future role of vigilantes in the urban squatter camps and the rural hinterland, nor of the roving bands of youth who bear no responsibility to any but their own local leaders. Those who have dispensed the 'necklace' of yesterday will always find a supply of old tyres, of petrol and matches, if not AK–47s. It is perhaps remarkable that in all the terror and mayhem that has been witnessed in South Africa over the past two decades, there has not been more major bloodshed. That is, no killings that could equal the extermination of Kampucheans by Pol Pot, of Kurds in Iraq, Ugandans by Amin or Malawians by Hastings Banda's cohorts. These massacres and many more, in Chile, Argentine, Tibet and other countries, have not as yet been repeated on quite that scale in South Africa. Instead there has been a steady and continuous flow of corpses and of maimed.

Many were killed by local gangsters, others fell victim to white brutality. Month after month there has been news of men and women tortured, mutilated and killed. Those accused (but not often found guilty in the courts) were farmers, or other white citizens. Others were policemen, in uniform or plain clothes, killing routinely in the course of official duties. Those done to death include demonstrators or just bystanders, and those locked up at the mercy of their captors in prison cells.

Some of the more notorious of these killings have been reported in the British press. Others have gone unremarked because the press does not find the event 'newsworthy'. One such event, described below by Brian Oswin, demonstrates that alongside black infighting there is a more pernicious terror in South Africa: that wielded by the police and the army and, inevitably, by the right wing reaction which has emerged from the ranks of those bodies. Let there be no doubt, these swastika swinging bodies might not be able to mount an insurrection but they are capable of destabilizing communities, indiscriminate (and also calculated) killings as well as inciting others to murder. No equation of forces in the coming events can afford to ignore the threat they represent.

A DEATH IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE KILLING OF SIPHO PHUNGULWA

Paul Trewhela

The Principle of Monarchy

The Mandela myth was mainly the creation of the South African Communist Party. As the most important organizer of ANC politics within the country and internationally for thirty years, especially through the media, the SACP in the late 1950s and early 1960s set about the creation of a very specific cult of personality.

The 'M Plan' of 1953, in which 'M' stood for Mandela, did more to surround the leader's name with a mystique than reorganize the ANC on a cell–system, as it was supposed to do. Ten years later, after the arrest of members of the

High Command of Umkhonto we Sizwe at Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, the emphasis was not principally on a collective call: 'Free the Rivonia nine.' The fate of an entire generation of political victims was absorbed into the fate of a single individual: 'Free Mandela.' Such personification of thousands of individual acts of imprisonment by the state might have been good media politics, but it was the negation of democratic accountability. It represented the introduction of the monarchical principle as a staple into modern South African political life. More urgently, it was a trivializing of politics which took the issue away from matters of substance and concentrated attention on the persona of one man.

It is now clear that Mandela's last three years in prison were a secret cloister of discussions, cultivated by the state, in which the Olympian remoteness of the regime was imparted to the politics of its leading opponent. In essence the fate of the whole society devolved in isolation upon the judgement of one man, whom prison appeared not so much to exclude from the people as it served to exclude the people from the secret deliberations between this one man and the state. This was a spectacle, in which a single individual cast a shadow on a vast audience through his non–presence.

And thus we come to Caesar's wife. As the decades of Mandela's imprisonment went by, the mystique of royalty, the principle of divine right, passed by law of succession to his wife, who became the representative of the idea of the sacral on the earth of township politics. In so far as Mandela in prison was mystically always present through his absence, Mrs Mandela as consort played a very material Empress Theodora, or perhaps Lady Macbeth. The more the myth grew through Mandela's unworldly situation in prison – alive, yet dead to human contact, the unseen mover in the power play of southern African politics – the more an extraordinary status attached to his wife.

During the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, Winnie Mandela won widespread respect for her resistance to the government. She defied loss of husband, banning, banishment, prison and unremitting police harassment, emerging from the 1976 student revolt as an important political leader. She was an emblem of defiance. The fact that her political philosophy was shaped by a crude nationalism opened her to the abuses of the 1980s: a matter greatly facilitated by her unique status as oracle to the unseen leader on Robben Island. In conditions of unremitting social tension, culminating in near–insurrection in the period of the 1984–86 township revolt, these circumstances produced their own deadly result.

This would have been venal enough if her courtiers had principally been adults. It was in the nature of South Africa in the mid–1980s, however, that her retinue was composed largely of children. Old Socrates drank hemlock, by order of an Athenian court, on a charge of corruption of youth, but Mrs Mandela's corruption of youth proceeded under the title *Mama we Sizwe*: 'mother of the nation'.

