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Speeches, Articles and Letters

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"RACIAL PROBLEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA": SPEECH AT THE SECOND PAN-AFRICAN YOUTH SEMINAR, DAR ES SALAAM, AUGUST 5, 1961¹

There is unquestionably much which could be said on the subject of racial problems. I think I could speak to you on the situation in South Africa for several hours and there would be plenty left over for discussion. I thought that what I might do today is to scrutinise the question of racial problems, in order to ascertain, as far as possible, the scientific facts on which they rest. It is true that man is mainly concerned with his day-to-day affairs. But it is also true that youth, by their very nature, are curious as to what lies behind these problems. Our enquiry into racial problems in Africa might therefore be commenced by discussing very briefly the nature of race in the context of sociological terminology.

There are two schools of thought. There is the biblical one which dates from the days of Adam and Eve, the two people biblically responsible for our being here. The question that arises is, at what point during this progression towards the present does the element of race enter the picture, out of Adam and Eve how did races emerge? The other aspect is the scientific one, the evolutionary process, from the ape or whatever it is we come from. I hate to think I had anything to do with apes but I am bound to respect the scientists in whatever they say, and it is possibly true to say that all of us had something to do with apes. And at what stage did this human species begin to coagulate or to disperse into racial groups? What are the characteristic features of these groups? How do they come to give rise to problems? For the purpose of our discussion, I think I should suggest that we regard the word race, whether there is any such thing as race or not, as a convenient formulation for reference to mankind in so far as it is organised into groupings, according to certain common characteristics, such as colour, the shape of the nose, the type of hair, or, culturally, the language spoken, characteristics which enable us to identify a particular group of people as being a particular race. And, therefore, what we mean by race is men organised into groups. But I am sure no one will suggest that there is anything objectionable about these characteristics.

¹ From: The 2nd Pan-African Youth Seminar, August 5-14, 1961, Dar es Salaam, Tanganyika. Pamphlet published by World Assembly of Youth, 1961.

Take the commonwealth of colour. No one has ever raised any objection to black, or white or green, or yellow, they are natural phenomena. There are black boars, there are black cows and horses and there is no repulsion attached to this. There is white, there is snow which is white and if people are said to be white or black, may I suggest that these are very unscientific terms indeed, there is nobody who is white. We went over to the Mount Kilimanjaro this morning and I saw snow that was white. I am travelling with a number of people, Africans, and a very nice gentleman from Switzerland who lives here. He was what you would call a white man, but his whiteness had nothing to do with the whiteness of the snow I saw on top of Mount Kilimanjaro. And yet, we use this word, we say there is a white person, there is a black one, unscientific. If we had time we might investigate why we have to say people are white, or black, why we can't find an appropriate term, why we have to say that people are non-white, as we are so fond of saying in South Africa, why can't we say they are something, instead of what they are not. Why do we have to say that there are Northern Rhodesians, or Southern Rhodesians, why can't we find a name? or South Africans? These are some of the things which we take for granted, out of laziness, because we are not in the ordinary course following necessarily scientific approaches to these issues. But, there is no scientific basis for racial problems arising solely out of the fact that there are different characteristics common to various groups of people.

Racial problems

What then is the problem? Why are there racial problems in South Africa? Are they in fact racial problems? And the answer is positively yes, and they have assumed proportions which have become almost impossible to contain within reason. They are genuine racial problems. They present themselves as racial antagonism and attitudes of dislike towards a person who belongs to a group which is outside of your own group. It starts with recognising yourself as a member of a particular group, sharing several common characteristics with other members of that group. And that is the form in which this racial antagonism presents itself. Its causes are various; but before I enumerate these it would be interesting to go back a little on this problem of racial antagonism.

In the days of the Roman Empire there were slaves in Rome, some of these came to be slaves by reason of their tribes or nations being conquered by the Romans, others were purchased in the ordinary course of things as captives. It does not appear

that there were many racial elements in this. Although many of the slaves were black in Rome, it does not appear that there were racial elements crucial to the concept of master and slave.

Take now the United States of America, and the importation into that land of slaves from Africa. And take a corresponding instance, leaving out other cases which one could cite, South Africa, the Cape of Good Hope, where slaves were brought in from West Africa, from Asia. In these two instances there is evidence that over and above the pure relationship of master and slave, there was also a racial element. For instance, in the United States, you will recollect that about a hundred years ago the northern states went into war with the southern on the question of the emancipation of slaves. And they won. These were two groups of the same people, Anglo-Saxons, who had decided to kill one another, on a question which they regarded as crucial. What happened after this war? Of course, the slaves were set free, as they have been free ever since, a law was passed, guaranteeing their rights, at least as far as the Federal Government is concerned; and yet, the relations between the southerners and the northerners, before and after this war, remained the same, and the relations between on the one hand the southerners and the northerners and on the other hand the liberated slaves also roughly remained the same. There were few intermarriages before this war, there were few, if any, after the war. There is still antagonism, repulsion, by the one group towards the other which is basically racial. But before the war there was intermarriage between the southerners and the northerners, there still is. I don't want to misrepresent the position. There is a difference, I think a real difference, in the position today, in the southern and the northern states, and in their attitudes towards the Negro-Americans. But it would be misleading to suggest that the basic issue involved in that war has been solved, it is yet to be solved, even now. And some of the most frustrated people today are the Negro-Americans. You can feel it in the way they speak, in their actions, the life they live. And this is because of an attitude which is basically no different from that which they experienced as slaves.

In South Africa it did not take long for the settlers to insist on a distinction between what they called black and white. I think some of you may remember that one of the women trekkers around 1836 gave as one of the reasons for the Trek the fact that slaves were being treated as equals to whites, liberated slaves that is. Before the emancipation of slaves, there was a law which enabled slaves, who became Christians, to

become free. And when they were free they were entitled to be treated like anybody else. And then objection was raised to this position, and they announced as early as then that there should be no equality between black and white, either in State or in church. About a century later this dictum was written into the constitution of one of the republics which went to war against Great Britain in 1899. And, quite significantly, to this day there still is no equality in South Africa, according to government policy, between black and white, either in State or in Church. This is the position which was taken before the slaves were emancipated. The racial element is very old and has endured.

Causes of Racism

The causes are various. There are psychological causes, some of them are traceable by methods of psychoanalysis. I don't think we should get embroiled in that sort of thing. Let me enumerate the more obvious and more important ones. These causes are common to the whole phenomenon of racial hostility, racial problems not only in South Africa but throughout the world. The first is the attempt to entrench privilege. There are situations in Africa where the white people have entrenched themselves against Africans, against peoples of races other than their own, and the dividing line is a racial one. Then there are economic considerations. The history of colonialism and imperialism is well known. We discuss it in and out of season. This also has given rise to racial problems because it also happened that it was the people who emanated from Europe who colonised what we call non-white peoples. That was an accident of history, but that is how colonialism and imperialism have expressed themselves. It is the non-white race which has been placed under this subjugation for so long. And it is this subjugation which has brought economic advantages to the imperialists, to the colonialists, to the rulers, to those who at a given time had been in power, and those have been in power all the time.

Another cause is sheer prejudice. Prejudice is interesting because it is something fed into one's mind. A child grows up prejudiced against another person, not because that person has done anything or a group of persons has done anything to the child, but because the child assumes that those who are older know better and if they have that attitude towards a group of people, that attitude must be correct. That is genuine but mistaken prejudice. But it has created problems. There are other cases of prejudice which are not genuine. A person who

operates on a certain assumption, for instance that Africans are inferior, may believe it. It is proved to him in numerous instances, facts are placed before him which contradict any belief in the inferiority of the Africans, and yet he persists. That type of prejudice is not genuine and it also creates problems.

Problem in South Africa

In North Africa the racial problems are in the process of resolution. In West Africa racism can hardly be regarded as a problem. But as you travel down the continent into Central Africa the racial problem starts. Actual strife emerges, basically determined by the groupings according to colour, according to culture, according to language. You come to a place like Tanganyika and you find that even here there is a racial problem but it is being solved, perhaps it has been solved. We sometimes say that Tanganyika is progressing very smoothly towards independence. That is not the end of the story. It has taken foresight, it has taken the spirit of give and take, it has taken cooperation, it has taken unity. What we see are the results of the effort, not the effort itself, and we are inclined to talk not of the efforts but about the results of that effort. The racialist is blind to facts, blind to everything, until it bleeds. Then of course the blindness tends to evaporate, as it is in process of evaporating. From Mozambique, for a long time, there was not so much as a whisper from across the border to tell us what was going on. But there is a serious racial problem which will have to be solved by one or other of the methods that we have come to be accustomed to. Then I think although the protectorates - Swaziland, Basutoland and Bechuanaland - fall into a slightly different category, they are also not free of this racial problem.

South Africa had a complicated and varied racial problem. First of all, we have become conscious in South Africa of the existence of what we call Afrikaners, English-speaking people, Africans, sians, Coloured people. That is a very large number to have to deal with. And the policy of that country has been such that these groupings have been created, maintained, kept alive and developed, strengthened and fortified one against another. And the efforts to entrench these groups and separations are still going on today. But that is not all. The effort has also been directed at building up a mutual hostility between them. And of course, that was not enough. The Africans too have been assailed with the principles of the same policy. They have also been sorted out into minor groupings, according

to tribe, so that it would not be possible for them to speak of themselves as Africans. And one of the instruments being used for this purpose is what is called Bantu education, rammed down the throat of the people by force of arms, by imprisonment, by all forms of victimisation.

It is a wholesale onslaught on the people who live in the same area to ensure that they live not only conscious of their difference, these accidental differences, but are also hostile to one another, and the laws which have been passed are intended to maintain this structure. And any breaking of these laws to reduce to the barest minimum by the organisation of armed forces.

I think for African youth it is fair to say that unless we all meet with an accident, South Africa is going to be an excruciating problem for the entire continent. A cruel problem, because human beings have tended to accept these divisions. Africans and Asians and Coloureds have been victims of this government policy, and have come to accept the racial designations. That itself is an acceptance of the doctrine that has been preached. We are not however something or the other. And indeed, in the government of the country, we are not anything, in the passing of laws, in the adoption of national policies, we are not anything. These are appropriate appellations as seen from the point of view of those who are something. What we have got to try to teach our peoples is to reject these concepts, but we will have to substitute something in their place.

I know that the Asians have been told by their international leader, a very sagacious leader, Mr. Nehru, to regard themselves as Africans if they elected to make Africa their home. Now, the question is how they do this. Of course, it is not sufficient to regard themselves as Africans, we have also to do the regarding, we have to accept them as Africans. How does this work out in practice? It is not so easy to say. Sometimes we glorify ourselves into saying we are all South Africans. But for the moment we are not anything, not South Africans. We are of course in various ways and by various methods - in South Africa, in Central Africa, in Angola - trying to give an answer to this whole problem of racialism in Africa, by various methods, various tactics, various political organisations.

But when we have achieved our immediate objective, such as Tanganyika has an immediate objective of independence on the 9th

of December, when we reach that stage for which we are struggling, then that which binds us together will be removed and a new set of problems will arise and one of them may well be this. We may well remember that we still are Asians and Africans, and as between these two, not to mention others. There may be considerations of economy, privileges, the entrenchment of those privileges, perhaps prejudice which has never been driven out of the hearts of people, and the whole range of manifestations of the problem of racialism as we know it will be present. Although perhaps we have a simple problem at the moment, the simple one of simply becoming free, complicated only by the need to find various methods of dealing with the situation we find, on attaining independence we still have not solved our problems, perhaps even not the racial problems which at the moment are a part of independence.

Unity of Mankind

There are a welter of problems peculiar to the state of political advancement known as independence. How to tackle these? I still think that the key answer is unity. Unity must be a tired word, overused everywhere, by everybody. We are always talking of unity. I am a member of the United Front, the South African United Front. We talk about unity in Africa, we spoke about it before the first All-African Peoples' Conference, it was spoken of when Pan-Africanism was first discussed, it was mentioned at Bandung, hardly a month ago we were discussing unity at Accra, and the theme of this conference is unity. I think the important thing to raise here is that unity does not grow wild. Tanganyika is a rich country, all Africa is rich, there is plenty that grows wild, you don't have to cultivate it, you don't have to water it, to nurse it. But unity is not like that. It does not grow wild. It has to be nurtured, built up, it wears away. It must be doctored, treated. It also has many enemies like the enemies that enter any plant that you grow, and you have to keep vigilant against these. And where does unity begin and where does it end?

I think true and lasting unity, as opposed to the unity we may seek at a given time for the achievement of a certain purpose, is one which is conceived on the basis of the essential oneness of mankind, based on what is basically a common human problem. That would be hitching our idea to the stars and I think we are likely to travel at least a little farther than if we are confined to, for example, tribal units. The World Assembly of Youth Seminar gathered here, predominantly Africans, is a gathering of people who, even assuming they could solve the African problems, will still be members of the international

world and committed to seeking a solution to international problems. And I believe that the idea of unity as a solution should not in fact disappear when it reaches the borders of the African continent. We should think in terms of world youth. We had better. Because if we don't and allow the progressive gravitation towards armed conflict, which is so manifest in the relations between East and West, we shall not save ourselves by saying we are neither East nor West. Our guarantee is to ensure the unity of mankind and this is not exclusive of the idea of the unity of a tribe, of a clan, of a nation, of a continent. I think unity is going to be discussed very mercilessly during the course of this conference. I need not dwell any further on it. I only wish to say that I am glad to be able to contribute incidentally to the basic theme, a vitally important theme for Africa.

**APPEAL FOR ACTION TO STOP REPRESSION AND TRIALS IN SOUTH AFRICA:
STATEMENT AT THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, OCTOBER 8, 1963²**

I wish to express my deep gratitude for the privilege accorded to me to address this important body. It was with considerable reluctance that I applied for leave to appear before this Committee, recognising, as I did, the supreme effort which the United Nations is making to induce the South African Government to abolish and abandon policies which are a cruel scourge on the conscience of every civilised being and an unequalled example of man's inhumanity to man. But we feel we cannot too frequently appeal to the nations of the world to call South Africa to sanity, nor do we feel we can be too emphatic in pointing out what a great deal of the damage which the Government of South Africa and its white supporters are doing daily, consistently and with arrogance may prove impossible to repair and thus remain an enduring source of anguish for future generations.

