

STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICAN
NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA ON THE VICTORY OF THE
PATRIOTIC FORCES IN ZIMBABWE.

A new state, the Republic of Zimbabwe is about to be borne. This will take place when the former colonial power, the ruling circles of Great Britain formally hand over power on the 18th April 1980, to the masters of Zimbabwe, the Patriotic forces.

This is a moment of triumph for the people of Zimbabwe, for the people of Africa and for the rest of democratic mankind.

As it has happened before, in the case of Algeria, Guinea Bissau, Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde and indeed on the rest of independent Africa, the birth of Zimbabwe was not easy. It was strenuously resisted by the colonial administration which, with the support of the British colonial power and the rest of the countries of aggressive imperialism including fascist South Africa, had marshalled a massive and well oiled military power and a para-military police force against the people of Zimbabwe and the neighbouring independent African states.

Pitted against such an aggressive force, the people of Zimbabwe had to undergo tremendous sacrifices during the progress of their war of national liberation. If the statistics have been preserved they will reveal thousands of innocent civilians massacred either as "collaborators" of the freedom forces or as victims of so-called crossfire. Thousands of black Rhodesians were herded like animals into so-called protected villages where they were made to lead concentration camp life. Many hundreds of thousands of Rhodesian

Africans were forced to flee their homes to become refugees in the neighbouring front-line countries. Even in these ~~sandwiches~~ they did not escape the repeated raids by the Rhodesian and fascist South African punitive forces and hundreds of old men, women and children became victims of these murderous outrages.

During the war of national liberation many freedom fighters ^{who} fell into the hands of the fascist regime were either summarily executed or sentenced to death after brief mock trials. Others were forcibly abducted from neighbouring African states jailed or murdered as it suited their captors.

The Rhodesian fascist regime had embarked upon a deliberate strategy of seeking to destabilize the socio-economic progress of the neighbouring frontline African states. Mozambique, Zambia, Angola and Botswana were deliberately made to bear the brunt of this aggressive policy. Many lives of their citizens were lost and important economic centres were destroyed, road and rail communication lines were disrupted.

The deliberate aim of this aggressive strategy was to mobilise the governments and peoples of these countries against the liberation forces of Zimbabwe and the rest of Southern Africa. It was expected that the success of these aggressive manoeuvres would result in the isolation of the revolutionary movements from their external rear bases. At the same time the enemy sought to destroy and weaken these forces by repeated attacks against their external bases in the front-line states.

Despite the persistence and stubbornness of the external aggressive policies and the escalation of internal violence against the progressive forces and the masses of the people in Zimbabwe, the reactionary Smith regime and its puppet supporters together with its international allies were forced to succumb to the growing pressure of the revolutionary movement supported by the overwhelming majority of the people of Zimbabwe. Viewed in this background, the victory of

the people of Zimbabwe demonstrates afresh the irreversibility of the revolutionary process whose main forces -- the world socialist system, the progressive working class movement in the capitalist countries and the national liberation movement of the peoples -- are constantly gaining strength despite the aggressiveness of the dying imperialist system.

It has been further proved that the people steeled and tutored in the crucible of revolutionary struggle are able to clearly stir their course away from that chosen by the enemy. In this context, the crushing defeat suffered by the puppet lackeys led by Bishop Abel Muzorewa demonstrated the total rejection by the masses of the people in Zimbabwe of all manoeuvres which sought to perpetuate imperialist domination through aggressive neo-colonialism.

The psychological impact of the recent developments in Zimbabwe on the two sides of the combat lines in South Africa and Namibia has naturally been different.

The ruling circles in South Africa are not quite certain how the future relations between South Africa and Zimbabwe are likely to develop. Whilst on the one hand they express a certain amount of optimism on the other hand they give vent to forboding fears about the worsening strategic situation of South Africa following the victory of the Patriotic forces in neighbouring Zimbabwe.

The state of uncertainty has led to some in-fighting within the leading echelons of the fascist Afrikaner nationalist Party expressing differing views on the tactics to be adopted to meet the new situation. It should however be emphasised that the feuding groups are in full agreement on the strategy of maintaining racist white minority rule.

The current racist Prime Minister is advocating certain cosmetic changes which seek to further entrench the apartheid structure in the political life of the country. The recent gimmick of the

Botha-Magnus Malan regime is to seek to involve the Black people in a pointless discussion of the "future" of South Africa whose ultimate aim, as they openly state, is not majority rule as in Zimbabwe but an endorsement of the racist programme of separate development and the perpetuation of white racist domination.

On the other hand, the political corpse of Johannes Vorster, victim of the Muldergate scandal, is beginning to stir into life. Vorster and others of the extreme right wing of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party are opposed to any cosmetic changes in the Apartheid system. He has recently gone on record saying that he sees no alternative to Apartheid. He is a different Vorster from the one who promised in October 1974 that South Africa and the world would witness changes in race relations in South Africa within six months. There is now a threat of another breakaway from the Nationalist Party and the setting up of a new party whose leaders will be Connie Mulder, Johannes Vorster and Andries Treurnicht.

What are reasons for the uncertainty in the future that has gripped the minds of the racist white minority?

Both within Namibia and South Africa, the struggles of the oppressed peoples are gaining a lot of ground, whereas in the past, the South African fascist regime has staked its hope on the puppets of the Turnhalle Alliance and those of the Bantustans, both the growing prestige of SWAPO and the ANC and the recent sweeping defeat of Muzorewa, have dimmed the hopes for a neo-colonial solution in Namibia and acceptance of the Bantustan "solution" for the independence of the oppressed millions in South Africa.

