



Editorial Notes:

After Verwoerd—Führer Vorster

IT HAS BEEN revolting to see how the frightened men of the official opposition in South Africa, including the Progressive Party and many so-called 'liberals', have fallen over themselves to express their regrets and convey their condolences over Verwoerd's death. Even more revolting has it been to read the words of the stooge Non-White leaders who mourned the passing of their 'baas', attended his funeral, greeted the election of his successor Vorster with satisfaction that South Africa would now be in the hands of a 'strong man'.

Had the real South African opposition, which is jailed, banned or in exile, been heard, it would undoubtedly have echoed the words of a columnist in the English magazine *The New Statesman*:

We should remember that Verwoerd was the chief architect of a fundamentally evil system . . . He must be held responsible for Sharpeville. His regime inflicted unspeakable cruelties on thousands of South Africans, white, black and coloured; it kept them in prison without trial while their families starved; it condoned tortures, beatings and judicial murder; it did its best to wreck South Africa's free press and the rule of law; and covered all these activities with a repulsive veneer of humbug, derived

from the debased form of Christianity in which Verwoerd believed. That he was knifed to death in the parliament he had debauched seems entirely appropriate . . . Too many tyrants die in their beds; and many of us, if we are honest, will admit some satisfaction that, for once, natural justice has been done.

There have been many who have been quick to see parallels between the murder of Kennedy in the United States and that of Verwoerd in South Africa. Both have officially been alleged to be the acts of isolated madmen, acting on their own. Both have been followed by a pronounced swing to the right in the political leadership of the ruling party. In the case of Kennedy's assassin, Lee Oswald, who was himself immediately murdered so that he could tell no tales, there has been more than a suspicion that he was the agent of a wider and more powerful conspiracy anxious to remove the 'peace and nigger-lover' Kennedy from office because he threatened both their profits and their policies of cold war. Nothing that the Warren Commission has done has removed that suspicion. On the contrary, recent evidence of the way the Warren Commission set about its work has only helped to convert suspicion into near certainty.

Is the situation so very different in South Africa? Who is the alleged assassin, Tsafendas—an alleged Mozambique-born 'play White' who, according to a fellow Parliamentary messenger, 'could not understand why the Government was doing everything for the Coloured people and nothing for the poor Whites?' How was it that a man with his racial and political background, known to the police of several countries, including the United States, Britain and Portugal (the three imperialist powers with the heaviest investment in Southern Africa and the greatest interest in maintaining the stability and profitability of the area)—how is it that such a man slipped through the 'security net' in South Africa and obtained a job as a Parliamentary messenger with access to the top men in the country's government in their most unguarded moments? Is it conceivable that the South African Special Branch, so expert at smelling out and hunting down elements hostile to the state, could have neglected to screen Parliamentary messengers altogether? Is it sheer coincidence that the man who built the Security Police into the terror instrument it is, Balthazar John Vorster, should have succeeded to the dead Verwoerd's political estate and taken over the premiership? What is the significance of Vorster's retention of control of the police force 'until we are in calmer waters'? Vorster's own explanation is that he had decided on this new arrangement, while relinquishing his other portfolios, because it could not be expected of the new Minister of Justice, Mr. P. C. Pelsler, to acquaint himself with all the facets of his new portfolios within a short time. Vorster

told Parliament on September 14th, 'for five years I have woken up and gone to bed with all these problems' connected with the safety of the State. Vorster has appointed the judge who is to inquire into all aspects of the murder of Verwoerd, yet he himself remains in charge of the police. Can it be expected that all the facts will be uncovered in such circumstances?

POWER CONFLICT

CERTAINLY THERE IS no close parallel with the Kennedy assassination. Verwoerd was no liberal. But there is ample evidence of a power conflict inside the Nationalist Party. The years of Verwoerd's rule, in which his own leadership appeared on the surface to be unchallenged and unchallengeable, were years of increasing stress and strain in the Nationalist Party. Verwoerd's concept of Bantustan, though not taken seriously by his enemies, certainly disturbed many of his former friends, who feared, however unjustly, that he intended to 'give the country away to the Blacks'. The last general election gave birth, first to the Republican Party, and then to the Front, both standing on a platform of opposition to Bantustan, maintenance of one united South Africa and of White domination over the whole country. The Nationalist Party machine, it is true, ground these parties into the dust, and they obtained very few votes. But their propaganda—eagerly seized on by the United Party—was sufficient to arouse concern among the Nationalist rank and file and to compel Government leaders to back-pedal on the Bantustan issue for the duration of the election campaign. One Nationalist leader even assured his audience that the achievement of independence by the Bantustans was nothing to worry about because it would not come about for at least 200 years. It was only after Verwoerd's assassination that a correspondent of the English press reported that the Premier had been distressed by the lack of understanding among the Afrikaner people of his Bantustan policies.

