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The Role of Intellectuals in the Struggle for Democracy, Peace and Reconstruction in Africa

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Introduction: Lessons of the Congo

A week from today, on the 30th of June, my country will celebrate the 37th anniversary of its independence from Belgium. The level of enthusiasm for this historic day is likely to be second only to that shown during the original celebration in 1960. For Patrice Lumumba's Congo has finally won its second independence, this time from the brutal neocolonial dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko.

The victory of the Congolese people over one of the most decadent oligarchies in post-colonial Africa is the culmination of a heroic people's war that Pierre Mulele, Laurent Kabila and other Lumumbists initiated in 1963, two years before Mobutu staged his second and decisive coup d'état. Waged as a struggle for a "second independence," the war was aimed at overthrowing the neocolonial state to replace it with a new state capable of meeting the people's expectations of independence, namely, basic human rights and material prosperity.[1]

During a seven-month period between April and November 1964, the eastern front of the second independence movement succeeded in liberating nearly two thirds of the national territory. It is at this juncture that the forces of imperialism and settler colonialism, which were concerned about the implications of the Lumumbist victory in the Congo for the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, decided to intervene. The US-Belgian military intervention on 24 November 1964 at Kisangani, the nerve and command center of the people's war, was

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followed by mopping-up operations against guerrilla bases by white mercenaries from Europe and Southern Africa. The Mulele-led western front was able to hold on until 1968 in the Kwilu district, while Kabila founded a new front in the east in 1967.

The resurrection of the Congo, together with its second independence, has important lessons for the struggle for democracy, peace and reconstruction in Africa today. Between July 1991 and December 1992, a national democratic forum of 2842 delegates representing all the relevant social forces of our country met in Kinshasa as the Sovereign National Conference. In August 1992, the conference staged a peaceful revolution in stripping President Mobutu of all executive powers, restoring our country to its rightful name of Congo, and setting up a power-sharing institutional framework for a two-year transition to democracy. The international community in general, and the major world powers in particular, showed nothing but contempt for the democratic right of our people to remove a discredited regime and replace it with a better one.

Five years later, the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL) succeeded, after a long march of seven months and a few decisive battles at both ends of the military campaign, in achieving all that the national conference had tried but failed to do. On 17 May 1997, as AFDL fighters were taking over Kinshasa, Kabila by a stroke of the pen proclaimed himself President and renamed the country "Democratic Republic of Congo." Almost immediately, Mobutu and his regime were history, and the international community did not hesitate to give its full recognition to both the new regime and the new name of the country. The lessons of the Congo for the African democracy movement from Cape to Cairo and from Dakar to Antananarivo are self-evident.

Since the October 1988 rebellion against the one-party state in the streets of Algiers, the once promising process of democratization in Africa has hit numerous snags and bottlenecks. With the international community confusing democracy with multiparty elections, entrenched leaders and oligarchies have learned to play the democracy game with astuteness. All they have to do is divide and weaken the real opposition by financing a number of fraudulent parties, rig the electoral process, and then invite external monitors at the tail end of the process to certify their charade as free and fair elections. When this is not adequate for purposes of ensuring their survival, the entrenched rulers resort to violence.

In this context of violence against democracy, armed struggle is the most appropriate means of removing entrenched neocolonial rulers and corrupt dictators. And one of the Congo's lessons is that revolutionary violence is the only message that imperialism and the international community seem to take seriously. I am stressing the revolutionary character of armed struggle as a strategy of national liberation here to distinguish it from other types of anti-state violence by social movements. The latter include the senseless violence of cult-like and bandit-

like groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone, respectively, and warlordism which only ravage their respective countries - like Somalia, Liberia and Congo-Brazzaville.

Three decades and a half after Frantz Fanon's pioneering essays on violence,[2] it is now an accepted fact that liberation movements resort to armed struggle as the last option open to them in the face of the intransigence of the oppressive regime and its systematic use of violence against the people. What distinguishes revolutionary violence from other forms of political violence is its political strategy, which consists of mobilizing the population around the cause of national liberation, enhancing the people's capacity to be self-reliant and participate in their own liberation, and preparing the revolutionary alliance for the exercise of state power after victory.

