic wealth; white interests have been able to establish the 'moral' standards by which America must live; white domestic imperialism made all the laws, rules and regulations. This was the modern world up to, and throughout, the first half of the twentieth century.

The independence of Ghana, achieved on March 6th, 1957, ushered in the decisive struggle for freedom and independence throughout Africa - freedom from colonial rule and settler domination. On that day I proclaimed to the world 'the independence of

Ghana is meaningless unless it is linked with the total liberation of the African continent'. Immediately, the beating drums sent this message across rivers, mountains, forests and plains. The people heard and acted. Liberation movements gained strength, and freedom fighters began to train. One after another, new African states came into being, and above the world's horizon loomed the African Personality. African statesmen went to the United Nations; Africans proudly wore the ancient regalia of their ancestral land; Africans stood up and spoke on the rostrum of the world forum, and they spoke for Africans and the people of African descent wherever they might be.

I experienced the immediate impact on Africa's dispossessed in the United States - Black dignity could be achieved. Black beauty was a reality. I know how determined and inspired African-American students went out from their colleges in the South and 'sat down' in those places which laws and customs had reserved for 'whites' only. They were heard to say when they were being dragged to jail by infuriated police: 'All Africa will be liberated before we here can get a lousy cup of coffee!'

American text-books shy away from discussion of slave revolts, though riots and insurrection form a large part of African-American history. We know how black men and women fought through the swamps of Louisiana, how Virginian planters cowed before the name of the rebel, Nat Turner, how Harriet Tubman led armed bands of runaway slaves out of the South, and of her fame as a sharp-shooter. The largest slave revolt was planned and led by a white man whose name has been immortalized in song. It was on Harpers Ferry bridge that John Brown began the Civil War which led inevitably to the freeing of the slaves.

The young African-American 'sit-downers' of recent years committed no violence, nor did the many white students who, following their example, poured out of the great northern universities to demonstrate against racialism, segregation and discrimination. But their petitions and pleas for justice were met with violence, with savage beatings, with jail sentences. Some of them died in the struggle.

Then, on August 18th, 1965, in the Negro ghetto of Watts, in the city of Los Angeles, African-Americans took up arms to meet their aggressors. Since then, practically every major city in the United States has seen guns, rifles and fire bombs in the hands of black men, who, with every shot fired, are claiming their birthright. Since 1966, the cry of the rebellion has been 'Black Power'.

What is Black Power? I see it in the United States as part of the vanguard of world revolution against capitalism, imperialism and neo-colonialism which have enslaved, exploited and oppressed peoples everywhere, and against which the masses of the world are now revolting. Black Power is part of the world rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, of the exploited against the exploiter. It operates throughout the African continent, in North and South America, the Caribbean, wherever Africans and people of African descent live. It is linked with the Pan-African struggle for unity on the African continent, and with all those who strive to establish a socialist society.

Analysis of the United States social structure indicates that black Americans comprise the proletariat base of the country. On their backs, their toil, sweat, enslavement and exploitation have been built the wealth, prosperity and high standard of living enjoyed by America today. Until recently, African-Americans sought to alleviate their oppression through integration into the majority white population. They demonstrated for an end of social discrimination and for 'equal rights', wanting to gain access to schools and colleges, restaurants, hotels and other places from which they had been excluded. Such were the demands of the Civil Rights Movement. Yet large numbers of African-Americans had no jobs, no decent housing, and no money to enjoy the restaurants, hotels and swimming pools reserved for 'whites only'. The Civil Rights Movement did not speak for the needs of the African-American masses.

It was, however, thought that the plea for civil rights would be met, because the United States Constitution, with its various amendments, supports these demands. Instead, thousands of African-Americans have been jailed, intimidated, beaten, and some murdered for agitating for those rights guaranteed by the American constitution.

The masses grasp instinctively the meaning and goal of Black Power: the oppressed and exploited are *without power*. Those who have power have everything, those without power have nothing: if you don't believe in guns, you are already dead.

Black Power gives the African-American an entirely new dimension. It is a vanguard movement of black people, but it opens the way for all oppressed masses. Unfortunately, the Trade Unions in the United States are as capitalist in make-up and goals as any million dollar corporation. And the majority of white skilled workers with their well-furnished houses, two cars, televisions and long vacations are complacent. They have much more to 'lose than their chains'. But there are potentially revolutionary white masses in the United

States. Consider the lot of the 'poor whites' in the hills of Georgia, Tennessee and the Carolinas, the white share-croppers in the low-lands of Alabama and Mississippi. Too often these are written off as 'poor white trash'. But they, too, are dispossessed; often they are without hope. Yet 'poor whites' and blacks' have not been pushed as far down as their backs will lie. When they see a way ahead for them, the oppressed and exploited do revolt. Black Power is leading the way; Black Power is already a spearhead.

