However much that (the) state of things may have altered during the last twenty-five years, the general principles laid down in the Manifesto are, on the whole, as correct today as ever. Here and there, some detail might be improved. The practical application of the principles will depend, as the Manifesto itself states, everywhere and at all times, on the historical conditions for the time being existing, and, for that
reason, no special stress is laid on the revolutionary measures proposed ...

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Preface to the 1872 German Edition of the Manifesto of the Communist Party

Introduction

In our era, the proof of history by the practical example of the Paris Commune in the nineteenth century and that of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah’s Convention People’s Party in Ghana to create an alternative State to replace the neo-colonial state in the twentieth century provides the basic guiding principle of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism to the effect that ‘the working class cannot simply lay hold of ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.’

In its endeavour, Revolutionary Pan-Africanism directs its arsenals at the ultimate destruction of the neo-colonial states of all existing African neo-colonies. In their stead is built a single socialist People’s Republican State of Africa under the leadership of the working class. This dual purpose to destroy and replace the existing neo-colonial state machineries is not intended as an instant action but a process of simultaneous destruction of the existing states and build-up of the new socialist united African state. Thus aims Revolutionary Pan-Africanism.

In pursuit of this aim Revolutionary Pan-Africanism is committed to such objectives as the existing conditions in each neo-colony might dictate and its own-created conditions arising out of its demands on the neo-colonial states. For this reason Revolutionary Pan-Africanism applies legal and extra-legal means as the said conditions might necessitate. With respect to the resort to legal forms of struggle Revolutionary Pan-Africanism focuses on and advances such gains that the working people might have forced the neo-colonial forces to concede and subsequently enshrined in the existing constitutions.

By so doing it seeks to transform those democratic gains into revolutionary instruments for the dissolution of the neo-colonial states while building the People’s Republican State of Africa. Wherever the neo-colonial states resort to
physical violence to frustrate that objective, the People’s Armed Forces must confront them.

This aim and its objectives are not in dispute among the ranks of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism. Issues of a secondary and diversionary nature, however, place obstacles in the path of achieving unity in those ranks. Foremost among such issues is the nature of ideological definition. The most disturbing in this regard is the proposition of an imaginary dichotomy between what some call orthodox and modern Marxism. For others reference to ‘Marxism’ must be expunged from the Pan-African revolutionary lexicon.

Reasons offered by this latter range from Black racist prejudices to innocent lack of differentiation between the general principles of Marxism (dialectical and historical materialism) and their application to specific societies in different historical epochs. It is in this respect that we respond to Dr. Ron Daniels’ self-avowed non-expert presentation at the Amilcar Cabral Foundation Conference, January 19-21, 2013.

In his essay presentation Amilcar Cabral in the Contemporary Context: The “Struggle Against Our Own Weaknesses”, Dr. Daniels makes it clear that ‘Much of this essay is based on the author’s re-reading and analysis of The Weapon of Theory as it appears in Revolution in Guinea: Selected Texts by Amilcar Cabral.’ We find it unfortunate that though he re-reads The Weapon of Theory before his presentation he draws strange conclusions as to what Amilcar Cabral says therein.

What can be seen to be his primary claim in the essay is that Cabral writes in contrast to the basic proposition of ‘orthodox Marxism’. For him, the premise of this premise is that while ‘orthodox Marxism’ asserts the class struggle as the motive force of history Cabral holds the productive forces of society to be the motive force. Our reading of The Weapon of Theory and The Communist Manifesto as well as The German Ideology suggests otherwise.

We have chosen only The Communist Manifesto and The German Ideology for this exercise because together with the various Prefaces added to the Manifesto’s German (1872, 1883, 1890), Russian (1882) and English
(1888) Editions its general principles, as could be found elaborated on in other books, are sufficiently explained therein. Our intention here, therefore, is to appeal to The Communist Manifesto and The German Ideology to make a statement that in Marxist theory the productive forces are the motive force in the history of all societies – ‘primitive’ and ‘civilized’; and that class and class struggles are the products of the progressive movement of the productive forces.

By this, we endeavour to show that even though Amilcar Cabral operates with these concepts within the Marxist framework he is mistaken in their application within the African context for the formulation of his theory of class suicide which represents an idealist error.

We then conclude that Marxism in its theories is neither orthodox nor classical – a position held by persons within the Pan-African movement with either an insufficient grasp of Marxism or just being overly Afrocentric. Such brothers and sisters and comrades might want to hear about Nkrumaism but not Marxism-Nkrumaism. We take Dr. Ron Daniels as one such unfortunate example whose understanding of his self-avowed mentor, Amilcar Cabral, is suspect.

**Dr. Ron Daniels Speaks**

*Beyond continuing a critical dialogue on the nature of national liberation in the 21st Century, it is our hope that in a very preliminary way, the Symposium would begin the process of building the transnational network of conscious clusters for national liberation discussed in this presentation.*

**Ron Daniels, Amilcar Cabral in the Contemporary Context: The “Struggle Against Our Own Weaknesses”**

Those are the concluding words of Dr. Ron Daniels, President of the Institute of the Black World, in his essay presentation to commemorate the 90th Birthday of Amilcar Cabral at the Amilcar Cabral Foundation Conference held from January 19-21, 2013. His concern is with national liberation in Africa, the United States of America (USA) and the Caribbean. Given the title Amilcar
*Cabral in the Contemporary Context: The “Struggle Against Our Own Weaknesses”*, one expects that his focus is on the struggle against the weaknesses of the national liberation movement which is but one of a few issues that Amilcar Cabral deals with in his speech *The Weapon of Theory*. He goes beyond that.

A close look at the presentation throws up various concepts in behalf of national liberation which require careful scrutiny since he goes to great lengths to elucidate them. Such concepts include ‘national revolution’, ‘national liberation’, ‘national reconstruction’, ‘authentic national liberation’, ‘the difference between national revolution and national liberation’, ‘discussion of national revolution vs. national liberation’, ‘the process of building the transnational network of conscious clusters for national liberation’.

He also mentions ‘the people’, ‘mode of productive forces as the motive force of history’, ‘theoretical understanding of the productive forces and their elaboration as the motive force of history’, ‘importance of the state of the productive forces, particularly class dynamics internal and external to society’, ‘productive forces or the mode of production’, ‘principles of African humanism.’, ‘the conscious elements of the petty bourgeoisie which must forego the natural tendency to join the bourgeoisie, to lead the struggle for national liberation.’, ‘the petty bourgeoisie may spark the struggle’, ‘Marxist orthodoxy’, etc.

