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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

SOVIET PENETRATION IN AFRICA REVIEWED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 29 May 81 pp 1459-1462

[Article by Jacques Latremoliere: "The Soviet Bloc Penetration in Africa"]

[Text] At the beginning of World War II, only two Soviet diplomatic missions and half a dozen consulates or consular agencies, dealing almost exclusively with maritime disputes, existed in Africa. Now, in 1981, the USSR is represented in that continent by 32 embassies staffed by 6,500 civil servants and agents who enjoy diplomatic status. The Addis Ababa embassy alone has a staff of 600 persons.

There is no possible comparison between all this manpower and the personnel lined up by big nations of the West such as Great Britain, France, the United States, Canada or the Federal Republic of Germany, although these countries are the major suppliers and clients of the African nations, even of those to which the socialist label is attached. The growth of commercial relations between the USSR and Africa can only partly justify all this personnel since the bulk of the activities of the Soviet embassies focusses on intelligence, dissemination of cultural information and political action, both among the governments and the populations themselves. Their efforts in these spheres are complemented by the presence of technical collaborators who are there in relatively large numbers considering the narrow scope of Soviet cooperation programs, from the standpoint of cooperation as we understand it, i.e., financial aid given as a donation or as a loan, allocated to productive projects and implemented by helping to design, study, execute and run these projects. This help can be given free of charge or be repaid in various ways. As a matter of fact, Soviet technical collaborators are working mostly in the local branches of the public services, preferably in the radio, press, audio-visual media, police and security, not to mention the services which control air, maritime and railroad communications.

For the entire continent, the number of these technical collaborators is estimated to be 28,000, to which must be added another 12,000 technical experts from East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Cuba, Poland and Bulgaria. There are fewer Poles and Bulgarians, the former because they are inclined to try to establish contact with Westerners working in cooperation programs and the latter because their level of expertise remains mediocre. This figure of 40,000 technical

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collaborators from the socialist countries (not counting China and North Korea) includes citizens of the USSR and satellite republics who are working for international organizations. There are almost as many of them as Western cooperation agents but their investments which, in our view, should be the basis for their presence, only amounts to 11.3 percent of the investments from the western countries.

In addition to civilian personnel, we have military personnel and in this category a distinction must be made between advisers, officers and NCOs in charge of teaching, training and sometimes officering the national armies on the one hand, and the operational established units on the other hand. Soviet personnel is predominant in the first group which consists of approximately 10,000 people and amounts to 80 percent of the nonsocialist foreign military men stationed in the continent and engaged in similar tasks. The total strength of the operational units is 60,000 men, of which 10,000 are Soviets, 15,000 East Germans and 35,000 Cubans. From this last group, 52.8 percent, that is, two divisions, are in Angola for the time being.

The armament of these units is more or less the same as the armament which is either given or sold to the African nations. It consists of strong equipment, not very sophisticated and already old, since it was manufactured in the sixties. Soviet military assistance strictly controls the use of weapons supplied to the national armies, particularly with regard to fuels and ammunitions; under the best circumstances, the organic reserves of these armies would only last them 2 or 3 days of fighting. This strict control is what would have made it possible, in 1977, to turn almost overnight the artillery and tanks of the Somali Army into a heap of scrap but for the stocks of ammunition and spare parts which the Soviets left behind when they were expelled from Egypt and which enabled President Sadat to "bail out" Mogadishu until 1979.

It is nonetheless a fact that one of the USSR's main concerns is to ensure, whenever the need arises, a rapid logistic support both for the operational units brought in from outside and for the national armies's operations which it wants to support. This is done by means of a large fleet of transport aircraft and the corresponding ground installations. This is how, in 1975, the Operation Carlotta succeeded in transporting 8,000 troops from Cuba to Angola in the space of 48 hours, forming a totally autonomous unit while, according to official estimates, in those days the Pentagon would have required a minimum of 10 days to achieve the same results. More recently, observers were surprised by the speed with which a Libyan expeditionary force was dispatched to Chad with the help of Soviet aircraft and 250 East German experts. Mobility and speed seem to be the key features of the Soviet machinery for intervention in Africa, be it a direct intervention or intervention by subrogate allies.

Cuban Personnel in Africa in 1979 (1)

<u>Country</u>	<u>Military</u>	<u>Civilian</u>
Angola	19,000	6,500
Ethiopia	15,000	450

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Guinea		350	50
Congo	Approx.	300	75
Mozambique		200	600
Equatorial Guinea		200	50
Guinea-Bissau		75	30
Zambia	Approx.	100	-
Tanzania	Approx.	50	150
Sao Tome	Approx.	50	100
Madagascar	Approx.	50	-
Benin	Approx.	50	-
Sierra Leone	Approx.	50	-
Cape Verde		-	12
Total		35,475	8,017

(1) Data from British sources

Another characteristic of this machinery is the close integration of all the expatriate military elements, including the advisers, within the local command centers, the most important of which is now based in Addis Ababa.

The number of people that the USSR and its allies have in Africa to unfold their strategy adds up to 106,000 persons of which 6,500 are diplomats or comparable categories*, 40,000 civilian technical collaborators and 60,000 troops, 50,000 of them in established units. The USSR supplies 49 percent of all this personnel, Cuba 33 percent (mostly troops since medical care is under the expeditionary forces' command) and East Germany 15 percent.

Patterns and Shortcomings of Soviet Involvement

The interest shown by the USSR toward Africa after World War II can be explained, in the first place, by the possibility which that country had of establishing, as other big powers had done, centers of political, cultural and commercial influence in territories which, until they became independent, had been closed to most foreign influences by their colonial status. Therefore, at that time, this interest could be interpreted as being both normal and fortuitous.

