

# Black solidarity for a socialist Azania

## An Introduction

by Frank Talk Staff Writers



- With the deepening of the liberation struggle since the mass uprisings beginning with the Rand Revolt of September 3, 1984 the broad liberation movement has reached a crossroads. The direction which we choose now will determine whether our struggle will end with resistance which will merely rattle the chains of our oppression or whether we will be able to shatter these chains through a thoroughgoing *revolution*.

In order to carry through the truly fundamental change that is called for by the conditions in occupied Azania today, we will need to be armed with a scientific understanding of society, including a rigorous and critical grasp of the basic role of the resistance of the masses and the process of revolution itself.

We believe that BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS (BC) is a scientific ideology<sup>1</sup> in that it:

- focusses on the *material conditions* in occupied Azania for the ultimate causes and directions of every event and phenomenon therein;
- comprehends these phenomena in their *changingness* and development and their interaction with other phenomena;
- studies the *struggle of opposites* as the underlying basis of the motion and change of processes.<sup>2</sup>

It is vital that BC continuously refine and cleanse its ideas — BC can never be stagnant and still be scientific. Therefore, we are acutely aware of the need for critical inquiry which will irreverently weed out what has been proved wrong or outdated in BC and further develop BC's correct kernel.

It is only if BC is constantly developed in this way that it will prepare and guide the Black working class in their political struggle for the assumption of State power. Only state power in the hands of the Black working class can lead to a liberated society which benefits all Azanians.

### Development of BC

In its initial stages, BC's priority was to jerk Black people out of the vice grip of fear and complacency. It snatched the cudgels of struggle from the hands of liberals and placed it firmly in the hands of the oppressed people. The 1976-77 Soweto Uprising is testimony to the success of this strategy which was employed under the banner slogan "BLACK SOLIDARITY".

"BLACK SOLIDARITY" signified a transcending of the artificial barriers of tribe and race and the assertion of the identity and interests of the oppressed nation.

"BLACK SOLIDARITY" also implied a closing of the ranks of the oppressed nation so that the notion that Black history was a history of barbarism in which Blacks lived by senseless and cruel violence alone, that Black religion was ignorant superstition filled with dark deeds and reeking Macbeth-like witches' brews, that Black music was unable to contain fresh content, that our illiteracy meant stupidity and emptiness of our heads of wisdom, intelligence or reason and that we were little more than troops of baboons with remarkable human resemblances could be laid to rest and Black people could attain psychological liberation — as a stepping stone to their physical liberation.

After the bannings of the mainstream BC organisations on October 19, 1977 a period of introspection within the BCM occurred.

The Inaugural Conference of the AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION had the theme "A Further Determination of BC and an emphasis on the workers' situation."

The line of the "leadership of the Black Working Class" was consolidated at the AZAPO National Symposium during April 1981 and the Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat as a transitional stage to a socialist society was boldly asserted at the First National Forum on 13th June 1983 in elucidating the Azanian People's Manifesto.<sup>3</sup>

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The goal of "scientific socialism" was defined by the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania at their First Conference in England in 1980<sup>4</sup> and was independently but unambiguously asserted by AZAPO.<sup>5</sup> This amounted to sharpening the definition of the future society from the nebulous "Black Communalism" adopted by the Black People's Convention<sup>6</sup> and portrayed in the Mafekeng Manifesto.<sup>7</sup>

AZAPO has decisively placed the quest for socialism on the political agenda. There is a danger of "socialism" and even "scientific socialism" degenerating into a mere platitude, of it becoming a "chicken in everyone's pot" demand. It is no wonder, then, that the demand for socialism is, for instance, linked by many to the liberal document known as the Kliptown "Freedom" Charter.<sup>8</sup>

For still others, BC's quest for socialism is an excuse for endless "conscientisation" not linked to a political programme and specific ends.

It is clear that the BCM of the 1980's has specified that Black Solidarity must be firmly in the hands of the Black Working Class, hence its banner slogan is "BLACK SOLIDARITY UNDER THE HEGEMONY OF THE BLACK WORKING CLASS."

This amounts to a qualitative leap forward in the execution of our struggle.

It remains true that groups such as the UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT are rooted firmly in the BC tradition of the 1970's and constitute a deformed Black Consciousness Movement.<sup>9</sup> They have refused to come to grips with new challenges but have rather tried to take the struggle back to the tired shibboleths of the Congress Alliance of the 1950's.

We repeat that the extent to which revolutionary feelings and aspirations are deepened into revolutionary science **now** and how that science is applied towards transforming spontaneous resistance into conscious revolution, has everything to do with what will be made of those opportunities and challenges and how much of the future will be

wrenched from the rubble of the old.

### Changes in the South African Political Economy

South Africa's system of racism and capitalism (referred to in this essay as "apartheid capitalism") has its *origins* in a particular form of settler-colonialism and has its *logic* in the capitalist mode of production.

Capitalism in occupied Azania has developed in a very specific context: it has utilized and transformed the rural African economy and has developed under the protective umbrella of and in close conjunction with imperialist capital.

Dramatic and far-reaching changes followed the discovery by the white settlers of diamonds in Hopetown in 1867 and the main gold-bearing reef of the Witwatersrand in 1886.

Intense social struggles occurred as the Black people sought to resist the onslaught of the settlers and the Boers sought to maintain the "independence" of the Transvaal and Free State republics. The Black people were eventually swept off their land and herded into tiny reserves where the settlers could contain them while the Boer republics were ground down and their political and military strength broken down so that a unitary capitalist state under British influence could be established in occupied Azania. Such a state was established after a *National Convention* in 1910.

Duncan Innes is no doubt correct in arguing that "the key to understanding why events unfolded as they did lies in recognizing the specific form of the international capitalist relations involved: that is ... they were relations of *monopoly* capitalism."<sup>10</sup>

The profits generated via the super-exploitation of Black labour on the mines laid the basis for subsequent capitalist development and the emergence of a South African capitalist class.