² The Special Political Committee of the General Assembly granted a hearing to Mr. Tambo on the proposal of the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Ambassador Diallo Telli of Guinea, who also called for urgent action concerning the trial of Mr. Nelson Mandela and others who were charged in court earlier that day.

The Special Committee, which had been established earlier that year to follow developments in South Africa, held a reception at the United Nations Headquarters in honour of Mr. Tambo. He was the first leader of a liberation movement to be so honoured by a United Nations committee.

The readiness with which my request was granted by your Committee, Mr. Chairman, confirms and is consistent with the declared desire of the nations and peoples of the world to see the end of apartheid and white domination, and the emergence of a South Africa loyal to the United Nations and to the high principles set forth in the Charter - a South Africa governed by its people as fellow citizens of equal worth whatever the colour, race or creed of any one of them. This kind of South Africa is the precise goal of our political struggle.

In thanking you and your Committee, therefore, Mr. Chairman, I wish to emphasise that I do so not on my own behalf, but also on behalf of my organisation, the African National Congress, and its sister organisations in South Africa, on behalf of the African people and all the other victims of racial discrimination, together with that courageous handful of white South Africans who have fully identified themselves with the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed people of South Africa.

I should also like to take this opportunity to place on record the deep appreciation of my people for the steps which have been taken by various governments against South Africa, which alone can give any meaning to condemnation of the policies practised by the Government of South Africa. On the other hand, I cannot exaggerate the sense of grievance - to put it mildly - which we feel towards those countries which have done and are even now doing so much to make apartheid the monstrous and ghastly reality which it is, and which have thereby created in our country the conditions which, if nothing else happens, will ensure an unparalleled bloodbath. Assured of the support of these countries the South African rulers, who boast openly of this support, are not only showing open defiance for the United Nations and treating its resolutions with calculated contempt, they are liquidating the opponents of their policies, confident that the big Powers will not act against them.

This brings me to the special matter which, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to submit to the distinguished members of this Committee for their urgent consideration. It arises out of news of the latest developments in the South African situation.

Trials of Mandela and other leaders

By a significant coincidence, this, the first day of this Committee's discussion of the policy of apartheid happens also to be the first day of a trial in South Africa which constitutes yet another challenge to the authority of the United Nations and which has as its primary aim the punishment by death of people who are among South Africa's most outstanding opponents of the very policies which the General Assembly and the Security Council have in numerous resolutions called upon the South African Government to abandon.

Today some thirty persons are appearing before a Supreme Court Judge in South Africa in a trial which will be conducted in circumstances that have no parallel in South African history, and which, if the Government has its way, will seal the doom of that country and entrench the feelings of bitterness which years of sustained persecution have already engendered among the African people.³

The persons standing trial include Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, which are household names throughout South Africa, Nelson Mandela being known personally to a number of African Heads of State; Govan Mbeki, a top-ranking African political leader and an accomplished economist who has borne the burdens of his oppressed fellow men ever since he left the university; Ahmed Kathrada, a South African of Indian extraction who started politics as a passive resister in 1946 at the age of seventeen, since when he has been consistently a leading participant in the struggle of the Indian and other Asian South Africans against the Group Areas Act and other forms of racial discrimination, and has, with other Indian leaders, joined the Africans in the liberation struggle; Dennis Goldberg, a white South African, whose home in the Western Cape was the scene of a bomb explosion in 1962, when government supporters sought to demonstrate their disapproval of his identifying himself with the African cause; Ruth Slovo (alias Ruth First), a South African white mother of three minor children, author of a recently published book on South West Africa, and one of South Africa's leading journalists. I could enumerate several others, and as I have shown, they consist of outstanding African nationalist leaders

³ Nelson Mandela and ten others were charged on October 9, 1963, with sabotage and other offences, and a number of others were named as co-conspirators. The trial came to be known as the "Rivonia trial" since several of the accused had been arrested at Lilliesleaf farm in Rivonia, near Johannesburg. Eight of the accused were sentenced to life imprisonment in June 1964.

Mr. Tambo was referring to press reports on the eve of the trial which were not fully accurate. Mrs. Ruth First, for instance, was not charged.

as well as others who have for long been associated with every conceivable form of protest against injustices perpetrated in the name of Christian civilisation and white supremacy. Trials against well over a hundred others are due to start at other centres in different parts of the country.

The charge against the accused is said to be "sabotage". This means in fact that they have contravened a law, or a group of laws which have been enacted for the express purpose of forcibly suppressing the aspirations of the victims of apartheid laws which no active opponent of the policies of the South African Government can evade. A study of the statutory definition of "sabotage", which distinguished delegates will find in official documents which I believe have been circulated to members, will show that a person accused of sabotage can be sentenced to death for one of the least effective and most peaceful forms of protest against apartheid.

Genocide masquerading under guise of justice

The relations between the government and those it rules by force in South Africa have never been worse. The law of the country has since the 1956 Treason Trial been altered so as to make it practically impossible for an accused person to escape a conviction. Lawyers who accepted briefs in political trials have been subjected to increasing intimidation and it has now become difficult to find counsel to appear in such trials. This has been particularly true in the case of the accused who are now facing trial. The law of procedure has also been altered with the result that whereas the State allows itself any amount of time to prepare its case against accused persons, the accused, held in solitary confinement, are kept ignorant of the charge against them until they appear in court. The time allowed them to prepare their defence is subject to the discretion of the court, and in the majority of cases the State insists on proceeding with the trial with as little delay as possible. Preparing a defence from a prison cell hardly enables an accused person to make any proper preparation.

An atmosphere of crisis has been whipped up and its effects have been reflected in the severity of sentences passed by the judges and, not infrequently, in the statements they make in the course of pronouncing sentence. Of special significance in this regard is the judgment passed last week by a Pretoria judge on seven Africans whom he found guilty of allegedly receiving training in the use of firearms in a country outside South

Africa. In sentencing each of the accused to twenty years' imprisonment, the judge stated that he had seriously considered passing the death sentence, but had decided not to do so because he felt the accused had been misled. This judgment and these remarks are a sufficient - and deliberate - hint as to what sentences the South African public and the world are to expect in the new trials where leaders of the political struggle against the apartheid policies of the South African Government are the accused. It is known that the State will demand the death sentence.

Already more than 5,000 political prisoners are languishing in South Africa's jails. Even as recently as the month of September of this year and after the [United Nations] Security Council, in its resolution of 7 August, had called for the release of "all persons imprisoned, interned, or subjected to other restrictions for having opposed the policy of apartheid", three detainees have died in jail in circumstances strongly suggesting deliberate killing. All these are the direct victims of a situation which would never have arisen had the South African Government taken heed of the many appeals which have been addressed to it by the world public and expressed in resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Call for immediate action

I cannot believe that this world body, the United Nations, could stand by, calmly watching what I submit is genocide masquerading under the guise of a civilised dispensation of justice. The African and other South Africans who are being dragged to the slaughter house face death, or life imprisonment, because they fearlessly resisted South Africa's violations of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, because they fought against a government armed to the teeth and relying on armed force, to end inhumanity, to secure the liberation of the African people, to end racial discrimination and to replace racial intolerance and tyranny with democracy and equality, irrespective of colour, race or creed.

If you, Mr. Chairman, and the distinguished delegates here assembled, consider, as I urge you to accept, that the developments I have referred to are of a nature which calls for immediate action by the United Nations, then I am content to

leave it to you and your distinguished Committee, Sir, to decide on the action which it deems appropriate.⁴

For our part, I wish to observe that every single day spent in jail by any of our people, every drop of blood drawn from any of them, and every life taken - each of these represents a unit of human worth lost to us. This loss we can no longer afford. It is surely not in the interests of South Africa or even of the South African Government that this loss should be increased any further.

Thank you, Sir.

**"UNITED NATIONS MUST TAKE ACTION TO DESTROY APARTHEID":
STATEMENT AT THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, OCTOBER 29, 1963⁵**

Mr. Chairman, I wish once again to thank you and this Committee for this opportunity.

In South Africa, since the earliest days of white rule, our people have not had the opportunity of being heard by the tribunals of State, by the people who formulate the policies of that country, by the people who make laws determining the nature and character of the lives we are expected to live in that country.

This year, and this occasion, is the first time, therefore, that we are being heard directly. Its significance is that this

⁴ Soon after the statement of Mr. Tambo, the Special Political Committee decided to recommend a resolution on the Rivonia trial to the General Assembly.

The resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on October 11, 1963, as resolution 1881 (XVIII), by 106 votes, with only South Africa voting against. In that resolution, the Assembly condemned the South African Government for its failure to comply with repeated resolutions calling for an end to the repression of persons opposing apartheid; requested it to abandon the Rivonia trial and forthwith grant unconditional release to all political prisoners and to all persons imprisoned, interned or subjected to other restrictions for having opposed the policy of apartheid.

October 11, the anniversary of this resolution, was observed from 1973 as the Day of Solidarity with South African Political Prisoners.

⁵ The speeches in the United Nations are from the official records of the United Nations, or were transcribed from tape.

distinguished and august audience is not one of a group of people in South Africa, representatives of organs of State, it is the governments of the world - all of them. It is all the more a pity that I am the only one who is taking advantage of this great offer. There are others who in many respects could have more appropriately represented my people, and all the oppressed people of South Africa, but who are languishing in jail, serving long sentences or facing trial.

Some of them, who were the subject of resolutions adopted by this Committee and the General Assembly three weeks ago,⁶ are at this very moment facing trial in the Supreme Court in Pretoria, charged with offences allegedly committed over a period of eighteen months, involving acts of sabotage in 221 or 222 instances, and alleged violations of South Africa's Suppression of Communism Act. Not only are they facing trial, but they are doing so in circumstances which make that trial largely farcical. Hence the significance and the importance of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly. They come before trial after going through a phase of persecution, ill-treatment and torture that is new in the South African situation, a fact which is an element of the tensions and the crisis that now characterise the life of the people of South Africa of all races.

Here is an extract from a letter written by a person who sat in the courtroom when these accused appeared three weeks ago. It says:

"The atmosphere in court was chilling, almost terrifying. Iron gates barred the way. Police - hundreds of them, uniformed and armed - and Special Branch men - masses and masses of them - amongst the spectators in the courtroom, watching every move we made, and stationed between us, listening to every word spoken on the spectators' benches".

In that kind of atmosphere, even for the best of judges, for the most impartial among them, it must be extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to be impartial, to remain immune to the effects of that type of atmosphere. And that will be the atmosphere that will characterise the trial throughout. This is a description of the atmosphere inside a courtroom; it is also an accurate description of the atmosphere in the entire country.

⁶Resolution 1881 (XVIII) of October 11, 1963, requesting the South African Government to abandon the Rivonia Trial and release all political prisoners.

In this letter the writer says:

"Some of the African accused amongst the eleven maintained most definitely that they had been tortured in different ways - suffocated with wet bags, given electrical and other treatment";

and a letter smuggled out of jail makes special reference to Nelson Mandela. It says:

"He is graded 'Category D', the worst for privileges and rights, although the police state: 'He is a very well-disciplined prisoner'. He spends twenty-three hours a day in a cell twelve feet by seven feet. He is prohibited from talking to any other prisoner. He is allowed no reading matter whatsoever, neither books nor newspapers, except such textbooks as are prescribed for the course of study which he has been permitted to embark on by correspondence at his own expense. He is allowed one thirty-minute visit from his wife every six months and may write and receive one letter every six months. He may not purchase or receive any food other than prison rations, which are: breakfast - mealie meal, plus the option of sugar or pea soup, no milk; lunch - mealie meal and a few cubes of meat on top; supper - mealie meal. He sleeps on a concrete floor, on a mat approximately three-eighths of an inch thick."

I mention these facts not for the purpose of inducing any pity for any of these accused. They believe in the cause they are fighting for; they are prepared to suffer for it, even to be tortured for it. I mention them simply because the condition of these men, who are leaders and for whom representations are now being made in the court, is perhaps an indication of the fate of thousands of others, also detained, to whom there is no access of any kind. It will take a long time before the world knows what has been the fate of these people, why some of them have died and what is even at this moment happening to them. In the meantime the trial against these eleven is proceeding, and there are other trials also due to proceed.

Unanimity against Apartheid

All this is happening in spite of the resolution that has been adopted. What the United Nations does about any further acts of defiance by the South African Government is part of the issues to which representatives are addressing themselves at this gathering. For us in South Africa it is a matter of great interest exactly for how long the United Nations can entertain

this type of conduct by a Member State. We are grateful for what has been done by the various groups represented here and for the unity that has been expressed in their condemnation of this system. You have here the African States, which form a group of their own, the Asian nations, the East European countries, the Latin American nations, Western Europe, the Nordic countries, the Commonwealth, the Western Powers - all bound together variously by one circumstance or another and perhaps differing among themselves on one ground or another. But they all have declared, as one man, their condemnation of the policy of apartheid. It is common cause that there has been no change in spite of this unprecedented unanimity of the world on this one issue; it is common cause also that in spite of this persistent attack on their policy, the perpetrators of it have gone ahead heaping misery upon misery on those whom they hold in subjugation, this also in defiance of world opinion and despite the efforts of the people directly affected by their policy.

The question that arises in our minds is: How far is the United Nations able to watch this happening? We have in the past suggested a possible answer. We have furnished facts indicating the nature of apartheid but also giving a hint of what the ultimate results are going to be if apartheid is allowed to continue. We have had occasion to listen to statements made by representatives which expressed this fear, statements not drawn from the imagination but based on facts. This year in particular this Organisation has established the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid, which has done a tremendous amount of work in placing at the disposal of the delegations and of the whole world an accurately detailed documentation of these facts so as to ensure that any statements made, any decisions taken, are based on an objective examination of the situation in South Africa.⁷ This has made it unnecessary for us to bring facts to be considered afresh by this body; but it has raised the

⁷ The Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa was established - in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 1761 (XVII) of November 6, 1962 - to keep the racial policies of the South African Government under review and to report to the General Assembly or the Security Council or both, from time to time.

The Committee was initially composed of 11 members: none of the Western Powers agreed to join it.

The mandate of the Special Committee was expanded in later years and it played a crucial role in promoting international action against apartheid in close cooperation with the Organisation of African Unity, the national liberation movement of South Africa, anti-apartheid movements and other public organisations.