These concepts emerge from an analysis of Amilcar Cabral’s *The Weapon of Theory* and also from an unquoted work of Franz Fanon. Let us scrutinize them within the context of national liberation. Naturally, we can only begin with the concept of ‘national liberation’ itself if we are to understand our context. In this regard, Dr. Ron Daniels strikes a certain similarity between the Fanonian and Cabralian renditions of the phrase. He explains that Fanon distinguishes between ‘national liberation’ and ‘national reconstruction’. According to him, Fanon restricts national liberation to the freeing of the dominated people from colonial domination and creating a nation-state run by the formerly dominated.
Fanon, he continues, sees national reconstruction as the total emancipation of the liberated people's socio-economic system consequently built and rooted in the people's history and culture. For Cabral, on the other hand, what Fanon calls national liberation is the limited act of national revolution whereby independence is won from colonial rule. In his conception, national liberation comprises both national revolution and control of productive forces for the building up of a new society.

For the rest of the presentation, Dr. Daniels operates within the encompassing Cabralian national liberation framework where 'productive forces' is seen as the base concept. He understands Cabral to project 'the mode of productive forces as the motive force of history'. Elsewhere in the presentation he talks about 'the productive forces and their elaboration as the motive force of history'. Here, it is just the 'productive forces' but not the 'mode of productive forces' that are the motive force of history.

He then refers to 'the importance of the state of the productive forces, particularly class dynamics internal and external to society'. This suggests an incorporation of 'class dynamics' as part of the productive forces. Further on, he introduces what appears to be numerical equivalents or interchangeable use of the concepts of 'productive forces' and 'mode of production' when he speaks of 'productive forces or mode of production'.

Having presented us with these characterizations of the productive forces and the assertion of the mode of productive forces being the motive force of history Dr. Daniels then proclaims the latter an insight that challenges what he calls 'Marxist orthodoxy'. The said orthodoxy is the assertion of the class struggle as the motive force of history and attributed to Marxist theory. These interpretations of Cabral's *The Weapon of Theory* deserve a second look at; before then, however, let us observe that Dr. Daniels does not concede that at a certain level the class struggle becomes the motive force of history and that even so the productive forces remain the ultimate determinant of history.

He understands Amilcar Cabral in such absolute terms that at all levels it is the productive forces or what he calls the mode of productive forces that
constitutes the motive force of history and that that is new, 'a challenge', to Marxism. Lacking this theoretical insight is a weakness, he says.

With the identification of this weakness among African revolutionaries, which he says is Cabral's primary concern, Dr. Daniels goes on to identify the petite-bourgeoisie as the 'seemingly unlikely' agency of change in the process of Cabralian national liberation. He sees the conscious sections of the petite-bourgeoisie playing a unique role here in providing moral and ethical leadership which is desperately needed for the realization of Africa's potential as a just and humane world power.

He predicates this optimism on the conscious petite-bourgeoisie being the class that has 'the leisure to see the limiting effects of neo-colonial domination and the internal neo-colonial mentality that fosters willing and unwilling collaborators' of neo-colonialism. That class, he says, has a 'natural tendency' to join the bourgeoisie; but to play its leadership role it 'must' forego this tendency. This means in Cabralian terms committing class suicide.

To properly appreciate this optimism in petite-bourgeois leadership, Dr. Daniels explains that this class, together with workers and peasants, is disgruntled at the self-serving business/economic elite's betrayal of the aspirations of the African masses for national liberation. This elite, whom he also describes as the 'emerging indigenous bourgeoisie', collaborates and cooperates with external powers, whose largess it ties its aspirations for success to, to frustrate the national liberation process.

In that process, therefore, he sees an alliance of the conscious petite-bourgeois, working class and peasant forces in which the indigenous bourgeoisie in its entirety is excluded. This alliance is dedicated to the final phase of national liberation whereby 'the creation of socio-economic and political structures, institutions, systems that serve the interests of the people', that is a new state, is pursued on the basis of what he calls 'principles of African humanism'.

Within the alliance, Dr. Daniels sees the conscious petite-bourgeoisie as the educated element 'that may spark the struggle' although it has an indirect
relationship with the ‘productive forces or the mode of production’ needed for ultimate success achievement. The working class and the peasantry, on the other hand, have a direct relationship with the productive forces that gives them the capacity to achieve control over those forces against the ambitions of the imperialists and their collaborators.

For the avoidance of doubt his own words are ‘It is the workers and peasants, the laboring class which has the capacity to directly impact the land, property and vital resources over which the imperialists and their collaborators seek to maintain control’. Hence, in Dr. Daniels’ scheme of things the Cabralian new society to be created would have the minority conscious petite-bourgeois class being the dominant (leading) aspect of the new class contradiction wherein the working classes become the dominated (led) aspect in spite of the fact that these latter now have control over the productive forces.

This intended petite-bourgeois rule of society in place of bourgeois hegemony must be the underlying reason why in spite of the fact that the word ‘socialism’ recurs five (5) times in Amilcar Cabral’s The Weapon of Theory speech it does not have a single appearance in Dr. Ron Daniels’ speech. We rather hear of a vague ‘principles of African humanism’. It is now better to check on what Cabral says himself if we are to avoid the selective reading that Dr. Ron Daniels subjects this celebrated speech to. For, whatever it is, he claims inspiration from Cabral’s speeches. In this respect, Dr. Daniels’ caveat of not being an expert in the field he walks through cannot be accepted. Something rather reactionary to Amilcar Cabral’s honest intentions violates the atmosphere in spite of his call to study the thought and practice of his avowed mentor. We have no right, however, not to put the blame squarely at the doorsteps of our undoubtedly great Comrade Amilcar Cabral. Thus enters Amilcar Cabral in his speech The Weapon of Theory.

**Amilcar Cabral Speaks**

*It is sufficient to recall that in our present historical situation — elimination of imperialism which uses every means to perpetuate its domination over our peoples, and consolidation of socialism*
throughout a large part of the world — there are only two possible paths for an independent nation: to return to imperialist domination (neo-colonialism, capitalism, state capitalism), or to take the way of socialism.

Amilcar Cabral, *The Weapon of Theory*

Amilcar Cabral, in *The Weapon of Theory*, primarily addresses the prevailing state of ideological deficiency in the national liberation movement. He sees this deficiency as the greatest if not just one of the greatest weaknesses in the national liberation process. In this respect, he considers the struggle against these deficiencies as *fundamental*. His submission is based on the concrete experiences not only of the African situation, specifically the Guinean, but also of a critical appreciation of those of others.

