

A New AC Feature

From time to time, documents appear of outstanding international importance and major importance to Africa—but are not generally available to the African reader. The AFRICAN COMMUNIST will, from time to time, reproduce such documents in this section of our Journal. In this issue we print the following documents:

1 Chief Lutuli's Appeal 'to all lovers of freedom wherever they may be' to stop arming the Verwoerd regime for war against Africa. The message was sent to the Anti-Apartheid Movement, London, in May, 1963.

2 President Castro's speech—to an audience of 125,000—at the Lenin Central Stadium, Moscow, on the occasion of the termination of the visit of a Cuban delegation which he headed to the Soviet Union. The meeting, attended by Premier Nikita Khrushchov, was held on May 24, 1963.

DOCUMENT I

NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

A. J. Lutuli

I GREET ALL LOVERS of freedom, wherever they may be. From my village in South Africa, where I have been confined for years by the Nationalist Party Government, I send greetings on behalf of the oppressed people of my country to all our friends throughout the world.

I am happy to think that there are many millions all over the world who are concerned with the unhappy plight of South Africa. I speak to you at a time when there is much reason for sadness in South Africa. But also at a time when there is reason for rising hope and renewed courage.

On the one hand we have the tragic spectacle of the South African white minority government armed to the hilt to crush the legitimate aspirations of the people: on the other we have the heartening sight of the overwhelming majority of the civilised world

uniting in a resolution which condemns in the most absolute terms the tyranny under which South Africa groans.

The forces of oppression and racial discrimination which have pressed heavily on us for so long are increasing in their viciousness, in their ruthless disregard for human values, in the ferocity of their attacks on a patient and reasonable people who have been, and even at this late stage still are, prepared to work out in calmness a just settlement of the conflicts in our land. And in spite of the increasing burden of oppression, it cheers me to know that the people as a whole continue to struggle for justice with fortitude and unabated patience.

Yet it is necessary to calculate as exactly as possible the terrible destructive forces which are being built up in our country. They can be measured in the flood of repressive laws, destructive of human rights and human dignity, which pour out from the legislative machine: in the assaults on human rights in the form of banishments, confinements, house arrests, gaggings and police persecution. They can be measured in the wholesale removals of people ruthlessly torn up from homes they have built up at great sacrifice from their meagre earnings: in the unceasing treadmill of arrests for statutory offences, principally under the pass laws, when people are unable to establish their right to be in the land of their birth: in Group Areas Acts, Job-Reservation and attacks on the press and freedom of speech: in the ruthless carving up of our country into racial kraals for whites and non-whites: in the dismembering of the land into Bantustans—only 13 per cent of the land for us Africans, comprising 75 per cent of the population, and in the obscurantist retreat into a tribal past for both white and non-white.

Most terrible of all, we measure the coming tide of destruction in terms of the massive build-up of military power against an unarmed people whose sole crime is their demand for the most elementary forms of human justice.

RULE BY VIOLENCE

All this preparation for what? For a further series of Sharpevilles? Is it any wonder that among the people of our country suffering from intense oppression—deprivation of home and family, of livelihood and of hope, there are some who, goaded beyond human endurance to the point of desperation, see no way out but to engage in desperate forms of reckless violence? Nor is it, humanly speaking,

to be wondered at that there are those who are embarking on calculated acts of violence because they have been forced to abandon all hope of reaching a just solution by consultation and negotiation.

But the Government has insanely committed itself to rule by the machine gun and armoured car: has elected to go down in a messy welter of blood and destruction rather than work out a clean and honourable solution. The Police vote of 1962 soared to R40 million: the Prisons vote to R10½ million: the Defence vote—greater than that in wartime—to R120 million.

Helicopters, paratroopers, white women's pistol clubs, armoured cars, strafing planes, automatic weapons, the integration of the police force—'one of the largest police forces . . .' with the Army—the whole ferocious panoply of War is being marshalled—in peace time and with the frank avowal that it is not for any outside enemy but to put down the people of the land. This is the pitiful state of my country today.

Saddening as this is, there are other features of the situation which increase our sadness. Those who are providing the government with these terrifying weapons of destruction are countries which allegedly care for human freedom. Certainly, some of them have a proud record in the defence of human liberties. Almost all of them have known the travail of war, of conflict against ruthless oppression: have known the bitterness of race-hatred and the wounds of armed conflict. Yet these countries today, and Britain foremost among them, are guilty of arming the savage Nationalist Party regime. The Saracens built in Britain have already left an indelible blot on the history of my country: now it seems that your Buccaneers and your tanks must leave their foul imprint.

Happily, the vast majority of civilised countries have shown their detestation of this foul regime. The most spectacular demonstration of this was the vote in support of the resolution in the General Assembly of the United Nations which called for sanctions against South Africa.

U.N. RESOLUTION

I would remind you that the resolution called on all states to break off diplomatic relations, or refrain from establishing them: close their ports to all vessels flying the South African flag and enact legislation prohibiting their ships from entering South African ports: boycott all South African goods: refrain from exporting

goods, including arms and ammunition, to South Africa, and refuse landing facilities to South African aircraft.

