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SECHABA

official organ of the african
national congress south africa

PRESIDENTS TAMBO & NUJOMA



THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

SECHABA

APRIL ISSUE 1984



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COVER CAPTIONS

The picture on the front cover of this issue shows the two Presidents – Comrade Sam Nujoma of SWAPO and Comrade O R Tambo of the ANC.

The back cover shows the platform at the foundation meeting of the Federation of South African Women, on the 17th April 1954. Ray Alexander (interviewed in this issue) is seated at the table, in the centre.



U.S. manoeuvres in Southern Africa

There are disturbing developments in Southern Africa. American imperialism is again showing its ugly face. Yesterday it encouraged the racist regime to attack the ANC and SWAPO in the neighbouring Southern African states; it attacked the front-line states, including Lesotho; it still trains, finances and deploys bandit troops in Mozambique, Angola and recently in Zimbabwe. Now the US is twisting the arm of the racists to 'negotiate' with the front line states. The aim is to undermine the positions of the liberation movements by cutting the support these movements receive from the neighbouring countries.

What are Reagan's plans? We should remember that this is an important year in the political life of the US — it is election year. Reagan has said categorically that he wants to come back. The black vote in the US is very important. Nobody wants to lose this constituency. Reagan is aware that the black Americans are very sensitive — and justifiably so — about US policy towards Africa. The Afro-Americans who understandably identify with the struggles of the African people,

regard an attack on the African continent as an attack on them. Reagan has to take this reality into consideration in his foreign policy towards Africa.

Not that Reagan's policy towards South Africa differed much from the policy of the South African racists. On the contrary, the growing alliance between the Botha regime and the Reagan administration strengthens the apartheid regime and also enables the policies of that regime to influence imperialist designs in our region. There is a direct interconnection between 'peace talks' in our region and the aggressive designs of the Botha regime. They are aimed at 'containing' our liberation struggle — to say the least. The ultimate aim is to liquidate our movement — if not physically then morally. The growing repression inside the country is not unconnected with the new approach of Botha.

The pressures on the Reagan administration at the UN cannot be overlooked. But his main worry is the home front. He has to deliver the goods. After his blunders in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Grenada, Lebanon, he has



to show his electorate that he can produce a 'peace plan' for Southern Africa.

The African National Congress is of the opinion that there can be no peace in Southern Africa unless and until the racist apartheid regime is overthrown. Those who want peace in Southern Africa have no choice but to support the struggle of the South African people as led by the ANC.

The South African racists are victims of their own propaganda. They have been telling the world and themselves that the ANC is

outside South Africa. They believe this despite the fact that the ANC has always engaged them within the borders of our country. The ANC is inside South Africa and its bases are our people. Indeed, it was none other than the spokesmen of the regime who complained more than once that the problem in South Africa is that the ANC is everywhere. That is their problem!

All we know is that racist South Africa is going to surprise the world by showing itself vulnerable much sooner than expected.)

Interview
with Ray Alexander

Women's Federation - Thirty years

On the 17th of April 1954, the Federation of South African Women was born at a conference attended by more than 150 delegates representing over 230 000 women. Representatives of women's organisations came from different areas of South Africa, including many towns in the Cape, as well as Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and Johannesburg itself, where the conference was held.

The conference was opened by Ray Alexander, a veteran of our women's and people's struggle, who spoke of the important role women played in the past, and must play in the present and future of our country. Conference elected Ray general secretary of the Federation, but the government imposed a severe banning order on her - banning her from holding office and participating in more than forty organisations, among which was the Federation.

On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Federation, 'Sechaba' interviewed Comrade Ray Alexander on the Federation and its work.

Q. Could you give us a brief account of the events that led to the formation of the Federation of South African Women?

A. The Federation came about as a result of

the development of our women's struggles. It's birth must therefore be seen not merely in terms of the conference on 17 April 1954. As far back as the days of the Second World War our women had begun getting organised for the struggle against food shortages and high prices of food. Food Committees were formed, and these fought for the fair distribution of food, particularly to the areas outlying the big cities.

The Food Committees concerned themselves with other issues affecting the lives of women. For example, we would meet on certain occasions like the 8th of March - International Women's Day - to discuss issues affecting women. Such meetings were further inspired by the activities of organisations like the Women's International Democratic Federation, which had begun organising women in the struggle against war and for the restoration of lasting peace. Thus on the 1st of April, 1953, a meeting was organised in Port Elizabeth, which was attended by leading women in the African National Congress and Trade Union movement. I recall a few names: Florence Matomela, Frances Baard, Marya Williams, Gus Coe, Mary Moodley and others. We had a representative meeting of African, Indian, Coloured and 3

White women. We also had a special guest, Mr Pemba, (an artist).

We were all excited by the role women had played in the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign, but felt that there was a need to bring together women of all racial groups in one national organisation that could effectively ensure the fuller participation of women in our national liberation struggle. We then took a decision to work towards the creation of such an organisation.

Q. Would you say that the ground was laid for the creation of a federal organisation of women?

A. Yes. Our women had shown in actual field of struggle that they could be organised into such a body, although we knew that it was not going to be an easy task. We immediately set about getting in contact with women in other provinces. We contacted Dora Tamana, Gladys Smith, Katie White and other women in Cape Town; Hilda Bernstein and other women in Johannesburg; Hendrietta Khuzwayo, Bertha Mkhize, Fatima Meer, Mrs Singh Fatima Seedat and other women in Natal. In Port Elizabeth we already had militant organisers like Florence Matomela and Frances Baard, who helped organise women all over the Cape.

Q. Since you did not operate under any established organisation, didn't you find problems in your work of organising, particularly as there already existed a national organisation of the people, the African National Congress, which had its own Women's League?

A. We encountered no problems at all. Actually, we received a lot of encouragement from Comrade Walter Sisulu, then secretary general of the ANC. Comrade Walter had before then undertaken a trip to some socialist countries, and was very impressed with the level of women's organisations there. Of course, there was some scepticism about the wisdom of another women's organisation from some comrades, who thought that the

Federation would be in competition with the ANC Women's League. But these fears were soon dispelled by the representation at the conference, where all ANC Women's League branches were represented. As to the invitation to attend, this was a letter to all interested individuals and organisations, signed by a number of women who acted as convenors.

Q. What questions did the conference address itself to?

A. A wide range of issues was discussed. Delegate after delegate spoke passionately against the white racist regime that keeps the majority of our people in poverty, ignorance, ill-health and slave labour conditions. The subjects covered showed the real political awareness of the delegates, who linked the question of women's rights with their own struggles and problems, the Bills that were then before parliament, and the political issues of the day. Women spoke of the conditions under which children were brought up, lack of proper family life, amenities and education opportunities, the need for schools, creches, maternity homes, the high rents and poor houses. Over and above everything, delegates emphasised the fight against unjust laws, the Bantu Education Act, the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act, the Population Registration Act and the pass laws — all of which greatly affected the lives of women and their families.

Q. The impression one gets when looking through conference records is that in addition to the bitterness prevalent against the regime, there was another degree of bitterness — against men. For instance, one delegate was loudly applauded when she said that if it were not for the husbands, many more women would have attended the conference. Another delegate angrily lashed out: 'If the men stand in our way, we shall sweep them aside for our rights.'

A. It is true that we were and still are primar-

ily subjugated and oppressed by the system of apartheid, which is the main cause for the misery of millions of our women. But we are still aware that because of the laws of apartheid, because of tradition and custom, women are further victims of oppression in their own homes. Women more often than not fail to attend meetings and contribute fully towards the work of our struggle because they have to be home to cook, feed and look after their families, and have to do a lot of other chores without the help of their husbands. We thus resolved to 'teach the men that they cannot hope to liberate themselves from the evils of discrimination and prejudice as long as they fail to extend to women complete and unqualified equality in law and practice'.

This position is sometimes misinterpreted to mean an attack on the menfolk, but we in the Federation, like all democratic women in our country, have always strived to maintain the link between the inferior status of women under apartheid and the inferior status to which our people are subjugated by discriminatory laws and colour prejudice. Thus the need for women's organisations is to enable women to mobilise others to win specific demands for them and their children. These organisations will not and should not be a divisive force, but a force for greater mobilisation of women into struggle for total national liberation. Through these organisations we must teach our men that we are half of the population, and without this massive potential being fully engaged in the work of our struggle there can never be progress.

Q. What documents guided the activities of the Federation?

A. We adopted a Charter of Women's Rights, which summarises the demands of women in South Africa for themselves, their children and families. The Charter called for the right to vote, the right to full employment opportunities, equal rights with men in relation to property, marriage and children and for the removal of all laws and customs that deny women such equal rights. It calls for compul-

sory and free education for all children, the removal of laws that restrict movement and all oppressive laws. Through the Charter the Federation pledged to build and strengthen women's sections in the national liberation movements and to organise women in trade unions and through the people's varied organisations. It further committed the Federation to strive for permanent peace throughout the world.