The name of the Committee was shortened in 1971 to "Special Committee on Apartheid" and changed in 1974 to "Special Committee against Apartheid".

question of what our attitude might be to possible solutions that this Committee or the United Nations as a whole might decide upon - because we are part of this situation and some of the delegations here have indicated, perfectly rightly, that a great deal of attention, even of care, must be taken in the steps contemplated for the solution of this problem.

Appeals for Sanctions

As early as 1958, we in South Africa were convinced that if nothing was done to bring pressure to bear upon South Africa in addition to what we were doing, so as to compel abandonment of this policy, the stage would be reached which is contemplated in a paragraph of the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I quote from that paragraph:

"... it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law..."

We were aware that the rule of law in South Africa was fast becoming a dead letter, that our own pressures internally were not bringing about the peaceful changes in which we believed, and that it had become necessary to supplement these pressures with what could be done from outside. So, in 1958, at the first meeting of the All-African People's Conference⁸ the South African delegation tabled a resolution for an international boycott of South African goods. That resolution was adopted and picked up in a number of countries by various organisations.

In 1960, at the Addis Ababa Conference,⁹ another delegation of South African political leaders submitted a memorandum to that conference of African Independent States. In that memorandum, they asked for sanctions and for the isolation of South Africa from Africa and the rest of the world. Their appeal was received by the African States there assembled. A resolution to that effect was adopted,¹⁰ and this was subsequently tabled

⁸ The Conference was held in Accra in December 1958.

⁹ The Second Conference of Independent African States, held in Addis Ababa in June 1960. Mr. Tambo led the ANC delegation to this Conference.

¹⁰ In a resolution on June 24, 1960, the Conference called on African States to impose sanctions against South Africa, invited Arab States to take steps toward an oil embargo against South Africa, and recommended that appropriate measures be taken by the United Nations under Article 41 of its Charter.

for discussion at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly.¹¹ In 1959, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was sent a memorandum by the African National Congress in South Africa, which asked, amongst other things, for sanctions against South Africa.

We did all these things because we felt that the world and the United Nations had a distinct role to play in South Africa. We knew that what we were asking for would involve suffering on our part, but we also knew that apartheid would never be abandoned, that racial discrimination in South Africa would never cease to be the official policy of that country, until and unless there were sacrifices, and the sacrifice of going hungry, of going without jobs because factories had been closed was a very elementary kind of sacrifice in the situation in which we were. It could hardly be compared with the ravages of apartheid on our people, who even then were being treated like unwanted animals in their own country.

We also knew that a boycott of South African goods through sanctions imposed from outside would also involve sacrifices for others outside South Africa, but we believed that it would be a minor sacrifice, negligible in comparison with the ultimate sacrifice which the whole world, we felt, would have to give and to make if apartheid was allowed to stay in South Africa.

We have been reproached, perhaps indirectly, with being so childish as to invite the world to inflict pain on us. It has been said that sanctions will hurt us first and foremost. I have given this historical background in the hope that we will not again have the discomfort of this kind of pity and paternalism, because it is a type of pity and paternalism which hurts us even more than sanctions would hurt us.

¹¹ The General Assembly - in resolution 1761 (XVII) of November 6, 1962 - requested Member States to take the following measures:

"(a) Breaking off diplomatic relations with the Government of the Republic of South Africa or refraining from establishing such relations;

"(b) Closing their ports to all vessels flying the South African flag;

"(c) Enacting legislation prohibiting their ships from entering South African ports;

"(d) Boycotting all South African goods and refraining from exporting goods, including all arms and ammunition, to South Africa;

"(e) Refusing landing and passage facilities to all aircraft belonging to the Government of South Africa and companies registered under the laws of South Africa".

There was another reason why we thought of sanctions. We do not believe in violence; we do not think that anybody believes in it. We do not want it; nobody wants it. We did not think of invoking the world to invade South Africa. We were convinced, living in South Africa and having lived there all our lives, that if South Africa were effectively isolated through economic and diplomatic measures, and others which have been mentioned in these debates, it would be impossible for the South African Government to operate apartheid. Apartheid would then have to be abandoned. We also believed, and knew, that it is impossible to separate racial discrimination in South Africa from the economic structure of that country. Racial discrimination, South Africa's economic power, its oppression and exploitation of all the black peoples, are part and parcel of the same thing. Sanctions would attack the economy, which could only be attacked from outside through sanctions. We know of nothing else. We can attack it from the inside, but the only method, as the representatives are aware, which has been allowed us and left open to us is the type of method which is a last resort. By that method, we could destroy the economy of the country. In the process, we would destroy life as well, our own life included, but in the end, however tragic it may have been, there would be no apartheid.

We believe that the world, too, can destroy apartheid, firstly by striking at the economy of South Africa. But if that failed, then the world would have to sacrifice, as I have indicated, in a more elaborate and more costly way. The mere possibility of the peoples of the world having less to eat, less to clothe themselves with because of a boycott has led to various problems being raised in regard to the implementation of sanctions. Fears have been expressed that it would not work because the main trading partners of South Africa are involved and are unwilling to support sanctions. They have said so. But we do not think that this is any reason why there should be no sanctions.

First of all, very correctly, the African States, and perhaps before them other States as well, such as India, have decided to have no economic relations with South Africa, and no trade or diplomatic relations. This has its own effect, except that it is being undermined to a greater or lesser degree by those countries which persist in having trade relations with South Africa. But they have decided to make this sacrifice. Last year a resolution was adopted which, if it were implemented only by those countries which supported it, would be most effective.

Attitude of South Africa's Trading Partners

In the final analysis, it may be that apartheid brings such stupendous economic advantages to countries that they would sooner have apartheid than permit its destruction. It may be that some countries are faced with this cruel choice. This is still no reason why those who are prepared to make the sacrifice should not do so. However, we are worried about the difficulties voiced by South Africa's trading partners as regards severing their trade relations with South Africa. One of the sources of worry is that we owe racial discrimination in South Africa, in so far as it is supported by the constitution of that country, to an Act passed by the United Kingdom Government, the South Africa Act of 1909, which legalised racial discrimination. Today the United Kingdom is South Africa's greatest trading partner. Because it is South Africa's trading partner, it is, therefore, the greatest source of strength for apartheid. I do not think that this position should be defended. We should be happy if we knew that the United Kingdom was at least doing something about it, trying to extricate itself from its complicity in the practices and policies of apartheid. What we have instead is a boast by British firms that in 1962, of all countries trading with Britain, South Africa was the source of its greatest profits. I shall quote from a pamphlet called *The British Stake in South Africa*, issued in 1962. It says:

"Of all individual countries in which we hold private direct investment, South Africa last year was the one from which we drew the biggest returns."

It is an uncomfortable feeling that the United Kingdom should have to depend on apartheid for its biggest returns, particularly when one comes across a statement such as that made by Basil Davidson in his book, *Black Mother*, in which he says that by the end of the eighteenth century

"the value of British incomes derived from trade with the West Indies was said to be four times greater than the value of British income derived from trade with the rest of the world."

At that time, it will be recalled, there was a very heavy concentration of slaves in the West Indies, and trade with the West Indies was the lucrative enterprise it was because there was available this large mass of people who worked without pay. There is some similarity between that situation and what we find

in South Africa, where millions of people, as Dr. Verwoerd¹² has so eloquently said, cannot rise above the level of certain forms of labour and are held in conditions which we describe as conditions of slavery, and which, if we wanted to be modest, we would describe as semi-slavery.

Representatives will recall the report, which came through yesterday, of a large number of Africans being trapped in a mine in Johannesburg, with little hope that they could be saved. The first question which occurs in the mind of an African is: what were they doing in that mine? They were working. For how much and for whom? The answer is disturbing, if there is any likelihood that the laws and policies which compel them to work under those conditions and to face death for nothing are going to endure because the big Powers are living and thriving on that system.

There is another disturbing aspect which relates to the question of sanctions. South Africa is encouraging immigrants from countries with white populations - from Britain, from France, from Germany, from Italy, but a large number of these people come from Britain. Firms in Britain are also moving to South Africa. That might not be such a bad thing. If they like to live in South Africa, our attitude is: that is very reasonable. It is a beautiful country. But the country which invites these people is also deporting from South Africa what are described as foreign natives. Africans, some of whom have lived there for over thirty years, are being uprooted and deported to Tanganyika and other countries. Their place, as far as the population of the country is concerned, is being taken by the whites. Therefore this emigration to South Africa is of a racialist character. It serves the interests of apartheid. One would have expected some attempt on the part of countries to discourage their citizens from going to South Africa - if for nothing else, at least because we say that it is an explosive situation and we cannot guarantee the safety of these families. Yet we should hate to do anything likely to alienate the rightful support which we have enjoyed from European peoples.

From our point of view, if sanctions are impracticable on any grounds, then nothing remains for anybody. I am using the term "sanctions" in a broad sense, covering all the various methods by which South Africa could be isolated. I should like to plead to this Committee to do the least that we expect of it,

¹² Dr. Hendrik F. Verwoerd (1901-66). Minister of Native Affairs of South Africa, 1950-58; Prime Minister, 1958-66. Assassinated in 1966.

to work out how sanctions can be effectively employed - the details of it - how the trade which various countries are conducting with South Africa can be diverted and dispensed among the over one hundred countries that should be in a position to take it up. That would involve a sacrifice, but it is difficult to reconcile the powerful statements which are made here in condemnation of apartheid with the determination to sustain that same apartheid by giving it the means of survival.

No Change of Heart of South African Government

May I refer to other problems in which we are interested and which have arisen in the course of the debate on this question at this session. Reference has been made to, and we ourselves were very interested in, the statement made by the South African representative in the General Assembly. It has been felt that the statement offers some hope and that perhaps there is a rethinking by South Africa of its policies. I should like to quote from an editorial in the *Rand Daily Mail* of 12 October, which refers to that statement:

"Mr. Jooste¹³ occupied the rostrum and a substantial audience heard him through.

"Carefully they listened, weighing up his words. But alas, there was no single, tiny indication of a change of heart. It was the same old South African line which everyone had heard before a dozen times. South Africa would use, Mr. Jooste declared, all available means to defend the policies and possessions of her white population."

The editorial goes on:

"For Britain, America and other important countries of the West, there is now no longer any adequate excuse for stalling. All have condemned apartheid roundly and publicly in the past - now they are being called upon to match their practices to their pronouncements. The bans on arms shipments to South Africa are the first responses to the mounting pressure on them.

"With the continued thawing in the cold war, the South African issue is moving steadily to the top of the world's immediate concern. No longer is it third, or fifth or eighth on

¹³ G.P. Jooste, formerly Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations

the list of priorities. It is desperately close to being the world's number one preoccupation."

We could not agree more with these comments. If any further value would seem to attach to the statements made on behalf of the South African Government, I think it is effectively disposed of by what Dr. Verwoerd himself has said. I shall quote his words, which are reported in the Hansard, House of Assembly Debates of the Republic of South Africa, Second Session. The statement was made on January 25, 1963. Dr. Verwoerd was replying to a vote of no-confidence moved by the Leader of the Opposition in South Africa:

"What does he mean" - that is, the Opposition Leader - "with 'control' when he says the United Party must retain control? The United Party wants to 'retain control over the entire South Africa'... What does he honestly mean the white man must do there under United Party policy? The word 'control' is a word which means nothing else than white supremacy or white domination. Control cannot have any other meaning than domination, supremacy. You can call it what you like. Control is domination, domination is supremacy, supremacy is domination, supremacy is domination. You cannot get away from that, Sir. Control means that the white man will remain the real controller."

Then he states later:

"I now want to deal with what seems to me the crucial point in respect of which this nation must say whether they have confidence in us or in the Opposition, whether they have confidence in the National Party or in the United Party.

"I maintain that judgment was given in 1961. Reduced to its simplest form the problem is nothing else than this: We want to keep South Africa white. The United Party also say they want to keep South Africa white. 'Keeping it white' can only mean one thing, namely white domination, not 'leadership', not 'guidance', but 'control', 'supremacy'."

Bantustans and Partition

Now, the bantustan theory or practice or policy has been referred to as a possible way out.¹⁴ The Transkei is cited as a glorious example of people marching happily to independence. What Dr. Verwoerd said in January of this year makes it clear that there is no independence contemplated. There cannot be. Happily the majority of delegations have seen through the trick and fraud of the bantustans.

But partition is also being worked up, mainly from outside the United Nations, and partition is a kind of bantustan policy because it is based on the trick, which has been resorted to, of talking about Bantu nations in South Africa and a white nation, of talking about homelands for the Africans in South Africa, but, also, about a white South Africa. These "homelands" are like the locations that we already have, patched outside cities where Africans are concentrated and kept in subjugation, available as labour. Whether it is called "homelands" or bantustans or countries in terms of partition, it is still racial discrimination and apartheid - it is still white domination.

In fact, although it has not been stated in so many words, we are worried by any suggestion of partition. Just as we have rejected the bantustans, we reject partition even more, because that would be an acceptance of racism after all. It would be its entrenchment. You would then have established in Africa a system which propagates and is allowed to propagate racism. You would have a portion of the country, the greatest portion of South Africa, surrounded by little, isolated, poor, miserable patches of land called States, a strategy for keeping the African people in permanent servitude. That is no answer to apartheid. There is no answer to apartheid apart from striking directly at its head.

It is so evil and has been condemned so forcibly and so genuinely that the only way to handle it is by destroying it.

Freedom for all

¹⁴ The South African Government began in 1963 to consolidate scattered African reserves on a tribal basis and grant them "self-government", with a promise of possible "independence", in order to divide the Africans and dispossess them of rights in most of the country. These areas, called "homelands" by the regime, were denounced by the people as "bantustans".

The Transkei was the first territory to be granted self-government.

Fears have been expressed, however, that if apartheid were destroyed, the lot of the white people in South Africa would become a doubtful one. We think it is right that the United Nations should concern itself with the welfare of all peoples, even groups of peoples. The Charter states that every individual, whatever his colour, shall be protected from victimisation on the basis of that colour. We ourselves have been worried about the fact that in South Africa there is a group of people, or individuals, or a racial group, which have been subjected to torture and indignity because of the colour of their skins or their origins. That is what we are fighting against.

I should like to refer to statements which have been made by South African leaders, other than myself, indicating our concern in ensuring that South Africa will be a happy country when apartheid has been abandoned. Chief Albert Lutuli made a statement recently from which I quote because it happens to be available. He said:

"The main thing is that the government and the people should be democratic to the core. It is relatively unimportant who is in the government. I am not opposed to the present government because it is white; I am opposed to it only because it is undemocratic and repressive. My idea is a nonracial government chosen on the basis of merit rather than colour. Appeals to racialism at elections should be a legal offence."