The primacy of the political over the military dimension of the revolutionary strategy implies a rejection of both militarism and adventurism. The primary aim is to win the political soul of the people by deepening their alienation from the oppressive regime. By exhausting the enemy and its will to continue governing a hostile population, the revolutionary forces may face government troops who are unwilling to die for a discredited regime, as in the case of Mobutu's Zaire. As a general rule, the final outcome is less dependent on the military capability of the enemy forces than on their political will.

During the last 30 years, the national liberation struggle in Congo-Kinshasa was inextricably linked with the democratic struggle against Mobutu's dictatorship and reign of terror. A participant in the struggle as a committed intellectual since 1968, I took part in some of the major events marking it between 1990 and 1996. It is therefore a happy coincidence that my two-year term as AAPS President and 12-year service on the AAPS Executive Committee should end at the very time of the second independence and the resurrection of the Congo.

This coincidence offers me the opportunity to share with you my thoughts on the current struggle for democracy, peace and reconstruction in Africa, with particular reference to our own role as intellectuals in advancing the struggle. My reflections are grouped in the remaining three sections of this address as follows. The next section examines the question why national liberation is still on the agenda in Africa, and provides a summary of its major historical tasks. This is followed by an analysis of the social responsibility of intellectuals universally, and of the specific historical mission of the African petty bourgeoisie with respect to the struggle for democracy, peace and reconstruction in the third and fourth sections, respectively.

The Historical Tasks of National Liberation in Africa

The resurrection of the Congo is once again a demonstration that the contemporary

world is an epoch of national liberation revolutions. All over the world, oppressed people have risen to challenge external domination and internal oppression in order to assert their right to freely determine their own destiny. In Africa, both the independence movement and the current struggle against neocolonial oligarchies are part of this historical trend.

For the people, the struggle for national liberation meant not only freedom from colonial rule, but also and more importantly a better standard of living and a more secure future for their children. Unfortunately, this basic promise of independence has materialized only for a tiny minority. The dream of freedom and prosperity by the great majority of the people has been transformed into a nightmare of oppression, instability and despair. For millions of Africans, independence has not brought about peace, security and economic development. Conflicts over the state and the resources it controls, together with the general failure of the post-colonial state to deliver on the promises of independence, had a negative impact on the national liberation revolution in Africa. They succeeded in setting it back.

Today Africa is a continent in disarray. It is a continent marked by a high incidence of poverty and an intolerable deterioration in the material conditions of life of ordinary people. On the basis of per capita GNP alone, more than half of Africa's 53 countries are poorer today than they were in 1960. Due to a growing reduction in purchasing power, the shortage of basic necessities and the lack of adequate public services, the scourge of poverty for the masses includes malnutrition, greater vulnerability to endemic diseases, misery and hopelessness.

The worsening of economic and social disparities between the masses and the new national oligarchies controlling the state and economy, a situation brought about by excessive corruption and misrule, has increased the dependence of the ruling classes on external support. Foreign economic and military support is essential not only for the deeper insertion of these classes into the international structures of wealth and privilege in which they seek to find their place, but also for protecting them in the face of popular discontent and rebellions. Thus the people's revolutionary struggle for liberation and development come face to face with the forces of domestic and international counter-revolution.

After three to four decades of independence, national liberation as a historical process is still on the agenda in Africa. The major social tasks at hand are the dismantling of the neocolonial oligarchies that have ruined our countries and destroyed their social fabric, the resolution of armed conflicts, the establishment of a stable and democratic political order, and the reconstruction of the economic and social infrastructure.

These tasks are an integral part of the historical mission of the African petty bourgeoisie with respect to the national liberation struggle. The basic outlines of this mission, together with the obstacles that reactionary forces are likely to put in its way, have already been described in the classics of African liberation by Frantz

Fanon and Amilcar Cabral.[3] It is remarkable that in the last 25 to 35 years, the theoretical insights and breakthroughs by both Fanon and Cabral on the national liberation struggle, and Fanon's strictures against the post-colonial state, have not been superseded by radically different analyses. For their theoretical weapons, sharpened as they were in the concrete struggles of our people for freedom and development, were clearly targeted at the reality, the historical context and the contradictions of these struggles.