Anticipating any objection to his position on this issue of ideology on grounds that it has a theoretical character, he makes haste to point out that every practice begets a theory. He explains that though a perfectly-worked out theory could have been the base of an unsuccessful revolution he sees no successful revolution without a revolutionary theory.

In thus admitting the theoretical character of the issue of ideological deficiency within the national liberation movement, Amilcar Cabral makes a theoretical contribution which he describes as his *opinion of the foundations and objectives of national liberation in relation to the social structure*.

Regarding the *foundations* of national liberation as it relates to the *social structure* he makes the principle clear that the development of any phenomenon, however it appears externally, depends *mainly* on its *internal* characteristics. (Elsewhere within the speech he uses ‘internal contradictions’ in place of ‘internal characteristics’).

In his use of ‘mainly’ in the statement of that principle, Cabral indicates that he does not discount the role (either favourable or unfavourable) of what he calls ‘external factors’. In effect, he sees internal contradictions playing the *dominant* role in the relations between national liberation and the social structure within which it is situate.
Hence in its relation to the social structure, national liberation emanates from and is a reflection of the internal contradictions within that social structure (society). As a reflection, so to say, national liberation reproduces the internal contradictions of its society. For this reason, it cannot be exported from one society to another society. And this is in spite of the fact that the said societies are confronted with the same enemy.

Thus, the successful handling of national liberation in a particular society comes by the correct resolution of the internal contradictions in that society. This, Cabral says, requires exact knowledge of the society in question and the efforts as well as the sacrifices of its own people. For, lack of this knowledge stands the national liberation endeavour at risk of being condemned to failure. Herein dwells knowledge (theory) as a weapon of struggle.

We consider this section of The Weapon of Theory speech so fundamental to it that a broad quote of it thus should clear possible doubts:

> When the African peoples say in their simple language that “no matter how hot the water from your well, it will not cook your rice,” they express with singular simplicity a fundamental principle, not only of physics, but also of political science. We know that the development of a phenomenon in movement, whatever its external appearance, depends mainly on its internal characteristics. We also know that on the political level our own reality — however fine and attractive the reality of others may be — can only be transformed by detailed knowledge of it, by our own efforts, by our own sacrifices. It is useful to recall in this Tricontinental gathering, so rich in experience and example, that however great the similarity between our various cases and however identical our enemies, national liberation and social revolution are not exportable commodities; they are, and increasingly so every day, the outcome of local and national elaboration, more or less influenced by external factors (be they favorable or
unfavorable) but essentially determined and formed by the historical reality of each people, and carried to success by the overcoming or correct solution of the internal contradictions between the various categories characterising this reality.

... our experience has shown us that in the general framework of daily struggle this battle against ourselves (the struggle against our own weaknesses) — no matter what difficulties the enemy may create — is the most difficult of all, whether for the present or the future of our peoples. This battle is the expression of the internal contradictions in the economic, social, cultural (and therefore historical) reality of each of our countries. We are convinced that any national or social revolution which is not based on knowledge of this fundamental reality runs grave risk of being condemned to failure.

At this stage, Amilcar Cabral expresses optimism that in spite of the identified ideological deficiency the experiences thus far accumulated enable revolutionary forces 'to define a general line of thought and action with the aim of eliminating this deficiency'. Towards the definition of this general line of thought and action he asserts that although in our generation it is correct to affirm that the motive force of history is the class struggle this affirmation requires precision since it is not wide enough to incorporate the essential character of peoples dominated by imperialism.

His exact words are that ‘Those who affirm — in our case correctly — that the motive force of history is the class struggle would certainly agree to a revision of this affirmation to make it more precise and give it an even wider field of application if they had a better knowledge of the essential characteristics of certain colonized peoples, that is to say peoples dominated by imperialism’.

He explains this in terms of the socio-economic phenomenon of ‘class' being itself a product of the progressive development of the level of productive forces and the pattern of ownership of the means of production. This process, he explains further, is not a simultaneous occurrence among all peoples in the
general evolution of humanity. It is, so to say, not a spontaneous and uniform operation that is finished and perfect; but a slow and an uneven development that goes through quantitative and qualitative transformations to generate classes and the struggles between them. Once again we quote from Cabral extensively:

In fact in the general evolution of humanity and of each of the peoples of which it is composed, classes appear neither as a generalized and simultaneous phenomenon throughout the totality of these groups, nor as a finished, perfect, uniform and spontaneous whole. The definition of classes within one or several human groups is a fundamental consequence of the progressive development of the productive forces and of the characteristics of the distribution of the wealth produced by the group or usurped from others. That is to say that the socio-economic phenomenon ‘class’ is created and develops as a function of at least two essential and interdependent variables — the level of productive forces and the pattern of ownership of the means of production. This development takes place slowly, gradually and unevenly, by quantitative and generally imperceptible variations in the fundamental components; once a certain degree of accumulation is reached, this process then leads to a qualitative jump, characterized by the appearance of classes and of conflict between them.

This holistic characterization of the process of history, Amilcar Cabral therefore asserts, enlarges on what amounts in his terms to a narrow view of that process occasioned by lack of more informed ‘knowledge of the essential characteristics of ... peoples dominated by imperialism’. The import of this assertion is that if those with this narrow perception had the more informed version of knowledge about colonized peoples they would have revised their position as to what is the actual motive force of history which he states to be ‘the mode of production — the level of productive forces and the pattern of ownership’.
It is instructive to note that in this immediate quote he aggregates the ‘productive forces' and the ‘pattern of ownership' of the means of production into the concept ‘mode of production' which they therefore define. But, for him, it is not the mode of production in its entirety that generates and gives content and form to classes and their struggles – that is the essential function of the productive forces.

Cabral appears to summarize all this in the following statement: ‘... as we have seen, classes themselves, class struggle and their subsequent definition, are the result of the development of the productive forces in conjunction with the pattern of ownership of the means of production. It therefore seems correct to conclude that the level of productive forces, the essential determining element in the content and form of class struggle, is the true and permanent motive force of history'.

Having stated that classes and their struggles are the result of the development of the productive forces together (‘in conjunction') with the pattern of ownership of the means of production he goes on to assert by logical induction that therefore only the level of productive forces ‘is the true and permanent motive force of history'. Though logicians might have problems with this induction they are appeased by an explanation that Cabral intends to say that the productive forces are the ultimate motive force of history since the pattern of ownership of the means of production (relation of production) is itself determined by the productive forces.

