

## The Gutter Press Demands Confrontation

Washington Post, *editorial*, "Foreign Policy: The Right Question," May 18:

...Has the United States overreacted to the Vietnam trauma, leaving itself without the military and political resources — including executive authority and that elusive quality known as "will" — to deter aggressors and bolster friends? An ever-larger segment of the political community, we note, seems to think that is the case. The mood may not be one of panic, but the alarm is real.

Some part of the problem is the sense that the curve of Soviet-encouraged violence and power is rising at a moment when the United States has neither recovered from the wounds of Watergate and Vietnam nor come to terms with changes in the international economy and the international balance of power. It is becoming an uphill battle to argue that the United States, having come through one good patch internationally (India, Spain and Portugal, Egypt and Sudan, etc.), is now simply passing through a bad patch. In any event, the outrage that fueled earlier demands to trim back executive power is yielding to the anxious feeling that the president, as the single responsible authority capable of direct action, cannot be deprived of the necessary tools. Paradoxically, that is happening even as misgivings spread about President Carter. He was elected, after all, to deal with a very different imperative: that of strengthening the moral and institutional structure of government's domestic initiatives, not of arresting the erosion of our influence and power overseas.

We do not offer this necessarily impressionistic view because we accept the validity of every element in it, but rather because we think it is taking on a force of its own that the president cannot ignore. How should he deal with it? We offer two general answers.

First, he should not be swept up in hasty improvisations whose immediate effect may be to still political doubts, but whose longer-term consequences may be harmful to American institutions or American interests or both. It would be foolish, for instance, to plunge into Zaire — though a sure and prompt response to Zaire's request for aid might be very useful....

It is not time to quake for the republic. The United States has elements of great material and moral power on which it can draw. But the president is not getting the best out of the many able people in his national-security apparatus. He is not projecting to the country a sense of purposeful participation in its own destiny. If Mr. Carter projected such a sense, we believe, he would tap support he does not seem to know exists.

New York Times, *editorial*, "The Answer Is Not in Africa," May 18:

Hardly a day passes without some new violent episode among the tribes of Africa as they struggle to preserve or to alter the boundaries inherited from their old colonial masters. Ethiopians are on the march against their long-

rebellious province of Eritrea. Rebellious Katangans, now called Shabas, are reviving the battle to break free of Zaire, the former Belgian Congo, or at least to topple its central Government, led by President Mobutu.

Indirectly abetting both offensives, if not directly participating in them, are Cubans supplied and supported by the Soviet Union. Africans stiffened by these foreign legions have already prevailed in Angola and on the Somali front of Ethiopia. The mere threat of a Cuban-Soviet involvement already colors the diplomacy of Rhodesia. So with each new episode, a question for Americans returns more insistently: When will it be time for the United States to try to block these non-African adventurers?

The time may be approaching. Stability and orderly development in Africa may soon require resistance against Soviet imperial maneuvers there. The world standing of the United States itself may soon require it. But a policy of resistance for geopolitical, global reasons does not automatically translate into direct intervention or into alliance with every frail or corrupt target of Cuban-Soviet activity. If the threat becomes large enough, let the answers be large in American-Soviet relations. Wheat deals and other trade activity, technical exchanges, cultural intercourse, scientific and medical collaboration — all are potential hostages in a determined policy to alter Soviet conduct.

So let us separate our anger over Moscow's dangerous opportunism from the pathetic and diverse conflicts in different regions of Africa. Zaire is a valuable case in point. That we share with General Mobutu a resentment of the role of Cubans in Angola, is no reason to conclude that we share much else with him or need to assert a national interest in his survival....

Conceivably at stake in the new fighting is Zaire's huge debt of about \$2 billion, much of it owed to American banks. And that is, granted, an American interest. But a corrupt and inept regime, even more than the decline in the price of Zaire's copper, is responsible for the country's economic failure and rising political opposition. The debts may never be paid, no matter who wins. As the Carter Administration seems to understand, Zaire's regime is hardly the vehicle for a demonstration of American resistance to the Russians.

It would be useful nonetheless to establish the extent of the Cuban connection with the Shaba rebellion, if only to destroy the Cubans' pretense that they merely serve the cause of territorial cohesion at the request of legally constituted African governments. Their imminent betrayal of their former friends in Eritrea would also demonstrate that the Cubans have become the puppets of the Russians. If we intend to resist them, Moscow is the place to call.

