

IV. The Question of the Nation

Imperialist political oracle and Obama adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, is a ruling class observer of the crisis of imperialism. In his book *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of a Superpower*, cited in Chapter II, Brzezinski makes this observation about the significance of the question of identity today when imperialism is being challenged to its parasitic foundation by the political intervention of the peoples upon whose oppression this system was founded.

Global systemic instability...is likely to be prompted in many parts of the world by challenges to existing state frontiers. In Asia and Africa especially, state borders are often imperial legacies and do not reflect ethnic or linguistic boundaries. These borders are vulnerable to increased pressure as heightened political consciousness leads to more assertive territorial aspirations....

The largely anti-Western character of populist activism has less to do with ideological or religious bias and more with historical experience. Western (or European) domination is part of the living memory of hundreds of millions of Asians and Africans, and some Latin Americans (though in this case its sharp edge is pointed at the United States)...In the vast majority of states, national identity and national emancipation are associated with the end of foreign imperial domination...This is true in such large and self-confident states as India or China as it is in Congo or Haiti.

In addition to Brzezinski's consideration of the question, there is a bevy of other publications attempting to address the same issues of the nation and identity. They include David Cannadine's 2013 book, *The Undivided Past: Humanity Beyond Our Differences*, and the 2004 Samuel Huntington book entitled, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*.

Patrick Buchanan's *Suicide of a Superpower: Will America Survive to 2025?* is another of the intellectual forays into the arena of the nation and its future from the vantage point of various representatives of U.S. and/or European imperialism.

These farseeing thinking representatives of the white ruling class are being forced to contend with the earth-shattering consequences of a European civilization resting on the historical fault line of economic parasitism.

The shifting center of gravity in the world, the omnipresent upsurge of the "wretched of the earth" to realize our dreams of happiness and security come at the expense of imperialist stability. The resistance of the oppressed unhinges the previous definitions of social reality that required imperialist-imposed tranquility for its foundation and raises the question of the nation and identity to center stage.

In his 2007 book, *Day of Reckoning: How Hubris, Ideology, and Greed Are Tearing America Apart*, Patrick Buchanan probes the question of the nation:

Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, it is said, were artificial nations created by the treaties of Versailles and St. Germain in 1919. And the Soviet Union was but the Russian Empire reconstituted by the Red Army, the KGB, the Communist Party, and Leninist ideology, not a nation at all...

The sudden disintegration of these three nations into twenty-six seemed to substantiate Strobe Talbot's prediction in his 1992 Time essay, "The Birth of the Global Nation":

"All countries are basically social arrangements, accommodations to changing circumstances. No matter how permanent and even sacred they may seem at any one time, in fact they are all artificial and temporary....

"[W]ithin the next hundred years...nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single, global authority. A phrase briefly fashionable in the mid-20th century—'citizen of the world'—will have assumed real meaning by the end of the 21st century."

Is the time of nations over? Is the nation-state passing away? Are the bonds that hold them together so flimsy? Since Talbot's essay, events have not contradicted him.

Buchanan's summation is representative of the anxiety of the international white ruling class, whose concerns about defending their world hegemony are reflected in the drone bombings, assassinations, unrelenting war and threats of war.

The current policies of the imperialists designed to crush the will of the peoples' resistance in Afghanistan and the Middle East, all of Africa, Asia, the Americas and the world, are attempts to maintain the shaky empire and its ideological reflections that define identity and the nation according to its interests and will.

Our entry into this discussion of the nation is mandated by the seriousness of the times. It is mandated by the requirement of Africans and the oppressed to provide a summation of reality that reflects our interests and our aspirations. Our summation is based on science and objective analysis grounded in material reality that predicts the defeat of imperialism and the emancipation of the toiling masses of Africa and the world.

Our discussion of the nation is informed by our inevitable elevation as workers to the role of the ruling class in the transition to a world shorn of classes, borders, nations and states. To win our liberation we must know who we are and who our enemies are.

Let us begin.

Most often the question of African nationality is handled in careless, offhanded and vague ways, making no pretense of ascribing to any particular scientific approach or definition.

The common practice among Pan-Africanists of referring to the international African community as African “peoples” is an example. More commonly, there is the practice of characterizing Africans forcibly dispersed from the Continent as African “descendants” with the intent of differentiating the national identity of such Africans from those who suffered imperial white domination on the Continent itself.

Africans are not unusual in the ambiguous manner in which the question of the nation is handled. In the past few centuries there has been much debate concerning this issue among some of Europe’s most erudite intellectuals. Their approach is equivalent to the quote: “I don’t know anything about art, but I know what I like.”

Similarly, it is difficult to get a uniform definition of the nation from different scholars or intellectuals. Some claim outright that there is not an a priori definition of the nation. “I can’t tell you what it is,” they might say, “but I know it when I see it.”

What is probably the most influential definition of the nation is one offered by Joseph Stalin. This is because as leader of the Soviet Union and the international communist movement from 1924 to 1953 Stalin took the question out of the classrooms and into the fray of political movements throughout the world. Stalin applied his interpretation to the real conditions impacting and tormenting millions of people struggling to define their places in the world.

Written at the end of 1912 or early in 1913, Stalin’s position, later published in pamphlet form, defined the nation’s key elements, which, according to Stalin, included a “historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.”

Obviously the situation for Africans does not satisfy Stalin’s definition of the nation, whether applied to the artificially created African “countries” carved out at the imperialist Berlin Conference in 1884-85 or to African people forcibly dispersed around the world.

While Stalin’s definition of the nation is one of many, it contains within it elements being offered by others at the time and even today. In fact, Stalin’s definition was a struggle against contending definitions forwarded by European socialists at a time when nationalist sentiments were roiling in Europe. These ideas would soon facilitate the European bourgeois war to re-divide the world, the First Imperialist World War or World War I.

In his book *The Undivided Past*, referred to above, author David Cannadine challenges many of the prevalent ideas around which the definition of the nation revolves. Here he deals with the

requirement that makes language a prerequisite. While not addressing Stalin specifically, Cannadine had this to say about the self-defined European “nations” involved in the First Imperialist World War:

To begin with, the idea that the belligerents of 1914 were unified, homogeneous nations does not survive detailed examination. Consider, for example, the matter of common language, often regarded as essential to any shared sense of national identity. It certainly did not exist in the nation created by the Risorgimento. “We have made Italy,” Massimo d’Azeglio observed at the time, “now we have to make Italians.” With less than five percent of the population using Italian for everyday purposes, they had a long way to go. In France, almost half the school children engaged with French as a foreign language, speaking another tongue at home: dialect and patois were widespread, and in departments bordering other nations, it was often Flemish, Catalan, or German that was spoken. A similar picture could be found in Germany, where in the east many spoke Polish as their first language, whereas in Alsace and Lorraine many spoke French; and in Russia, educated people conversed in French, while workers and peasants used a wide variety of Slavic languages and dialects. In Austria-Hungary the array of different tongues was even more varied, including German, Czech, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, Croatian, and Greek, and many of the Hapsburg emperor’s subjects were multilingual, speaking one language at school or at work and another at home. Insofar as a common tongue could be considered an essential criterion, none of the major powers that went to war in 1914 qualified as a “nation.”

Cannadine challenges other ideas generally used to determine the nation, some of which also dispute Stalin’s influential definition. We know many of the limitations of Stalin’s work from our own observations. However, this does not relieve us of the need to enter into this discussion.

