

**PAN AFRICAN
CONGRESS VENTURE
IN RETROSPECT**

BY

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“The Pan Africanist Congress Venture in Retrospect” or its shortened name- the “PAC Venture” is one of the most remarkable documents produced in this country, It was published just six months after one of the most cataclysmic events which took the form of universal condemnation of the fascistic/racist Verwoerd regime following the massacre at Sharpeville of unarmed and peaceful demonstrators at Sharpeville on the 21st March 1960.

For a start it was published when details of events were still fresh and the atmosphere which had engulfed the country was still hovering. For many of us it was also our first experience of a first State of Emergency, where martial law was declared and the powers of the courts were suspended in favour of the emergency regulations.

I recall as a student going down in July 1960 to Cape Town, the central meeting-place of the Unity Movement leadership. All centres were asked to give reports of the happenings in their area. My report had some significance because we had mobilized students to join a massive demonstration which originated from Cato Manor, Durban and which was wending its way to the Durban Central Prison to demand for the release of their leaders who were detained. Our participation in the demonstration was very short-lived because soon after we joined, the Police opened fire in Berea Road killing and wounding demonstrators. It was also the first time we heard the innocent sounding, but deadly, rapid dull thuds of the Belgian made sub machine guns. Our group fortunately suffered no casualties. The psychological trauma? That is another matter.

At Cape Town, the home of Tabata and Jane Gool at 8 Milan Street turned out to be the venue of a mini conference with representatives from the various areas. Although the Tabata was banned and prohibited from attending gatherings, he nonetheless attended the meeting and read out the “PAC Venture” which was in manuscript form.

We sat (as youth, on the floor) riveted as the reading proceeded and were enthralled as the narration of events and their interpretation unfolded. There was an intense beauty in the unravelling and interpretation of historical events so simply and with such fluidity and clarity. Looking back over the decades, I am of the view that in writing “PAC Venture”, Tabata had reached the pinnacle of his intellectual powers.

In 1983, a work by Dan O’Meara, “Volks-kapitalisme...” was hailed as a fresh look at the nature of the Nationalist Party rulers and their supporters. O’Meara had applied the class analysis in dealing with the Nationalist Party and described them as “Petit-bourgeois.” O’Meara has done a very laudable piece of research and analysis concerning the Nationalist Party.

What, however, has not been recognised is that Tabata preceded O’Meara *by some 23 years* in the classification of the Nationalist Party rulers as petty bourgeois. The “PAC Venture” is par excellence the application of the Marxist materialist conception of history to the events of those days. The analysis shows the “unnatural” situation which prevailed those days. The economy of the country was predominantly a

capitalist one. In the nature of things the government of such a country is “a board of directors for capitalism”. Yet in 1960, it was the petty bourgeoisie which was in control of the government. It had supplanted the capitalists.

The author unravels the historical development of the country from the turn of the century and explains the principal conflicts in the country in class terms – between the franchiseless oppressed blacks (African, Indian and so-called Coloured) and the Whites in general who monopolised political power; between the petty bourgeois Nats and the capitalists proper of the country (industrialist, finance capitalists and the monopolies); between the petty bourgeois rulers and the imperialists who had vast investments in the country.

Looking at events in the context of these conflicts made a great deal of sense and provided an acceptable understanding of them. Tabata was able to show that the imperialists used the petty bourgeois leadership and its followers of certain segments of the liberatory movement against the fascistic Nats. There were a series of conflictual events from after the Nats won the elections by an even greater majority in 1958. The imperialists used as their proxy the liberals, the African National Congress and later the Pan African Congress in their battle against the Nats. This culminated in the shootings at Sharpeville, Langa Durban and elsewhere. The shootings, as Tabata explains were the response of the Nats to the imperialists’ pressure and provocation.

The underlying conflicts completely escaped the leadership of the PAC.

- On the 16th March 1960, Robert Sobukwe, leader of the PAC wrote to the Chief of the Police, General Rademeyer and concluded by requesting”

“Hoping you will cooperate and make this a most peaceful campaign.”

- On 20th March 1960, Sobukwe announced, inter alia, “..unfolding programme which starts tomorrow and ends up in 1963 with the realization of a United States of Africa..”
- ON the same day, Philip Kgosana , the Western Cape leader of the PAC who became known internationally because he succeeded in persuading the 30 000 assembled people in Cape Town to return to Langa , made a public prediction:

“My prediction is that the police will not arrest us tomorrow. What they are going to do is to arrest the leadership - the so-called agitators and inciters. The people will be told to disperse and go to work. In that case you peacefully disperse without making any noise and interjections.”

How little did the PAC leadership, or for that matter even the ANC leadership, know of the various battles being fought for agendas *quite different* from that of the interests of the oppressed people.

APDUSA through its Secretary, L. Mqotsi had some harsh but salutary words for the PAC leadership:

If this is not done, {i.e. a strategy, tactics to be implemented under the supervision of a unified command} anarchy will reign, with frustration, disillusionment and wastage of human life following in its trail. The population has indeed paid too dearly for the stunts and escapades so light-mindedly

undertaken by individuals, where youngsters call out masses of unorganised people, only to lead them into a bloodbath. The attitude that the problem of liberation is simple is a most dangerous one. It is a simpleton, a half-wit, who oversimplifies the complex problem of liberation. They are the political gamblers who have not taken the trouble to work out the consequences of their costly actions. And it is the people who have to pay the price.¹

The “PAC Venture” has been carefully researched and sources for quotations are given.

It ought to occupy place of pride in the documentation surrounding the narration, description and analysis of the massacres at Sharpeville, Langa, Durban, Pondoland and elsewhere.

The document ends with “Problems of Organisation”. In this section the reader is presented in crisp but very potent form the nature of the tasks on a national scale confronting the leadership of the liberation movement in the preparation for a social revolution by the oppressed people against their national oppression and economic exploitation.

Apdusa Views
10th November 2006

¹ “The Birth of APDUSA” -issued March 1961.

THE PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESS VENTURE

IN RETROSPECT

With Sharpeville and Langa, 21st March, 1960, the P.A.C. (Pan African Congress) adventure exploded on the South African scene. Sharpeville, a hitherto unknown location in the Transvaal, hit the world headlines with the news of the police shootings and the ground strewn with African dead. For a brief moment the world gaze was turned on South African affairs. South Africans themselves, the Whites, suddenly became aware of the teeming Black millions in their midst. People asked in amazement: What has happened? Some said that Sharpeville marked a turning point and it would never be the same in South Africa again. Others even spoke of a South African revolution.

People everywhere were shocked and puzzled at the turn of events. Share markets came tumbling down and the national reserves dwindled by the day. Industrialists, kings of commerce and big farmers alike for once raised their voices in urgent chorus and sounded the tocsin of alarm. Not the least shocked by the results of their actions were the P.A.C. leaders themselves.

In a spirit of reckless bravado and adventurism they had launched their anti-pass campaign, which was somehow to bring freedom to more than ten million people by 1963. It was to be a "non-violence" campaign, they proclaimed. With enormous political naivete they saw themselves as discovering a new political method of disarming the herrenvolk with a

minimum of expenditure, a method of liberating a whole people without the loss of a single drop of blood. They were the first to be stunned with shock - when their non-violence march provoked a burst of gun-fire, followed by an orgy of brutality from a police force armed to the teeth and supported by the army. They were no less taken by surprise at the eager solicitations of a section of the Herrenvolk itself, from the Parliamentary opposition, the Progressive Party and the Liberals down to the Black Sash. Nor- could they explain why the world Press, including that of British and American imperialism, expressed such strong criticism of the policies of the Nationalist ~ Government and concern for the fate of the Union. Yet it is a fact that the events, which a few years ago would have been allowed to pass unnoticed, today produced such sharp and widespread reactions.