As from 1933 onwards manufacturing industry began to expand rapidly, overtaking mining as the biggest single contributor to national production during the Se-

cond World War.

For its expansion, however, South African capitalism has continued to depend on the import of capital goods such as machinery from the advanced imperialist countries, producing on a bigger scale and far more cheaply than South Africa could hope to match. To pay for such goods, South African capitalism has had to rely first and foremost on raw material exports — the products of mining and farming.

The expansion of "modern" manufacturing industry under South African capitalism has thus been bound — and remains bound — by a thousand threads to the economic forces governing mining and farming.<sup>12</sup>

In viewing changes in the postwar South African economy, it is possible to discern three periods, viz:

1. the consolidation of the system of apartheid-capitalism between 1948 when the Nationalist Party assumed the reins of power until the events of Sharpeville in 1960;
2. the period of the South African miracle with the decisive crushing of the military wings of the PAC and the ANC (viz. *Poqo* and *Umkhonto we Sizwe*) in 1963 until the Soweto Uprising of 1976-7;
3. the period from the Soweto Uprising to the present; corresponding to the multiple organic crisis of apartheid-capitalism.

The *first period* is marked by the systematic elaboration and enforcement of a system of racial segregation suited to the requirements of modern capitalist growth and the provision of the necessary infrastructure and heavy industrial investment to spur capital expansion.

There was a boom based largely on developments in gold and uranium in the immediate postwar years. A series of initiatives were taken to encourage and facilitate investment in manufacturing. A highly integrated network of state corporations created a modern industrial infrastructure. This "parastatal"

structure was from the beginning heavily penetrated by foreign capital. The World Bank loaned some \$200 million to South Africa in the 1950's for these efforts.

The *second period* saw the instruments of repression being perfected further while Western capital plowed millions in floating capital and technological know-how into the South African economy. Capital intensive industrial developments saw the increasing interpenetration of different capitalist sectors.

This period was quite appropriately inaugurated by Sharpeville. In the immediate wake of the blood-bath, the American bank, Chase made a much publicised loan of \$10 million to the regime and soon joined a consortium to lend the regime \$150 million.

American bankers saw the chance to get on the "inside track" and push the British into a subordinate position. What followed was an unprecedented inflow of Western capital.

The United states is not the dominant investor (see Chart A) but it has emerged as the imperialist chieftain in South Africa. It is clear that *foreign capital has played a critical role in the development and configuration of the South African economy.*

The sheer magnitude of this foreign investment has cushioned Pretoria, freeing up her resources for her awesome military machine. The repressive capabilities of the regime are very much a function of foreign capital: the regime has been given the extended capacity to transport military equipment and personnel rapidly at low cost over widespread geographical areas.

Sectoral differences between monopoly capitalists became gradually less important as the monopoly conglomerate, with subsidiaries in many sectors and substantial investments in other conglomerates, emerged as a significant force in apartheid-capitalism, ALWAYS subordinate to foreign capital.

The *third period* is marked by economic contradictions and

Table 1  
**EMPLOYMENT AND AVERAGE MONTHLY WAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

<i>Mining, May 1983</i>	<i>No. Employed</i>	<i>Av. Monthly Wage</i>
African	613,452	\$ 260
White	78,020	1,395
Coloured	9,581	430
Indian	659	690
<i>Manufacturing</i>		
African	748,700	\$ 320
White	316,600	1,290
Coloured	240,800	365
Indian	86,400	460

Source: Republic of South Africa, *Central Statistical Services*

Table 2  
**SOUTH AFRICA'S RESERVES OF SELECTED MINERALS**  
(percentage of world reserves)

<i>Mineral commodity</i>	<i>World</i>	
	<i>Rank</i>	<i>%</i>
Manganese ore	1	81
Platinum group metals	1	72
Gold	1	49
Chrome ore	1	58
Vanadium	2	29
Andalusite, sillimanite	1	38
Fluorspar	1	34
Vermiculite	2	28
Diamond	2	22
Uranium	2	16*
Zirconium	2	11
Coal	2	10
Phosphate	3	9
Antimony	3	7

\*excluding COMECON countries

Source: Republic of South Africa Yearbook, 1984

Table 3  
**RATE OF RETURN ON TOTAL BOOK VALUE, U.S. FIRMS' DIRECT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN MINING AND SMELTING, 1953-72 (percentages)**

	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	<i>South Africa</i>
1953-57	8.3	10.4	25.7
1958-62	5.9	14.5	20.8
1963-67	9.9	19.9	43.3
1968-72	5.3	12.8	31.6