Amilcar Cabral is thence satisfied that this conclusive assertion of the productive forces as the ultimate motive force of history assures societies without the existence of classes at a point in history (before the emergence of classes and their struggles as well as after the abolition of those classes) that they are very much part of history and therefore have their own history.

He, as a result, assuages the anxieties of those who are pronounced falsely to have no history of their own due to the absence of classes in their societies at a point in the past evolution of human society. He asserts that they have a history based on the eternal (‘permanent') development of the forces of
production. He then assures a continued history for those whose societies are said to have a future of an inevitable cessation of their classes and class struggles thereof after that event. His tantalizing rendition of this goes forth in these words:

If we accept this conclusion, then the doubts in our minds are cleared away. Because if on the one hand we can see that the existence of history before the class struggle is guaranteed, and thus avoid for some human groups in our countries — and perhaps in our continent — the sad position of being peoples without any history, then on the other hand we can see that history has continuity, even after the disappearance of class struggle or of classes themselves. And as it was not we who postulated — on a scientific basis — the fact of the disappearance of classes as a historical inevitability, we can feel satisfied at having reached this conclusion which, to a certain extent, re-establishes coherence and at the same time gives to those peoples who, like the people of Cuba, are building socialism, the agreeable certainty that they will not cease to have a history when they complete the process of elimination of the phenomenon of ‘class’ and class struggle within their socio-economic whole. Eternity is not of this world, but man will outlive classes and will continue to produce and make history, since he can never free himself from the burden of his needs, both of mind and of body, which are the basis of the development of the forces of production.

It is on the basis of this conclusion that Amilcar Cabral categorizes the historical process into three stages whereby the first stage corresponds with the period when the mode of production has a rudimentary character and society is thus structured horizontally without classes and a state. He calls this the communal society.

The second stage is characterized by a higher development of the productive forces, accompanied with a change in the ownership of the means of
production leading to such productive means being privately appropriated, and thus occasions the emergence of a vertical social structure of classes as well as a state. This is the stage of *feudal* and *bourgeois* society.

He characterizes the third stage as the *socialist* and *communist* society where the further development of the forces of production resolves the problem of private appropriation of the means of production through its elimination leading to the progressive disappearance of classes and the state for a restoration of the horizontal social structure.

Cabral does not insist that these stages necessarily follow each other across board in each society. He rather asserts that *different* human groups within a *given* society exhibit different stages in the development of their productive forces and thus precipitate a *simultaneous* development of all or two stages of the historical process in the *same* society. He calls this the uneven development of society. Cabral explains additionally that each stage of the historical process has within itself the seeds out of which the next stage evolves.

So that necessarily each human group or the entire society goes through the process. The *rate* at which one stage is reached depends on either some internal factors or the impact of external elements that might accelerate or slow down the process of change in each case. This implies that the free development of the productive forces is the essence of social progress. Any internal or external factor that arrests the process of this free development of the productive forces requires being destroyed by way of national revolution within the context of a process of national liberation.

It is in the light of this understanding of the dynamics of social development – whereby Amilcar Cabral deals with the *foundations* of national liberation in relation to the social structure and makes us understand the *particularity* of national liberation as one that is set and developed within the progressive march of the productive forces in each socio-economic entity – that he raises the issue of the *objectives* of national liberation in relation to the social structure. As could be seen at the tail end of the immediately preceding
paragraph, Cabral apparently makes a distinction between national revolution and national liberation.

For him, national liberation is the general process of a socio-economic whole (a society) regaining the freedom of the development of its productive forces, previously usurped through foreign domination, and thus regains its particularity or what he specifically calls ‘historical personality’. He refers to this as the society’s ‘return to history’; that is, history as an independent development of productive forces.

This is why he says that ‘national liberation exists only when the national productive forces have been completely freed from every kind of foreign domination.’ And that ‘this freedom alone can guarantee the normal development of the historical process of a people.’ On the other hand, Cabral sees national revolution as a ‘nationalist solution’ which has the limitation of offering independence with only a theoretical power to adopt an economic structure that best suits its society.

In a situation of the existence of such a theoretical power, he says, a nationalist solution does not provide a resolution for the destruction of the capitalist structure that holds the society in dominance by imperialism. He calls such a situation a ‘neo-colonial situation’. Thus, he does not conceive national liberation as a bifurcation comprising a period of national revolution and a period of control of productive forces.

For him, ‘national liberation necessarily corresponds to a revolution’ since it represents ‘a profound mutation in the process of development of the productive forces’. In this same spirit he equates ‘attaining national liberation’ with ‘fulfilling the aspirations of the people’. And quite interestingly, he speaks of ‘true national revolution’ in the same way that he speaks of ‘true national liberation’ and ‘the true meaning and objective of the national liberation struggle’. This objective, he spells out in its simple terms, being the regain of the inalienable right of the people to have their own history.

He describes this right as ‘the basis of national liberation’. All of us understand from the aforesaid that this means the pursuit of the destruction of
foreign domination over the productive forces of a society for the free development of those forces to serve the aspirations of its people. For Cabral, a revolution that does not effect a change in the ownership or control over the productive forces of society constitutes a misnomer.

National liberation and national revolution if they are true to their calling of winning back the usurped control of the society over its productive forces amount to the same phenomenon and must not be differentiated. The latter is not an aspect of the former; they are the same and of the same status. With Cabral, national liberation is a **continuous** process that does not end with the physical absence of the foreign usurper on the territory of the usurped but continues until all direct and indirect links with the said territory are forever severed and the people are once again in control of their own destiny.

That is why he asserts that the principal aspect of the struggle of national liberation in the current condition is the anti-neo-colonial struggle – yet another objective of national liberation. So it is with national revolution. Cabral, however, explains how this objective relates to the social structure. He does not propose it arbitrarily.

To start with, he explains that under colonialism there is a paralysis of the social structure’s process of transformation due to the low level of development of the forces of production. With the increased level of development of the productive forces under neo-colonialism, however, the social dynamic **appears** revived and the historical process (i.e. the free development of the productive forces) in turn **appears** to be normalizing in the path of its evolution. Cabral calls this an illusion reinforced by the emergence of the nation-state.

