

tively with its vocation as the ladder of civilization it must help us, the nations of the Third World, to better master our national independence politically and economically; to better safeguard our respective sovereignties, thanks to an American policy no longer geared to providing the world with food aid but with aid for agricultural development, an irreplaceable source of progress, aiding us rationally to better exploit our water resources, the diversification of our production, the realization of our self-sufficiency in food. This is the greatest shield against the rise of political instability and social disorder.

The policies of the International Monetary Fund do not, unfortunately, correspond to these prerogatives. Since 1960, the resources of the IMF have been contracting. The sum of the quotas of the member countries dropped from 12% of the value of world imports to 4% in 1980, while the financing needs have constantly grown. This has favored an uncontrolled indebtedness on the part of the Third World, which has placed an increasing number of poor countries in a position of extreme vulnerability and of social and political tensions, thereby facilitating their dependence on their creditors or other foreign powers.

In order for America to comply effectively with its vocation as the ladder of civilization it must help us to better master our independence.

I will permit myself here to recall certain ideas of the Third World militant, Mr. Mohamed Mzali, Prime Minister of Tunisia, and a man of great universal culture, which allows him to have a global and rational vision of international relations. In his talks with President Reagan [state visit to Washington, April 1982], Mr. Mzali had raised and supported the necessity to rethink the philosophy and structures of development aid, such that it be transformed into an effective means for solidarity, guaranteeing our countries the capacity to develop and become self-sufficient and not an easy prey of problems of neo-colonialism.

Mr. Mzali loves to cite the ancient Chinese proverb which says that instead of giving me a fish you should teach me to fish. Mr. Mzali also spoke with President Reagan on the problem of the Middle East, pointing out that the Palestinians and Arabs who still speak the language of reason belong to the last generation whose culture, education, and spirit still allow for calm dialogue. The future generations will be led by despair and will destroy, at the expense of peace, all the bridges which link nations and cultures with a bond of civilization.

This would mean not only the destruction of the Third World, but surely also of the world as a whole.

The future of U.S.

by Rev. Dibala Mpolesha

The following is an abridged version of the policy paper presented to the Third International Schiller Institute Conference on Nov. 24-25, by the Rev. Dibala Mpolesha of Zaire. Reverend Mpolesha is the president of the Zaire Council of Churches and is the general director of the Ecumenical Center of Kinshasa, Zaire. He is also a founding member of the Club of Life.

I bring you the fraternal greetings of your brothers and sisters of Africa, and I speak to you both as a pastor and representative of the Third World. I would like first of all to express my joy at finding myself among you in the context of this forum.

My sincere felicitations and thanks are addressed to the Schiller Institute, to whom go the credit and the saving initiative of placing us in a dialogue that brings together two realities (church and society) to fight against the decoupling of the United States not only from Europe, but also from Africa and Asia, that is, the world in general.

Africa's geographic and demographic situation

Africa is a continent inhabited by over 470 million people, both white and black. It comprises over 54 independent countries, while the rest are still under the colonial yoke. I, who now speak to you, am an African from Zaire, formerly the Belgian Congo. It is a country inhabited by over 35 million people with a surface area of 2,345,445 square kilometers, meaning it has an average of ca. 15 inhabitants per square kilometer. In this it resembles the rest of Africa.

Africa contains all manner of raw materials in its soil, which are unfortunately exploited in the cyst economy.

Africa has problems, which are underdevelopment, ignorance, disease, misery of all types, and infant mortality. According to the reports of UNICEF, over 1 million infants die in Africa every year due to malnutrition and lack of care. In Africa, unemployment is growing because there is no employment market.

The situation which Africa is undergoing today is not only an internal one, but is more than anything else externally generated. Africa depends on certain factors which stem from the economy established by the great powers.



policy in Africa

One of these great world powers is none other than the United States, the host country to which we are addressing ourselves today. A remarkable economic power, the United States plays a great role for or against the development of the Third World in general and of Africa in particular. America is obviously one of the partners of Africa. To speak of the situation of Africa is to speak at the same time of the United States, the two situations being inseparable. This is the reason why we will speak of "American policy towards Africa."

Why the misery and hunger in Africa?

According to statistics, of 31 countries struck by famine, 24 are African nations. What a record! On the strength of this, we cannot prevent ourselves from affirming that Africa embodies today the misery which is striking the entire planet. This is why we are called to focus particularly on the crucial problem of African development.

Africa, as we will explain shortly, is the cradle of the species and of human civilization. It also contains natural riches. Today, the equation is reversed, and Africa has fallen into the greatest misery. How can we explain this shameful collapse? This is the second reason why we are still led to speak most particularly about development in Africa.

The United States of America makes available millions of dollars for the Malthusian program of murdering infants. This program is called family planning or Desirable Births throughout Africa.

Man as the indispensable condition for the existence of a country

In effect, no country in the world can be developed without human capital. On the contrary, the economic progress of the developed countries today goes hand in hand with an accelerated growth of their populations.

Africa is less populated [than the countries of the developed sector]. It is half empty. Low density of the African population is explained by the devastation of Africa caused by a variety of diseases and by the slave trade in black Africa.

Africans went everywhere in the United States to work on the plantations, railroads, road construction and all manner of activities reserved for the imported Africans.

For us Africans there is no question of limiting births, because our geographical space is empty and requires population. . . . It is rather a question of stopping the use of contraceptive pills in Africa.

The exploitation of Africans by the rich countries is a shameful blot on the history of humanity. Africa has not only been the source of all sorts of raw materials, but also the source of mechanical energy in the form of the thousands of slaves who were shipped out for the development of plantations and road construction throughout the developed countries.