Admittedly, the large number of personnel assigned to the new embassies opened by the USSR seemed surprising but the United States was also sending equally large staffs mainly to Ethiopia, Zaire, Nigeria and even Togo. The way Soviet diplomats lived in phalansteries, their refusal to accept invitations unless invited in pairs, and their wives' mad scramble to get to the female lingerie department in low-price stores, became amusing topics of conversation. Their cultural campaigns, films, circus and music-hall performances and the opening of libraries were looked upon by old African regulars, such as the British and the French, as nothing but a propaganda activity which should be watched, naturally, but for the most part that activity seemed to be less harmful to their positions

*The amount of personnel in the diplomatic missions of satellite countries is negligible.

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than the American involvement. Even the setbacks suffered by the Russians and the blunders they committed while discovering Africa were seen as reassuring signs of their inability to adjust to the continent. That is what happened with some items sold in Guinea, with the sugar which did not satisfy the African sweet tooth or with the offices for the exhibit and sale of Soviet equipment where their local partners absconded with funds advanced to them.

This bizarre period belongs to the past now and with the passing of 20 years one has a better idea, in view of the results obtained, about the objectives of a policy which proved to be remarkably realistic as it gradually unfolded, although it was not lacking in dogmatic justifications. The manner in which Somalia was quickly abandoned as an ally in favor of a country which was its enemy but had greater wealth, more population and a better geographic location, provides convincing proof. Soviet apologists are hard put to justify that turn-about with the argument of a class struggle and fighting imperialism since it has to be admitted that Ethiopia is the African exponent of that imperialism.

Paradoxically, it is by looking at the sectors of activity which are neglected by the Soviets, with slight variations depending on the countries, rather than at their positive areas of involvement, that one can see where their real interests lie. The most important of these sectors is the investment sector. It is true that the socialist dogma considers this sector more like a tool used by the international capital to dominate the Third World than an instrument of development; this view is hard to defend when applied to economies where the state is in command or control of the means of production regardless of who provided the initial funding for those means of production. The case of Ethiopia is not conclusive in this respect since the Russian penetration is too recent and that country had, and still has, military priorities which have forced it to borrow close to \$2 billion from the USSR. In the economic sphere, Soviet contributions seem to be limited to their participation in a project to expand the Assab refinery and in studies to build another refinery in Addis Ababa. But in Somalia, where over a period of 10 years the Soviets were in a prominent position from the military and political viewpoints, they can only be credited with medium and small fishing projects, canning factories and small industrial enterprises.

In Mozambique, where the Soviets seem to remain in a privileged position, the problem in hand is to rehabilitate the enterprises created during the Portuguese period rather than to create new ones. Technical assistance in the forms of personnel or supply of credits for equipment goods are more than justified under these circumstances. Nonetheless, the countries of the socialist bloc have only brought a modest contribution to the reconstruction and expansion of the railroad network with the exception of diesel locomotives supplied by Rumania. Even in terms of goods sold or services provided, Soviet aid operations in that country remain scarce. In the province of Namputo, Soviet aid is reactivating cotton farming with quite good results while Rumania does the same in Cabo Delgado and the French company CFDT [French Company for the Development of Textile Fibers] in Sofala and Zambeze. But this initiative is one of the few examples, if not the only one, of direct cooperation in the sphere of farming which can be credited to the USSR in Africa.

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In socialist Angola the situation is even more astonishing. Here, Russian economic aid did not have to face the same disadvantages as in Mozambique, a country dependent on South Africa which supplies it with the merchandise needed to keep its main industry, transportation, going and which is the sole buyer of the electric power produced in Mozambique. The colonial structures of former Angola, with its large coffee plantations in the provinces of Uige, South Cuanza and North Cuanza and with its mines and industrial plants owned by multinational corporations, lent themselves to a swift takeover by the state, a move where the experience and financial backing of the USSR would have been indicated. It did not happen. The coffee plantations in the north are still stagnating due to the lack of capital resources, farming tools and manpower. Foreign companies continue to pump the oil in Cabinda, Cuanza and Cuando. There have been talks with Swedish companies to mine the iron ore. And even more surprisingly, the international big capital continues to be pooled with state funds in the DIAMANG [Angola Diamond Company] corporation and the marketing of Angolan diamonds is entirely in capitalist hands, mostly South African, while the Soviets have not requested, nor were they granted, any share of it.

In the Congo and in Benin, countries with socialist political systems, Soviet operations are negligible. They used to be more important in Mali under the regime of Modibo Keita and in Guinea. In Mali, the USSR provided the capital and technical expertise to build several infrastructure projects, mostly aviation-related projects, and Soviet loans (66 billion Mali francs) remains the highest item in the external debt. In Guinea, the USSR is scheduled to go into partnership with the state to mine a small bauxite deposit in Demele, near Kindia, which is expected to produce 2.5 million tons a year for a period of 30 years. The USSR was supposed to have exclusive rights of purchase and in return would grant a low-interest loan of 83 million roubles. In the end, the implementation of this project has been delayed due to objections raised concerning the purchasing price offered by the USSR for the mineral and regarding the ultimate destination of that mineral (the USSR was planning to resell it to a French group to pay for the construction of an alumina and aluminum plant in the USSR). It seems that, after all this, Guinea is no longer interested for technical and political reasons. As for the USSR, these projects in Guinea and in Mali go back to the days when it was trying to find its way into Africa. Since then, it seems to have found other ways of getting into Africa and, besides, political developments in Guinea and Mali have not produced the satisfactory results that the USSR had every right to expect back in the sixties.