Q. Considering that the Federation was never banned by the regime, do you think that after 30 years of its existence, it managed to achieve the goals which it had set itself?

A: Although it is correct that the Federation was never legally banned, it cannot be said that it continued to operate as it should have. The leadership of the Federation was subjected to severe bannings, detentions and arrests. Lilian Ngoyi, who later became our president, was continuously served with banning orders; until her death Dora Tamana, who had been elected acting secretary general after I was banned, was harassed and victimised by the regime; Helen Joseph, who also served a term as secretary general of the Federation, was the first person in South Africa to be house arrested; she was further continuously banned and silenced. However, we continued to participate in all major campaigns: against the Bantu Education Act, the Cape Provincial Segregation Ordinance; we campaigned for equal opportunities for our young African, Coloured and Indian women to work in shops and offices.

The most important of our campaigns was the anti-pass campaign, carried out jointly with the ANC Women's League. This campaign led to the August 9th, 1956 demonstration by over 20,000 women of all races. We joined the international democratic women's movement, sent our leaders like Dora Tamana, Lilian Ngoyi, Asha Darwood and others to conferences abroad, and in this way participated in the struggle to protect the children and peoples of the world from

another war, for peace and social progress. Yes, we were and still are a force. That is why so many of our women were and still are under constant harassment by the regime. Today they are trying to silence Albertina Sisulu, they have kept Dorothy Nyembe in their dungeons for the past fifteen years, they have tried to stifle our veterans like Helen Joseph, but our women are marching forward to victory.

Our women have created strong organisations throughout the country – the United Women's Organisation, the South African

Women's Federation, the East London Women's Organisation, the Port Elizabeth Women's Organisation, the Durban Women's Organisation as well as many other self-help and other clubs.

It is in recognition of the militancy of our women and as a means of consolidating the ranks of the democratic women's movement that the African National Congress has declared this as *the Year of the Women*. It is indeed a fitting tribute to the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Federation of South African Women.

ANC WOMEN'S SECTION STATEMENT

Made on March 8th International Women's day

On the occasion of the 74th anniversary of International Women's Day, the African National Congress Women's Section greets all the peace-loving women of the world, particularly those engaged in struggles against racism, fascism, colonialism and anti-people's regimes. This year we commemorate the 8th of March with redoubled commitment to ensure the liberation of our motherland from the monstrous apartheid regime. The declaration of the National Executive Committee of the ANC of 1984 as the **Year of the Women** of South Africa has placed added res-

ponsibilities on our women and all our people; to mobilise the greatest number of women and consolidate their fighting power for the final onslaught on the apartheid rulers.

On the 25th of March this year, the doors of the Kroonstad prison in South Africa will open to release Dorothy Nyembe, a veteran of our women's and people's struggles, sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment in 1969 for helping the soldiers of Umkhonto We Sizwe. We call upon all democratic and peace-loving women of the world to send messages of greetings and solidarity with this gallant

fighter to welcome her into the ranks of the democratic women and people's movement in South Africa and internationally. Messages can be sent:

*c/o Mrs Beatrice Mhlongo
F579 Ntuzima Township
PO Kwa Mashu
Natal 4360
South Africa.*

We also call upon our sisters in the international community to demand the unconditional release of all our women in gaol, particularly brave fighters like Albertina Sisulu, Barbara Hogan, Lilian Keagile, Tnandi Modise and all political prisoners and detainees in the apartheid dungeons.

Faced with ever-growing resistance to its genocidal policies, the minority regime has embarked on a campaign of blackmail of the countries of Southern Africa in an effort to lure them into submitting to Pretoria's diktat. South Africa has intensified her policies of destabilisation of the Front Line countries by increasing her support to the rebel groups such as Unita in Angola, the so-called Mozambique Resistance Movement and the renegades opposed to the legitimate government of Lesotho. At the same time the white minority rulers in Pretoria are posing as the 'Messiahs of peace and goodwill' to the rest of the world in an effort to hide their real intentions.

Meanwhile, inside South Africa, the regime is further entrenching white minority domination by continuing with the intended 'elections' of sections of the oppressed black majority into the apartheid parliament. Under the guise of 'reform,' Pretoria is initiating the 'three-tier parliament,' which will deny the vast majority of the black people the right to participate in the government of the country. This move must be met with the condemnation of all democratic people of the world.

There can be no real peace in Southern Africa, Africa, or even in the whole world, until the peoples of South Africa are afforded their rights under a government elected by

the majority of the people, black and white. We therefore call on the democratic women's movement the world over to intensify the struggle for the complete destruction of the minority regime.

We greet our sisters in the Front Line countries and assure them of our commitment to the destruction of a regime that has denied them and their peoples a right to enjoy the freedoms they so gallantly fought for.

We greet our sisters in Africa and urge them to continue the fight to strengthen our continental organisation — the Pan African Women's Organisation, and the OAU.

We salute the gallant women and peoples of the socialist countries for their continued committed and unflinching support for our struggle.

We greet our sisters and all progressive forces in the capitalist countries who continue to fight the evils of their governments, which have chosen to collaborate with apartheid against the wishes of their people.

We especially extend our warm fraternal greetings to all the women and peoples struggling to end the injustices perpetrated against their peoples — to our comrades in SWAPO and its Women's Council, the Polisario Front, our fellow combatants in the ranks of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the General Union of Palestinian Women. We greet the women of El Salvador, who are waging a bitter struggle against the anti-popular US-backed regime. We hail the victories scored by the gallant people of Nicaragua and all young states waging a bitter struggle against the forces of imperialism and reaction.

Forward with the year of the women of South Africa!

For the liberation of the peoples of South Africa!

Forward with the struggle for peace and social justice!

*Gertrude Shope,
Head, Women's Section,
African National Congress.*

PRETORIA'S GENOCIDE BILL

Part 1

by
David Riga

This study of Pretoria's proposed new 'influx control' legislation will be published in three parts.

The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill (OMSB), at present being considered by South Africa's all-white parliament, is one of the most drastic and far-reaching pieces of racist legislation in the long and tragic history of 'influx control, otherwise known as the pass laws.

The Bill gives the Minister of Co-operation and Development virtually uncontrolled powers to order the lives and opportunities of the African people. It will reduce the already small number of rights enjoyed by Africans living in the cities; it will, if unamended, place African farm workers under further restrictions; and it will condemn millions of those living in the Bantustans to poverty, starvation and epidemic disease.

This is why the African National Congress has labelled the proposed law the Genocide Bill.

When the racist regime and its apologists abroad speak about the 'reforms' taking place in South Africa they do not mention the Genocide Bill. It does not fit into the image they try to project of a government bent on gradually extending human rights to all its citizens.

On the contrary, the Bill depends for its effectiveness on stripping the vast majority of South Africans of citizenship itself. It is a major step along the road to the racist dream of the day when there "will be no black South Africans."

But the Genocide Bill is in fact an integral part of P W Botha's plan to guarantee the survival of white domination. It is intimately related to the other 'reform' measures, including the granting of a form of sham representation in parliament to the so-called coloured and Indian minorities.

The Genocide Bill is vital to the implementation of the Grand Apartheid ideal of a confederation of 'independent' black states bound to the dominant white state. Above all, it is the centre-piece of the racists' designs for the so-called urban Blacks, whom the Nationalists have identified as the main threat to white domination.

Indeed, the origins of the Genocide Bill lie in a secret report produced by the Afrikaner Broederbond, the elite secret society that acts as the Pretoria government's think-tank and ideological watchdog. The report was drawn up in the last months of 1976, while the ruins of the regime's policy for 'urban Blacks' were still smouldering in Soweto and dozens of other black townships across the land.

officer who may at any time call upon any black person to produce to him for examination any authority or certificate granted to him under this Act." If he or she can't produce the right 'certificate,' then a fine of R600 or six months in gaol is the penalty. At present the penalty is R100 or three months.

The penalties on people who give lodging to 'illegals' are to be increased from R20 or two months' imprisonment to R500 or six months. And the penalties on employers of illegal labour, now R500 or three months, will be increased to R5 000 or six months' imprisonment.

The Bill attempts to blunt the challenge to white supremacy represented by the most feared enemy of the regime — the African workers. Its effect on the established urban African working class will be to increase the insecurity of their position by wielding the threat of a loss of jobs or, even more dangerous, of accommodation.

In terms of the Bill, loss of 'approved' accommodation means the loss of PUR status and the danger of being 'repatriated' to a 'homeland' one has never seen, where starvation reigns and the prospect of getting even migrant labour is virtually zero.

More sinister, the apparent 'concession' granting freedom to move from one 'prescribed' urban area to another may be used by the government to implement its Grand Apartheid design whereby all Africans will be tied to an ethnic 'homeland.'

The government intends establishing vast new black townships in an area north of Pretoria. These areas will be linked to the surrounding Bantustans — Bophutatswana, Lebowa and KwaNdebele. It appears that the government intends forcing members of the 'ethnic groups' concerned to move from Soweto to a new township where they can be officially regarded as living in a homeland.