It is true that nations exist if only because the nation is a commonly held idea along the lines of Marx’s maxim that theory, when grasped by the masses becomes a material force. Indeed, the idea of the nation is something that *has* been grasped by the masses to the extent that people actually kill and die in the name of furthering its perceived interests.

Slavery, colonialism basis of the European nation

One of the least discussed questions concerning the nation is the basis for its advent in history. How is it that the world is perceived as a place where for thousands of years there was no such thing as the nation only to have it suddenly emerge in Europe, dominating the 19th century, often referred to as the era of “nation building”?

One attempt at an explanation for the advent of the European nation is provided by Modibo M. Kadalie, Ph.D. in his book published in 2000, entitled *Internationalism, Pan-Africanism and the Struggle of Social Classes*. This rather lengthy and vacuous quote demonstrates the general lack of clarity that surrounds this issue:

After thousands of years of change, transformation, setbacks, rapid advances, monstrous defeats, unevenness in human conflicts with nature and with other human beings, which was constantly changing in its character; the colossal units of production and exchange that have come to be known as the modern nation-state came into being ruled and fashioned by a class of people who resulted from this long and arduous path of dialectical development. The modern nation-state was the creation of the modern bourgeoisie and serves as the political form or funnel through which this class continues to perpetuate itself in its quest for historical immortality.

The most highly developed political formations of this type took place in Europe and later in North America. It is for those reasons that the brutality that has come to be a part of this class slashing its way across the planet has come to be associated with Europeans generally. Rightfully so. Capitalism and the European predatory nation state became to Europe and the rest of the world what feudalism, in its most advanced forms, was to Asia, and communal and intricate pre-feudal modes along with a variety of early forms of social production were to the continent of Africa...

The European bourgeoisies could become international precisely because they were national. After carving out and consolidating their sway within a certain geographical area which defined its boundaries, a given national state could continue its expansion. This occurs because of the organic and predatory nature of the capitalist mode of production. With this expansion bourgeois rule spreads. It, therefore, became a highly developed system for international conquest with its ruling class at the helm guiding, in a deliberate and calculating way, its own realization and affirmation through continuous conquest.

What Kadalie has done here is to detail the obvious: indeed, “The modern nation-state was the creation of the modern bourgeoisie,” and indeed, it is predatory. However, after all is said and done, we still do not know its origin nor the historical basis for its emergence in Europe. In addition, we are misinformed by Kadalie who claims: “The European bourgeoisies could become international precisely because they were national.” In fact, the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois nation were products of imperialism, the “international” activities of slavery and colonialism.

This is the point made by Hosea Jaffe in his book *A History of Africa*:

The 15th century, then, saw the multiplication of the primary accumulation of European capitalism; and Africa played the most important part in the process as the principal arena of European colonialism, the very genesis and foundation of the capitalist system. From the turn of the 16th century the Americas and Asia were added to this foundation, and out of this totality arose capitalism and modern Europe itself. Before capitalist colonialism there was no Europe, only a collection of feudal, mercantile and tribal towns, farms, villages, discrete states and kingdoms vying and

warring with each other, just as in Africa, but on a different property basis—that of private property in the land. Europe then was neither a concept nor a reality, at most a vague idea that Arabs—but not “Europeans”—had long ago of some place northwest of Greece. As long as Europe remained isolated from the world, there was no Europe. When it became connected with, and dependent on, first Africa, then the Americas and finally Asia, it began to become a reality and an idea. Only when Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, English, German, Danish and Swedish confronted and clashed with Africa, America and Asia did the need arise for them to consider themselves as a set, a whole, different from, hostile to and, eventually, superior to Africans, Americans and Asians. Colonialism gave them a common interest.

This “common interest,” the sense of sameness, common history and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture—elements contained in most definitions of the nation—was forged through slavery and colonialism. This was the nation-building process; the sense of sameness and common culture of violence are features of the subjective factors identifying the European nation.

Contrary to white leftists and modern-day Marxists, both the white ruling class *and* the white working class owe their existence to this process. They are historical twins, containing the same DNA and spawned by a history of genocide and enslavement of other peoples that is repugnant in its entirety.

The parasitic capitalist economy is the objective factor, the material basis upon which the subjective relies; it is the bonding element of the nation that holds this collective community together.

The European nation, and we do mean “European,” with its multiplicity of languages, classes and internal borders, was born as a bourgeois nation, a white, Christian nation, spawned through the blood and gore of slavery and colonialism and resting on a foundation of capitalism benefitting Europe at the expense of Africans and the rest of the world.

Aspects of the European nation’s subjective content, its self-perception, were forged through the assault on Islam during the Christian Crusades in the feudal era for control of much of the same territory in North Africa and the “Middle East” that imperialism is contending for today. However, the most essential component of Europe’s subjective identification grew out of its history of genocidal aggression against Africa that included colonial slavery.

Herein lies the process that bonded Europe into a single nation, though differentiated by sometimes competing capitalist centers designated as countries and incorrectly identified as nations. This, like the anti-Islamic national component, is residual from the pre-colonial European feudal era where contending European powers defined themselves primarily in relationship to each other, except for the united looting expeditions through the Middle East that occurred under the religious banner of Christianity.

Thus the European nation was born white and Christian. Moreover, it was born as a bourgeois nation, as the center of capitalist production stemming from parasitic accumulation of “capital” flowing

from colonial slavery. Even the European working class was born on the pedestal of colonialism and slavery, therefore ultimately realizing the benefits of an oppressor nation and identifying with its own bourgeoisie.

Marx was wrong!

Feudalism preceded capitalism in Europe. Feudal society was defined primarily by the relationship between the nobility, impoverished peasants and serfs, agricultural workers who were tied to the estates of the feudal lords who expropriated most of what the serfs produced.

While serfs could not be individually bought and sold as was the case with Africans, the serfs had little or no rights that were not granted by the lords. The role of the feudal state was to protect this relationship that required permanent attachment of the serfs to the landed estates.

As we know, in describing the transformation of feudalism to capitalism, Karl Marx authored the term “primitive accumulation,” naming the European enslavement, genocide, wars and occupations of oppressed peoples around the world as the source of the vast wealth extraction out of which the entire capitalist system was born.

But Marx erroneously includes in his definition of primitive accumulation the internal process of European peasants and serfs being driven from the land through England’s Enclosure Acts beginning in the early 1600s that privatized lands that had been collectively farmed by peasants for centuries.

According to Marx from Part VIII, Volume I of *Capital*:

The economic structure of capitalist society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society. The dissolution of the latter set free the elements of the former.

The immediate producer, the laborer, could only dispose of his own person after he had ceased to be attached to the soil and ceased to be the slave, serf, or bondsman of another. To become a free seller of labor power, who carries his commodity wherever he finds a market, he must further have escaped from the regime of the guilds, their rules for apprentices and journeymen, and the impediments of their labor regulations. Hence, the historical movement which changes the producers into wage-workers appears, on the one hand, as their emancipation from serfdom and from the fetters of the guilds, and this side alone exists for our bourgeois historians. But, on the other hand, these new freedmen became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production, and of all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.

Marx was wrong. Though this process involves the creation of the social mobility and capitalist labor force previously prohibited by feudalism, it is not primitive accumulation.

European capitalist society may have very well “grown out of the economic structure of feudal society” but it was *conceived* by way of:

The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black skins...

Notably, in *Capital* Marx devotes far more pages to the conditions of peasants and serfs in the transformation from feudalism to capitalism than he does to the enslavement and genocide that created immense wealth for Europe but destroyed the lives and means of production for millions and millions of African and oppressed peoples for centuries to come.

