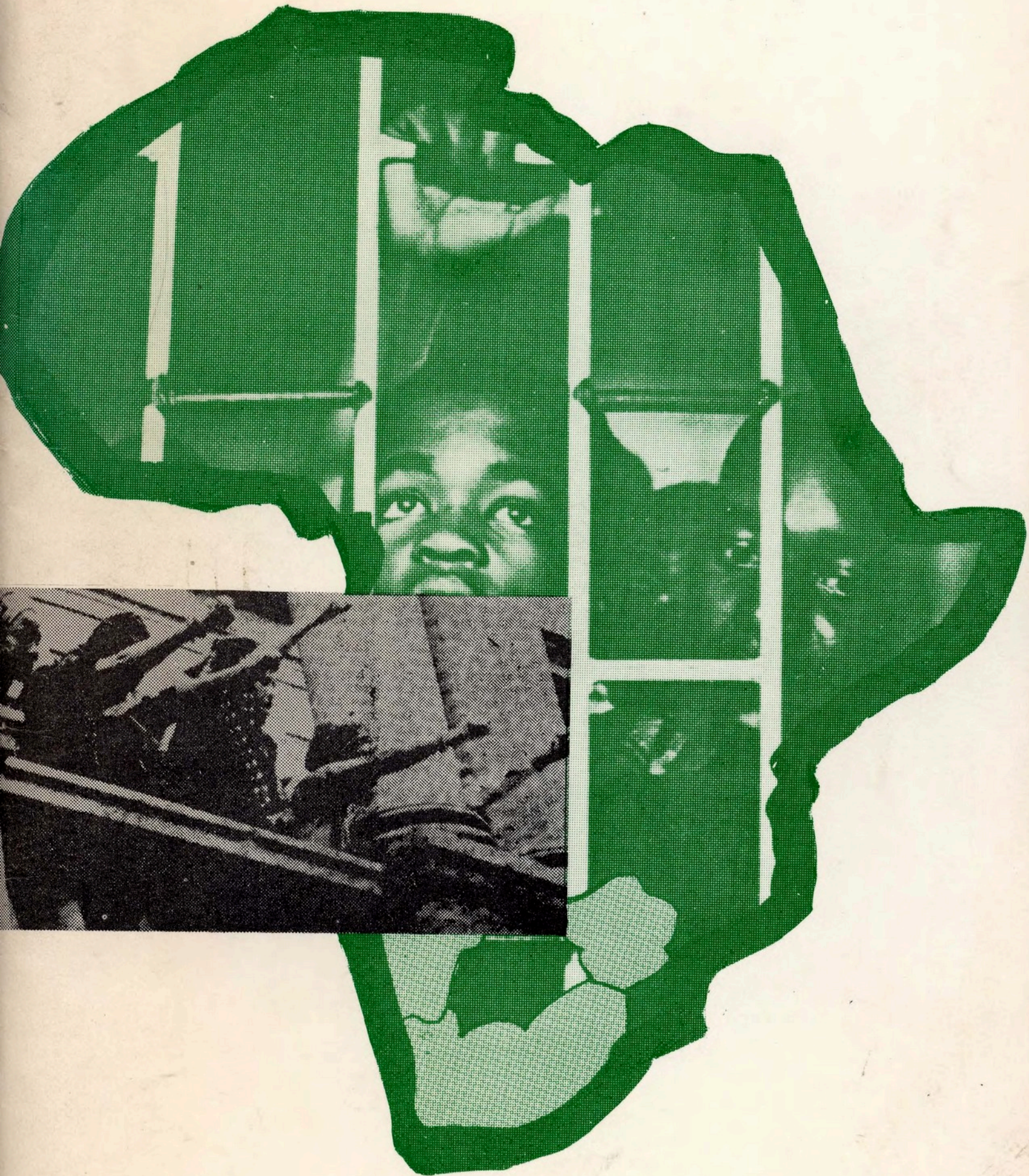