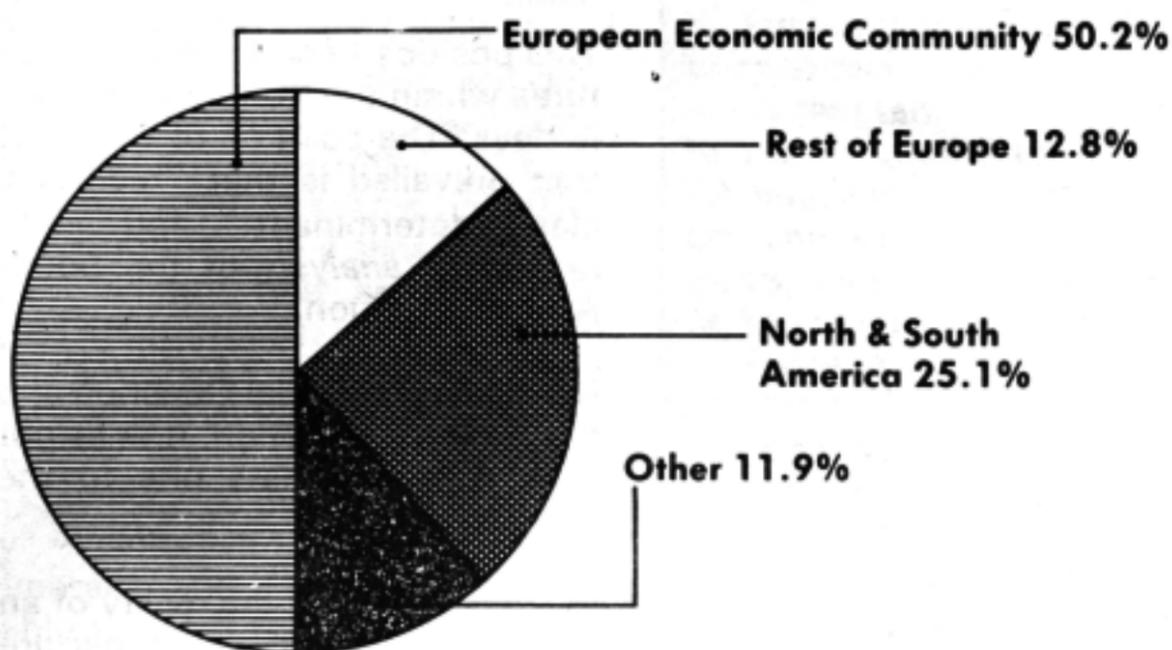
Table 4  
**RATES OF RETURN ON U.S. MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS (in percent)**

	<i>1967</i>	<i>1974</i>	<i>1980</i>
Canada	8.0	14.1	10.3
Europe	9.5	13.2	13.7
South Africa	16.2	17.1	31.3

Accounting procedures between years not strictly comparable.

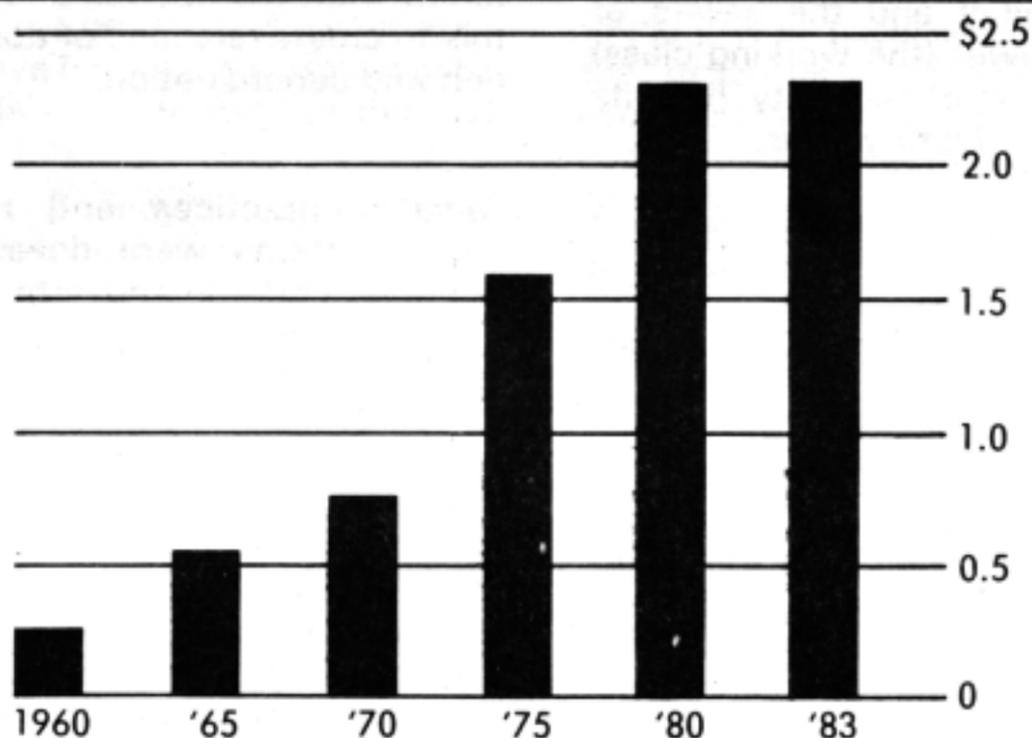
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, *Survey of Current Business*, various issues

Chart A  
**FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**  
*Origin of foreign investment, 1983*



Source, *The Economist*, 30 March, 1985

Chart B  
**U.S. DIRECT INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**  
*(in billions of dollars)*



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, *Survey of Current Business*, various issues

Chart C  
**FOREIGN CAPITAL AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME IN THE 1970s**

South African Government	State Corporations	"Privately" Held Corporations
Administration	ARMSCOR (military)	Anglo-American Corporation, plus six other mining finance houses
Police	ISCOR (iron and steel)	Multinational corporations: 40 percent of South African manufacturing
Army	ESCOM (electricity and nuclear)	Multinational corporate banks: 60 percent of 20 largest South African banks
Airforce	SENTRACHEM (chemicals)	
Navy	SAH&RR (harbors and railways)	
	SASOL (oil from coal)	
	NATREF (state oil refinery)	
	IDC (state development corporation)	
	Etc.	

social conflict generated by the structural conditions of cheap wage labour all interpenetrated by the world economic crisis and mounting tensions between the USA and the Soviet Union.

By the 1970's, multinational corporations owned about 40% of South Africa's manufacturing industry.

South Africa is a veritable repository of strategic minerals: see *Table 2*. Fabulous profits have been reaped in the mining, smelting and refining of these resources. In the 1968-73 period, American investments in mining and smelting grew rapidly at an annual rate of 15% compared to 5% for the rest of Africa. *Table 3* provides some explanation for the robustness of this growth in the expansionist phase of the postwar spiral.

