

# AFRICA 1960-61

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BEFORE THE REVIEW CONFERENCE

## Africa's First Communist Summit

African Communists made their grand *début* in Moscow last week when they attended—for the first time in the post-war history of international Communism—a Communist “summit” meeting.

Delegations were divided into (1) African Communist parties, which had official delegations, and (2) the second eleven—the so-called “brotherly” delegations who were just observers. In the first class came:

1. The Algerian Communist Party; represented by the First Secretary of the Central Committee, Larbi Buchali, who had had the honour of being the only African Communist to attend the preparatory commission for the “summit” which met at the beginning of October and drew up the agenda. [The Algerian Communist Party was outlawed in 1955, claims approximately 5-10,000 members.]
2. The CP of Morocco; represented by the First Secretary of the Central Committee, Ali Yata. [This party, now illegal, has approximately 12,000 members.]
3. The CP of Tunisia; represented by the First Secretary of the Central Committee, M. Ennafaa. [Approximately 800 members.]
4. The CP of the Sudan. [This party was founded in 1946 and has only about 300 members.]
5. The CP of the UAR. [Outlawed with approximately 1,000 members.]
6. The CP of Réunion. [Founded in 1959.]
7. The South African Communist Party. [Illegal and dormant for the last 10 years, now erupting.]

The “brotherly” delegations came from Guinea, Ghana, Mali, Congo, and Cameroons where Communism is still in the chrysalis stage and where Communists work exclusively through “front organisations.”

Though news of the actual goings-on at the “summit” are shrouded in mystery, our correspondent reports: It appears that there have been two separate plenary sessions trying to iron out the Sino-Soviet differences. First—a conference of the 12 ruling Communist parties of the so-called “socialist camp”; second, plenary meetings of all Communist parties which were attended by African delegates. These plenary meetings started on November 10th. The important top 12 meetings were kept very secret and the “sister parties” and “brotherly delegates” were only consulted and not admitted.

Some African Communists had private talks with two top Soviet Party Presidium members, Suslov and Mukhitdinov. The Algerians were the only African delegation to be received by Liu

Shao Chi, the Chinese Head of State. Moroccan and Tunisian Communists and some other African delegates had lengthy discussions with less important members of the Chinese delegation. It seems that the Chinese tried to impress on Africans the importance of Algerian violent revolution as an example for the whole of Africa for the "national liberation movements" in Africa.

There was also a debate by the special Afro-Asian Commission under the chairmanship of Mukhitdinov with the active support of the Soviet Party top ideologists, Konstantinov and Professor Mitin. All the African Communists took part in these activities, prompted by such top Chinese experts on Afro-Asian Affairs as:

1. Lin Ning-yi, chairman of the Central Council of Chinese Trade Unions, chief delegate to meetings of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the World Peace Council—two "front organisations" used for spreading Communist influence in undeveloped countries;
2. Liao Cheng-chih, chairman of the Chinese Committee of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Council, who led a delegation to the Council's meeting in Conakry, in April 1960;
3. Yang Shang-kin who receives and entertains Africans visiting Peking;
4. Peng Chen, mayor of Peking, who looked after Ferhat Abbas during his recent visit to China.

The subject discussed was "aid and action." The two main topics debated at the conference—and the two points of apparent disagreement between Moscow and Peking—had direct bearing on Africa. They were:

1. Should Communists support all "national liberation movements" and "bourgeois governments"? Moscow thought Yes, preferring the "peaceful" although subversive road to Communism. Peking favoured supporting Communist movements only and "violent revolutionary mass action." [The Algerian and Moroccan Communist Parties were on Peking's side.]
2. Should economic and technical aid be given to undeveloped countries? Should industrialisation be promoted? Moscow favoured this policy as it gave Communism a hold on virgin territory (e.g. Afghanistan). Peking counter-argued that industrial development encouraged *rapprochement* with capitalist nations; this was disadvantageous to world revolution.

In Africa the Chinese clearly prefer selective agricultural aid (they cannot afford much). This is acceptable to Guinea, Mali, and other countries with undiversified economies. There Communist cadres can at the outset get a stranglehold of the whole economy and shut out the West.

Judging by the theoretical organ of the Chinese Party, *The Red Flag*, there might be room for a Sino-Soviet compromise. "It is absurd to say that world peace and world revolution are incompatible," it stated bluntly. The Chinese would, it seems, be prepared to accept that war "is not inevitable," *provided* Khrushchev accepted its likelihood and *provided* that in the next historical phase there were enough strong revolutions in undeveloped countries such as Africa.