

# NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT

-Oupa Mashige

A front is an association of patriotic forces and organisations irrespective of ideological differences or differences on a particular objective. All differences between affiliates are buried and any differences on a particular point must be settled by negotiations and democracy. There should be mutual respect, sincere co-operation and mutual assistance to progress together. Coercion and authoritarianism are to be ruled out of the front and when facing problems, front members must freely discuss and frankly express their opinions, make criticism and self-criticism to help one another to discern right from wrong.

## CORRECT IDEOLOGY

The front is characterised by a correct ideology of progressive forces who will tower as a symbol of dedication and revolutionary zeal, who will blaze a trail of example for all patriotic forces and who will shoulder the main burden of the revolution. This will of necessity require a hard core of revolutionaries, steeled and tempered in the struggle. A front is an organisation of a double character. The question of nation and democracy plays an important role and it always has a class content. Only a class that best represents the national democratic interests of the popular masses can lead the people's National Democratic Revolution and the democratic front. In the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism, the working class stands unchallenged as the best representative of the popular masses. Therefore the working class in alliance with the peasantry forms the backbone of the front. Other classes, strata and social groups can join the front i.e. the students, intelligentsia, the petty-bourgeoisie etc., and their interests are secured by this mass movement led by the working class - the most revolutionary class.

The front is further characterised by having a centralised leadership that will abide by established rules and regulations and a common programme. The programme must guide the strategy and tactics that will be employed in achieving the set goals, embracing the interests of all affiliates of the front. The programme that will guide the front will have to be an all embracing programme that will include and guarantee the inte-

rests of all affiliate parties and organisations. However, the affiliate organisations do not renounce their programmes, but retain them and their autonomy whilst at the same time fulfilling the aims of their undersigned obligations in the front.

The closer the harmony and spirit of collectivism in the front, the greater and consolidated becomes the unity of the members and influence of the leading body, the more progressive it becomes. If the front is founded on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and the working class party, the front can ultimately, with the increase of the consciousness of the masses and the class consciousness of the workers, become socialist orientated. However, the concrete conditions of the struggle and the experience of the masses play a large role in this transition. The imperialist aggression in Vietnam and the strength of the party of Ho Chi Minh influenced greatly the tasks of the Vietnam fatherland front. Ultimately the front decided on the peaceful unification of Vietnam and the transformation of the Vietnamese society into a socialist one as the ultimate goal. These were the goals of the most bombed country ever to be aggressed by the USA, the leader of all war hawks in the imperialist world.

## LEADERSHIP

On the leadership of the front, President Ho Chi Minh, the unparalleled people's leader said: "The party cannot demand that the front recognise its leadership. It must instead show itself to be the most loyal, active and dedicated member of the front. It is only through daily struggle and only after the masses have recognised the correctness of the policies and the leading capacity of the party that the party can win the leading position." It is on this basis that all front members join hands as equal partners, but it is only dedication, correct policies, loyalty and a high revolutionary zeal that make the hallmarks of leadership of the front.

A front can operate either legally or illegally. Depending on the prevailing concrete conditions. Alternatively a front can combine both methods of struggle - legal and illegal methods of struggle as was the case in the anti-Nazi front in Europe in all German occupied territories, bringing together all partisan groups and organised masses in occupied territories. The anti-Hitler front was also international, embracing all anti-fascist forces in Europe.

Legal and semi-legal members of the front will concentrate on mobilising active participation of the masses, leading

them in their daily struggles against the oppressor, activate united action and co-ordinate efforts with illegal members. All members of the front must work towards strengthening the unity of the front, encourage the entire people to bring into full play their revolutionary heroism, their determination to fight and win, to persevere and step up their resistance till final victory. The front must mobilise people and all strata to actively take part in building a new culture, to actively participate in education and building and consolidating people's power.

The front must be closely linked with the masses in order to express their profound interests. Leading member organisation of the front must work out the correct line of policies for the masses to follow. The revolution can succeed when it is carried out by the masses consciously, voluntarily and enthusiastically. The leading party and the front must learn from the creative experience of the masses. It must check on its line and policies thereby setting straight in time the shortcomings of the scientific character of its line. The party and the front should sum up their experience and through their activities complement and readjust its own line and policies. It is only then that the front will reflect the profound interests of the broad masses of the people, put forward adequate slogans to mobilise them. This will bring them combat position and help them to realise more and more clearly through their experience that the party's line and policies are correct, thereby enhancing their confidence in the party and inspiring them to participate more actively in the revolution under the party's leadership.