A principal automotive arm of the 1984–86 township revolt was the schools boycott, interlinked with other campaigns such as the rent boycott. The effect of the schools campaign was ultimately catastrophic; but this movement of the youth (the 'young lions') also put an immense head of pressure under the

regime. Their organizing role in rents boycotts and in getting urban councils disbanded cannot be ignored. When unemployment stood at 40 per cent and over, and underemployment was very high; when 800,000 or more were employed in petty hawking; and when the youth themselves faced the prospect of miserable paid jobs or no jobs at all, the school was no magnet of attraction at the best of times. The schools boycott led to illiteracy; the bleakness of prospects made literacy irrelevant.

The schools boycott was associated with the slogan (endorsed in practice by the ANC) 'Liberation before education', also phrased as: 'Revolution today, education tomorrow.' Across the country, tens of thousands of children decamped permanently on the streets, a huge, amorphous army, a children's crusade, brought into existence by this mass of declassed youth merging with the very large stratum of the unemployed and the criminal *boheme* of the townships.

Educated by the streets, since they were amenable to no force of adults in the society, these children became the masters of their parents and the vehicle by which the ANC leaders acquired their ticket to the talks at Groote Schuur. Adults not in South Africa need only imagine the effect of permanent, unbroken school holidays in their own homes, and on their own streets, spiced with the sadism of South African social conditions. This was the milieu in which teenage armies, teenage generals, teenage courts and teenage executioners gave lessons in patriotism to the workers.

An Autocracy of the Young

An inversion in culture was the dye in which all subsequent South African political life was stamped. Having fought the battle for the trade unions over the preceding decade, the workers worked while the children militarized themselves. In this way the township won political hegemony over the factory, the workless over the worker, the child over the adult. The revolt of the young – uninfluenced by any mediating influence of the trade unions – found its expression partly in the 'necklace' killings by means of a burning tyre soaked in petrol. Small left–wing groups critical of the new reasoning were ordered to shut up, or else. Critical individuals were silenced or driven out. It was in this environment of menace that a founder member of MK said during the period of the township revolt: 'I know where the government stands, I know where Inkatha [the political arm of the KwaZulu Bantustan] stands, but I don't know where the "comrades" stand. If the ANC radio from abroad ordered them to kill me, they would do it.' (personal communication, 1986)

Leadership by children of the streets was fatal to any bond (in Russian terms, *smychka*) between town and country. The phenomenon of a counter–revolt by migrant workers, in their tribally segregated barracks, in opposition to the revolt of the township youth had already appeared in 1976, both on the Rand among Zulu workers at the Mzimhlophe hostel in Soweto and among Bhaca workers in the hostels at Nyanga East near Cape Town. In each case, resentment by migrant workers at taunts and harassment by the politicized youth of the cities gave rise to pogroms against township residents, with the

active connivance of the police. In the following fourteen years, the ANC learnt no lessons from this incubatory period of rural/urban slaughter, which reached its full horror in the PWV (Pretoria–Witwatersrand–Vereeniging) region in August and September 1990, and afterwards.

A further consequence of this paedontocracy, or government by the young, was the milieu out of which arose the Mandela United Football Team – a euphemism of the same order as the term Civil Co–operation Bureau for the secret assassination department run by the South African Defence Force. Mrs Mandela, who advocated liberating the country 'with our necklaces and our boxes of matches' during the 1984–86 township revolt, reigned as queen of the ghetto over this gang of youngsters, whom she housed, organized and goaded into functioning as an instrument of political control over the townships. This group, since linked to sixteen murders, was founded by her at the end of 1986.

The Empress of the Damned

It would take a novelist or dramatist of great power to illuminate the motives of this woman, enduring loss of husband, banning, exile and imprisonment, transformed into a scourge of mothers through her teenage wolfpack. How far was the brutalized behaviour of the 'football' club simply an expression of the generalized brutality of South African conditions, brought about by its predatory social production relations? At what point did international adulation of Mrs Mandela feed the mania? Or the attentions of South African white bourgeois society, which introduced her to its salons as the townships burnt? Or the courts, which for several years declined to prosecute, despite agreement between prosecution and defence on evidence relating to Mrs Mandela in a case in 1988 resulting in imposition of the death penalty? Or the South African press, which never reported this and other matters? (This legal record, unreported in South Africa, was made public by John Carlin in an article, 'Terrorized by "Winnie's boys"', in the *Independent*, 21 September 1990.)