Equating the removal of the European peasants from their land with the fact that Europe transformed Africa into a “warren for the commercial hunting of black skins” is a historical lie. It relegates African people to mere footnotes of history.

The expulsion of the peasants from the land is a *result* of the process of primitive accumulation of capital, not a part of it. Ultimately, the former serfs became European workers who now also sit on the pedestal of our oppression and benefit from it enormously.

This Eurocentric error by Marx subordinates the historical basis of the existence of Africans and others to the requirements for European development. It objectifies the history and civilization of African people, rendering us invisible and leading to wrong conclusions that disguise the bloody reality of parasitism, making it seem that African people exist merely for the needs of Europeans.

This Political Report is replete with examples that challenge Marx’s confusion on this issue. When it comes to objectively describing the historical process that gave rise to capitalism, and its impact on Europe and the development of capitalism, Hosea Jaffe, quoted earlier in this chapter, and the African People’s Socialist Party do a better job.

Marx’s lack of clarity obviously stems from his own social location on the pedestal of African slavery, a location that provided the superstructure for the European capitalist society within which Marx’s consciousness was forged and that his life’s work relentlessly criticized.

In *One People! One Party! One Destiny!*, the Political Report to our Party’s Fifth Congress, we commented on the tendency by Marx to muddle this issue. Here is a selection:

We have to note here as well that Marx's description of slavery as an "economic category," and his concept of primitive accumulation provide outstanding examples of historic objectification of African people by Europeans.

The entire historical process that resulted in the total disruption of the political economy of Africa, the imposition of colonial borders and the capture and dispersal of millions of Africans whose forced labor was responsible for the development of Europe and European society is characterized as an "economic category"!

Marx reduced the process of European pillage and plunder of the world and the ensuing genocide and enslavement to "primitive accumulation" of capital, a footnote whose function in history is to explain the "development" of Europe.

In other works Marx developed the concept of the "fetish of the commodity" to explain how commodity production, production for the market, obscures and mystifies the relationship between people, allowing it to be confused with a relationship between things.

A similar thing happened with the concept of "primitive accumulation." Here the relationship between peoples and countries is also obscured and mystified. Marx attributes European "development" solely to the "genius" and productive forces inside of Europe. He is thereby covering over or liquidating the origin of such "development" in the parasitic impairment of the capacity of independent development in Africa and other places victimized by Europe.

European nation is white and Christian

The European nation became the means of securing the loyalty of the emancipated laborers to the emergent capitalist state and, by association, ruling class. Now, it is not the feudal state or sheriff of Nottingham that forces the toilers to fight the wars of the ruling class or put the interests of the state above their own.

It is the flag, the national anthem, the pledge of allegiance along with the collective identification with a common history that transcends individual European countries or territories: this is what facilitates the new relations of production¹ necessary for capitalist production, relations of production resting on a parasitic economic foundation whose genesis is colonial slavery.

¹ Relations of production is a Marxist term for the material and human relationships involved in how a society comes together to produce the necessities of life. Relations of production could be capitalist, socialist, feudal, etc.

In summation, the European nation derives from relations of production contained within capitalism that was spawned by slavery and colonialism. It was born as a parasitic capitalist or bourgeois nation that encompasses all classes within it.

The European sense of sameness, self-perception and subjective expression, necessary for binding the emergent working class to its newly forged bourgeoisie, is white and Christian. The material base of the European nation is the parasitic capitalist system that bore it in Europe. The capitalist system feeds the entire European nation through its cannibalistic, parasitic relationship to Africa and most of the world.

I have belabored this discussion and description of the European nation because its arrival on the world historical scene with the advent of capitalism has determined, through the barrel of a gun, how other national expressions would be defined by other peoples in various parts of the world.

It is no accident that Europe would describe the nation in a manner that would not be applicable to Africans, the Indigenous of the Americas and many others whose enslavement was a condition for the emergence of the European or “white” nation in the first place.

European scholars have demanded a common definition of the nation. It is a declaration of European universalism that requires every nation to contain the same elements apparent in the European nation.

It is an extraordinary example of philosophical metaphysics to suggest that we should determine the quality of any social phenomenon without first examining the specifics and history of the phenomenon being defined. It is an extraordinary example of imperialist national narcissism to define the validity of all social phenomena based on proximity to one’s own reality.

The function of the European nation was to serve the development of Europe alone; the rise of the European nation is an attack on the development and survival of much of the world.

Historical basis of the African nation state

Our discussion of the African nation and its definition, resting on a real, material basis, must serve African development. The research and writings of Cheikh Anta Diop demonstrate quite scientifically the cultural unity of Africa going back through millennia. Diop authored the book, *The Cultural Unity of Black Africa: The Domains of Matriarchy & of Patriarchy in Classical Antiquity*, that today remains the standard for investigation of ancient Africa by any serious historian.

Below we examine a quote extracted from Diop’s otherwise deeply scientific work. Here he not only explores the spiritual aspect of African identity, but he also compares it to that of Europe. This is because the discussion of characteristics specific to national identity always distinguishes one people or nation from an “other.”

The nation cannot be defined by measuring itself against itself. If there is no “other,” there is no logic for the “nation.” The “white man” needed the existence of the “black man” to achieve his identity. So it is with nations.

Of course, the problem for the European nation is that it resulted from a false, self-serving European definition of the African. Since this false definition was the basis upon which the sense of white sameness, necessary for the definition of the European nation is anchored, the ability of the African to successfully achieve self-definition marks the beginning of the end of a crucial subjective factor necessary for European national coherence.

Diop’s works place significance in what he characterized as the Southern or Meridional cradle of human development versus the Northern cradle, and how the differences in material conditions peculiar to each of them contributed to shaping the worldview and character of their respective inhabitants. This is Diop’s summation that contributes to defining the national character of African people as compared to Europeans:

In conclusion, the Meridional cradle, confined to the African continent in particular, is characterized by the matriarchal family, the creation of the territorial state, in contrast to the Aryan city-state, the emancipation of woman in domestic life, xenophilia, cosmopolitanism, a sort of social collectivism having as a corollary a tranquility going as far as unconcern for tomorrow, a material solidarity of right for each individual, which makes moral or material misery unknown to the present day; there are people living in poverty, but no one feels alone and no one is in distress. In the moral domain, it shows an ideal of peace, of justice, of goodness and an optimism which eliminates all notion of guilt or original sin in religious and metaphysical institutions....

The Northern cradle, confined to Greece and Rome, is characterized by patriarchal family, by the city-state...; it is easily seen that it is on contact with the Southern world that the Northerners broadened their conception of the state, elevating themselves to the idea of a territorial state and of an empire. The particular character of these city-states, outside of which a man was an outlaw, developed an internal patriotism, as well as xenophobia. Individualism, moral and material solitude, a disgust for existence, all the subject matter of modern literature, which even in its philosophic aspects is none other than the expression of the tragedy of a way of life going back to the Aryans’ ancestors, are all attributes of this cradle. An ideal of war, violence, crime and conquests inherited from nomadic life, with as a consequence, a feeling of guilt and of original sin, which causes pessimistic religious or metaphysical systems to be built, is the special attribute of this cradle.