Nor was it only on the Bantustan front that there was this 'lack of understanding'. There has also been serious disturbance in the ranks of the Afrikaner workers over the Government's apparent willingness to tolerate meddling with the traditional colour bar in the sphere of labour. Tens of thousands of White workers in the Mineworkers' Union alone have been at loggerheads ever since the original 'experiment' in promoting African workers to more skilled spheres of work was initiated, with Government consent, in 1965. The diehard reactionaries among the workers have been trying desperately ever since to dislodge the existing leadership of the Mineworkers' Union, who are condemned as liberals and 'kafferboeties'. Bearing in mind

that the Mineworkers' Union was the first big trade union to be captured by the Nationalist Party on its road to power and has long been regarded as one of the staunchest bastions of the Party, one can well understand the anxiety with which the Broederbond regarded this conflict in the ranks of Afrikanerdom as it spread from union to union, from one area to another. In fact, there was scarcely a single sphere in which the Nationalist Party operated where this conflict between the 'liberals' and the 'reactionaries', reflecting the new class divisions growing inside the Party, did not threaten the unity of the Party and, ultimately, its hold on the apparatus of power. There was the revolt among the intellectuals in the form of the 'Sestiger' movement. There was the breakaway of those predikants who helped to form the Christian Institute. Truly, Afrikanerdom despite its seeming invulnerability was being shaken to its spiritual foundations.

On August 21st, 1966, the *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg published an exposure of 'some of the secret activities and operations of the Hertzog Group (also known as the S. E. D. Brown Group), which has recently been sharply attacked in the Nationalist Press'. This Group, called the 'Afrikane Orde' was founded by Dr. Albert Hertzog, and has several hundred influential members; its fascist journal, *S.A. Observer*, edited by Mr. S. E. D. Brown, is financed by a secret fund believed to be controlled by Dr. Hertzog.

At a secret meeting last year of the 'Afrikane Orde' addressed by Dr. Hertzog, Dr. Verwoerd's leadership was discussed and it was decided that he was no longer 'suitable' . . . One of the principal aims of the 'Afrikane Orde' is to infiltrate Nationalist youth movements like the Afrikaanse Studentebond and the Jeugbond, with the intention of taking them over eventually. If it succeeded in its aim—it has a certain support already—it would be in a position to make a take-over bid for the control of the Nationalist Party.

Among those tainted by 'foreign influences' in the eyes of the *S.A. Observer* were Professor H. B. Thom, rector of Stellenbosch University and Chairman of the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Associations (F.A.K.); Dominee Gericke, moderator of the Cape Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church; Dr. Anton Rupert, the tobacco king; Dr. M. S. Louw, Dr. H. J. van Eck and Dr. Etienne Rousseau, all members of the new Afrikaner élite of financiers and technocrats. Thousands of students at the Afrikaans universities signed a petition protesting at the A.S.B. motion of thanks to Mr. Brown.

A motion of praise for Mr. Brown and his journal was passed at the congress of the Afrikaanse Studentebond at Stellenbosch in July. As an A.S.B. executive member later explained, the students wished to

express their gratitude to Mr. Brown because he had worked for a Republic; had exposed the role of the English press on behalf of liberalism; had warned against the Christian Institute; had alerted the country to the danger of N.U.S.A.S.' left-wing activities; had fought Communism and internationalism; had reported fully on the Rivonia sabotage case and the menace of the United Nations; and had opposed Senator Kennedy's visit to South Africa.

But the A.S.B. motion provoked an immediate answer from the more moderate elements inside the Nationalist Party, who had been incensed by attacks launched by the *S.A. Observer* against prominent Afrikaners, dubbed as 'liberalists' and by implication almost fellow-travellers and certainly dupes of the Communists. Mass meetings of protest were called, and the pressure was so great that the Students' Representative Councils of Pretoria and Stellenbosch Universities and the A.S.B. executive itself were forced to repudiate Mr. Brown and denounce his attacks on leading Afrikaners as 'totally unfounded'.

