



Editorial Comment

Army Chief of Staff speaks:

NO VICTORY FOR THE REGIME

Joe Slovo on the release of Dennis Goldberg

What has happened to Dennis Goldberg is certainly no victory for the regime. It is a kind of blackmail practised against prisoners in South Africa.

Here is a case of a man who has served more than twenty years for a crime he allegedly committed, a man who has been isolated in the dungeons of Botha's prisons. One wonders and it will come up one day as to what happens under these conditions.

A man like that was subjected to what he himself described in a subsequent interview as "inordinate pressure" to give the regime some kind of propaganda ploy to present to the world. Dennis Goldberg says that a man from the Zionist kibbutz movement played a part in getting the South African racist regime to release him.

According to Goldberg the man "chose the most inopportune moment to apply this pressure and weave me in a family web of love which reinforced my own psychological needs". What has happened to Dennis Goldberg is something which the regime cannot be proud of. We know and the whole world knows that the real response to this kind of pressure has been impressively made by Nelson Mandela.

In this same interview Goldberg, with tears in his eyes says: "I wish I had been as strong as they are to my commitment and I hope they understand". According to the correspondent he said this dabbing tears from his cheek. Those of us who knew Goldberg, those of us who struggled with him realize that he was subjected to the most inordinate pressure.

One cannot agree with the decision that he took, i.e. signing an agreement to give up the possibility of violent struggle. I am sure he does not agree with it in any case. We cannot agree that he chose Zionist Israel as a haven, moving from one prison to another.

But at the same time we can understand and sympathise with a man who has played a very important role in the history of our struggle and we hope the wounds he has suffered will be healed and will find a place to continue struggling against this regime that blackmails him.

Focus of intense opposition

On the current treason trial of UDF leaders

If anything exposes the duplicity of the regime it is the arrest of the leaders of the UDF and their trial on a charge of high treason. Over and over again in the past period, making concerted noises directly and indirectly to the ANC, saying if only this organisation gives up violence we could talk to them and would allow them to operate. They would have every right to participate in the democratic political life of the country.

We all knew it was duplicity because the ANC was long banned before it could lift any stick of dynamite, long before it put a match to any object. At the time when the ANC was banned it was a normal legal political organisation of the same nature as the UDF. Now they say that we would participate in the political life of the country if we give up violence.

I believe that there can be no doubt that whatever steps the regime takes to prevent opposition to the crimes of

apartheid, the accumulation of resistance and organisation which has grown up will prevent the enemy from putting a stop to the kind of militancy we have witnessed. The people and their organisations which have shown their mettle up to now, will continue to spit at the enemy with the kind of defiance which we have observed growing in the recent past.

I believe the trial of these UDF leaders will become a focus throughout the country of even more intense resistance to the plans of the regime. We have the experience of the 1956 Treason Trial. Those leaders who sat on the dock in the Treason Trial accumulated more support sitting in the Drill Hall and the Pretoria synagogue than they had been able to accumulate in the previous few years before their arrest. Therefore that courtroom and the leaders who are there will, as in 1956, become a focus of even more intense opposition, militancy and expressions of anger and frustrations from the people.