With only three, four and five years of observing the nascent party-state in Guinea, Ghana and Tunisia, respectively, Fanon produced a definitive anatomy of the post-colonial state, one that can only be updated with respect to minor details. He identified the new ruling group as a "bourgeoisie of the civil service," whose preoccupation rested more with personal wealth and pleasure than in transforming society for economic development. It relied on external protection and internal repression in order to remain in power. As for the single party, which this class justified as an engine of social mobilization and national unity, Fanon saw it as a coercive instrument of social control, whose mission was to help the government hold the people down. According to Fanon:

> the party is given the task of supervising the masses. The party plays understudy to the administration and the police, and controls the masses, not in order to make sure that they really participate in the business of governing the nation, but in order to remind them constantly that the government expects from them obedience and discipline.[4]

Although Cabral was primarily concerned with the immediate task of liberating Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde islands, he did reflect and write on the post-independence situation in Africa. In fact, his theory of national liberation distinguishes between two major phases of the struggle: the anti-colonial phase, during which nearly all social classes of the colonized are united by the common goal of ending foreign or settler rule; and the post-colonial or neocolonial phase of class struggles. For Cabral, the historical tasks of national liberation are very complex during this latter phase, regardless of the manner in which independence was achieved, because they involve the ultimate question of radically transforming the very structures of the economy and the state.

It is in this context that the new rulers come face to face with a terrible dilemma: they either side with the international bourgeoisie to keep these structures intact and thus betray the revolution, or identify with the deepest aspirations of the people by transforming these structures to serve their interests. Whatever choice the rulers make, the liberation struggle becomes inevitably and more clearly than ever a part of the international class struggle. This is why Cabral maintains, and appropriately so, that the principal aspect of the national liberation process is the struggle against neocolonialism.

With the leadership in nearly all our countries being relatively well integrated in the international structures of wealth and privilege, and with petty bourgeois intellectuals like academics dying to join them, the question arises as to who is to lead this struggle against neocolonialism. For Cabral, the petty bourgeoisie must play a leading role in the national liberation struggle. During the anti-colonial phase, educated African elites were the only group that could play this role, because of their integration, however partial, in the structures of colonial domination and of their knowledge of the outside world. In the present phase, the leadership should come from those revolutionary petty bourgeois intellectuals who will desert or shun the ruling alliance and abandon their class privileges to become revolutionary workers. They are the united revolutionary vanguard, "generally an active minority," that is "conscious of the true meaning and objective of the national liberation struggle which it must lead."[5]

Although I share Cabral's dream of enlisting intellectuals in the struggle for democracy, peace and reconstruction, I do agree with Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba that Cabral's notion of a vanguard party organized around revolutionary intellectuals is basically elitist since the party is conceptualized "in the absence of an independent working class political capacity."[6] The existence of independent mass and other civil society organizations like trade unions, peasant cooperatives, women's groups and professional associations is the best guarantee against authoritarian and dictatorial tendencies in the liberation and democracy movements. The absence of this and other safeguards such as regularly organised leadership elections, intra-party democracy and freedom of expression, easily leads to the betrayal of the democratic and egalitarian objectives of the liberation struggle.

When this happens, as it did in countries where liberation movements or military juntas had proclaimed themselves Marxist-Leninist, the ideological commitment to socialist democracy and equality was not manifested in the organization and functioning of party and state structures. Thus, whether it was based on the Leninist myth of vanguardism or the African Socialism's myth of classlessness, the party-state could not succeed as an instrument of economic development and national integration. Unable to transform society, the party came to reflect it, with all its social and political contradictions.

In a 1979 article on the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, I made a much too sharp distinction between internal settlement, neocolonialism and genuine liberation.[7] Likewise, in all my pre-1988 writings, I tended to see liberation movements as radical political organizations that were substantially different from other types of nationalist movements in Africa.[8b]

With a better understanding of political developments in Algeria, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, it is now clear that these distinctions were too simplistic to convey the complexity of

African political realities. If the liberation movement was more radicalized in those countries that were freed through armed struggle, it does not follow that the decolonization settlements and political compromises leading to independence and/or majority rule in these countries were necessarily more advantageous for the people than elsewhere.