But he denies the reality of even this illusion since he sees that the essence of imperialist domination remains the same such that there is a continual negation of the historical process whereby the free development of the national productive forces remains usurped. He explains this to the effect that with the so-called native ruling class running the nation-state but **in submission** to the ruling class of the dominating country the productive forces are at best limited if not entirely prevented in their development.
It is this political economy that, for Cabral, effects changes in the native social structure which in turn further shapes the objectives of national liberation. The changes throw up new classes within the social structure with their characteristic tendencies, capacities and potentials. In this regard, he sees, in the first place, a ‘native pseudo-bourgeoisie’ which is necessarily dependent on the ‘international bourgeoisie’. Secondly, there is the ‘petty bourgeoisie of bureaucrats’ out of whom the native pseudo-bourgeoisie emerges.

He then refers, thirdly, to ‘the nationalist petty bourgeoisie’. Fourthly, there is the ‘comprador’ class which is described as ‘intermediaries in the commercial system’. Fifthly, he marks out ‘working classes’ (‘urban working class’ and ‘agricultural proletariat’) whom he distinguishes as ‘embryonic’ in character and also describes as ‘vanguard classes’. Sixthly, there is the ‘peasantry’ which he holds as ‘the physical force of most importance in the national liberation struggle’.

Talking about tendencies, capacities and potentials of the various classes, Cabral says that the dependence on the international bourgeoisie by the native pseudo-bourgeoisie renders the latter incapable of being a national bourgeoisie and as such cannot effectively fulfill its historical function of freely directing the development of the productive forces ‘however nationalist it may be’. This view impresses on us that when Cabral talks of ‘the ruling class’ he is in reference to this pseudo-bourgeoisie.

In this respect, his statement that ‘the native ruling class becomes progressively more bourgeois’ is in reference to the tendency of the pseudo-bourgeoisie to aspire to be bourgeois proper. Writing off the pseudo-bourgeoisie from the ranks of national liberation forces and as one that stands ‘obstructing the path of revolution’, Cabral is, however, silent on its accomplice in the person of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie out of which he says that the pseudo-bourgeoisie emerges. Nothing is said of its role in the national liberation process.

This brings us to his characterization of the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie. That is to say that Cabral sees a part of the petite-bourgeoisie as nationalist. He sees it as part of the ‘native petty bourgeoisie’. According to him, the native
petite-bourgeoisie is ‘the only social sector capable of being aware of the reality of imperialist domination and of directing the state apparatus inherited from this domination’. It is this native petite-bourgeoisie that is ‘capable of being the immediate heirs of the colonial or neo-colonial state’.

He attributes this to its objective and subjective position whereby it has a higher standard of living and level of education as well as political awareness than ‘the masses’. This position brings it into ‘more frequent contact with the agents of colonialism’, leading to its greater chances of being humiliated; hence, its rapid awareness ‘of the need to free itself from foreign domination’. According to Cabral, however, it is not the entire class that assumes this responsibility of freeing itself but its revolutionary sector; that is, the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie. The others retain their doubts characteristic of their class.

That is during the colonial period. In the neo-colonial period, where the pseudo-bourgeoisie must be eliminated, according to Cabral, ‘the (petite-bourgeoisie’s) function of leading the struggle is shared (to a greater or lesser extent) with the more educated sectors of the working classes and even with some elements of the national pseudo-bourgeoisie who are inspired by patriotic sentiments.’ As to really how much of the share in leadership is assumed by the petite-bourgeoisie, Cabral says that the neo-colonial situation offers it ‘the chance of playing a role of major and even decisive importance in the struggle for the elimination of foreign domination.’

Here, he is, in fact, referring to the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie which he describes as ‘the sector of the petty bourgeoisie which participates in leading the struggle’. He justifies the major and decisive role of this class on the premise that ‘it is the most suitable sector to assume’ the leadership functions due to the limitations of the working classes and the sector of the pseudo-bourgeoisie in support of the struggle. This role, however, ‘is entrusted’ to it, Cabral says.
Being entrusted with this role of leadership demands of the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie not only ‘a greater revolutionary consciousness’ but also a capacity for faithful interpretations of the aspirations of the masses as well as ‘identifying themselves more and more with the masses.’ This suggests that these qualities – faithful interpretations of others’ aspirations and identification with them – are not a natural characteristic of the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie but one that is acquired with effort.

What is natural with it are its ‘natural tendencies’, if it is to retain power, ‘to become more bourgeois’ by way of permitting the development of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the compradorial classes ‘in order to transform itself into a national pseudo-bourgeoisie’. These natural tendencies, with the potential of negating the revolution, are the basis of Cabral’s urge on the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie to acquire the aforementioned qualities; lest it betrays the revolution. This, for Cabral, means ‘to be reborn as revolutionary workers’; in other words, being ‘capable of committing suicide as a class’.

But, in his assessment of the working classes, Cabral does not see them undergo such a self-sacrificial process in their own interest. In fact, he sees them as the class that whatever its level of political consciousness ‘seems to constitute the true popular vanguard of the national liberation struggle in the neo-colonial case.’ Note that he says that the working class only ‘seems’ to be the true vanguard whatever its level of political consciousness.

That is certainly an absolute denial of the working class’ capability of ever being the true vanguard of the national liberation struggle for the realization of its aspirations which the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie (‘a revolutionary vanguard, generally an active minority’ as he put it) must faithfully interpret and not betray. He attributes his doubts to ‘the generally embryonic character of the working classes’.

This, by a certain stretch of the imagination, means that in the revolutionary process realization of the aspirations of the working classes lies in a messianic mission of an active minority of self-sacrificing revolutionary group of reborn petite-bourgeois intellectuals.
Amilcar Cabral, nonetheless, waters down this perception with the statement that where the working class constitutes the true popular vanguard its mission cannot be completely fulfilled unless it ‘firmly unites with the other exploited strata’ (in which he includes the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie) within the framework of ‘a strong and well-structured political organization’. Certainly, this raises some confusion as to who really constitutes the vanguard in the revolutionary process.

But Cabral appears to resolve this for us in his statement whereby he sees the progress made in the social structure permitting a sharing of the leadership function between the nationalist petite-bourgeoisie and ‘the more educated sectors of the working classes’ as well as, he adds, ‘even with some elements of the national pseudo-bourgeoisie who are inspired by patriotic sentiments’. In the ensuing alliance, the level of leadership acquisition among the classes is actually contingent in the sense that it could be ‘to a greater or lesser extent’.

