

M.I.T. in Africa

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE
OF CONTROLLING
THE LIVES OF
BLACK PEOPLE

"He began by asking me what went on at the Center for International Studies and when I spoke of its interest in world problems, he tapped his fingers knowingly together and said: 'I suppose this all has something to do with investments!'...I murmured a small denial and changed the subject but this did not help at all."

"Identity expert" Harold Isaacs on an interview with Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, in the New World of Negro Americans.

At 93, the late Dr W.E.B. DuBois was still brilliant; his suspicions about the MIT Center, rather candidly reported to discredit him in a book by one of its mandarins, were to become prophetic as the origins and real functions of the CIS began to become apparent to people throughout the world. What DuBois could only guess at, can now be authoritatively proven: the MIT Center in both the policy-oriented theoretical analysis it has generated and in actual programs it has undertaken have served as instruments for the rationalization and extension of U.S. imperialism in Africa.

All black and revolutionary people should take note:

[THEORY TO MANAGE THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT]

Throughout the fifties the MIT Center played a central role in developing a theory and strategy which could help shape US policy towards the then "emerging" world. Center Director Max Millikan, fresh from a top-level post at the C.I.A. (see Wise and Ross, The Invisible Government) organised a group including Walt Rostow to work out approaches to economic development, to serve as a framework for U.S. Aid strategy, and to guide U.S. corporate penetration in the Third World. Rostow's famed "Non-Communist" manifesto, now largely discredited even by conservative economists, set out the theory which reached its logical conclusion in the escalation policies in Vietnam. Not only did Rostow's intellectual work lead directly to the counter-insurgency conclusions implicit in a pre-capitalist, counter-revolutionary world view, but his actual influence as LBJ's key advisor gave him the power to actually carry out his theses of oppression. Rostow with CIS cronies operated under the deceptive cover of anti-colonialism. US strategists could attack the Brits & French - US control (neo-colonialism) was a better idea. A brief look at the Center's forays into Africa offer one more case study of how American universities, citadels of institutionalized racism already, serve the Empire.

The theory enunciated by Rostow and Millikan was intended to help that overlord class work out a sophisticated global strategy.

"But the Center has tried to do more than this," explain Lyons and Morton in Schools for Strategy (Praeger, 1965), a survey of education and research in "National Security Affairs." "It has tried to reach the policy-maker and has focused on problems of immediate relevance to him. As far as one can tell, it has been successful in this effort.

... Certainly, Millikan and several of his research associates can be considered members of the small band of academicians whose advice is frequently sought by policy-makers and who, by personal prestige and knowledge, exert an influence on the formulation of policy." When the spectre of an independent Africa began to appear on the world scene, it is not surprising that M.I.T. was selected to help the MAN formulate a plan.

[APPLYING THIS NONSENSE TO AFRICA]

In 1956, with the actual independence of most African States still four years off, the long-range planners at the Center began to set their eyes on the "dark continent". A large grant from the Carnegie Foundation made a major research project on African economic and political development finally possible. The late Arnold Rivkin, a lawyer-economist attached to the State Department's Marshall plan was brought in to direct the major undertaking which Rostow helped design. He had visited Africa for the first time during the Korean War in search of rare metals and predictably was "taken with the experience." His enthusiasm was soon to be translated into a series of major influential articles intended to sophis-

ticate American strategy and to tie Africa closer to the West. One book, Africa and the West; Elements for Free World Policy outlined various ways that the U.S. might use the UN, multilateral aid agencies, "third forces" such as Israel (see ARG; 'David and Goliath co-laborate in Africa', Leviathan, September 1969) and the European Economic Community to 'rationalize' the control of the U.S. Free World Empire over Africa, while 'modernizing' the continent at the same time. When Rivkin graduated from MIT he oozed into a position in the World Bank, another US controlled instrument run by that peace-maker Robert McNamara, where he directed its Africa maneuvers. Not all of Rivkin's sophisticated ideas were adopted, in part because short-term U.S. economic interests and conflicting pressures prevented the U.S. from implementing them.

By 1965, as the imperialist nature of U.S. policy began to become clear to African peoples in the wake of the Congo debacle and U.S. support for South Africa, Rivkin warned the Ruling Class readers of Foreign Affairs (a council on Foreign Relations magazine) that "US policy in Africa has lost much of its credibility for a large part of the African continent." As black people in Africa began to get hip to U.S. objectives, Rivkin, worried about defending "the national interest", pushed the theme of his earlier MIT research. "The United States also need to rationalize its political and economic policies in Africa, to make them consistent and credible and thus responsive to our national interest in the development of stable and viable African States." (Foreign Affairs, Oct 65)

Some more insights into this whole MIT concept of stability and order was explained in mind-blowing prose by another key MIT mandarin, Ithiel De Sola Poole, a leading apologist for the US in Vietnam:

"In the Congo, in Vietnam, in the Dominican Republic, it is clear that order depends on somehow compelling newly mobilized strata to return to a measure of passivity and defeatism from which they have recently been aroused by the process of modernization. At least temporarily, the maintenance of order requires a lowering of newly acquired aspirations and levels of political activity." ("The public and the polity", in Contemporary Political Science: Toward Empirical Theory. Edited by Ithiel de Sola Pool.)

Stripped of its sociological gobbledygook, this notion translates into one idea: Counter-revolutionary control.