Two Exceptions to the Lack of Economic Involvement: Sea Fishing, the Ajaokuta Iron and Steel Complex

The USSR's African policy with regard to sea fishing has often been described as nothing but a front to justify the presence of its spying vessels in the Indian Ocean or in the Atlantic as well as to gain gradual access to ports for military-related purposes. Such thoughts certainly underlie Soviet strategy and the chief of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Gorchkov, reminded us in a 1977 interview with PRAVDA that "the transport ships, the fishing and scientific vessels are part of the Soviet naval power." With 4,500 vessels, 760 of which are large trawlers equipped with freezers, serviced by mother ships and factory ships, the Soviet fishing

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fleet is, in fact, the largest and most modern in the world. But sea fishing is also a convenient way of providing the proteins that Soviet nutrition lacks as a result of the ever-present meat shortage. A part of the catches are sold abroad in exchange for hard currency providing earnings which are by far more important than the expenditures incurred in political activities in Africa.

In 1978, 2.3 million tons of fish, or 35 percent of the total caught, were fished by Soviet ships on the Atlantic seaboard from Morocco to the Cape. The USSR has signed agreements with several countries securing fishing rights and port facilities for their ships and, in some cases, the right to build repair shops on land in exchange for which they conduct oceanographic studies and provide trawlers, freezer vessels, training programs and partnerships in small canning factories.

But since 1976, almost every coastal country in Africa has adopted the 200-nautical mile limit fishing zone, sometimes making up part of its exclusive economic zone, and the USSR is facing increasing difficulties in its fishing activities. In Guinea-Bissau, where the Soviet fleet was partner in a joint operation (Estrela do Mar) which grossed \$1.5 million in 1978, the authorities are not eager to go back to the same formula. In 1980, after an experiment viewed as not being very conclusive, the Senegalese Government canceled the Soviet-Senegalese fishing operation. Mauritania has launched a joint enterprise which is still being negotiated because the Russians are demanding additional benefits. The USSR keeps some 30 trawlers in the territorial waters of Sierra Leone which gets 12 percent of the catches through the agency of a state company responsible for marketing and controlling the catches reported by the captains. The economic situation of traditional fishermen is adversely affected by this arrangement, raising many complaints. The USSR is trying to get into Liberia where it has placed a research vessel at the disposal of the authorities. In Equatorial Guinea, where the USSR had a quasi-monopoly over fishing activities by virtue of an agreement signed with Masie Nguema in 1973, the new regime established in 1979 by Col Obiang Nguema Mbasoga was quick to expel the Soviet trawlers which had established a base in the Bay of Luba in Bioco. One cannot rule out the possibility that new agreements will be signed at a future date involving the creation of refrigerating facilities and the delivery, at regulated prices, of a larger share of the catches to feed the local population.

Angola is the main base for Soviet trawlers in the Atlantic. In 1979, these trawlers caught, in the open seas, 750,000 tons of fish (640,000 tons of which were sent to the USSR) compared to 165,000 tons caught in 1975, the first year they fished there. An agreement signed in April 1977 grants them unlimited rights in exchange for technical aid and the delivery of equipment to rebuild the local fishing industry, with results which are not very convincing so far. Finally, although Namibia does not welcome Soviet trawlers, they have been taking advantage of the fact that there is a total lack of control over those territorial waters and they are cleaning them up. In that zone, their catches for 1977 amounted to 65,000 tons of sardines, 220,000 tons of hake and 436,000 tons of mackerel. This conduct on the part of a big power which has signed the International Fishing Convention for the Southeast Atlantic has raised repeated strong protest from African officials, particularly at the UN.

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In the Indian Ocean seaboard, one of the first Soviet initiatives in Mozambique, after that country's independence, was to sign fishing agreements, as it did in Angola, and create a joint company, the MOSOPESCA company, specialized in shrimp fishing. Almost the entire catch is exported to the USSR, which supplies 90 percent of the fish required by the Mozambique population (around 30,000 tons) in the form of canned fish. Maputo and Beira are the main bases for Soviet fishing vessels in that region of the Indian Ocean but fishing resources there are not as plentiful as on the Atlantic side. Fishing potential has been further cut back by the fact that the Seychelles and Mauritius--which in 1979 failed to renew its fishing agreement with the USSR--have adopted the 200-nautical mile zone. One should also point out that although Soviet trawlers were barred from Somalia, the authorities of the Republic of Djibouti did not grant them the right to call on that port as they requested.

All things considered, the expansion of Soviet sea fishing activities off the African shores is an exceptional departure from the rather indifferent attitude so far adopted by the USSR regarding the economic life of African countries, although these fishing operations are far more profitable for the USSR than for the countries involved. As we have just seen, these countries are showing signs of growing tired of the small advantages derived from a cooperation which is jeopardizing their potential resources. It seems that the golden years are now over for Soviet trawlers in those regions.

Another exception is the USSR's financial and technical cooperation with Nigeria in the Kainji Dam project on the Niger River, in the 760,000-kilowatt power station fed by that dam and in the iron and steel complex of Ajaokuta. This is a major project with an estimated total cost of \$4 billion and two French firms--Fougerolles (in a pool with the German company Julius Berger) and the Dumez civil engineering firm--are participating in the project with fairly substantial contracts (3.8 billion French francs). Construction work, scheduled to be completed late in 1983, is being supervised by nearly 6,000 Soviet experts who, with their dependents, form a community of 10,000. This represents the largest Soviet working site in Africa since the Aswan project and is far larger than two other projects to build hydroelectric power stations in Guinea-Bissau and in Tunisia.

Could it be that under the cover of this project the USSR is trying to increase its hold over a vital sector for the future of Africa, given its population and its oil resources? Or, is the USSR simply trying to test and advertise its expertise through contacts with Western enterprises and in a country in full development? Since it is unusual for the USSR to show interest in such a location and in such a project, the move is not likely to be fortuitous.