However, notwithstanding the usefulness of the works of Diop and similar scholars, all of which had to battle against hundreds of years of European prejudice disguised as scholarship to reach the light of day, our discussion of the African nation will revolve around the same time period to which the birth of

the European nation belongs. It is clear from what has already been revealed in this Political Report that there is a direct causal relationship between the existence of the European nation and the aspirations of Africans to consolidate the African nation.

Like the European nation, the emergent African nation is a response to necessity. We are facing the historical requirements for advancing and developing Africa and African people, whose generally oppressive conditions of existence derive from the stuff resulting in the emergence of the European or “white” bourgeois or capitalist nation.

One People! One Party! One Destiny! addressed this necessity. It raises the issue of the consolidation of the African nation as a practical political problem that we must solve to forward the national liberation of our people from imperialist domination worldwide. African Internationalism is a theory of practice, as exemplified by this passage:

An African Internationalist investigation...leads us to conclude, among other things, that key to the liberation of African people is the defeat of the parasitic stranglehold that has been imposed on us by imperialism.

Moreover, as African Internationalists we recognize that Africa has been under some kind of attack for millennia, but that our struggle today is contextualized by the fact that the world economy that gives life to our oppression is a capitalist economy.

Our struggle is not fueled by a subjective need for vengeance against every group that has historically attacked Africa. This means that the struggle must be waged against the capitalist social system that is the basis of our exploitation and wretched conditions of existence today. Our struggle for the unification and emancipation of Our Africa and our people is also a struggle against capitalism.

Hence, our struggle, if it is to be fought to its successful conclusion, must be led by the African working class. It must result in the establishment of a united, socialist Africa responsive to the needs of African people worldwide.

African Internationalism teaches us that slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism, along with African disunification and dispersal, provided the material basis for the European bourgeois national consolidation, the sense of white sameness resting on the pedestal of the oppression of African and colonized peoples.

Hence, we understand that a key function of the revolutionary struggle for the permanent defeat of imperialism and to liberate Africa and her scattered children is the reunification of African people worldwide into a revolutionary, proletarian nation.

“It is slavery that gave the colonies their value; it is the colonies that created world trade, and it is world trade that is the pre-condition of large scale industry.” These

words by Marx recognize the role of the plunder of Africa in the establishment of capitalism and carry within them the suggestion of what it will take to destroy the capitalist world economy. The African who gave value to the “colonies” is now the oppressed and exploited inhabitant of the colonies that are sometimes incorrectly referred to as nations.

Our conditions of existence in the “colonies,” and elsewhere in this world of imperialist-created borders are centered in and derive from the conditions of existence in Africa that are the consequence of the primitive accumulation of capital, the “original sin.”

Our revolutionary struggle for liberation, unification and socialism in Africa, throughout the “colonies” and other areas of the world to which we have been forcibly dispersed in the construction of capitalism, will prove to be as significant in the defeat of the capitalist social system as the slave trade was in its advent.

The socialist liberation and unification of Africa and African people under the leadership of the African working class will be the central factor in the defeat of world capitalism and will provide the material basis for the advent for world socialism.

African Internationalism, which demands the total revolutionary liberation and unification of Africa and African people worldwide under the leadership of the African working class, is informed by this scientifically sound dialectic.

Hence, the African Internationalist struggle for the liberation and unification of Africa and African people is at the same time the key factor in the achievement of socialism as a world economy. It is the way forward for those Marxists and other socialists who are confronted with the false conundrum surrounding the question of “socialism in one country.”

As capitalism was born as a world economy with its basis in the enslavement and dispersal of African people, leading to [as Marx wrote] “considerable masses of capital and labor power in the hands of producers,” so, too, will socialism be born as a world economy in the process of reversing the verdict of imperialism.

Hence, socialism will not be born in one country, but in many countries that are tied to the defining economy of a liberated and united Africa and people under the revolutionary leadership of the African working class.

This is why a fundamental task of the African revolutionary is the consolidation of the proletarian African nation.

African petty bourgeoisie attacks Garvey, nation

This was not the extent of our discussion of the nation in the Political Report to our Fifth Congress. Then as now we were engaging in serious struggle with the ossified notions that have hampered and misdirected our struggle since the political defeat of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) led by Marcus Garvey in the 1920s.

At that time the struggle for African national consolidation, though seriously debated, was essentially being advanced by the program of the UNIA with its membership of 11 million Africans around the world and its slogan of “Africa for the Africans, those at home and those abroad.”

Since its founding in 1919, the Communist Party USA had joined with an assortment of African liberals and the U.S. government in hounding Garvey because of the UNIA’s position on the African nation. In 1928 a resolution of the Sixth Communist International held in Moscow admitted that Africans constituted a separate nation inside the U.S., just as the now-deported Marcus Garvey had explicitly stated all along. The Communist Party USA was forced to reluctantly comply with this position.

This came after the CPUSA, NAACP and others had eagerly promoted and united with the U.S. government’s attack, imprisonment and deportation of Garvey to Jamaica, the island of his birth. The Comintern’s position on the “Negro Question” suggested that Africans were a nation within a contrived national homeland of the “Black Belt South” in the U.S.

This manufactured nation of sorts, as described in the “Negro Question,” was designed to take advantage of the obvious national consciousness among the African population of the U.S., influenced by the successful Garvey Movement that the CPUSA helped to destroy. The CPUSA attempted to infiltrate the UNIA with undercover communist organizers.

As I stated in “African Internationalism versus Pan-Africanism,” presented at the Conference to Build the African Socialist International held in London in 2005, and printed in my book *One Africa! One Nation!*, the Communist Party “...did not address the fact that our homeland had been taken away from us and we from it, which is what Africans were responding to by joining the Garvey Movement.”

The CPUSA “Black Belt South” position, moreover, completely obscures the fact that the land of what is now called North and South America—including the “Black Belt South”—was stolen by Europeans from the Indigenous people in the same genocidal process that brought about the birth of parasitic capitalism and the consolidation of the white nation. The Indigenous people continue to suffer the consequences of this even today. This land belongs to the Indigenous people.

The CPUSA’s position nevertheless implicitly recognizes the commonality of national interests linking Africans worldwide. This passage is one example of that:

The Negro race everywhere is an oppressed race. Whether it is a minority (U.S.A., etc.) majority (South Africa) or inhabits a so-called independent state (Liberia,

etc.), the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism. Thus, a common tie of interest is established for the revolutionary struggle of race and national liberation from imperialist domination of the Negroes in various parts of the world.

The 1928 Communist Resolution on the Negro Question became the template for succeeding positions on the question by various Marxist communists and an assortment of black nationalists, some of whom were not communists and sometimes even anti-communist in their outlook.

One of the most influential advocates of this position before his defection from the Communist International to the ranks of Pan-African anti-communism was George Padmore. Padmore was a well-known Trinidad-born activist who penned an authoritative book entitled *The Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers* that was published by a section of the Communist International in 1931.

Like the entire worldwide Marxist movement that made up the Communist International, Padmore was a rabid, visceral anti-Garveyite.

The introduction to Padmore's 1931 work, written during the Great Depression, could have easily been written today considering the current economic crisis. Whether intentional or not, Padmore's book exposes his own opportunism and that of the Communist International he represented. Padmore uses all the evidence that supports Garvey's efforts to organize the liberation of the African nation as the basis for joining and celebrating the attacks on Garvey. It was attacks such as these that destroyed Garvey's extraordinary anti-imperialist movement for the happiness and material well-being of African people.

Padmore's introduction inadvertently supports our Party's position concerning the commonality of African conditions and interests internationally, our common national identity, its class character and the African national territory that helps to define us as the nation, though dispersed.