In the economic sphere, the debt trap and IMF/World Bank tutelage have combined with corruption and mismanagement to reduce the capacity of the state to serve the needs of ordinary people. In the relatively developed region of Southern Africa, the fact that white settlers have retained much of the best land and other privileges does have the same effect. Rather than narrowing, the gap between the poor and the rich, who now include a tiny black bourgeoisie, is growing.

In the political sphere, authoritarianism remains the dominant tendency. Whether independence was achieved by armed struggle or by peaceful means, the ruling party and its leader have sought to monopolize the political space to the detriment of other parties and civil society organizations. Everywhere, the legacy of the party-state weighs heavily on the current democratization process. The once powerful single parties are resisting pressures to share power, while entrenched rulers are finding it difficult to separate themselves from the office they occupy and to abandon their personal hold on countries they have come to consider as their private domain. There is no better example of this sickness of perpetual leadership than former President Mobutu of Congo-Kinshasa.

The Weapon of Theory

As students of this historical process, we have the duty to provide for our people the theoretical weapons and tools with which to understand the process, together with its underlying causes, substance and consequences. For it is with such tools that they can both interpret reality and transform it to build a better world. The AAPS tradition of socially relevant scholarship is consistent with a universal tradition that places great emphasis on the social responsibility of intellectuals, a tradition that includes great thinkers like Socrates, Karl Marx and Cheikh Anta Diop.

According to this tradition, intellectuals are to be philosophers and, as such, they must become critics of the *status quo*. For to philosophize, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty said so brilliantly in his inaugural lecture at the *Collège de France* over 40 years ago, implies that there are things to see and say.[9] And what a philosopher sees and says may not agree with society's conventional wisdom and dominant interests.

This is a position that is in perfect agreement with the Socratic view of philosophical practice as an uncompromising quest for the truth. A quest, it must be added, involves a critical appraisal of all received ideas, values and conventions. The philosopher, according to this view, is one who investigates and announces the

results of this investigation regardless of the price to be paid for commitment to the truth, the ultimate price being, as in the case of Socrates himself, giving up one's life.

Why, it may be asked, are intellectuals singled out for such a privilege, or burden, in all human societies? There are as many answers to this question as there are conceptions of the nature and role of intellectuals. But whatever the differences, ranging as they do from the Platonic ideal of philosopher-kings to the Gramscian concept of organic intellectuals, there is a broad consensus that knowledge is power and, therefore, knowing entails social responsibility.

Given the intermediate position that intellectuals occupy in contemporary society between the dominant and dominated classes,[10] their scientific practice cannot be neutral. For Maurice Duverger, every sociological or social science investigation is influenced by a particular value system in the researcher's immediate or wider environment, which is reflected in the choice of hypotheses, research design and conceptual frameworks.[11]

Generally, intellectuals analyze society either from the standpoint of the dominant groups, which have a vested interest in mystifying the way society works, or from the perspective of ordinary people, who have nothing to lose from truthful analyses of their predicament. As Barrington Moore suggests, it is this latter class perspective that comes closer to objective scientific analysis:

> For all students of human society, sympathy with the victims of historical processes and skepticism about the victors' claims provide essential safeguards against being taken in by the dominant mythology. A scholar who tries to be objective needs these feelings as part of his ordinary working equipment.[12]

In the face of the growing social exclusion in the very centers of advanced capitalism, African intellectuals have to be skeptical about the claims by cold war victors to have established the only economic system that is capable of satisfying human needs. Some of the ideologues of the system have gone so far as to claim that it represents perfection, or the last station on the journey to abundance and happiness - in short, the end of history.

However, a closer look at social realities reveals that this is not the case. In the United States of America, the high incidence of crime, drug addiction, homelessness and other social ills portends for millions an end of history quite different from the proverbial milk and honey of God's country. Likewise, some of the most developed countries in Europe are afflicted by one or all of the following ills: double-digit unemployment, rising crime rates and unprecedented racism against peoples of colour, both officially (e.g., visa and immigration restrictions) and unofficially.

The market, after all, is not so free, effective and fair in its allocation of

resources. Everywhere, policies inspired by Thatcherism and Reaganomics are allowing the rich to get richer and condemning the poor to even greater poverty. As for the middle classes, electoral politics seems to provide one of the needed distractions from financial worries, with the now familiar promise of lower tax burden.