Statistics and Methods

Although the USSR is more lavish with propaganda about its economic aid to Africa than with statistics, it is possible to assess that aid as amounting to \$1,019 million between 1970 and 1976.* By logical extrapolation, one comes up with the

*Problems of Communism: China's Impact, George T. Yu, 1978.

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figure of \$1,420 million for the 1976-1980 period while, during that same period, the European Development Fund invested \$3.4 billion, French aid commitments amounted to \$4.1 billion and the actual amount of economic aid given by the West to Africa is estimated to be \$13 billion. It is true that if we were to establish a plausible comparison between the East and the West, the GDR contributions must be added to Soviet cooperation in Africa. However, the GDR share remains low (\$6.6 million a year between 1954 and 1979). On the whole, if we compare the two blocs we come up with a ratio of 11.2 to 100.

Soviet Aid and Credits to Africa from 1970 to 1976 (1)
(in million \$ U.S.)

Algeria	479	Morocco	44
Angola	10	Mozambique	3
Central African Republic	2	Niger	2
Chad	2	Nigeria	7
Congo	4	Rwanda	1
Egypt	299	Senegal	2
Equatorial Guinea	1	Somalia	87
Ethiopia	3	Tunisia	55
Guinea	2	Upper Volta	1
Guinea-Bissau	14		
Mauritania	1	Total	1,019

(1) Source: US CIA. "Communist Aid to the Less Developed Countries of the Free World." ER 77, 10,296 Washington, D.C. August 1977.

Of course, military aid from the Eastern bloc countries is not included in these figures. Without breakdown figures, it is difficult enough to have an idea of Soviet economic aid. But the task becomes even more impossible as regard armaments because they are supplied under conditions which vary depending on the degree to which beneficiary countries such as Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Angola, Benin, the Congo and Guinea Bissau have been won over to Marxism-Leninism. Military supplies delivered to those countries over the last 20 years are estimated to total \$12 billion and 50 percent of these deliveries were straight gifts. The USSR takes a different view when dealing with nationalist regimes which are progressive in the social sphere (in fact, in the view of Marxist orthodoxy, there is nothing more suspect than African socialism) such as Algeria and Libya in particular. Although these countries are valued as political destabilizing elements, they are still required to pay for their arms at the going price. Even when subsequent changes in the balance of their accounts with the USSR favors the introduction of Soviet experts, these deliveries do not fall within the concept of aid.

To the Soviet military deliveries must be added those supplied by the GDR amounting to \$4 million a year for the whole of Africa. Services in kind provided by Cuba in that sphere are subject to compensations worked out in the Soviet-Cuban accounts.

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A superficial study of the trade that takes place between Africa and the countries of the Eastern bloc shows that even if the volume of trade has increased, on account of oil deliveries to Guinea and of a certain flow of trade in the opposite direction involving exports of tropical goods such as bananas, coffee and cocoa, there is a wide gap between that volume of trade and the amount of funds allocated to economic and military aid by the USSR and its allies. This imbalance could be explained by the fact that the economies are not complementary, particularly as far as consumer goods, food supplies and manufactured commodities are concerned.*

What is obvious is that the economic objective is only of secondary importance and one must look for other reasons to explain this aid. Considered as a whole, the strategy of the USSR, which holds the leadership of the socialist world, has a peripheral character. It affects far less landlocked countries than those with a seaboard. The purpose of that strategy is to establish bases of operation on ports where political destabilization, only taking place on a second stage, would lead to reinforcing these bases and turning them into air and naval bases in the event of a worldwide conflict. As for the Soviet involvement in Ethiopia, it should be seen as primarily directed against Egypt with a view to gain control over the Mediterranean basin.

One could go on discussing the underlying motives for that policy--whether it is prompted by ideological considerations or by a panslavism inherited from the Czars--and the methods used to attain their goal: cultural cooperation, scholarships, exchanges of trainees, technical cooperation as in Nigeria, the signature of trade agreements or activities in the political sphere such as infiltrating the national armies. The officially-held doctrine is condensed in the principles constantly reiterated by Brezhnev: opposition to a global conflict with the West, keeping up the ideological struggle, socialist solidarity and protection of socialist gains in the Third World, support for the proletariat and backing for the national liberation movements against colonialism and neocolonialism. But when it comes to implementing these principles and methods, they are toned down by an ever-present pragmatism. The interests of some Western countries, France for example, can be accommodated as they are in Europe for reasons of expediency or, more to the point, because their presence (as in Djibouti) is viewed as a lesser evil compared to the American presence. The fact remains that the Soviet offensive in Africa only goes back to World War II, that the Soviets did not play a significant role in the decolonization of that continent and that the dynamics of the cold war between the two blocs are probably the reason for their present attitude.

If these are the grounds for their actions, one could then obviously wonder what is the reason, apart from ideological affinity, for the friendliness shown to Soviets in an Africa whose economic development only gets a mediocre support from them. The answer lies in the fact that for many African governments, the Soviet "threat" represents an incentive for Western countries to maintain and increase their aid. This is a faulty assessment because aid should be divorced from

*See MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS of 1 May 1981, pp 1231-1233: "USSR-Africa Trade in 1978 and 1979."

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politics as it is in the case of European and French bilateral aid. Indeed, by turning the argument around and following the somewhat selective American line, one could also say that these governments would react quite differently if Western aid made a distinction between "good guys" and "bad guys."

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

A LOOK AT MITTERRAND'S AFRICAN ADVISERS

Mitterrand's African Advisers Profiled

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 2 Jun 81 pp 18-21

[Article by Sennen Andriamirado]

[Text] The ministerial embraces will not feel the same! Only yesterday, Minister of Cooperation Robert Galley was effusively falling into the arms of his foreign affairs counterparts such as Moustapha Niake of Senegal, Simeon Ake of the Ivory Coast or Martin Bongo of Gabon.