Here's Padmore:

It has been estimated that there are about 250 million Negroes in the world. The vast majority of these peoples are workers and peasants. They are scattered throughout various geographical territories. The bulk of them, however, still live on the continent of Africa—the original home of the black race. There are, nevertheless, large populations of Negroes in the New World. For instance, there are about 15 millions in the United States, 10 millions in Brazil, 10 millions in the West Indies and 5 to 7 millions in various Latin-American countries, such as Colombia, Honduras, Venezuela, Nicaragua, etc., etc.

The oppression of Negroes assumes two distinct forms: on the one hand they are oppressed as a class, and on the other as a nation. This national (race) oppression has its basis in the social-economic relation of the Negro under capitalism. National (race) oppression assumes its most pronounced forms in the United States of America, especially in the Black Belt of the Southern States, where lynching, peonage, Jim-

Crowism, political disfranchisement and social ostracism is widespread; and in the Union of South Africa, where the blacks, who form the majority of the entire population, have been robbed of their lands and are segregated on Reserves, enslaved in Compounds and subjected to the vilest forms of anti-labor and racial laws (Poll, Hut, Pass, taxes) and color bar system in industry.

The general conditions under which Negroes live, either as a national (racial) group or as a class, form one of the most degrading spectacles of bourgeois civilization.

Since the present crisis of world capitalism began, the economic, political and social status of the Negro toilers are becoming ever worse and worse. The reason for this is obvious: the imperialists, whether American, English, French, Belgian, etc., etc., are frantically trying to find a way out of their difficulties. In order to do so, they are not only intensifying the exploitation of the white workers in the various imperialist countries by launching an offensive through means of rationalization, wage cuts, abolition of social insurance, unemployment, etc., but they are turning their attention more and more towards Africa and other black semi-colonies (Haiti, Liberia), which represent the last stronghold of world imperialism. In this way the bourgeoisie hope to unload the major burden of the crisis on the black colonial and semi-colonial masses.

Padmore's introduction continues to assert:

It is also necessary for the workers in the capitalist countries to understand that it is only through the exploiting of the colonial workers, from whose sweat and blood super-profits are extorted, that the imperialists are able to bribe the reformist and social-fascist trade union bureaucrats and thereby enable them to betray the struggles of the workers.

There are a number of erroneous assumptions found in Padmore's words. It is clear that he does not recognize that capitalism was born as parasitic white power that liberated the European bourgeoisie *and* working class from the fetters of the feudal social system. He does not understand that this occurred at the expense of Africans and the oppressed of the world that are overturning that historical relationship at the very moment of this, our Party's Sixth Congress. Capitalism represented progress only for European development, for the workers, the bourgeoisie and society in general.

Padmore does not explain why the imperialists would try "to find their way out of their difficulties" by "turning their attention more and more towards Africa and other black semi-colonies." Of course, for African Internationalists, 21st century Garveyites, the answer is simple: it is the raw, terror-laden exploitation of Africa upon which the entire imperialist edifice rests.

What Padmore warns the white workers about, the super-profits coming from the colonies, is normal capitalist functioning. There is nothing "super" about these profits. The thing that may make the

profits appear to be super is simply the fact that white workers, as part of the white nation, share in the imperialist exploitation of the rest of us.

The concept of “super” profits muddles the fact that the vast majority of Africans and other colonized workers constitute the true base of capitalist exploitation and always have. The fact is that the level of profit extraction from this relationship is normal! White workers achieve a greater return for the value of their labor power because they exist as part of a parasitic nation that originates from parasitic capitalism stemming from slavery and colonialism.

“Super” profits infer an exceptional level of exploitation. However it is the white or European oppressor nation worker that experiences the exceptional relationship with capitalism. Ours is not an exceptional relationship. It is the norm. It is the European oppressor nation worker that experiences a “super” relationship with capitalism that is revealed in the different conditions of existence experienced by European workers and the rest of us.

Padmore’s concern about the “reformers” and “social-fascist trade union bureaucrats” is also misdirected. While reformism certainly is a problem, when it comes to the issues within the European/white nation, the real question is opportunism, the tendency to sacrifice the long term interests of the struggle against imperialism rooted in the colonial question for the short term interests of white workers, which can only be served at the expense of the rest of us, something the white working class as a social force has never hesitated to do.

Perhaps the root of Padmore’s opposition to Garvey and true African national liberation can be found in his characterization of “social ostracism” as one of the oppressive consequences defining the conditions of existence of Africans colonized within the U.S. The question is: social ostracism from whom? The issue of social ostracism only concerns those whose interest is in integrating, assimilating into the social domain of the white oppressor nation, not those who recognize their interests in liberation of the African nation.

This struggle for black or African national independence is usually called black separatism, a subjective response by whites who never speak of the Declaration of Independence proclaiming the establishment of the U.S. bourgeois state on stolen Indigenous land as a “Declaration of Separation.”

However, it is in the section of his book entitled “Revolutionary Perspectives” that Padmore unleashes the full force of his venom on Garvey and the struggle for African national emancipation. According to Padmore:

The struggle against Garveyism represents one of the major tasks of the Negro toilers in America and the African and West Indian colonies.

Why must we struggle against Garveyism? As the “Programme of the Communist International” correctly states: “Garveyism is a dangerous ideology which bears not a single democratic trait, and which toys with the aristocratic attributes of a

non-existent 'Negro kingdom'! It must be strongly resisted, for it is not a help but a hindrance to the mass Negro struggle for liberation against American imperialism."

Garvey is more than a dishonest demagogue who, taking advantage of the revolutionary wave of protest of the Negro toilers against imperialist oppression and exploitation, was able to crystallize a mass movement in America in the years immediately after the war. His dishonesty and fraudulent business schemes, such as the Black Star Line, through which he extorted millions and millions of dollars out of the sweat of the Negro working class, soon led to his imprisonment. After his release Garvey was deported back to Jamaica, his native country. Isolated from the main body of the organization, Garvey has been unable to maintain his former autocratic control over the movement, as a result of which there has been a complete disintegration of the organization, which is now under the control of a number of warring factional leaders.

Padmore continues:

Despite the bankruptcy of the Garvey movement, the ideology of Garveyism, which is the most reactionary expression in Negro bourgeois nationalism, still continues to exert some influence among certain sections of the Negro masses. The black landlords and capitalists who support Garveyism are merely trying to mobilize the Negro workers and peasants to support them in establishing a Negro Republic in Africa, where they would be able to set themselves up as the rulers in order to continue the exploitation of the toilers of their race, free from white imperialist competition. In its class content Garveyism is alien to the interests of the Negro toilers. Like Zionism and Gandhism, it is merely out to utilize the racial and national consciousness for the purpose of promoting the class interests of the black bourgeoisie and landlords. In order to further their own aims, the leaders of Garveyism have attempted to utilize the same demagogic methods of appeal used by the leaders of Zionism. For example, the promise of "Back to Africa," behind which slogan Garvey attempts to conceal the truly imperialist aims of the Negro bourgeoisie.

We have been generous in the space given Padmore because he is one of the best representatives of this backwards view on the struggle for African national liberation that poses as progressive. It is clear that without intending to do so Padmore validates Garvey's position when he says "the oppression of Negroes assumes two distinct forms: on the one hand they are oppressed as a class, and on the other as a nation."

However, echoing many of the written attacks on Garvey by W.E.B. Du Bois, Padmore goes on to manufacture conclusions about Garvey's intentions that cannot be substantiated by science and rely solely on clearly prejudiced, subjective rantings.