In his political column in *Die Burger* on August 5th, the editor, writing under his pseudonym 'Dawie', said: 'A solid healthy Afrikaner opinion has for a long time been in secret rebellion against the activities of the journal and the mainly Northern little circle which is associated with it'.

Most other Nationalist journals also condemned the *Observer* and the smear tactics it used against leading Afrikaners, and *Die Volksblad* pointed out on August 11th that just as the 'concern and worry among Nationalists and Afrikaners about the abuse and casting of suspicion on leaders in cultural, business and political affairs, is not limited to any particular point of the compass in this country', so in turn it had to be recognized that the method and direction of thought to which they objected 'naturally has more carriers than the editor of the challenged journals and that they 'are domiciled not only in the North'.

THE ULTRA-RIGHT

THE ONLY NATIONALIST paper to venture a half-hearted defence of the right wing in the Nationalist Party was the Johannesburg daily *Die Vaderland*, but Brown's political and spiritual bed-fellows included such well-known Nationalists, as Dr. Albert Hertzog, Dr. Piet Meyer, head of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and chairman of the Broederbond; Mr. Jaap Marais, M.P.; Professor A. D. Pont and Mr. A. M. van Schoor, editor of *Die Vaderland*. Brown and Marais were members of the organizing committee of the first anti-Communist 'volkskongres', sponsored by the Inter-Church Anti-

Communist Action Committee of the Dutch Reform Church held in Pretoria in April 1964. Other members of the organizing committee included Mr. Ivor Benson, former Talks Organiser of the S.A.B.C. and later Ian Smith's first press censor in Rhodesia; Dr. Piet Koornhof, secretary of the Broederbond; and Mr. G. H. Beetge, an official of the White Building Workers' Union and one of those most strongly opposed to any relaxation of the industrial colour bar. The conference, after hearing addresses by local and overseas 'experts' on Communism, appealed to the Government to take steps against the 'liberalistic' press in South Africa, and decided to establish a standing national council to combat 'Communism'.

Chairman of the D.R.C.'s Anti-Communist Action Committee is Dr. J. D. Vorster, actuary of the General Synod and a brother of the man who was then Minister of Justice, now Prime Minister of South Africa. During the war Dr. Vorster was an ardent admirer of Hitler and the policies expounded in 'Mein Kampf', and, like his brother, was arrested and interned for his pro-Nazi activities. According to an interview published in the *Cape Argus* on June 27th, 1964, he believes that he and his brother have been 'called' to save South Africa from Communism.

'To me it is more than mere coincidence that we have both become Ministers of Justice, I of the church and he of the Government. As such we have a duty to perform and we do it gladly and in spite of criticism.'

Denying that he and his brother influenced each other in their actions, Dr. Vorster said, 'I think the truth is that we feel so much alike on many issues that we almost always come to the same conclusions and act accordingly. In this respect we are almost like identical twins'. In the course of the interview, Dr. Vorster said Nazism was much more acceptable to him than Communism 'because it is in the first instance not materialistic and because it is not, like Communism, international. My own belief is not national socialism but Christian-Nationalism . . . And my brother is 100 per cent with me'.

It is hardly surprising that the second 'anti-Communist' Congress held in Pretoria at the end of September brought together another bevy of lunatic-fringe fascists invited by Dr. Vorster from Europe and America, including pre-revolutionary royalties and Cabinet ministers from Eastern Europe and Birchites from America, one of whom astounded the South Africans by informing them that but for 'Communist influence' in the American Government, the United States would have won the Vietnam war long ago.

The assassination of Verwoerd cannot be viewed apart from this background of the growth of this trend of violent and bigoted ideological Nazism inside and outside the Nationalist Party. The columnist Neels Natte, writing in *Die Transvaler*, Verwoerd's own paper, of which he was for many years editor, confirmed on August 12th that that the witch-hunt in the Nationalist Party had gone to such lengths that it had affected even the Prime Minister himself. It was only a few weeks later that the assassin's dagger was plunged into Dr. Verwoerd's body. Into his shoes stepped—'by unanimous consent' of the whole Nationalist Party leadership, the bloodstained Minister of Justice, Balthazar Johannes Vorster, who in May 1963 had said:

We have reached the stage in our national history when we realize more and more that there are times in a nation's history when not only reason must speak but blood as well—and that time is now.