It is important to notice that whichever class in the alliance assumes the dominant position in the leadership it is expected to observe the singular pursuit of the interest and aspirations of only the working classes and the peasantry (the masses); since with the revolutionary or nationalist petite-bourgeoisie having committed class suicide its interests as propelled by its natural tendencies are nullified or exchanged for those of the working classes. In this respect, the patriotic elements of the pseudo-bourgeoisie joining the struggle are expected to follow suit.

Hence, the spectacle of class suicide spreads to the ranks of some sectors of the national pseudo-bourgeoisie which is target for immediate destruction in the national liberation effort. All in all, with Cabral’s analysis, education constitutes the vital requirement for being in the vanguard of national liberation. Without education, class suicide is a dead possibility for those outside the working classes. This brings us to the peasantry in Cabral’s setting of the objectives of national liberation in relation to the social structure.
In this respect and within the context of education as the determining factor in placing a class in the leadership or vanguard of national liberation, Cabral sees that the (unfavourable) economic, social and cultural situation of the peasantry does not allow it ‘to distinguish true national independence from fictitious political independence’ although it is ‘the most important physical force in the national liberation struggle’.

If it is the education and immediate humiliating proximity of the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie to the agents of colonialism that enable it to develop its desire to free itself from colonialism and neo-colonialism, it is ‘the growing poverty of the peasantry’ that ultimately brings it ‘around the ideal of national liberation’. We say ‘ultimately’ because in Cabral’s terms that growing poverty is one of the factors that contribute to the rise of consciousness of neo-colonialist frustration – the immediate basis of rallying to the cause of national liberation – among the popular sectors (inclusive of the peasantry).

We are here anxious to explain that according to Cabral the material conditions of both the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie and the peasantry occasion their desire to be free of foreign domination in all its manifestations; but that the asset of education in the arsenals of the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie enables it to attain a rapid understanding of the processes of foreign domination as against the unfavourable position of the peasantry in this respect. This peasantry he classifies as ‘hired men, sharecroppers, tenants and small farmers’.

And its attainment of the consciousness of neo-colonial frustration is by the agency of the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie. For, through the struggle ‘only a revolutionary vanguard, generally an active minority, can be aware of this distinction (true and fictitious independence) from the start and make it known … to the popular masses.’ But how much faith does Cabral have in the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie? In his reaction to this he sees that class in a ‘dilemma’. How does he resolve it?

The dilemma consists in the fact that given the natural tendencies of the petite-bourgeois class in the neo-colonial situation it either has to betray the revolution or commit class suicide. This material predisposition to look after
its own and betray the revolution, apparently determined by the level of development of the productive forces within the context of which it is a service class without an economic base, historically denies that class the possession of political control or the state.

According to Cabral, the ruling class' political control is based on its economic capacity. Within the colonial and neo-colonial systems only imperialist capital and the working classes have this capacity. This forms the basis of Cabral’s assertion that however sophisticated the petite-bourgeoisie might be in its revolutionary consciousness it never possesses the state. This requires full citation thus:

But however high the degree of revolutionary consciousness of the sector of the petty bourgeoisie called on to fulfill this historical function, it cannot free itself from one objective of reality: the petty bourgeoisie, as a service class (that is to say that a class not directly involved in the process of production) does not possess the economic base to guarantee the taking over of power. In fact history has shown that whatever the role — sometimes important — played by individuals coming from the petty bourgeoisie in the process of a revolution, this class has never possessed political control. And it never could possess it, since political control (the state) is based on the economic capacity of the ruling class, and in the conditions of colonial and neo-colonial society this capacity is retained by two entities: imperialist capital and the native working classes.

In the face of this historical reality why does Cabral appear to still have faith in the leadership of the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie rather than the working classes in the conditions of neo-colonialism? We have already explained that Cabral sets this on its asset in education. In the citation above, however, he nullifies this asset as a guarantee for capacity to possess the leadership of society via the state.
But then, Cabral appears to change gears at this point: he appeals to ‘the sphere of morals’ – that is, ‘the capacity of the leader of the national liberation struggle to remain faithful to the principles and to the fundamental cause of this struggle’ – to sort of guarantee ‘the development of revolutionary consciousness’ which he now again prescribes as ‘The positive solution in favour of the revolution’. Once again we cite his own words in full thus:

The positive solution in favor of the revolution depends on what Fidel Castro recently correctly called the development of revolutionary consciousness. This dependence necessarily calls our attention to the capacity of the leader of the national liberation struggle to remain faithful to the principles and to the fundamental cause of this struggle. This shows us, to a certain extent, that if national liberation is essentially a political problem, the conditions for its development give it certain characteristics which belong to the sphere of morals. (His own supplied italics)

In the process, there appears to be the replacement of the revolutionary consciousness of the class with its leader’s morally reinforced revolutionary consciousness which seems to be more potent. Though everything appears to set us in the direction of this conclusion it appears unfair. Amilcar Cabral’s insistence on the necessity to spread and develop revolutionary consciousness among the national liberation forces cannot be questioned.

The issues he raises concerning the historical capability of the petite-bourgeoisie (including its revolutionary sector) are a genuine concern. For, the facts of history truly enjoin us to be wary of so-called revolutionary petite-bourgeois leadership. But his attribution of true or steadfast revolutionary consciousness to moral factors can be better explained as we attempt to do in the concluding section below to restore revolutionary consciousness and leadership to class forces away from an individual leader.

Thus, in Amilcar Cabral’s The Weapon of Theory speech we see him proceed from dealing with the foundations of national liberation in relation to the social structure – whereby he makes us understand the particularity of national
liberation as set and developed within the progressive march of the productive forces in each socio-economic whole – to treatment of the objectives of national liberation in relation to the social structure.

In this latter regard, the focus or aim is on creating a new society on the basis of knowledge of the relations between classes in this era of neo-colonialism and setting the objectives of national liberation within the framework of those relations. Here, he identifies the class forces at play in a neo-colony, their tendencies, their capabilities and potentials as revolutionary forces. In this respect, he gives a holistic definition of national liberation. He ends, contrary to popular perception, by casting doubt on the fidelity of even the revolutionary petite-bourgeoisie to the cause of revolution.

In the concluding section of this paper we do not only explain the suspicious nature of the so-called educated petite-bourgeoisie. We trace it to the interaction of its objective class position with its class origins. We also suggest that though there is still a sector of that class that could play a catalytic role in national liberation, class leadership rests with the working classes.

