

TRIBALISM

For centuries tribalism has been the traditional form of organization among Africans. It has dominated the pattern of life in political, economic, and social affairs. When metropolitan countries moved into Africa, they created arbitrary boundaries for territories which did not follow these tribal entities. These lines cut through tribal lands separating tribe members from kinsmen who became residents of another country. When independence arrived and territories achieved a state of sovereignty, the most important task of the new government was to unite the various tribes into the new system of government. The boundary separation of tribe members has not permitted this to be fully accomplished, however. Thus today, this is part of the problem involved in certain border disputes. Additionally, the rise of the kind of strong central governments which prevail in African countries today has created problems, in the accompanying reduction of the influence and powers of tribal chiefs, which are analogous to the States rights versus Federal Government power issues in the United States.

MILITARY COUPS

Since January 1964, there have been nine military coups in Africa. In each the rationale was based on alleged corruption and extravagance on the part of the previous regime. In each case, military leaders have stated they would be taking over the government temporarily only in order to put the country back on its feet and exercise the discipline necessary to restore stability, following which the government would be returned to some kind of parliamentary system.

In two of the countries visited by the study mission, ample evidence of unrest predicted trouble ahead. The study mission, arriving in another country shortly after a military government had taken over, had opportunity to witness the early stages of its transition.

THREAT OF COMMUNISM ON THE CONTINENT

Many African leaders have spoken out against Red Chinese infiltration and subversion, notably President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, who is one of the architects of east African nationalism, and President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast. There is an awareness among the leaders of Africa of the dangers of Red Chinese domination on the continent. In two of the nations in which coups have occurred, diplomatic relations with the Government of Red China have been terminated. There was no indication in the countries visited of a desire to exchange their newly won independence for neocolonial communism.

Soviet communism does not appear to be as great a threat as militant Chinese communism, though the Soviet threat is more sophisticated. While many of the nations are recipients of Soviet aid and Russian technicians have been acceptable to them, there is evidence of African disenchantment because many Soviet commitments have not been fulfilled and some of the assistance has turned out to be impractical.

The threat of communism is diminished to some degree by a sort of personality clash between the Africans and the Russians and