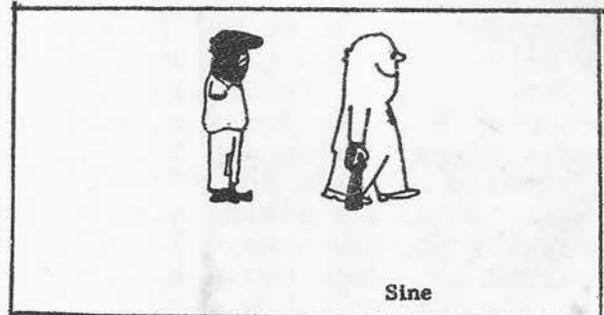
Explains Noam Chomsky in his brilliant critique of the New Mandarins: "The Policy Recommendations of the moderate scholars are based on a certain form of stability - not that of North Vietnam or North Korea but that of Thailand, Taiwan and the Philippines - is so essential that we must be willing to use unparalleled means of violence to insure that it is preserved." "Unparalleled means of violence", for the uninitiated, means counter-revolutionary war.

[TRANSLATING THEORY INTO PRACTICE]

While Rivkin and his researches analysed Africa, Max Millikan was making the contacts which would insure that MIT ideas become the American practice. In 1958 Millikan was one of a select group of corporation powersuckers including David Rockefeller and Harold Hochschild (American Metal Climax) who participated in a special tour of Africa under the auspices of the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations, a powerful pressure group on foreign policy run by the corporate elite. (see Domhoff, Who Rules America?, 1967) Millikan was part of the Council's confidential discussion group on

African policy that year, a key period in which the US was tooling up for the era of neo-colonial domination.

Millikan's contacts and proposals made sense within this select inner circle seeking to shape the future of Africa. In 1960, the MIT Sloan School of Management received a grant of one million dollars from the Ford Foundation for the "MIT Fellows in Africa" program, to be run by Council on Foreign Relations Director Carroll Wilson (ex General Manager of the Atomic Energy Commission and then President of Climax Uranium Co. Dig?) Millikan helped Wilson work out the details of this program which brought "well-trained working level assistance to African development institutions at a time of acute need." This money enabled 21 slick MIT and Harvard Business School grads to be placed in strategic positions in key decision making centers in the new African states. Director Wilson



was very candid in acknowledging that the program's whole purpose was to ensure that African states continued to allow private (ie American) investment, and to ensure that they develop along acceptable lines. "Planning economic development," he explained in a book which emerged from one of the program's conferences, "in ways that will stimulate the private sector and achieve a good return on increased resources from public plus private investment is a relatively new kind of exercise." (Managing Economic Development in Africa. MIT Press, 1963)

Ford continued to pump money into African Studies at MIT. \$118,000 enabled a team to concentrate on Nigeria while one economist, under this auspices wrote that country's first economic development plan. (Rivkin headed-up the US economic mission to Nigeria.) Other CIS researchers concerned about Africa have been red-hunter William Griffith, and Harold Isaacs who found time to work with the CIA funded American Society of African Culture (AMSAC). There are a few token "independents" or even "radicals" on the Center staff: not all are enamoured with the role of running-dog-professor-advisor. But the Center must be judged as an institution, not just a collection of good guys and bad guys. The duty of the good guys remains: to make the revolution.

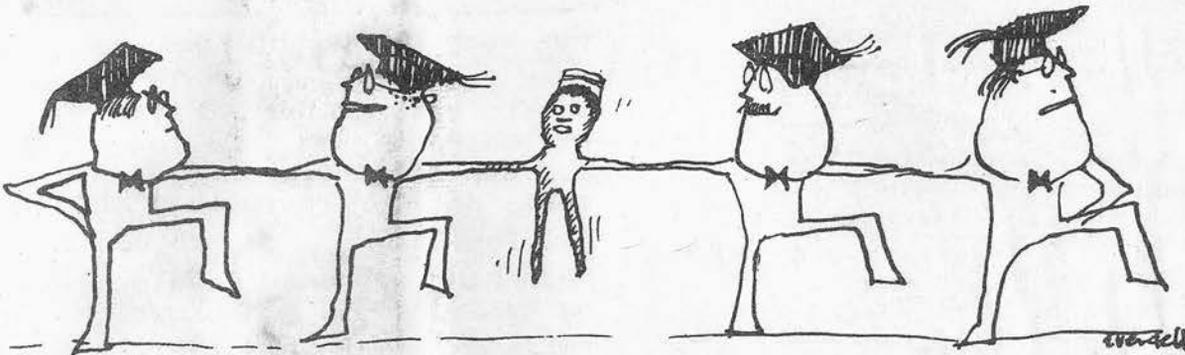
This type of African Research is a form of scientific colonialism, a process defined by Johann Galtung, the social scientist who blew the whistle on the infamous Project Camelot, "whereby the center of gravity for the acquisitions of knowledge about the nation is located outside the nation itself. This is essentially what happens when raw materials are exported at a low price and

reimported at a very high cost as manufactured goods... Scientists from the scientifically powerful nations often know more about other nations than these nations know about themselves... Social science knowledge about a small country in the hands of a big power is a potentially dangerous weapon It contributes...to manipulation in the interests of the big powers." (Quoted in African Studies in America: the Extended Family. Africa Research Group.)

This white-power, big power manipulation by social science dirty workers such as those at MIT is finally being challenged. In Africa, American researchers can no longer move freely, combing the continent for the fleas of revolution. In the US those whose minds have also been colonized with the pernicious concepts and counter-revolutionary assumptions of a bastardized, system-serving, social science have had enough.

Should Max Millikan's mandarin menagerie be allowed to survive?

~~It's them or us. November 4th.~~



For a fuller analysis of how African Studies serves the Empire, write for:
African Studies: The Extended Family (50c)

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