The spokesman of the new Zimbabwe have already indicated some aspects of the future international relations of their country with the outside world -

- (a) the new Zimbabwe will be a member of the OAU, the non-aligned movement and the United Nations. All these forums are well known for their uncompromising opposition to the draconian apartheid policies of the Botha-Magnus Malan regime.
- (b) radio RSA, the external propaganda arm of the fascist apartheid regime has been asked to discontinue its broadcast from Salisbury.
- (c) there are hints that the new Zimbabwe will adhere to the international sports boycott against the apartheid regime.

As the new Zimbabwe extends its contact with the outside world, representatives of the progressive and democratic states will gain accreditation to the government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. The reactionary ruling group in our country is terrified out of its wits by the prospect of representations of socialist countries crowding on the borders of the fascist republic. Already a number of socialist countries are represented in Botswana, Mozambique and Lesotho. Swaziland will undoubtedly follow out in the future. This has led some within the ruling group to express dark fears that South Africa will be under constant surveillance by these progressive forces.

How do the masses of the people in South Africa and Namibia view the developments in Zimbabwe?

Together with their comrades-at-arms in the whole of Africa and the rest of the progressive world, the oppressed peoples in South Africa and Namibia applaud the victory of the people of Zimbabwe and are anxiously awaiting the emergence of the new republic and its entry into public political life as a member of the democratic forums of the international community.

All these forms and many others will be strengthened by the entry of the new Republic of Zimbabwe into their ranks.

The independence of Zimbabwe has driven yet another nail into the coffin of decaying colonialism and racial oppression. This has further tilted and consolidated the balance of forces in Southern Africa in favour of the struggling masses.

Of strategic importance has once again been the vindication of armed struggle as an effective weapon for winning of genuine power by the oppressed people. This is the crux of the whole question.

The victory of the national liberation revolutions of the former Portuguese colonies after protracted armed struggles led by the vanguard organisations of the oppressed peoples placed genuine power in the hands of the former slaves. This was a development which imperialism had not bargained for since it drastically cut all bonds that had secured the peoples of the former colonies for centuries of colonial domination.

The exercise of all power by the people also precluded any future attempts to impose a reactionary order which would again pander to the interests of the defeated colonial system.

The ideologues of imperialism also saw in the developments the beginnings of a radical swing away from the dominating ideological and political influence of the imperialist system.

Instead the new tendency was to embrace the socialist system as a true and genuine friend and ally. This was obviously not to the liking of the imperialist ruling circles. They started to manoeuvre to accommodate the new changed situation by presenting a different face as of a friend and ally who had accepted to support the people's aspirations of majority rule. At the same time they sought to present themselves as peacemakers ready to solve the problems of

feuding parties - the oppressed people and the oppressor colonial regimes. In their efforts at peacemaking, the main urge was directed at disarming the fighting forces of the oppressed people for the obvious reason that this would weaken the revolutionary forces and compromise them in the face of their enemies.

The main inspirer of this hypocrisy was the former American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger who tried very hard during the course of his "shuttle-diplomacy" in Southern Africa in the mid 70's to present a smiling face for aggressive American imperialism. Kissinger was of course determined to prevent the Mozambique-type and Angola-type victories which had succeeded to place all power in the hands of the peoples. His ideological platform for these manoeuvres was anti-communism and this baton is now being held aloft by Margaret Thatcher, the chieftainess of British imperialism and reaction.

In the wake of developments in Southern Africa, the strategic situation has shifted against the enemy of the whole continent of Africa. The crisis facing the regime has been further accentuated by the developing armed onslaught which has given fresh impetus to the mass political activity of a large section of the oppressed population. For a more accelerated advance of our struggle it is essential that the African National Congress and its revolutionary allies should successfully develop these strategic tasks - mass mobilisation and intensification of the armed struggle directed by a consolidated and strengthened underground machinery.

One other important strategic task is to ensure the all-round international isolation of the Botha-Magnus Malan regime, a task that has always been sabotaged by international imperialism. These same imperialist forces seek to justify the protection of their protege in Southern Africa by manoeuvring to reduce the struggle of our people into a civil rights movement whose demands, they argue, will be met by certain reforms within the apartheid structure. It is

in this light that we should view the activities of groupings such as the European Economic Community (EEC) with content that the crisis confronting our country will be solved by calling on the multi-national co-operations to observe certain "codes of conduct". These dangerous illusions are deliberately foisted to protect the super profits of the multi-national co-operations and to reinforce their springboard in Southern Africa for neo-colonial aggression into the independent African continent.

The African National Congress working in close collaboration with its revolutionary allies is deeply committed to intensify the struggle for the seizure of power and the forcible transfer of that power from the fascist minority to the hands of the democratic majority, for the creation of a people's democratic South Africa. This is our strategic goal. It is clear that democratic power cannot be won in South Africa without the all-round defeat of the racist colonialist regime and its elimination as a factor influencing popular power in our country.


What are our immediate tasks this year, the year of the 25th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, our revolutionary programme? In the words of our President, Oliver Tambo, we must engage in:

- mass action to remove the Botha regime from power;
- mass action to destroy the separate development institutions, or to turn them against the enemy;
- mass action to fight the enemy on all fronts and on all issues;
- mass action to step up the popular war of liberation;
- mass rejection of all reformism and attempts to disarm us by seeking to delude us that foreign investment, dialogue with the regime and peaceful change can ever liberate us;

- mass action to observe the Year of the Charter as a year of the people's commitment to a genuinely democratic South Africa and popular struggles to bring about such a democratic South Africa.

The African National Congress is confident that the people of the new Republic of Zimbabwe and the rest of progressive and democratic mankind will steadfastly support the revolutionary struggle of our people until final victory.

A LUTA CONTINUA!
AMANDLA NGAWETHU!
MATLA KE ARC'A!
POWER TO THE PEOPLE!


ALFRED NZO
SECRETARY GENERAL.

LUSAKA
19/3/1980.