## REVOLUTION

In any revolution, certain quarters can use the struggle as a vehicle to acquire prestige and popularity. Some individuals can resort to ultra-revolutionism and opportunism with high phraseology in an attempt to poison or hi-jack the leadership of the front. All front members must in such an event expose all opportunists to the masses. The front must unceasingly uncover enemy agents and provocateurs in their midst, expose them to the masses and frustrate all enemy efforts to halt the revolution. The front must of necessity fight both left and right opportunism, educate the masses on vigilance. The masses must be able to understand the stage of the revolution and the right time and action under the guidance of the front. The front must develop the revolutionary initiative of

the masses, to be able to move in one step in a united action. The masses can take an initiative in dealing with opportunists to keep the ranks of the front pure and ready to intensify its blows against the enemy.

Since the advent of socialism in the world and the defeat of the dark clouds of nazism, national liberation movements have received an unparalleled impetus and imperialism lost considerable ground. It is inconceivable to think of a national democratic front that will not clearly have a principled anti-imperialist stand, a front that will flirt with all reactionary circles of the world, from the Peking Maoist betrayers to US war-hawks and 'human rights' gospel preachers. The front must of necessity, in order to express the most profound interests and demands of the national democratic revolution be anti-imperialist and align itself with the three main streams of revolution, i.e. the socialist camp, the international working class and the national liberation movement. The economic aim of the front will express a secured economic policy regarding the dark forces of multinational monopolies, work out a policy that will put people's power on the commanding heights of the economy and with the material being of the masses secured the masses will rise to greater heroism in defending the revolution.

## **POLITICAL WEAPON**

A front as a political weapon of struggle is a very sophisticated phenomenon. It demands a lot of grass-root work and thorough preparation and planning before launching a front. It is necessary to prepare a hard-core of revolutionaries, dedicated comrades of unbending principles, who will sustain the work of the front and be able to stand the thorny road of revolution, a nucleus that will activate revolutionary zeal of affiliate members, a nucleus of revolutionaries tempered in the struggle. The front must prepare in advance for possible enemy reaction especially in regard to switching methods of struggle from legal to illegal and that transition must be swift to be able to sustain the tempo of the revolution.

Before launching a front, there should be a thorough search of genuine forces that qualify for membership. This of necessity demands an inside knowledge of all organisations and parties to join the front. The internal mechanism of these possible associates must be thoroughly studied, influential figures known and understood to enable a genuinely patriotic coming together of bodies to end the oppression and humili-

liation. This demands men-on-the-spot who will put everything in their power to distinguish people's friends from foes, who will give a proper analysis of the nature of the enemy and the way of defeating him, form of synchronised work and how it can be achieved.

What then are the possibilities of creating such a front in our situation? This is a question that demands our collective discussion.

---

# The Rise and Fall of Nito Alves

## Part 2

-Khamalo Migwa

### Nito Alves as the Minister of Interior

For the Angolan masses in 1975, it was not easy to differentiate ideological differences between President Agostinho Neto and together with all consistent members of the MPLA on the one hand and the ultra-leftist spellbinding demagogue called Nito Alves on the other hand. During this time, however, one of the immediate main aims of the MPLA was to expel the FNLA bandits from Luanda, and the organisational abilities of Nito Alves particularly in the ghettos of Luanda were indispensable. As a result of his success in securing Luanda as a stable MPLA base, Nito Alves became the Minister of the Interior in the first government of the People's Republic of Angola. The failure of the masses to see the essence of Nito Alves and not only to judge him by his appearance, is common in many revolutions, more so because counter-revolutionaries have learnt through history and experience that it is only when they utter revolutionary phrases that they can attract the people, even though they repeat them in parrot fashion. Nevertheless, the people must learn to separate the essence from phenomenon, the real from what appear to be. It is under this consideration that the Strategy and Tactics of the African National Congress says:

"The revolutionary-sounding phrase does not always reflect revolutionary policy, and revolutionary-sounding policy is not always the