'Winnie's boys' were generally just that – boys. But boys transformed into killers. The rise of political violence as a means of political control in the townships, associated most blatantly with the Mandela team, became institutionalized at the same time as torture, imprisonment and murder of internal critics within the ANC had become routine practice abroad. The nature of the ANC security department in its exile camps – before, during and after the township revolt – was described in *Searchlight South Africa*, No 5. Serious historical research is needed before an accurate picture emerges of the nature and orientation of political violence in the townships in the 1984–86 period and afterwards. It is likely, however, that the methodology of Mrs Mandela's boy scouts in dealing with critics was reinforced by knowledge of how the ANC security department conducted itself abroad. According to court records agreed by prosecution and defence, Oupa Seheri, a trained ANC guerrilla, carried out a double murder in Soweto while staying in Mrs Mandela's house, where he also kept the murder weapon. Two other trained ANC guerrillas – Peter and Tsepo – were later killed in a shoot–out with the police in the home

of Jerry Richardson, the 'manager' of Mrs Mandela's 'team,' who was sentenced to death for the murder of 14–year–old Stompie Moeketsi Seipei.

Seipei was himself typical of this army of youth. Having played his part in the township wars, he was murdered on or around 3 January 1989. Mrs Mandela's household – 'packed with youths...part barracks, part boarding school, part prison', in Carlin's description – was the arena in which an ad hoc disciplinary committee tried cases and ordered punishments, administered then and there by physical violence in the yard. After having been abducted from a white priest's house and brought to Mrs Mandela's house for 'trial' and a beating, Seipei was taken away by Richardson and disposed of. The image of this child, coupled forever with that of the 'mother of the nation', will remain a vignette of the period in which the ANC re–won political hegemony in the townships. And inextricably associated with these, a third image: of a young girl engulfed in flames before the television cameras, a victim of 'our necklaces and our boxes of matches'.

What repelled the residents of Soweto was a methodology of coercion, in essence no different from that which produced the 1984 mutiny in the ANC abroad. Within South Africa it was only less organized, given that the ANC lacked parastatal powers. A 'crisis committee' was set up by ANC loyalists in Soweto in July 1988 to watch over Mrs Mandela, according to Carlin: it was helpless against the 'football team,' and failed to save lives. The turning point came with Seipei's murder, which caught the attention of the media. Shortly afterwards, in a remarkable press conference on 16 February 1989, the acting general secretary of the United Democratic Front, Murphy Morobe, read a prepared statement on behalf of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM). Speaking on behalf of the then most important network of ANC supporters in the country, Morobe said:

> We have now reached the state where we have no option but to speak publicly on what is a very sensitive and painful matter. In recent years, Mrs Mandela's actions have increasingly led her into conflict with various sections of the oppressed people, and with the Mass Democratic Movement as a whole. The recent conflict in the community has centred largely around the conduct of her so–called football club, which has been widely condemned by the community. In particular, we are outraged by the reign of terror that the team has been associated with. (quoted by Carlin)

Since then, both before and after the release of her husband, the ANC made strenuous efforts to rehabilitate Mrs Mandela as the consort of the probable future president of South Africa. She was seen sweeping the streets of Alexandra township together with residents in a photo–opportunity prepared by the former Alexandra Action Committee, under the guidance of its most prominent activist, the trade union leader Moses Mayekiso (now a member of the central committee of the SACP). This process of political sanitizing was not confined to South Africa. In a press conference in London on 4 June, during one of her husband's international tours, not a single question was put to her by the world's press as she sat beside him, concerning the affair of Seipei and the football club. The mythology of political sanctity was international.

The ANC must have imagined that reality was what it willed it to be. It appointed Mrs Mandela as its 'head of social welfare' on 21 August this year – despite everything. To residents of Soweto that decision must have appeared equivalent to appointing a child molester to head an orphanage, and it produced an angry protest demonstration outside ANC offices in central Johannesburg by black social workers. That ANC leaders such as the secretary general, Alfred Nzo, should have even considered attempting to 'rehabilitate' Mrs Mandela in this way, after the statement by the MDM, is an indication of the autocratic matrix in their thinking. It is an index also of a tension between the bureaucratic centralism of the ANC in exile and local organizations created spontaneously within South Africa before and during the 1984–86 period: a tension continuously present since the return of the ANC leaders, and one tending towards the negation of local democracy.

Return of the Exiles

It is not hard at this point to understand the political environment in which eight former members of the ANC in exile – six of them victims of the repressions abroad – returned to South Africa from Tanzania in April this year, as reported in *Searchlight South Africa*, No 5. Their return was mentioned in the article 'Inside Quadro,' which introduced 'A Question of Democracy: The ANC Security Department in the 1984 Mutiny in Umkhonto we Sizwe', written by five participants in the mutiny, then (and at the time of writing this report, still) refugees in Nairobi.[1] The authors of the article – Bandile Ketelo, Amos Maxongo, Zamxolo Tshona, Ronnie Massango and Luvo Mbengo – first came public with an account of their experiences in a long interview published in a British newspaper, the *Sunday Correspondent*, on 8 April, while the other group of eight were being held in prison in Malawi after having fled Tanzania in an effort to reach South Africa.