It is important to note that one of the specific features of the postwar alliance is its highly integrated economic character: thus *Table 4* understates the true level of US investment since some US capital is invested in South Africa via US capital in the UK, France and West Germany, amongst others.

Between 1978 and 1984 the South African economy grew by only 3% a year and there was an actual decline in gross domestic product in 1982-83.

South Africa depends heavily on the rest of Africa as a market for intermediate and advanced goods: over half of its chemical exports and about three-quarters of its machinery and equipment were sold to the rest of Africa during the 1970's. It goes without saying that the most advanced operations of foreign capital in Africa are concentrated in occupied Azania.

South Africa has subjugated Southern Africa by cross-border raids, assistance to counter-revolutionary groups, economic pressure, and the undermining of SADCC.<sup>13</sup> The plan to construct a "constellation" of dependent black satellite states around the golden sun of white urban industrial centres cannot limit itself to the bantustans alone: it must incorporate all of Southern Africa.

Net foreign investment in South Africa fell by \$360 million between 1976 and 1984. This is because with the tempest of the black masses in revolt investments in South Africa bear a high risk premium.

Thus the Botha-Malan junta has to make a show of concessions while tightening up and clamping down.<sup>14</sup>

In this context, it is weird to read that American and Soviet analysts at a conference in Harare agreed that they have minimal interests in the Southern African region, the Americans attempting to suggest that their concern was a moral one dictated by a repugnance to apartheid!<sup>15</sup>

We believe that the system of apartheid-capitalism, far from being anachronistic or irrational, is an historically constituted form of superexploitation that is functional from the vantage point of capital accumulation and that for these and strategic reasons the Western imperialists have every interest in the maintenance of an oligarchy in occupied Azania.

The way that is being touted to break the impasse is a National Convention *a la* 1910. Hence the current whizz kid of Anglo American, a multinational corporation in its own right, says:

"... Just think that about 200 years ago, in the summer of 1787, there was a nation which was in danger of falling apart. Then fifty-five men assembled at a convention and drew up a document which has served as the basis of government for that nation ever since... The place was Philadelphia and the nation was America. That event was not predictable — it was made to happen by great men. *The same can be made to happen here...*"<sup>16</sup>

## QUOTE!!!

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### Race as a Class Determinant

The Black Consciousness Movement has had to battle consistently in the market place of ideas against the intellectual snobbery of the so-called "left" who rely on arid dogma, on economic formulations and on their own little hierarchies. In doing so, the BCM has emphasized the importance of race, class and gender in the development of apartheid-capitalism.

For the wilfully colourblind orthodox "left" the traditional fight is defined as one between the owners of the means of production (capital) and the sellers of labour power (the working class) which must, of necessity, have its site on the factory floor.

BC has eschewed the tendency to wish away the National Question or to insist, in the face of stubborn reality, that the struggle demands that "black-and-white" must "unite-and-fight".<sup>17</sup>

Nor has BC fallen into the trap of geographically dividing the life of the Black worker: the Black worker who is exploited on the factory floor is the very same Black worker who has to trudge home to inhuman living conditions.

BC does not divide and separate the economic and cultural aspects of the struggle but sees the need to struggle over both the *standard of living* and the *quality of life*.

At the AZAPO symposium in April 1981, Father Buti Tihagale declared:

"... (T)o subsume the complexity of the South African socio-political and economic conditions under the rigid category of 'culture' is a hopelessly inadequate exercise. But ... (equally inadequate is) the 'new school' that

regards economic interests as the sole determinant of social relations as they exist in South Africa."<sup>18</sup>

This position heralded radical ruptures within the BCM in those early days.<sup>19</sup> The position of the BCM that prevailed is that "race is a class determinant" and is a *race/class analysis* of the South African situation.

BC melds the Social Question and the National Question: it does *not* seek to subordinate one to the other.<sup>20</sup>

In acknowledging the reality of an oppressed nation, the departure point of "BLACK SOLIDARITY" comes out forcefully.

BC is quite clear that "race" as a biological entity does not exist. But to say that race *per se* was a significant factor in the shaping of social forces which rapidly took on a life of their own is to refer to the way in which Europeans perceived people who were phenotypically and culturally different from themselves and used this to create relations of domination and subordination.

<sup>21</sup>*Racist* practices and *racist* social systems were developed wherever countries were brought under *colonialism*. Racism has grown out of a relationship of exploitation between Black people and their colonial rulers.

In areas such as North America, the white colonizers attempted to exterminate the indigenous people and succeeded in setting up white majorities. In areas such as India, the colonisers governed the area as their overseas colonial possession.

In occupied Azania, the settlers finally defeated and dispossessed the indigenous people and then used them as cheap labour. They set up a white oligarchy which uses brute force to maintain its privileged position.

As W.D. Jordan's study of American slavery shows, "blackness" was one element in the cluster of 'negative' qualities that pre-eminently fitted Blacks for slavery; by contrast the absence of these qualities in Europeans rendered them immune

from enslavement.<sup>22</sup>

It is only a few days after he landed on the shores of the Cape that Jan van Riebeeck warned against the "wild tribes (who) are somewhat bold, thievish, and not at all to be trusted." What Van Riebeeck called "our Netherlanders" became increasingly confirmed in a sense of their own identity and separateness from other groups.

Race is a constant variable in the history of occupied Azania. Racism served purely economically exploitative goals and also "moral" and "cultural" goals: whites were concerned about cultural "debasement", moral "contamination" and racial "hybridization" that might flow in the absence of racial barriers. Racism also provided psychic gratification to those who relished lording it over dominated groups.

