

LIBERIA

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Pageant of Modern Africa

*And it came to pass near the middle of the twentieth century
There existed in the vast continent of Africa
Only two independent nations —
One on the east coast, Ethiopia ;
The other on the west coast, Liberia ;
And Tubman and Hailie Selassie stood before the World Forum.
Far to the south there was a farcical government
Known as the Union of South Africa where millions of blacks
Were trampled under foot by thousands of whites ;
And the rest of the continent was controlled by European nations ;
And a great rumbling was heard, first the north,
"We have slept too long", they murmured ;
"Other masters have occupied our house too long.
It is time for them to go home.
We must set our house in order."
Reluctantly, the foreign masters departed ;
But some left an iron horse
Filled with soldiers and weapons of war.
Libya, Tunis, Morocco, proclaimed a rebirth
And settled down to redeem time lost.
Then stalked along the western coast of Africa
The Spirit of pristine empires,
Over the desert, hills and rivers,
Moving masses of men, women and children.
Up sprang Nkrumah, supported on all sides by those
Who dared to assert their manhood
In the British Commonwealth of Nations,
As the century reached its mid-point.
From the jailhouse he restlessly shouted, "Freedom, now !"
Helplessly looking around in vain
For some sign of weakening resistance,
The porwerful lion slowly penned his paw*

*And allowed the cub, Ghana, to shake loose
From parental restraint.
Then came a mighty upheaval
Over the land mass controlled by France.
Escaping from her shackles,
Under the leadership of Sekou Toure,
The nation of Guinea emerged — the second Republic in Africa.
The motion gained in momentum'till the whole continent,
Becoming a seething mass, shook and belched forth into the
Nuclear Age,
In rapid succession, nation after nation —
On the west coast and on the east ;
Near the heart and at the extremities :
Ahidjo, Olympio, Keita, Dia, Tsiranana, Lumumba,
Osman, Maga, Diori, Yameogo, Boigny, Tambalbaye,
Daco, Youlou, Mba, Balewa, Daddah, Margai
and Nyerere
Pioneered as leaders of state and government.
But hark ! the groans of fathers, mothers, children —
Far to the north, in Algeria,
Where the death toll mounts daily
As Africans are slain by Frenchmen
Who resist the tide of freedom — though is sure
Still they fight on — Africans who love liberty more than life —
For their posterity they bathe the streets in blood !
While to the south re-echo mournful sounds
In the Union of South Africa, South-west Africa,
In Angola, and in the Congo !
How long will the slaughter last ! Dear God ;
The last ditch stand must finally give way,
And Africa shall bask in the light of day.
Thus shall the end be !*