Since May, when material for issue No 5 was got ready for the printer, the ANC security apparatus in exile has moved in some strength back to South Africa, merging with the youth milieu from which the Mandela 'football club' was drawn. In part this took place illegally, through the ANC's underground channels, but it also took place though a special amnesty agreed between the government and the ANC within the negotiating process. One of the first to return legally – preparing the way for senior commanders of MK such as Joe Modise (commander) and Chris Hani (chief of staff) – was the ANC's head of intelligence, Jacob Zuma. These were the conditions in which Sipho Phungulwa, one of the group of eight who returned to South Africa in April, was murdered in a daylight public assassination in Umtata, the main town of the Transkei, early in June.

Phungulwa was one of the closest colleagues of the authors of the article on the 1984 mutiny. After active involvement in the 1976–77 youth uprisings in the Port Elizabeth area, he left South Africa to join MK with his close friend Amos Maxongo, one of the authors of the article. Under the 'travelling name' Oscar Sizwe, he was one of the first group of MK cadres posted to Lesotho to help establish and organize ANC underground structures in the Transkei and

Border areas. This was appropriate since he knew the region, and his first language was Xhosa. At that time he was 'working very closely to Chris Hani and acting as his bodyguard' (letter from Ketelo, 17 July 1990).

Hani is reported to be a member of the Politburo of the SACP (*Front File*, October 1990). He appeared on the platform at the public launch of the SACP in Soweto on 29 July, speaking only in Xhosa. Ex–detainees regard him as a Xhosa chauvinist, a current vigorously resisted by the mutineers both before and after the mutiny. When Phungulwa was murdered, Hani had already returned to South Africa under amnesty and had begun to set up a base operation for MK in the Transkei 'homeland', working under very favourable conditions provided by the military regime of Major–General Bantu Holomisa, the first of the Bantustan leaders to adapt to the new dispensation. Even when the South African government withdrew Hani's amnesty in July and arrested leading MK figures following capture of large quantities of arms and computerized instructions relating to the so–called Vula military operation, Hani continued to enjoy protection in the Transkei. The indemnity was later restored by the government.

In exile, following his mission in Lesotho, Phungulwa had 'gone through the trying times in the struggle to democratize the ANC' (Ketelo). He took part in the 1984 mutiny in Angola, was next door neighbour to Ketelo in the isolation section of the State Security Prison in Luanda after the crushing of the mutiny in Viana camp and then shared a cell with him in the ANC detention camp, Quatro (officially, 'Camp 32'). He remained in Quatro until the former mutineers were released in December 1988.

After they were transferred by the ANC to Dakawa camp in Tanzania in January 1989 and permitted to take part in normal exile activities, Phungulwa was the main person responsible for organizing sports and culture among the exiles, whom the ANC prisoners on their arrival found very dispirited and apathetic. Towards the end of last year he was elected Sports and Cultural Co–ordinator for all the exiles in Tanzania, 'known practically by every ANC member in the region'. In general, it was only the former mutineers, with their attachment to democratic principles and their pronounced notions of political commitment, who could breathe life into the moribund structures in the camps. It was not long before these pariahs, who were not permitted to mention the mutiny or the repressions they and their colleagues had suffered, became an alternative pole of leadership to the security–dominated ANC bureaucracy in Dakawa.

On 16 September 1989, one of the seminal events in the life of the ANC abroad took place. In an astonishing rebuff to the ANC leadership, two former mutineers were elected to the leading positions on the most representative body of all the exiles in Tanzania, the Regional Political Committee, at an annual general meeting attended by several top–ranking ANC leaders, including one – Andrew Masondo – regarded by the mutineers as among the ANC leaders most responsible for the reign of terror in the camps.

The two ex–prisoners from Quatro chosen to represent thousands of exiles in Tanzania were Omry Makgoale (the MK district commander in Luanda before the mutiny, elected chairperson of the RPC under his 'travelling name'

of Sidwell Moroka, also known as Mhlongo) and Mwezi Twala (elected organizing secretary, under the travelling name Khotso Morena). Both had been members of the Committee of Ten, elected in Viana camp on the outskirts of Luanda to represent the demands of the armed personnel of Umkhonto to the ANC leadership in the middle period of the mutiny in 1984. Makgoale had been present in Quatro prison when the leading figure in the mutiny, Ephraim Nkondo (known to the mutineers by his travelling name, Zaba Maledza), was dragged through the prison with a rope around his neck, shortly before his death.[2]

By voting Makgoale and Twala to leading positions on the RPC, the ANC exiles in Tanzania effectively endorsed the standpoint of the mutineers of 1984 against the ANC National Executive Committee and the MK High Command, which had violently repressed their demand for a democratic conference. Twala was one of the group of eight who later escaped from Tanzania with Sipho Phungulwa in January this year, and was the main spokesperson when they gave a press conference in Johannesburg on 16 May after being released by the police.