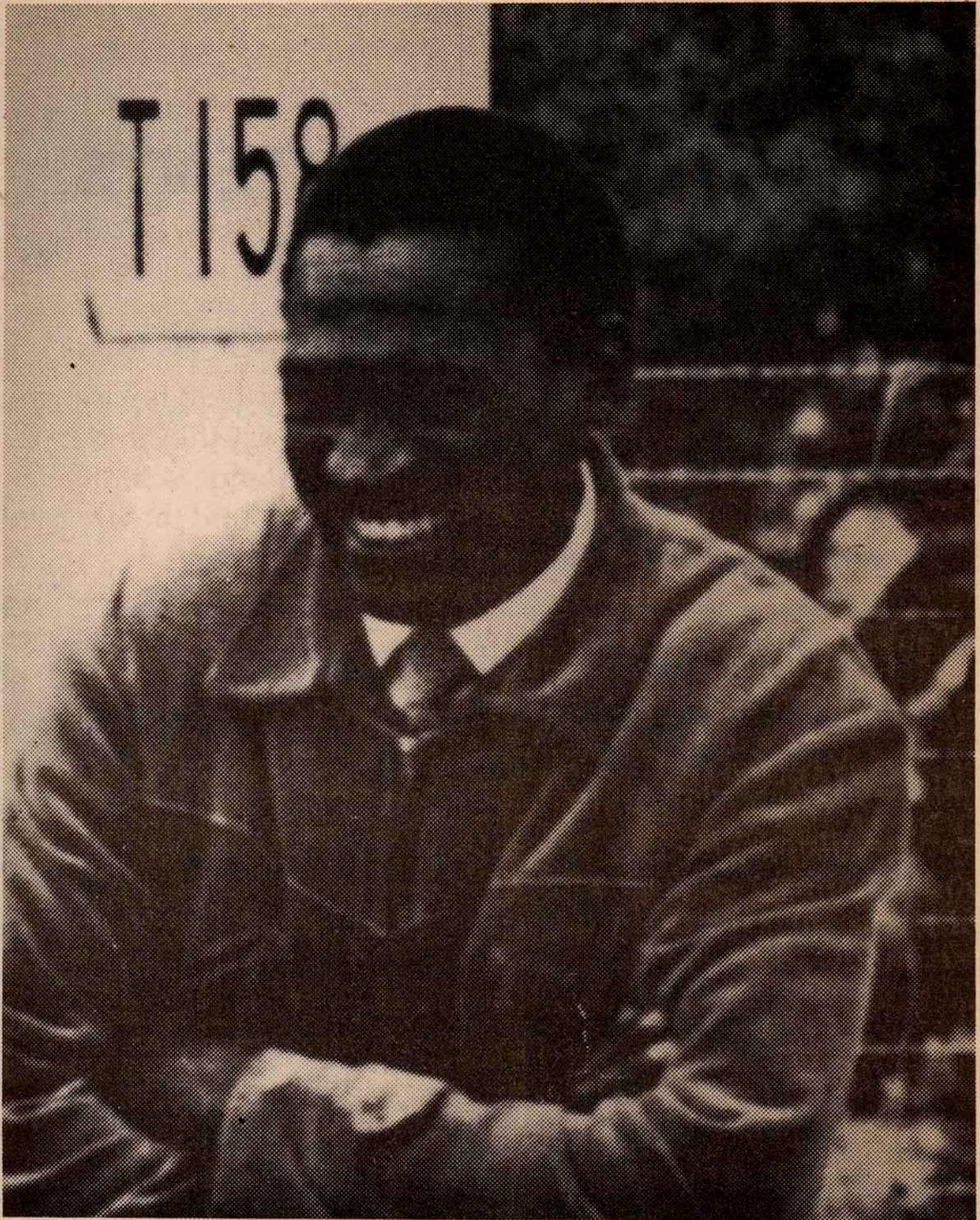


