

unlike real fertilising of the field, continues constantly.

The significance of political work among the masses is further underlined by the necessity to develop political leadership at grassroot level. No strategy of revolution will supercede the one that transfers the liberation initiative from the few leaders in exile, to the local leadership within the country. The struggle cannot be conducted by remote control; as Amilcar Cabral said: "One cannot cook the rice outside the pot." The fundamental task of the exiled leadership is to develop grassroot political as well as military leadership in the real theatre of the struggle. It is this grassroot leadership that sustains the anti-racist and anti-imperialist campaigns that are initiated by the movement; it is them who advise on the correct strategies and tactics to defeat the enemy: they select the best targets for combat actions and supply the most accurate data on the mood of the people, the best elements among them, the informers and administrative stooges, etc. - in short, they provide the dynamic link in the liberation equation, without them the struggle is doomed.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE.

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS BRING THE HORIZON NEARER

-Mthambeleni rate!

South Africa is at present reeling under a barrage of condemnations from the more progressive sections of mankind for her somewhat bizarre methods of silencing her political opponents. A country that has had to travel a long, lonely path - not unlike a leper - South Africa finds itself being an embarrassing and strange bedfellow even to the apartheid apologists of Washington. It is a skunk among nations with the United Nations having declared apartheid a threat to world peace and a crime against humanity. How does South Africa manage to earn itself such repugnance?

Hardly two months pass, each year, before the sensibilities of right-thinking people the world over are affronted by reading or hearing of another detainee who has died in detention. There has been so many gone: Looksmart Ngudle, Mini, and a host of others whose young lives were out down in a cold disregard for life. A short while ago (05.02.82) Dr Neil

Aggett, a white trade unionist, was slain by P.W. Botha's paid assassins in his detention cell. The time-tested excuse of suicide was used. Aggett's case is somewhat peculiar in that he is the first white person to die in detention. Fascism has no colour.

SHAMEFUL TRAVESTY

As of this writing an infinitely shameful travesty of justice is taking place in the Cape Town Supreme Court where 71-year-old Oscar Mpetha is fighting for his life. He has been in detention for well over ten months charged - together with eighteen others - under the all-embracing, draconian Terrorism Act, two charges of murder arising from the death of Casper Jansen and George Beeton in Crossroads in August 1981. The whole Kangaroo court bases its charges on testimonies of minors - one who is eight years old - and Oscar Mpetha is brought to court in chains and leg irons. Comrade Mpetha, it should be remembered, was the lastly-elected ANC President in the Cape before the organization's banning in 1960. He is also a resolute fighter, his political history spanning about five decades.

Thozamile Gqweta of SAAWU (South African Allied Workers' Union) was detained by the South African Gestapo. While in detention his fiancée was shot dead by police in a funeral; in a nightmarish coup de grace the South African racist agents overdid themselves by firebombing the house in which Gqweta's mother and uncle were sleeping. Both died.

The hideous and bestial murder of Griffiths Mxenge, the Durban advocate, ex-Robben Island inmate, who had been a prominent force in the organization of black jurists and who has done so much to popularise the "Free Mandela Campaign" convinces one that the beasts the people of South Africa have to contend with need to be decapitated. They are without the merest mustard grain of compunction in their blood. Their crimes are in par with those that made mankind release a collective gasp of horror at Nuremberg.

The fact that the abovementioned people who have suffered so hideously in the hands of the South African racists are connected by their affiliation to civic and trade union organizations is not accidental. And fascism's main weapon being intimidation it is not surprising that South Africa employs the modus operandi of the late Haitian dictator, Papa "Doc Duvalier" and his Ton Ton Macoute.

How effective are the civic organizations to bring about

such panic and widespread hysteria in the ranks of the South African ruling clique?

It will be noticed that it is only in the economic sphere that when workers start flexing their labour muscle some people - the whole military-industrial complex sits up, becomes extremely attentive and listens with big ears. The history of strikes and miscellaneous industrial unrest is a long one - and is written in blood. From the incredibly successful General Strike of March 28, 1960, through the 1973 Durban strikes that effectively tied up the Natal industrial machinery, up to the plethora of industrial actions that are keeping industrialists and investors in a tizz today, there is an increasingly marked sophistication, resilience and utilization of new forms of struggle on the part of the black workers. Observers of the South African political phenomenon who believe in the efficacy of strike action maintain that South Africa wouldn't last for two weeks (and that might even prove long!) if all workers through the length and breadth of the country could act in concert and speak in one voice.

UNIFYING FACTOR

Civic organizations, because of their unifying factor, have always been a thorn in the side of the South African racist regime. These are organizations through which people's grievances are channelled. When people say, "Power to the People" they are usually talking about their collective power as expressed in concrete form through the conduits that are civic organizations. And the mass media is loud in the land about Soweto Teachers' Action Committees, Nyanga Residents' Associations, Port Elizabeth Students' Committee, etc. The South African realities forced Prof. N. Wiehahn to say that Trade Unions were part of the industrial community and attempts to ignore them were counter-productive, short-sighted and stupid.

The African National Congress has throughout its existence done just about everything to get the South African regime to change. The ANC did this, knocking on the doors of opportunity for so long that it was ultimately seen that the regime will always remain deaf and intransigent.

The past eighteen months have adequately demonstrated the effectiveness of the work of the civic organizations, - popular discontent and resistance and the timely activities of Umkhonto We Sizwe.

The people of KwaMashu and other townships around Durban were engaged in an Anti-Rent Campaign, protesting against

increased electricity and rental rates. Electricity was cut which was a futile gesture against people who've always used candles and paraffin lamps. The discontent of the people was translated into positive action by a unit of MK combatants who sabotaged an electricity supply sub-station with limpet mines. This operation cost the racists a cool R2,5 million. Thousands of workers were sent home, communication lines disrupted, tons of food perished and industries suffered considerable loss as factories stood idle during the power cut.

Again in Durban - two bombs exploded in a motor-area of Smith Street, ripping open show-room frontages of McCarthy Leyland damaging four new cars and shattering more than fifty windows on both sides of the street. All this had a direct bearing on the fact that the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers and Sigma Motor Corporation had been locked in a bitter dispute. The South African Labour Bulletin of July features an article on "Strikes in the Motor Industry" and makes special mention of strikes at Sigma in Pretoria and Leyland in the Western Cape, both triggered off by dissatisfaction over wages.

SHOW OF SOLIDARITY

Among the workers and their civic organizations there is an unprecedented show of solidarity. 800 Workers in the Cape Town meat industry held a one-day strike in support of demands by workers at Table Bay Cold Storage and National Meat Suppliers. In June 1980 AZAPO, the Committee of Ten and Soweto Traders Association supported the Western Province General Workers Union (WPGWU).

There are wild rumblings abroad in the horizon as the beleaguered masses of South Africa finally see who their oppressor is; people are no longer playing guessing games and everyday they go to sleep resolved to wrest one more inch of concession from the grapnel that holds into all these riches. Civic organizations, then, working in concert with the National Liberation Movement have this effect of bringing the horizon nearer. All the things that are happening within South Africa, the unbridled excesses of the fascist regime and their collision with last-ditch resistance from the people who have, at last, nothing more left to lose show us that we really are in a Decade of Liberation and that nothing short of Unity in Action will usher in Freedom Day.