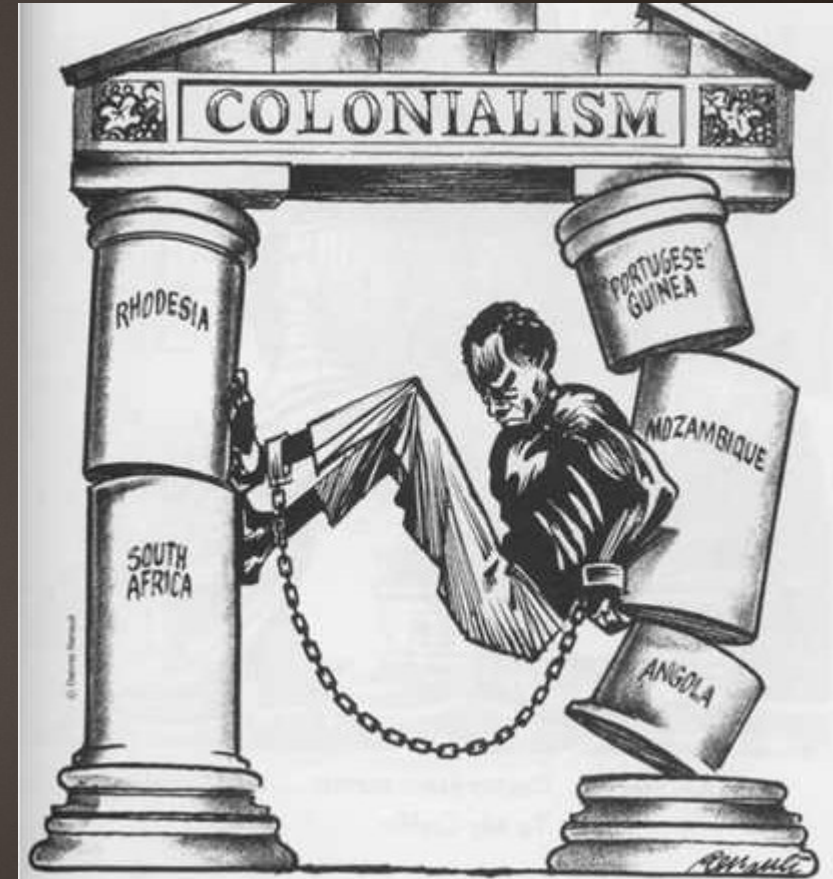


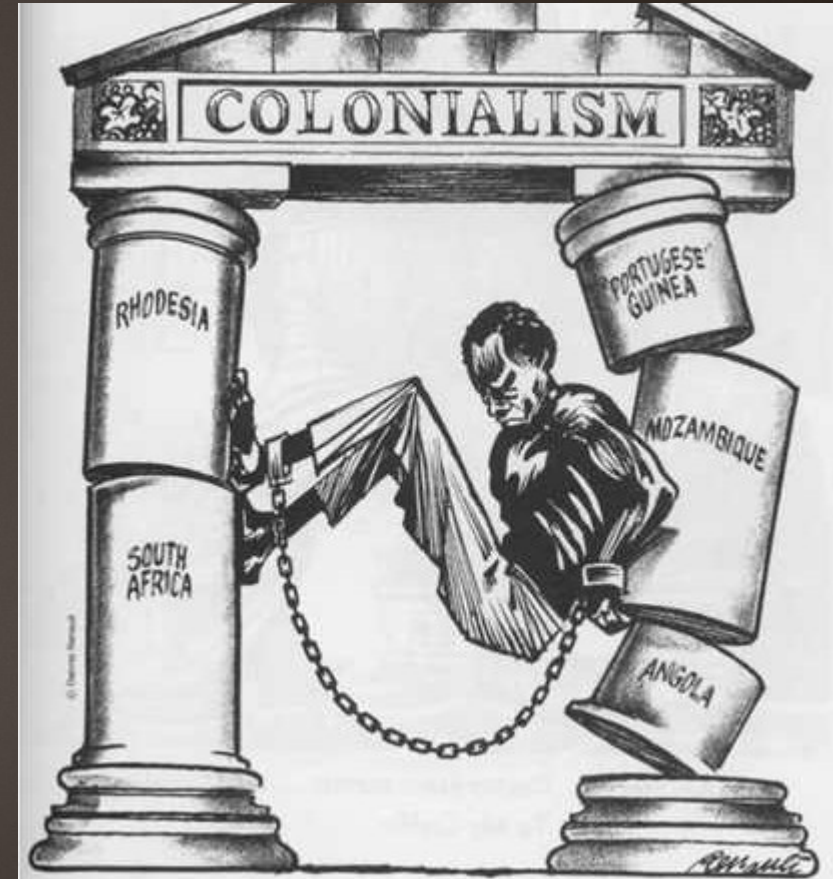
Decolonization of Africa

- ▶ Africa was the last major region to be decolonized.
- ▶ Decolonization of Africa took place from 1956-1980.
- ▶ In 1956, two countries controlled almost all of Africa: Britain and France



Pressures to Decolonize

- ▶ African Nationalism put enormous pressure on imperial governments
- ▶ US government pressured its allies to decolonize
- ▶ Soviet Union support provided the threat of communist revolts
- ▶ Civil Rights movement drew international attention
- ▶ European citizens thought the empires too expensive



Background: WW2

- ▶ African soldiers returning from Europe after World War 2 were well trained and highly political.
- ▶ Many had served among European soldiers as equals.