It is instructive that Padmore's great fear is the "imperialist aims" of the Garvey Movement at a time when there were only two nominally independent countries on the Continent of Africa and the entire African world was locked in the stranglehold of white colonial slavery.

It borders on insanity that Padmore's fears would be directed at an alleged intent of Garvey to create a black imperialism in Africa that would, in fact, overturn a real, existing, white imperialism! The movement to stop Garvey, of which Padmore was an illustrious participant, was in reality a movement to protect white imperialist domination of Africa from African people ourselves.

It is clear how Padmore's position against Garvey mirrors that of the white ruling class, blaming Garvey for the imperialist attacks that were responsible for Garvey's imprisonment and deportation as well as the destruction of the UNIA, events that Padmore gleefully describes.

His barely concealed joy at the downfall of Garvey and the UNIA reveals a commonality of interests among the imperialist white ruling class, Padmore and the Communist International on one side, and Garvey, along with the millions of Africans who supported him and the UNIA vision of national liberation on the other.

Three years after the publication of his book, Padmore left the Communist International, perhaps after discovering it was the headquarters of "reformers and social-fascists" from whom he wanted to protect the white workers. He would eventually end up a Pan-Africanist in the company of W. E. B. Du Bois, whom he had characterized in this same book as a petty bourgeois reformist. He was now a virulent anti-communist and author of the book, *Pan-Africanism or Communism*, for which he is probably best known and revered by petty bourgeois Pan-Africanists.

As we stated in "African Internationalism versus Pan-Africanism," quoted above:

People ask, "Can there be revolutionary Pan-Africanists? I think that's an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. Pan-Africanism does not have the ability to recognize the class question, therefore whoever wants to be a Pan-Africanist can be. [Kwame] Nkrumah was a communist, but I've been in London with people who call themselves Pan-Africanists who are anti-communist. A Pan-Africanist is whatever somebody who calls himself a Pan-Africanist wants to be."

Pan-Africanism liquidates the class contradiction that's killing us all over the world. To win the total liberation and unification of Africa and consolidate our nation we have to be absolutely clear. African Internationalism informs us that the African working class aligned with poor peasants must unequivocally lead this struggle for African liberation. Every other class force wavers in its loyalty to imperialist white power that affords them the promise of material or other benefits at the expense of the suffering African working class and the subjugated African nation.

The success of the Garvey Movement and its program is the best concrete evidence of the sense of sameness experienced by Africans worldwide. The UNIA was an organization of several million members and supporters throughout the world, including Australia.

Its influence continues to be experienced by Africans even today, a century after its founding. The Garvey Movement's 1920 Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World, held in Manhattan at Madison Square Garden attracted between 25,000 and 50,000 people from throughout the African world. This was an amazing accomplishment at a time when communications and transportation were considerably more difficult than they are today and our national oppression placed formidable constraints on our mobility, both within the U.S. and in the colonial territories in Africa and elsewhere.

The historic Garvey Movement convention was the only place in the world that afforded Africans a democratic opportunity to vote their political preferences. Marcus Garvey was elected the Provisional President of Africa by convention attendees and the Red, Black and Green flag was adopted as the colors of African people.

It was also at this convention that the delegates enthusiastically adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World as their program giving political definition to the collective, national interests of the struggle of Africans worldwide. The 1920 Garvey Movement convention addressed the common issues of oppression and resistance. It cemented a united, world African consciousness and expression of power that sent the Communist Party scurrying to the U.S. government to collaborate in the attack that would imprison and deport Garvey and destroy the Garvey movement.

The crushing of the Garvey Movement took the combined endeavors of the U.S. and other imperialist governments of the time, along with a motley assortment of enemies of various hues and ideological leanings, who were all opposed to the notion of our national liberation as Africans. With the destruction of the Garvey Movement went the dreams of African people who aspired to consolidate our African nation—an aspiration left to our Party to accomplish.

The African nation and commonality of culture

The African nation is real. It is distinguished by a number of elements, both objective and subjective. Clearly there is a sense of sameness, something that European and Negro scholars often pretend does not exist, but which nevertheless exposes itself to public view every time white rulers and their Negro allies attack and criminalize us for the conditions of our collective plight.

Few quibble that black people in Africa itself are some variation of African, although sub-identities of ethnicity or "tribe" and/or religion often challenge the significance of the fact that they are African.

The colonial, dividing borders imposed on Africa by Europeans are part of the parasitic process of achieving European national identity through destroying the African collective identity and facilitating the colonial theft of African resources. One function of the borders has been to prevent the consolidation of a

single, continental-wide national economy that would be the primary, material foundation of national unification, including one African language.

The commonality of African culture and language would consolidate, develop and flourish under the influence of African self-serving economic forces unleashed from the distorting, limiting imposition of borders that divert all things of value to the service of external forces. Historically our resources and labor have benefitted Europe and Europeans primarily, but today this increasingly involves China, India, Turkey and every imperialist-aspiring predator capable of entering the feeding frenzy on Africa's soil.

In the U.S. it is generally agreed that Africans constitute a distinct community, with a distinct history and culture. No scholarly studies are needed to make this point. There is disagreement, of course, on the question of whether these distinct features contribute to the definition of Africans as a distinct nation.

Some of the problems surrounding this question in North America revolve around two issues. One is the fact that Europeans themselves are new to this continent, having wrenched it from the custody of the Indigenous people through brutish, horrendous, genocidal aggression that contributed to the culture of violence that defines the European nation. To admit that Africans constitute a nation is to thrust to the surface an underlying question that the white nation cannot tolerate. Namely: "If they are Africans, then who are we?"

Secondly, there is the question of the size and viability of the African population inside the U.S. Of course, there are more African people in North America than white people in some European countries that pose as nations. Nevertheless, Africans are held to a different standard on this issue.

This takes us back to Garvey and the UNIA. This takes us back to the African People's Socialist Party and the African Socialist International. This takes us to the recognition that the African nation is *not* confined to the borders imposed on us by Europe, whether in Africa or the various places to which we have been forcibly dispersed.

As African Internationalists we recognize that the basis of our struggle is the European attack on Africa, the forced dispersal and colonization of untold millions of its inhabitants and the creation of artificial borders used to facilitate the alienation of Africans from each other, from our resources and from our national identity.

Our position here does not ignore the fact that false national consciousness has been imposed on Africans worldwide through the violence of the imperialist state and imperialist-imposed ignorance.

In West Africa there is a territory known as Cameroon, named for the Portuguese word for shrimp after the Portuguese colonizers discovered an abundance of shrimp in its waters. The fact that there are thousands of Africans there that refer to themselves as shrimp does not make them shrimp any more than an African in England is a "Black Brit" or an African in the U.S. a "Negro" or "African-American."

Africans throughout the world continue to exist under some form of colonial domination. In this era that takes the form of indirect or neocolonial rule by the European imperialist state in disguise. The capitalist-imperialist state, unlike its feudal predecessor, was born as an “international” state through imperialist colonial slavery, the foundation of capitalism and the European nation.

The bourgeois state manifests itself in Europe as relatively benign in relation to white people. In Nigeria, Sudan and all of Africa, as well as in Ireland, India, the Middle East, Asia and in all the colonized territories of this planet, including inside the U.S., the North American-European imperialist state has been highly armed and unremittingly violent.

