
Interview: Siahyonkron Nyanseor



Africa must break the grip of the IMF's genocide policy

Mr. Nyanseor is the chairman of the African Anti-Malthusian League of the Schiller Institute, and was formerly president of the Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas. He lives in Atlanta, Georgia. Lawrence Freeman interviewed him on Dec. 22, 1992. The following is the conclusion of the interview, which began in our Jan. 1 issue. In the first part, Mr. Nyanseor argued there is no reason for Africa to be as backward as it is today, if a policy of genuine development were applied.

EIR: Would you say that the idea that there are objective conditions why Africa is backward, is a myth that is fed to the rest of the world, to get it to accept the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the policies of depopulation?

Nyanseor: Yes, that type of arrangement goes back to the Anglo-Americans as well as some Europeans. They decided that we would provide the natural resources, and that created a dependent relationship, in which they would provide us food—food that we used to grow, before we got into contact with the westerners, before colonization, slavery. Africa was feeding itself. What this did, was to produce cash crops, to produce what we could not consume, just for export, for hard-currency exchange.

Africa is very rich in natural resources; the soil is fertile enough to grow whatever you want to grow. But that was not the intended purpose for which our economy was structured by these colonial masters. It was structured to also provide slaves, as one of the raw materials, at the expense of our masses. They then go and install a puppet government—the Mobutus and other African leaders, like one who calls himself Houphouët-Boigny—people who just feel that they are tied with Europeans much more than with the traditional way of looking at things. [The westerners] send guns and ammunition to maintain them, by trying to suppress the masses of people by force.

That's the reason why Africa never had a tradition of government like you have here. When a man comes in by force, he's only thinking about force; that's the only message he can understand. It's not that Africa is incapable of having democracy. The tradition of the people is to change rulers by

force. This is the heritage of colonialism.

EIR: When most people look at Africa today, they see the starvation, they see the masses of people dying and suffering. But there has been a consistent discussion that all this is unnecessary, and that Africa could be a very advanced, productive continent. Cheikh Anta Diop wrote in the 1950s and 1960s in favor of an African-wide development program, in which he highlighted nuclear fusion energy. Lyndon LaRouche wrote several programs for the development of Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. I know you're familiar with both of these programs. What do you think is necessary now? What kind of steps need to be taken to begin a real process of development for Africa?

Nyanseor: Most African leaders come to the West to go to school, and then we realize that we are being miseducated. People come here, they become lawyers, and think they will go back to Africa to work to change the system. But when you leave here and go and try to change the system—the same with people who try to change the system here—you become branded a communist or a radical agitator, and you're terminated.

The only way that genuine development will come to Africa, is for the African leaders to sever their relationship with the IMF and western countries, and try to do things in the best way. One of the ways is to come up with a Federation of African States. Now Europe is trying to do that. We need to come up with a Federation of African States, for infrastructure development. You build railroads, within the continent of Africa, so that if one area is landlocked, you will be able to move its natural resources to a [domestic] market; but if you look at Africa, the way the colonialists built so-called infrastructure, was from where they would get the natural resources, to the port—and that's it.

As a result of that, the African economy becomes very retarded and tied into the western world.

Diop was considered just an African intellectual and as a matter of fact, he had a problem with his government, because he was part of the opposition. They thought that his program was impossible, and could not be done. I think he was incarcerated once or twice, and his dreams did not

materialize. The young, new African breed needs to look at his stuff, read it discriminately, and see how they can implement his policies.

We have to break our tie with the West, or the western mode of development.

Political science professor Hans Morgenthau came up with a theory of modernization, which most African leaders accepted; that was a political blunder. Morgenthau came out with his modernization paradigm: that to build modern cities, you don't need infrastructure or technology transfer; you bring in a foreigner who would build the road, build the dam, and leave it, instead of trying to train the Africans themselves to be able to do this, to build modern dams, like they were doing in Ghana.

Most people thought that what [Kwame] Nkrumah was doing, by building a modern dam in Ghana, was unnecessary, that Ghana did not need it. But Nkrumah was not thinking in terms of Ghana alone; he was thinking in terms of other countries that would use the dam for electricity. Some people felt that Nkrumah was being too ambitious, and as a result of that, they had to get rid of him. Any kind of program that you see that is going to benefit you in the development of technology, to develop your people and the human resources, as well as the economy—they don't want that, because they want Africa to be tied down.

So a Federation of African States is one of the best ways to look at it, where you can have regional economic organizations. If one person is producing cocoa, then you'll have the African Common Market to establish a price in order to export cocoa, and there'll be no infiltration of foreign powers.

EIR: You said before that the African countries have to break with the western mode of development. Typically, people don't understand that the predominant western mode of development is the policies of the IMF and the free traders. But there is also another western mode of development, the American System, which involves building up indigenous manufacturing and agricultural capability.

Nyansoor: I am talking about the IMF, as one of the Anglo-Americans' modes of keeping a country underdeveloped; not the American System that LaRouche and the others support.

EIR: One of the things that's very popular today, unfortunately, on a lot of campuses among African-Americans, is to reject any form of western technology: "Oh, that's western, that's European, that's no good, we have to do it our way, it has to come from Africa." That is being used to deny Africa the type of technology that is absolutely necessary to reverse what is going on today.

Nyansoor: What those people fail to realize, is that knowledge is not the exclusive right of one group of people; even western technology has its roots in the African tradition. If you want to go far into that, you'll find that people borrowed from one culture to another, from one region to another. So

those who are saying that, perhaps, do not understand history as it is.

We are all human beings put on this planet by God, and we develop knowledge from our own locale; that knowledge should also be shared for the benefit of the improvement of mankind. That is how I see it. I don't see everything western as evil; and there are many things in Africa that I as an African would not condone. I would dissociate myself from them.