What, then, really happened in those March days? And what lay behind the events that prompted the Nationalist Government to take the drastic step of declaring a state of emergency. To understand and assess these events, it is necessary to have some idea of certain historical developments in South Africa. For the past lays the basis for the political conflicts and the emotional content of events in the present.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is pertinent to remember that the Boers and the British were rivals in the conquest and exploitation of Southern Africa. These represented two different economies, feudalistic and capitalist respectively. With the discovery of gold and diamonds in the latter part of the 19th century, industrialisation was on the order of the day and the tempo of development was speeded up, British imperialism dropped all pretences of respecting small Boer Republics and independent African tribes. Capitalist development necessitated a unified economy in South Africa. The Boers and the Africans had to be vanquished and British rule firmly established. The Boer War was an incident in this process.

As soon as the Boers were defeated, however, the British found it expedient to rehabilitate them and paid reparations to the vanquished. They needed the Boers to act as supervisors over the millions of potential Black workers and as guardians over the investments of British imperialism. With the Act of Union in 1910 the Boers were placed on a footing of political equality as co-rulers of the country. As a further sop to ensure that the Boers supported the Union, the constituencies were weighted in their favour, i.e. of the farmers. In fact, the Dutch farmers were granted political representation far in excess of their economic power. But imperialism took the precaution of counter-balancing this by granting a limited vote to African and Coloured males in the Cape. At this stage the real and unchallenged rulers of the country were the Chamber of Mines; for the whole economy of the Union hung upon the mining industry and the employment of cheap Black labour.

Then came the First World War. A section of the Boers seized the opportunity to revolt and were crushed. This was the section that nursed the passions of the Boer War and identified themselves with a strong nationalism, whipping up antagonism against the English section, the foreigners and invaders. After the war, however, the impetus to the development of Industry made an increasing number of Afrikaners realise the benefits of belonging to an economy that was attached to world capitalism. The rich farmers invested their surplus capital in industrial concerns and thus from now on cast in their lot with that of the industrialists. A clear class distinction is now discernible in the Boer camp.

The interlocking of Boer and British capital found political expression in the coalition between Hertzog and Smuts. And this political marriage between the Chamber of Mines and the rich farmers sounded the death knell of the African vote in the Cape. British imperialism no longer required the African as a safeguard against the Boers of the north. At this stage the Chamber of Mines was still dominant both economically and politically. Secondary industry did not have an independent political voice, but its interests were catered for by the same party that represented the Chamber of Mines. Its spokesmen attached themselves to this party.

Now Dr. Malan who had refused to be drawn into the Hertzog-Smuts deal, broke away and sought support from the small farmers, railway workers, government employees, small business men and intellectuals: in a word, the Afrikaner petit-bourgeois. This section belongs to that class which, wedged in between the two fundamental classes in society, the bourgeoisie and the working class, is unstable and susceptible to spurious propaganda. They are all the more prone to fall for catch phrases because of their precarious position in society. Malan, then, appealed to the racial passions of a fanatic group dedicated to the salvation of the Boers. It was a racialism that fed itself on hatred of all other sections. They saw the English as usurpers and exploiters; and towards the Africans and other non-Whites they maintained the attitude of the old Boer Republics, regarding them as created by God to minister to the chosen people. It was a narrow, rabid racialism that was given the grandiloquent name of Afrikaner Nationalism.

In this atmosphere secret societies flourished and chief among them was the Broederbond, whose devotees were dedicated to the advancement and ultimate triumph of the Afrikaner Volk. They set themselves the task of penetrating into every sphere of public life and every department of State. Their avowed aim was the advancement of Afrikanerdom, but in actual practice this meant the promotion of the individual. The Broederbond organised boycotts of Non-Afrikaner shops and "Buy Afrikaner" campaigns were pushed with tremendous zeal. In this way insurance companies and other business ventures of the Afrikaners grew by leaps and bounds. Afrikaner business men utilised this so-called Nationalism

for their own ends. For them, Afrikanerdom became synonymous with their particular interests.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the Afrikaner die-hards saw an opportunity of welding the Volk together. In full anticipation of a victory for Hitler, they stood out against British imperialism. The end of the war found the Afrikaner business men with ready cash and the post-war boom in industry swept them to the crest of the wave. It was they who made funds available for the party machine. The highly organised Broederbond, with its key-men strategically placed in every sphere, every department, could now go all out in preparing for elections. It was the Nationalist Party controlled by the Broederbond, that won the elections in 1948. The Malan victory was the victory of a party controlled by the petit-bourgeois. For the first time in the history of South Africa the big financial interests found themselves ousted from the Government. Here we have the phenomenon where the big bourgeoisie is represented by a minority in its own parliament.

Since then South Africa has been under the rule of the petit-bourgeois, and they have used their new-won power like men intoxicated with it. But it itself is ruled by a Junta within, namely, the Broederbond. At first, the bourgeoisie, not realising the extent to which the Nationalist Party was under the influence of the Broederbond, gave their support to the new government. Dr. Malan, after all, had been trained in the conditions of orthodox parliamentarism. And in any event, they reckoned the responsibility of being in power usually has the effect of mellowing or taming those invested with it. The next step, however, was the supplanting of Dr. Malan, who was not a member of the Broederbond, by Strydom, its representative. By this time the positions in the Nationalist Party itself were filled by the Broeders and it was they who packed the enlarged Senate. Then, on the death of Strydom, it was natural that the Broederbond should elect their chief, Dr. Verwoerd. Thus we have the spectacle that the party functionary is the Government in South Africa.

Dr. Verwoerd was elected to the premiership in a strictly constitutional manner. And yet in the eyes of the various parties in and out of Parliament he is still regarded in the nature of an interloper. And neither is he the voice of his own party as a whole. Once more we see "Afrikanerdom" split by class interests. That section within the Nationalist Party which had supplied the funds, and whose financial interests have, become bound up with international capital, find themselves prisoners in their own party. *Under normal conditions in a capitalist country, the cabinet of the party in power serves as the executive for the financiers and Industrialists.* But the present government in South Africa is the executive of the Junta, the Broederbond. And it is this ruling Afrikaner section of the petit-bourgeoisie that considers itself at war with the big financier; it is still fighting the Boer War.

This Broederbond government can think and behave only as a petit-bourgeois. It cannot comprehend the complex functioning of finance capital and the inter-relationships that result from its operations. Myopic in its vision, it legislates for the individual. There is altogether a devastating pre-occupation with pettifogging legislation. Job reservation, industries in the bushes, Bantustans, etc., are a sop to party supporters. But all these are an irritant to big business. They have the cumulative effect of seriously interfering with the natural flow of capital and clogging the economic development of the country. To the petit-bourgeois, the fact that the rate of economic development in South Africa has today become the lowest in Africa has no meaning. He seems impervious to their impact. He is even impervious to the rapid loss of confidence on the part of overseas investors, the heavy slump in the stock exchange, which can have such a serious effect in South African economy. With the mentality of a Trek Boer, he would seem to consider that all that is necessary is to pull in his belt a bit, while droughts and other such like divine visitations are sent to try him. What is one to think of a cabinet minister who blandly remarks that there is far too much made of losses on the stock exchange? Here speaks clearly, not the voice of capital, but that of a representative of functionaries.

This pettifogging legislation, then, which is made in the interests of a petit-bourgeois utopia and a racial myth, produces tensions which in turn make it necessary to employ strong-arm methods. The State of emergency, where the rule of law is replaced with the rule by edict, is a step towards a permanent state of fascism, not only for the Blacks as hitherto, but applied to all.