Nelson Mandela said at his trial:

"I am no racialist and I detest racialism because I regard it as a barbaric thing whether it comes from a black man or a white man."

May I say that these are leaders of people and are expressing the feelings of their people. The only way to ascertain the feelings of people is through what is said by those whom they have chosen to be their leaders and their spokesmen.

Walter Sisulu, who is among those who are facing trial today, has stated:

"The fundamental principle in our struggle is equal rights for all in our country, and that all people who have made South Africa their home, by birth or adoption, irrespective of colour or creed, are entitled to these rights."

Robert Sobukwe, who, after serving for a period of three years, is still in detention indefinitely - perhaps for the rest of his life unless we do something in the meantime, which we hope to be able to do - stated:

"Freedom of the Africans can only be established when the African group comes into its own. Freedom of the Africans means freedom for everyone, including Europeans in this country."

Any other leading personality in the South African liberation movement would have expressed himself in similar terms. The Committee may be aware of a document known as the Freedom Charter which was adopted at a conference to which political parties and all organisations from every racial group were invited.¹⁵ My recollection is that I had written the letters, one of which was addressed to the National Party of South Africa which was then in power.

The Freedom Charter purports to express the views of all South Africans of every race, and the gathering which was held in 1955 represented all races. Everyone was invited. The Freedom Charter begins with these words:

"We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people."

That statement, which declares South Africa to belong to all who live in it, is a drastic concession on the part of the African people, but it is a demonstration of the willingness of the African people to live in South Africa with everybody who wants to live there on the basis of absolute equality - no racism, no racial discrimination, no superior race, no inferior race. On that basis South Africa belongs to all who live in it.

It has been suggested by a group of Nordic countries, whose peoples have made great sacrifices for South Africa, that apart from any pressures, such as those which have been referred to in the past, the United Nations should give some attention to the

¹⁵ The Freedom Charter was adopted by the Congress of the People, held in Kliptown on June 25-26, 1955. The Congress was the most representative gathering of the South African people until that time.

The Freedom Charter was subsequently endorsed by the African National Congress and allied organisations which accepted it as a basic policy document.

question of what will replace apartheid.¹⁶ We welcome these suggestions, if it is felt that the time has come to work out the details. But the effort would be entirely wasted if it were not also recognised that unless the pressures which have been suggested by delegations and in resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly are intensified, in other words, unless the sanctions in the broadest sense are applied, or an act which is of the nature of sanctions in its effectiveness is undertaken, then it is irrelevant what kind of proposals we may have for the future. The Freedom Charter, the document to which I have referred, and the other official statements made by prominent leaders in South Africa have been treated by the South African Government as not even worth the paper they are written on - an attitude South Africa will maintain until it finds itself unable to practise the policy of apartheid.

In my own view, we have not yet reached the stage at which we can go into details about what will supplant apartheid, over and above the statements which have been made in explanation of our official policies and over and above the provisions of the Charter itself, which are a protection of individuals. But, needless to say, whatever the United Nations and the countries which have supported us, and the delegations here which have attacked apartheid, feel should be done, we will cooperate with them. I cannot go into the question of when and by what machinery this should be done. I should merely like to say that if we have the opportunity of discussing this - that is, any of our people, any of our leaders - with either the Nordic countries or the African States, or any body which will be established, we will be willing to participate.

But may I repeat that it will be dangerous for the United Nations to get itself bogged down in the pursuit of solutions

¹⁶ In a statement to the General Assembly on September 25, 1963, Per Haekkerup, Foreign Minister of Denmark, said that his country supported pressure on the South African Government to induce it to change its policy. The United Nations should, however, face the fact that the great majority of the European population in South Africa wrongly assume that abandonment of white domination means abandonment of their own existence. It should show the way forward to the creation of "a truly democratic, multiracial society of free men with equal rights for all individuals, irrespective of race". He continued:

"Changing a society so deeply rooted in apartheid and dominated by a minority into such a free democratic, multiracial society may well prove to be a task which cannot be solved by the people of South Africa alone. I feel convinced that in such a process of development the United Nations will have to play a major role if we are to avoid disaster. We must consider how, if necessary, we can, in a transitional period, contribute to the maintenance of law and order and the protection of life and civil rights of all individuals. We must likewise consider how the United Nations can best assist South Africa in laying the foundation of its new society."

which are irrelevant to the present situation in South Africa, in concentrating on the details of how to protect the whites in the future and abandoning the more urgent modes of action in the interest of peace, in South Africa and externally; namely, the problem of how to intensify the pressures which have been mentioned in the debates that have been the subject of resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

Challenge to the United Nations

Finally, I should like to say that we have said in the past that the South African situation is approaching a crisis. We said so in 1960 in an unofficial memorandum that we distributed at the United Nations, and there can be no doubt now that South Africa is in a crisis. But this is not the end. That situation is deteriorating rapidly and is capable of any developments any day. The fact that in the last five weeks, or five months, or eight months, on the face of it things have been quiet and peaceful, that investments have been increasing and mounting, that investors have been drawing greater and greater profits, and super-profits, and that people have been flowing into the country - families from everywhere except from Africa - that fact should not blind the world to the realities of the situation.

We cannot be expected to sit side by side with it. We have come to the United Nations because of our belief in it. But if the United Nations finds any real difficulties, we are bound, most naturally, to explore every other avenue that is open to us, whatever that is, to strengthen ourselves in every way that is conceivable. There is no question from our point of view of postponing anything. Apartheid has outlived its time in the world and most certainly in Africa. What would encourage people who like to see changes come about in a peaceful way would be to feel that, now that the question is in the capable hands of the world's governments, through the machinery of the United Nations, we shall begin to see dawn in South Africa. We thought we saw that dawn when 106 countries voted unanimously against South Africa. We saw so much of the dawn that cables were sent to President Kennedy congratulating the United States. Cables of that kind are not sent to President Kennedy every week or every year. This was a demonstration on the part of people who felt that the United Nations was at long last seizing the bull by the horns.

Cables were even sent to Lord Home, then Foreign Secretary [of the United Kingdom]. It was possibly the first cable he has received from any African people about British policy, certainly in South Africa. But this again was a reaction to what appeared to be a decision on the part of the big Powers in the West to join hands with the ordinary people and save the world from an approaching disaster.

But if we got too excited about that decision, and if in fact nothing still is going to be done, then may I repeat that that seems to us to indicate the need to seek other avenues, whatever those may be. Needless to say, in my view - and I may be entirely wrong, but I believe this faithfully - the United Nations cannot allow South Africa to continue acting in defiance of its expressed views, without undermining confidence on the part of the world in the ability of the United Nations to deal with the situation of which it is seized. I also believe that South Africa is imposing a severe strain on the United Nations. But that strain can increase with fatal results, even for a world organisation, unless action is taken immediately. Hence our appeal for action.

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON PROPOSALS FOR A UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON APARTHEID, 1963¹⁷

A. General

(1) The Security Council is at present seized of the question of apartheid, following its resolution of August 7th.¹⁸

(2) The Secretary-General, having reported in terms of that resolution, and in view of the worsening of the South African situation since the August meeting of the Security Council, a

¹⁷ From: *South Africa Freedom News*, No.24, Dar es Salaam, January 1964.

These comments were probably sent by Mr. Tambo from New York in November 1963.

¹⁸ The Security Council, in resolution 181 of August 7, 1963, called upon the South African Government "to abandon the policies of apartheid and discrimination... and to liberate all persons imprisoned, interned or subjected to other restrictions for having opposed the policy of apartheid". It solemnly called upon all States "to cease forthwith the sale and shipment of arms, ammunition of all types and military vehicles to South Africa."

further meeting has now been requested for by the African States for the purpose of discussing and deciding on the question of apartheid in the light of the current situation in South Africa.

(3) The Security Council meeting is being convened against the background of the decisions of the Addis Ababa Summit Conference which gave expression to what has been termed the "spirit of Addis Ababa".

(4) The meeting is also important as following closely on the General Assembly resolution of October 11th, which called for the abandonment of trials in South Africa.¹⁹ In defiance of the unanimous support for this resolution, the Pretoria trials are proceeding. Other sabotage trials have been started in other parts of South Africa, and in each case the accused are facing death sentences. Generally, the apartheid policies are being intensified.

(5) In these circumstances, both the discussions in and the resolutions of the Security Council meeting are expected by all opponents of apartheid, and particularly by the African people, to show that the Security Council takes a most serious view of the behaviour of the South African Government.

B. The Draft Resolution

(1) The Security Council should avoid repeating appeals to South Africa. The General Assembly has done this for more than a decade and in the result has encouraged South Africa to believe that it can, with impunity, ignore these appeals. The fact that South Africa has failed or ignored to carry out or comply with a decision of the Security Council should itself be an issue for consideration by the Security Council. The latter should not resort to merely taking the same decision once more. Certainly, South Africa should not be allowed to continue reducing the UN, including the Security Council, to a debating society and nothing more. A successive repetition of appeals by the Security Council would have precisely this effect.

(2) The production of a blueprint prescribing the mode of transition from apartheid to a nonracial society should be the

¹⁹ The General Assembly, in resolution 1881 (XVIII) of October 11, 1963, requested the South African Government "to abandon the arbitrary trial [of Nelson Mandela and others] now in progress and forthwith to grant unconditional release to all political prisoners and to all persons imprisoned, interned or subjected to other restrictions for having opposed the policy of apartheid". The resolution was adopted by 106 votes, with only South Africa voting against.

responsibility of the South African people, save that the United Nations can place its services, including its expert advisers, at the disposal of the people or government of South Africa. Such services and such advice could only be furnished in furtherance of the aims of the Charter and the principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A declaration assuring South Africa of the United Nations' willingness to assist in the process of eliminating racial discrimination should suffice at this stage.

(3) The South African Government rejects the idea that there are any better experts than itself on the South African situation. It seems quite unwise to proceed on the basis that this Government needs expert advice as to an appropriate alternative to apartheid. It wants no alternative and will produce none until it finds itself unable to make headway with, or maintain itself in power on, apartheid. At best a committee of experts can only produce an opinion, which, as an opinion, stands little chance of being any more acceptable to South Africa than the world's unanimous condemnation of apartheid.

(4) The idea of a body of experts is born of the feeling that the white man's fears should be considered. But the issue before the United Nations is not what is being done to the white man, but what the white man is doing to the African. The only complaint before the United Nations is that apartheid is an inhuman policy. There is no other problem. It is to this problem that the United Nations should devote its attention. It is only when South Africa's whites are becoming exposed to a possible danger that the United Nations would be justified in addressing itself to their complaints. At the moment, they do not even recognise the right of the United Nations to interfere in any way with what they are doing to the African people.

(5) More use should be made of the Special Committee on Apartheid if it is felt that there are any aspects of the situation which are still obscure, and on which information, including information in the form of expert opinion, is considered necessary.

(6) Nothing should be done to lift the pressures which have been built on South Africa and which offer the sole hope for any of the changes demanded of the South African Government. To allow or cause a relaxation of these pressures would be to undo the work of many years of devoted effort by enemies of apartheid the world over, and, not least, by the United Nations itself.

The result would be to make it even more difficult for the UN to influence the South African situation in any way.

(7) The expression "positive alternative" suggests that the demand on South Africa to abandon apartheid and the action of governments taken in terms of [General Assembly] resolution 1761 or the independent action of the African States are "negative pressures" incapable of compelling the South African Government, of its own, to seek and find policies that are not abhorrent to the conscience of mankind.

(8) There is no balance between increase of pressures and the quest for "positive alternatives". In the terms of the resolution the UN directs its attention to an academic solution and all but abandons the pressures which would lend any relevance at all to these alternatives. In this respect the resolution fails to take into account the realities of the South African situation. In particular, it takes no account of the fact that this situation is deteriorating. What the resolution does therefore is precisely what South Africa's trading partners would have wanted to do: to focus attention on the "positive alternatives" and relegate the issue of the pressures, e.g. sanctions, to the background and in the process to undermine the efforts of countries which are rightly carrying out the terms and spirit of resolution 1761.

(9) By making every future consideration of the apartheid question dependent on steps to be taken by the Secretary-General and on the reports to be made to him, the draft resolution has taken the issue out of the competence of the General Assembly which is entitled to examine and discuss reports on its resolution 1761 and on subsequent resolutions, and to take appropriate decisions thereon.

(10) The Security Council resolution of August 7th, calling for an embargo on the supply of arms to South Africa, should not be regarded as calculated to induce a change on the part of the South African Government. It seeks to terminate the manifestly unethical practice of furnishing South Africa with the instruments for, and therefore of assisting in, the murder of its opponents. It does not operate to prevent the murders, much less the policy which must inevitably lead to such murders. Operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution therefore does not touch the policy of apartheid as such and does nothing to weaken its foundation or even slow down its tempo.

(11) There has always been the fear on our part that of the two portions of the Nordic proposals, the first and more important might be shelved and the second given a dominant position to a degree which would make it practically impossible to discuss or decide on pressure, e.g., oil sanctions.²⁰ The reference in this and subsequent paragraphs is to a draft resolution which Norway proposed to submit to the Security Council.

Under the terms of this proposal the Security Council would express the firm conviction that the policies of apartheid and racial discrimination as practised by the South African Government "are abhorrent to the conscience of mankind and that therefore a positive alternative to these policies must be found through peaceful means". It would request the Secretary-General to establish a small group of recognised experts "to examine methods of resolving the present situation in South Africa through full, peaceful and orderly application of human rights and fundamental freedoms to all inhabitants of the territory as a whole, regardless of race, colour or creed, and to consider what part the United Nations might play in the achievement of that end."

The present draft resolution, having regard to operative paragraphs 4 and 5, does little to eliminate this fear.

²⁰ Under the terms of this proposal the Security Council would express the firm conviction that the policies of apartheid and racial discrimination as practised by the South African Government "are abhorrent to the conscience of mankind and that therefore a positive alternative to these policies must be found through peaceful means". It would request the Secretary-General to establish a small group of recognised experts "to examine methods of resolving the present situation in South Africa through full, peaceful and orderly application of human rights and fundamental freedoms to all inhabitants of the territory as a whole, regardless of race, colour or creed, and to consider what part the United Nations might play in the achievement of that end."