The implications of all this for intellectual practice in Africa are crystal clear. Given the crisis of both the state and the university, African academics are greatly dependent on external grants and consultancies for research funds and personal income. Consequently, they are very vulnerable to externally defined paradigms and research agendas. This situation calls for greater vigilance against being so easily taken in by the dominant mythologies like market liberalism, structural adjustment, women in development, and others.

The antidote to externally determined intellectual fads and fashions is to produce new ideas and methods from the people's largely untapped but rich reservoir of knowledge about history, culture and the natural environment. Going to the school of the people, as Fanon has shown with reference to petty bourgeois freedom fighters who went to the bush during the anti-colonial struggle, can have pleasant surprises for those who tend to think that they know it all and are contemptuous of "ignorant peasants." The major task for intellectuals is to systematize popularly-produced notions and ideas into the language of *contemporary revolutionary* thought and politics.

This is what Mulele did in Kwilu, where virtually all of the guiding ideas and themes of the second independence movement were essentially the intellectual production of the masses. The very concept of "second independence" and notions that politicians were "liars" and the neocolonial rulers "new whites" were all produced by the people's own organic intellectuals. All they needed for going forward with the struggle were modern organizational resources and a progressive leadership capable of analyzing the balance of forces correctly and of charting an appropriate course of action. In Congo-Kinshasa, the only group that had the capacity to generate such leadership was the Lumumbist intellectuals, the group to which Mulele and Kabila belonged.

An integral part of intellectual practice is active involvement in the affairs of one's society. The point is forcefully made by Plato in an autobiographical sketch in his *Seventh Letter*, in which he states with reference to the unfavorable political climate in Athens that he feared to see himself "at last altogether nothing but words, so to speak - a man who would never willingly lay hands to any concrete task."[13] Given his characteristic formalism and idealism, Plato is unwittingly defending a cardinal position of materialist epistemology. This is the view that, to be able to capture reality and to know it fully, one must at the very least interact with it and at best attempt to transform it. Truths or facts are neither ahistorical nor "given" in nature. Knowledge of the real world is obtained not from sense experience but

through intellectual activity, the process of knowledge itself being intimately associated with the material and historical conditions of its production. It is a process closely linked with politics.[14]

Laying Intellectual Hands to Concrete Social Tasks

What role should intellectuals in general and academics in particular play in the current struggle for democracy, peace and reconstruction in Africa? Based on the intrinsic meaning of intellectual activity as defined earlier, this role must consist of laying intellectual hands to concrete social tasks. In concrete terms, this means actualizing the dialectical unity of theory and practice not only in the production of scientific knowledge, but also in the practical involvement of intellectuals in politics. Logically, the second activity should be a function of the first. Consequently, as philosophers with things to see and say, our first task is to produce and disseminate usable knowledge based on the analysis of concrete conditions. As academics, this task goes hand in hand with the reconstruction of our universities.

Higher education is in a total state of crisis in Africa today. This crisis is part and parcel of the deeper crisis of the state system of which most universities and research centers are a part. Rather than serving as centers of critical thinking and fundamental research, African universities have come to embody the characteristics and contradictions of the society around them. They are afflicted by all the ills associated with the post-colonial state such as authoritarianism, nepotism, mismanagement and administrative incompetence.

The crisis of higher education in Africa has a lot to do with politics. The very rise and decline of African universities cannot be understood without reference to the political context underlining them. With few exceptions, most universities created before independence were founded during the postwar decolonization era in response to African pressures for political and social emancipation.[15] They were seen as centers of excellence for training a small core of reliable African elites on whom the dominant classes in Europe could count for preserving their long-term interests in Africa. Ibadan in Nigeria, Makerere in Uganda and Lovanium in the Congo (now the University of Kinshasa) are the best examples of this elitist tradition.

After independence, universities became a national symbol of sovereignty as well as a yardstick of the state's commitment to fulfilling the people's aspirations for economic development. Potentially promising regional universities lost support in the general rush to set up national universities. States invested heavily in the infrastructure and gave basically all the financial support that university administrators, teachers and students needed for their work. This included free education for students, who received stipends for books and social expenses, and social benefits such as housing and car allowances for teachers and top administrators.