Now fascism is a form of rule which the bourgeoisie falls back upon as a last resort. As a general rule, finance capital flourishes best in a bourgeois democracy which guarantees the maximum freedom possible under capitalism. The bourgeoisie avoids the imposition of fascism as long as possible. For fascism implies the open use of force and the maintenance of a huge unproductive army. It is a confession that capitalism can no longer maintain itself; it can no longer afford to rule by the ordinary bourgeois democratic means. It involves the exacerbation of class tensions, all of which tend to frighten away the free flow of capital.

The situation as it is now, under the Nationalist petit-bourgeois government, is intolerable to finance capital. It must get rid of the stranglehold of the Broederbond. This was the state of affairs -a state of conflict between the bourgeoisie and the petit-bourgeoisie- when the P.A.C. adventure burst upon the South African scene.

IMPERIALISM STILL SEES A FUTURE.

Imperialism, for its part, firmly believes that it still has a future in Africa and that there are vast fields for the investment of capital and possibilities of development that will give a new lease of life to world capitalism. Any

attempt to move into fascism at this juncture has the effect of jeopardising the whole process. Imperialism visualises the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. Macmillan's "wind of change" speech that came as such a shock to the Nationalists, was an expression of the new trend in imperialist tactics. It marks the end of the old colonialism and the beginning of a new relationship with the emerging African States. All this, of course, is directed to the continued existence of capitalism, i.e. to its expansion and the increase of heavy investment. In other words, Imperialism is deeply concerned with the economic domination of Africa. This means that, while granting the African States constitutional independence, it ensures the economic stranglehold over them. All the colonial powers in Africa seem to have agreed that the only policy left for them now is to adapt or die. The rapidity with which one state after another in the continent of Africa is being granted formal independence highlights the urgency of the situation.

It is in this context that we must view the conflict in South Africa between the big bourgeoisie, i.e., the financiers and the industrialists on the one hand, and on the other the petit-bourgeoisie, i.e. the functionaries now running the government of the country. The latter cannot contemplate relinquishing their vested interests as functionaries, which depend on a colour-caste society. They know that the abolition of the colour-bar spells death to the functionary and all his hangers-on. It is the desperate need to preserve these interests that makes them adopt their rigid, last-ditch attitude.

The local industrialists, backed by international finance, are calling for a revision of the old crude baasskap attitude. The Non-Whites are to be granted some concessions and treated in a manner more commensurate with the current demands of the emergent States. This does not mean, however, that the industrialist is actuated by any philanthropical feelings towards the Non-Europeans. First and last he is concerned with self-preservation and the maintenance of his investments. It is because he considers that the petit-bourgeoisie at the head of the State are endangering these interests and heading the country for disaster, that he can no longer tolerate them and must have them removed. This is the essence of the clash between the big bourgeoisie and the petit-bourgeois Broederbond.

If that section of the Nationalist Party which speaks for the new Afrikaner finance houses does not succeed in ousting the Broederbond, then finance capital will have to get rid of the Nationalist Party itself from power. Many behind-the-scene attempts were made to bring pressure to bear on the Broederbond, but they would seem to have failed. When the United Party, for instance, called for a coalition, it was not because its strength as Opposition could endanger the Government. It was too weak for that. It was that the representatives of industry were addressing themselves to the Afrikaner industrialists in the Nationalist Party and hoping that their interests would prompt them understand a common class language. But

the Afrikaner business men had become prisoners in their own party. With this it became evident that the defeat of the petit-bourgeois Broederbond would involve a more protracted battle, and stronger methods would have to be used. '

It was in this situation, with the big bourgeoisie and the petit-bourgeoisie poised for a fight that the P.A.C. incident happened. As soon as the P.A.C. launched its Anti- Pass campaign, the two opposing sides moved into position. The Government acted with a promptness and violence quite out of proportion to the P.A.C: "provocation". The P.A.C. itself was shocked at this violent reaction. Some said it was revenge for Cato Manor where several policemen had lost their lives in a liquor raid. But the fact is that the Anti-Nationalists, the Progressives, Liberals and the rest, had raised a clamour over the incident, holding it up as proof of the "drastic deterioration in race relations". They had been consistently beating the drum and harping on bad race relations, using this as a whip to beat the Government with.

Now Sharpeville was the Government's reply, not simply to the P.A.C. but to its opponents. Those shots that reverberated throughout the world were fired in the battle between the last-ditch elements, the Broederbond, and finance capital.

The liberals, always very vocal, placed themselves at the head as champions and spokesmen for the interests of industry. They grasped the situation with both hands. Here was an opportunity of forcing the issue. They planned on the one hand to sweep the Broederbond out of power, clear the field for big capital and place it firmly in the saddle, in a government representative of its own interests. At the same time the liberals seized the opportunity of re-instating themselves and once more establishing a footing among the Non-Europeans. They were eager to recapture the leadership of Non- European organisations.

The P.A.C. adventure, then, came in most opportunely as an. instrument in the fight between the Broederbond and industry. That same P.A.C., that had broken away from the African National Congress on the ground that the -latter was dominated by the liberals, now became a pawn in the hands of these very liberals.

PAC ACTION

The story of the P.A.C. is simply told. Less than two years ago the P.A.C. broke away from the parent body, the African National Congress. It set itself the task of organising on a racial basis. Its criticism of Congress was that it wasn't racialistic enough, since it allowed the other racial groups not only to become members but also to be in the leadership. Since they had no real political difference with Congress - on the score of racialism the difference was one of degree rather than kind- they had no distinctive rallying cry with which to draw membership to themselves as against Congress. In fact they had to fall back on the adventuristic tactics typical of the A.N.C. They had to out-Congress Congress.

Before launching the Anti-Pass campaign, the P.A.C. had visited a few centres, amongst them, Cape Town, where they held well-attended public meetings. They were elated by their "success" and translated this as meaning a following for their organisation; according to them they had captured Cape Town. It did not occur to the inexperienced young leaders that, in the situation as it was, the people responded, not to the P.A.C. as such - whose policy they did not even know - but they were ready to attend any meeting that criticised the Government. There was not only the constantly mounting pressure of oppression; but the people of Langa in particular had been made aware of the present political climate in and outside the Union of South Africa.

While there was an overwhelming sense of urgency and a readiness to engage in battle against oppression, the people had not yet learned to recognise the genuine as against the spurious form of struggle, they had not yet grasped the crucial importance of the when and the how; and above all, they had not learned to weigh and discriminate in choosing their leadership.

On the 21st March 1960, the P.A.C. launched their Anti-Pass campaign. The people were asked to leave their pass books at home, march peacefully to the nearest police station and hand themselves over for arrest. The emphasis was on non-violence. This was in some mysterious way to bring about freedom by 1963. Let it be stated that the P.A.C. put forward two demands: (a) the abolition of passes; (b) the payment of a specific wage to every African to wit, £8 3s. 4d. per week. How these demands, and how the fulfilment of them, could transform the State and bring about freedom in three years, or even thirty, the P.A.C. alone knew. The leadership of the P.A.C. showed complete ignorance of the nature of the tasks before them. They did not pose the question of the kind of society they visualised, or the nature of the State in which these freedoms they proposed could be enjoyed. They did not seem to understand even the nature of the oppression they are fighting against. They made no attempt to see the present developments in South Africa in relation to the world situation; they felt no need to analyse the objective as well as the subjective conditions in South African society. Yet all these were necessary before they could determine the programme and policy, and the method of struggle which the people must use. For the method of struggle is dynamically related both to the nature of the society the people are up against and the society they are striving for. The starting-point as well as the objectives must always be clearly defined. The degree of responsibility of the leadership in an organisation is measured by the way in which it poses these tasks and faces up to them.