If the era of Verwoerd had been characterized by an attempt to clothe crude racialism with a certain attempt at sophisticated rationalization and psychological subtlety, we may be sure that the rule of his successor, Chief Hangman and Torturer Vorster, will dispense with such refinements. 'Not reason but blood', is the slogan of this Police Chief in the Police State. Beginning in blood, his term of office is hardly likely to end otherwise; we can but hope that it will be brief.

FÜHRER VORSTER

BALTHAZAR JOHANNES VORSTER was one of fifteen children born to his parents on a farm in the Eastern Cape and brought up in the strict Calvinist traditions of the rural Afrikaner. Of the fifteen children, one died in infancy. Of the remaining fourteen, five brothers and four sisters are still alive.

Balthazar Vorster said in after-years that he received many canings from his father which didn't do him any harm, and uses this experience to justify the million lashes which have been administered to 200,000 prisoners, Black and White, in South African prisons and police cells during the last twenty years. The number of whippings imposed has increased eight fold under Nationalist rule, to the scandal of the whole civilized world.

TOWARDS NATIONAL SOCIALISM

THE YOUNG ADVOCATE Vorster had barely got himself started on his career when South Africa was engulfed by the Second World War and the spread of Nazi ideas and activities among Afrikaner nationalists was

raised to new heights. Vorster joined an organization called the Ossewa Brandwag (Oxwagon Sentinel), a fascist organization built on military lines with a view to taking over power by force, negotiating with a victorious Hitler and establishing a totalitarian racist regime in South Africa. The future Nationalist Minister of Justice scorned the Parliamentary tactics of the Nationalist Party at that time under Dr. Malan, and committed himself to an organization whose leader, Van Rensburg, boasted: 'I fought (Smuts') war effort and I fought it bitterly with all the means at my disposal—which were considerable . . . There is no doubt that they (the O.B. members) seriously hampered the government's war effort.' The Ossewa Brandwag went in for a campaign of sabotage and terrorism directed against military installations and the army personnel. 'We often broke the law—and broke it shatteringly', said van Rensburg.

While South African troops were fighting and dying to make the world safe from Hitlerism, Vorster, as an Ossewa Brandwag 'general', was parading his gangs of hooligans in secret and preparing them physically and ideologically for 'Der Tag'. Today he claims to be fighting to save democracy and Western civilization from Communist subversion; but in 1942 he said:

'We stand for Christian Nationalism which is an ally of National Socialism. You can call this anti-democratic principle dictatorship if you wish. In Italy it is called Fascism, in Germany Nationalism, and in South Africa Christian Nationalism'.

Vorster was arrested under the war-time emergency regulations in September 1942. He says he was kept in solitary confinement for forty-two days, went on hunger strike in protest and as a result was transferred to Koffiefontein internment camp where he was prisoner No. 2229/42 in Hut 48, Camp 1. He was released on parole in January 1944 and placed under house arrest until the end of the war, needing a special permit every time he had to leave the town for any purpose. His personal experience of solitary confinement and house arrest did not restrain him from using both weapons against his political opponents after he became Minister of Justice.

After the war, Vorster again became involved in politics. The Ossewa Brandwag was absorbed in the Afrikaner Party of Mr. Havenga, which had entered into an electoral alliance with the Nationalist Party for the 1948 elections. Vorster was nominated by the Afrikaner Party for Brakpan, but ironically enough was vetoed by the Nationalist Party which felt that his war record would make him unacceptable to the electorate. But Vorster eventually got the nomination, to be defeated by the English-speaking United Party member A. E. Trollip, who was

later to cross the floor and join the Nationalist Party on being offered the position of Minister of Labour and Immigration which he at present holds.

THE STRONG ARM

VORSTER PERSEVERED AND was later elected member of Parliament for Nigel, but for many years remained an obscure back-bencher who was thought to have little hope of promotion because of his war record, and his ultra-Fascist views which made him an embarrassment to the 'democratic' and 'reasonable' appearance which the Nationalist Party was anxious to present to the country and the world. But the reality of mass oppression and intense exploitation, and the mounting resistance of the people, were making it more and more difficult to preserve such an appearance without making some genuine concessions to the non-White majority. A point of decision was reached with the deep crisis which opened the sixties on South Africa. The police massacre of pacific demonstrators at Sharpeville was followed by a national protest strike and the mass burning of passes, the declaration of a 'state of emergency' and mass arrests without trial of democratic leaders of all national groups. A tide of revulsion swept through South Africa and the world. Business and financial circles panicked; gold and other shares tumbled drastically on the stock market. Foreign investment dried up, and only a massive 'rescue operation' by United States financiers prevented a major crash.