But if the effects of the Genocide Bill on the Africans living in the cities will be dire, the effects on the rural populations of the Bantustans are likely to be catastrophic.

These areas, which were found by the government-appointed Tomlinson Commis-

sion in 1954 to be grossly overpopulated, have had their populations increased by a massive 66½% since 1970, because of the resettlement policy of the regime. Certain Bantustans, for example KaNgwane, QwaQwa and KwaNdebele, had their populations increased by between 200 and 500 per cent.

In 'independent' Venda it is estimated that at most 14 000 families could live productively off the land. The present population attempting to live by subsistence farming in Venda numbers 24 739 families.

It is authoritatively considered that the effect of the Genocide Bill will be to increase dramatically the rate of resettlement in the Bantustans.

Not only that. By cutting down drastically on illegal migration to the cities, the Bill will be severing the last lifeline of the rural people. The Bill will lead to a massive damming up of 'surplus labour' in the Bantustans, which are already physically incapable of supporting the present populations.

The results are not difficult to foresee. If the Bill is implemented it will lead to human catastrophes on a massive scale.

Already in South Africa in 1981 it was reported that more than 80 000 people fell victim to diseases of under-development, such as diphtheria, leprosy, malaria, rabies, measles, polio, hepatitis, tetanus and trachoma. The number of cholera cases each summer has been steadily rising over the past three years. In the Ciskei several dozen people were reported to have been struck by bubonic plague. Polio, until recently contained, has been sweeping the Letaba district of the Gazankulu Bantustan in the Eastern Transvaal.

It is in this context that the African National Congress has dubbed the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill the Genocide Bill.

The Origins of the Bill

The Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill (OSMB) is likely to prove an important instrument not only of the strategy of the Pretoria regime for containing the political demands of the so-called 'urban

Blacks,' but also of its attempt to adjust and regulate the supply of African labour power to the industrial areas over the next few decades. A study of the Bill and its origins in the report of the Riekert Commission (1977) should therefore throw light both on fundamental contradictions of South Africa's special type of colonialism, and on important political questions of the immediate future period.

The OMSB is closely linked to the proposed new local authority system for the African locations. Together with the Black Development Bill, these measures form the core of the government's attempt finally to lay the ghost of 1976. National Party strategists hope that the carefully sequenced implementation of this legislation will lay the basis for their broader confederation plans, aimed at resolving the political crisis of white South Africa.

At the same time the Bill tries to reconcile specific needs and demands of the capitalist class with the presentation of the general conditions for maintaining the high-profit, low-wage economy in South Africa.

The key to understanding the Bill and the situation that has given rise to it is the Riekert report. Contrary to the myth put about by the press in South Africa, the Bill is not a 'betrayal' of the 'spirit of Riekert.' On the contrary, it expresses very faithfully the basic principles and strategies suggested by the report.

The analysis that follows, therefore, begins by discussing the basic diagnosis, given in the Riekert report, of the crisis facing white South Africa, and its capitalist system in the aftermath of 1976. Secondly, it outlines the twin strategies proposed by the report: the strategies of 'normalisation' and 'effective control.' The final section of the analysis tries to show how the OMSB fits into the long-term strategy of the government, and how the process of adaptation of the Bill through the select committee and other state apparatuses has been aimed at reconciling contradictions between various social forces among the whites, notably the government,

big business, and the administrative cadres of the Department of Co-operation and Development.

The Pass Laws

As the legal and administrative mechanism regulating the flow of cheap labour power from the bantustans to the cities, influx control is an integral part of the economic system of South Africa. As that system has developed, so influx control has been adjusted to meet its needs. But the pass laws are not only an economic mechanism; throughout the process of capitalist development in South Africa, they have fulfilled four general functions.

In the first place, the pass law system had to regulate the quantity of labour available to the farmers, the mines and commerce and industry. Secondly, it had to ensure that such labour was available at the right price. Thirdly, by enforcing physical segregation, it had to help control the cultural and social conditions of Africans living in 'white' areas. And finally, it had to help suppress the political resistance and organisation of the African working people.

In the early nineteen-twenties, two different strategies for carrying out these functions emerged. The pragmatic strategy, developed in the Native Affairs Department report of 1922, accepted that the urbanisation of black South Africans was inevitable, but argued that it could be strictly controlled and limited so that "undesirable classes" such as "the professional agitators" could be kept out. The Stallard Committee in the Transvaal, on the other hand, proposed a 'radical' strategy:

"... the native should only be allowed to enter urban areas, which are essentially the white man's creation, when he is willing to enter and minister to the needs of the white man, and should depart therefrom when he ceases so to minister."

were real but they were not fundamental. Both recognised that the black worker was indispensable to South African capitalism. Each had a different idea as to how the danger that same black worker posed to capitalism and white supremacy should be averted.

The Nationalist Party victory in 1948 meant the 'radical' Stallard approach would be vigorously pursued. The Nationalist Party ideologues envisaged a massive process of "spatial structuring" which would guarantee the perpetuation of white supremacy and keep the *volk* pure. This grand vision, which reflected the interests and outlook of the Afrikaner petit-bourgeoisie and intellectuals, alarmed some capitalists, who were worried that too-strict influx control would dry up the reserve of unemployed in the cities, and drive up wages. But the government reassured these gentlemen: influx control would not be administered "in such a way that industry would suffer. Industry is thus in very good hands indeed."

Industry is Looked After

Industry was looked after. In the decade following the Nationalist victory, South African capitalism underwent a massive development and enrichment. At the same time the government pursued its ideological and political aims. The state apparatuses administering the pass laws grew by leaps and bounds, and its powers were expanded to control virtually every aspect of the lives of the majority of South Africans. The old 'native affairs' structures, which had always been run on colonial lines, different from the state organs for whites, became a 'state within the state.' The date of 1978 was confidently set, at which time the 'flow to the cities' was to have been stopped and even reversed.

In 1976 the whole edifice was shaken to its foundations. The job of the Riekert Commission was to pick up the pieces, and re-design the structure.

The commission was appointed in August 1977, and instructed to inquire into, and make recommendations concerning, the broad area of laws and regulations governing

the lives of black people outside the 'homelands' with special regard to "bottle-necks and other problems experienced by both employers and employees in the utilisation of labour." Because the commission was instructed to regard its enquiry as an 'economic' one, it was freed from the specific constraints of National Party ideology, though bound in general to stick to the government's overall objectives in labour policy. The commission took "the effective functioning of the free labour market mechanism" as its point of departure, and tried to present itself as detached, scientific and rational. But though the events of 1976 were never discussed as such, they were often alluded to, and it is obvious that they were an important consideration. The reaction to them in capitalist circles overseas was also a factor in the thinking of the commission.

Growing African Labour Force

The report found that South Africa's manpower situation was in a phase of "dynamic change." There was a rapid growth of African work-seekers, which threatened to create a dangerous level of unemployment. The proportion of Africans in the labour force had risen from 67.7% in 1951 to 70.3% in 1970, while the coloured and Asian share had remained constant, and that of whites was steadily falling. This showed the "important quantitative role" of African labour in the South African economy. Moreover, this growing black work force was tending to be geographically concentrated in a few main 'white' areas, notably the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging, Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage and Durban-Pinetown concentrations. The growing number of commuters, the increased population of the 'black homelands' and the large numbers of migrant contract workers were also noted.

Residents of towns in the 'black homelands' were found to be almost "completely dependent on the commuting system for their income and the maintenance of reasonable living standards." This emphasised the importance of 'inter-state' co-operation on labour

THE KOORNHOF BILLS



**THE ORDERLY MOVEMENT AND SETTLEMENT
— OF BLACK PERSONS BILL —**

matters, between Pretoria and the bantustan leaders.

Changes were also taking place in the industrial and occupational structures of the labour force, especially a move from the primary to the secondary and tertiary sectors. Although agriculture still accounted for the largest part of the African work force, this was due mainly to the subsistence sector, which accounted for 1.1 million, or 19.8% of the total African labour force. In mining and construction, African labour was "absolutely predominant," while African workers made up 45.5% of the labour force in manufacturing. This trend was bound to continue; the move from primary to secondary and tertiary sectors among African workers "has hardly begun ... and will probably be more rapid than ... (that of) other population groups."

There was a significant vertical mobility, that is, into more skilled jobs. "Although the largest percentage of the Black workers were still employed as labourers in 1975, the projections show that there is a strong movement toward the production workers' group ... The percentage of Blacks employed as clerical and sales workers, foremen and artisans, will ... also increase slightly."

In fact, the projections showed that for the first time in the development of South African capitalism, African production workers, (that is, machine operatives) would, by 1981, exceed the number of unskilled labourers. The number of white and Asian workers in this crucial category was declining.