There has been a remarkable decline in the levels of state support for higher

education during the 1980s and 1990s compared to the 1960s and 1970s. A major reason for this decline is the dramatic expansion of secondary education, which created and continues to create an increasing demand for higher education. Even with the best of intentions, governments cannot keep up the same levels of financial support as in the past. Moreover, the world economic crisis and the pressures for democratizing authoritarian states have deepened the financial crisis of African universities.

Generally, Africa has not recovered from the worldwide recession that began in 1975. Declining commodity prices and an increasing debt burden have placed tremendous pressure on public finances. Countries are also constrained by the stabilization and adjustment programmes of the IMF and the World Bank to reduce budgetary support to social services, including higher education. Until recently, the World Bank continued to argue that African countries were spending too much money on higher education, and that teacher salaries were higher than those in Asia and Latin America![16] Although it is true that the cost of higher education in Africa is relatively higher than in Latin America and Asia because of the lack of economies of scale, one would be hard put to show that African university teachers are better off economically than their counterparts in the other regions of the South.

To the ravages done to the university by the economic crisis during the 1980s were added the effects of the political dynamics of democratization, particularly since 1988. Today, the violent backlash of authoritarian regimes against the democracy movement has combined with the economic crisis and the IMF and World Bank policies to sound the death knell of normal university life in most African countries. Academic sessions have been disrupted by state violence, the worst case of this being the May 1990 massacre of students at the University of Lubumbashi by Mobutu's death squads. "*Les années blanches*," or entire years lost by students because of university closure and cancelled sessional examinations, have become a frequent occurrence in Francophone Africa.

Fearful of what they saw as subversive activities on the campuses, governing authorities were more than happy to go along with the strictures of the Bretton Woods institutions by slashing budgets and thus making life miserable for both university teachers and students. In doing this, they sought to destroy any critical thinking in the universities and to weaken or neutralize dissent on the campus. These are governments, both military and civilian, that have managed to appoint a significant number of professors and lecturers to top positions in the state and continue to spend excessively on the military and security establishments.

By depriving scholars of the capacity to lead a financially secure middle-class lifestyle and the ability to conduct serious research, governments have succeeded in making many of them willing collaborators. Instead of following Socrates in remaining skeptical of the defenders of law and order against the claims of social justice, many of our colleagues have been too eager to follow Plato's footsteps in

dirtying their hands in the service of tyrants like Mobutu, Ibrahim Babangida, Sani Abacha and others.[17]

A second determinant of the worsening conditions of teaching and research in African universities today is the quality and performance of university administrators, virtually all of whom are scholars and intellectuals. During the last 30 years, there has been a growing politicization of university administrations, with people named to top positions on account of political loyalty rather than competence. Where distinguished scholars used to work as defenders of academic freedom and excellence, political hacks have been installed to work with state security to make life difficult for both students and academics who would question the *status quo*.

This is not to suggest that all the managers of state universities in Africa today are political hacks. Honest and principled intellectuals can still be found among them. For the most part, however, top university officials are careerists who replicate at the university level the typical behavior of top state officials. An extreme example of this is Jean-Félix Koli Elombe, who served as Vice-Chancellor of the Universities of Kisangani and Lubumbashi in the 1970s. The man wore a cap and carried a cane, just like President Mobutu, and he was a frequent traveller between these cities and Kinshasa, the capital. In Kisangani, Mr Koli Elombe had university officials, including faculty deans and department heads, and university security guards line up to send him off on his tours and welcome him back at the airport.

Like state officials, most university authorities run their campuses as though they were a private domain. To ensure full control, they do their best to control appointments to deanships and department headships so that only individuals in whom they have full confidence would hold these positions. Merit is thus relegated to secondary importance. Corruptive behavior, including influence peddling and sexual harassment, is not unknown in university circles. Misuse of university property by officials, misappropriation of funds, and serious flaws in the management of human, financial and material resources are also a reality of university life in Africa today. The result of all this is mismanagement and the breakdown of essential services.