Having failed to raise any of these fundamental, yet most obvious questions, it is little wonder that the P.A.C. did not even examine the nature of the weapon of non-violence they so cavalierly brandished. Nor did they stop to consider its effect, first on the authorities who promptly

unleashed their police terror on the people, and then on the people whom they had disarmed, both psychologically and literally, tied hand and foot and delivered over to the authorities. The whole conduct of this P.A.C. adventure showed not only reckless irresponsibility but an ignorance that made them prey to the more wily and experienced politicians of the Liberal Party. They became, as we said, pawns in their hands. Their state of mind when they launched their campaign is revealed in a statement made by Kgosana, one of their leaders, under cross-examination during the Commission of Enquiry. When asked how the P.A.C. proposed to effect a change and achieve their aims, he replied that "All Africans could do was what the P.A.C. had planned; get arrested for not carrying passes and stay away from work until industry was forced to approach the Government". (Cape Argus, 11.6.60.) Kgosana went on: "The only thing, we felt was to exert pressure on the industrialists who have the vote and who, with the pressure on them, can appeal to the Government."

The imagination almost boggles at this display of infantile naivete. Such political babbling can only come from people who don't know the first thing about what is required for a liberatory struggle. Yet these same political infants hold themselves up as liberators of the people. The above statements imply that, from the outset, they would hand over the responsibility to the enemy, to the very industrialists who are their employers and exploiters. What is more, the people must stand aside and wait patiently while their bosses "appeal" to the Government on their behalf. This is tantamount to handing over the leadership to the liberals, who in this case speak for the industrialists. This is progression backwards with a vengeance. Here is a voice as from the grave; the Non-European leaders of the late 19th century, who regarded the liberals as their devoted champions, would have felt themselves at home with some such sentiments. In short, what the P.A.C. leaders advocated from the start was no less than a betrayal of the people. Night and day without ceasing, men and women are tasting the bitterness of that betrayal.

LIBERALS TAKE OVER

Let us return to the March days. As soon as the liberals had assessed the P.A.C. adventure, had determined its scope and limit and made sure that it was controllable, they took over the leadership. From then on they directed the course of events. The Press was swung into action. It will be remembered that very few centres had responded to the P.A.C. call on Monday, 21st March. It was only afterwards that a number of other places reacted as a result of the reports of Sharpeville and Langa. The Press, which is notorious for spreading a blanket of silence over the activities of independent Non-European organisations, suddenly came out full blast. Every move, every march or demonstration led by the P.A.C. was made front-page news. Events rapidly followed one another with a snowball effect.

The Government, for its part, promptly replied with nation-wide police raids, seizing documents and arresting members of the Liberal Party, the Congress of Democrats (C.O.D.) and the African National Congress. Next day, Friday, March 25, it banned all meetings in 24 magisterial districts, later extending the ban to others, and forthwith announced its intention to seek parliamentary powers to ban the A.N.C. and the P.A.C. By the end of that week 50 per cent of the African labour force in Cape Town stayed away from work. Here we may note that the employers in industry and commerce, having been informed that the situation was under control, adopted a sympathetic attitude towards the workers who stayed away.

The following week the tempo of events sharply increased. Luthuli, the president of the African National Congress, was brought into the picture. Monday, March 28, was his nation-wide "Day of Mourning". It was estimated that in Cape Town, for instance, 95 per cent of African workers stayed away from work. Then on March 30th, 30,000 Africans from the Langa and Nyanga locations marched into Caledon Square, Cape Town. The Government introduced a Bill to outlaw the A.N.C. and the P.A.C. and on the Thursday a State of Emergency was declared, retrospective to the Tuesday. But this did not halt the increase in incidents throughout the country. Feeling ran high in Durban thousands of people marched to the jail, demanding the release of their leaders, and were mowed down with machine guns. Similar incidents took place in Johannesburg, Germiston, Bloemfontein, Cradock. and Beaufort West; in East London, Port Elizabeth, Worcester, Somerset West, Hermanus, Simonstown, etc. Mass arrests were intensified throughout the country. The police could now arrest and detain anybody without warrant at any time of the day or night, on the merest whim. That week, the police, backed by the armed forces, let loose a reign of terror on the people. Troops and police began a series of raids on locations, arresting more than 18,000 Africans by May 6th.

These, then, are the events. The Government had reacted to the situation with the utmost ruthlessness. Now let us look more closely at the moves and counter-moves. We have said that Luthuli was placed in the limelight. What was his function? Up to the Day of Mourning, the P.A.C. leaders had occupied the centre of the stage. The liberals, however, realising that the young P.A.C. leaders were a bit of a dark horse, decided to fall back on the old and tried A.N.C. leader. Luthuli, whose popularity had been waning, had no machinery for making his "decisions" known to the people. As a banned man, he lived in isolation. He might talk to his heart's content in the privacy of his room in a remote village, but his words would fall on the empty air. He had neither the organisation nor a Press of his own by means of which to address himself to the country. The liberals, and the liberals alone, could enable him to obtain access to the powerful English Press. This they did, and with great effect. The Day of Mourning was a resounding success. Industry and commerce suffered heavy losses; there was a dramatic drop in shares on

the stock exchange and a spectacular flight of capital Both the British and the American Governments voiced the anxiety of finance capital in the strong protests they made against Government policy. And the Nationalist Government had no answer to this.

With the Day of Mourning the liberals had made their point: if the Afrikaner industrialists were to save their business concerns, they would have to get rid of Verwoerd and his Broederbond. At this stage they could have called off the P.A.C. venture.

Now, however, the liberals proceeded to play their typical role. They had to lay the very "monster" they had called forth to use against the Government. We shall concentrate on what happened in Cape Town to demonstrate their machinations. It is a fact that the population of Cape Town, African, Coloured, Indian and a large section of the Whites, had been sympathetically disposed towards the people who had responded to the P.A.C. call. But to continue after the Day of Mourning was to upset a precarious balance. The spectacle of 30,000 Africans marching down on the city produced widespread alarm among the Europeans. But to their surprise and relief the vast crowd was so orderly that not a hair of anybody's head was touched. After a parley with the police in Caledon Square, the liberals persuaded them to go quietly back to the locations. Instinctively the people had decided not to re-enter the locations until it was all over, yet they were inveigled into marching back into what proved to be natural concentration camps. Yes, they were to learn a bitter lesson as to what a location is - nothing less than a concentration camp.

Now was the signal for the second round of violence. The army took over, threw a cordon round the locations of Langa and Nyanga, sealed them off from the rest of the community and subjected the Africans to untold terror. The third round of violence took place when the police went on the rampage through the streets of Cape Town and the suburbs, ostensibly looking for "loiterers" and "intimidators". With baton and sjambok they hit out right and left at every Non-European in sight. The spirit of the people had to be broken; they had to be whipped to their knees; they had to be starved into submission. But violence breeds violence. The situation throughout the country became tense and many Whites were ready to reach for their guns. In the continued State of Emergency the Government was filling the jails to overflowing; police and armed forces co-operated in creating a state of terror and confusion. , And now the same Press that had blazoned forth the Sharpeville and Langa shootings began to underplay the widespread police-terror. So scanty was the reporting that the overseas Press accused the local Press of timidity. But it was not a question of timidity. They can be as bold as any when it suits them. What was involved was a change in direction; their aim and purpose had shifted. It was one thing to have called forth the power of the people to threaten Verwoerd and his Broederbond, but it was quite another to allow them to become fully conscious of their own power. The strike - weapon was a sword of Damocles hanging over

capitalism itself. It was now the task of the liberal bourgeoisie to break the very spirit and idea of the effectiveness of a strike. The heroes of yesterday had to be stripped, humiliated and returned to their ignominious anonymity.

Let there be no mistake about it. The liberals were concerned with more than the defeat of the Broederbond. They were conscious of the larger issues; they were aware of the movements taking place throughout the continent of Africa and beyond. They had their ears to the ground and could hear the rumblings of the coming social and political upheavals of a people on the march. And, like the good servants of imperialism that they are, they had to anticipate the dangers. Their actions were calculated to call out the movement prematurely so as to bleed it to death. This is the sum total of the havoc wreaked on the people, and it is they who have to pay the heavy price for the venture originally triggered off by the P.A.C. and exploited by the liberals. It is in this light that the irresponsible action of the P.A.C. leaders is shown up in all its enormity.