Within days of the election, the ANC leadership set out to negate its embarrassing result, culminating in an administrative *ukase* of the NEC in October dissolving the RPC and attempting to replace it with an appointed Interim RPC which the ex-detainees correctly described as a dummy body. This was an event of the greatest importance for the future of democratic conditions in South Africa, since this dissolution of an elected body was the work of a small number of individuals who within six months were engaged in negotiating with the South African regime for a new form of government in the country. The question of the detainees proved to be a nerve signal indicating the future political complexion of South Africa itself.

The Struggle for Democracy

Phungulwa fought alongside his prison comrades from Quatro to reverse this system of administrative decree. At the annual general meeting of the Zonal Youth Committee (ZYC) in Dakawa on 14 December – in the presence of the SACP leader Rusty Bernstein, of the Regional Department of Political Education – he argued that ANC officials should not dictate 'who should be elected'. He opposed the idea that individuals elected to the RPC should agree to participate in an appointed 'dummy structure'. A person who was elected by the people, he stated, 'should serve the interests of the electorate not certain individuals. As the ANC has taught us, we should elect people of our choice'. (minutes, signed by the ZYC administrative secretary, Neville Gaba, 28 December 1989)

At this meeting, one of the most important in the fight of the ex-mutineers against bureaucratic despotism, Bernstein pointed out that he was 'happy to see the spirit of democracy. In his opinion the meeting was conducted in the spirit of perestroika and glasnost, a spirit that requires truth about things'. (minutes) It is not known how Bernstein reconciled these oily words, sanctioned from Moscow, with the silencing of the leading activists in the

democracy movement in the ANC shortly afterwards, or with the manner in which they were driven into flight from the ANC and its host state, Tanzania, or with Phungulwa's murder.

A motion calling on an elected office–bearer of the dissolved RPC 'not to participate in the dummy interim structure' was passed by the ZYC, after contributions from Makgoale, Twala and Phungulwa setting out the history of the struggle for democracy within the ANC. By continuing the fight for electoral accountability through the ZYC, the former prisoners made it plain that they had not given up the principles of the mutiny, but that these now had a wider audience than ever. It was a forthright challenge which the ANC leaders were not slow to respond to. Within a fortnight, ANC headquarters in Lusaka sent two NEC members, first to the camp at Mazimbu and then to Dakawa on 24 December, in order formally to exclude the mutineers from office in any of the ANC structures, as reported in *Searchlight South Africa*, No 5. The two delegates from the NEC were Chris Hani, who had played a major part in the suppression of the mutiny, and Stanley Mabizela, whose colleague from Fort Hare University College in the early 1960s, Sizakhele Sigxashe, had concluded the mutiny with public executions.

On 28 December, following 'the decision of the NEC,' the ANC coordinator at Dakawa, Sidwell Khoza, insisted by letter that Phungulwa be removed from his position as cultural coordinator, along with eight others holding elected office in various local structures, including Ketelo, Maxongo, Makgoale and Twala. 'A sense that anything might happen at any time set in, as the community awaited the reprisals that might follow', the Nairobi refugees wrote in their history of the mutiny (p 65). 'There was a need to pre–empt the actions of the security department, which would have definitely followed.' Three days after being removed from office on Khoza's instruction, Phungulwa and the ex–detainees (but not Makgoale and some others) resigned from the ANC in order to remove themselves from its jurisdiction, and thus hopefully avoid arrest and possibly death.

At first they tried to place themselves under the jurisdiction of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Dar es Salaam, the Tanzanian capital. They received no assistance, a thread that runs throughout the history of the UNHCR in the face of appeals for help from the victims of the nationalist movements in South Africa and Namibia. Instead, they were arrested by the Tanzanian government and held in detention during the visit by Walter Sisulu.[3] The conviction that they could get no protection either from the UNHCR or from the Tanzanian regime, which they viewed as in league with the ANC apparatus, convinced the ex–mutineers that their only safety lay in flight.

Bandile Ketelo and Zamxolo Tshona succeeded in reaching Nairobi on 22 January, after having been deported three times back to Tanzania in handcuffs by the Kenyan immigration police, and 'threatened with death if we came back to Kenya' (letter from Ketelo, Nairobi, 14 June 1990). Others arrived in two groupings in March, including Amos Maxongo and his companion Selinah Mlangeni and their small baby. All suffered extreme hardship, including arrest, before being provided accommodation by the All African Council of Churches at the YMCA in Nairobi.