It is evident, therefore, that the university reflects the characteristics and contradictions of the society around it. The struggle for democracy and reconstruction must also be waged at the university so as to increase its capacity to sustain its teaching, research and community outreach activities. *Within the state system, university administrations must be democratized in such a way that department heads, faculty deans and even vice-chancellors or rectors are elected. As centers of learning and excellence, universities need an autonomous political space, free from state interference and partisan politics.* Concerned scholars, like some among the AAPS membership, should do everything possible to help the university improve its research capacity and thus enable serious academics to at least match

the distinguished scholarly contribution of a much smaller number of African intellectuals in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Rebuilding the university for greater scholarly involvement in the popular struggles for democracy, peace and reconstruction must also involve the rejection of the developmentalist conception of the university dear to the World Bank and authoritarian governments. This is a university in which priority is given to technology and the natural sciences only, since these are seen as areas of direct relevance to economic development. The result is the marginalization of the humanities which are perceived as a threat to the *status quo*.

Finally, and this is the second major task, professional intellectuals like ourselves must go beyond university walls to join those social forces struggling for radical change. Individually and collectively, we must work even harder to develop a viable civil society and, if necessary, join those political movements likely to push for the realization of the historical tasks of national liberation. These tasks require the continuation of the struggle, even after the attainment of the much desired second independence.

A luta continua!

Notes

1 For background information on the second independence movement in Congo-Kinshasa, see Nzongola-Ntalaja, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Africa (Zed Books and IFAA, London, 1987), ch. 5, pp. 92-120; French trans. as "Le mouvement pour la seconde indépendance au Congo-Kinshasa (Zaïre), de 1963 á 1968" in Peter Anyang' Nyong'o (*ed.*) Afrique: la longue marche vers la démocratie (Publisud, Paris, 1988), pp. 208-252.

2 Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (Grove Press, New York, 1963). There are three essays: "Concerning Violence," "Violence in the International Context," and "Spontaneity: Its Strengths and Weaknesses".

3 Frantz Fanon, Les Damnès de la Terre (Maspero, Paris, 1961); English trans. The Wretched of the Earth. The best collections of Amilcar Cabral's speeches and writings are *Revolution in Guinea* (Stage 1, London, 1969; Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972) and *Unité et lutte* (Maspero, Paris, 1975); English trans. *Unity and Struggle* (Monthly Review Press, New York, 1979). Surprisingly, the English edition does not have two seminal essays on the social structure of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, respectively.

4 Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, pp. 181-182.

5 Cabral, Revolution in Guinea, p. 105.

6 Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba, "Development, Post-Leninism and Revolution in Africa," *African Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1988), pp. 89-100.

7 Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Internal Settlement, Neocolonialism and the Liberation

of Southern Africa," *Journal of Southern African Affairs*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1979), pp. 133-151, with a revised version in Nzongola-Ntalaja, Class Struggles and National Liberation in Africa (Omenana, Roxbury, MA, 1982), ch. 6.

8 See Nzongola-Ntalaja, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Africa, pp. 35-36.

9 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Eloge de la philosophie (Gallimard, Paris, 1953).

10 Nicos Poulantzas, "On Social Classes," *New Left Review*, No. 78 (1973), pp. 27-54.

11 Maurice Duverger, Sociologie Politique (Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), pp. 11-12.

12 Barrington Moore, Jr., Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World (Beacon Press, Boston, 1966), p. 523.

13 Plato, *Seventh Letter*, cited in George H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, A History of Political Theory (Dryden Press, Hinsdale, 4th ed., 1973), p. 51.

14 See Manuel Castells and Emilio de Ipola, "Epistemological Practice and the Social Sciences," *Economy and Society*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1976), pp. 111-144.

15 The major exceptions include universities of the ancient Arab and Islamic scholarly traditions and those created by the settler minority in South Africa.

16 See, for example, Angela Ransom, *Financing Higher Education in Francophone Africa*, EDI Policy Seminar Report No. 12 (The World Bank, Washington, 1988), pp. 5-6.

17 Plato, it will be recalled, served as tutor to Dionysius of Syracuse, one of the tyrannical rulers of Greek city-states. For an excellent critique of intellectuals as technicians and apologists for African dictators, see Jibrin Ibrahim, "Political Scientists and the Subversion of Democracy in Nigeria," in Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja and Margaret C. Lee (*eds.*), The State and Democracy in Africa (AAPS Books, Harare, 1997), pp. 114-124.