Since 22 May, somebody else is in charge and, from now on, the Ministry of Cooperation and Development will have as its boss a 44-year old "young man," Jean-Pierre Cot, and it will take him a while to get used to this kind of effusive manners and to know which partners he should embrace two, three or four times. Unless he never gets used to it!

Although he has a warm personality, is known to be a "nice guy" and a "man who likes to make contact with people" and who rejects the label of technocrat, he does not have toward Africa that "gut feeling" which his predecessor claimed to have. From the viewpoint of physical appearances, Robert Galley was famous for his three-piece double-breasted suits while Cot will be known for sporting blazers. With a youthful face, long and curly hair casually groomed, this professor of international law from the University of Paris will be "the voice of France" during negotiations with African countries.

The Ministry of Cooperation continues to exist but its style will be different. And its spirit will also be different. The ministry would have ceased to exist long ago but for the insistence of the senior Senegalese head of state, Leopold Sedar Senghor, who again pointed out to President Mitterrand that he should not "frighten" some African leaders by giving the impression that he was going to do away with French-African cooperation.

Little known in Africa but vitally important for many African regimes since it handles French-African relations, that ministry located on "Rue Monsieur" was seen by some as the successor of the "Rue Oudinot" ministry, the former Ministry of overseas France. Others, in a more prosaic vein, saw it as the keeper of the keys to the French money chests--the FAC (Aid and Cooperation Fund) and the CCCE (Central Fund for Economic Cooperation).

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The "African Paper" of the Socialist Party (see JEUNE AFRIQUE issues Nos 1062 and 1063) indicated that the ministry would be replaced by a National Agency for Cooperation similar to the ACIDI (Canadian Agency for International Development). But mapping out a policy is one thing while governing is something else if one takes into account, as in this case, the reactions of foreign partners.

Yet, why was a minister who knows nothing about Africa selected to such an "African" post?

The first reason is past experience. In 1950-1951 when Francois Mitterrand took over the Ministry of overseas France, he had no insight about Africa. When Gaston Defferre, now minister of interior, took over the Rue Oudinot Ministry in 1956-1957, he could not claim to have that kind of insight either.

And, under the Fifth Republic, Robert Galley practically discovered Africa when he became minister of cooperation. A man such as Jean-Pierre Cot can go through the same apprenticeship even if he follows a different course.

A second reason: Francois Mitterrand has wanted to strike a balance in his government team between the various trends within the Socialist Party. Jean-Pierre Cot, who is the right-hand man of Michel Rocard, appointed to the post of minister of state in charge of planning and of territorial planning, will contribute to represent the Rocard group in the government.

And finally, a third reason: President Mitterrand undoubtedly wants to break away from the past by appointing to the Ministry of Cooperation a man who is not an offspring of the colonial seraglio. However, such men exist in the new French government team.

The French president himself knew Africa during the dark years of the continent. At that time, he opposed the arrest of Felix Houphouet-Boigny, then leader of the RDA (African Democratic Rally) and, as such, hounded as a rebel. With skillful moves, he became the architect of the divorce between that important African party and the French Communist Party.

The number two "Africa hand" is Gaston Defferre who, during the 1956-1957 period, moulded French-speaking Africa as we know it today by means of the famous outline law. The change introduced by that law was to grant internal autonomy to the colonial territories. But when he insists that this law was the first step toward decolonization, Defferre undoubtedly forgets that for many Africans it still represents a balkanization: the law carved up the large federations of the AOF (French West Africa) and of the AEF (French Equatorial Africa) into small territories which later became states.

In addition to the "Black Africa hands," the French Government also has its "Maghreb hands." One of them is Minister of National Education Alain Savary (age 63) who resigned in 1956 from the post of secretary of state for Moroccan and Tunisian affairs as an act of protest when the aircraft carrying the Algerian Revolution leader Ben Bella was searched in mid-flight.

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Another "Maghreb hand" is Michel Jobert, minister of state in charge of foreign trade. Born in Meknes, he is reputed to be one of the top French experts on Morocco. As such, his presence in the ranks of the government should counter-balance the friends which Algeria and the POLISARIO have among the members of the socialist team.

In addition to his Moroccan trump cards and to the high regard which the oil-producing Arab countries have for him, Michel Jobert has a wide experience going back to the newly-independent Black Africa. As principal private secretary of Gaston Cusin, then French high-commissioner for French West Africa in Dakar (1956-1958), he had to implement the famous outline law; as assistant to the principal private secretary, and later principal private secretary (1959-1961) of the minister of state in charge of cooperation, Robert Lecourt, he was the one who tested the first "noncolonial" relations between France and French-speaking Africa.

But if anybody deserves the title of "Mister Third World," it is Claude Cheysson, the minister of foreign affairs. Apart from his Vietnamese experience, this career diplomat has been an adviser to Pierre Mendes-France (for foreign affairs) and to Alain Savary (for Moroccan and Tunisian affairs). From 1958 to 1962, he headed the General Secretariat for Technical Cooperation with Africa, then became director general of the Sahara Organization--that unfulfilled dream of a Sahara shared by all the Maghreb countries--and was later put in charge of the Organization for Industrial Cooperation in Algiers.

After serving as ambassador to Indonesia (1966-1969), Claude Cheysson went back to the object of his early love. As a member of the EEC Commission since 1973, he became commissioner for development and was the architect of the two Lome Conventions (signed on 28 February 1975 and 31 October 1979 respectively) which regulate the cooperation between the nine Common Market countries and the 56 ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries.

Thus, Claude Cheysson has emerged as the "Mister Third World" and this is how he is viewed by a number of African leaders whose confidant he has become, if reluctantly. Cheysson is, without doubt, the minister who has been in the closest and best position to follow and even participate in African developments over the last 10 years. From now on, as boss of French diplomacy, he will be in control of France's policy in Africa.