The next move further reveals the complex function of the liberals and the subtle role they play in the deception of the people. Although the liberal bourgeoisie and the Broederbond had started out as opponents, with the Africans as a pawn in the game, the developing situation had made them aware of a common danger. It must be understood that, beyond a certain point, the basic identity of their interests transcends their internal and temporary conflicts. The awakened sense of power in the people constituted a threat to the herrenvolk as a whole; over against the common enemy, the oppressed, they are united. The liberals had made a gesture. The Press had piped down on the ruthless suppression of the people. And the Government appreciated this. That is why it allowed them to play the "Good Samaritans" in the blockaded locations. The liberals were the only ones permitted to pass the army cordons and take in food to the starving people.

In this role the liberals, as usual, excelled themselves. Their women, the Black Sash, were installed at the head and swung into action, organising a veritable orgy of charitable activity. This regiment of women had found a mission. They usually do. Indeed, they are quite a phenomenon. In a time of war they sweep the population into a paroxysm of trivial activity, whist drives, knitting bees and the rest, all of which produces a paralysis of mental activity. Parents lose their sons, wives their husbands, and children their fathers, but people are so caught up in a frenzy of organised activity, that nobody stops to ask for what purpose their loved ones have given their lives. Typically, on this occasion, this regiment of the idle rich rushed to invade the ranks of the Non-Europeans, whipping up a frantic enthusiasm for collecting food parcels, etc. Through their network of personal contacts which they had insidiously cultivated, they got a section of the people involved in a fury of activity. The uprooted and declassed intellectuals, the self-seeking petit-bourgeois among the Non-Europeans, were so carried off their feet that they fiercely attacked

anybody who refused to be drawn into their business. It never occurred to these bemused lackeys to ask the question: "What is it all about? How did we get into this state of affairs? For whose benefit exactly is all this activity?"

OPPORTUNISTS EXPOSED.

The P.A.C. adventure caught many people unawares, and it revealed them in their respective political positions. Each section reacted according to its basic standpoint. The Black liberals, for instance, hurried to take their place openly alongside the Black Sash and other White liberals. Then there were the shop-keepers and other members of the merchant class, predominantly Indian. As a general rule they are reluctant to contribute to any fund-raising for Non-European organisations, but in this instance they were galvanised into activity and tumbling over one another with the offer of gifts. This behaviour was in keeping with their political outlook. To them the P.A.C. adventure was the only kind of struggle they recognise - the ad hoc struggle.

It will be recalled that back in 1943, when the federal bodies, the All-African Convention and the Anti-C.A.D. (Anti-Coloured Affairs Department), met the leadership of the South African Indian Congress to discuss the formation of the Non-European Unity Movement (N.E.U.M.) on the principled basis of the Ten Point Programme and Non-Collaboration the Indian leadership refused to join, on the ground that they could not accept the first demand of the Ten Point Programme, namely, equal franchise for all, irrespective of colour, creed or sex. "This is not politic" they said, "We should come together on specific issues agreed upon from time to time." The Indian merchant class, which dominated the leadership of the Congress, thought in terms of bargaining with the Government and bringing pressure to bear upon it. For this purpose they needed the vast numbers of the Africans. As they themselves bluntly expressed it: "You have the numbers, gentlemen, and we have the money." This attitude of mind, then, dictated their adherence to the ad hoc form of struggle. At that time they were faced with the Pegging Act and the struggle for trading licences, and now it is the menace of the Group Areas Act. Any commotion that will at least stay the application of the Act is to them desirable. If the Anti-Pass campaign, with its quota of dead and thousands in jail, can harass and embarrass the Government, it is to be supported. "You have the numbers, gentlemen, and we have the money." The Indian merchant class, like the liberals, is not interested in a fundamental alteration in the political as well as the economic set-up of the country, which is implicit in the demand of full equality for all. They would like palliative measures, improvements here and there, chief amongst them the guaranteeing of their properties and trading rights. But they would also like to maintain their supply of cheap labour. In this regard this class is as frightened at the prospect of the

liberation of the Non-Europeans, i.e. the poor Indians, the Coloureds and the Africans, as any White exploiter.

In some respects the African petit-bourgeois intellectual sees eye to eye with the Indian merchant class. He thinks in terms of producing a state of affairs that would embarrass the Government and increase his price. As we know, his position in society is a precarious one. He feels acutely the humiliations to which he is subjected in common with his fellow oppressed. He knows, of course, that the realisation of the Ten Point Programme would put an end to his present disabilities and he may even pay lip-service to it. But this implies an arduous and protracted struggle. Under the painful pricks of his daily existence, he finds it a far too distant goal. He is allured by the prospect of a short-cut that will offer him some amelioration, to lessen the harshness in the meantime. He is hungry for privileges. In other words, he finds an irresistible attraction in the idea of becoming an "exempted Native" and favours those actions likely to bring about his privileged position. The ad hoc form of struggle is precisely suited to his ends. The idea of so-called compromise and gradualness is what ties him to the liberals, in fact ties them together. The liberals, for their part, find the "exempted Native" most acceptable to them. He accepts his "difference", his inferiority. He is a creature who still knows his place and is amenable to sweet reason: and he can always be depended on to transmit this line to the masses. But as long, as the masses follow this kind of leadership, so long will their energies be frittered away in temporary, and temporising activities.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

There is yet another section that the P.A.C. venture showed up in all its bankruptcy. These were the renegades who have turned their backs on the Non-European Unity Movement. For years they have been pre-occupied with emasculating the Movement, separating it from the people and turning the organisations into gossip-and-mutual- admiration centres. For years they have been busy sniping at the genuine fighters against oppression, confusing the youth, destroying what had been built up over years of hard and devoted work. They seemed to take a cynical delight in obliterating the very traditions of the Movement in town and country. With amazing ingenuity and an enormous expenditure of energy they organised campaigns of slander against the Movement itself, indulging themselves in disruptive activities, as if obsessed with the need to destroy what they were deserting. In all this they displayed a singular lack of inhibition, peculiar to people who had never really absorbed the traditions of the Movement, people who had never been fired by the enthusiasm, devotion and single-mindedness which characterised the early days of the Movement. A common sport amongst them was to fling swear-words, accusations of "Africanists", etc., at the core of the Movement. And then, when the real Pan-Africanists came along, they were completely taken off their guard. To this day they do not know what hit them. When they

attempted to find away back to the people, they found all channels blocked, so effectively had they cut themselves adrift. They had landed themselves in a position where they did not know which way to turn, and were scurrying hither and thither. They had lost anchorage; they had become political flotsam and jetsam. They, who, in unison with the Movement, had denounced the liberals and their tactics, were now running at the beck and call of the Black Sash women. They who for years had been spitting at the Nassers, were now smarming up to the Egyptian Embassy to act as an agent in charitable deeds. They who had formerly condemned the oppressive government, with all its state agencies, could today call in the police against an organisation in the Movement and then brazenly argue that the police force could be used as defenders and protectors of the Movement. What is more; this rank renegadism, this quisling morality, is served up to the youth as the policy of the Movement. Indeed, the political crisis took them completely unawares, exposing them in all their nakedness and political bankruptcy. The opportunists who are thus floundering are the same ones who pulled the Anti-C.A.D. and are busy pulling the Teachers' League of South Africa out of the N.E.U.M. They are the same ones who tried to destroy all contacts between the Coloured sector and the Africans. In order to succeed in wrenching away what was left of the Anti- C.A.D. they had to use propaganda with a strong undercurrent of racialism. It took the sudden eruption of the P.A.C. venture to expose these racialists, who had worked their way up to commanding positions in the Anti-C.A.D. organisations. It required this crisis to smash the empty facade and send them into the political wilderness.