For a brief period, more sober elements among the ruling classes seemed to be shrinking from the abyss towards which the Nationalist leaders were plunging. Verwoerd was out of action, critically injured by the revolver shot at his head by the white farmer, David Pratt. The acting Prime Minister, financier Paul Sauer, made a notable speech of a conciliatory tone such as had not been heard for many years, conceding that many things were wrong in South Africa and promising that 'the old book' of the history of our country had been closed and a new book would be opened. But the right-wing, fascist forces rallied to call the Whites to unite for a last-ditch defence of their privileges. A reign of terror and police dictatorship was launched, intended to make the already dictatorial methods of previous Justice Ministers Swart and Erasmus seem mild. The man selected to implement this project was the bitter, ruthless unrepentant Nazi, Vorster. He was promoted, over the heads of party colleagues, as Minister of Justice.

In his first speech as Minister Vorster declared that 'rights were getting out of hand in South Africa', and in all his subsequent legislation he has acted to ensure that the rights of Government opponents

were whittled down to nothing. In 1962 he pushed through Parliament the notorious Sabotage Act, equipping him with sweeping powers to restrict the political leaders of the people (house arrest, prohibition on publication of statements by banned people, etc.) and making various forms of political activity ranging from the distribution of leaflets to outright acts of violence punishable by a minimum of five years imprisonment to a maximum of death.

THE POLICE STATE

WHEN THIS DRACONIC law failed to bring the sabotage campaigns to an end, Vorster during 1963 pushed the General Law Amendment Act through Parliament, increasing the range of political offences punishable by death and containing the notorious ninety-day no-trial clause which put an end to the rule of law and turned South Africa into an out-and-out police state in which the life and liberty of any person is placed at the mercy of any police officer, with the jurisdiction of the courts expressly excluded.

'I appreciate that it is not a measure which is proper in peace time', Vorster declared during the debate on the ninety-day no-trial Act. He knew he was opening the way to torture of political prisoners. 'The Hon. the Leader of the Opposition said that he had seen human beings being broken (when he was a prisoner of war). It is not a very nice thing to see a human being being broken. I have seen it and he has seen it. The man taking these powers must take responsibility for them.'

In his own words Vorster must take responsibility for the ghastly crimes against humanity which have been perpetrated by his police force during the last seventeen months. Here is the tally:

* About 800 people of all races have been held in solitary confinement without legal right of access to lawyers, relatives or friends. At least sixty have been held for more than ninety days, and eight, including three women, for more than 180 days.

* About 400 have been charged in court, but more than 300 have been released without being charged. About fifty have given evidence for the State under promise of indemnity.

* At least forty-nine detainees have complained of assaults by policemen or warders—twenty-six alleged kicking and hitting, nineteen said they were kicked, hit and electrically shocked with sacks tied over their heads.

* Two detainees have committed suicide by hanging in their cells and in September 1964, a third, Suliman Saloojee, leapt or was hurled to his death from the window of the seventh floor room at Security Police

headquarters in Johannesburg where he was being 'interrogated'.

* At least five detainees have been examined by psychiatrists or been admitted to mental hospitals.

* Latest 'interrogation' techniques are more refined. Electric shock torture has been apparently abandoned, following exposure and international protest. Today detainees are kept standing indefinitely until they drop or, their minds broken, agree to make statements.

'It is not a very nice thing to see a human being being broken,' said Vorster. But he connives at the breaking. At this moment about 100 men and women are under 180-day detention. The room on the seventh floor from which Saloojee threw himself to his death has had bars placed over the windows. It will be more difficult for detainees to commit suicide in future. But the mind-breaking which drives them to suicide goes on. And Vorster justifies it.

'History taught that nothing so destroyed a great nation as weak leadership', he told a symposium on 'The challenge of leadership' at Stellenbosch University in March of this year. And in May he told a Republic Day meeting in Rustenburg: 'It is no secret that the threats against South Africa are drawing to their climax. Ask me what we should do when this climax comes? There is only one thing I can say to you: "If you lie down you are finished".'