**"APARTHEID - THE INDICTMENT": PAPER PRESENTED TO THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA,
LONDON, APRIL 1964²¹**

One of the biggest failures of any group of people this century has been the failure of the ruling white minority in South Africa to discard policies which have nothing but destruction and disaster to offer for the future of the country. The failure is the bigger for the insane determination of the authors and high priests of these policies to push them to their logical extremities against a rising tide of indignant world opposition and in defiant unconcern for the consequences.

"If we are destroyed," they say, "it will be our fate, not our fault." But if they are destroyed, it cannot help them to argue or complain afterwards that it was their fate. The fate-not-fault theory is, however, important because it reflects an attitude of mind which is basic to the policy of apartheid, namely, that South Africa is populated by people and non-people. In the following discussion the situation in South Africa will be examined with special reference to this attitude of mind on the part of the whites.

Apartheid, in its more comprehensive connotation, is the sum total of all the policies and practices, stratagems and methods, beliefs and attitudes that have been marshalled and are being employed in an attempt to ensure and entrench the political domination and economic exploitation of the African people by the white minority.

Colour and Race

Paramount in the strategy of the South African rulers, therefore, is the use they make of colour or race differences. In the workings of apartheid, colour comes first in importance, race next, and human beings last. In the terminology of apartheid, it may be correct to say "the population of South Africa is 16 million", but it would be incorrect to say "there

²¹ From: Ronald Segal (ed.) Sanctions against South Africa. Hammondswoth, England: Penguin, 1964.

The International Conference was organised by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement with Ronald Segal as the Convenor, and was held at Friends House, London, from 14 to 17 April 1964. Participants included representatives of governments, United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid, African liberation movements and anti-apartheid organisations, as well as a number of experts.

are 16 million people in South Africa". There are only 3 million people. In their public speeches, the political leaders of the Nationalist Party are always meticulously careful not to exaggerate the number of people in South Africa. Seldom if ever does the Government in its publications and official documents refer to the "people of South Africa" in a meaning that extends beyond the 3 million whites.

The very first clause of the current Constitution of the country states:

"The people of the Republic of South Africa acknowledge the sovereignty and guidance of God."

The Constitution was conceived of, drawn up, discussed, approved, and adopted as an Act of Parliament (No. 32 of 1961) by whites only, to the deliberate exclusion of all other South African inhabitants. Its provisions express their wishes and nobody else's.

The "people" referred to are therefore the whites. The Constitution of the Union of South Africa (South Africa Act, 1909) contained an identical clause with "Union" instead of "Republic" of South Africa. That Constitution was, like the present, the exclusive creation of whites. But the "guidance" clause was only inserted in 1925 through an amendment introduced by the then Nationalist Party Government led by General J.B.M. Hertzog. Because of the importance attached to it, the new clause was made Article No. 1 of the South Africa Act, 1909, as amended.

But Hertzog and his Party were not the originators of the concept of "people" as covering whites only. They had brought it down from an earlier page of their history. The Constitution of the Boer Republic of the Transvaal prior to its annexation by Britain in 1877 had the following provision:

"The people will permit no equality between whites and coloured inhabitants, either in Church or State."

In 1896, the Transvaal Republic, having been reconstituted, declared, in its laws, that

"The people will not permit the equalisation of coloured with white inhabitants."

The Free State Republic had similar provisions, the word "people" being used in the same context.

The distinction between people and "non-people" can be traced to two further successive sources. Before doing so, however, reference should be made to its other manifestations in the political jargon of the exponents of apartheid.

Until very recently, Nationalist Party politicians seeking votes or support spoke of the "two nations", meaning the English- and the Afrikaans-speaking whites. Needless to say, a discreet distance between Afrikanerdom and the other nation was cautiously maintained. Now that South Africa is a Republic, there is more frequent talk of "the nation". The rest of the inhabitants of South Africa, who constitute the majority, have never been either a nation or part of the "nation". They are "non-people", and are identified as Bantu (formerly "native", formerly "kaffir"), Coloureds (formerly "Hotnots"), and Indians (formerly "Coolies"). Chinese and other Asians - excluding the Japanese - belong to this last category.

Consciousness of these colour and race differences is nurtured, encouraged, maintained, and even enforced by means of numerous devices transcending every conceivable sphere of life, and invariably placing the African, with his black skin, at the rock bottom of the human scale, the white man at the top, and the rest at an intermediary level close to the African. So long as this consciousness of colour and racial dissimilarity, with its concomitant stratifications, is kept alive in the minds of the inhabitants, it is hoped, colour and race can serve the interests of domination and exploitation, with the "people" living off the "non-people".

We have followed the history of this relationship, in so far as it is a matter of government policy in South Africa, to the late nineteenth century. Its true origin, however, is neither governmental nor political. It emanates from the pitch-dark days of slavery.

The unexampled profits which slave labour yielded to slave masters and investors in an expanding world trade between European Powers and their colonies, with the clamorous demand for more slaves and more slave labour, initiated a wholesale invasion of the African coast and interior by slave traders, who seized thousands of Africans and flooded the slave market with slaves from Africa, to the total eclipse of non-African slaves. The result was that "slave" came to mean "African slave" and the

black skin became the universal badge of slavery and inferiority.

As Europe and America grew more prosperous, and in order that they might grow even more prosperous, the humiliation, degradation, and dehumanisation of man by man continued as black African slaves were beaten, tortured, hanged, exposed to conditions which killed them in tens of thousands year after year, persecuted and terrorised, and in general confined to a separate existence of their own - an existence more animal than human, nearer death than life. All this was done in an attempt to subdue and subordinate them to rigid control and to extract more and more labour from them without the risk of a revolt. It was the status of the slave, the purpose for keeping him in that status, and the methods which it became unavoidable to use which were later to lend force to the movement for the abolition of slavery.

But the slaves were the private property of their owners and a vital economic asset. The Cape had not lagged behind in availing itself of this asset. By 1806, 25,000 settlers owned a population of 30,000 slaves. Thus it was that the decision of the British Government to order the emancipation of slaves in all British colonies was deeply resented by slave-owners at the Cape as being an unwarranted interference in their domestic affairs and personal rights, and as showing disrespect for their doctrines and beliefs. The slaves were emancipated, but the grievances remained and for many of the dispossessed owners became the chief of several causes of the Great Trek, which culminated in the establishment of the Boer Republics. Something else remained: the mental attitude which had learnt to recognise in a slave a black man, in the black man a slave, and in both a subhuman. This was not peculiar to South Africa, but while the rest of the world has now acknowledged that all men are equal, the "people" of the Republic of South Africa will permit no equality between white and Coloured inhabitants.

Franchise

There is no African, Coloured, or Indian member of the South African Parliament, and there never has been. For the African and Indian there is not even the pretence of a franchise. The Transkeian gathering of Africans called a "Parliament" represents no extension of franchise or political rights to Africans in South Africa. In the context of the South African political situation, as also in the extent to which the Government, an interested party, interfered in the conduct of

the election campaign and in the actual voting, the make-believe elections, at which the "M.P.s" were elected for the "Transkeian Parliament", were patently farcical. Since the people could not stop the elections, however, they took the opportunity to protest at apartheid by casting their votes overwhelmingly against government-supported candidates in spite of pressures and techniques, sometimes subtle and often crude, to swing the votes in the opposite direction.

The so-called "Parliament" is at best an administrative institution. By clear intention and design, it is dominated by chiefs who are civil servants in the pay of the government, and whose first loyalty is to their government and employer. No decision that this "Parliament" takes will have any validity unless approved by the Government, and the latter will approve nothing which is not in the interests of racial discrimination and white domination. And the bantustan scheme is nothing if it is not an attempt to entrench racial discrimination and white domination throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. That is why the Transkeian bantustan has had to be constituted over the dead bodies of scores of African people, and under the crushing grip of a state of emergency.

The Coloured people of the Cape Province may elect a meagre 4 whites to represent them in a House Assembly that contains 160 members. But this represents a loss, not an increase of rights. In 1909, 10.1 percent of the registered voters were Coloured, as against the 85.2 percent European. The Africans, although their population was more than double the number of whites, accounted for 4.7 percent of the registered votes. Africans and Coloured could not be members of Parliament.

In Natal, also a "liberal" colony, the franchise for non-whites was a burlesque. Figures for the year 1907 show that the whites constituted 99.1 percent of the registered voters. The remaining 0.9 percent was made up of 150 Indians who had managed to qualify for registration, 50 Coloured, and exactly 6 lonely Africans. And yet the non-whites comprised 91 percent of the colony's population.

It could be justifiably claimed, however, that for the years 1907 and 1909 these franchise rights, however limited, represented at least a faint glimmer of light which would grow, given enough time, into the brightness of a full day. It did not grow. It faded when Union was formed in 1910 and was later to vanish altogether under Nationalist Party rule.

Racist Laws and Cheap Labour

In the fifty-three years that have passed since Union, the South African Parliament has produced the most appalling collection of racist laws to be found in any single country anywhere in the world. Their cumulative effect and the increasing ferocity with which they have been enforced during the past sixteen years have given to apartheid the basic characteristics, if not the exact dimensions, of slavery. But to the African, for whom the policy has meant humiliation and degradation, starvation, disease and death, jail, beatings, torture and hangings, the difference is academic.

Masters and Servants Laws, a relic of pre-Union times, make it an offence against the State for an African to disobey his master, to absent himself from work without permission or good cause, or to commit some breach of contract of employment. These laws serve to invest the employer with powers to exact submissiveness and docility from the African so that his labour can be the more effectively exploited. They are supplemented by and are themselves part of an elaborate network of discriminatory laws, such as the Industrial Conciliation Act, and the Natives (Settlement of Disputes) Act, which make strikes by Africans illegal; the Mines and Works Act, which confines Africans to unskilled employment; the Native Land Act, which robs Africans of rights to all but a final 13 percent of the land; the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, and a long list of other laws, all amended from time to time for greater effectiveness, and supported by numerous regulations, ordinances, and proclamations. By this network of laws the African population is held in the compulsory service of South Africa's whites. Interlocking systematically with the entire range of racialist legislation, and knitting it into a fine mesh, the notorious Pass Laws guaranteed to the whites that this service is not only compulsory but also incredibly cheap. How else could the "people" prevent the "equalisation of persons of colour with white inhabitants"?

"Abantwana balala ngendlala!" This is the anguished but all too familiar cry of a starving mother in South Africa's reserves, writing to her husband, telling him that the children are starving. He is working on a white farm, in competition with convict labour, or he is in a mine receiving wages far below those enjoyed by white miners, or may be he is sweeping the streets of some city, and earning £ 3 a week,²² from which

²² A Rand (R) was then equal to half a pound sterling.

he pays for his food, rent, train or bus fare to and from work. Wherever he may be working, if he sends any money, it is all spent within a few days of its receipt. His wife writes a second letter reporting how many of the children are ill, and a third one telling which of them has already died. But, precisely because the children are starving and dying of starvation, he must remain working. He must find work and accept any wage.

The reserves are overcrowded, poor, and unproductive and are the scene of perennial famines. He must seek work outside the reserves. If he goes to the mines, he may never return, and if he does he may bring back a broken limb or miner's phthisis. If he goes to work on a farm, he may be beaten to death. At the very least there will be a *sjambok* and a boot urging him to work harder and yet harder, and at the end of the contract his earnings will have accumulated to a mere pittance.

Where he offers himself for either the mines or farm labour, he will have little difficulty in proceeding to his place of employment. His travelling expenses will be met by way of a loan, to be recovered by compulsory deduction from his wages. But if, because of the unpopularity of the work in the mines or on farms, he enters an urban area for the purpose of seeking work, then from the time of such entry he is like a convict at large, liable to be taken to the nearest prison on meeting the first policeman; for the Urban Areas Act and the Pass Laws make it practically impossible for him to escape arrest, unless he plays a cat-and-mouse game with the police - spending the night in a wide variety of backyards, taking illegal shelter with friends, if any, while during the day, as he moves from place to place, exploring various avenues to lawful residence and employment, he avoids the police as if they were wild carnivorous beasts waylaying their black-skinned booty at street corners. The obstacles placed in the way of taking up a job completely deprive the African of the power to bargain for satisfactory terms of employment and place him at the unrestricted mercy of the employer. The result is cheap labour.

Forcible Removals

Another device by which African labour is kept cheap is the insecurity of homelessness. The true essence of home is not where one is forced to live, against one's will and against all

reason, but where one chooses to live, and it includes the right to live with one's family.

If ever the reserves were anyone's home, they have long ceased to be so for most Africans. Besides, the Government has given itself powers to remove any African or group or community of Africans from any part of the country to any other part if it considers this desirable "in the interests of good government". Many Africans and African communities have been forcibly removed from their houses under these arbitrary powers.

On the farms, the regular farm-labourer lives on his employer's property. If he loses his job, he loses his home simultaneously. He cannot enter an urban area because of pass and influx control regulations; he cannot eke out an existence from the barren hillsides of the reserves. He therefore wanders from farm to farm with his family and belongings, seeking employment. In general the fact that he has been expelled from one farm makes him an undesirable character in the eyes of other farmers. In these circumstances he is open to ruthless exploitation.

In urban areas, Africans are huddled into depressing and soul-destroying "native locations", which are clusters of little houses largely built to the same monotonous pattern and arranged in rows. In these locations, as in all areas set aside for African occupation, the numerous conditions governing such occupation are such as to reduce the African's residential rights to a precarious tenancy.

The village of Sophiatown was literally razed to the ground with bulldozers to force its residents out of their properties and move them to locations. A series of these mass removals has been carried out in different parts of the country. The latest is taking place in Alexandra Township, an African village on the outskirts of Johannesburg. This has been an established community with many of the families living there already in the third generation. Thousands of families have already been forcibly removed to locations. There remain 10,000 married couples and 21,000 children. These are now to be eliminated. The village is to be bulldozed out of existence, and in its place eight hostels are to be built, each to house 2,500 single Africans. The women and children, remnants of the broken families, will presumably be driven into the overcrowded and denuded reserves. It is as if a farmer was taking part of his cattle to a camp on one part of his farm, picking out the oxen from the remainder, and placing them in another camp in another

part of the farm, and driving the cows and calves to a third camp some distance away. He can of course not be expected to consult, much less seek the approval of, his cattle, and he does neither.