I am a staunch follower of the LaRouche organization, because a lot of us think that LaRouche's ideas could benefit African people. They could benefit the entire world.

For instance, just the other day, we were talking about the fact that if you want to feed Somalia, you must demand development. Somalia is dying as a nation; Africa is dying as a continent. People have been told that it is our fault. It is *not* our fault. LaRouche has said it clearly: The fact is that Africa and Somalia have been killed by a systematic policy of underdevelopment, underpayment for their exports, underinvestment for their infrastructure, and massive looting through usury and debt policy—these are the things that are causing us to die.

EIR: Africa has a unique problem, which is that inside every country, there are hundreds of different languages and dialects. One of the things that Diop talked about, was establishing one African national language. What do you think about this kind of approach, and how do you think this question affects the process of economic development for Africa?

Nyansoor: You see the evolution that Europe had by trying to unite city-states into a nation. Africa was also going through that evolution, where we had the Senegal, Mali, Ghana, and all sorts of other empires. But slavery actually arrested that; and what the westerners did was to play on those tribal divisions. This has to be overcome, and can be overcome if you have a good leader.

Africans are not fools. Nkrumah, for instance, was doing it, but Nkrumah was also being fought from within the African community. They saw him as a threat to their own sovereignty, because he was proposing that all of the African countries unite and have a federation of African states, and one economic policy to develop the continent.

People who were colonized by the French, or the British—they thought that the French way of doing things was the best, or the British way, because they wanted to remain enslaved. In Africa now, neo-colonialism is dominating, so Africans think that they are French Africans or British Africans, rather than being an African. I strongly support Diop on the issue of language. It should be done on a regional basis: Western Africa would pick a language that it could use; Eastern Africa would pick Swahili or something. This is very essential for our own development.

EIR: Is there anything going on that you know of inside Africa today, that represents a positive current, either cultur-

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ally or for economic development?

Nyanseor: One of the most positive things is Ecomag, the Economic Community of West African States, in Liberia. Ecomag is its military wing. It includes all the West African states—Ghana, Liberia, Togo, Sierra Leone, there are about nine of them. When there is a problem in the West African area, Ecomag, as a regional force, tries to mediate. Nigeria, being the regional force, has played an important role in keeping the peace and trying to bring some stability.

One of the things that I would like to have, was discussed by Nkrumah. Nkrumah said, "Time is everything in our march." He went on to say that "we must, in Africa, crowd into a generation that experience and achievement attained through centuries of trial and error by older nations of the world." He said that "we shall not go through the same trial and error. We do not wish to see Africa set on a course in which her nations grow in different, separate, and competing directions until they develop into a confused and disorderly economic tangle of the '60s and '70s." But, he said, "because Europe has become the victim of such circumstances, there is surely no reason why Africa should follow a similar course."

LaRouche and others have already done the research. And if the research is already available, why should we go through the same trial and error you've gone through? We can borrow from what you already have, and make a test for ourselves. This is one of the things that Nkrumah was speaking about, but most people would say that he was born before his time, like LaRouche. People were afraid of him, especially Europeans were afraid that he'd create an African giant. And that's the problem that we have today.

EIR: Mr. LaRouche is in jail in the United States, and this Jan. 27 will be the fourth anniversary of his imprisonment. Some people feel that if the world is going to get out of crisis and the disastrous state that it's in today, then LaRouche will have to be freed from jail, so that he can begin to apply his knowledge to solving some of these problems. Do you think that's true for Africa as well?

Nyanseor: The Lyndon LaRouche case is sad, not only for America, but it's sad for the world.

One of the things that's very disheartening, is that people, especially Americans, are ignorant of what is really happening. They rely on the tube, the television. Just today I was talking with a friend who was in Brazil and met an African-

American lady. My friend was reading the LaRouche-Bevel *Program to Save the Nation*, and the African-American lady saw it. She's a theorist in economics, and said that LaRouche is a very brilliant man, but he was stealing money from helpless people and this and that. I said to my friend, "Well, you see, that lady seems not to understand what's really going on. She's very ignorant, she doesn't know the facts, and she just wants to confuse you."

But what is disheartening to me is, where are the civil rights leaders? Civil rights does not only belong to African-Americans. Dr. Martin Luther King's dream was the civil rights of all Americans. But it seems that the civil rights leaders have graduated into the establishment, and the party is over. And this is what is very disheartening.

LaRouche stood for the same principles that Dr. King and Malcolm X died for, and if LaRouche has been railroaded, these people should be talking. They have no guts. Amelia Boynton Robinson is one who is very good, who has been very consistent. Then [the Rev. James] Bevel joined our team. Bevel is very consistent. [Reverend Bevel was LaRouche's vice presidential running mate in November.] If these people begin to speak, something is going to be done.

But LaRouche is mainly in jail, because the system is telling us that he's very dangerous, because he is one person who is speaking for the human race. He's not saying, "I'm for Caucasians, or for Indians"—but for humanity. "If humanity is going to survive, x, y, and z needs to be done." What's wrong with that? Socrates died for the same purpose, because he was trying to educate the masses of the people to understand their rights and what needs to be done, and they were saying that he was corrupting the minds of the youth. And that's the same thing for which LaRouche is in jail.

One of the things that I think needs to be done in the movement, is that all African leaders or Third World leaders need to be able to understand the new, so-called economic enslavement that has been established, called the new world order, which is not in our best interests.

I'm also troubled by the role that the United States and the United Nations are playing, even in Somalia. My gut feeling is telling me that they will try to use this as a launching pad to go and to destabilize other countries. If the United States could find a pretext for going to Grenada or some other places, saying that they went in "in the interests of humanity," then America should also be questioned.