Time for Azania



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The Great Leader of the Azanian people and President of the Pan Africanist Congress, Mangaliso Sobukwe, takes his incarceration on Robben Island with typical relaxed composure, as shown in the above picture, taken outside his cell during a visit by overseas journalists at the time he was there under the “Sobukwe clause” of the Sabotage Act which empowered the “Minister of Justice” to detain the national leader for six years without trial, after he had completed a three years long hard labour sentence for leading the March 21 Positive Acting Campaign. Sobukwe is now held in Kimberley under house arrest and a maze of restrictions.

The PAC Case

From an article by Mangaliso Sobukwe in May 1959.

The Pan-Africanist Congress has been launched, and since it is destined to play a most decisive role in the struggle for national liberation, I think it is in the interest not only of South Africa but of the world, that its policy and ultimate goal should be stated authoritatively and unambiguously. I intend to do so in this article.

Let me begin by saying that we are quite aware of the fact that we are faced with an overwhelming combination of forces internally, in the person of the white ruling minority, and externally in the person of the forces of western capitalism and international imperialism.

The domestic forces of oppression have entrenched themselves over the last 300 years. Consequently they enjoy a monopoly of economic, political, cultural and military power.

Viewed from this angle alone, the position of the ruling minority appears impregnable. But there are weaknesses in this structure.

First of all, the entire economic fabric rests on the indispensable pillars of cheap black labour.

Secondly, the white minority can maintain its continued domination only by perfecting the techniques of control in such a way as to enlist the active cooperation and good will of the oppressed.

These techniques include the creation of bodies calculated to maintain and develop the relations of dominating and dominated, as well as to condition the minds of the dominated for the unquestioning acceptance of their role as collaborators in the perpetuation of their own domination.

That is why we embrace the policy of non-collaboration as adumbrated on the nation-building programme of 1949.

But because the South African ruling minority is backed by the forces of international capitalism and imperialism, it becomes necessary for us to develop an international outlook.

However, the lesson of history in the last half-century shows that we can only get the moral support and sympathy of friendly peoples; they can never liberate us.

This means, among other things, that we must develop policies not merely aping this or that country, or merely fashioned to ap-

proximate to or to please certain powers or constellations of powers or peoples.

Our policies must flow from the logic of the African situation and from the fundamental long-term interests of the vast African millions.

That is why in international matters, we support Dr. Nkrumah's policy of positive neutrality, holding, with Dr. Azikiwe, that we are "independent in everything and neutral in nothing that concerns the destiny of Africa."

It is our contention that the vast illiterate and semi-literate masses of the Africans are the cornerstone, the key and very life of the struggle for democracy. From this we draw the logical conclusion that the rousing and consolidation of the masses is the primary task of liberation.

This leads to the conclusion that African Nationalism is the liberatory outlook to achieve this gigantic and historic task and that the philosophy of Africanism holds out the hope of a genuine democracy beyond the stormy sea of struggle.

We have made our stand clear on this point. Our contention is that the Africans are the only people who, because of their material position can be interested in the complete overhaul of the present structure of society.

We have admitted that there are Europeans who are intellectual converts to the African's cause, but because they benefit materially from the present set-up, they cannot completely identify themselves with that cause.

Thus, it is, as South African history so ably illustrates, that whenever Europeans "cooperate" with African movements, they keep on demanding checks and counter-checks, guarantees and the like, with the result that they stultify and retard the movement of the Africans and the reason is, of course that they are consciously or unconsciously protecting their sectional interests.

The only people who are interested in so-called "fronts" are those who do not believe in permanent cooperation; those who wish to advance a certain line at any given time.

We do not wish to use anybody, nor do we intend to be used by anybody. We want to make the African people conscious of the fact that they have to win their own liberation, rely on themselves to carry on a relentless and determined struggle instead of relying on court cases and negotiations on their behalf by "sympathetic" whites.

