



africa research group

p.o. box 213 cambridge, mass. 02138

June 23, 1971

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of our dissolution statement. Clearly in the context of this short statement we do not deal with all of the issues involved in the decision to dissolve. However, we recognize the importance of getting out this information to groups such as yourselves. We are planning to attend the Colorado Anti-Imperialist Conference in July where we hope to have the opportunity to explain the reasons behind our statement in greater detail, and to share ideas about plans for the future.

We feel it is important to stress that our dissolution is a positive act, opening the way for more and different types of anti-imperialist work. Hope to see you at the conference.

Amandla ngawethu,

Africa Research Group



DISSOLUTION OF THE AFRICA RESEARCH GROUP

Preliminary Statement--June, 1972

Africa's struggle for freedom against the forces of Western imperialism has found a militant and growing constituency among Black Americans. In March of this year, Black dockworkers in Louisiana refused to unload chrome from Rhodesia. In April, the Pan African Liberation Committee took over Harvard's administration building to protest Harvard's support for Gulf's presence in Angola. In May, twenty thousand Black people marched through the streets of Washington to express solidarity with Africa's liberation movements. The level of consciousness about Africa in the United States will never be the same.

In these last months the Africa Research Group, a predominately White movement research and education organization, decided to disband its operations after four years of investigating and disseminating information about the dynamics of domination and liberation in Africa. Our decision reflects a political assessment of the future of our role in the anti-imperialist struggle and our appraisal of those forces which are correctly beginning to lead that struggle, particularly around the issues of Africa, in the United States. In line with this decision, the ARG files and library will now be housed at the Black Economic Research Center (BERC) in New York City in order to expand their accessibility to groups and individuals concerned with issues related to American imperialism in Africa.

We strongly support the efforts of Americans of African descent who are intensifying political actions to challenge American intervention in Africa, particularly the aid and comfort this country gives to white racism in Southern Africa. By internationalizing their concern about racism and economic exploitation, they have elevated anti-imperialist issues into a mass concern. By challenging American corporations like Gulf in Africa, they are demonstrating the need to challenge that corporate power in the United States. It is clear to us that the Black community is the social force in this country that will lead the movement to change

American policy in Africa and provide the greatest political and material help to the African liberation struggle.

The Africa Research Group was organized in 1968 to put the problems of African liberation on the map of America's political consciousness. We sought to show that Indochina was not the only arena in which the United States had intervened on the side of counter-revolution and reaction. By research and educational work, we strove to show that our fight was not just to end a war but to change a global system. We had no vested interest in detached scholarly studies of imperialism in Africa, or in being a centralized storehouse of information.

Rather, we saw, and still see, information as an essential weapon in political struggle. To support a strike at Harvard University, for example, we helped prepare an analysis of how Harvard as an elite university serves corporate interests on an international scale. We published other studies to help build a broader awareness of the mechanisms of American penetration of Africa. We also tried to hit directly at the agents of American expansion by exposing, for example, a U.S. Army contingency plan for the takeover of the Republic of Tanzania. We think that our pamphlets, articles, and other educational activities have helped advance the understanding of the international capitalist empire. As the members of the Group decide to shift our individual and collective energies in broader directions, we are confident that the work we have initiated can, and will, be continued. From the beginning, ARG has sought to popularize and simplify the process of research. By publishing a Radical Study Guide, we sought to share our evaluation of those books and articles which we have found most useful. By contributing to NACLA's Research Methodology Guide, we have helped lay out the sources of information that make government and corporate strategies understandable.

Thus, our decision to disband is in no way a rejection of an anti-imperialist analysis, nor a rejection of the necessity for continuing research. It will allow those of us in the White movement to deal more directly with questions of relating internationalist issues to our own constituency. In the past, we often felt that our focus was not close enough to home. At present, we feel that two levels of research are necessary: research to provide information for specific action projects (anti-corporate campaigns,

for example), and long-range theoretical research on the system of capitalist oppression. It is necessary to continue to develop approaches for relating research projects to other political work, particularly pertaining to the communities and workplaces that must be the starting points of American peoples' struggle. We are currently working with other groups in the Boston area to find new ways of expanding internationalist research and education in this direction.

We call upon our Brothers and Sisters in the White movement to understand and support the struggles of African peoples. It is clear that African people must direct this struggle and carry out its primary work; but their fight is also our own. The examples of the African peoples in struggle must continue to inspire and enlighten us.

Even as, at this juncture, we in the Africa Research Group have the need to find new individual and collective work, we can assure the corporate controllers and their collaborators in the government, the foundations, and the universities that they will never escape our collective opposition. The form of our work may shift from time to time, but our commitment will never change.

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ARG will continue to fill orders for literature until August, 1972, at which time arrangements will be made for the distribution of remaining publications. ARG files and library will be available in the near future at BERC, 112 West 120th St., New York, N.Y. 10027.