Disparity in Wages

The destruction of the sense of security that comes from having a home and family is therefore the aim and effect of government policy for the Africans in urban as well as in the rural areas. It has contributed enormously to the maintenance of a regular supply of cheap labour, and has helped, as few other things could do, to highlight and preserve the time-honoured difference between the "people" and the "non-people". Although South Africa is by all accounts "blessed" with a vast reservoir of cheap labour, the guilty try to soothe their consciences by stating, in a blind comparison, that Africans are better paid in South Africa than in most countries in Africa. Yet wages have reality only in relation to the cost of living. Instead of comparing an African worker in South Africa with another in another country, let us compare the wages of two workers in South Africa: an African and a white labourer. In 1946, the average earnings of an African worker employed by manufacturing industry amounted to £159.1 per annum, as against £734.28 for a white employee in the same industry. A white employee therefore received 4.6 times an African's wages.

In 1958, the corresponding figures were, for an African employee, £ 173.25, against £ 915.89 for a white worker, giving a ratio of 5.28:1. In 1961, an African received £ 176.6 as against £ 991.28. The ratio became 5.6:1.

These figures show that between 1946 and 1961 white earnings rose by 35 percent while African wages increased by only 11 percent. In that period the cost of living far outstripped the negligible increase in African wages.

The wages paid to an African mine-worker have hardly improved since the nineteenth century. He receives one sixteenth of a white worker's wages. In 1962 mining profits exceeded £140 million. The African mine-worker, however, is still paid 3s. per shift, plus a ration of third-grade mealie meal, some inexpensive meat, potatoes, and a few items produced on white farms where African wages are even lower, with a white employee earning 17 times what an African earns. The forcible sale of a man's labour by another for the other's sole benefit is a right enjoyed only by an owner with respect to his

property. The subtleties of apartheid do not make it obvious that a mechanism exists in South Africa by means of which Africans are forced to work for wages that the employers pay to the government for its sole benefit.

Imprisonment and Police Violence

It is now common knowledge that at least one thousand Africans per day are convicted by South African courts for petty pass offences. There are also convictions for tax offences, failure to pay municipal rents, breaches of numerous government proclamations and ordinances in urban and rural areas, as well as convictions for offences the commission of which is the inevitable result of the drastically repressive conditions under which Africans live.

When all these are taken into consideration, the number of Africans driven into South African jails every day, year in and year out, must be of the order of 2,000. From the jails they are distributed as convict labour to farmers and other employers, and payment for the labour thus given is made to the government. The practice makes the law, the police, and the courts appear as a simple device whereby the African is summarily stripped of his rudimentary rights and then forced to work as if he were a slave.

The practice of apartheid has made South Africa a lively cemetery. Between 1948 and 1960 the total number of Africans killed by police bullets in the course of political protest, including the victims of the Sharpeville massacre, was approximately 300 according to official records. Since then there have been scores of Africans killed in the Transkei when the African people opposed the Government's attempt to impose a bantustan on them.

Some Africans have been killed, not by the police but in circumstances initiated by general opposition to apartheid. Others have been sentenced to death for alleged offences committed in similar circumstances. The total number of unnatural deaths accountable to apartheid and resulting directly or indirectly from some government provocation must be well in excess of 500.

Poverty and Disease

It is, however, in the matter of health that the inherent evil of white domination appears at its most heartless. One of

the topics which the South African Government discusses least in its propaganda material is the state of health of the African people. The only information that seems to be available relates to Baragwanath Hospital. We are repeatedly told that this hospital has three miles of beds and the best and highest of everything. No other hospital seems to exist in South Africa. There is not the faintest hint as to the annual mileage covered by African graves. The reason is not far to seek.

Apartheid keeps African labour cheap. It has to in the interests of the "people". Cheap labour keeps Africans underfed. In the urban areas four out of every five families are starving. The rate is higher in the country areas. The result is that the African population is exposed to the ravages of diseases easily traceable to poverty. The average life expectancy of an African is 37-42 years. For whites it is 67-72 years, a difference of 30 years!

In breathless praise of the government's showpiece hospital, Baragwanath, the Director of Information of the South African Embassy in London declares: "Every hour of the day and night a baby is born in the maternity ward." But out of every 100 African babies born, 57 die, before they reach their fifth birthday. The rate for whites is 5 per cent.

This mass destruction of innocent babies is the work of apartheid. In the midst of so much wealth and so much food, there has to be so much poverty, and so many deliberately starved to death.

And yet the boast persists: "South Africa has never had it so good." Indeed it has not. On the weary and laden shoulders of African labourers stand the great finance houses of the Western world. South Africa is pulling down its old buildings and replacing them with skyscrapers that rise to dizzy heights. The London Stock Exchange is pouring fortunes into the bulging treasure bags of British investors. Cheques are dropping on the marble desks of United States financiers with unfailing regularity, each fatter than the last. And what goes into the roughened and empty hands of the African who digs up all the wealth? Nothing but poverty and early death - and on top of it all, taxation.

Taxation of Africans

There is a sharp contrast between the system of taxation for the Africans and that for the whites, because the purposes

of the two systems differ. The taxation imposed on the African people is another ruthless instrument designed to compel them accept work on the white-owned mines and farms. To this end, for Africans, but not for whites, failure to pay tax is a criminal offence.

While an African man above the age of 18 years must pay a minimum of R3.50 per annum, irrespective of whether he earns an income or not, whites are only liable to pay income tax if they earn R600 per annum or more. For whites anything less than R600 is regarded as inadequate for the purposes of taxation. For Africans no distinction is made between married and single, and no rebates are granted for dependents or the possession of insurance policies, as in the case of whites.

In addition to poll tax, Africans have to pay local tax; tribal levies to Bantu Authorities; a Bantu Education tax; ploughing, dipping, and grazing fees.

Apart from direct taxation, statistics for 1957 show that Africans contribute between $\text{R}42,500,000$ and $\text{R}50,000,000$ per annum in indirect taxation. Despite this huge contribution there are hardly any social amenities for the African people. The government uses the revenue from African taxation to develop apartheid institutions which the people reject, such as Bantu Education. It has often been said that "taxation without representation is tyranny". In South Africa the Africans are taxed by a white minority government in order that it may forge and build the instrument of its tyrannical rule.

Not satisfied that the interests of white domination have been fully secured, and anxious to perfect the machinery of exploitation of the African people for the benefit of white South Africa and her friends, Dr. Verwoerd has now thought up the "Bantu Laws Amendment Bill". It is suitably colour-washed with such sugared phrases as "Peace Officer", "law courts", and "Aid Centres". But the savagery of the Bill is the product of a mind that combines the ruthlessness of a slave-driver with a sadistic admiration for Hitler's system of labour camps.

Group Areas and Population Registration

So far, only limited reference has been made to the impact of apartheid on the other Coloured races in South Africa. This is not because this policy is any less inhuman to them. Racialism is an essential element in apartheid and is incapable of humanity. What has been said in relation to the African

people covers the fate of the other non-whites but with slight variations in degree. Mention must be made, however, of two laws, both passed in 1950 and both intended to affect everyone in South Africa.

The Group Areas Act, 1950, amended in 1957, sets out to carve up South Africa into racial group areas and force each group to live in an assigned area. In practice it turned out to be a vehicle of hate and an instrument for the persecution in particular of the Indian community. Government representatives openly admitted that its aim was to ruin the Indian people economically. Its harsh provisions carried out with a callousness more suited to a society of jungle-bred headhunters than a "Christian" country. Under this Act Africans have been pushed from area to area and forcibly broken up into ethnic and tribal groups to facilitate their suppression.

The Population Registration Act, 1950, required the registration of every person in South Africa, with particulars of race and other detailed information. The Act created a Board to classify borderline cases between the racial groups. As soon as members were appointed to this Classification Board, it summoned some whites to appear before it to prove that they were not "natives". Guided by the Act's meticulous definitions of "white person", "Coloured", and "native", they carried out a witch hunt into their victims' past ancestry and unearthed ancient birth, marriage, or death certificates and other documentary evidence in their quest for the truth. They perused sworn affidavits and heard oral testimony. They scrutinised the hair, nose, eyes, lips, and skin of the "suspect". They questioned and cross-questioned him or her for hours, and having retired for a few days or weeks to consider the verdict, they ultimately arrived at a decision, and communicated their judgment to the person under investigation.

A white woman suddenly discovered, to her horror, that her husband was not white but Coloured and that her own beloved children had suddenly become Coloured. A shocked white man was told that his wife did not have pure blood, and his children promptly ceased to be white and automatically dropped out of white society.

The Board tore into the Coloured community with added vigour, setting off a paralysing wave of panic in every household as one Coloured person after another was adjudged a "native". No mediaeval Inquisition was ever more thorough or derived more satisfaction from its task.

Following the letter and the spirit of government policy, the Classification Board broke families and careers to pieces as husband and wife, parent and child, and brother and sister were wrenched apart and many cast into the caste below. Reportedly, at least one child in Cape Town, unable to bear the mental strain of it all, committed suicide.

As the wave of panic began to sweep into the white community, causing understandable unease among those who had been shouting loudest about the purity of their blood, the Classification Board was called off and disbanded, but not before its activities had demonstrated: what needless damage racialism had done in South Africa; to what bottomless depths one has to sink one's soul to be an advocate of apartheid, or its supporter, open or secret; and yet, what impenetrable emptiness pervades the noisy myth that there is a pure race to be protected, to the last drop of its blood, against ordinary human beings living in their motherland.

The inhumanity of Population Registration Act is the inhumanity of apartheid as reviewed in the foregoing pages. It will be observed that, for this grisly and ever-widening trail of persecution, death, and destruction, the Constitution adopted by the select "people" in 1961 claims the "guidance of the Almighty God". But what a sordid record for such a claim!

Stop Trading with South Africa

The outline given so far of the diversified manifestations of apartheid makes no mention of the reactions of those affected by this policy. The impression may have been created that the oppressed have been the passive and meek victims of ruthlessness. Nothing could be further from the truth.

If the South African Government's defence budget for the current year has had to be raised to the monstrous figure of £105 million, if the white population has taken to sleeping with loaded pistols under its pillows, if it has become necessary to maintain a large police force and army - both heavily armed and perpetually on the alert - it is because South Africa is in the thick of a vicious political struggle which has now reached a stage where women's pistols, police arms, and a white army are all that separates the majority of the people of South Africa from their historic objective - the destruction of apartheid and everything that goes with it, and the establishment of a South African State of which all its people will be justly proud.

The struggle against apartheid and white domination has consumed half a century of patience, leaving in its place a yawning vacuum soon to be filled with bitterness, hate, and worse. But it has shown, as the experience of the African National Congress demonstrates, that there are South Africans, no less white than Mr. Vorster, and Afrikaans- as well English-speaking, whose hatred of white domination, racial discrimination and exploitation is second to none. Side by side with the Africans, they have fought against these evils, and so have been ostracised by their neighbours and friends. Like the oppressed, they have been banned, imprisoned in the solitude of their houses, held in solitary confinement, and subjected to torture; they are with the oppressed, facing trial - even death sentences; no less than Chief Lutuli, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Robert Sobukwe, George Peake, Monty Naicker, and many others, they reject white supremacy and suffer for doing so. They are few. But this is precisely where the greatness of their courage lies. Their white countrymen have rallied to the support of a white regime. Other South Africans are abroad, in the company of the peoples of the world who have demanded a halt to racialism. Some have given and are giving of their best in the humanitarian cause which is no less vital in the final result. But what is to be the end of the world's abhorrence of apartheid, if the world supports apartheid materially?

If this Conference should find, as the opponents of white domination in South Africa have insisted, that there is nothing the world can do if it does not impose sanctions to destroy apartheid, then let this Conference throw its full weight behind the demands of African, Asian, and other nations upon South Africa's trading partners to stop trading with a country which refuses to abandon a slave system.

NEW YEAR MESSAGE TO U THANT, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DECEMBER 29, 1964²³

We wish, Sir, to place on record that the United Nations has this year shown a new firmness and determination in the handling of the South African question. We wish to express our deep appreciation of the unequivocal stand of the United Nations on many issues affecting our struggle against apartheid.

The vigilance and swift reaction of the Special Committee on Apartheid, and its detailed, up-to-date and comprehensive reports deserve special commendation.

We welcome the unanimous demand by the United Nations General Assembly that all political prisoners should be released and their trials abandoned. The murder of Vuyisile Mini, Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Mkaba in the face of this clear demand by the General Assembly and the Security Council and in total disregard of your own appeals are sufficient proof of the suicidal intransigence of the South African white minority Government.

The time has come to indict those countries which for the sake of profit have encouraged and aided the inhuman excesses perpetrated by the racist Government of Verwoerd in South Africa in pursuance of policies that constitute a serious threat to peace in Africa and the world.

It is, therefore, our hope, Sir, that the New Year will see United Nations action of a kind which will unavoidably force the racialists in South Africa to heed world opinion and surrender political power to the majority of the people. Only so can mankind avert the unspeakable tragedy of the racial conflict which the South African Government is fomenting so assiduously.

With the sincere wishes of the African National Congress and the oppressed people of South Africa for a successful New Year in your great work,

Yours faithfully,

(signed) O.R. Tambo

²³ From: E.S. Reddy papers

Deputy President, ANC (S.A.)

The General Assembly, in resolution 1881 (XVIII) of October 11, 1963, requested the South African Government "to abandon the arbitrary trial [of Nelson Mandela and others] now in progress and forthwith to grant unconditional release to all political prisoners and to all persons imprisoned, interned or subjected to other restrictions for having opposed the policy of apartheid". The resolution was adopted by 106 votes, with only South Africa voting against.

STATEMENT AT PRESS CONFERENCE IN DAR ES SALAAM CONCERNING SENTENCES IN THE RIVONIA TRIAL, JUNE 12, 1964²⁴

Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Dennis Goldberg and Elias Motsoaledi were today sentenced to life imprisonment in the Rivonia trial which since last year, has been the focal point of world attention.

The judge in the trial has done his duty to the white government which appointed him. The Rivonia leaders have done their duty to South Africa and all its people. They have done their duty to Africa and the world.

Those who opposed evil have been put away by the evildoers. The acknowledged leaders of 13 million people - men of incontestable integrity and character - have been proclaimed criminals at the instance of a handful of violent bloodsuckers and tyrants.

