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U F A H A M U

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U F A H A M U

Tenth Anniversary Issue

Volume XI, Number 1
(Summer 1981)

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DRAWINGS by Hezbon E. Owiti (Kenyan artist) & Chike Aniakor (Nigerian artist); Cover Drawing by Hezbon E. Owiti.

*Tijan M. Sallah is the author of *When Africa Was a Young Woman*, a book of poems. His works have appeared in *New African*, *Callaloo*, *Africa Woman Obsidian*, and *The Black Scholar*.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Ufahamu is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Ten years of life, ten years of struggle. Ufahamu's life is a life of struggles. When it was born most of us were not around but we learned from its parents, the African Activist Association, that it was born out of and during a season of misunderstanding. One of the figures they remember most vividly is that of the midwife whose presence brought confidence and smiles to the anxious faces of the community. Her responsibility, needless to say, was heavy. She assured a safe--although painful--delivery of the baby. Then she called its name:

"UFAMAMU"

"Understanding" responded the family in unison.

Some thought it too heavy a name for such a tiny thing. They were told to remember that it is not by its size that you judge hot pepper but rather, by what it does. Soon the midwife left the family and went on delivering and naming more babies. Deep down, she knew that the baby was in good hands. That midwife, we are told, was RENEE POUSSAINT.

Then came other caretakers (now we know them as editors-in-chief): Nancy Rutledge, Teshome H. Gabriel, Edward C. Okwu, Niko M. Ngwenyama, I.N.C. Aniebo, J. Ndukaku Amankulor, Kipkorir Aly Rana, and Louis Armand. All of these people and a great number of others whom space does not allow us to mention but whose dedication was remarkable, embarked on a chaotic road and carried Ufahamu right through its tenth year of struggle. Our warmest tribute to them!

To be sure, Ufahamu's life has not been easy. Even as a baby it had learned to dodge blows. When we came we found a strong fighter exchanging blows with a monster under the petrified gaze of Dr. Ralph Bunche^{*}; it was hitting, dodging blows, hitting, stepping back, stepping forward, delivering punches, right, left, left, right. It looked like a thousand people gathered together and, back to back, delivering two thousand blows in all directions. And we understood. Ufahamu is fighting an octopus. The octopus has many tentacles and it's bloodthirsty. It hits from all directions. To fight it, one must hit in all directions. Sometimes it retreats, and then comes back to hit again. Now we can see it losing energy and momentum, dragging itself painfully in the dust, exposed, weak, and trying to recover from wounds inflicted upon it . . . but watch out! It's -

^{*}His bust graces the front of Bunche Hall, our location.

still alive! Imperialism is like an octopus. It has many tentacles but the family of Ufahamu draws its energy from a deeply rooted desire for FREEDOM AND JUSTICE; it must win.

The academic environment is a complex environment. It brings together all kinds of people with all kinds of ideas, yet underneath this peaceful surface lies a boiling river of struggles. The outsider often fails to see that. To those scholars and students who supported and continue to support Ufahamu we want to express our deep appreciation. We hope that together we will strengthen the journal and thus bring a better understanding of Africa to all those who care to understand it. Finally, those of us who came much later under the shade of the tree which the original Ufahamu family planted would like to reassure the family of our commitment to continue their work so that the tree may bear more fruit and provide a greater shelter.

In a forthcoming issue Ufahamu will publish the proceedings of the Third Annual Conference of the African Activist Association on the Total Liberation of Africa. This conference was held on May 13, 14, and 15 at UCLA. This year's conference focused on South Africa and Namibia. The organizers of the conference would like to thank all the participants for their contributions, especially the representatives of ANC, SWAPO, and BCM.

Our next issue will be an interdisciplinary issue. It will present articles on African history, education, politics, economics, and literature.

PREFACE

In celebrating Ufahamu's tenth anniversary the editorial board wishes to pay tribute to the contributions made to the liberation struggle by Cabral, Neto, Chipembere, Rodney, and Biko. Ufahamu has published a great number of scholarly articles. Out of this wealth of works we have chosen to reprint in this issue the articles published in Ufahamu by these freedom fighters.

It was our desire to reprint most of the invaluable material gathered in the course of the first ten years of our journal. Such an enterprise would involve a considerable amount of material expense which Ufahamu cannot yet afford. So we settled for the works by the freedom fighters who died in the course of the struggle against imperialism. Their thoughts and actions recorded in this special issue constitute a vibrant contribution to world progress and peace.