The other group of eight, including Phungulwa and Twala, attempted to make their way from Tanzania back to South Africa via Malawi, on the principle that 'better a South African jail than the ANC "security"', (*Searchlight South Africa*, No 5, p 30). Arrested and imprisoned under very grim conditions in Malawi, they were interrogated there by South African security police, returned to South Africa by air by the government, detained by the police for three weeks in Kimberley and then released in Johannesburg on 15 May. The following day they presented the story of the mutiny and the repressions within the ANC at a press conference in Johannesburg organised for them by a Reverend Malambo, a figure with a political history allegedly associated with the South African government. While an ANC supporter accused them of being 'askaris' (former ANC members 'turned' by the police into secret assassins for the state) and to the disbelief of anti–apartheid journalists, they gave a detailed account of the mutiny and repressions within the ANC, confirming the information provided by the Nairobi group to the British press in April and the article appearing in *Searchlight South Africa* in July. Phungulwa at this time had only three weeks to live.

Friends of *Searchlight South Africa* were present at this press conference and had discussions with some of the ex–detainees afterwards. A fairly detailed report of the occasion, and of their allegations, appeared the following day in the Paris journal, *Liberation* (17 May). The group stated that they intended to form an association of 'parents of those who died or were detained in exile'. They had a duty to look after the interests of those they had left behind. It was necessary to obtain explanations from the ANC and to organize their comrades' return.

Shrouding a Murder with Slander

Days before Phungulwa's murder, the ANC's chief of intelligence, Jacob Zuma, took issue with the ex–detainees, claiming that a statement at their press conference that the ANC was holding more than 500 dissidents was false and that the correct figure was just over a hundred. He publicly smeared all the ANC prisoners, including the group of Twala and Phungulwa, with responsibility for 'participating in assassinations and spying'. The method of the Moscow Trials was deliberately invoked against the ex–mutineers, in order to discredit their fight for democracy. 'There were people with instructions to sow discord within our forces and our membership, to raise complaints about petty things and to aid a situation of uncertainty, even with specific instructions to organize mutiny', he told *New Nation*, a pro–ANC weekly funded by the Catholic Church (25 May, reported in *ANC Newsbriefing*, week ending 3 June).

As stated in an open letter delivered to Nelson Mandela on his visit to London in July, these remarks by the ANC's chief of intelligence were 'a lie and an incitement to murder' (open letter to Nelson Mandela from Solidarity with Ex–Swapo Detainees, London, 3 July 1990). A close colleague of the leading Stalinist Harry Gwala during his imprisonment on Robben Island, Zuma is responsible for very important positions within the NEC in the negotiating

process: he is a member, for instance, of the ANC working group responsible for determining political offenses in association with the South African government, deciding on release of political prisoners and immunity for exiles (*South*, 10 May, reported in *ANC Newsbriefing*, week ending 20 May), and is on the ANC committee responsible for investigating the carnage in Natal (NEC statement, 25 July). One need only grasp the primacy over the ANC bureaucracy in exile of its security apparatus – staffed mainly with members of the SACP and trained by the KGB – to gauge the weight of Zuma as chief of security, and the implication of his slander on the former mutineers. For many in South Africa, the label 'enemy agent' has been a death sentence.

Not long afterwards, Twala was told that he had 'forfeited his right to live in the townships' because of his comments at the press conference, following a 'comrades meeting' in Evaton, where his family lives. His young accusers said later: 'We ordered the family he was visiting to kick him out immediately'. (*Weekly Mail*, 8–14 June) In fleeing Tanzania for South Africa, the group had failed to reckon with the township vigilantes, whose activities received heightened expression in Mrs Mandela's football club and correspond nicely to the political theory of Mr Zuma. The phrase 'forfeited the right to live' rings ominously: it appears to have been a commonplace of township jurisprudence.

Zuma's statement could only mean that the ex–detainees were being set up for murder, either at the hands of township thugs or by ANC security personnel returned from abroad. Either way there would be no problem. The ANC/SACP was in the process of transferring security personnel from Mazimbu in Tanzania to South Africa, one of whom (travelling name Lawrence) was shot dead and others arrested by the police. In general, Umkhonto seems to have used its security personnel on numerous clandestine missions within South Africa, partly at least because of their greater loyalty to the SACP.