Let Nelson Mandela and his colleagues be assured that history will not let them down, nor will it fail to punish the real criminals. Their committal to South Africa's brutal jails is a challenge to the liberation movement and the people they led. It is a challenge to their colleagues and brothers, the leaders and people of Africa. It is a challenge to the world which denounced the Rivonia trial as arbitrary and demanded the release of all political prisoners and the immediate abandonment of the policy of white domination.

²⁴ From: *Spotlight on South Africa*, Dar es Salaam, Volume 2, No. 24, June 15, 1964

The African National Congress will not rest before this challenge has been fittingly answered. There shall be no peace before our people take full control of the destiny and future of their country and motherland. And since in South Africa moderation and reason leads only to Verwoerd's death cells and torture chambers, then moderation and reason must take leave of the South African situation.

We salute the heroes of Rivonia. Their imprisonment is not the end of the liberation struggle or of resistance to tyranny; it is the beginning of a new and decisive phase in that struggle - a phase which will embroil the continent of Africa and destroy the foundations of international peace.

We call on our oppressed people in South Africa to prepare for hard times and for untold sacrifices in the fight for vindication of their aspirations. We urge mankind to heed the words and the appeal of Chief Lutuli in his statement calling for sanctions.²⁵

²⁵ In a statement released on the same day at the United Nations, Chief Albert J. Lutuli, President-General of the African National Congress, said:

"I appeal to all governments throughout the world, to people everywhere, to organisations and institutions in every land and at every level, to act now to impose such sanctions on South Africa that will bring about the vital necessary change and avert what can become the greatest African tragedy of our times."

PRESS STATEMENT, DECEMBER 1964²⁶

In a statement released in London on Wednesday, December 23rd, Mr. Z.B. Molete, Publicity Secretary of the Pan Africanist Congress, is reported to have said that there are talks being held between the ANC and PAC, with Mr. Diallo Telli participating.²⁷ He further states that at the end of November there was a meeting between Mr. Leballo and myself in the presence of Mr. Telli.

Both the "talks" and the meeting are purely fictitious. Mr. Z.B. Molete knows perfectly well that there are no "talks" of any kind being held between the ANC and the PAC, and Mr. Diallo Telli is participating in no such talks.

Mr. Molete also knows that although all the persons he mentioned, including himself, were in Algiers at the beginning (not the end) of November, at no time was there any meeting between Mr. Leballo and myself either in the presence of Mr. Diallo Telli or at all.

The PAC leaders, showing reckless disregard for the ultimate consequences, have taken many people for a ride by the simple technique of telling untruths and fashioning their stories to suit their chosen victims. The false picture of unity in which they irresponsibly drag in the name of the Secretary-General of the OAU serves the same purpose as the despicable and provocatively scandalous lies they have been spreading in Ghana about Nelson Mandela. In each case the intention is, characteristically, to deceive and mislead for purely selfish ends.

(Signed)
O.R. Tambo

²⁶ From: *Spotlight on South Africa*, Dar es Salaam, January 1, 1965

²⁷ The statement of Mr. Molete was reported in *The Nationalist*, Dar es Salaam, on December 24, 1964.

Mr. Diallo Telli was Administrative Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity.

Deputy President
African National Congress (S.A.)

NELSON MANDELA²⁸

by
Oliver Tambo

MANDELA AND TAMBO said the brass plate on our office door. We practised as attorneys-at-law in Johannesburg in a shabby building across the street from the Magistrates' Court. Chancellor House in Fox Street was one of the few buildings in which African tenants could hire offices: it was owned by Indians. This was before the axe of the Group Areas Act fell to declare the area "white" and landlords were themselves prosecuted if they did not evict the Africans. MANDELA AND TAMBO was written huge across the frosted window panes on the second floor, and the letters stood out like a challenge. To white South Africa it was bad enough that two men with black skins should practise as lawyers, but it was indescribably worse that the letters also spelled out our political partnership.

Nelson and I were both born in the Transkei, he one year after me. We were students together at Fort Hare University College. With others we had founded the African National Congress Youth League. We went together into the Defiance Campaign of 1952, into general strikes against the Government and sat in the same Treason Trial dock.

For years we worked side by side in the offices near the Courts. To reach our desks each morning, Nelson and I ran the gauntlet of patient queues of people overflowing from the chairs in the waiting-room into the corridors. South Africa has the dubious reputation of boasting one of the highest prison populations in the world. Jails are jam-packed with Africans imprisoned for serious offences - and crimes of violence are ever on the increase in apartheid society - but also for petty infringements of statutory law that no really civilised society would punish with imprisonment. To be unemployed is a crime because no African can for long evade arrest if his passbook does not carry the stamp of authorised and approved employment. To be landless can be a crime, and we interviewed weekly the delegations of grizzled, weather-worn peasants from the

²⁸ From: First, Ruth (ed.) No Easy Walk to Freedom: Articles, Speeches and Trial Addresses of Nelson Mandela. London: Heinemann, 1965.

The article by Mr. Tambo was published as an introduction to the book.

countryside, who came to tell us how many generations of their families had worked a little piece of land from which they were now being ejected. To brew African beer, to drink it or to use the proceeds to supplement the meagre family income is a crime, and women who do so face heavy fines and jail terms. To cheek a white man can be a crime. To live in the "wrong" area - an area declared white or Indian or Coloured - can be a crime for Africans. South African apartheid laws turn innumerable innocent people into "criminals". Apartheid stirs hatred and frustration among people. Young people, who should be in school or learning a trade, roam the streets, join gangs and wreak their revenge on the society that confronts them with only the dead-end alley of crime or poverty.

Our buff office files carried thousands of these stories and if, when we started our law partnership, we had not been rebels against South African apartheid, our experiences in our offices would have remedied the deficiency. We had risen to professional status in our community, but every case in court, every visit to the prisons to interview clients, reminded us of the humiliation and suffering burning into our people.

Nelson, one of the royal family of the Transkei, was groomed from childhood for respectability, status and sheltered living. Born near Umtata in 1918, he was the eldest son of a Tembo chief. His father died when he was twelve and his upbringing and education were taken over by the Paramount Chief. Nelson, Sabata, Paramount Chief of the Tembu and opponent of the Government, and Kaizer Matanzima, Chief Minister of the Transkei and arch-collaborator with the Nationalist Government, were educated together. At the age of 16, Nelson went to Fort Hare and there we first met: in the thick of a student strike.

After Fort Hare, we parted company. I went on to teach mathematics at St. Peter's School in Johannesburg. From this school, killed by the Government in later years because it refused to bow its head to government-dictated principles of a special education for "inferior" Africans (Bantu Education), graduated successive series of young men drawn inexorably into the African National Congress, because it was the head of our patriotic, national movement for our rights.

Nelson ran away from the Transkei to escape a tribal marriage his cousins and uncles were trying to arrange for him. In Johannesburg, he had his first encounter with the lot of the urban African in a teeming African township: overcrowding, incessant raids for passes, arrests, poverty, the pinpricks and

frustrations of the white rule. Walter Sisulu, Secretary-General of the African National Congress in a vital period, befriended and advised and urged him to study law. Mandela studied by correspondence to gain an arts degree, enrolled for a law degree at the University of the Witwatersrand and was later articled to a firm of white attorneys. We met again in 1944 in the ranks of the African National Congress Youth League.

As a man, Nelson is passionate, emotional, sensitive, quickly stung to bitterness and retaliation by insult and patronage. He has a natural air of authority. He cannot help magnetising a crowd: he is commanding with a tall, handsome bearing; trusts and is trusted by the youth, for their impatience reflects his own; appealing to the women. He is dedicated and fearless. He is the born mass leader.

But early on, he came to understand that State repression was too savage to permit mass meetings and demonstrations through which the people could ventilate their grievances and hope for redress. It was of limited usefulness to head great rallies. The Government did not listen and soon enough the tear gas and the muzzles of the guns were turned against the people. The justice of our cries went unrecognised. The popularity of leaders like Mandela was an invitation to counter-attack by the Government. Mandela was banned from speaking, from attending gatherings, from leaving Johannesburg, from belonging to any organisation. Speeches, demonstrations, peaceful protests, political organising became illegal.

Of all that group of young men, Mandela and his close friend and co-leader, Walter Sisulu, were perhaps the fastest to get to grips with the harsh realities of the African struggle against the most powerful adversary in Africa: a highly industrialised, well-armed State, manned by a fanatical group of white men determined to defend their privilege and their prejudice, and aided by the complicity of American, British, West German, and Japanese investment in the most profitable system of oppression on the continent. Nelson was a key figure in thinking, planning and devising new tactics.

We had to forge an alliance of strength based not on colour but on commitment to the total abolition of apartheid and oppression; we would seek allies, of whatever colour, as long as they were totally agreed on our liberation aims. The African people, by nature of their numbers, their militancy, and the grimness of their oppression, would be the spearhead of the struggle. We had to organise the people, in town and

countryside, as an instrument for struggle. Mandela drafted the "M" plan, a simple commonsense plan for organisation on a street basis, so that Congress volunteers would be in daily touch with the people, alert to their needs and able to mobilise them. He no longer appeared on the public platform and few platforms were allowed us as the years went by, but he was ever among the people, guiding his lieutenants to organise them. During the Treason Trial these efforts at organisation were put on trial. Mandela went from prison cell to dock and then to witness-box, when the accused conducted their defence and he and his co-accused expounded the policy of Congress in court. The men in the dock were acquitted, but the trial marked the end of that epoch and the opening of a new one.

By 1960, virtually every African leader was muzzled and restricted by Government decree. There was no right to organise. In March, 1960, there were the anti-pass protests called by the breakaway Pan Africanist Congress, and the peaceful gathering at Sharpeville was machine-gunned. The ANC called for a national protest strike.

The country answered that call. The ANC was declared illegal, together with the Pan Africanist Congress. In a five-month-long state of emergency, virtually every known Congressman was imprisoned, but during the Emergency and even more so immediately afterwards the ANC put itself on an underground footing. Now Mandela's "M" plan came into its own. Ever at the centre, pulling the strings together, inspiring the activities that, if apprehended, could mean long stretches in prison for ANC activists, was Nelson.

In May, 1961, South Africa was to be declared a Nationalist Republic. There was a white referendum, but no African was consulted. The African people decided there were ways of making their opposition felt. A general strike would be the answer. The strike was called in the name of Nelson Mandela. He left his home, our office, his wife and children, to live the life of a political outlaw. Here began the legend of the "Black Pimpernel". He lived in hiding, meeting only his closest political associates, travelling round the country in disguise, popping up here to lead and advise, disappearing again when the hunt got too hot.

The strike was smashed by an unprecedented police and army mobilisation. If peaceful protests like these were to be put down by force then the people would be forced to use other methods of struggle; this was the inevitable conclusion. The ANC

was no longer merely a national patriotic front, it was an underground resistance struggle. Acts of sabotage shook the country from the second half of 1961. "Umkhonto we Sizwe" (the Spear of the Nation) had been formed and was at work.

I had left South Africa early in 1960, sent out by the ANC to open our office abroad. Mandela was then in prison during the state of emergency proclaimed after Sharpeville. I saw him again, astonishingly, in 1961 and 1962, when he left his hiding places somewhere in South Africa, was smuggled across the border and turned up at the Addis Ababa conference of the Pan African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa²⁹ to expound before the delegates the policy for the struggle of our organisation and our people.

In South Africa, the freedom fight has grown grim and relentless. Mandela went home to survive a perilous existence underground for 17 months until he was betrayed by an informer and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for his leadership of the 1961 strike and for leaving the country illegally. From his cell, he was taken to the dock in the Rivonia Trial to face trial with eight others - among them Walter Sisulu. The charge was sabotage and conspiracy to overthrow the Government by force. The world watched that trial and knows the verdict of guilty and the sentence of life imprisonment.

Nelson Mandela is in Robben Island today. His inspiration lives on in the heart of every African patriot. He is the symbol of the self-sacrificing leadership our struggle has thrown up and our people need. He is unrelenting, yet capable of flexibility and delicate judgment. He is an outstanding individual, but he knows that he derives his strength from the great masses of people, who make up the freedom struggle in our country.

I am convinced that the worldwide protests during the Rivonia Trial saved Mandela and his fellow-accused from the death sentence. But in South Africa, a life sentence means imprisonment until death - or until the defeat of the Government, which holds these men prisoners. The sentences they serve are a scaring reminder that such men must not be wasted behind bars; that no solution to South Africa's conflict can be

²⁹ The Pan African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECSA) was formed at a meeting of representatives of nationalist movements from Kenya, Uganda, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Zanzibar - with Julius Nyerere as Chairman. It was subsequently expanded with the admission of movements of Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. The movements were allowed to open offices in Dar es Salaam when Tanganyika became independent.

found, while the people are deprived of such leadership; that Mandela is imprisoned not for his personal defiance of apartheid law but because he asserted the claims of a whole people living and dying under the most brutal system of race rule the world knows.

"PASSIVE RESISTANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA": ARTICLE, 1966³⁰

Oppressed people in South Africa have always associated the history of the United States with the great name of Abraham Lincoln. There was an issue involving human rights in his day - an issue that challenged the principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence. To the honour of his name, his people, and his country, Abraham Lincoln translated these great principles into concrete action.

The United States Government has made some forthright statements of policy in condemnation of such practices as apartheid in South Africa, where black men and women are held in bondage in violation of the principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What puzzles and worries Africans, however, is the opposition persistently offered by the White House to any action intended to put an end to this bondage.

In its historical development, "passive resistance" in South Africa has been closely associated with the late Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy. As early as 1907, he led the Indian community in South Africa in acts of passive resistance. In later years there were further passive resistance campaigns by the Indian community. Mahatma believed in the effectiveness of what he called the "soul force" in passive resistance. According to him, the suffering experienced in passive resistance inspired a change of heart in the rulers. The African National Congress (ANC), on the other hand, expressly rejected any concepts and methods of struggle that took the form of a self-pitying, arms-folding, and passive reaction to oppressive policies. It felt that nothing short of aggressive pressure from the masses of the people would bring about any change in the political situation in South Africa. As a

³⁰ From: Davis, John A. and James K. Baker, *Southern Africa in Transition*. London: Pall Mall Press, 1966.

countermeasure to Mahatma Gandhi's passive resistance, the African National Congress launched, in 1952, the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws, or the "Defiance Campaign".³¹

Before they were finally defeated and subjugated by sheer force of superior arms, our forefathers had been engaged in many bitter struggles against the white foreign invaders and colonial conquerors, both Boer and British. With spears and battle-axes their only weapons, and with shields their sole means of protection against bullets, Africans fought grimly in defence of their land and their national independence. The armed struggle was carried on intermittently for 127 years. In the end, however, the Africans were defeated, totally disarmed, and then shepherded into what are known as reserves. These reserves, 260 in number, are usually in the poorest parts of the country and are utterly inadequate for their large populations.