Still, he will not be the only person in charge of the African file in Paris. Jean-Pierre Cot, his minister delegate in charge of cooperation and development, will share this task with him. As the Socialist Party's national representative for European affairs, Cot established an excellent relationship with Claude Cheysson when the latter was posted in Brussels.

To compensate for his lack of knowledge on African affairs, he has already selected experienced aides. The first is Jean Audibert, his principal private secretary, a former director of the FAC (Aid and Cooperation Fund), then director of cultural and technical cooperation and, finally, chairman of the ASECNA (Association for Air Navigation Safety in Africa). All along, Audibert has been one of the main organizers of the Socialist Party's Africa Group.

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Then there is Renauld Vignal, head of mission. Until his latest appointment, this career diplomat worked on the "North-South" file in the department of economic affairs of the Quai d'Orsay and he is known to have established a good relationship with the American liberal team of Jimmy Carter, particularly with Andrew Young whose militant humanism he shares.

That same humanism is a characteristic of the last and most unexpected "Africa hand," Jean Le Garrec, secretary of state to the prime minister. Without specific portfolio, Jean Le Garrec is reported to be the right-hand man of Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy. But even more important, as far as the Africans are concerned, is the fact that this 52-year old man spent his career in the CFDT [French Democratic Confederation of Labor] union and in the Socialist Party defending the rights of immigrant workers in France.

There is little doubt that Jean Le Garrec will be "Minister Immigrant" but with a slight difference: from now on, they will not be referred to as "immigrant workers" but as "immigrant population." The reason for this change is that socialist France does not want to look upon foreigners as mere bunker-hands of the French economy. A symbolic nuance, no doubt, but a nuance which signals a frame of mind--human warmth and respect for mankind.

In this respect, one could even say that, from now on, those Africans who are having human right troubles will be likely to find a more receptive ear in the French Government. The Mitterrand team is full of "human rights' champions" and for a long time now they have been demanding that moral standards be applied to French-African relations.

They are even advocating cooperation on a selective basis depending on whether human rights are observed or disregarded by the recipient nations. When Claude Cheysson was drafting the Second Lome Convention, he suggested that the preamble to the treaty include a reference to human rights. He failed in this point to the delight of many African governments.

The present minister of state in charge of research and technology, Jean-Pierre Chevenement, set the cat among the pigeons when, in 1979, he questioned the government of Valery Giscard d'Estaing on the issue of its African policy which, at that time, was at least suspected of being in silent collusion with the despots of Africa. Francois Mitterrand himself stands as a champion of these famous human rights. Although he was rather discreet on the subject of the past friendship between Giscard d'Estaing and Bokassa, there have been times when he has refused to be associated with some undesirable individuals.

A few months ago, while he was on a trip to the Ivory Coast, he did not visit a member of his family who lives in a neighboring country, to avoid finding himself in a situation where he would have to shake hands with a president who is known to be following on the footsteps of someone like Bokassa.

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African Experts in Socialist Party

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 2 Jun 81 pp 20, 21

[Article by Sennen Andriamirado]

[Text] On the fourth floor of 10 Solferino Street, Paris, at the Socialist Party [PS] headquarters, four telephones are ringing nonstop in one of the offices assigned to the National Secretariat for International Affairs. From the time that Francois Mitterrand was elected and until a government was formed, telephone calls and unexpected visitors turned that office into a kind of hidden Foreign Affairs Ministry.

One day, Francois Fugier, who is in charge of the "Third World desk," took a call from Caracas. The caller was the French ambassador to Venezuela requesting instructions. She kindly advised him to approach the Quai d'Orsay where Giscard d'Estaing's minister, Jean Francois-Poncet, was still dealing with everyday matters. Another time, a special envoy from President Ahmed Sekou Toure came to that office to assure the "French socialist comrades" of the joy felt by the "Guinean revolutionary comrade on the occasion of Francois Mitterrand's splendid election to the post of president of French-speaking Africa at the EHESS (School of Advanced Studies on Social Sciences); Gabriel Arnaud, in charge of external relations in the CCFD (Catholic Committee Against Hunger and for Development) who "is very knowledgeable" on the subject of southern Africa; Jean Audibert, chairman of ASECNA (Association for Air Navigation Safety in Africa) who is reputed to be one of the top French experts on Chad and generally on all the countries in the Sudanese area; Roland Colin, director general of IRFED (Institute for Research and Training in Education and Development) and former chief private secretary of Mamadou Dia, president of the Senegalese Council until 1962, and who "deals" not only with Senegal but with Mali, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic as well.

That inner core is surrounded by a second circle which consists of experts from various ministries and specialized agencies. There is, for instance, Andree Audibert, head of social services in the Ministry of Cooperation; Denis de Sevres, the driving spirit behind the magazine RECHERCHE ET PEDAGOGIF, who has been put in charge of the "French-speaking countries" file by the PS; Yves Person, a historian who is the director of the African Research Center; Georges Cancade from the Central Fund for Economic Cooperation and Claude Wauthier, a journalist working for AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE.

Finally, the last circle is a sort of semi-clandestine network of "friends"--some are party activists, others are not; some are French citizens, others are not--who have also contributed to the mapping out of the PS's African policy (see JEUNE AFRIQUE, issues Nos. 1062 and 1063) by preparing background notes or supplying....some confidential documents.

The same as all those who are in the National Secretariat for International Relations, the members of the Africa Group have a reputation of being "travel junkies." This unkind reputation came to them as an inheritance from some of their predecessors who were said to love traveling. Another label attached to

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the "African experts of the party" is that of being "young Turk ideologists." In fact, and apart from Veronique Neiertz and Francoise Fugier, all the members of the International Commission are over 40. Philippe Farine, who is over 60 and a retiree, could even be taken for an old man if he did not have such a strong physical appearance. Jean-Pierre Raison (age 45) separates the rest of them into two categories: "Those who go back to the colonial years like Gabriel Arnaud, Roland Colin or Jean Audibert, and the Algerian war generation to which I belong."