At this momentous period of history, as the era of people's armed revolution gets under way in Africa, I see coming the triumph of the human spirit, the collapse of the forces of inhumanity and the emergence of the glorious effort finally to free mankind from senseless and inhuman exploitation, degradation and wars. The old Africa is crumbling down; the new Africa is being constructed.

In Africa, we thought we could achieve freedom and independence, and our ultimate goals of unity and socialism by peaceful means. This has landed us in the grip of neo-colonialism. We could not succeed using non-violent methods. The same power structure which is blocking the efforts of African-Americans in the United States is also now throwing road-blocks in Africa's way. Imperialism, neo-colonialism, settler domination and racialism seek to bring us down and re-subjugate us.

In Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and South East Asia, imperialists and neo-colonialists, with the help of local stooges, attempt to master with guns. They are united in their determination to extend and prolong their domination and exploitation. So we must fight wherever imperialism, neo-colonialism and racialism exist. We too must combine our strength and co-ordinate our strategy in a unified armed struggle. Non-violent methods are now anachronistic in revolution. And so I say to the progressive, revolutionary forces of the world, in the words of Ernesto Ché Guevara: 'Let us develop a true proletarian internationalism, with international proletarian armies; the flag under which we fight shall be the sacred cause of redeeming humanity.'

It must be understood that liberation movements in Africa, the struggle of Black Power in America or in any other part of the world, can only find consummation in the political unification of Africa, the home of the black man and people of African descent throughout the world. African-Americans have been separated from their cultural and national roots. Black children overseas are not taught of the glory of African civilization in the history of mankind, of pillaged cities and destroyed tribes. They do not know the millions

of black martyrs who died resisting imperialist aggression. The imperialists and neo-colonialists inside or outside the United States designate everything 'good' as 'white', and everything 'bad' as 'black'. Black Power says: 'We will define ourselves'. For centuries, African-Americans have been the victims of racialism. They have now taken up arms to abolish it for ever, and to destroy its fertile breeding ground, the capitalist system. For it is only with the building of a socialist society that peace and racial harmony can be ultimately achieved. It is only world socialism which can provide the solution to the problems of the world today.

For us in Africa, for the people of African descent everywhere, there can be no turning back, no compromise, no fear of failure or death. Africa must and shall fulfil her destiny. Even though revolution in other parts of the world may wither or go astray, the African revolution must reach its goal of unity and socialism. We have taken the correct road, even though hazardous. We face death as we face life with head up, eyes lifted, proud and unafraid. The seed dies that life may come forth. So, we may meet death knowing that we cannot be defeated. For the oppressed peoples of the world will one day triumph. Hundreds and thousands of us have died in many an imperialist war. If we die in the struggle of black emancipation it will be as men bringing into this world the wholesome, rich benefits of Black Power.

And so for us Black Power heralds the long-awaited day of liberation from the shadows of obscurity. We take our place among the peoples of the world without hate or apologies, with confidence and with goodwill towards all men. The spectre of Black Power has taken shape and form and its material presence fights to end the exploitation of man by man.

CONCLUSION

Racial discrimination is the product of an environment, an environment of a divided class society, and its solution is to change that environment. This presupposes the fact that it is only under socialism in the United States of America that the African-American can really be free in the land of his birth.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

MESSAGE TO THE BLACK PEOPLE OF BRITAIN

Members of the Black Panther Movement and all my Black Brothers and Sisters, comrades and friends from the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Latin America and all corners of the socialist world.

Greetings:

History rarely moves in a straight line; its course is uneven. Today as a result of the contradictions in capitalism, neo-colonialism and racism, Black Power is emerging on the stage of history. The oppressed of the earth are seeking a new way out to resolve these contradictions and achieve total emancipation.

What is Black Power? By Black Power we mean the power of the four-fifths of the world population which has been systematically damned into a state of underdevelopment by colonialism and neo-colonialism. In other words, Black Power is the sum total of the economic, cultural and political power which the black man must have in order to achieve his survival in a highly developed technical society, and in a world ravaged by imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and fascism.

Black Power epitomizes a new stage of revolutionary consciousness of the yearning and aspiration of the black man. Since the black man is the most oppressed of the races of mankind, Black Power, therefore, is the struggle for the possession of the economic, cultural, social and political power which he, in common with the oppressed and the exploited of the earth, must have in order to stampede and overthrow