Tlhaqale's words also hint at a clash between those in the BCM who refused to apply class analysis and insisted that the struggle was one for the repossession of land *simpliciter*. We have had occasion to describe this clash in the BCM in the first *Frank Talk*.<sup>23</sup>

Walter Rodney<sup>24</sup> describes how Nkrumah denied the existence of classes in Ghana until the petit bourgeoisie as a class overthrew him. He says that Nkrumah had wandered for years with the assumption that he must disassociate himself from scientific socialism because it originated outside the boundaries of his own society and he was afraid of its cultural implications. This is due to the fact that he made a distinction between *social* theory and *scientific* theory which is not a necessary distinction but is one which grows out of the history of bourgeois thought.<sup>25</sup>

Naturally any ideology when applied must be applied with a thorough grasp of the internal realities of a given African society, says Rodney. People have no difficulty in relating to electricity and do not ask 'Was Edison a racist?' But they ask 'Was Marx a racist?' The natural sciences are not to be separated from the social sciences. An interpretation of the social reality can derive a certain historical law and hence scientific law of society which can

be applied irrespective of its origins or its originators."

Of course, Walter Rodney warns that scientific socialism must not be taken as a finished product: "to take it as a finished product is to take the easy route."

Rodney maintains that the nationalist struggle will be won under the rubric of scientific socialism.

A writer in the *New Nation*<sup>26</sup> suggests that the formulation "Black" working class tries to project a socialist analysis of South Africa while at the same time trying to emphasize the nationalist dimension of oppression. He suggests that the BCM wants to "leapfrog" over the national democratic struggle to socialism.

We must emphasize that we reject a particular variant of the two stage theory of revolution only, the one so succinctly put forward by Dr Victor Goncharov, a leading Soviet analyst on South Africa:

"*Firstly* it is necessary to settle the problems of the (national) liberation struggle, and *then* to come to the next stage of the socialist revolution in South Africa ..."<sup>27</sup>

This position was criticised by a leading COSATU and UDF activist as "... a waste of time, a waste of energy, and a waste of people's blood."<sup>28</sup> We agree!

However, we fully emphasize the struggle for national self-determination and have no intention to leapfrog over any of the democratic demands of the revolution.

Within the oppressed nation, the BCM has insisted on the *hegemony* of the Black working class. By "hegemony" we mean the successful mobilization and reproduction of the "active consent" of other oppressed social forces as a result of the exercise of the intellectual, moral and political leadership of the Black working class.

We refer to the Black working class as the "universal class" because it is the only class capable of leading a thoroughgoing revolution which will benefit *all* Azanians.

It is not simply because of their numerical strength that the Black working class constitutes the universal class. It is because they have no stake in maintaining or reinforcing the system of apartheid-capitalism and almost literally have nothing to lose but their chains and a whole world to gain in a free Azania.

It is up to the more advanced sections of the Black working class to ensure that other classes in the oppressed nation do not derail the struggle in the direction of a new exploitation.

It is for these reasons that the BCM has elaborated its position in the 1980's as BLACK SOLIDARITY UNDER THE HEGEMONY OF THE BLACK WORKING CLASS.

Nolutshungu argues convincingly that "Blacks who actually own or control the means of production are few and are not represented in any one of the major industries of the country"<sup>29</sup> and that a "black middle class" would of necessity be in subordinate collaboration with the white ruling establishment.<sup>30</sup> He contends that it is "very doubtful" that such a weak class could "succeed in exercising effective hegemonic control over the working class... Hegemony does not depend on economic power alone and could not be secured by the modest advantages which a collaborating middle class may be allowed under the order of white domination. It depends also on culture and ideology and on the force of traditional bonds and sentiment."<sup>31</sup>

The attempt to create a national Black bourgeoisie is doomed to remain inchaote, says Nolutshungu: "Not all those who have benefited directly from government financial aid have assumed active positions in the politics of separate development, so that political *encadrement* may turn out not to be simply related to economic *embourgeoisement*. "Embourgeoisement" is used in this context to mean the creation of the economic, social and political conditions for the emergence of a bourgeoisie or for the large-scale entry into an existing bourgeoisie of categories of people previously excluded from it."<sup>32</sup>



superstructure exhibits all the "trappings of a capitalist democracy" while the Black superstructure is at "odds with the capitalist economy (and) sets the economy at odds with itself..."

We must say that those in the BCM who seek to propound ideas of a white working class which will find revolutionary consciousness in some never-never land are quite simply revisionists who seek to strip the universal class of its richest seam in occupied Azania — its **BLACKNESS**.

Once we accept Black working class hegemony, we must guard against the dangers of economic reductionism or trade unionism. Steven Friedman in *Building Tomorrow Today*<sup>39</sup> argues:

"It is because they have won rights in the factories that workers are demanding them in the townships. It is because they have controlled their own organisations that they are demanding that community groups also allow their members to control decisions."

This is manifestly untrue: to take but one instance, the trade unions were compelled to align themselves with their members' moods gained from experiences and organisations in the townships to participate in the Witwatersrand Stayaway in November 1984.

The Black working class has to be infused with political education that affects it in *all* facets of life. The trade union, although potentially a progressive class instrument in the hands of the Black working class, is nevertheless limited and actually potentially reactionary. That is why Harold Pakendorf could write so enthusiastically about the recent mineworkers' strike:

"Far from looking with distaste on NUM, we need to compliment it. There may be doubts as to its bargaining methods... but it is still working within the system.

"Whatever else may be said, the mine strike is not part of the revolutionary onslaught. It is part of the orderly, normal process of change."<sup>40</sup>

The trade union merely deals with

It remains true, however, that the Black petit bourgeoisie<sup>33</sup> is a vacillating class: it remains susceptible to the lures of capitalism and, if allowed either to lead the revolution as *a class* or in the name of the Black working class, they will simply reproduce the same or greater levels of human suffering.

