

Decolonisation & Neocolonialism

Why decolonise?

1. The growing strength of colonial nationalism
2. International Opposition
3. Superpower pressure to give up colonies
4. It suited the old colonial powers to give up their Empires
 - i. New postwar European governments see imperialism as racist
 - ii. Empires were a financial burden
 - iii. Old imperialist countries were focussing on Europe rather than the world
 - iv. Neocolonialism offered a way to retain informal control.....

How Neo-colonialism was/is carried out:

1. Cultural Ties:

- i. Language of imperialism keeps links with old imperial country (eg French newspapers, books in shops, TV programmes, keep influence for France)
- ii. Organisations like British Council/Sports (Cricket, Rugby, Commonwealth Games) keep up influence of UK

2. Political ties:

Both UK & France set up softer versions of old Empires when they set up "clubs" for the newly independent states:

Eg UK has the Commonwealth (meet each year, develops and keeps economic, cultural, political links with new states. UK can "advise" them on policy)

France: Union Francaise

3. Military Contacts

Especially in the early years of independence.

- These keep a military presence in the area for the old imperialist power.
Eg Cuba: US base at Guantanamo
South Vietnam: French, then US in 1950's
UK kept bases for initial years of independence in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Malaysia and (still in 2000) Guyana, Cyprus (NB UK in Malvinas/Falklands as it is still a colony)
French still have 10,000 troops worldwide in ex colonies
- Old imperialists will intervene in ex colonies to "support" new regimes (France sends troops 5 times to ex colonies to remove governments 1960-80 in Africa, UK at the moment have troops in Sierra Leone.)
- Both used their navies to patrol and exert influence (as with old gunboats) along African & Asian coastlines in 1960's and 70's.

These allowed the old mother countries to intervene almost at will and to make the new (client) govts dependent on them to stay in power - as in Cuba, 1900-34.

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4. "Aid"

Aid is used to tie a new state to the old mother state by

- i. Blunt method: no support for the mother country (eg in UNO, or in Cold War or in choosing mother country companies = no aid
- ii. More subtle method: aid given by mother country but the ex colony is told what to spend it on: usually goods produced by the mother country:
 - Eg UK cars in old UK colonies, French cars in old French colonies
 - But by 1970 Japan soon captured the markets in most consumer goods
 - UK & France pressured ex colonies to spend aid on what they still made best: weapons: guns, tanks, aircraftTherefore aid was now used to keep armaments industries of Europe in business
Result: new states often were poor but had new weapons. They want to use them
 - = wars with new neighbours or to put down opposition in own country
 - = more weapons needed
 - = more business for mother countryEg Biafran war in Nigeria (1969)

5. Economic Ties

- i. Cash crop economies in many ex colonies ensure the new states cannot escape global economy
 - Eg Cuba & sugar; Kenya, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) & tea
 - This gives great influence to multinationals who had invested in colonial times
 - Eg Cuba: US United Fruit Company
 - Kenya: UK company: BAT
 - = controlled prices, so controlled money earned by new country especially when the country had one main crop only
 - Where new countries nationalised these old imperial investments they were "punished":
 - Eg US boycott of Cuba
 - 1956 UK & France invade Egypt when Egypt nationalised the Suez canal from UK and France)
- i. Companies from the old mother country had existing links & contact and were usually the first choice for new economic development (eg the ex French colonies in Africa adopt French companies and Technology for their colour TV systems in 1970's)

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6. The Role of the European Community

The EC was set up in 1956. The old colonial powers of France, Netherlands, Belgium were founder members, UK had joined by 1972. The EC had a common policy of dealing with the third world (ie mainly their ex colonies) which would tie them to Europe economically:

1963 Yaoundé Convention: (Focus was on newly indep french colonies)

- a. Markets guaranteed in Europe for 3rd world products [eg coffee, cocoa, uranium] from specified states (mainly ex French colonies)
- b. Europe would lend \$1bn to be spent on:
 - European (mainly French) industrial products
 - European grain (France = main grower) but at European prices (higher than world price)
 - New construction projects, using European companies

To make this easier to organise France set up the "franc zone" in ex colonies
1972: UK joined the EC. Yaoundé was changed to fit in old UK colonies

1975 Lome I and 1980 Lome II agreements

A development of Yaoundé and a new section to provide a more social aid programme for the poorest. But the pattern of dependency was clear by 1970's

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