How much weight do these "African experts" carry within the party? A lot considering that they are also known to be Lionel Jospin's proteges. But how much weight will they carry from now on in a France ruled by socialists? Discreet or bitter in advance, their only answer is to say that the party is not the government and that the PS program is not necessarily the same as President Mitterrand's program. This is perhaps their way of saying that Francois Mitterrand will not feel tied down to every program although the party commissions will act as watchdog committees of the government.

But, at least, the "African experts" of Solferino Street have had a first satisfaction: as they recommended, the French-African Summit Meeting of Kinshasa, scheduled to be held in September this year, will not take place. Firstly, because one must find out what is the point of that tradition established by Giscard d'Estaing. And secondly, because Francois Mitterrand wants to be free to choose the first African country that he will visit.

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GABON

REPORTED CORRUPTION, POVERTY, DESPOTISM BLAMED ON BONGO RULE

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 242, 22 Jun-5 Jul 81 p 29

[Article by Alam Sibom: "Letter from Libreville"]

[Excerpt] Omar Bongo, who governs like an absolute monarch and whose friends and relatives are legion in the government, in diplomatic missions abroad and in local administration, has instituted tribalism and regionalism as a regime. Behaving as if Gabon begins and ends with his native town, Omar Bongo has made of Franceville an ultra-modern metropolis to the detriment of the capital and other administrative centers. He has sold our country to imperialist France; our resources are plundered by the consortiums, the cartels and the neo-colonial trusts. Royalties on these thefts constitute Bongo's and his friends' personal fortune: they export our public monies to accounts in Switzerland or in France, where they purchase for themselves chalets, chateaux, buildings, apartments in Paris and its suburbs and on the Cote d'Azur.

Meanwhile, our workers, our students, our people are encountering more and more difficulties. Corruption and bribery are rampant, but agriculture has been left to fend for itself and city folk can purchase few foodstuffs on the market. There are few roads, and there is no public enterprise for rural and urban transportation. Travelers must borrow trucks to drive to the provinces in search of food. Air traffic is beyond the reach of peasants and workers, since a one-way ticket for a 400-km flight costs more than 30,000 francs CFA.

In spite of all this, education and health are being turned over wholesale to the private sector. Transformed into businessmen, Omar Bongo and the members of his government own stock in all the enterprises and companies. With under-employment a scourge, prestige projects are carried out brilliantly. The governing class and the privileged, resplendent with good health, live a golden life in an insolent display of luxury.

Grouped in an association whose leaders give no thought to peasant women or housewives, women can only sing Bongo's praise. In order to camouflage the exploitation of women, a Ministry of Feminine Promotion has been established, lacking any function or purpose.

As for the youth, it is molded into an association of informers. Students who dare to criticize the regime have their education grants suspended. Moral depravation completes this summary and sad balance of the domestic situation.

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To keep his throne, Omar Bongo has simultaneously turned himself into an extreme propagandist and a zealous supporter of Giscard d'Estaing's policies in Africa, thus sullyng Gabon's image throughout the continent and the world.

It is possible today to bet--without any risk of losing--that the despot of Libreville is worried and that he is rather looking toward the brawny Reagan regime... In Gabon, the time of the popular awakening has arrived.

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UGANDA

'GUARDIAN' CORRESPONDENT MEETS IDI AMIN

LD021330 London THE GUARDIAN in English 2 Jun 81 pp 1, 24

[Report by John Hooper and Jonathan Steele: "Amin Surfaces With a GUARDIAN Phone Call"]

[Excerpt] Ex-president Idi Amin, describing himself as young, strong and brave, yesterday telephoned THE GUARDIAN from Saudi Arabia to say that troops loyal to him were within a short distance of the Ugandan capital, Kampala. And that they were led by a commander with the code name of "Nine Nine."

General Amin, asked by THE GUARDIAN to confirm the authenticity of the call by meeting THE GUARDIAN's correspondent Nigel Harvey in Jidda, arrived at the rendezvous at the Sands Hotel, 15 minutes late. He was wearing a long white Saudi robe and was accompanied by two children.

After Mr Harvey had introduced himself General Amin, looking slightly nervous, immediately sought to leave saying that Mr Harvey and therefore THE GUARDIAN had now seen that he was who he had said he was on the telephone earlier yesterday.

He was in a rush but under prompting said that four West Nile groups opposed to the government--who he claimed in the telephone call to be leading--only disclaimed him as their leader, because he told them to.

He proceeded to tell the hotel receptionist what great things in agriculture and industry he had intended for Uganda. But he stopped promptly and turned for the door, and when asked why he had left Libya said he preferred Saudi Arabia and was comfortable there and would stay.

He was anxious that no photographs should be taken as he left the hotel and it became apparent as he drove himself off in a green limousine that he was being followed by three Saudi security men in a car.

Observers in East Africa described his claims to military success in Uganda as preposterous, and said there was no political future for him in Uganda. The ex-president's call fits into a pattern of dubious claims made by Ugandan exiles and would be political leaders.

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Amin himself and several of his entourage have telephoned correspondents in East Africa but this is the first time he has telephoned the London offices of a British newspaper.

General Amin, who telephoned THE GUARDIAN from a call box in the Sands Hotel, strung together his ideas by implication rather than anything else. After claiming that the Ugandans wanted him back, but that he was reluctant, he went on to speak about troops inside Uganda, commanded by "Nine Nine," whom he named as one Yacobo Agriza. "Nine Nine," he went on, was in the north-west Nile region with 20,000 troops and was about to appoint a governor and four district commissioners.