*The only relationship which the Black working class can have with other classes in the oppressed nation is on the basis of its own hegemony.*

There is a tendency to shy away from the reality that the white working class is a part of the ruling class, almost as if it is sacrilege to acknowledge that supposed agents of revolution are not entirely without sin. This shines out in the following words:

"White workers in South Africa do not yet find it possible to struggle side by side with Black workers. Therefore it has to be stated quite clearly that it is the Black working class *at this point in time* which must lead the struggle."<sup>34</sup>

Others have gone so far as to imply that the existence of a white working class was a "myth"<sup>35</sup>

It is interesting to note that European immigrants came from

societies which were themselves highly stratified on a class basis. John X Merriman noted exactly this phenomenon in 1908 when he observed that white workmen who, "however unjustly", had been regarded as the "lower classes" were delighted on arrival here (in South Africa) to find themselves in a position as an aristocracy of labour."<sup>36</sup>

It is the white working class which swells the ranks of the white right and Sivanandan tells us why:

"... South Africa is the one capitalist country ... where ideology and not production relations determines white working class consciousness... vis a vis the Black working class, the horizontal division of class assumes the vertical division of race: the horizontal is the vertical. Class is race, race class."<sup>38</sup>

The white working class will only acquire revolutionary consciousness in the nightmare of social revolution and under the Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat.

"In effect", says Sivanandan, "there are two superstructures" to the same economic base in occupied Azania — the one white and the other Black. The white

the relations between Black workers in a given trade or industry and their employers. What is achieved at the end is that the workers acquire trade union consciousness which might mean better living and working conditions (within the system) but which hardly develops the consciousness required to abolish the entire exploitative social system.

The Black working class has to transcend trade union consciousness in order to acquire revolutionary consciousness. As Comrade Julie Vedan put it:

“Unionism is a capitalist trap. Can the liberation movement use the trap to trap the trapper?”<sup>41</sup>

In short, the Black working class must be armed with BC so as to incorporate an holistic world view which reveals the political content of the social relations of production.

### **The Nature of the South African State**

As long as society is divided into classes, there will be a state apparatus. Marx remarked in the Communist Manifesto that “The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie”.

The state apparatus is essentially a machine for keeping down the oppressed and exploited. The essential parts of this machinery are not legislatures and other similar vehicles of public discussion and nominal decision-making (these are dispensable) but are the executive power and the bureaucracy, the courts and, in particular, the armed forces. These forces are the concentration of the power of one class over another; they represent a monopoly of force by the ruling class and their purpose is to forcefully guarantee its interests.

All these things — the armed forces, the courts and laws, the executive, the bureaucracy, the legislature, the political institutions in general — belong to the superstructure which in any society rests upon and reinforces the capitalist base.

The state is not and cannot be neutral: it is an instrument of class

rule and enforces the dictatorship of the ruling class over the oppressed classes. It is an objective structure of society whose character is determined not by the class origin of its leading personnel but by the specific social division of labour of which it is an extension and the production relations which it must ultimately serve and reproduce.

In reality and essence bourgeois democracy means democracy in the ranks of the ruling class and dictatorship over the oppressed.

There is a structural problem for the state and its apparatuses in occupied Azania — and it is precisely the colonial one of the close integration of racial (national) domination and exploitation — the interlocking of racial and class places in the social division of labour — and its effects on order and security.

Nolutshungu argues that for Blacks, petit bourgeois or bourgeois, the interest they may have in the reproduction of capitalism does not easily synch with an interest in the reproduction of the state system through which it is defended and maintained. The incongruence of political and economic division which makes class alliance possible is very effective here in view of the ineffectiveness, so far as Blacks are concerned, of the state’s legitimating ideologies.

The ruling class in occupied Azania is made up of foreign capital, monopoly capital (English, Afrikaner, state), the white middle class and the white labour aristocracy. The South African state is a dictatorship of the white ruling class and its reactionary sidekicks

The 1983 Tricameral Constitution merely buttressed the power of this ruling oligarchy.

A process of militarism is occurring: the State Security Council is at the apex of the national security management system with joint management committees fulfilling its role at the regional and local level.

There is close State-capital linkage via the Economic Advisory Council. As six monopolies effectively control over half the private

sector in South Africa,<sup>42</sup> the Economic Advisory Council was re-structured in 1985 to include only these monopolies.

The South African state is really a deformed bourgeois state: a capitalist democracy for whites and a dictatorship over the oppressed and exploited Black people (see above).

The hegemony of the white ruling class exercised through its Repressive State Apparatus (army and police) and Ideological State Apparatus (Educational system, law, religion, etc.) can only be challenged and dismantled by the hegemony of the Black working class.

“Black Solidarity” is the key to a revolution against imperialism, precapitalist social relations, and the domestic forces that represent and uphold all this and it will lead to the Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat. It involves a broad class alliance very firmly led by the Black working class.

### **The Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat**

With socialism victorious, the South African state must be completely abolished and upon its ashes the Azanian state will be born.

The Azanian state will take the form of the revolutionary dictatorship of the Black Proletariat. As the National Forum puts it:

“...(T)he outcome of the struggle should not be viewed in isolation from the fact that the Black working class is the vanguard of the revolution. And therefore the Black working class should control the outcome of what they have struggled for and guard the future developments of socialism.”<sup>43</sup>

The Azanian state is the central social institution in the transitional phase of socialist reconstruction, and itself will cease to be a class state and will be purely administrative in a classless society. The Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat is above all else transitional to a higher form of society, colourless, fearless and hence stateless.

The Dictatorship of the Black pro-

letariat differs fundamentally from other forms of the state in that it is the dictatorship of the non-exploiting majority over the exploiting minority. It exists not to perpetuate indefinitely the rule of one class, but to eliminate all classes, races and all states; it is a means to the end of wiping out all oppressive machinery and the state itself.