Africa is a large continent rich in every way. But Africa lives in inhuman misery: poverty, infantile mortality, abortions, unemployment, hunger, ignorance, disease, and drugs.

In short, since Africa is poor in finished products, how can it escape its underdevelopment?

Colonial Africa

The momentum towards development, whatever its embryonic character, which pre-colonial Africa had was disrupted by acculturation: first by contact with the Portuguese in the period of discovery and later with the colonisers themselves.

Instead of enriching Africa, this acculturation rather exploited, impoverished, and reduced the population to the lowest possible levels. The majority of the African population began to live in the most absolute poverty. Most Africans today live at lower living standards than had their ancestors in the period of the arrival of the Westerners in the 15th century, or before the Roman conquests in the Mediterranean in the beginning of our era.

This situation can be explained by the fact that Africans were sold by the thousands to go and develop the American continent. Slavery and the trade of blacks ravaged Africa for a period of three centuries.

Thus the misery which today is widespread throughout Africa is the fruit of the egotism of the rich nations, who seek to enrich themselves further through the exploitation of the poor, who then become increasingly poor.

American policy toward Africa and our perspectives for the future

The continent of the Rights of Man, the United States, has always spoken of these rights without applying them in detail. American action has always been impotent, ineffective.

In the same way, the United States has always spoken of political liberty, the nominal liberty of peoples, the right of peoples to run their own lives, not to mention the right to economic freedom and the freedom to develop. Yet American policy vis-à-vis Africa has installed an economic neo-colonialism whereby Africans have neither the right nor the liberty to make decisions about their own economies. In effect, the rates of exchange and triangular trade only profit the rich to the detriment of the poor, who are forced to accept

prices for their products which are fixed by the rich countries.

In this old economic order, the International Monetary Fund takes not the slightest concern for the integral development of Africa.

The birthplace of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man, the United States, must accomplish its mission towards the world in general and Africa in particular. American policy, as it did in the past, ought not only speak of the rights of man but also move to the application of these rights. Is it not said that one preaches better through example than through the word!

The United States once freed itself completely from England. Our hope is to see it expend the same effort in the liberation of the nominally free countries of Africa.

In other terms, the United States must accord freedom not only in politically nominal terms, but also and above all economically such that the nations of Africa can feel themselves the arbiters of their own destinies, freed from the old economic order, the hangman's noose. Such economic freedom would completely end neo-colonialism in all its aspects, to instead create the new economic order which Africa needs. With this new economic order, all 15 countries, including those of Africa, ought to have the same rights in trade exchanges. By the same logic, the triangular market must end. In effect, every people under this new order ought to have the right to choose its trading partner and to fix the price of its products without any constraints.

The IMF must cease all lending to African countries from which those countries cannot fully profit, because this gigantic aide is only consumed by the neo-colonialists who have replaced the old colonizers. An immediate stoppage of such loans would push Africa to necessarily get out of its miseries by its own means. And furthermore, the amount of credit and aide received by Africa is inferior to the profits taken from the supposedly aided countries. . . .

In all this, the killer is egotism. The United States . . . should opt for the equality of the rights of peoples and nations. From this principle stems the need to suppress the terms "heartlands" and "peripheral countries." The entire system is conceived from the standpoint of the former to the detriment of the latter.

In short, the principal duty of the rich countries, if they are to foster true development, is to first respect the right to development which others too have. The United States must recognize that this is the only way in which it can better participate in the development of Africa. It must respect Africa's right to development, together with all the corollaries this implies.

Protection of the weak and help to the oppressed

The United States freed itself and should free others, particularly Africa, which is being invaded by communism.

Africa should be Americanized in every way and for

everyone's benefit. Today we see that Africa is half Americanized and half communist. My country, Zaire, is an example of one that is surrounded by communist countries—Congo-Brazzaville, Angola, Tanzania, Burundi, and Zambia—and yet the U.S. shuts its eyes in the face of such a situation.

In order to free Africa, Africa must be economically freed. You once took the decision to end all slavery from Africa. This decision was taken by a sole individual, and it helped us. Today, demand of our listeners present here today and of the United States to once and for all put an end to the cyst-economy, the colonial economy, the alienated economy.

God, defender of the weak, refuses the exploitation of man by man.

In order for Africa to better develop itself, it must be left free to have all its raw materials be transformed into finished products in Africa itself, without triangular trade.

We request a total moratorium of all debts held by the countries of the Third World which are, as you well know, experiencing enormous difficulties.

We ask the developed countries to abandon all the Third World debts they hold, because as God tells us in the Bible: "If your brother become poor and his hand weaken while you are near, you will support him." (Lev. 25, 34-38)

What to conclude from this situation

Being already free, the U.S. has an urgent duty to free the nations of Africa which today are enmired in economic slavery. . . . Triangular trade must be banished to the past. What is indispensable for the development of Africa is technical assistance of the type the U.S. made available to Japan.

In the context of the industrialization of Africa, priority must be given to the construction of trans-African railroads linking the north to the south and the east to the west. This demands the presence of Western experts, and will also help to relieve unemployment.

Additionally, a considerable quantity of American excess cereal production must be sent to aid those African countries struck by famine. The United States will not remain indifferent to the deplorable climatic situation which is currently destroying the eastern part of Zaire. This is the climatic danger produced by the present drought in eastern Zaire, the Kivu region, which is the granary of Zaire and which has been seized by famine. All friends of Zaire are under the obligation of coming to its aide in order to put a stop to this deplorable situation.

We call for a one-year moratorium as a "jubilee" on the part of the Western countries with respect to the poor countries of Africa.

In any case, as a pastor, we have wished to deal with this subject from a Christian point of view. That is to say, demonstrating the role that the United States could play in its capacity as a Great Power, in contributing to the development of Africa which is currently enmired in misery.