It is to be expected that, in an attempt to cover up their isolation, they would seek to effect some kind of unity with the "exempted Native". For one thing, their common outlook makes this a logical step. Both groups are basically racist in outlook, though they would no doubt strenuously deny the very suggestion. Both groups are desperately seeking special privileges, as distinct from the mass of the oppressed. But this thin layer of the privileged is extremely vulnerable; they have to bend every effort to safe-guard their cherished positions. In this situation the "exempted Native" provides a bastion he stands in the front line of herrenvolk attack. These timid privilege-seekers may establish their unity, but it will only be in word. It will never be a dynamic unity, forged in the struggle as a weapon for the liberation of all oppressed. Their outlook is, incompatible with that of an uncompromising struggle for liberty. For all who seek, special privileges are in effect accepting the status quo. Self-interest will inevitably lead them to other concession hunters, and this road leads to the liberal camp. Their proper place is with them.

COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

Our analysis of the moves and counter-moves in this whole political crisis, and the role of the liberals in it, would be incomplete without

reference to the Commissions of Enquiry into the Sharpeville and Langa disturbances. Immediately after the shootings the opposition parties in Parliament clamoured for a Commission of Enquiry. Dr. Verwoerd at first rejected the proposal, but so great was the protest in the world. Press, that the Government considered it politic to yield on the point, especially in view of the impending Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. To understand what was happening, let us get back to the original framework in which all these events took place. Once more, we should view them within the confines of the tussle between the rival herrenvolk parties. The Commission was a trump card for the liberals. To be sure, they have no illusions about such Commissions and their findings. What they were concerned with was the propaganda they could reap out of it. Here they were in their element; they were in a position to kill two birds with one stone. Firstly, with this Commission they had a ready-made forum from which to address the White electorate. They could expose: the incompetent administration of the Nationalist Party; they could raise a hue and cry about the disastrous effect of the Nationalist policy on race relations and utter doleful Jeremiads on the doom that awaits South Africa, if the Broederbond Government. is not changed. But, as before, the liberals at the same time took the opportunity to present themselves as the defenders of the Non-Europeans. Here they swung their lackeys, the "exempted Natives", into action. It was they who went among the Africans to prepare witnesses to give evidence before the Commission; it was they who tried to turn the attention of the people to the grand show their masters were staging. With such methods the liberals hoped to recapture their lost positions among the Non-Europeans.

But the people, particularly in the towns, have learned to regard Government Commissions with suspicion. They have learned from long experience that they have nothing to gain from them. This is a point that cannot be too often stressed. What happens in these Government Commissions is never in the interests of the people. They are irrelevant to their struggle. The so-called exposure of the Government is a monstrous delusion. The people do not need to hear the evidence at the Enquiry to know that their fellow-men were shot dead and that others are still nursing bullet wounds inflicted on that day of police violence. The scars on their bodies and the marks of the whiplash are evidence enough. They do not require a public recital of grievances to know their lot is one of continual violence. This public bemoaning of herrenvolk actions, arranged by the herrenvolk itself, will not alter by one jot or tittle the daily grind of oppression. Such Government Commissions are an armoury in the process of the deception of the people. They are used as safety-valves, or as a means of white-washing the actions of the minions of the Government. When the herrenvolk lawyers put on the political garb, climb the public rostrum and shed their crocodile tears, it is time for the people to be on the alert, lest they be snared by the fine speeches.

VOICE OF INDUSTRY

And there has been a whole spate of full speeches from many anxious representatives of Industry and commerce in South Africa. But the people would be very much mistaken if they thought these were uttered in their interest. The tussle between the Broederbond and the representatives of finance capital flared up strongly and this time it was unmistakable that the whole of the business world, i.e. all of industry, commerce and mining concerns, were on the one side against what they called the extremism or the Broederbond junta in the Government. For the first time the Nationalist Afrikaner business institutions raised their voice openly in criticism of Government policy. The criticism sprang up from unexpected quarters. The South African Bureau of Race Relations (SABRA), the intellectual wing of the Nationalist Party, from which its theoreticians are drawn, solemnly urged a "more realistic approach" and demanded a 'new deal' for Africans. A Stellenbosch professor announced: "Thousands and thousands of Bantu with their families are today settled in urban White areas. To regard them as visitors or migrant labourers would be unrealistic." (Cape Argus, 21.4.60.) This is in direct opposition to Government policy. Then a Bloemfontein professor, also a die-hard Nationalist, demanding a change of policy, said: "To alter one's opinion is more often than not a healthy sign. For a person with an unalterable opinion is an unalterable ass." (Cape Times, 23.5.60.) And pleading for the "exempted Native" he said: "Little scope has been left for the educated Bantu and a feeling of frustration has taken deep root with them. The recent disturbances may be traced back to this frustration." The speaker went on to urge that "highly qualified" Africans' should be exempted from the many pin-pricks to which the average Non-White is subjected. This struggle now raging within the Nationalist Party itself was brought into the open when Paul Sauer, a senior member of the Cabinet, in his speech at Humansdorp, declared: "*The old book of South Africa was closed a month ago at Sharpeville*". This statement produced a violent reaction from the Broeders. It revealed a rift in the Cabinet and indicated the sharpness of the feud within the Nationalist Party. Then we saw the Afrikaans Handelsinstituut² joining hands with the Cape Chamber of Industries in protest against the extremism of the Government policy. The Government firmly told industry and commerce to leave politics alone, and in answer to this "mind-your-own-business" attitude, the leaders of industry came out with a volume of indignation. The Chairman of the General Mining and Finance Corporation roundly declared: "When the policies of the politicians threaten the basic economy of the country the leaders of industry have not only a right but also a duty to express their opinion and to continue to do so until some change of policy is apparent." (Cape Argus, 21.6.60.) Then the President

² Chamber of Business of White Afrikaners – Editor Apdusa Views

of the Transvaal and Orange Free State Chamber of Mines appealed to the Government to pay heed to the recommendations made by the Chamber of Mines and other employer organisations "to ease tension". The Federated Chamber of Industries in Cape Town sent a deputation to the Government, as they felt that "the only alternative to continued lawlessness and riotous outbursts was anew approach based on consultation", they said. "The Chamber proceeds from the premise," they continued, "that the Natives are part of the permanent structure of the country and that the fully urbanised Natives in particular are largely detribalised and that their tribal chiefs are no longer in a position to express their point of view." (Cape Times 4.5.60.)

Then the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Industries, in a joint statement, declared: "Industry and Commerce cannot fulfil their function of maintaining and improving the standard of living in South Africa while the circumstances that caused the recent disturbances remain unchanged." After denouncing job reservation, they continued: "A country of 15 million people cannot realise its economic potential while four-fifths of its population are seriously lacking in economic opportunity as compared with the remaining fifth." (Cape Times, 13.5.60.) The South African Association of Chambers of Commerce, in a five-point programme, gave the most comprehensive, consistent set of demands in the form of recommendations to the Government.

1. "That the Union should be developed as a single economic entity.
2. "That restrictions which prevent members of any race from conducting business operations in any part of the Union should be progressively relaxed with a view to their ultimate withdrawal.
3. "That the work reservation provisions of the Industrial Conciliation Act should be repealed.
4. "That restrictions on the mobility of labour should be progressively relaxed.
5. "That trade unions should, with the effluxion of time and with suitable safeguards become representative of workers of all races." (Cape Argus, 20.5.60.)

This programme is in direct contradiction to that part of the herrenvolk policy that is specifically of the Broederbond, That is to say, it is a negation of the pipe dreams of the ruling junta in the Nationalist Party. The programme constitutes a blue- print for finance capital. Its fulfilment would create the necessary conditions for the expansion of industrial and commercial enterprises. Its protagonists are convinced that such measures would restore confidence in the economic stability of the country and attract international capital so sorely needed for development.

