

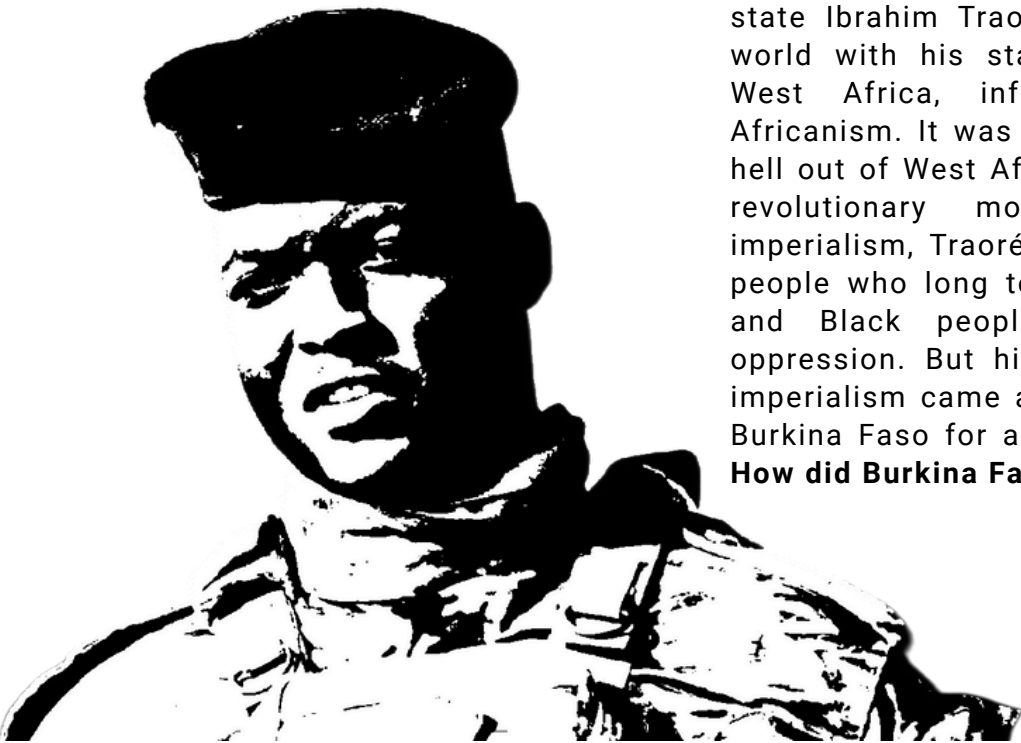
FRANCE OUT OF AFRICA

- BUT RUSSIA IN ?

**BEHIND
ENEMY
LINES**

Anti-Imperialist Resistance

**STAND WITH THE PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA
AGAINST IMPERIALISM!**



Since he took power in 2022, Burkina Faso's head of state Ibrahim Traoré has inspired people around the world with his stand against French imperialism in West Africa, influenced by Marxism and pan-Africanism. It was past time for the French to get the hell out of West Africa, and in the absence of a global revolutionary movement fighting back against imperialism, Traoré has become a beacon of hope for people who long to see Africa free from imperialism, and Black people around the world free from oppression. But his success in getting rid of French imperialism came at the price of opening the doors to Burkina Faso for another imperialist power to step in. **How did Burkina Faso get to this point?**

1890s: What's today Burkina Faso was conquered by France and subjected to French colonial rule, with its resources plundered and its people exploited by imperialism, after centuries of the slave trade ravaged Africa for the benefit of the ruling classes in Europe and the United States.

1960: After winning formal independence from France, it remained under imperialist subjugation politically and economically, still exploited by foreign powers.

1983: Anti-imperialist Thomas Sankara, who rose through the ranks of the former French colonial military, came to power through a successful military coup and implemented radical reforms that threatened French dominance of Burkina Faso.

1987: For defying imperialism, Sankara was assassinated and his government was overthrown in a military coup.

- A puppet government was installed and French imperialism returned to Burkina Faso along with the French military.



THOMAS SANKARA



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**THE EMPIRE IS THE ENEMY
WE CHOOSE TO RESIST IT**

2000s - 2010s: The US Africa Command (AFRICOM) under George Bush's "War on Terror" begin a bilateral military cooperation with Burkina Faso

- Burkinabé troops are trained in the thousands to fight al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups.
- U.S. Special Operations Forces set up small bases in Burkina Faso to support reconnaissance flights and so-called counterterrorism operations against Islamists operating in neighboring countries and regions, such as Mali, Mauritania, and the Sahara.

January 2022: A military coup led by Colonel Paul-Henri Damiba ousts the government

- Damiba came in a long line of military leaders who participated in US "engagements" such as:
 - Flintlock, an annual Special Operations Command Africa exercise focused on enhancing the counterterrorism capabilities of West African nations
 - Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance course
 - US-sponsored Military Intelligence Basic Officer Course
 - U.S. Civil Military Support Element in Burkina Faso
- The new government struggled to deal with the violence and instability caused by al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups, which at one point controlled 60% of Burkina Faso's territory.

September 2022: Ibrahim Traoré leads a coup and becomes the head of state of Burkina Faso

October 2024: Traoré fires Apollinaire J. Kyélem de Tambèla, who served as the Prime Minister since 2022

- A staunch supporter of Sankara's reforms, one of Tambèla's first actions was to call for a reduction in the salaries of the president and various ministers. He was quoted saying, "I have already said that Burkina Faso cannot be developed outside the path set by Thomas Sankara."

2023-25: Traoré's government gets to work:

- He passed economic reforms intended to build up Burkinabé self-sufficiency, such as:
 - Importing and distributing tools for agricultural production,
 - Granting 15% ownership in all mines to the Burkinabé government, and
 - Building a national refinery and establishing national gold reserves for the first time.
- To combat the terrorist groups, a key issue in maintaining his popularity, Traoré hands over ownership of several Burkinabé gold mines and other economic assets to Russian corporations in exchange for the support of Russian paramilitary troops in the conflict.
 - Russia does this across the African continent: offering assistance to African leaders in armed conflicts and investing in infrastructure, in exchange for political influence and economic control, all so that Russia can extract wealth from those African countries.

September 2025: Burkina Faso declares homosexuality illegal

- This tactic has been used by other African governments that rose to power on the wind of anti-imperialism to shift the blame for their failures to actually overcome imperialism onto other groups of people.
 - For example, Uganda made homosexuality illegal in the early 2000s, blaming homosexuality for their AIDS crisis, rather than dealing with the fact that they were spending 12 times as much on debt relief as they were on healthcare.

Although his promise of an Africa liberated from imperialism has rightfully inspired hope in millions of people, Traoré's government has already shown signs of betraying that promise.

Today, too many people mistake better deals with a different imperialist power (Russia instead of France, China instead of the US) for liberation from imperialism. But regardless of what you think of Traoré's government and what his government winds up doing, the question is: What are *you* going to do to oppose imperialism? What will *you* do to fight for liberation?

As Palestine is subjected to genocide with the full support of the US, as immigrants are being deported from the US to a brutal prison in El Salvador, and as the US military's AFRICOM enforces present-day imperialist domination over Africa, we in the US have a responsibility to the people of the world. We must be the ulcer in the belly of the beast, exposing the crimes, past and present, of US imperialism from Africa to Gaza, from Central America to Southeast Asia. We have an obligation to resist every new imperialist war move, every land grab, every demand of debt payment, every injustice of imperialism.

If you're down for that, join Behind Enemy Lines – Anti-Imperialist Resistance.

**JOIN & SUPPORT
BEHIND ENEMY LINES:**

