

Reagan rule threatens European economy

Ronald Reagan has broadened economic sanctions against the Soviet Union and in so doing has caused serious conflict with the governments of France, West Germany, Italy, England and Japan by ordering that US companies and companies selling US technology not honor their contracts in the Siberia-Europe gas line.

The gas line not only offers benefits to the European and Japanese firms and their workers but promises economic independence for the OPEC nations.

The action was supposedly to punish the Soviet Union for events in Poland, but is also an attempt to head off closer economic ties between the Soviet Union and western Europe. Despite the fact that Reagan's economic war against the USSR was not well received at Versailles, he is forging ahead.

In the five year period ending in 1985, the USSR plans to build seven extra-long gas pipelines from western Siberia to the central part of the country. The Siberia-Europe pipeline is 5800 kilometers long and can provide at least 1000 trillion cubic feet of gas in 20 years. By 1984, if construction goals are met, it can deliver at least 40 billion cubic meters of gas to seven western European nations.

As for their participation in the construction, the European nations will receive guaranteed shipments of gas and oil. There are also possibilities of increased trade with the So-

viet Union, which could provide a much needed economic boost. This development would be of decided benefit to Europe in light of the US refusal to lower interest rates which are devastating to the foreign rate of exchange and the continuing market battles between US corporations, the steel industry in Europe and the textile and auto industries in Japan.

Firms in western Europe and Japan will provide nearly \$1 million worth of material for the pipeline. The USSR is the world's largest importer of steel tubes, which benefits the nations of western Europe. Thirty percent of the steel tubes produced in West Germany are exported to the socialist block, particularly to the USSR, and the USSR will also purchase the special turbines needed.

Since 1973 the world has been

aware of its dependence on OPEC oil, and the high prices of oil have devastated the economics of much of the world. Even the current oil glut, which has forced crude oil sales at lower costs, has not forced down the cost of oil and gasoline. Although the oil sources are owned by the OPEC nations, the transportation, refining and marketing remain in the hands of transnational corporations, chiefly those based in the US.

The Siberian pipeline offers a new source of oil for Europe and Japan. Geologists agree that Siberia has one of the world's richest deposits. The Tiumen region alone contains one-fifth of the world's known gas reserves.

In the last ten years there has been a ten-fold increase in gas and oil extraction, with a total of over 300

million tons in 1980. Gas production reached 156 billion cubic meters in 1980, with a 1990 goal of 500 million tons of oil and more than 500 billion cubic meters of natural gas. The USSR also has large coal reserves.

The new pipeline will provide 30 percent of the energy needs of the seven participating nations. This guarantee of a stable fuel supply is what Reagan wants those nations to reject in the interest of the US cold-war build-up.

Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki said his government will continue the Sakhalin project and that he considers it to be a matter of national importance. The European nations have ordered the companies licensed in their countries to honor their commitments and contracts on the pipeline — France being the first to ship products to the USSR.



World's longest reigning monarch dies

King Sobhuza II of Swaziland, the world's longest-reigning ruler, died Saturday at the age of 83.

Swaziland, a land-locked nation about the size of New Jersey, is surrounded on three sides by South Africa and on the other by Mozambique. Rich with natural resources, the nation exports asbestos and iron.

Sobhuza II was born on July 22, 1899, during the Boer War. His father, King Kgwane V, died suddenly the following year and the tribal council selected Sobhuza II to succeed him.

He was sent to the country's first primary school and then to South Africa to receive a western education. Until he was 22 years old, his grandmother and uncle acted as regents. He became ruler in 1921 but it was largely a ceremonial office because the country — a British colony — was administered by the British High Commissioner.

His first task was an attempt to persuade the British government

that contracts giving huge tracts of land to white farmers were not valid since tribal law allows the king to grant use of land, not ownership. He wanted the British government to allow him to buy back the land.

When the British finally left in 1969 they left a parliamentary form of government, but after four years Sobhuza II abolished the constitution as "un-Swazi" and turned to an absolute monarchy. He administered the country closely and put his sons and relatives in important posts.

Sobhuza actively supported foreign investment and management, much of which remained in the control of a few whites, hoping it would benefit the 600,000 inhabitants, many of whom were living in rural poverty. When he took office only 37 percent of the land was in Swazi hands, while 73 percent was owned by Swazis when he died.

Sobhuza stayed on good terms with apartheid South Africa and Marxist Mozambique, using the sea

ports of both nations. He repeatedly hosted Mozambique leaders and gave shelter to South African exiles. At the same time, South African whites came on tourists to enjoy gambling casinos not available in their country.

Earlier this year the king had opened negotiations with South Africa in an attempt to annex a part of South Africa's so-called tribal homeland where 700,000 Swazis live. This annexation would give Swaziland access to the sea.

Sobhuza preferred to live a simple life in a village outside the capital, where he generally wore a leopard-skin loincloth and led the many tribal festivals and ceremonies. He claimed approximately 100 wives and 600 children.

Sobhuza was popularly referred to as the Great Mountain, the Bull, the Son of the She-Elephant, and the Inexplicable. In his western role, in which he moved at ease, he was a Knight of the British Empire.

He urged his people to learn western ways without losing tribal customs.



KING SOBUHA II

Saharan question threatens African unity

(Continued from page 1 col 6)

At independence, the existing boundaries in Africa seemed the only reasonable thing to go by. Even Kwame Nkrumah, who was the OAU's moving spirit, could argue that to redraw the boundaries in accordance with ethnic affinities would logically culminate in the balkanization of Africa into puny and unviable "tribal" states.

Nevertheless, it remains true that what emerged from the debris of colonialism were not "nations" but unwieldy conglomerations of nations, nationalities and tribes. They left such divided peoples as the Ewe of Ghana and Togo, the Yoruba of Nigeria and Benin, the Hausa of Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon, and the Somalis of Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti. It is from such divisions that border claims and counter-claims occur.

Another result of the colonial border formations — the lumping together of two or more entire national civilizations into one colony — has led not to border claims, but to secessionist movements. The most famous of these are Eritrea in Ethiopia, Biafra in Nigeria, Katanga in the Congo (now Zaire), etc. There are simmering cases which threaten to take volcanic forms in almost every country.

The point about the present border system — the split nations and the lumped together nations — is that the states naturally behave like

eggshells. Being artificial, political instability is built into the very state structure handed over by colonialism. Some are states without nations; others are nations without states; none are true nation-states.

The question of "tribalism" thus is a colonial question, and there is nothing particularly African about it. It is a question which still plagues European countries like Spain, which has its Basque, Andalusian and Catalan nationalist movements; and Britain, with its Scottish, Welsh and Cornish movements.

The basic illness of the modern African state, then, is that it is a structure which has been imposed on ethnic groups which do not have a single cultural root, are disparate numerically, have different levels of economic development, do not enjoy proportionate shares in the state machinery, but yet are expected to benefit equally.

The only common denominator is that the economic basis of the African states is foreign. Since an indig-

enous economic basis is absent in every case it follows that any alliance of such states will also be baseless economically. That is why the various contradictions in the OAU so faithfully reflect the foreign powers that vie for favor within individual states.

If the OAU falls to pieces it will

be to a great extent a result of the delusion of "national independence" which Africans entertained in the early sixties. But it will also be an auspicious time for all thinking Africans to come out with new blueprints for laying foundation stones for new and more genuine nation-states.

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