Vorster has consistently refused Opposition demands for a judicial inquiry into the allegations of torture of political prisoners, saying he has full confidence in his police force. He has equally refused to withdraw the 180-day no-trial law, saying he is not willing to 'chop off the hands of my police'. He boasts of the results of his work: under various security laws, 3,355 people of all races, including 592 in the Transkei, were detained in South Africa last year. Since March 1963 there have been 111 political trials in which 1,315 persons were charged. Their fate was:

- 44 sentenced to death;
- 12 sentenced to life imprisonment;
- 894 sentenced to a total of 5,713 years' imprisonment;
- 340 acquitted;
- 1 sentenced to six lashes;
- 4 sentences unknown;
- 18 remanded.

In the maximum security prison camp on Robben Island, seven miles off Cape Town, about 1,500 prisoners, including about 1,000 political prisoners, are incarcerated under abominable conditions.

The raids and arrests, the beatings and the tortures continue. Daily new political trials come before the courts.

REPLY TO THE CHALLENGE

Once again, at a critical moment of choice, South Africa's doomed white supremacists have rejected the path of sanity.

It is a sad comment on the changing times that the choice of this sinister and bloodstained sadist to succeed Dr. Verwoerd has been made without open opposition or even a whimper of protest, not only inside the ruling Party, but even from liberal and 'Progressive' circles in South Africa, and their counterparts in the capitalist countries abroad.

This silence by no means reflects the feelings of the true South African democracy, above all those of the voiceless and voteless subjected majority. They know this move for what it is, an open declaration of merciless war against the people. They know it as a challenge; that again, as in 1960, the racist rulers have refused the slightest concession but deliberately spat in the faces of the South African people and the principles of humanity. To this challenge there can be but one reply—to struggle harder on every front for the liberation of our tortured country. Power is ours—but we must be ready to fight as never before to realize and gain it. It is freedom or death.

AMANDLA NGAWETHU!

CONCERN ABOUT CHINA

FRIENDS OF THE Chinese Revolution in all countries are expressing the gravest concern at the turn the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party has been taking towards increasing isolation from the other socialist countries and the rest of the international Communist movement. Such a policy only serves to harm the interests of all fighters for socialism, liberation and peace; of the heroic Vietnamese people in their great resistance to American imperialist aggression; and—not least—of the Chinese people themselves.

Recent reports suggest that this concern is shared by very many among the seasoned and experienced Marxist-Leninists of China; indeed it would be strange if this were not so. Perhaps this helps to account for some of the reported excesses of the so-called cultural revolution, in which the youthful 'Red Guards' would seem to be directed rather against elected leaders of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League than against the remaining elements of capitalism which exist in the country.

Without attempting to pass judgment on the internal affairs of People's China, Communists everywhere cannot but query generalizations which seek to brand the great cultural treasures of capitalist and pre-capitalist civilisations as 'reactionary' and 'harmful'. Marx and Lenin loved and respected the writers, poets and musicians of past

ages; to belittle and even ban their works is unhistorical and un-Communist. It may be that these are minor questions in comparison with the great sweep and achievements of the Chinese revolution, which is transforming the lives of hundreds of millions of people. But they are manifestations of an increasingly marked tendency to disregard and defy the experiences, good and bad, of the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. over the past fifty years, and of the century old international Communist movement. This departure from Communist traditions manifests itself in strange and unaccountable ways.

It is impossible, for example, for South African revolutionaries to understand or condone the way in which the Chinese leadership has taken under its patronage so discredited a collection of political hitchhikers as the leadership-in-exile of the defunct 'Pan-Africanist Congress' of South Africa (which country they have, for some lunatic reason of their own, recently taken to calling 'Azania', a name unknown to our people). The P.A.C. leaders, as we have more than once had occasion to recall in these columns, built their organization from the start on the basis of rabid anti-Communist slanders. Even now, in the safety of exile, they continue to spit their venom at Congress and Communist leaders like Mandela and Fischer, whose shoe-laces they are not fit to tie.

We cannot believe that our Chinese comrades can really take seriously the claims of P.A.C. to be the authentic representatives of the liberation movement of our country. But we cannot help feeling, either, that the current anti-Soviet campaign of the Chinese leaders has brought them to a stage where they will accept any allies, however dubious their standing or their motives. It is this campaign itself which is at the root of the matter. We consider it to be profoundly mistaken, fraught with the gravest dangers for the cause of national liberation, socialism and peace. It has achieved nothing but to encourage the ambitions and adventures of the imperialists and to cause disarray and confusion among the ranks of the anti-imperialist and progressive forces.