Financial Times (*London*), May 16:

Where will France be fighting next? Zaire's appeal for French military support in its southeastern Shaba province opens the prospect of its taking on a fourth over-

seas front. With its military involvement under attack at home — from the Left — and abroad — from, among others, the Danes in the European Parliament last week — France is running an increasing risk of burning its fingers in foreign wars....Giscard Africanus is making enemies almost as quickly as friends. Some argue that French intervention works negatively in the long term by encouraging the — already far greater — interference of countries like Cuba.

## French Response: Caution

Les Echos (*Paris*), *May 16*:

...There are no reasons lacking to incite one to prudence either...Particularly, nothing has come to confirm in a categorical way that the Shaba events are not simply the result of a reinforced (internal — ed.) opposition to the regime. Or at least that they are not

meeting favorable echoes in a population suffering from a catastrophic economic situation...In the case of Zaire the border-line between the principle of support for moderate Africa and that of noninterference in internal affairs is very difficult to trace.

Le Figaro (*Paris*), *May 15*:

Paris will undoubtedly make an effort, before taking any decision whatsoever, to verify if the Cubans are really involved in the coup and if the vital centers of Shaba threaten to fall into rebel hands...

Le Figaro, *May 16*:

The information that can be gathered on the situation in Shaba is so **fuzzy**, so contradictory, that it would be imprudent to affirm what will be the attitude that the powers Mobutu called on will take...All the more imprudent since the policy of these powers in Zaire is, itself, extremely undecided.

# 'That Anachronistic British Policy: Hypocrisy'

*As British interests are doing everything possible to foment a race war in southern Africa, the government of Ethiopia this week issued a resounding condemnation of British "colonial" policy in an editorial in the April 23 Ethiopian Herald. Here are excerpts:*

The British government has been lately conducting an extremely hostile and provocative campaign against Ethiopia and its revolution. The recent speech, for instance, of the British Foreign Secretary, Dr. David Owen concerning the internationalist support being rendered to Ethiopia by fraternal socialist states to defend its independence, unity and revolution, may have been prompted by a desire to mislead the world of the essential contents of the prevailing situation in the Horn of Africa. Dr. Owen's thoughtless outbursts reflect not only an automated performance to please his imperialist warlords, but also shows profound confusion in Britain's foreign policy objectives. Indeed Britain's unprincipled position, in the eyes of fair-minded world opinion, has given her the reputation of being opportunistic and of living in a dream old world.

It is to be recalled that Dr. Owen's naive attitude towards the national sovereignty and revolution of Ethiopia drew sharp condemnation on the part of the Ethiopian Ambassador to Britain, Ato Ayalew Wolde-Giorgis, who condemned the Foreign Secretary's remarks as "an effrontery to the honour and dignity of Ethiopia and its revolution." Ato Ayalew also dismissed Dr. Owen's high handed behavior in questioning the sovereign rights of Ethiopia to choose its friends, by stating: "We have the full and inalienable right to ask for and obtain assistance to repel the (Somalia) aggression and to dispel the machinations of the imperialists and reactionary Arab countries."

All along the British government has been deeply engrossed in open acts of animosity and blackmail directed

against the Ethiopian state and the revolution of its people. Ever since the upsurge of the Ethiopian Revolution, British government leaders and the British mass media have been making deliberate attempts to smear our revolution. Runaway feudalists made Britain their sanctuary from where they staged counter-revolutionary plots with the aim of restoring the former feudo-capitalist system. The long series of anti-Ethiopia innuendos by British leaders have been raised to such serious proportions which render continued maintenance of relations meaningless.

Who does not know that Britain, as the greatest criminal in imperialist plunder, has been massacring and dividing people, destroying civilization, stifling culture and expanding slavery and racism to America, the Middle East and Asia? Unable to reconcile itself to having been defeated by the struggling oppressed masses of the world and the attainment of independence by the former British colonies, the British government has arrogated to itself the role of an international policeman. It also continues to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states.

Britain remains the culprit for the problems of Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, the Middle East, and Ireland which are areas of world tension. The British government is in the vanguard of those western countries which are rendering constant support to the colonial and racist regimes of Southern Africa, in their horrible crimes against the African people. But the British government shall no longer be allowed to go unchallenged and continue with its sinister machinations against the rights of oppressed peoples to achieve independence as well as consolidate and defend their freedom and unity....

Dr. Owen's insulting remarks, therefore, were a climax in frustration by a man with a searing conscience