Urbanisation and Proletarianisation

Associated with the growing numbers and importance of the African proletariat was a 'massive' process of black urbanisation. This had important implications for the provision of infrastructure, housing and training facilities, the report noted. The commission was especially struck by the fact that, whereas white, coloured and Asian urbanisation was wholly or almost complete, that of Africans "has hardly begun."

14 According to a labour bureau report of

1971, moreover, about 57% of all registered male workers and 73% of registered female workers had rights of urban residence. There were also about 1.8 million African youths in urban areas, most of them also probably with these rights. Of the 2.5 million economically active Africans in 'white' urban areas, about 1.1 million were migrants.

In the post-1976 context, the report did not find it necessary to spell out the political implications of these figures.

It did, however, point out that sharp rises in African wages in the early nineteen-seventies, but with a lower rise in productivity, had led to a "considerable" increase in labour costs per unit output. Increases in African wages since 1973 were put down mainly to the higher gold price and to the "re-grading of artisan work."

The report's survey of dynamic changes in the labour market concluded by noting the continued low level of education and training among African workers, and the dangerous shortage of skilled manpower in South Africa.

Turning to the "institutional framework," the report found that this gave rise to serious problems in the supply of labour-power. Among the most serious of these "market failures" were immobility of labour, imbalances in supply and demand, and resentment among Africans, especially those with Section Ten rights of residence in the 'white' cities.

With regard to workers' mobility, the report found that the Bantu Affairs Administration Act of 1971 had failed in its aim of increasing mobility by enlarging the "prescribed" urban areas and allowing freer movement between them. The commission was told by employers that movement, even within "prescribed areas" had actually declined since the Administration Boards were set up in terms of the Act. Movement between "prescribed areas" had become even more difficult. In particular, the report noted that "the black population in rural cities and towns seems to have dammed up," while "as a result of general economic development since 1968

... unemployment in the prescribed areas ... rose strongly."

The commission was particularly concerned at the large amount of illegal employment of black workers: "unlawful employment can undermine the whole system and doom it to failure." Harsh penalties for employers of "illegal labour" would be needed to curb this trend, control had to be tightened and loopholes closed. The employment of 'illegals' and the frankly expressed preference of many employers for cheap and insecure migrant workers rather than those with Section Ten rights, had led to a labour surplus in the urban areas. Since the 1976 events, employers had begun to show a "strong resistance particularly to urban black juveniles."

This was politically "dangerous." It was in the national interest for employers to make the optimal use of available labour living on a permanent basis in the urban areas, the report warned.

Section Ten Rights

The commission was clearly worried about the position regarding the holders of Section Ten rights. On the one hand, it noted that the many restrictions on the lives of Africans in the 'white' areas led to resentment, frustration and tension. On the other hand, the security afforded by Section Ten qualifications led to "work-choosiness." Moreover, the fact that these qualifications were tied to specific prescribed areas impeded the flow of labour-power. The commission would clearly have liked to recommend that Section Ten rights be abolished altogether. It quoted various internal reports from the Department of Co-operation and Development to the effect that Section Ten "was conducive to idleness and work-shyness," and that it was "misuse(d) by agitators and the Press to show up the government in a bad light and to incite Blacks."

But such a move was politically impossible: "suspension of these qualifications will undoubtedly elicit opposition from a large part of the urban black population and will

also be exploited for political purposes by certain internal and external groups ... (even) the amendment of the existing provisions ... may elicit strong political reactions ..."

The ambivalence in the report regarding Section Ten rights was to be skilfully exploited by the legal draughtsmen of the Department of Co-operation and Development.

In essence, what the Riekert Commission found was that the whole system of influx control was working both too well and not well enough. It was not working well in that it no longer delivered the right amount and kind of labour where it was needed. It was working too well in that the basic purpose of the migrant labour system, to undercut the bargaining power of African workers by laying on a permanent surplus supply of cheap labour-power from the 'homelands,' had proved so successful that employers were reluctant to give jobs to urban-based African proletarians at all.

Why employ 'choosy' Section Ten men or women, when contract workers or 'illegals' were available, whose precarious status made them cheap and insecure?

But the very success of South African capitalism had been responsible for bringing into existence an urban black proletariat whose numbers, education and relatively secure position had made it a potential threat to continued white dominance and thus to the survival of that same successful, high-profit, low-wage capitalist system.

A contradiction thus existed between the immediate, narrow interests of South African capitalism and the broader social and political conditions necessary to ensure the safety and survival of South African capitalism. The next part of this analysis will look at the strategies suggested by the Riekert Commission to overcome this crisis.

ERRATUM

We apologise to Grant Moloto for the fact that his poem, *Roses for Heroes*, published in the February issue of *Sechaba*, was wrongly attributed to another poet.

CHILDREN

ACCUSE

IMPERIALISM

By a SECHABA correspondent

Towards the end of last year, a unique Tribunal was convened in the capital city of the People's Republic of Angola to arraign the economic, political and military policies of the western powers and, in particular, the United States.

The uniqueness of the hearings in Luanda, from 28th November till 1st December, lay in the fact that the Tribunal was convened by children's and youth movements – the Agostino Neto Pioneer Organisation, the International Committee of Children's and Adolescents' Movements and the Pan-African Youth Movement. The charges of illegality were presented by young girls and boys of the liberation movements fighting against colonialism in various parts of the world – ANC of South Africa, SWAPO of Namibia, Fretilin of Timor, Pioneers of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic and the General Union of Palestinian Students. In addition, representatives of the youth of a number of Latin American, African and Asian countries, combating the greed and violence of imperialism, gave evidence.

In all, fifty national and international youth organisations addressed the Tribunal, which was made up of lawyers, judges and independent experts from various parts of the world. The most moving part of the hearing

was the evidence of twenty witnesses, the majority being children and adolescents, who were direct victims of acts of aggression by imperialism. They were, together with a number of former agents of imperialism, able to provide vivid and graphic testimony of the extent to which imperialism and its offshoots adopt the cruellest and most violent methods to impede the struggle for national liberation, social emancipation and world peace.

Botha, Savimbi and Reagan – Tried In Absentia

The scene was set by the opening address of the representative of Angola before hundreds of Angolan children and in the presence of leading members of the Government of Angola and the representative of the Central Committee of the MPLA-Workers' Party. In a most impressive address, he drew attention to the reason why the dock was empty – the reason was that as a 'tribunal of conscience,' the culprits – Botha, Savimbi, Reagan – as the material and moral authors of imperialism, were being tried *in absentia*. But these were the local representatives of a vast system of child labour, war, racism and fascism. "The imperialist countries, engaged in unbridled plunder of the natural resources of the developing countries, bear the responsibility and guilt for the world economic crisis."

The defeat of Portuguese colonialism was certain after the colonialists were forced to kill young children who would not betray the MPLA and its revolution. Augusto Ngangula, who was hacked to pieces by Portuguese troops after systematic beating and torture, embodied the 'unstoppable revolution.' But more recently, in the spirit of Ngangula, young Jaoa Tito, a ten-year-old Angolan who gave evidence at the Tribunal and who had been abducted by the bandits of the UNITA, refused to take food from people without paying for it. "The MPLA," he said, "does not steal food."

This revolutionary consciousness and the refusal to submit to the direct aggression of imperialism was reflected in the evidence of all the children. Graphically, they described, from their own experience, for example, the details of the racist South African attack on the capital of Lesotho in December 1982, when forces of the regime indiscriminately attacked the refugees in their houses in the middle of the night. From Namibia to Mozambique, from Uruguay to Timor, from the Saharawi Republic to Nicaragua, the children, through their testimony, tore away the veil of secrecy and the restraint of silence imposed by the imperialist news media.

Murder, abductions, rape, torture and impoverishment are the weapons used to subjugate and terrorise, so that countries remain under the control of their 'masters.' In Latin America, the children provided the evidence to show how the United States is trying to stem the tide of liberation in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Uruguay. In these and other countries, the silent genocide of hunger, man-made and perpetrated by the multi-nationals, is the result of poverty, degradation and despair.

In contrast, Angola and the countries fighting for a new society without the exploitation of man by man, where 'man will no longer be a wolf to man but a brother to man,' show what can be done. It is because they subvert the anachronistic apartheid regime and carry out their duties to the liberat-

ion movements of Namibia and South Africa that the South African regime wreaks death and destruction on Angola.

Participants at the Tribunal saw images of the new Angola when they attended the celebration of Pioneers' Day at the national stadium, in the presence of President Jose Eduardo dos Santos. The investment in health and education, in the welfare of the young in terms of equality, was reflected in the liveliness of the children in their games of football, netball and volleyball. The grace, rhythm and beauty of the gymnasts showed what a revolution committed to the whole person can achieve in the space of seven years of independence.

Discipline and Political Consciousness

But the most impressive part of the morning was the *tableaux vivant* — the use of multi-coloured banners with thousands of participants who, under the supervision of a handful of instructors, drew great applause for their slogans in support of socialism, national liberation and independence, and for the sophisticated pictures that went along with the slogans. Such discipline and political consciousness!