Let our Chinese comrades dispassionately survey the years since 1960 when this fraternal strife came out into the open. They have been years of intensified imperialist counter-revolutionary offensives in Vietnam, in Indonesia (resulting in the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Communists) and elsewhere in Asia. Of intrigues and aggression in Africa (including the overthrow of the progressive Nkrumah government). Of intensified intervention in Latin America (including the crude suppression of the democratic revolution in Santo Domingo). It is scarcely conceivable that all these acts of brazen and illegal aggression could have been carried out in the face

of a united and vigilant anti-imperialist front, spearheaded by the Communists.

We are not saying that the Chinese comrades alone are to blame for this tragic division in the ranks of the revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces. The supreme task of today, transcending all others, is not to apportion blame for the past, but to heal the breach and stand together against the enemy. And we must bluntly say that, in this all-important task, the present trend of Chinese policy is purely negative.

These matters are too grave to pass over them in silence. We must achieve unity. The longer it is delayed the heavier will be the cost, to the oppressed and exploited of the earth; to the cause of freedom, peace and socialism; and also to the future of the Chinese people and the Chinese revolution.

TRIBUTES TO SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS

WIDE INTEREST, in many parts of the world, was evoked by the forty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the South African Communist Party. Inside South Africa itself, an underground message from the Central Committee was widely distributed and commented on even in the bourgeois press. Abroad, in Moscow's *Pravda*, in Prague's *Rude Pravo*, and many other journals in a score of countries, special articles were published drawing attention to the anniversary, and evaluating the Communist Party's contribution towards South African liberation during the forty-five stormy years of its history.

Many of these articles showed that the writers had made a detailed study of our country and our Party, and South African Communists find it a great source of satisfaction and encouragement that our comrades in every corner of the world rate the work of our Party for national freedom, and its creative application of Communist principles to the understanding and solution of our country's problems, very highly indeed. An anniversary greeting from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union declares that the South African Communists, in their Party programme, 'have worked out the theoretical principles of the liberatory struggle, have given the people a clear perspective and defined the forms of struggle for the establishment of a genuinely democratic system in the country, calling the masses of the people for the revolutionary overthrow of the infamous racist regime'. The message adds that our South African Communist Party 'has won the well-merited esteem of the world Communist and national liberation movements by its consistent struggle for the purity of Marxism-Leninism, for real proletarian internationalism'.

It is impossible for South Africans to read without emotion the warm tribute of the British Communists in a letter from their General Secretary, John Gollan. 'Continuing the great tradition of the founders of your Party, Bill Andrews, S. P. Bunting and Ivon Jones', he wrote, 'and fighting in the spirit of the martyred Johannes Nkosi, you are carrying on the struggle for national freedom, for the ending of apartheid and white supremacy, for the rights and interests of the working people. The story of your Party in the successive battles of the people for these noble aims is among the finest in the annals of the international communist movement. . . . In the face of open fascist terror you have upheld the great Communist principles of racial equality, national liberation and socialism.' Everywhere, Comrade Gollan points out, the courageous struggles of the South African people inspire the deepest respect. 'The vital part played by your Party is one which has won it the love and admiration not only of brother Communist Parties but of millions of others inside and outside South Africa. . . .'

A letter from C. Rajeswara Rao, general secretary, on behalf of the National Council of the Communist Party of India, expresses appreciation of the statement in the s.A.C.P. programme that the South Africans of Indian origin have turned their backs on reformist bourgeois leadership and have unreservedly joined the many struggles of the African and other oppressed peoples' . . . 'because we know that your Party by its principled stand and courageous leadership has played a great role in bringing about this change'.

From Hanoi (a cable from the Central Committee of the Vietnam Workers' Party wishing the s.A.C.P. 'new successes in the struggle for freedom and democracy for South African labouring people'); from the German Democratic Republic ('The Socialist Unity Party and the entire population . . . stand firmly and resolutely at the side of the s.A.C.P. and the South African people', wrote comrade Ullbricht); from the French and Italian Communist Parties; from Cyprus and Canada, Hungary, Poland and Rumania, warm greetings reached the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party.

Cordially appreciated was the message from Comrade Ali Yata, general secretary of the Moroccan Communist Party. 'You especially have braved the racist terror of apartheid, whose ferocity has few equals in history and is denounced by the human race . . . we shall make every effort to contribute to your struggles, regarding them as our own.'

To all who commemorated and greeted our Party's anniversary we express our thanks, our pledge to fight unflinchingly for freedom for our people and the advance of socialism for mankind.