Thus all the outpourings of the various sections of the herrenvolk, all the warnings and cries for "new deal" for the down-trodden, turn out to be

pleas for the satisfaction of their own economic requirements. If we look into these demands we shall see that none of them ask for the abolition of the oppression and exploitation of the Non- Europeans. On the contrary, they are looking for the, best way of ensuring the maintenance of herrenvolkism in a fast-changing world. Their quarrel with the Broederbond is that, by their fanaticism, their rigidity, their stubborn extremism and their lack of statecraft, they actually endanger capitalism itself. The far-sighted liberal bourgeoisie hastens to suggest a programme that offers safeguards. For they are experts in thinking up all sorts of checks and counter-checks, safety-valves and such like devices. Their main weapon always is the deception of the people.

The Association of Chambers of Commerce of South Africa puts the matter aptly in its recommendations: "There should be imparted to the Non-Whites a sense' of inclusion in the shaping of the Union's future." There you have an example of their fine speeches; the Non-White should be given the illusion but not the substance. And this characterises all the soporific utterances of the many spokesmen of the herrenvolk parties. Dr.Jan Steytler, leader of the new Progressive Party, stretching out his hand of friendship, said: "The Non-Europeans are crying out for co-operation with the Europeans. We must give them a basis on which to do so." (Cape Times, 7.6.60.) Then he asks for the extension of democracy to the Non-Whites, but hastens to add that universal franchise would bring not democracy but chaos". But as he warms up more and more in his speech, you suddenly see the tail of the baboon shooting out of the trousers. He appeals to the Whites "to get the support of the mass of the Non-Whites and thereby defeat Non-White extremism". The Non-Europeans must be split and divided at all costs. The liberal bourgeoisie must win over that section of the Non- Europeans that would normally provide the leadership in the struggle for liberation.

Mr.H; F. Oppenheimer, uncrowned king of the mining industry, and a skilful and suave politician to boot, expounds his views at some length in his chairman's address to the Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa. "New methods and new policies are urgently needed if we are to build a truly united South Africa," he said. (Cape Times, 2.6.60) But what are these new policies? Firstly, a modified form of the Pass Laws, not their abolition, since "they are necessary for good government and are very much in the interests of the Africans themselves". Secondly -and he regards this as most important - the creation of a special class of "exempted Natives". Describing aspects of the Pass Laws which are "so intolerable to the urban African", he went on:

. "It is difficult to exaggerate the sense of frustration these features of African urban life cause, particularly amongst the growing number of intelligent and educated men who hold responsible positions. And it is these people who are the moulders of African thought and the effective leaders of their people." He went on to say that "prosperity depended on

a general restoration of confidence, and steps must be taken to regain the goodwill of the African population".

Once more we see how the liberal bourgeoisie is actuated solely by economic interests. Oppenheimer's main concern was to allay the fears of overseas investors, for there had been a phenomenal drop in the share market as a result of Sharpeville and the Government's declaration of the State of Emergency. Here it is clear that the creation of the "exempted Native" has become the pivotal point of their policy. In other words, the buying over of the Non-European's intellectuals is seen as a sine qua non for the maintenance of the status quo... As we have said, the utterances of the various sections of the herrenvolk have nothing to do with the interests of the oppressed Non-Europeans. For the most part they are addressing themselves to the electorate of the country and manoeuvring for positions in the battle for power.

Each one employs the appropriate ammunition against the other. In fact, in this regard, the Non-Europeans are treated as chattels, each herrenvolk party explaining to the voters what It will do with this human material and how it will deploy these vast labour resources. As the ever-mounting pressure of events in Africa aggravate the crisis within South Africa, there is going to be much public declamation and beating of the herrenvolk breast about Non-Europeans. It would be the height of folly on the part of the oppressed, if they allowed themselves to be embroiled in all this. Here we may quote from "The National Situation", an address given at the 1958 Conference of the All-African Convention:

"The Nationalist Party has reached its zenith; internal rifts will begin to show themselves. Indeed, there are going to be many different groupings and a realignment of forces within the herrenvolk camp, But these are internal skirmishes amongst themselves. We must never allow ourselves to be drawn into them. Our battles are distinct from those of the herrenvolk. As against us they are one and all united."

In their struggles against the Broederbond and their attempts to worst it, the spokesmen for the various financial interests will appear bold, courageous and even revolutionary in their criticism of the Government. They will paint their own plans in glowing colours, with an eye, also, to attracting the Non-Europeans. But jackals cannot, by their very nature, work out salvation for the sheep. If the people learn that the liberal bourgeoisie, together with the rest of the herrenvolk, depend for their existence on the exploitation of the oppressed, they will realise that it is a form of political suicide to follow them, hang on them for advice and expect assistance from them. Once they understand that their interests and those of the herrenvolk are diametrically opposed, they will be effectively insulated against the pernicious influences of the liberals.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED.

We have tried to describe the events that followed one another in quick succession since the P.A.C. adventure. We have described them within the framework of the tussle between the herrenvolk parties. But all these will be out of proportion, off balance, out of alignment, as it were, and we shall not be able to draw the correct lessons from them, unless we put them in proper perspective. The events have a setting in a colour caste society where the majority of the oppressed people are struggling to free themselves from the yoke imposed by a minority. But South Africa itself is part of a continent of Africa, which is in the throes of the struggle for liberation. And the people of South Africa have become aware of these struggles.

The year 1943 marked a turning-point. When the AII-African Convention took the New Road together with the newly-formed Anti-C.A.D., and the Non-European Unity Movement was born, a new leadership crystallised certain ideas which were profoundly to affect the struggle. First of all, they saw themselves as part of a larger struggle of the oppressed throughout Asia and the rest of the continent of Africa. The people learned to identify their struggle for liberation with that of all those who were throwing off the yoke of imperialism, and in this way the happenings outside the Union affected their thinking and influenced their attitudes and actions in a very real sense. From the outset the Unity Movement broke the herrenvolk-erected barriers between the Non-Europeans, lifted them out of their narrow, parochial pre-occupations and broadened their whole outlook. Further, the new leadership taught incessantly the rejection of inferiority. For many years the Non-European Unity Movement, with its affiliated organisations, carried on campaigns in the towns and all over the countryside to boycott all institutions created for "inferior races". Gradually the people began to accept the idea of non-collaboration with the oppressor. Even the Congresses, i.e. the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress, were forced to acknowledge this fact and, in order to procure a hearing among the people, adopted the now familiar language of Unity and Boycott. But they still did not accept the idea of full equality between White and Black, with all its implications. Thus, instead of coming over to the N.E.U.M. and adopting the Ten Point Programme, which would commit them to a consistent, principled struggle, they preferred to be left free to manoeuvre and bargain, and indulge in stunts to embarrass the Government; in other words, to utilise the ad hoc form of struggle.

But what are the concrete signs that the people have imbibed the ideas of the N.E.U.M.? What is strikingly manifest is that they are strenuously opposing the imposition of the Bantu Authorities, with all their anachronistic tribal trappings; they are steadily rejecting Bantu Education and the proposed "Coloured" education; they are rejecting Parliamentary and Provincial special representatives for Non-Whites. As the struggles of the people develop and their political consciousness heightens; a situation

of tension is created. As they build up their forces in preparation for a concerted effort against oppression, the Government for its part stiffens and tightens its grip, with the result that the atmosphere becomes more and more highly charged. A situation is then ready-made for opportunists to jump in; they revel in this opportunity to carry out their stunts. Thus the African National Congress and its obstreperous offspring, the Pan-African Congress, seized the chance of using the people to achieve their sectional aims. The fact is, they are bankrupt of ideas. At no time do the Congresses provide a new political milieu of vital ideas that will bring the Movement to a higher stage. Opportunist stunts by their very nature must fail. And it is the people who must bear the brunt of that failure. Up to now every such failure has been followed by disillusionment and a temporary set-back.

