

People of Burkina Faso Drive Blaise Campaoré from Power

By [Ann Garrison](#)

Global Research, November 04, 2014



Watch the following Videos:

1. Thomas Sankara :The Upright Man

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5USbA701SI>

2. Thomas Sankara - Speech Against Debt

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gx2PoOY3ADo>

KPFA Evening News Anchor: In 1987, African revolutionary Thomas Sankara, the president of Burkina Faso, called on his fellow African heads of state to join him in refusing to pay debt they could not rationally owe to their former colonizers, calling it a form of neo-colonialism. He predicted that he would be dead before the next African Union conference if he alone refused to pay. Sankara was dead, with France's help, within the year.

Yesterday, 27 years and 16 days after his death, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in Ouagadougou to demand the resignation of Sankara's assassin, President Blaise Campaoré. Protestors even lit the country's Parliament Building on fire to keep its members from amending the Constitution to allow Campaoré to remain in power. KPFA's Ann Garrison has more.



Hundreds of thousands of Burkinabe – people of Burkina Faso – gathered in the Place de la Nation in the country’s capital, Ouagadougou, to demand the resignation of President Blaise Compaoré, on Oct. 31, 2014. – Photo: Joe Penney, Reuters

KPFA/Ann Garrison: Today the BBC is reporting that Burkina Faso’s ousted President Blaise Compaoré has fled to safety in the Ivory Coast, after hundreds of thousands of people filled the streets of the country’s capital, Ouagadougou, to demand he step down. Compaoré is most infamous for organizing the assassination of Burkina Faso’s revolutionary leader Thomas Sankara, with the help of France and the French puppet government of the Ivory Coast.



Protestors in Ougadougou lit the Parliament Building on fire to keep its members from amending Burkina Faso’s Constitution to allow Blaise Compaore to cling to power.

Sankara led a coup that overthrew the French puppet government of the Upper Volta in 1983. Sankara renamed the country Burkina Faso, which is most often translated as “Land of Upright Men” but also as “Land of Honest Men,” “Land of Incorruptible Men” or “Land of Men of Integrity.” This passage of the 2006 film, “Thomas Sankara, the

Upright Man,” includes Sankara’s famous speech urging his fellow African heads of state to join him in refusing to pay neocolonial foreign debt:

Narrator: The summit of the OAU, the Organization of African Unity. Thomas Sankara challenges the other heads of state. He talks about the famous foreign debt and the drastic increase of interest rates and concern for all Third World countries. He points an accusing finger at all the leaders who are degrading their people while growing personally richer in the name of the old North South domination system.

Sankara: I would like the conference to clearly declare that we cannot pay the debt. Not in a rebellious spirit, but just to avoid being assassinated individually. If Burkina Faso is the only one to refuse to pay the debt, I won’t be at the next conference. On the other hand, with everybody’s support, we will not have to pay it.



Map of Burkina Faso, the Land of Upright Men, in Africa

And when we are saying that we should not pay that debt, we’re not refusing responsibilities or not keeping our words. It’s just that we don’t have the same moral standards as others. Between the rich and the poor, moral standards cannot be the same.

The Bible and the Koran cannot serve those who exploit people and the exploited ones in the same way. We should have two editions of

the Bible and two editions of the Koran. Brothers, with everybody's support, we'll be able to make peace at home. We'll also be able to use Africa's full potential to develop because our land is rich.

Brothers, with everybody's support, we'll be able to make peace at home. We'll also be able to use Africa's full potential to develop because our land is rich.

KPFA/Ann: Sankara was dead three months later, shot by soldiers loyal to Blaise Compaoré, who then seized power, announced that he would "reconstitute the revolution," then reversed its advances and became a pliant French puppet and regional power broker.

African people fighting European sponsored dictatorship all over the African continent are now cheering the courage of the hundreds of thousands of people of Burkina Faso who filled the streets of Ougadougou this week, forcing Blaise Compaoré to flee the country. Top army officers have announced their unanimous support for Lt. Col. Isaac Zida as leader of a transition to democratic elections.

[The BBC quoted one of the protestors](#) outside Parliament, who said: "It is we, the people, who overthrew Blaise Compaoré, not the army. We are going to watch what they are doing, and if we don't agree with the new leader, we will be back out on the street."

For [Pacifica](#), [KPFA](#) and [AfrobeatRadio](#), I'm Ann Garrison.

*Oakland writer **Ann Garrison** contributes to the [San Francisco Bay View](#), [Counterpunch](#), [Global Research](#), [Colored Opinions](#), [Black Agenda Report](#) and [Black Star News](#) and produces radio news and features for Pacifica's [WBAI-NYC](#), [KPFA-Berkeley](#) and her own [YouTube Channel](#). She can be reached at anniegarrison@gmail.com. If you want to see Ann Garrison's independent reporting continue, please contribute on her website, anngarrison.com.*