Apologists for apartheid-capitalism needs must assail us for openly proclaiming the necessity for the Dictatorship of the Black proletariat. Our answer is simple: better us than you — far better, infinitely better, the dictatorship of the Black proletariat than the present dictatorship.

The Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat will represent the recognition of Black working class hegemony by all other class forces in the South African social formation. This stage of the Black working class as the ruling class in the state is necessary for the political consolidation of socialist transformation and for providing the administrative base upon which to mobilise all social forces under the hegemony of the Black working class for building a socialist society.

The necessity for a vanguard party to lead the revolution is rooted in the material contradictions of apartheid-capitalism, which create a gap between the more advanced minority of the Black

proletariat and the rest of the class. To bridge the gap requires a vanguard party.

By allowing mass-based participation at all levels of political activity and decision-making the Azanian state under the leadership of its vanguard party will acquire the legitimacy it needs from all supportive social forces.

At the heart of the Azanian state will be democracy among the masses and dictatorship over the exploiters: these are in dialectical relationship to one another.

At all times we need to guard against any form of bureaucracy emerging with its own privileges and interests. Even after ownership of the decisive means of production have, in the main, been socialised, there will remain classes and class struggle: not only members of the old exploiting classes but *new* bourgeois elements (headquartered within the vanguard party itself) engendered out of the basic contradictions of socialist society itself.

After all, the anti-racist, socialist society will emerge from the womb of a racist and capitalist society and will thus be in every respect — economically, morally and intellectually — still stamped with its birthmarks. And the bourgeoisie retain the upper hand internationally.

We must never make the error of

regarding the ownership system and the socialist economic base as a whole as a machine with a button to grind out socialism; it is a very fluid and contradictory ensemble of social relations which can be transformed into its opposite if not constantly and continually revolutionized by the masses.

The Black working class raising itself to the position of the ruling class does not mean their taking power over the existing state apparatus and utilizing it in their interests. The state apparatus must be smashed, broken up and replaced by a new state, radically different from all previous states and serving as the transitional form to the abolition of classes, races and the state itself.

The struggle is dialectical in a twofold sense: it involves the dialectical relationship between dictatorship and democracy in socialist society and it involves the dialectical relation — the unity and opposition — between strengthening the Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat and at the same time, by the same means, creating step by step, but also through a series of revolutionary leaps, the conditions whereby the Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat will no longer be necessary ... or possible.

*Footnotes on page 55*

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## Footnotes:

### Black Solidarity for a Socialist Azania: An Introduction

1. See Quraish Patel "Black Consciousness and the Class Struggle" (April 1981) *Frank Talk* Volume 1 Number 1, page 12. Imrann Moosa in "Workers, Students and the Popular Movement" (5 May 1983) *FTCI* says: "... (I)deology is a complex unity which is produced under specific conditions and which is moulded and remoulded in the process of struggle: indeed, ideology is grounded in *material reality* and is itself a material force. A revolutionary ideology has to emanate from the experiences of the oppressed and the exploited in a society and the kind of oppression and exploitation which they undergo. A revolutionary ideology is, by definition, a dynamic ideology: it must encapsulate the continuous process of change and conflict."
  2. Poled Lectures No. 1: Poled Secretariat, Durban Branch of AZAPO: *FTC IV*: June 1986.
  3. *National Forum* June 1983: page 66.
  4. *Our Urgent Tasks* adopted at Brixton, England on 12th April 1980.
  5. The formulation "scientific socialism" was first used at the National Forum Summit in April 1984. See Michael Tissong, *The Struggle for a Socialist Azania*, AZAPO Council, Houtbosdorp, May 1985: *FTC II*.
  6. Bearing in mind that the BPC operated under conditions making it impossible for it to spell this out.
  7. Adopted in 1975.
  8. See the *Position Paper* on page 22 of this issue.
  9. This subject deserves detailed treatment on its own. Aubrey Mokwena, a former SASO leader and UDF executive member, suggests that the UDF is the true inheritor of the SASO tradition: see *Black Consciousness in Perspective* (1983) *FTC VII*. Frank Chikane maintains that BC is merely a means to the end of a non-racial society, and a necessary "stage of development" for Black people: see Jeremy Cronin and Raymond Suttner (eds): *30 Years of the Freedom Charter*: (1986) Ravan at 235 ff and also the views of Mosiuoa Patrick "Terror" Lekota at 196 ff. Mokgethi Motlhabi *Black Resistance to Apartheid* (1984) Skotaville at 276 states that the general tendency in the UDF is to say that BC has "served its purpose".
  10. Duncan Innes: *Anglo American and the Rise of Modern South Africa* (1984) Ravan at 70.
  11. The defining characteristics of the labour process under conditions of superexploitation are:
    - a. Lower wages, substantially longer working hours and a significantly higher intensity of work per hour than prevail for comparable activities in the advanced countries.
    - b. Part of the costs of sustaining and reproducing this capitalist wage labour is borne by pre- or non-capitalist relations of production.
    - c. The workforce is subjected to extra-economic coercion which enhances the appropriation of surplus value.
  12. David Kaplan: "The Current 'Upswing' in the South African Economy and the International Capitalist Crisis: A Re-Interpretation of South African Development": 16 *WIP Supplement* (February 1981) at 6.
  13. In the Southern African Development Co-Ordination Conference. South Africa produces 77% of the total gross domestic product in Southern Africa, 90% of the energy, three quarters of the coal, iron, wheat, maize and electricity and controls 90% of the military network.
  14. The South African economy has moved into a recovery phase comparable to "the 1977-81 period" where "the scenario was similar": *Takeover Talk* (July 1987) Comment at 14.
  15. Howard Barrell: "Soviet Policy in Southern Africa" 48 *WIP* 3 (July 1987) at 4. See also "Soviet academic wants a 'pink South Africa'" *Natal Mercury* August 31, 1987.
  16. Clem Suntner: *The World and South Africa in the 1990's* (1987) Human & Rousseau at 111. See also Leon Louw and Frances Kendall: *South Africa: the Solution* (1986) Amagi at 200 ff. Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley *South Africa without Apartheid: Dismantling Racial Discrimination* (1986) Maskew Miller submit at 263 that the dismantling of apartheid "will have to be followed by the creation of a true social democracy if South African capitalism does not want to drown in the wake of the inevitable post-apartheid aspirations."
- In our view, a National Convention is a *last resort* for the white ruling class and its imperialist masters.
17. "The National Question" *Frank Talk* Volume 1 Numbers 2 & 3 at 8ff. Paper delivered by Imrann Moosa: Lenasia: 1984: *FTC I*.
  18. Buti Thlagale: "BC in the Labour Force": April 1981: *FTC I*.
  19. See note 17 above.
  20. *Frank Talk* Volume 1 Number 1 at 23.
  21. *Racialism* refers to attitudes, behaviour and "race relations"; "racism" is the systematization of these into an explicit ideology of racial superiority and their institutionalisation in the state apparatus.
  22. W.D. Jordan: *White over Black: American Attitudes towards the Negro 1550-1812*: Penguin Books: Baltimore: 1969 at 20.
  23. See note 19 above.
  24. Walter Rodney: "Marxism in Africa" *FTC II*.
  25. In *Ujamaa — Essays on Socialism* Dar es Salaam 1969 President Nyerere, erstwhile President of Tanzania, wrote:

"African socialism did not start from the existence of conflicting 'classes' in society... The foundation and the objective of African socialism is the extended family. The true African socialist does not look at one class of men as his brethren and another as his natural enemy. He does not form an alliance with the 'brethren' for the extermination of the non-brethren"
  26. 'A Look at the Manifesto' *New Nation*: 1987.
  27. See note 15 above. Cf Alec Erwin "The Question of Unity in the Struggle" (September 1985) *SALB* Volume 11 No. 1 at 51ff and Jeremy Cronin "The Question of Unity: A Reply" (January 1986) *SALB* Volume 11 No. 3 at 31ff.
  28. *News and Letters* 22 May 1987.
  29. S.C. Nolutshungu: *Changing South Africa: Political Considerations*: (1983) David Philip at 116.
  30. *Op cit* 123.
  31. *Op cit* 124.
  32. *Op cit* 82.
  33. The Black petit bourgeoisie can be broken up into:
    - a) Bureaucratic petit bourgeoisie ie. government employees;
    - b) Upper traditional petit bourgeoisie ie. big traders and professionals;
    - c) Lower traditional petit bourgeoisie ie. small traders;
    - d) Upper new petit bourgeoisie ie. managers in big businesses;
    - e) Lower new petit bourgeoisie ie. nurses, teachers, laboratory assistants, trade union organisers, etc.See Tissong *op cit* 3 and Khangale Makhado "Black Consciousness as a Driving Force" (January 1981) *FTC I*.
  34. Pamphlet issued by the Azanian Labour Monitoring Group: (July 1987) *FTC II*.
  35. H. Simson "The Myth of the White Working Class in South Africa": *African Review* Volume 4 Number 2 (Summer 1974).
  36. Quoted in E.N. Katz *A Trade Union Aristocracy* (1976) African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand at 77.
  37. Andrew Kenny "White Revolution" in *Frontline* (June 1987) at 33. See also Tissong *op cit* 5.
  38. A. Sivanandan "Race, Caste and Class in South Africa" *Frank Talk* Volume 1 Number 5 at 27ff.
  39. Steven Friedman: *Building Tomorrow Today*: (1987) Ravan at 8.
  40. Harald Pakendorf: "Yes, we should be applauding this strike, not regretting it!" *Sunday Times* 16th August 1987. In the end, NUM settled for the Chamber of Mine's *pre-strike* offer, and described the three week walkout as a "dress rehearsal for further action": see "Miners go back as massive strike ends" *Daily News* 31 August 1987.
  41. Julie Vedan: "Trade Union Unity" (June 1984) *FTC V*. See also Don Ncube *Black Trade Unions in South Africa* (1985) Skotaville and Merle Lipton *Capitalism and Apartheid* (1986) David Philip.
  42. Ie. Anglo American, Sanlam, Volkskas, Rembrandt, S.A. Mutual and Anglovaal. Mc Gregor's *Who Owns Whom* (Juta) 1987. *Takeover Talk* July 1987 (Activity) records that Rembrandt has paid R32,5m to make its shareholding in Volkskas stand at 25,4%.
  43. See note 3 above.

### Black Theology: Opiate or Material Force

1. Dr. Takatso Mofokeng: "The Evolution of the Black Struggle and the Role of Black Theology" in *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*: I. Mosala and B. Thlagale (eds.) (Skotaville) Page 114.
2. Dr. Itumeleng Mosala: "The Use of the Bible in Black Theology" *op cit* page 176.
3. William R. Jones: "Liberation Strategies in Black Theology: Mao, Martin or Malcolm?", in *The Chicago Theological Seminary Register* Volume LXXXIII Number 1.
4. Dr. Alan Boesak: *Farewell to Innocence*: Orbis Books: 1977.
5. Bishop A. Zulu.
6. Dr. Simon Gqubule: "What is Black Theology" in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* No. 8 September 1978 page 22.
7. Sergio Rostagno: "The Bible: Is an Interclass Reading Legitimate?" in *The Bible and Liberation* Norman K. Gottwald page 63.
8. Dr. A. Boesak: *Black and Reformed*: (Skotaville): 1984 page 24.
9. Dr. A. Boesak: *Farewell to Innocence*: (Orbis): 1977 page 10.