Phungulwa was killed in the territory he had previously helped to organise for military operations by MK. He had gone to the Transkei with Nicholas Dyasopi, a colleague from the mutiny and one of the group who had returned with him via Malawi, in order to explain to ANC members about the situation of the ex–mutineers. An appointment was made to speak to the chief representative in the ANC office in Umtata. A report from South Africa explains what followed:

> On the day of the appointment, when the comrades arrived in the office they were told that the man they were supposed to meet was not present and therefore they were asked to wait a bit.
>
> When the comrades realized it was getting late they began to leave, but officials insisted that they should wait until six o'clock as there was going to be a meeting and the man they were looking for would surely attend. But as the comrades could not wait any longer they left.
>
> Outside the office there was a car with two occupants who sternly looked at them. On their way to the location they saw the same car following their taxi. At the point of their destination, the car overtook and blocked the taxi and that was where Sipho Phungulwa was shot. Dyasopi managed to flee and tell the story.

The use of the car and the weapon (a Scorpion machine pistol) recalls evidence agreed between prosecution and defence concerning the same means used in a double murder in Soweto in 1987, involving Oupa Seheri – a trained ANC guerrilla, infiltrated back into South Africa from abroad – operating from Mrs Mandela's house. Further, on leaving the ANC offices in Umtata shortly before he was shot, Phungulwa had recognized one of the two men in the car as a former ANC guerilla whom he had himself trained in a military camp run by MK in Angola. This information became available when Dyasopi was able to alert his comrades to what had happened.

An Expendable Life

After the murder, some of the ex–detainees living in Soweto appeared on South African television and explained their case. As chief of staff of MK, Hani, who was in South Africa at the time of the murder setting up his own base of operations in the Transkei, was interviewed on the same programme and obscured the issue in the same manner as Zuma by presenting the ex–detainees as killers acting on behalf of the South African state. Without exception, former mutineers whether inside or outside South Africa considered Hani to have been ultimately responsible for Phungulwa's murder. They consider that Phungulwa – with his detailed knowledge of MK operations in the Transkei and his past role as Hani's bodyguard – was killed because he knew too much and because he had infringed on territory where Hani was setting up his own local military fiefdom, separate from the Johannesburg base of Joe Modise, the Umkhonto commander.

A month later, Nelson Mandela was confronted with information about Phungulwa's murder and the demand for an investigation by the ANC in an open letter from a small group set up in London, Solidarity with Ex–Swapo Detainees (Swesd). When the same issues were raised before journalists from all over the world at a press conference in central London on 4 July, during his world tour, Mandela 'brushed aside' the question in a 'steely' manner, according to a front page report in the British press the following day. His comment was cynical: 'I have never known a dead man to be able to identify the person who killed him'. (*Guardian*, 5 July) A letter delivered personally to Archbishop Desmond Tutu on 21 June in Oxford, where Tutu was receiving an honorary degree, asking him to support an inquiry into Phungulwa's murder, likewise failed to get a reply.

During the same period, ANC security in the camps in Tanzania told exiles that the ex–mutineers who had returned to South Africa or were living as refugees in Nairobi were 'true enemy agents who came to cause confusion amongst our ranks'. The language is very similar to that employed by Zuma, as ANC security chief, shortly before Phungulwa was shot. Security officials (nicknamed 'Selous Scouts,' after a notorious detachment in Ian Smith's forces in the last years of white rule in former Rhodesia) also stated that Phungulwa had been killed 'because he went to attack ANC offices in the Cape' (private communication in possession of the author). This transparent falsehood was an implied admission that he had in fact been killed by the ANC.

Despite having been presented by ex–detainees with a document setting out the history of suppression of the struggle for democracy in the ANC during his visit to Tanzania in January, Walter Sisulu at the most senior level of the ANC's old guard from Robben Island – second only to Mandela – also publicly repudiated the ex–detainees in much the same way as Zuma and the security apparatus in Tanzania. There is a systematic refusal, or inability, on the part of the ANC to confront its own history, not different from the inability of Mandela to confront the history of his wife. Instead, the big lie serves as a means to repress further, and even – as in the murder of Phungulwa – to prepare and justify assassinations. A leading MK commander, Mosima Sexwale, who spent 18 years on Robben Island, effectively conceded that ANC members had been involved in Phungulwa's murder when he met the Nairobi group on 31 August/1 September in Nairobi to urge them to rejoin the ANC: he stressed, however, that this had not been on instructions from the leadership (letter from Bandile Ketelo, 11 September).

Shortly after Phungulwa's murder, following a similar approach by Sexwale and the ANC national organizer and former MK leader from the 1960s, Wilton Mkwayi, the six surviving members of the group which had returned via Malawi – not including Dyasopi – were reported to have agreed to rejoin the ANC (*New Nation*, 29 June). When the Nairobi group were asked to rejoin the ANC by Sexwale, they refused. In the event of any meeting with the ANC leadership, they wanted to be independent. That is how the matter rests before the ex–detainees, among an estimated 40,000 exiles, return.