It became quite apparent why the South African regime is bent on attacking Angola and trying to destroy the gains of the revolution. One of the greatest achievements of Angolan revolution under the banner of the MPLA-Workers' Party is the deep humanism which motivates all aspects of life there. The South African regime cannot countenance a system where black and white, women and men, young and old work together to reconstruct a society from the plunder and greed of colonialism. Therefore, it embarks on sponsoring the bandit groups such as UNITA, destroying the infrastructure of railways, roads, hospitals and clinics, and causing damage to the value of ten billion US dollars, in order to coerce Angola. But the spirit of internationalism was a real and tangible thing in Luanda, and all the manoeuvres of South African aggression and imperialist tactics will not divert it from its path.

The Tribunal concluded with a reading 17



Racist attacks on Mozambique — this picture shows the sleeping quarters of the ANC office in Maputo after the bomb blasts of 17th October 1983.

ren and young people.” The Tribunal referred to the policy of bantustans, which are reserves of cheap labour and where “children, dispossessed of their own nationality, have neither a present nor a future.” The Tribunal drew attention to the illegal occupation of Namibia, where “mass murder and unspeakable violence” is committed “against SWAPO militants and the defenceless civilian population, not sparing children, and causing the exodus of thousands of people, especially children,” into exile in adjoining territories.

The Tribunal also drew attention to the acts of cruel aggression against the People’s Republic of Angola, the illegal occupation of a large part of its territory, and the Pretoria policy of destabilisation through the armed bandits, whose acts of death and destruction are mainly felt by children. The Tribunal condemned the policies of the permanent members of the Security Council from the west, who refuse to adopt comprehensive sanctions against the apartheid regime. The policy of destabilisation by South Africa is aimed also at Mozambique and other front line states, and its purpose is to disrupt the economic and social life of these territories.

of the findings of the judges. The conclusions were based on rules of international law guaranteeing the right to peace, freedom from aggression, the right to self-determination and economic development. Country by country, situation by situation, the Tribunal denounced the activities of imperialism as a threat to peace and as the major obstacle to human development.

Quite appropriately, the Tribunal began by referring to the policies of the South African regime where, internally, the “cruel and brutal form of racial discrimination has resulted in its rejection by the oppressed people as a whole,” and “especially by child-



The Spirit of Internationalism

The Tribunal held Israel, Morocco and Indonesia liable for the acts of aggression against the people of Palestine, the Saharawi Arab Republic and East Timor, and noted that in these and other cases it is the active support by the United States that results in acts of genocide against these peoples. It expressed support for their liberation movements.

There was a special section concerning Latin America in the findings of the Tribunal. The Tribunal met soon after the "shameless and criminal aggression against the tiny sovereign state of Grenada" and the US flexing of muscles had "destroyed the most cherished hopes of the children of Grenada for a brighter future in a free and independent country." There was special recognition of the role of Cuba and its people and children who are permanently threatened by the acts of provocation of the US imperialists, who do not tolerate the political, economic and social system chosen by the Cuban people, nor the internationalist help that Cuba gives to peoples fighting for their liberation, symbolised in respect of children by the many schools on the Isle of the Youth.

Racist attacks on Mozambique – this picture shows the roof of the ANC office in Maputo after the bomb blasts of 17th October, 1983.

The catalogue of terror, destabilisation and support by the US of the murderous cliques arrayed against popular struggles in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Uruguay were identified, policies which have resulted in the orphaning of thousands of children, and the suffering of these countries as a result of poverty, hunger and disease.

Organised Crime Against Humanity

The arms race and the "frenzied limited nuclear war policy" as shown by the stationing of medium-range strategic missiles in certain western countries, threaten international peace and security. Imperialism, therefore, 19

described by the Tribunal as "an organised crime against humanity" was condemned on the basis of the law and the facts, in the following terms:

1. The imperialist countries of the west, bearing the major responsibility for:

- * The aggravation of the situation of exploitation, poverty and oppression to which the majority of human beings are subjected, including millions of children.
- * The unbridled plunder of the natural resources of under-developed countries, particularly by transnational companies, and for the exploitation of the labour power of those countries, including child labour.
- * The establishment and maintenance by force of fascist and bloody regimes.
- * The growing threat to peace and security in the world.

2. The racist minority South African regime bearing responsibility for:

- * The continuation of its inhuman apartheid policy which cruelly affects the everyday life of children and threatens their future.
- * The intensification of its policy of police and military repression against the majority of the people and their vanguard, the ANC, a policy that badly affects mainly children and young people.
- * The illegal armed occupation of Namibia, and for its terror and repression against the people of that country, irrespective of age or sex, which terror and repression is directed particularly against their liberation movement, SWAPO.
- * Repeated acts of aggression against independent states in the region, especially Front Line countries, and for the illegal occupation of a large part of the territory of the People's Republic of Angola, which, apart from the enormous material damage caused, imposes on the youth of Angola the supreme sacrifice of their lives, in the efforts to resist aggression.

3. The Zionist and colonialist Israeli regime, instrument of US imperialist policy in the Middle East, for:

- * The war of extermination it is waging against the Palestinian people.
- * Criminal aggression against neighbouring states, especially Lebanon.
- * The criminal policy of discrimination against the Arab population under its jurisdiction, continuously subjected to provocations and attacks, who live in a permanent state of insecurity.

4. The expansionist and colonialist regimes in Morocco and Indonesia, for:

- * Criminal aggression against the peoples of neighbouring territories, in violation of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.
- * The genocide perpetrated by the militarist Indonesian regime against the people of East Timor, and for the deliberate attacks on the civilian population of the Western Sahara committed by the expansionist Moroccan regime.

5. The countries allied in particular with the United States and the foreign economic interests which take part in this imperialist policy of oppression and exploitation, the source of poverty, degradation, despair and death.

6. The International Tribunal, "Children Against Imperialism," concludes that imperialism and its agents are guilty of:

- * The crime of aggression
- * The crime of genocide
- * Crimes against humanity
- * Crimes against peace
- * The crime of war

It calls on the conscience of the peoples to mobilise to put an end to those crimes which, by affecting millions of children, are threatening the very existence of mankind, and to demand reparations for the immense moral and material damage caused by those crimes.

The Children's testimony

We print here a few short extracts from the statements that were made by children and their representatives at the tribunal, 'Children Accuse Imperialism,' an account of which is given in the preceding article.

The Union of the Communist Youth of Uruguay.

"As a result of imperialist plunder of our resources and labour, millions of Latin American children live in poverty, disease and ignorance. Every thirty seconds a child dies on our continent for lack of medical care. More than three million children are forced to work from the age of six. More than half a million girl children prostitute themselves because of hunger ...

"Children are kept working as apprentices for years, without any work status or overtime pay. The normal working day is twelve to sixteen hours, and forty per cent of Uruguayan children of the age of twelve are living in such conditions."

Johanna Haikali of Namibia

"I am twelve years old now ... One day a certain number of racist South African soldiers slept at a school in our village. When the

school children arrived, they told us they were going to show us bodies of SWAPO guerrillas. The teachers told us to go back home and when the South African soldiers realised it they asked the teachers why they were sending us home without attending classes ... We were beaten against palm trees. After a short while they called us together and started telling us that we just believe in SWAPO guerrillas, who do not even eat food; they eat grass and they even have tails. They continued beating us and threw teargas; we tried to run away, but we were just falling down because of the smoke.

"It was the very same day that I decided to flee the country. At the moment I am attending classes at the SWAPO Education Unit in Lubango."

Toini Shihepo of Namibia

Toini told the story of an experience undergone at the age of thirteen.

"I was born on the 16th of November 1964 ... I arrived at Kassinga on the 18th of December 1977.

"On the 4th May 1978, Kassinga was attacked. It was early in the morning and we

were found at the parade. When I raised my eyes I saw planes bombing. They were just directed at the centre of the parade. I just found myself in the dust and I was unable to see.

"Later on I started to see and saw people running away, so I kept quiet just looking at them. Then later on I saw my friend who stood next to me falling without his head, then I ran away. After that I heard helicopters buzzing and I fell down.

"Then later, I saw that I was having a wound in my leg then in the ribs and in another leg again. So I was no more able to stand up. I just lay down and then the ground forces of the boers arrived in the settlement. I was just looking at them, then they kicked and pulled me.

"I slept there till the next morning, when I was taken by the SWAPO soldiers to the hospital."

Joao Tito of Angola

"I was born in Luanda and I am ten years old. My mother is already dead. I lived in Huambo with my father ...

"One day I took a lift in a truck to go to Bailundo and visit my uncle. On the way, we were attacked by the *kwachas* (UNITA). A lot of people died in that truck, and the only survivors were three FAPLA soldiers, a baby and myself.

"The *kwachas* took us to a base in the bush. When we reached the base the baby we were taking with us started to cry a lot. They got hold of it and beat it against a stone; it finally died.

"When I saw that I also started to cry. A lieutenant came and told me to be quiet, hitting me hard on the hand with a knife. He cut my fingers ...

