

BANTUSTANS - Splitters of National Liberation Forces

- CHRIS MTHULI

As a vanguard movement of the revolution in South Africa, it is the duty of the ANC to muster all freedom-loving and democratic forces arrayed against the racist Pretoria regime both within and without our country for its speedy and inevitable destruction to establish a government based on the will of all our people (black and white). Whilst recognising the absolute necessity of working in reactionary institutions with the aim of undermining them from within, we should also be brutal against incorrigible quislings who camouflage their treachery by projecting enemy-created Bantustan community councils, South African Indian Council, etc., as instruments of change. To regard Bantustans, the enemy's strategy of "divide and rule" as a force worth mobilising is self-defeating.

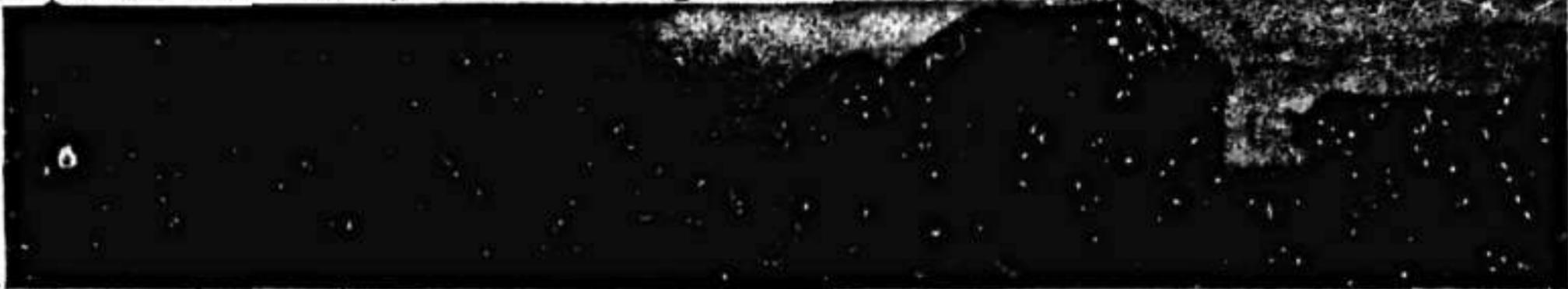
The Bantustan system is the direct opposite of the aspirations of our people for unity expressed as far back as 1912 with the founding of the African National Congress. From its inception in the late 19th century, the sinister concept of reserves, bantustans or 'homelands' was and is based on the fallacy that the white settlers occupied uninhabited areas as they were moving northwards and on their way made contact with the African people emigrating southwards. Nothing could be further from truth. The truth however is that our people, fighting as separate ethnic groups and armed with inferior weapons could not withhold their positions from the northward thrust of the marauding land-hungry settlers.

LAND ACT

When in 1910 the British and Boers conspirators, in total disregard of our indigenous people, created with impunity the Union of South Africa, - this marked the beginning of a systematised pillage and plunder of our country. The white settlers were entrusted to hold away the destiny of a country that was never theirs. In 1913 they heartlessly enacted the Land Act by which they would occupy 87% of the land, the most fertile and mineral rich. The rightful owners of the land, in spite

of their overwhelming number are supposed to be overcrowded in the remaining 13%.

In 1925 they bestowed the President of the Union with paramouncy over all the so-called reserves (this law has not been repealed with the sham independence of the Bantustans). The white government had not only robbed us of our land and kept us in limbo, desecrating our very culture.



This is how our people are expected to live.

Faced with an unprecedented growth of national feeling in the post war years, the cynical Nationalist government enunciated in 1951 the Bantu Tribal Authorities Act by which it hoped to divert the fervour of nationalism to tribal reserves. Transkei became a test-case in 1963 - we are told that it is today independent, so is Bophuthatswana and Venda. This is an outrage to our dignity and destiny.

Our people have always been incensed and resentful of these diabolical laws designed to render them landless. Since the time after the Bambata Rebellion of 1906 until 1961 they have shown their rejection of racist domination by all possible avenues except armed struggle. This is evidenced by the creation of the ANC in 1912 to unite the oppressed and led the resistance against being relegated to hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land of our birth.