The working classes aim at the purposeful realization of Cabral’s specific option for socialism; for which reason the imperialist-implanted capitalist state structure in the neo-colonies in Africa must be consciously destroyed to make way for the socialist state in replacement. The context for this process is the programmatic framework of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism as outlined, however, by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.

In this regard, we seek to point out that nobody ever really commits class suicide.

**Concluding Discussion**

In his treatment of the foundations of national liberation in relation to the social structure, Amilcar Cabral is basically dealing with the mode of production of a society. We understand him to define the mode of production as made up of the forces of production and the pattern of ownership of the means of
production. His entire speech never for once refers to ‘the pattern of ownership of the means of production’ as the ‘relations of production’.

And yet that is what the pattern of ownership of the means of production is — relations of production. Within the mode of production, the forces of production determine the pattern of the ownership of the means of production or the relations of production, if you like. Cabral refers to them as ‘interdependent variables’.

What Cabral appears to have left out is the category ‘exchange relations’ or ‘relations of exchange’. The relations of exchange emerge from the relations of production. All these relations are, in class society, constituted by the classes. Whereas the production relations exhibit the main class forces like the feudal, bourgeois and proletarian classes which relate to the means of production, the exchange relations throw up the compradorial and other intermediary classes in their relations to the means of exchange.

All these are explicitly or implicitly applied in Cabralian analysis. They are all **Marxist** categories. And Cabral does not object to being referred to as a Marxist. As a Marxist, then, we expect him to treat class tendencies with greater sophistication than his handling of the petite-bourgeoisie in his speech. Before then let’s consider Dr. Ron Daniels’ views.

Dr. Ron Daniels makes no pretence at being an expert or theoretician on the work of Amilcar Cabral. He sees himself ‘as a veteran scholar/activist and practicing Pan Africanist whose life’s work has been influenced by the thought, theory and praxis of Amilcar Cabral’. He cautions us to observe the importance of his shortcomings in this respect. This is where his problem is. His humility in this regard should, however, not prevent us from stating our displeasure at his example.

For someone whose **whole** life’s work has been under the influence of Cabral we can only expect more from him. As a scholar and an activist his own influence on others should be borne in mind. It is certainly reprehensible that he does not study Cabral deep enough to avoid the attribution of categories
like ‘mode of productive forces’ to him. Can we find that in The Weapon of Theory?

Dr. Daniels’ attribution of ‘the mode of productive forces as the motive force of history’ to Cabral and that this ‘challenged Marxist orthodoxy in light of Cabral’s careful study of the evolution of pre-industrial societies in Africa’ is not only not careful but also mistaken.

Additionally, although he correctly points out Cabral’s African-centred approach to the examination of theories of revolution he fails to conduct a critical examination, however appreciative, of what he calls Cabral’s vision of the nature of ‘national revolution’ and ‘national liberation’ as well as Cabral’s apparent uncritical assertion of the unique role of the petite-bourgeoisie in liberation struggle.

These are the points of interest in Dr. Daniels’ essay that need be quickly dealt with before we address them in Cabral’s speech. Let us begin with the issue of mode of productive forces as the motive force of history.

As already implied, Amilcar Cabral does not talk about any mode of productive forces. He rather talks about the mode of production. Within the latter he points at the productive forces and the relations of production (which he refers to as the pattern of ownership of the means of production).

Although he agrees that in our generation the class struggle is the motive force of history he suggests the need for an expanded definition that makes it possible to deal with the history of the societies without classes – not just pre-industrial societies. Hence, he suggests the productive forces as the motive force of history.

This suggests a permanent motive force of history that abides throughout the evolution of human society. He does not explicitly state this as a challenge to any imagined Marxist orthodoxy although it appears to him to be adding to knowledge.

On the question of national revolution and national liberation, Cabral makes no effort to distinguish the two from each other. When he speaks light of
national revolution as a nationalist solution he points at it in terms of its neo-colonialist variant. This variant does not project the revolutionary struggle beyond inheriting the capitalist state structure implanted during the colonial period. He sees it not as ‘a true revolution’.

This understanding is appreciated when he talks about ‘those who want their national revolution to be a true revolution’. That is reinforced when he talks of the need for a ‘struggle against our own weaknesses’ and states that ‘any national or social revolution which is not based on knowledge of this fundamental reality runs grave risk of being condemned to failure’. Surely, this other national revolution does not retain but destroys the inherited structure.

But, then, it might be asked how this nullifies any distinction between national liberation and national revolution. Cabral, in this connection, makes the national liberation movement the vehicle of national revolution and thus equates national liberation with national revolution. We see this when he describes ‘the destruction of capital and the advent of socialism’ as necessities of national liberation.

That is to say that in the same way that he sees the destruction of capitalism and its replacement with socialism in the process of a national revolution (true revolution) so does he see national liberation in terms of the destruction of capitalism to be taken over by socialism.

That being so, to suggest that Cabral sees national liberation as a two-phased phenomenon involving, first, national revolution (a period to inherit the capitalist structure) and, second, national liberation (a period of developing the forces of production) is to construct an antithesis to his revolutionary theory. This theory culminates in socialism whereas the two-phased phenomenon leads to neo-colonialism.

Focusing on the development of the productive forces, Cabral sees an ongoing revolution that frees the forces of production from the fetters of foreign domination for their unfettered (free) development under the indigenous alliance of class forces previously exploited by imperialism. Dr.
Ron Daniels does not see what Cabral sees. That explains why, by design or sheer neglect, he does not see nor report to his audience Cabral’s pre-occupation with socialism. Hence, he does not mention the word ‘socialism’ even once in his entire essay.

The said antithesis constitutes the grounds for Dr. Daniels’ perception of Cabral according some unique role to the petite-bourgeoisie in the liberation struggle; when, in fact, Cabral rather raises significant historical doubts about the capacity of that class (and its revolutionary sector) to hold and direct the state along the desired path to socialism. Possibly, these doubts play a great role in Cabral appealing not to the material conditions of petite-bourgeois existence but rather to the petite-bourgeoisie’s moral sense to faithfully commit to the demands of the national liberation struggle.

In effect, we do not see any real unique role being accorded even the revolutionary sector of the petite-bourgeoisie in Cabral’s final scheme of affairs. This positions us to carry out an in-depth analysis of Cabral’s appeal to moral imperatives within the environment of the historical materialist approaches that he adopts in his dissection of the African reality.