"Because I continued to cry a lot, I was sent to another base called Ponta Negra (Black Point). At that base they ordered me and the other children there to steal maize and potatoes from the people's villages and fields at night. I refused, saying that when the MPLA wants food it buys it and doesn't steal from the people. So I didn't go ...

"Since I continued to cry all the time, they put me in a pit where there were other members of the population they said were MPLA people. There were no blankets or cloths in the pit and we slept on leaves. The pit was covered with branches and grass ...

"One day I agreed to go with the other children to steal potatoes and maize from the fields. Soon after we had set out I ran away. I met a comrade who accompanied me to Huambo."

Nomagqabi Sokupo

Ten-year-old Nomagqabi told of the Maseru raid in December 1982.

"I was sleeping in a room with Kananelo who is eight years of age. I heard a sound outside like the sound of thunder. We did not go out because we were afraid. Suddenly, there was fire on our bed. I took a blanket to put the fire out. There was also fire on the window, so we went out ... We rushed into Uncle Mathabathe's house. Uncle told us to take cover with Aunt Bunie. The boers were firing. When Kananelo touched her hip, there was blood. There was a bullet shell in her hip. The boers were shooting at us through the window, but the bullets went through to the corridor.

"We went to our neighbours, who gave us a blanket, and we went to hide in the garden. The boers came back and we saw them in brown uniform. They fired again. An aunt came out to see if we were safe and she was shot dead ...

"Nurses came. They couldn't take out the bullet shell from the hip because it was next to a nerve. Kananelo was taken to hospital.

"Uncle Mathabathe went to check how many comrades were dead or injured. We then went to stay at Sebabuleni. From there I went to stay with an aunt at Quthing. When I came back I did not see my friends. I was told they had gone to Maputo and I never saw them again. Uncle Khanyile and Fezeka's father were also killed by the boers."

AMANDLA

ANC Cultural Group Tours the Benelux Countries

The cultural ensemble of the African National Congress, *Amandla!* was justifiably described by a diplomat from one of the Front Line States as "a secret weapon of the national liberation movement." Indeed, performing in theatres with the 'house full' signs displayed outside in the Netherlands, accorded standing ovations in Brussels, Liege, La Louviere and Leuven, flooded with rave reviews from the media, *Amandla!* acquitted themselves quite creditably. The ensemble was a catalyst that galvanised and mobilised tens of thousands of people against the racist regime of Pretoria.

Amandla! made its debut in the Benelux countries from the 11th to the 16 December in Holland and from the 17th to the 23rd December in Belgium. In each country, they gave six fantastic performances that left audiences asking for more. In Namur they rendered no less than five encores, until the management was compelled to turn the lights on and off, in order to discourage the audience!

In the Netherlands, *Amandla's* tour was sponsored by the Anti-Apartheid Movement. In Belgium it was organised by an anti-apartheid co-ordination committee embracing over fifty organisations and personalities ranging over a wide political spectrum, from the Ecologist Movement, trade unions, youth groups, political parties, members of the European Parliament, women's organisations, the Communist Parties, peace movements and economic development groups. They were all united over the programme to:

- * Isolate the regime of apartheid,
- * Show their solidarity with the liberation struggles in South Africa and Namibia, and especially with the ANC and SWAPO.
- * Show their solidarity with the Front Line States, who are the victims of fascist aggression by the apartheid regime.

Everywhere they went, the cultural ensemble was received with fraternal warmth, comradeship and solidarity. In Liege, the deputy

On stage:
members of
the ANC cultural ensemble,
Amondla!



mayor, Monsieur Raymond Yans, gave a reception for them. Politically, they were also able to meet and to exchange views with very many political groups, including fraternal ones from Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and so on. Perhaps a measure of their success can be judged by the fact that Comrade Godfrey Motsepe, Chief Representative for the ANC, based in Brussels, was asked to accept observer status at the meetings of the 45-nation Organisation of African Unity states represented in the Benelux countries, by the chairman of this august body of ambassadors.

In his introductory remarks before a huge audience consisting of ambassadors and other dignitaries, workers, students, militants, the press and TV, Comrade Motsepe stated that *Amandla!* was a manifestation of a totally African, ideologically lucid and politically committed culture of resistance. Every lyric of each song, every dance, every gesture they made, every poem they recited, was an articulation of the deepest political aspirations of our people.

He further quoted the late Amilcar Cabral, who asserted; "the exercise of imperialist domination demands cultural oppression, but the people are able to create and develop a liberation movement, because it keeps its culture alive, and in the teeth of organised repression of cultural life it continues to resist culturally." He went on to say, "For us, the national and social emancipation of our people is closely interrelated with the release of the people's cultural energies, enunciated by the Freedom Charter:

"The doors of learning and of culture shall be opened! The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life; all the treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands; the aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace."

Comrade Nelson Mandela Awarded Honorary Doctorate

The ANC scored a major diplomatic and political victory in Belgium, on the 13th January 1984, when Comrade Nelson Mandela was awarded Doctorate Honoris Causa at the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Free University of Brussels.

In a solemn and dignified ceremony, replete with pomp and pageantry, before thousands of people from all walks of life, including government officials, diplomats and the king of Belgium, Comrade Mandela was honoured for his courage, and his steadfast tenacity in his pursuit of social justice and freedom for his land and his people.

The honour bestowed on the ANC and the liberation struggle, as symbolised by Comrade Mandela, dealt a severe blow to the pro-apartheid lobby in Belgium, which had tried every dirty trick in its endeavour to dissuade the University from granting it to the ANC.

The award was received by Comrade Mfanafuthi J. Makatini, the director of the International Department of the ANC. At a press conference he shared with the other recipients of the award (Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Madame Simone Veil, former President of the European Parliament and Mr Spinelli, Member of the European Parliament) he called upon all the countries that have not done so to put an end to all cultural, economic, military and nuclear collaboration with the apartheid regime, and to join in the international fight for the eradication of this cancerous system.

He said that, despite the much-vaunted military might of the regime, and its determination to confront the whole world and the Security Council in defence of its inhuman system, the ANC and SWAPO are confident of victory over this inherently vulnerable and increasingly isolated fascist regime.

Interview with
Archbishop Trevor Huddleston

The Christian response to racism

Archbishop
Trevor Huddleston
addressing a public meeting
in London in 1983



As an Anglican parish priest in Sophiatown, Johannesburg, from 1943 till 1956, Trevor Huddleston, C.R., became well known in South Africa for his outspoken criticism of the racist policies of the Pretoria government. The ANC conferred the Isitwalandwe award upon him at the Congress of the People in 1955. In 1956 he was recalled to England, and published a book, 'Naught for Your Comfort,' about his life in South Africa. Since then, he has served as Bishop of Masai, Bishop of Stepney in London, Bishop of Mauritius and Archbishop of the Indian Ocean. After serving many years as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Britain, he was elected President in 1981. The following interview with 'Sechaba' took place in February of this year.

Question: What political activities were you engaged in before 1955, and what was it that earned you the award of Isitwalandwe, conferred on you at the Congress of the People?

Answer: Well, I suppose between 1943 and 1955 I got more and more involved in the battle against apartheid and its consequences because I was a priest working in Sophiatown, and, as you may remember, Sophiatown was the only African township where people were able to own their own homes. So when the Western Areas Removal Scheme came into force and houses were bulldozed and people were moved out to Meadowlands, that was a moment of challenge, but it was only the end of a long period of battling against the pass laws and against police intervention

and the activities of the Special Branch — as it then was — to disrupt freedom of speech and freedom of association.

So I suppose you could say that all those things together were the things that engaged me before 1955 and which in the end resulted in my being awarded the Isitwalandwe. Of course, don't forget, Albert Lutuli was awarded the Isitwalandwe award at the same time as I was, and Dr Dadoo, but neither of them was able to come to the Congress of the People to get the award, because they were restricted. I was the only one who actually got it on that day, so it was a very wonderful occasion for me.

Q. What are your recollections of the mass removals from Sophiatown?

A. Well, if you knew Sophiatown you'd know that it was a very remarkable place. It was a place where, of course, many people were living in very squalid conditions, but many others owned good houses and they very greatly valued their homes. It was a contrasting place — it was a place of considerable violence but also a place of very great vitality — and it was a marvellous community to live with.

And so when these mass removals started the impression that it made upon me was of a determination to wipe off the face of the earth that particular community. Tens of thousands of people lost their permanent homes and were forced to settle in what was then known as Meadowlands, part of Soweto, in rented accommodation. And of course there was resistance, but it was the kind of resistance that in the end couldn't prevail against the force of those in authority. They brought bulldozers; the police moved in; the people were threatened. It usually started early in the morning, and people were told to get out of their homes, and then their houses were bulldozed out of existence, so that in the end it was like a kind of battlefield. It was just as though somebody had been bombing the place.