Hence, the British state that was vicious in its colonies, bragged about police not carrying guns in England. That is until their colonial subjects emigrated to England in enough numbers to create *domestic* colonies like the ones found in the U.S. since its bloody advent through genocide and colonial slavery.

The United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a host of international institutions along with the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) and the various U.S. and European military function as arms of a combined European capitalist state with the purpose of violently barring us from seizing control of our African nation. This is also the case for the neocolonial African governments that for the most part rely on charity handouts from imperialist states or institutions for funding, training and leadership.

Nevertheless, we can say without hesitation that the African nation does exist. We are one nation in need of consolidation, a nation definable by objective and subjective characteristics, with features arising specifically in response to historical necessity—just like the European nation. While the objective, material foundation of the African nation is fundamental, this does not limit or undermine the subjective element, the sense of sameness experienced by Africans everywhere.

The most important defining, material or objective element of the African nation is its derivation from Africa, the national homeland of African people. This is the critical component of African identity from which most of the subjective factors derive. The African nation is also defined in part by physiognomy. We are black people of and from Africa, the equatorial continent.

This common connection to Africa carries with it deep and profound cultural connections going back thousands of years, as previously shown in the quote by Cheikh Anta Diop. In 1962 Joseph Ki-Zerbo made similar assertions about the African nation. Included in a 1975 anthology entitled *Readings in African Political Thought*, Ki-Zerbo discusses in, “African Personality and the New African Society”:

Contrary to the colonial image, which presents pre-colonial Africa as a collection of tiny groups torn by internal strife and tribal warfare, sociologically frozen at the stage of a protozoan or an amoeba, African society was highly organized. Its principal features, in my opinion, were the following: first, the authority of the old people...[I]n Africa the hierarchy of power, of consideration, and of prestige, was in direct rapport with the hierarchy of age...The council of elders in traditional Africa was the supreme

political master of the city or the tribe. It was often this autocracy of the old that evolved into a veritable cult of ancestor worship....

Another important characteristic of the traditional society is solidarity, and this point is too obvious to require any lengthy examination. I would, however, like to say that this solidarity is not just a phenomenon of the superstructure, a trembling of the spirit, or a tenderness of heart towards others. This solidarity is imprinted on the very basic structure of African culture, and especially in its economic organization. You know that in the traditional African society the notion of property was defined in terms of the family, community or the village and not in terms of the individual. The concept of personal property in terms of the individual is generally alien to African social concepts. Fields are often common property and work is most often collective. Another social manifestation of this solidarity is hospitality, which, it is true, is obviously not an African monopoly but which nevertheless is particularly strong there; and here I am pleased to associate North Africa with the rest of the continent....

Another important feature is the equalitarian character of African society. Naturally, I do not intend in any way to idealize or present traditional Africa as the best of all possible or imaginary worlds. Africa has had its tyrants, as have other nations throughout history. But it must be stressed also that the traditional African society often included classes based solely on functional differentiation. There was, for instance the mason class, the blacksmith class, the warrior class. But the fact that in Africa property was common, the fact that there was no class that accumulated the capital property and reduced others to the state of mere tenancy—mere peasants or farmers whose toil was used to amass profit—well, that fact proves that the exploitation of man by man never achieved the status of a system in the traditional society of Africa. And, moreover, by reason of the unlimited solidarity of which I have just spoken, the true principle of such a society was “To each according to his needs,” to the extent of the complete utilization of common revenues.

Who is an African?

We can see our commonality in Africa, but as we pointed out earlier, no nation is defined solely in relationship to itself. To say that the nation is one thing is to say that it is not another. Dark skin is a product of equatorial Africa, the land of “black” people. “Black” people among ourselves would be incapable of defining ourselves as such. It is through our relationship with “white” people and the dialectic of the oppressor nation and the oppressed nation that Africans became “black.”

We can say, therefore, that the African nation is one born of its historical ties to its African national homeland, with a core sense of sameness that includes a common culture, history and physiognomy.

Still, to arrive at a full definition of the African nation we must say more than this. The African nation is informed by historical necessity, determined by our conditions of existence at this very moment, hundreds of years subsequent to our defining conflict with the European predator nation. Europe's parasitic attachment to Africa and Africans shapes and determines both its successful existence and our national incoherence.

A critical feature of our conditions of existence as a people is the imperialist near-total control of the economic life of Africa and African people wherever we are located in the world. Neither Africa, the land, nor Africans, the people—both fundamental components of the productive forces—have been accessible to Africa for the production and reproduction of real life for Africa and Africans.

Hence Africa has created staggering wealth for imperialism that has benefited the entire European nation—ruling class, middle class, workers and others at our expense. Everything they have was stolen from our labor, resources and knowledge! We have a historical mandate to take back what is ours and fulfill our destiny as a united, independent, self-governing nation in control of our own Continent and future.

This is an immensely profound reality that must be internalized by Africans and all peoples throughout the globe who have an interest in destroying forever this blood-sucking culture of violence stemming from U.S.-European imperialism.

Therefore, historical necessity—the absolute requirement of any people to produce and reproduce life as a condition of existence, survival and a meaningful future—*requires* the consolidation of the African nation. The consolidation of the African nation is a prerequisite for overturning the abject, genocidal conditions of existence of Africans everywhere.

There is no separate solution for the liberation of African people based on colonially-defined borders or identity any place on Earth. Clearly the African Liberation Movement has run into its limitations when fought within the context of these borders. Civil rights and “flag independence” only serve to obscure our oppressive exploitation, not overturn it.

Millions of Africans have been forcibly dispersed from Africa throughout the world. Europeans and others have come to Africa, some as colonizers, some as subjects of colonial powers who were allowed privilege in Africa as intermediary colonial agents functioning as buffers between Africans and our oppressors, a situation contributing to absolute African dependency and the atrophy of African productive forces. Other occupants of Africa are descendants of the Arab conquest in Africa preceding that of Europe.

How do these various forces fit into our definition of the African nation?

First of all, all black people forcibly transported to diverse parts of the world as part of the process giving rise to capitalism and the European nation are Africans. Period.

Secondly, all black people throughout the world are potentially part of the African nation, whether they were part of the forcible dispersal or whether their presence in other places predates the assault on Africa. This includes black people in Australia, India and other places who generally experience a sense of sameness associated with African blackness and the oppression we share because of our blackness. Under imperialist world domination, blackness is universally perceived as justification for our oppression.

For those Africans forcibly dispersed from Africa, we are directly connected to each other by the parasitic capitalist world economy under whose weight we continue to groan in poverty and oppression as the economic foundation of the European nation. All our cultural expressions, found everywhere we are dispersed—music, dance and other art forms and traditions—have their foundation in Africa.

The African nation and Arabs, whites and others in Africa

On the Continent of Africa, our national homeland, there are many Europeans who came as colonizers. They have chosen to remain in Africa after nominal independence was declared in some territories, including Zimbabwe, Namibia, Kenya and South Africa as prime examples. In South Africa white people called themselves Africans prior to independence.

Are these white people genuinely a part of the African nation by just declaring themselves so? The fact is that all Europeans, including those in Africa, are beneficiaries of the imperialist economy derived from African colonialism and slavery. This places them concretely and objectively in the category of the European nation, even as they may now be forced to disguise their European national identity for the purpose of maintaining a parasitic attachment to Africa. This attachment of European colonizers to Africa objectively undermines the consolidation of the African nation whose blackness is an identifying badge of exploitation and oppression.