The powerful Defiance Campaign of 1952 marked yet another milestone of renouncing the hated apartheid system recently introduced by the Nationalist Party which came to power in 1948. The Pondoland, Sekhukhuniland and Zeerust Revolts cannot go unmentioned to show that our people have rejected Bantustans on a national level.

FORCED CITIZENSHIP

To an African city dweller, Bantustans mean forced citizenship and forced removal when he can no longer produce wealth for the white boss. For those in the countryside it means forced removal at any moment depending on the whims and caprice of the racist president. The Freedom Charter sets out clearly what we the people of South Africa aspire for.

The Bantustans have however not only been created to frustrate our political aspirations, a role they play with outstanding zeal. Transkei's Proclamation R400 and other rep-

ressive laws; Sebe's brutality against trade unionists are clear proof. Our organisation, the African National Congress, is banned under Matanzima's repressive laws. They also serve the economic and military efforts of the Pretoria regime. But of course we know that the economic power that Racist South Africa is today, is attributed to the super-exploited black majority who are now told that they belong to the barren Bantustans.

It is not by chance that the Bantustans are economically wholly dependent on their white masters. Because these are areas whose relief does not allow agriculture, stock-breeding or forestry to say the least. To all intents and purposes there are no industries. They are over-crowded by elderly people who have no social security after being rejected by white industries, women and children who are by law denied a normal family life for all the economically active men, family men, are contracted through the migratory labour system to lead the lives of prisoners in the compounds while servicing the white economy from which they earn slave wages. Hunger, diseases and ignorance are rife. The infant mortality rate is absolutely high. About half of every thousand babies die before the age of five due to malnutrition and related diseases. We know that in South Africa food is plentiful, but to maintain high rates of profit it is thrown into the sea. Life expectancy is despicable. To imagine that at least it should be above sixty, in our country it is about 40-45 years. Our people cannot live long enough because all their life is exposed to hazards calculated to destroy them. The doctor patient ratio is alarmingly high and consequently health services are very poor. The housing does not allow the necessary privacy in family and community life. The schools are overcrowded and do not offer conducive atmosphere for studying. To say the least about the concocted education to keep us in perpetual servitude. Train and bus fares are high and the people in the bantustans are expected to pay taxes in a drive to have these self-sufficient.

All these satanic designs no doubt show that the policy of bantustanisation is an important and integral part of the systematic genocide against our people. We know that the Pretoria racists say the whites are a majority in South Africa because Africans, divided on language groups, form minorities. We also know that they encourage emigration to South Africa by whites so as to augment their number to back up their argument.

PUPPET ARMIES

Because of the balance of forces in Southern Africa today,

the white supremacists find it difficult to defend South Africa. The lines of defence are on its very borders. The combatants of Umkhonto we Sizwe, our people's army, are piercing the monster through its belly. The racist monster is, against this background, creating puppet armies in these bantustans - mark you the bantustans are more or less positioned along the borders. This is setting Africans against Africans. This is saying the Africans should do the dirty work for the enemy. This is to say Africans must serve as cannon-fodders in their aggressive wars against Angola, Mozambique and other Front-line States. This is tantamount to saying Africans have got no right to live.

We know that the racist army is powerful in terms of its military technology, skill and manpower. We also know that it has a big arsenal which is backed by the US and other West European countries. But we know that half a million of the most powerful army of the US troops plus the puppet army of Vietnam were rendered useless by the Vietnamese people. We have a proud history of wars of resistance - the blood of our heroes runs in our veins. Our war of liberation is just. That is why we are certain of victory in the end.

We call upon our people in the bantustans to continue with fresh impetus their refusal to be forcefully removed from areas they have occupied from time immemorial. They should not take up citizenship cards nor vote in the sham elections. They should in fact render the puppet governments ineffective. They should protest against rent increases, high transport fares, tribal bantu education, taxes and low wages. They should demand to live normal lives with their families. We are saying that they should demand the right to basic human life, to live as a right.

We must exhort and educate the puppet armies to rise against their 'governments' and dissuade them from joining these tribal armies. Those amongst them who are moved by the misery which bantustans has brought to our people should undermine these puppet armies from within and use their military knowledge to sabotage all symbols and exponents of oppression.

**DOWN WITH THE BANTUSTANS 'INDEPENDENCE!'
FORWARD TO A PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT!**