And of course it did mean very, very

great hardship for many people, particularly as a lot of the accommodation they had to move into was just temporary accommodation. Remember that at that time there were vast shanty towns in what is now Soweto, so housing conditions were appalling. So it was something that I felt had to be resisted.

Q. What did you think of the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter, and what do you think of them now?

A. Well, the Congress of the People at Klip-town was the greatest gathering of all those regardless of race or culture or even political affiliation, because it was based on what the Freedom Charter has to say about these things. And the Freedom Charter itself was really based on the United Nations Charter of Human Rights, and so it drew thousands of people together.

It was a marvellous day, as I remember, and people came from all over the country, by train, by bus, by foot, and it was really like a great festival. But of course it was a festival with a purpose, it was a very serious festival, because it was at that Kliptown Congress that the Freedom Charter itself was approved and passed, and I have a copy, one of the very few, I suspect, of the original Freedom Charter, which was presented to me at the Congress of the People, which I've kept ever since.

Well, I believe it has proved to be the basic document for the struggle, for the resistance movement, and in fact when I saw the other day a videotape of the launching of the United Democratic Front, the UDF, my mind went back to that particular Congress, because it had the same kind of atmosphere, a tremendous enthusiasm and vitality. All around the place, of course, there were the Special Branch, the police, but in those days they weren't nearly so well organised as they are today, and we just went ahead and ignored them.

It was a great moment in my life, certainly, and it was only a very short time after that, of course, that the Treason Trial started.

I had been recalled from South Africa, otherwise I have no doubt that I would have been one of those brought to trial. But it was a marvellous moment of determination and commitment, and I only hope that spirit will survive.

Q. You were one of the very first clerics in Southern Africa to make a political stand. Since you left, and especially over the last few years, there have been great changes in the attitude of the churches to politics, the relationship between the churches and political organisations. What is your opinion of this?

A. I'd like to state first of all that Father Michael Scott, who lived just down the road from me in Sophiatown, was certainly the first in that particular area to make protest. I was a very slow starter; it took me a long time, really, to understand what everything was about, and I want to acknowledge that Michael Scott was the one who really raised the banner.

But then I felt that I must commit myself. I can remember the actual occasion; it was a meeting of the ANC in Johannesburg on a Sunday morning. I had been taking part in a service in church, and I was invited to speak at this meeting — it was a crowded meeting, I forget where it was now, but it was in the centre of the city somewhere — and I there and then said, "It's been too long a time for talk. Now we've got to act, and I want to make it clear to everybody that I commit myself publicly to this struggle."

Well, that's an easy thing to say, of course; not so easy to do. But I have always believed, and I still believe, that the Christian response to racism and to apartheid can only be one kind of response. You have to fight it.

And certainly it's true that there have been changes in the attitude of the churches to politics and to apartheid in particular over the years. I think one thing we can take credit for — and I speak now as a member of the Anglican Church — is that no less than four of our bishops have been deported from

South Africa because of their opposition to apartheid, and many others, of course, have suffered greatly, people like Bishop Desmond Tutu and many others, who have suffered because they have borne their witness to what I believe, and they believe, to be the Christian attitude to race.

Because the Christian attitude to race is based on something very simple: we do in fact believe that man — humanity — has a dignity given to it by God and that anything that tries to undermine or destroy that dignity has to be resisted. That's been the basis of my own attitude, and I think that vast numbers of Christians and churches of different denominations — the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church and others — have, in their public statements, condemned apartheid.

But that's a very different thing from getting ordinary people, the ordinary people who belong to the churches, to take up the challenge themselves. And I think that this is still the major problem. Although church leadership in South Africa has been pretty consistent — I'm talking of course of the churches other than the Dutch Reformed Church, and even there, as we now know, we have people like Allan Boesak and Beyers Naude, who, although members of the Dutch Reformed Church, have totally refused to accept that church's view on apartheid — but all the churches, I think, today have shown in the leadership a considerable strength and courage. The trouble comes lower down, with the ordinary people, those South Africans who of course are born and bred into a position of privilege and who therefore are not so willing to accept what to me seems the clear and unmistakeable duty of Christians to oppose racism.

Q. What were your impressions of the front line states, during your recent visit?

A. Well, I visited Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Tanzania, and what I found was complete agreement that South Africa today is embarked on a policy of mas-

sive aggression and the destabilisation of those states on its borders.

Of course I was able to see all those who really represent their governments; I was able to see President Kaunda, President Nyerere — I'd already met President Machel in this country — President Canaan Banana and Mr Mugabe and their foreign ministers. I had a wonderful visit to Mozambique staying as the guest of the Governor of Maputo, and I met a very large number of people there, but the most impressive thing was that they were all united in their view that the aggression and the destabilisation policies of South Africa were their first priority.

Of course I can't, in a short interview, develop that theme; I'm speaking about it as best I can through the media. I had a wonderful reception there, and it was most deeply encouraging to me to be able to talk to Oliver Tambo, the President of the ANC, and to know what his views were.

I think that the most important thing I could do was to make certain that the whole Anti-Apartheid Movement was in line with the wishes of the governments of the front line states. And I can only say that I think what we are going to do in the future will be very largely governed by what we have heard and what we have seen on this visit. I went, as you probably know, with Mr Abdul Minty, the Secretary of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and the Director of the World Campaign Against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa, and we were able — I think — to form a very clear idea of how we should go forward.

Q. What should be done in Britain to promote solidarity with the struggle for liberation in South Africa?

A. I think, as always, the most urgent task is to give a clear and accurate picture of what things are leading to, because, though people in this country can say they oppose apartheid, when it comes to action that is the last thing they do. They will not easily be led to withdraw investment in South Africa; they will

be victims of South African propaganda with regard to such things as the arms boycott and the sports boycott and all our efforts to isolate South Africa. We've got a very big educational programme in that respect, and of course we've got to bring home to the government as best we can at every point that it has to take a much stronger and more definite line of action. As you know, we have been campaigning for years for an effective sanctions policy against South Africa, in line with what the United Nations has resolved over and over again. So far, Britain and the western powers are unwilling to try to impose an effective sanctions policy, but we've got to go on pressing for this.

We've got to focus attention — and this is what we're doing this year particularly — on the international petition for the liberation of Nelson Mandela. This is much more than a symbolic thing, because in fact it is a very positive demand, which will be seen to have the support of thousands of people right across the world. We shall be able to publish the results of this campaign in June.

And of course we have to show that the policy of the Reagan administration, this policy of so-called 'constructive engagement' with South Africa, has done untold damage because it has led the South African government to think it can do what it likes in the way of aggression against the front line states and others. Angola, Mozambique, now Zimbabwe and of course more recently, too, Lesotho, they've all been the victims of this aggressive policy, and that aggressive policy has had the backing — the implicit backing — of the American administration.

I was for five years in the Indian Ocean, as you know, as archbishop there, and I was there when the attempt was made at a *coup d'etat* in the Seychelles. Nobody could possibly say the Seychelles is a threat to South Africa, but nevertheless to destabilise every country has been their aim, and in this regard, as well as in so many other instances, the attitude of the Reagan administration has been very, very harmful.

Q. What is the attitude of the Anglican Church to the armed struggle in South Africa?

A. I don't think you could say there is one attitude. The Anglican Church is in fact not an authoritarian church, it's a very democratic church. There are plenty of Anglicans who recognise that the armed struggle is the result of years and years of peaceful attempts to change the attitude of the South African government. Always it has been in vain. They've beaten on the door and the door has remained locked. Therefore, it's inescapable, I believe, that this generation of Africans were bound to turn to the force of arms.

I have to say that I, as a priest, and as a bishop of the Christian Church, could not possibly be involved in taking up arms, but I've always tried to show that there was, and is, an inevitability about the use of force if everything else has failed.

And this is a great criticism, too, of the western powers who, in fact, have refused consistently to help in this struggle for freedom in South Africa, and then have said, 'Well, they are turning to the east and using arms from the east,' and therefore, for some extraordinary reason, it is accepted that the armed struggle, for those who are the resistance fighters in South Africa, is somehow wrong. In the second world war, those who fought against the Nazis in France and elsewhere were regarded as freedom fighters, but in South Africa it's different.

Q. Is there anything else you want to say to *Sechaba*?

A. Well, I think there are just two things. I think the first thing is that our prime objective at this moment must surely be the liberation of Namibia, and if we can achieve that, and achieve it quickly, that will be a very great and positive step forward. There are pretty strong indications that South Africa is now tired of that struggle; it's very, very costly, both in terms of money and men; it's not a popular struggle; and in his recent state-

ments Mr Botha has made it clear that South Africa is tired of that struggle. Now I believe that we have to make that our first priority.

But, secondly, we do have to recognise — and I think, speaking after my experience of visiting the front line states and of having long conversations with the President of the ANC — that this particular moment is critical, and that therefore we have to mobilise all the support we can get for the African National Congress. As South Africa seeks, by destabilising the countries where the ANC is now based, we have to make certain that the world knows what South Africa is attempting to do. And this is what I personally feel to be my main objective.