Three articles by Cabral are reprinted here. The first, "On Utilization of Land in Africa," was written by Cabral while he was an agronomist for the Portuguese colonial government. His scientific basis for understanding the plight of people in Guiné, and for organizing a party in 1956 (Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde, PAIGC), whose aim it was to correct these inequalities, developed from the material gathered during his two-year (1952-54) survey. He understood that a transfer of power from colonial hands to African hands would not constitute African independence, that Africans must also have control of the means of production. Although Marxist in orientation, Cabral's thoughts are the product of an original mind.

The second, Cabral's statement to the United States House of Representative's Committee on Foreign Affairs (February 26, 1970), took place after PAIGC was engaged in armed struggle with the Portuguese. Cabral's emphases in foreign policy matters were always the same: the process of liberation is a class struggle, not black people against white, and the people of Guinea-Bissau were not fighting the people of Portugal but the Portuguese colonial regime.

This testimony is particularly relevant today because parallels can be seen between the struggle in Guinea-Bissau and the continuing struggle for independence in Namibia. The United States/Western European involvement in support of the Portuguese can easily be seen as shades of the present U.S./Western European involvement in South Africa, which in turn is responsible for the delay in bringing about United Nations supervised elections in Namibia.

The third article is a recounting of the status of the struggle in Guinea-Bissau from January through August 1971. Cabral's description of Portuguese efforts, the reactions of the international community and other African countries (the Organization of African Unity, etc.), and what the Guineé people had been able to do to intensify their struggle and move toward victory bears a startling resemblance to the struggle in which the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) is presently engaged in Namibia.

Cabral's theory of liberation--the necessity for Africans to control the means of production and the resulting changes in economic/social relations--is the essence of all the later and still-continuing liberation struggles in Africa.

Following Cabral, Neto also insisted on stating that liberation struggles are class struggles. Carefully outlining colonialism in its two dominant forms: "paleo-colonialism/neo-colonialism," Neto warns us against putting too much emphasis on race and not enough on the apprehension and dismantling of imperialism toward greater social transformations.

Indeed, Chipembere's vivid narrative of Malawian politics is a testimony to the warnings of Neto. It presents the case of an independent African country where the class struggle dominates racial and cultural bonds. No sooner had Malawi taken its independence than its president, Banda, had turned to the imperialists and against the people of Malawi; thus jumping, legs and hands tied, into the muddy swamp from which the people of Malawi had hoped to liberate themselves.

Independence--constitutional independence--without a mass base is unfortunately a still-born child. In Africa and the Caribbean it has come with sharper forms of political and economic dependency. "Politics," says the author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, "is about choices"; there can be no political choices where there is no local control of the economy. Clearly the problem in the Third World, particularly in Africa, is first of all about political--not constitutional--independence. In this instance, imported models are simply commodities for intellectual consumption; they do not allow the release of--but stifle--creative energies. The adequate models can only be found in the forms of struggle being carried out within the societies themselves and how this struggle relates to external forces. There are two fundamental contradictions in Africa today; one is embedded in the internal social relations and the particular forms which class struggle--whether silent or voiced--takes in Africa; the other major contradiction opposes the peoples of Africa to imperialist forces and their relentless attacks, interventions, and clashes of various kinds. We share

Walter Rodney's optimism, however, that the restoration of human dignity to humankind lies in the hands of Third World masses.

The Quest for a True Humanity is only possible through the struggle for liberation and, where race and class are practically equated, the struggle necessarily takes the form of that concrete equation. South Africa is a unique example of such an equation. Fascism does equate race and class. Apartheid entrenches itself within the thin walls of skin color, the better to subdue and cynically exploit, cut, sell, and bury Black. It goes without saying that those walls must be destroyed and the colonial system which brought it must be smashed. Steve Biko, the most articulate spokesman of the Black Consciousness Movement, defines the essence of the movement as: "the realisation by the Black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression--the blackness of their skin--and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude." This is the position which the fascist Pretoria regime has pushed the oppressed masses of South Africa to adopt. Yet, the dream of Steve Biko, our dream, is not to destroy life, but simply, "to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible--a more human face."



The Triumph
Chike C. Antakor.