"They are already within surrounding Kampala. That is why proudly I am telephoning you. I love your people and I love your newspapers very much," he said.

Later, General Amin said: "The name I give you--if you ask any soldier, regular soldier of Uganda, he will tell you he respects somebody called 'Nine Nine'."

Sources in East Africa said, however, that they had never heard of "Nine Nine" or of Yacobo Agriza, and that the name had not been mentioned in association with the four guerrilla groups known to be operating in the West Nile region.

Above all, they said, it was inconceivable that any sizeable number of the troops who remained with Amin after the Tanzanian invasion would still be loyal to him. He had flown out to a life of relative ease first in Libya and then in Saudi Arabia. They had remained behind in an area of Zaire and the southern Sudan where communications and facilities were so bad that the relief agencies had difficulty in providing them with even minimal help.

At several points in a lengthy and rambling conversation, General Amin stressed that he was now pro-Western. "I am now very friendly to all British and American old friends. And I wanted to assure you that I will make Uganda in the future very productive and a very good friend of the people."

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ZAIRE

CORRUPTION, FINANCIAL SITUATION ANALYZED

London NEW AFRICAN in English No 165, Jun 81 pp 30-31

[Article by Monty Cerf: "'If You Want To Steal, Steal Cleverly...'"]

[Text] With more IMF money flowing in, and President Mobutu's personal fortune rising to the \$100-million mark, Zaire's leader crushes reformists and sets course again towards a mountain of national debt.

ZAIRE'S PRESIDENT Mobutu Sese Seko has recently moved against the more independent-minded members of the legislature, arresting five of the most prominent members. Two of them, Mpanda Ndjila and Tshisekedi wa Muluma, were among those who demanded an inquiry into the 1979 massacres of 200 people shot by troops for alleged diamond smuggling.

Apart from his purge of people whose "crime" was telling the truth, Mobutu has banned elections.

More Loans

This is his latest U-turn on the reform measures initiated in 1977 under strong pressure from the United States, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. At that time, in dire need of more loans to service a mammoth \$3.5-billion debt, Mobutu grudgingly permitted elections of some Political Bureau members, Legislative Council members and the initiation of parliamentary question periods.

In addition, he was forced to allow the IMF appointment of outside experts to take over key positions in the Bank of Zaire and the Customs Service. They hoped to cure rampant corruption and fraud at the highest levels of government.

When the rejuvenated Legislative Council twice rejected the budget and repeatedly publicised widespread corrup-

tion among senior officials, including members of the President's own family, the question periods came to an abrupt halt. Mobutu's personal fortune is currently estimated at \$100-million.

After Mobutu's financial "rehabilitation" of most of the high-placed business and government figures whose credit facilities had been cut off by the IMF team lead by West German Erwin Blumenthal, observers conclude that substantial reform is impossible.

The recent purge reflects Mobutu's new-found confidence that he will again get what he wants from the IMF and others, reform or no reform. It is now almost certain that he will get a new IMF extended fund facility worth close to \$1 billion over the next three years. The IMF is simply unwilling to allow this Central African copper and cobalt giant to default and declare bankruptcy.

Mobutu has also secured a deal with the US for the sale of 5,000 tons of cobalt over five years. With the election of Right-wing Ronald Reagan and the demise of Carter's human rights policy, Mobutu can count on less outside pressure for internal reform. Diplomats in Kinshasa agree that United States "human rights" pressure contributed to Mobutu's token reforms of 1979 and 1980.

In the meantime, Zaire's silent crisis continues largely unrecognized by the world community. Life expectancy hovers at 41 years while inflation soars past 100 per cent a year and urban unemp-

loyment over 40 per cent. The situation has deteriorated dramatically.

A food importer, Zaire's agricultural production has now hit its lowest levels in 20 years. People are turning again to subsistence agriculture. Farmers are often unwilling or unable to take their produce to market. Artificially low government prices for wholesale purchases deter commercial crop production.

Aid food is often blackmarketed in neighbouring Congo-Brazzaville. Aid medicine is often blackmarketed in Kinshasa before it reaches rural hospitals. Health receives a mere two per cent of the national budget.

Even military supplies from the West (trucks, guns, gasoline, K-rations, soft drinks) disappear only to reappear on the streets of Kinshasa. It is not uncommon to see US army trucks being used as taxis or in the rice business.

First State Commissioner Bo-Boliko admitted that only one-third of all teachers in Zaire actually existed. The rest were "phantoms", i.e. fictitious employees whose salaries were going to other people. In a 1979 Paris Press conference, President Mobutu admitted the budget cuts of two-thirds could be made by eliminating fictitious employees.

Less Secret

Tax and import duty evasion fraud costs Zaire's 28-million people more than \$300-million per year in the coffee section alone. In 1975 the Shaba regional commissioner was grossing over \$100,000 per month. Only two per cent of that was his legal salary. President Mobutu literally gives away lucrative businesses and portfolios to those whose loyalty he needs.

Since his 1976 speech candidly discussing *le mal Zairois* (the Zairian sickness), official corruption has become less secret or stigmatised than before. At that time Mobutu advised his fellow countrymen: "If you want to steal, steal cleverly (*yibana mayele*), in a nice way. If you steal so much as to become rich overnight, you will be caught."

Massive military aid from France, Belgium, the United States and Morocco recently protected the Mobutu Government and the Shaba province from Angolan-based exile attacks (Shaba I 1977; Shaba II 1978). This clearly demonstrated Western interest in protecting the mining industries and preserving the *status quo*.

The recent Mobutu purge and the IMF decision to give continued aid indicates there will be no change in the *status quo* in the foreseeable future.

The silent crisis continues●

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