I would love to feel that, before I die, apartheid has been defeated totally and absolutely, but even if I don't live to see it, I'm thankful to have been able to play a part — and I recognise that it's a very small part — in the struggle for freedom in Southern Africa.

ERRATUM

On page 24 of the February issue, ten lines were omitted from the book review entitled, *Right Wing Politics and Ultra-Leftism*. The paragraph, with a following quotation, should have read:

Terms like "the Tambo leadership" and "Communist control" of the ANC come from the PAC and 'ANC dissident' sources, which he uses uncritically as a source of information on the ANC external mission — one of his weakest points in his research. He does admit, though not without apology, that:

"The history of the exiled political movements is thinly documented and additionally difficult to research from within South Africa, because of the unavailability of their publications ... South African official sources are by nature secretive and frequently misinformed. Much of the press reportage is sensational in character and speculative ..."

Play Review

Athol Fugard and the white liberals

Athol Fugard's latest play, 'Master Harold and the Boys,' which was first performed at Yale University in 1982, has had critical acclaim for its exposure of 'the roots of racism,' and as a drama has won awards on Broadway and in London. Zakes Mokae, whose performance in Fugard's first major play, 'The Blood Knot,' took him out of South Africa and into a career in Britain and the United States in 1963, won the highly prized Emmy Award for his Broadway portrayal of Sam Semela in 1982; and the 'Evening Standard' of London declared 'Master Harold' the best play in London's West End in 1983. It is at present enjoying an extended run at the National Theatre of Great Britain, in Fugard's own production, which transferred from the Market Theatre in Johannesburg.

The play basically deals with the relationship between a white teenager whose parents run a small cafe in Port Elizabeth, and the two black men who clean and serve in the cafe: the young 'Master' and the 'boys.' It is a theme taken from Fugard's own adolescence, closely mirroring the playwright's own background down to the detail of incidents which, it emerges from his newly published *Notebooks 1960/1977*, have never been satisfactorily resolved in his mind. Although we see and hear only the three characters, we learn from them the young Fugard's relationship with his parents — his father a cripple slipping towards death in a haze of brandy, amusing himself with children's comics; his mother's anxiety translated into what the young Fugard/Harold regards as awful nagging and insensitivity to his young feelings. For this young man the two servants, Sam and Willie, have always been a welcome relief from the horror of his home life. They are his

friends, they know him as 'Hally,' they fulfil the roles of elder brothers, uncles, advisers in his loneliness, even playmates, flying kites with him in the place of the childhood friends he has obviously never had.

The tale is a very familiar one for South Africa. Almost all white South Africans recall the mixture of love and guilt they feel for the nannies they had, women who were closer and more loving to them than their own mothers, and who then had to be rejected and demeaned during the process of 'growing up' and becoming a responsible member of white society. In *Master Harold and the Boys*, this point of rejection forms the climax of the piece, and has the young Master spitting in Sam's face, thus killing the warmth of their relationship for ever, because Sam gently tries to persuade Hally to be more respectful of his parents, instead of making bitter, cruel jokes about their infirmities. Hally is trapped by the truth of Sam's words, but in his guilt can only make things worse, and retreat into the irreversible white laager — no black man must ever put me in my place, and I'll prove it — I am, by right of birth, the Master here, however wrong I may be.

Athol Fugard has made his huge international reputation through writing plays of such apparent honesty. From *The Blood Knot* onwards he has become the voice of white South Africa's conscience for liberal opinion inside and outside South Africa. Because he has never claimed to be 'political,' his work is always more acceptable to South African censors and European and American audiences than far more powerful and pertinent drama, so that, while his works of personal anguish and curiosity about what happens to people under South African conditions earn international acclaim, writers whose

drama would say far more and put his work into context are banned and gaoled. A group of such writers, former leaders of SASO, have recently been released from Robben Island after serving lengthy sentences for 'inciting' people through their work.

The point is not that South African writers have no right to express personal, rather than broader, political, sentiments, but rather the way they choose to show these sentiments, and their final effect on the conditions being described. It is clear from Fugard's recently exposed *Notebooks* that he has been dogged all his life by anguish about his position, not only as a white South African, but as a mixture of 'English' and 'Afrikaner' stock. In one small frame he seems to encompass most of the possible contradictions of being a white South African.

Can he really work in the 'whites only' framework, he asks himself, when so much of his stimulation has come from the black actors he has worked with? John Kani, whose work with Winston Ntshona under Fugard's direction had a great impact in the early nineteen-seventies, plays the lead in *Master Harold*, and is much admired on the London stage. But in South Africa he still has to carry a pass, and the 'Baas' who signs this pass so that he can stay in the Port Elizabeth area and work there is none other than Athol Fugard. To a degree this is 'playing the system,' but considering the message which he is trying to put across in this new play, the 'game,' like the play, is just too uncomfortable. A guilty adolescent episode which Fugard is using to portray some of the 'roots of racism' is now dredged up more than thirty years later, but leaves Fugard's dilemma and the foulness of apartheid completely unchanged.

The author's guilty helplessness also leads him into some badly confused writing, and some appalling portrayals. The characters ramble uselessly through discussions of Master Harold's history and geography homework, which is rather poorly interlinked with the gentle passion Sam and Willie have for ballroom dancing. Then comes the spit in the face from Harold. To Fugard this is no doubt a horrible experience he has to relive through

his actors in order to come to terms with it.

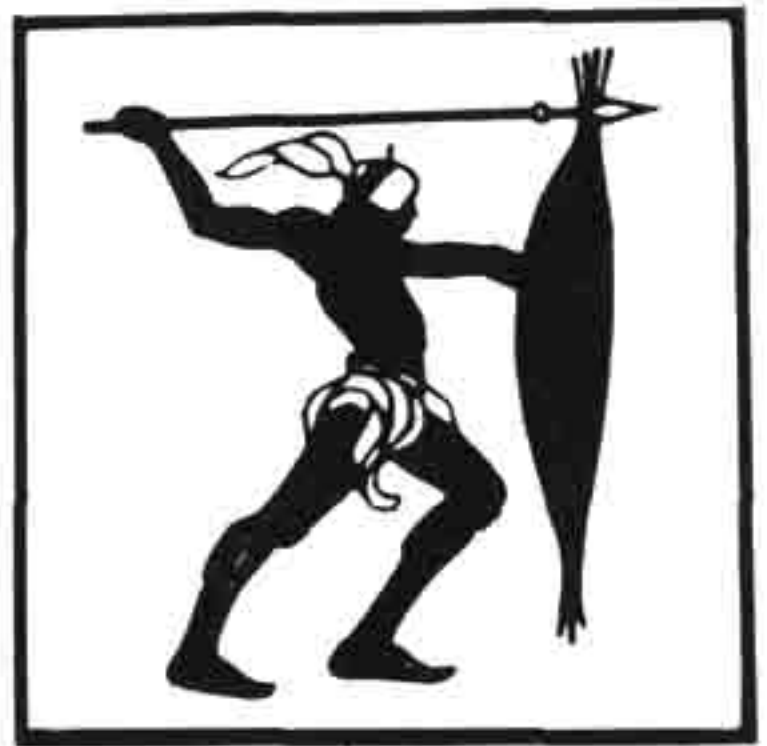
To the audience it is hardly so traumatic, and therefore simply looks cheaply theatrical and ugly. But even worse, Fugard has to extend the humiliation of black by white by preceding this episode by having Sam take down his trousers to make a point about how bad a joke about someone's 'black arse' is. As portrayed on the stage, the impression is not of the humiliation of Sam Semela by a boy a third of his age, but of the humiliation of a black actor before an audience which, in London and New York, is appallingly ignorant of the truth behind all these powerful, dangerous apartheid images. Far from rising above his guilty background, Fugard remains inextricably bound up in it.

Since Athol Fugard is widely regarded as the free, spirited voice of a new South Africa, such effects on an audience are very dangerous. He is clearly attempting to come to terms with all this horror around him. But it remains true that the South African situation and the escalating war for its liberation, leaves no middle ground in which an author may merely wander and have no comment to make. The story of Athol Fugard's relationship with the black servants of his youth could certainly be told to powerful effect if the writer had really come to understand where he stood in relation to these events.

But what is the audience left thinking? The last image we are left with is of Sam Semela and Willie Molapo dancing slowly in a ballroom clinch, under the dimmed lights of the cafe after Master Harold has left, Willie's last opinion to Sam being, "To hell with it! How did you say it, Boet Sam? Let's dream." They dance to Sarah Vaughan singing "Little man, you've had a busy day." Master Harold, and the whole of the society which makes his cruelty and guilt so helpless and endless, has been let off the hook, and "the boys" turn blank and escape into a useless dream. True events may have been faithfully expressed, but nothing has been learned, and Fugard, his audience and South Africa have gained nothing, except perhaps some profit from the portrayal of continuing humiliation and brutality.

John Matshikiza

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