- ▶ Now they were asked to return to Africa as second-class citizens.
- ▶ Countries demanded their independence but were denied.



Background: Algeria

- ▶ In 1954, this conflict erupted into the Algerian War.
- ▶ Tired of oppression under the French, Algerians rose up to overthrow them.
- ▶ Despite pressure from America, France decided to violently fight this war.
- ▶ It was very bloody. 250,000 were killed over the 7 year conflict.
- ▶ Fear of this repeating in other colonies further pressure Europe to decolonize.



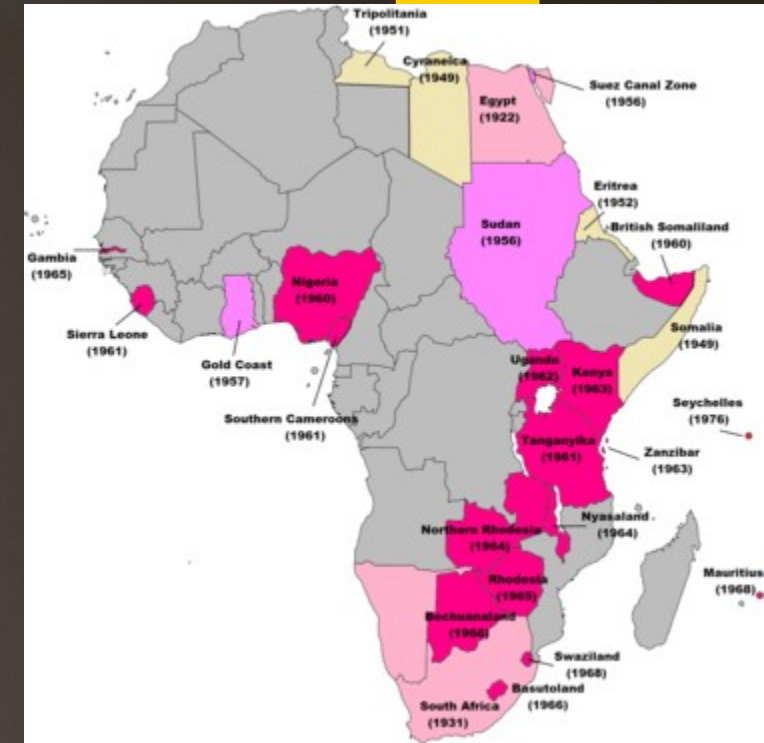
The Winds of Change: 1960

- ▶ In 1960, things were too much for the empires to hold on anymore.
- ▶ The British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, delivered the Winds of Change Speech
- ▶ The message was clear, Britain was giving up on its Empire.
- ▶ France quickly followed suit.