But the political climate has changed in South Africa as well as the rest of Africa. A close examination of events during the P.A.C. venture reveals a pattern. It is significant that all those centres throughout the Union, which had participated in the Defiance Campaign and the Pass-burning organised by the Congresses, now did not respond to the P.A.C. venture. The people in these places had obviously learned a lesson. It was centres like Cape Town that had been conspicuous by their absence from the earlier stunts, which were now involved. The response of various centres one after another after the Sharpeville and Langa shootings was not due to the P.A.C. call. The people were reacting to the Government's brutal measures; they were expressing solidarity with their fellows. Throughout the country the tension had become enormously heightened. If the Government thought to cow the people with its ruthlessness, It had miscalculated. Not even the subsequent failure of the P.A.C. venture, which was crushed with such ferocity, could break their spirit. People have been learning fast through experience. There are scarcely any centres left that have not had their share of those bitter experiences.

The temper of the people has hardened. There is a significant absence of that apathy that always followed upon disillusionment. It can be said that there is a qualitative change in the mood and outlook of the people in town and country. This was strikingly demonstrated by the deportment of the people, first during their encounters with the police and then their behaviour during the trials. The slaves of yesterday had suddenly dropped their humility and presented themselves before the disconcerted magistrates like men who have sloughed off their chains. It is true that the content of their speeches, which were more in the nature of an accusation than a defence, showed political immaturity. Nevertheless, in those speeches one caught the accents of the people themselves. The very fact that the spokesmen on these occasions expressed themselves with a political naivete not very different from that of the masses, was proof of the authenticity, the formidable actuality of what we have described as a qualitative change.

Further proof of this change, and underlining the fact that it is widespread, comes from events in Pondoland, where people were shot dead as a result of their opposition to the Government schemes. Giving evidence before a Commission of Enquiry, one spokesman, who bluntly refused to give his name, said: "We want to know from the Government: Is blood being spilt freely here, because then we are prepared to die. We might as well be dead as alive." He said again: "If you wish to see peace and rest in this country, take this message with you: We do not want Bantu Authorities; take the Paramount Chief and his supporters away. Take him where he can administer affairs away from us." (Cape Times., 26: 7.60.) These are the peasants talking in this forthright manner. They are the peasants in what the rulers regard as the most backward part of the country. In fact the Press refers to them as the "tribesmen". And, indeed, the renegades, our political flotsam and jetsam, have so lost their bearings and are so taken in by herrenvolk propaganda, that they, too, have referred to the struggles of the people in Pondoland as "no more than inter-tribal faction fights". But let us hear these same peasants speak for themselves: "When the vote was taken away from us, the African people were not allowed to sit side by side with the White man in Parliament. This unrest has come to stay as long as the African people have not got representatives in Parliament to voice their grievances." One thing that comes out clearly in the present crisis is that the people are ready to make sacrifices for liberty. But this in itself is not enough. They must learn to define more precisely what freedom means. Freedom from what? And for what? In other words, they have to learn to know where they are going. This is still not all. They have to learn how they are to achieve their goal, i.e. the nature and the method of the struggle in which they are engaged.

PROBLEMS OF ORGANISATION

It is the task of the leadership to bring this knowledge to the masses. And this is bound up, among other things, with the problems of organisation. If the people learn to regard their organisations as instruments of struggle, then their whole attitude towards them will alter. Just as no man hastens to war without his weapons, so will the people cease to rush into action without pooling the resources of the Nation-wide organisation under the guidance of the unified leadership of the National Movement. The leadership has to stress unceasingly the sustained national aspect of the struggle as against the sporadic, localised, isolated and sectional ventures. It is only when the people have recognised the indivisibility of oppression, when they have fully learned to see themselves, not as Africans, Coloured and Indians, but as a people seeking to abolish national oppression that they will turn their backs on localised stunts. A national outlook does not come of itself to the people. It must be brought to them by those sections of the population who have learned to handle ideas. People must learn that colour, White or Black, is irrelevant to

membership of a nation. This is the responsibility of the leadership. When the people have learned to think in term of a nation and act as a nation, they will themselves shun precipitous action at the bidding of an irresponsible, local or sectional group. For such actions rushed into recklessly without forethought, without preparations, and virtually gambling with the lives of the people, have the effect of atomising the struggle and handing the people piecemeal to the Government. The tempo of events is such that they can no longer afford to lay themselves open to the costly pranks of the opportunists. The task of the leadership, then, is clear. The people must be taught the meaning of organisation and all that is involved in belonging to it. They must be bound by organisational discipline. They must learn to act in the name of their organisation and under its leadership. The problem of organisation has assumed paramount importance. It can no longer be treated as an academic question. It is a problem that requires immediate solution. We cannot separate the political problems from the organisational. Hitherto, the Movement has tended to lay stress on the ideas and the programme of struggle at the expense of. the organisational question. It must be brought home to the people that political and organisational problems are aspects of one and the same problem. An organisation is not only a necessary instrument in the struggle but also a vehicle for the ideas of the Movement. The concept of a nation will remain an empty word without those vital channels of communication which an organisation supplies. A body without its arteries which carry the life-blood to every tissue, and without that network of the nervous system which alerts the body and carries impulses to its outer-most part, is a dead thing. An organisation must be seen both as an instrument of struggle and at the same time a weapon of defence against the ceaseless attacks from all sides. Such an organisation gives the individual a sense of belonging, which strengthens him against insidious influences.

The people have to learn that it is idle to talk about liberation unless they are prepared to knuckle down to the arduous task of building and maintaining their organisation. They have to learn that each little organisation is a component part of the larger body, and if each is not pulling its weight, the whole will suffer. Oppression, like life, cannot be broken into separate compartments. Likewise the fight against it must be seen as a unified whole. The workers in the towns, with their problems, are part of the nation,. as the peasants In the countryside are also a part. The workers will have to understand that the pass system cannot be fought in isolation, because it is one aspect of the segregated low wage system and an integral part of the whole machinery of oppression The peasantry, too, will have to understand that the Bantu Authorities and the Rehabilitation Schemes are indissolubly bound up with the low wages in the towns, the pass system and all the Urban Areas legislation. In short, the land problems facing the peasantry, and all the impediments and lack

of freedoms put in the way of the workers in the urban locations, are aspects of the sum total of national oppression. The organisations of the people have to reflect this dynamic interconnection.

The peasantry, then, will have to learn that it is not enough to organise the people in their respective villages or even districts. They have to see to it that their fellow fighters in the towns are similarly organised, and that both groups belong together in the National Organisation. The townsman, too, cannot afford to isolate himself from his fellow oppressed in the country. They must be aware of their common goal. In the prevailing conditions in South Africa, this task is made easier by the fact that it is the same people who today hold the plough and tomorrow are wielding the pick-axe and the next day are employed as labourers in heavy industry. The system of migratory labour ensures continual contact between town and country. The National Organisation, then, must co-ordinate all these aspects of the struggle. It reflects at once the indivisibility of oppression and the unity of purpose on the part of the oppressed Non-Europeans. The people must bend all their energies to building an organisation that will be an effective weapon in the struggle for liberty. The Non-European Unity Movement is such an organisation. It was created precisely to break the artificial barriers that had separated the various sections of the Non-Europeans and bring town and country together. The people are clamouring for unity: the Coloured people, the Indians and the Africans in the towns stretch out their hand to their fellow oppressed in the country. The African peasantry, too, are turning their eyes to the towns in the knowledge that their co-fighters are eager to join them in the struggle for liberation. The leadership must provide the channels to give effect to this burning desire on the part of the people.

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