On behalf of all the oppressed people and all freedom lovers in South Africa, I wish to make it clear that we welcome this resolution most joyfully: that we look forward to, and entreat, its most stringent implementation, and that we would encourage the most vigorous forms of action in protest against the apartheid policies which blight our country.

At the same time I would urge citizens in all countries to be vigilant in ensuring that these resolutions are honoured in words as well as action, and to campaign energetically for their fullest implementation by their governments and by all private enterprises and individuals.

I must remind you too that the same resolution drew the attention of the world to, and expressed regret at, the fact that some member-states indirectly provide encouragement to the South African government to perpetuate segregation. This is a matter of grave concern to all of us and calls for demonstration by all of us of our abhorrence of it, particularly by those who are still free to speak and act, and who have not been crippled, as many of us have been, by the strangling restrictions of a virtual police state.

I would ask you to unite in demanding that your governments should honour the resolutions taken at the United Nations. I would urge that you and your government be not deterred from any action by the excuse—often advanced by our oppressors—that boycotts and sanctions will bring to us, blacks, more suffering than the whites. We have been victims of suffering long before our boycott and sanctions call to nations of the world. We are committed to suffering that will lead us to freedom—as it has been the lot of all oppressed people before us from time immemorial. What we are determined not to do, cost what it may, is to acquiesce in a *status quo* that makes us semi-slaves in OUR COUNTRY.

I would ask you in particular to unite in protesting, vociferously and unremittingly, against the shipment of arms to South Africa. On this issue let your voice be clear and untiring: NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

When you contemplate the mass of cruelly repressive legislation, when you observe the horrifying pitiful tale of human suffering and indignity, and when you see the way this fair country is blasted by the racially insane, let your cry be: NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

And when you visualise the terrible havoc which may be wreaked on South Africa, havoc of which Sharpeville was the merest minor

portent, by the most deadly and destructive military weapons known to modern man, let your cry be: NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

SHARPEVILLE

If you have any doubts, if you think this is a gross and hysterical exaggeration, let me give you a single example of the callous disregard for human life which permeates those who rule South Africa: speaking at the current session of the all-white South African Parliament, a Cabinet Minister referred to Sharpeville as 'an ordinary police action'. An ordinary police action in which 67 unarmed defenceless men, women and children were shot dead and 180 wounded! This is an 'ordinary police action'. What of the extraordinary actions of the future for which the government is now frantically preparing?

When you contemplate this grim and bloody prospect, surely it is your duty as an individual and the duty of all to ensure that no such foul assault on human beings should be perpetrated. Surely you must join in the great united cry: NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

I direct a special appeal to all the workers of the world, who share with us, not only the common brotherhood of labour, but who in many instances have shared with us a common suffering and hardship. I appeal to them to make their voices heard and to show their unity with us not only in words but in actions. To those working in the factories where these deadly weapons are manufactured, I say make sure that your labour is not used to produce the weapons which will deal death to the people of my country. And to those who have any part in the transaction—the dockworkers, the sailors, the airport workers and all others, I say: let your opposition be shown, not only in your cry: NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA, but also in your resolute refusal to lend your labour for this foul purpose.

Perhaps it is futile to appeal to those who put profits before justice and human lives. Nevertheless, in all sincerity, I appeal to them to pause and re-think their sense of values which puts material values before human lives. For this is the meaning of their making available their murderous wares to the South African government.

The time must surely come when South Africa must emerge from the dark night of racial fanaticism to take its place among the free nations of the world. You all—people and governments—can, to your honour, hasten this day.

The Nationalist juggernaut, top-heavy with its crushing weight of military might, is crumbling and rotten at the base. Its present show of strength is a facade to hide its hastening decay and doom. The duty of all who find the regime repugnant to mankind is to hasten this day. A regime that flouts world opinion cannot last. Nor will such a regime endure when many of its own citizens are resolute and pledged to work for that end even at the cost of limitless sacrifice. For we are steeled by oppression, and the daily sight of human values being ground underfoot only makes us cherish even more those values.

CAST ASIDE HYPOCRISY

To the nations and governments of the world, particularly those directly or indirectly giving aid and encouragement to this contemptible Nationalist regime, I say: cast aside your hypocrisy and deceit: declare yourself on the side of oppression if that is your secret design. Do not think we will be deceived by your pious protestations as long as you are prepared to condone, assist and actively support the tyranny in our land. The test is your stand on the principle: **NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA**. No expressions of concern, no platitudes about injustice will content us. The test is action—action against oppression.

We look forward to the day when we shall be, with all the free peoples of the world, brothers, brothers-in-arms against injustice, anywhere, and at any time. But our immediate task is the freeing of our land: a task in which we look for support to lovers of freedom in the world. All lovers of freedom can help. All can do something to make the resolution for sanctions a reality. Whoever you are, whatever you may be, it is possible for you to assist. In your church, in your educational, or political, or labour, or cultural, or sporting organisation, it is possible for you to assist in exerting the pressures which will isolate this political pariah and lead to its extermination. All may play their part in ending this oppression, and all may—and must—join in the resolute declaration: **NO ARMS FOR SOUTH AFRICA**.