This does *not* mean that whites from the colonizing nation cannot become a part of the African nation. What it does mean is that whites would have to commit “national suicide,” abandoning the interests of the European parasitic oppressor nation and uniting with the historical trajectory of the African nation to achieve “black power.”

Whites in Africa must unite with the capture of total economic and political power by African workers in a borderless Continent. Power in the hands of African workers is the only way to unleash the productive forces of Africa, allowing Africa and Africans to engage fully in the process of producing life for Africa and Africans the world over. Objectively this would mean white people in Africa would have to voluntarily relinquish to the African nation the vast resources they have accumulated through their past identification with the parasitic European nation.

In the final analysis the struggle against world capitalism, resting as it does on the exploitation of the majority of the peoples of the world, will require the destruction of the “white” or European nation that requires for its existence a parasitic relationship to the majority of humanity.

The national liberation of Africa and African people will be a leading force in that destruction. The role of genuine white or European communists will be to actively engage in the commission of national suicide by becoming one with the national liberation of Africans and others. This is a far cry from the current position of most self-declared white communists who talk instead about the need of the oppressed of the world to unite with their narcissistically-defined European version of history.

A similar situation is that of the Arabs who came into Africa as conquerors, initiating their enslavement of African people that lasted 1,500 years, and paved the way for the European trans-Atlantic slave trade. Similar to Europeans, Arabs must embrace the historically necessary trajectory of Africa toward black power as their own.

We saw the potential for this kind of unity in the 1960s when Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt stood as one of the strongest allies of Kwame Nkrumah in his attempt to create a united Africa. Ahmed Ben Bella, revolutionary fighter and first president of liberated Algeria, was another who cast his lot with the African nation. Both men shared with Africa a sense of sameness that showed promise for consolidating all of North Africa into the African nation.

In addition to the practical examples of Nasser and Ben Bella there is the example of black Haiti, which upon achieving independence from France in 1804, created a constitution declaring citizenship and land ownership for blacks only, but which defined whites, including the Poles who fought with Africans in the struggle for independence, as “black” for the purposes of citizenship. This was a historic case of whites committing national suicide and consciously abandoning the pedestal upon which the European nation rests as a parasite on Africa and the world. This is a case of Europeans accepting as their own the struggle for the achievement of revolutionary black power.

We also mentioned the presence in Africa of people from India and other former colonies who were brought to the Continent by the British for the express purpose of acting as a colonial buffer between the imperialists and the often-resisting African masses.

There are literally millions of Indians in Africa today, most of whom live at a much higher standard of living than both the majority of Africans and the majority of people in India. This shows how the pedestal upon which Europeans sit on our backs can be and has been opened up to petty bourgeois sectors of formerly colonized countries who now enjoy the benefits of white power at our expense.

Thus, Arabs, Europeans and residents of Africa from other European colonies *can* become African if they commit national suicide and abandon their parasitic relationship to African people. They must financially, politically and in every other way unite with the leadership of and become one with the African working class and the aims of a united and liberated Africa.

We are Africans because we say we are!

The African nation, then, is a community of people whose core identity is based on historical ties to the equatorial continent of black Africa, contributing to a common culture, history and physiognomy.

The African nation is also comprised of all those African people who have been forcibly dispersed to various places in the world through colonial slavery. Dispersed Africans were part of the process of the development of capitalism and the European nation, a process that requires our subjugation and national incoherence.

Additionally, the African nation is comprised of many who experience a sense of sameness, a subjective connection to Africa, mainly because of skin color that helps to define their imperialist-inspired impoverished and oppressed state of existence. The Dalit in India, the Indigenous of Australia and other areas where the African presence goes back to earliest times, such as in the Asia-Pacific region, are included in this category.

Finally, the African nation can include people of other nationalities living in Africa who commit national suicide, becoming part of the African working class and abandoning all allegiance to a predatory, colonial relationship to African people.

The truth, stated simply, is: we are Africans, whatever else we may be called, because we say we are Africans and we feel like we are Africans.

Africa is the national homeland of all black people worldwide. It is the land to which the identity of the African nation is firmly and irreversibly affixed. Our historical connection to Africa represents the critical element of the material basis for African nationality. For although we have been forcibly dispersed by colonial slavery and related factors subsequent to the initial European attack on Africa, our current conditions of existence, both in Africa and abroad, are essentially defined by the consequences of our forced dispersal.

Here we remind ourselves that it was Europe that divided Africa with the illegitimate borders that now still function to facilitate the theft of Africa's still vast resources by various imperial forces. The colonial division of Africa continues to separate Africans from each other and from our resources that are being expropriated without cessation.

The 54 delineated territories currently characterized as African nations were created in a conference held in Berlin, Germany in 1884-1885, attended by contending European states that parceled Africa out among themselves, resulting in the map that is known as Africa today.

The result of this European invention has been the evolvment of a false national consciousness that fits the interests of the imperialists who created it at the expense of Africans ourselves. There were *no* pre-colonial borders separating Africans from each other. Now borders surround 54 colonially-created entities, many of which cut right down the middle of ancient family or kinship territories, dividing and pitting against each other Africans that lived together for time immemorial. Clearly, this physical and

psychological separation has facilitated false national consciousness, not to mention a myriad of other traumas.

The practical significance of this clarification concerning the African nation and its relationship to the European imperialist nation was discussed in our book, *One People! One Party! One Destiny!*:

The anti-imperialist struggles of the world's peoples for repossession of our sovereignty and resources, both human and material, are the basis of the current, deep crisis of imperialism. They are struggles to remove the pedestal upon which the entire rotten edifice of imperialism rests. They are struggles that enlist the vast majority of humanity, the laboring masses of every nation, in the creation of a new world without exploitation and oppression, without slaves and slave masters and, ultimately, without borders.

We recognize that the struggle for the liberation and unification of Africa and African people, the struggle for the consolidation of the African nation is ultimately a struggle that undermines the solidarity of the European nation-state. We understand that under imperialism those who were enslaved, colonized and oppressed as a people will have to win liberation as a people.

We are also clear that the successful nation-building struggles of Africans and others under the leadership of the working class is at the same time the beginning of the process of the withering away of nations.

The European nation was born as a bourgeois nation at the expense of whole peoples and their territories. As we have seen in this discussion, it is a nation that requires the oppression and exploitation of whole peoples for its successful existence.

Hence, African people have to resist the imperialist bourgeoisie as a people. Our assumption of consolidated nationhood will function to destroy the bourgeois nation. Thus the rise of revolutionary worker nation-states destroys the material basis for the existence of nations and borders that function to distinguish and separate one people from another.

This is easier to understand when we finally realize the significance of the fact that capitalism at birth came wrapped in the skin of the racialized European nation-state. It is this reality that made impotent the Marxian assumption of communism resulting from the withering away of the European bourgeois industrialized state.

However, the fact that the European bourgeois nation-state achieves life and definition from its relationship to Africa and the oppressed peoples of the world means that our victory over imperialism, with the African working class at the helm will result in

the withering away of nations. This will leave bare and make possible the withering away of the bourgeois state, which will have become historically redundant.

Consolidating the African nation and building the African People's Socialist Party as the tool to achieve that goal must be at the top of the agenda of every African on Earth. Every struggle must lead to this end; every border must be broken down; the crisis of imperialism must be deepened daily. It is on the shoulders of Africans alive today to complete the struggle that our people have waged for more than 500 years: the liberation of Africa and reunification of African people everywhere—the consolidation of the African nation.

Independence, unification and socialism in our lifetime!