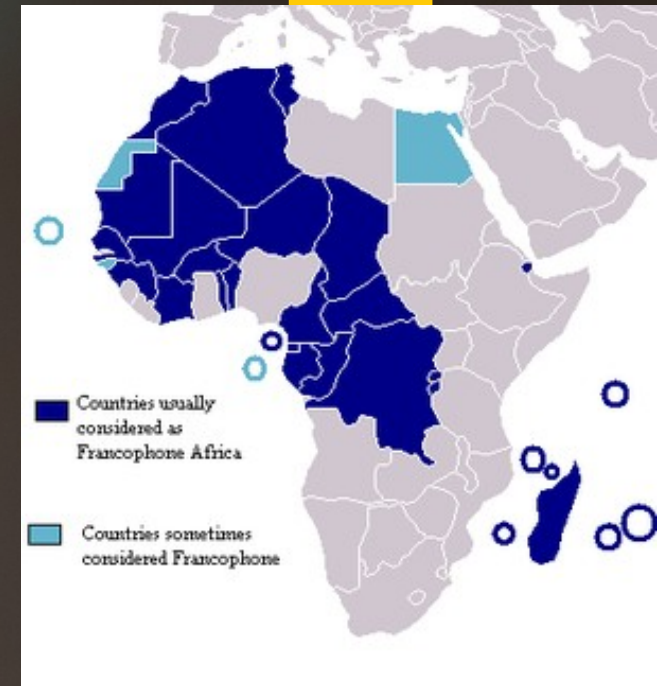
British Decolonization: The Spider Web

- ▶ Britain decolonized rapidly from 60-66
- ▶ But only British officials left.
- ▶ British companies, and the corrupt local collaborators stayed.
- ▶ Britain set up tax-haven islands and established a secretive offshore banking network that still funnels away tens of billions of dollars every year.



French Decolonization: Window Dressing

- ▶ France officially decolonized even more rapidly than Britain.
- ▶ But France never really left. French colonial administrators and financiers continue to exercise significant power even to this day.
- ▶ Like British colonies, former French colonies are dominated by French companies.



Problem 1: Bad Borders

- ▶ Europe drew Africa's borders without knowing what they were doing.
- ▶ Nations are put together or split up almost at random.
- ▶ This has made it very difficult for African countries to build national unity.
- ▶ Hundreds of civil wars and separation movements have been created by this problem.



Problem 2: Foreign Ownership

- ▶ Most African resources (mines, etc) are still owned by foreign companies.
- ▶ Most money does not stay in Africa.
- ▶ Europe, America, and China still benefit from Africa's resources more than Africa does.
- ▶ Attempts to change this are frequently suppressed by covert actions from Europe and America



Problem 3: Political Instability

- ▶ The suddenness and indifference with which Europe decolonized Africa left a power vacuum.
- ▶ That power vacuum was filled by warlords, militias, religious fanatics, and rebel armies.
- ▶ Many African countries have struggled to find lasting peace or political stability.



Case Study: Ghana

- ▶ Ghana gained its independence in 1956
- ▶ It's leader, Kwame Nkrumah, was a hero of African Nationalism
- ▶ Once free, he took bold action to break the power of the British-loyal elites
- ▶ In 1966, he was overthrown by a military coup, leading to an era of civil conflict and military rule that did not end until 1979.
- ▶ Despite this, Ghana has remained reasonably stable and successful.



Case Study: Congo

- ▶ The Congo gained its independence from Belgium in 1960.
- ▶ It was a troubled country, with many problems to fix.
- ▶ Its prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, asked the USA for help but was denied
- ▶ He turned to the Soviet Union
- ▶ America's CIA supported a coup. Lumumba was tortured and executed



Case Study: Congo

- ▶ The new ruler, Mobutu, was a brutal dictator but enjoyed US support.
- ▶ He killed political rivals, took Congo's wealth for himself, and carried on a near genocidal culture war.
- ▶ When he died in '97, Congo collapsed into the Congo Wars, which lasted 7 years and claimed 8 million lives—more than world war 1.
- ▶ Even today, Congo remains divided.



Dictators and Wars

- ▶ In the wake of decolonization, without almost any support from the West, most African democracies collapsed.
- ▶ Bloody civil wars of the 60s gave way to corrupt if not brutal military dictators
- ▶ Almost all of these dictators had good relations with Europe and America because they kept communism away.



Africa's Future

- ▶ The era of the dictator has ended in much of Africa.
- ▶ National unity has never been higher.
- ▶ Democracy is growing throughout the continent.
- ▶ Economic dependency on the West has been softened due to competition from China, India, and Korea