Of the Indian minority we say that they are an oppressed

national group. But among them has emerged a merchant class which has become tainted with the virus of national arrogance and cultural supremacy.

The leadership of the Indian people, unfortunately, is drawn from this class, which, like the "sympathetic" whites, is concerned with protecting its own sectional interests.

The only Indians who can, because of their material position, be interested in the complete overthrow of white domination and the establishment of a genuine Africanist democracy, are the poor "coolies" of the sugar plantations of Natal.

But they have not yet produced the leadership of their own. What we wish of them is that they should reject this opportunist leadership and produce their own leadership.

In short, we intend to go it alone. Should an issue arise which objectively requires that we take it up, we will, irrespective of who may also be interested in that issue.

Some quarters have already stated that the Africanists are not interested in mass demonstrations. That is true, if the emphasis is placed on demonstrations. But it does not mean that we are not interested in mass action.

We are a mass organisation and we believe that every African should be involved in the struggle for national liberation.

Having said that, I should further point out that we believe in a disciplined planned struggle. Unfortunately, we have noticed throughout the entire post-1949 period, the absence on the part of those who "lead" the African people, of any capacity to learn from past struggles.

There seems to be a tendency among them to shelve unpleasant decisions in favour of those that bring immediate emotional dividends. At best they were ineffective and at the worst they revealed opportunistic tendencies.

We have said in the past and we say so now, that we are not prepared to have our people used for cannon-fodder. When we embark on a campaign it will be the leaders who will be in front. They will not remain behind while the masses rot in gaol.

Politically, we stand for government of the Africans for the Africans by the Africans, with everybody who owes his loyalty only to Africa and accepts the democratic rule of an African majority, being regarded as an African.

We guarantee no minority rights because we are fighting precisely that group-exclusiveness which those who plead for minority rights would like to perpetuate.

It is our view that if we have guaranteed individual liberties, we have given the highest guarantee necessary and possible.

I have said before and I still say so now, that I see no reason why, in a free democratic Africa, a predominantly black electorate should not return a white man to Parliament, for colour will count for nothing in a Free Africa.

Economically, we stand for a planned economy and the most equitable distribution of wealth. I have said that to me at least, the slogan of "equal opportunities" is meaningless if it does not take equality of income as the springboard from which all will take off.

Our problem, as we see it, is to make a planned economy work within the framework of a political democracy. It has not done so in any of the the countries that practice it today, but we do not believe that totalitarianism is inherent in a system of planned state economy.

Socially, we stand for the full and complete development of the human personality with the active creation of conditions that will encourage the rapid disintegration of group-exclusiveness and the emergence of a united African nation, devoted to the tremendous task of developing the country and creating a distinctive African culture.

Lastly, of course, we who are Pan African in outlook do not subscribe to the doctrine of South African exceptionalism and are committed to Pan Africanism and a Union of African States which we would like to see as a unitary, centrally-controlled organic whole.

After Freedom, Then What

Nobody disputes our contention that Africa will be free from foreign rule. But the question is: After Freedom, then what? The ready answer of white ruling minorities is: chaos and a reversion to barbarism and savagery. The ready answer of all Pan Africanists — and this includes all genuine nationalist organisations on the Continent — is the creation of a United Africa and the advent of a new era of freedom, creative production and abundance.

In Free Africa the first 10 or 15 years will be years of readjustment and feverish reconstruction. There will be plenty of work to do, and capital for that work will be forthcoming from both East and West — because there can be no greater guarantee against political and economic instability than the final recognition of the

supremacy of African interests in Africa.

By the end of the century the standard of living of the masses of the people will have risen dramatically. Subsistence farming will have disappeared and a large internal market will absorb a very large percentage of the industrial and agricultural products of the Continent. The potential wealth of Africa in minerals, oil, hydroelectric power etc. is immense. By cutting out waste through systematic planning, a central government can bring about the most rapid development of every part of the state.

*(This article is reprinted from **PAC in Perspective**)*

Robert Sobukwe Papers

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