In this regard, we observe Amilcar Cabral’s pointer at the unstable tendencies of the petite-bourgeoisie to be in confirmation of the Manifesto of the Communist Party (The Communist Manifesto) authored by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. So as to underscore this confirmation we need to dispel the doubts concerning Cabral’s affirmation of the productive forces as the motive force of history in apparent contrast with the Marxist position on that issue. From the preceding pages we understand where Cabral stands.

Now, where does Marxism stand? In our view, Cabral says nothing new and does not contradict the Marxist position. We intend to show that in Marxist literature (The Communist Manifesto in particular) despite the initial statement that ‘The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of the class struggles’ even that history is therein portrayed as propelled by the development of the productive forces in the particular society in which that development takes place before the 1888 English Edition.
In the 1888 English Edition of *The Communist Manifesto* Engels adds a footnote to qualify the citation above to refer to the period of ‘written history’. He explains that when *The Communist Manifesto* was written in 1847 certain facts were not yet available about ‘the social organization existing previous to recorded history’.

The works of persons like August von Haxthausen, Georg Ludwig von Maurer and Lewis Henry Morgan, however, had unveiled the existence of common ownership in land, proved that to be the social foundation from which all Teutonic races started in history and emerged as primitive form of society that was found from India to Ireland, and crowned it all by laying bare the inner organization of this primitive communistic society, respectively. Only after the dissolution of the primeval societies did society begin to be differentiated into antagonistic classes, Engels reports. His work, *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, has since (1886) attempted to retrace this dissolution.

Just as the physical, chemical and biological sciences make statements about the laws of nature to apply to all nature even before new items of nature are known, Marx and Engels state in *The German Ideology* (1845-46) that ‘Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., that is, real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms’. This is in the nature of a statement of a natural law that abides throughout the evolution of human society.

Preceding that statement, they assert its empirical basis thus: ‘The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions of their life, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way’.

Hence, before the proof of the existence of pre-recorded history of primitive human society (society without classes) Marx and Engels make productive forces the fundamental determinant of human activity (history).
functionality of the fundamentality of the productive forces in history and knowledge of it thus precede the birth of Amilcar Cabral in 1924.

In this respect, and to borrow from Cabral’s own usages, it should not be a shock to observe that in affecting attitudes that suggest his originality in positing the productive forces as the motive force of history he, Cabral, is either not aware of this finding in Marxist philosophy and science or that he commits plain plagiarism.

And for Dr. Ron Daniels to see in that behaviour a new discovery that stands in antithesis to Marxist understanding is, to say the least, a gbeyecious (frightening) disposition of a scholar/activist in practice. For, to be able to make his declaration we expect Dr. Daniels to have scrutinized Marxist texts which only could guarantee his scholarly authority to talk like that.

We cannot proceed without pointing out that Amilcar Cabral’s beautiful section on uneven development in a society and/or between societies is also not new. For, in The German Ideology, Marx and Engels effortlessly state that ‘The relations of different nations among themselves depend upon the extent to which each has developed its productive forces, the division of labour and internal intercourse’. Cabral explains this in so many words in The Weapon of Theory.

If Cabral forcefully and successfully brings to our consciousness the fundamentality of the productive forces in history-making, plagiarism or no plagiarism, his real shortcoming lies in his handling of the petite-bourgeoisie vis-à-vis his celebrated theory of class suicide. Contrary to the historical materialist basis of his analysis of the place of the productive forces in history and society, his prescriptions in his theory of class suicide are morborfully (pitifully) a wallowing in idealism. In our concluding paragraphs here we present the Marxist materialist view on the issue.

In the statement, ‘The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society’, Marx and Engels bring to the fore the force of material imperatives in the nature of logical
necessity in human behaviour. Every class behaves upon the promptings of its need to continue to live, to exist.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, they explain how sectors of non-proletarian classes out of the pursuit of their own interests drop into the working class to wage the revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. They mention the lower strata of the middle class who, by virtue of their ‘diminutive capital’ and specialized skills that do not enable them to compete with the large capitalists (the bourgeoisie) who have improved methods of production, gradually sink into the proletariat. These strata are described as ‘the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant’.

They ‘all … fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class.’ In addition to them there are sections of the ruling class who get similarly dropped into the proletariat due to the advance of industry or feel ‘threatened in their conditions of existence’. These latter ‘supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress’. They are part of the ‘bourgeois ideologists who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole’, according to Marx and Engels.

Their behaviour is observed ‘when the class struggle nears the decisive hour’ of an ongoing dissolution of the ruling class. Marx and Engels hold that these are not a revolutionary lot in their opposition to the bourgeoisie. The only true revolutionary class is the proletariat. As the two put it, ‘Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a genuinely revolutionary class’ that holds the future in its hands. The others decay and disappear.

There is no doubt that within the analysis of African reality these ring Cabralian bells. But Cabral appears to compromise on the decay and disappearance of these apron strings to bourgeois existence. Hence, he rather appeals to their sense of *morality* to genuinely identify with the aspirations of the proletariat. Of course, the complexity of the African reality suggests that some of them survive as genuine revolutionary workers not by
responding to sermons in morality but by the complexity of their own material existence.

By which expression we mean that the material imperatives of their class origins impinge on their objective class position. Thus by training they might be petite-bourgeois in their calling but the deprived social environment of their years or decades of upbringing might commit them to the elimination of the unfavourable conditions of that environment to secure the immediate and future existence of persons living in such an environment that include themselves – even before they emerge from the classroom where their potential as rebels could be discerned.

Such persons express no sense of doing anybody else any favour contrary to the implications of the theory of class suicide. They wage a struggle they understand to also be and feel as their own struggle. Just as the other classes have their intellectual spokespersons so do the working classes.

Amilcar Cabral, consciously or unconsciously, applies in Africa the principles laid down in The Manifesto of the Communist Party. Like all of us applying those principles he is not immune to error. His effort remains useful to the revolutionary cause of Africa. Errors committed need to be corrected. The overall analysis requires an improvement based on a consistent observation of the fundamental functionality of the productive forces determining the direction of society and history.

All in all, the main tribute we can pay and pay to the memory of Amilcar Cabral in the year of his 90th Birthday Anniversary is our readiness to build the productive forces (including a well-structured politico-military organization) necessary to shatter the existing oppressive capitalist relations of production that remain so many fetters on African liberation and crystallization of a socialist united Africa under its single state – the People’s Republican State of Africa (PRSA) – as guided by the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Nkrumaism.

Amilcar Cabral lives on!

Forward Ever with Revolutionary Pan-Africanism! Forward!