But wounds could not be licked indefinitely. If the British and the Boers, despite the bitterness of a hard-fought war, could come together in a united front against the African people, why could not the Africans unite and face their common problems and enemy, no longer as individual and separate tribes but as a united people? The answer was found on January 8, 1912, when African chiefs, intellectuals, clergymen, workers, and peasants from every tribe in South Africa met in Bloemfontein and formed the African National Congress. The organisation turned out to be more than a negative reaction to the formation of a union of white foreigners and conquerors. It became the symbol of African unity and gave our people a sense of nationhood that has survived the most determined applications of the policy of divide-and-rule over a period of more than fifty years. Seeing in this organisation a serious threat to their continued political and economic domination of the country - an evil force to be fought and destroyed by all means - the white rulers of South Africa and their successive governments employed a variety of measures to eradicate it. They intimidated and victimised chiefs, teachers and government employees who supported the organisation; they engaged the services of informers and agents provocateurs; they engineered groundless quarrels among members of the organisation; and they encouraged the formation of splinter and opposition groups to confuse the people, to undermine their struggle for national

³¹ Mahatma Gandhi had, in fact, rejected the term "passive resistance" and called for defiance of unjust laws and led campaigns of civil disobedience. Mr. Tambo made a more positive assessment of Mahatma Gandhi in later years.

emancipation, and, in that way, to perpetuate oppression and exploitation.

At the time of the formation of the ANC, there was no question of relying on armed force as a means of struggle. Only ten or so years previously, the Boers had tried that method against the British and failed. Bambata had resorted to arms in 1906 and also failed. Deputations, petitions, demonstrations, and conference resolutions were the order of the day. Besides, the Africans had been forcibly disarmed. The ANC, therefore, led the people into essentially peaceful and nonviolent forms of action. It was not unusual for governments of the pre-apartheid era to take some notice of African demands and hold out some promise of possible concessions. In some cases, political pressure in the form of public meetings and protest demonstrations yielded favourable results. Although the overall political and economic situation of the Africans remained consistently intolerable, there was always hope for securing some redress of grievances through peaceful means. The African was not denied such rights as freedom of assembly, speech, organisation, the press, and movement - all of which have since completely vanished.

The pattern of legislation passed by successive governments was distinctly discriminatory against the African people and aimed at establishing and perpetuating a servant-and-master relationship between black and white. Thus, Africans employed by white farmers were treated like serfs and worked from dawn to dusk for a mere pittance; the poor and hunger-stricken inhabitants of the overcrowded and arid reserves were subjected to heavy taxation; and, in the urban areas, Africans were harassed by laws requiring passes and were chased from pillar to post by the police.

During World War II, Hitler became the hero, and Nazism the faith, of hundreds of Afrikaners. The fanaticism of the SS was a virtue to be emulated. As the Jews had been shown their place in Hitler's Germany, so would the Kaffirs in South Africa. But the Africans, heartened by the Allies' promise of a postwar world in which the fundamental rights of all men would be respected, became increasingly impatient with their lot. Institutions such as the Advisory Boards, the Natives' Representative Council, the Transkeian Bunga, and the "Native Parliamentary Representatives" - an insignificant handful of whites representing Africans in the South African Senate and House of Assembly - were all attacked by Africans as dummy bodies, and agitation for their boycott was started. Anti-pass

campaigns were launched in urban areas where the Africans were most affected by the pass system, protests against poor housing and low wages mounted, and the rural population resisted government schemes that interfered with their rights to land and that sought to limit their livestock.

The war ended, but repression continued unabated. In 1946, the African mine workers in Johannesburg and the Reef went on strike. The strike was ruthlessly repressed and several Africans were killed. The Natives' Representative Council, a dummy African parliament, which, since its establishment in 1937, had struggled in vain to prevent the enactment of discriminatory legislation, adjourned indefinitely in protest. In the same year, the South African Indians launched a passive resistance campaign against a law restricting their right to landownership. In the meantime, the growing African National Congress continued protesting against various forms of segregation. The government, on the other hand, adopted more repressive legislation.

It was in this atmosphere of discontent and expectation that the black cloud of reaction and brutal repression descended on South Africa: Dr. Malan's Nationalist Party seized political power in May, 1948. These were the disciples of Hitler. One year later, the shape of things to come was clear. Laws enacted by previous governments were reinforced with vicious amendments and were vigorously enforced by officials who, for sheer brutality, seemed to have been specially recruited from some prehistoric bush where cruelty was a highly prized virtue. Soon the expression became current among Africans that "The devil has been let loose on this country".

Responding to this new challenge, the ANC adopted in 1949 a "programme of action" that stipulated that boycotts, strikes, non-collaboration, and "civil disobedience" would now be used as methods and forms of action in the political struggle. The programme contemplated participation by the masses of the people. It did not raise the question of violence versus nonviolence. The appearance of the word "nonviolence" in the political vocabulary of the ANC was a product of the objective conditions under which the programme was being put into action. The use of the expression "civil disobedience" in the programme was, however, of significance. The ANC was an ordinary political organisation that had always used methods of political pressure recognised in a democratic country. These methods had been nonviolent, but there had been no specific declaration of policy excluding violence or positively proclaiming nonviolence.

In the course of normal demonstration or other forms of political action, the people could conceivably have been provoked into conduct that amounted to civil disobedience, and this could have happened without a policy decision authorising such conduct. Why then did the 1949 ANC conference go out of its way to provide for "civil disobedience"?

The force with which apartheid struck at the African masses called for action, and the conference decided to commit the organisation to specified drastic forms of action. But the programme of action did not define "civil disobedience". Did it mean civil disorder? Mob violence? Rioting? It most certainly did not mean any of these types of conduct. The keynote of the disobedience was to be discipline. The expression "civil disobedience" referred to the deliberate breach, or defiance, of government laws, regulations, and orders. The conference, in interpreting civil disobedience in terms of disciplined and purposeful mass action, emphasised nonviolence. It called for self-control on the part of the people and urged them to withstand acts of provocation by the police, who were obviously anxious for a showdown. Failure to emphasise the need for discipline would have been a fatal political blunder. Nonviolence was thus a political tactic that could be changed according to the demands of the political situation at any given time.

On May 1, 1950, eighteen Africans were killed by the police during a one-day strike staged as the climax to a provincial campaign for universal adult suffrage. On June 26, 1950, the Africans' first national protest strike was called. The strike was the culmination of a countrywide campaign of protest against the Unlawful Organisations Bill introduced by the government and aimed at stamping out all opposition to its racial and oppressive policies. It was also intended as an act of mourning for the Africans killed on May 1 and earlier in the liberation struggle. The strike was a great success and demonstrated the readiness of the oppressed people for determined political action. The Unlawful Organisations Bill was withdrawn as a result of the protest agitation. (It was later introduced and enacted, with slight textual amendments, as the Suppression of Communism Act.)

The policy of uncompromising apartheid was carried out with vigour, violence, hate, and haste. This has remained the pattern of Nationalist Party rule in South Africa to the present day. The country has been in a state of perpetual political crisis now since 1948. It has been the blackest period in the

past sixty years and, for the Africans, the bloodiest since the Boer invasions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In fifteen short years, hundreds of innocent Africans have been shot dead by the police; many more have been wounded by police gunfire during raids, while under arrest, and while in prison; and many have been beaten to death on white-owned farms. In addition, millions of Africans have been convicted of petty offences, and the average number sentenced to death annually for what are essentially political offences has been higher than in any corresponding period since Jan van Riebeeck landed in the country in 1652.

When this gruesome phase in the history of the country began to assume a regular pattern in 1950, numerous protests and demonstrations against government policy were staged by many organisations from every racial group. In one way or another, the various groups and movements representing the vast majority of the population voiced their protest. These groups saw the clear advantage in coordinating the anti-apartheid forces and encouraging joint action against the common enemy. Furthermore, since it was the express aim of the government to enforce sharp racial divisions among the population and to set up separate and possibly hostile racial camps, the very act of cooperation and unity among all opponents of racial discrimination and white domination was in itself an attack on government policy. It was, therefore, of great political and strategic importance for the African National Congress to rally, and to welcome, the support of other oppressed groups and of democratic whites. The South African Indian Congress and the Coloured people's leaders readily accepted a basis for conducting joint campaigns.

At its conference in December 1951, the ANC decided to launch the Defiance Campaign. The story of this dignified, disciplined, and peaceful campaign is well known. It won many friends for the African cause in South Africa and abroad, and served to focus the attention of influential sectors of world opinion on the South African political scene. Within South Africa, the Defiance Campaign strengthened the liberation movement and set the tone for future action. Although towards the end of the campaign the Africans were provoked into some violence, they had amply demonstrated their capacity for self-discipline and their readiness for militant struggle. This meant that it was possible, without resorting to violence, to force the government into a position in which its policy became unworkable. In the years following 1952, hundreds of leaders were banned from taking part in political activities or attending gatherings. Many were restricted to defined areas

while others were banished from their homes. Scores were imprisoned, and meetings and processions were prohibited in many parts of the country. Despite all this, however, and despite the fact that the most influential leaders were cut off from the people, the pressure of mass political action throughout the country continued to rise, compelling the government to fall back on an ever-increasing list of repressive and restrictive laws. It made greater use of the police force, equipping it with a growing pile of arms ranging from locally produced pistols to tanks supplied by Great Britain.

When these measures failed, the government resorted to banning political organisations and placing the whole or parts of the country under a state of emergency. The reaction of the ANC to its banning in 1960 was to announce that it would conduct the liberation struggle underground.

The March 1961 conference of 1,500 delegates representing 145 organisations, at which Nelson Mandela was the main speaker, was organised largely under illegal conditions.³² It demonstrated the power of the underground organisation and the unity of the people. Following this conference, preparations started for a three-day national strike to commence on May 29, 1961. The strike drew unprecedented support from the mass of the African population and was fully backed by the Indian and Coloured communities. Faced with this tremendous political demonstration - which was triumphant breakthrough for a liberation movement operating under a cloud of repressive legislative prohibitions and restrictions - the Verwoerd Government abandoned the political fight and took to arms. The unarmed demonstrators and would-be strikers were confronted with practically the entire South African Army, fully equipped and ready for war.

Today the oppressors are arming feverishly. In 1963, Parliament passed a peacetime "defence" budget of more than œ64 million (approximately US \$200 million). The Army, Navy, and Air Force are being further expanded and equipped with additional modern weapons. Military training of men, women and young people has become a regular feature of organised life in the white section of the South African population. The Minister

³² The All-in African Conference, convened by African leaders, was held in Pietermaritzburg on March 25-26, 1961. It demanded that a national convention of elected representatives of all the people be called by the Government before May 31, 1961, to determine a new non-racial democratic constitution of South Africa; and resolved that if this demand was ignored, demonstration would be held against the proclamation of the Republic on that date. It elected a National Action Council with Nelson Mandela as Secretary.

of Defence boasts that 250,000 white men and women can be put into action at any time. The regular army of 20,000 is increasing by 10,000 men annually and will number 60,000 by 1965. The police force, which numbered 20,000 in 1953, rose to 50,000 by 1962 and is being further increased. It has now been equipped with weapons for "combat duty." Arms factories have been established in South Africa and, recently, Britain and France have become notorious as the leading accomplices in the frantic arms buildup in South Africa, they being the chief suppliers of a substantial range of death-dealing war weapons and military aircraft of various types. The Army build-up and the new Anti-Sabotage Act have completely nullified the strategic value of nonviolence, leaving the African with no alternative but to pursue the goal of freedom and independence by way of taking a "tooth for a tooth" and meeting violence with violence.

It is hardly necessary to make the point that we would rather have avoided this course. But if the South African Hitlerites go berserk and seek to drown the country in innocent human blood before committing suicide after the manner of their revered hero, no one should be surprised that the African should take effective and appropriate steps to defend himself and, by every method that he considers appropriate, to ensure the successful prosecution of his struggle for liberation. In this context, violence is an extension of, not a substitute for, the forms of political action employed in the past. Its use will be confined to the pursuit of the objective of freedom for the oppressed people.

An intensive policy of soliciting and mobilising world condemnation of apartheid started shortly after the launching of the Defiance Campaign. Visitors to South Africa - numerous journalists, distinguished authors, leading world personalities, and representatives and members of overseas organisations - were briefed in detail on the tyranny of apartheid. By means of annual memoranda sent by the ANC and the SAIC to the United Nations and by South African delegations attending international conferences, the word "apartheid" spread to many parts of the world. The arrest of African leaders on charges of high treason followed by an appeal by Africans for an international boycott of South African goods further increased world support, and offered people and organisations in different countries an opportunity to give tangible expression to their sympathies for our cause. By 1960, the degree of world interest in South Africa was such that the Sharpeville massacre provoked an explosive and universal barrage of indignant protests. This

coldblooded carnage brought the whole of mankind face to face with the essentially inhuman and barbarous nature of apartheid.

Many people and organisations in different countries, notably in Britain, Scandinavia, and the United States, took up the issue, and, since 1960, campaigns have been organised to rally support for the boycott of South African goods and for other economic sanctions. Several governments, particularly the newly independent African States, Asian nations, and the Socialist countries, have supported United Nations resolutions calling for economic sanctions against South Africa. The United States and Great Britain which, of all the United Nations member States, have the biggest stake in the South African economy, have, however, consistently and strenuously resisted the move to impose sanctions on South Africa. This has so far made it impossible for the United Nations to employ the only form of peaceful and effective intervention open to it, and has consequently enabled the South African Government to pursue its policies with only limited interference from the outside world. Hence the emergence of violent methods of struggle in South Africa.

It would be wrong to conclude that it is now too late to influence the trend of events in South Africa by way of external pressures. On the contrary, the challenge of the present situation is the greater not only to those who abhor racialism and all that goes by the name of apartheid and white minority rule, but also to those who disapprove of all violence. The sooner South Africa is isolated economically, politically and culturally, the shorter will be the duration of this, the last and bitterest phase of the struggle for human rights and freedom in Africa.