A Premature Truth

Zuma and Hani are men with whom capital can deal. None better than such as they to police the embers of revolt! As men of the political generation of the 1960s, they could not forgive the mutineers for holding up to them the principles of the youth of 1976 – above all, its inability to compromise on democracy. For the earlier generation of the time of Zuma and Hani, Stalinism was a magnetic pole of attraction: not so for the youth of 1976, who imbibed some of the spirit of the changed world politics of 1968. This clash of political generations, as much as anything, explains the opposing places in the conflict between the 'mother of the nation' and the children of 1976.

The return of Sipho Phungulwa, after thirteen years' exile, was the return of one of the children of that period – one of the most thoughtful and dedicated of its children. In the meantime, the hope and promise of that time had given birth to strange fruit, both in South Africa and abroad. A study of the period from 1976 to 1990 would indicate that it produced initially the most democratic process of self–organization in the country's history, the formation of the black trade unions. It was a period as full of promise as in any country's history. The contribution of the ANC to this process was minimal. The formation of the unions into a force within the society was achieved, if anything, despite obstruction by the ANC and the SACP in exile (see 'Two Lines within the Trade Unions,' *Searchlight South Africa*, No 3). The independence of the unions presented itself initially as a major obstacle to ANC political hegemony,

a barrier to be knocked down before the country could be made safe for the present negotiations.

The means by which this was achieved required that the principles of the generation of 1976 be barbarized – in other words, that their revolutionary sting be drawn. The suppression of the generation of 1976 by the ANC security department in exile in the mid–1980s, alongside the rise of political hoodlumism as a way of death within the country, marked a political reaction against the most radical tendencies within the society: a campaign of repression which, in the manner of the 20th century, branded its victims as the counter–revolution. It is Zuma and Hani, not the ex–detainees, who shake the hand of the South African state, dripping in blood.

South Africa, too, has its revolution betrayed, and the mutineers of 1984 are witness to it. Thus the response: Off with their heads! Wipe out the infamy! from the ANC security apparatus. Alongside the myth of Mandela and the sinister figure of his wife, one must place also the corpse of Sipho Phungulwa. He had been back in South Africa for less than two months, half of that time as a prisoner of the state, the other half as a marked man by the ANC. The great majority in South Africa will shortly discover how little they are to gain from the current changes. Precisely because of that, the mutineers endure the fate of those who tell a premature truth. It may be asked why attention should be focused on this one death, when the period since the unbanning of the ANC has produced so rich a harvest. It is because this murder, like none other so far, reflects back on the principal mythology of the transition period: the myth of the ANC, reaching its most celestial heights as the Mandela myth.

Notes

1. As explained in the article in *Searchlight South Africa*, No 5, the ANC's prisoners in Angola renamed the detention Camp 32 after a hated prison in South Africa, the Johannesburg Fort, known colloquially as 'Number Four.' This then became transformed into the Portuguese for the word four, 'Quatro' – which we spelt incorrectly as 'Quadro.' There were other errors in the article, in which real names were occasionally confused with the pseudonyms (or 'travelling names') that ANC exiles received when they left South Africa. ANC combatants whose real names were confused with their travelling names include Mwezi Twala, Vusi Shange and Bandile Ketelo.

2. Ephraim Nkondo was the younger brother of Curtis Nkondo, the former president of the Azanian People's Organization (Azapo) and current president of the national teachers' organization, Neusa. He was known to the mutineers by his travelling name, Zaba Maledza, the name in which he appears in *Searchlight South Africa*, No5. In 1976 he had been a student at the University of the North at Turfloop, active in the black consciousness students' organization, SASO. A published report on the mutiny, the pamphlet *Fighting the Crazy War*, by an anonymous participant, is dedicated to Nkondo under the hope that in a democratic South Africa 'the ghost of Zaba Maletza and others will be laid to rest'.

3. A picture of the grim conditions in the prison system of Tanzania is provided in the autobiography of the former leader of Swapo, Andreas Shipanga, held without trial in Tanzania from 1976 to 1978. Shipanga was falsely charged by Swapo with having spied for the South African government. His account of his years in prison in Tanzania appears in, *In Search of Freedom: The Andreas Shipanga Story, as Told to Sue Armstrong*, 1989, Ashanti, Gibraltar.

DRAGONS TEETH IN SOUTH AFRICA

Baruch Hirson

The Shame of Tribal Fighting

Over the past three years more than 3,000 lives have been lost in Natal and nearly 1,000 in the southern Transvaal. The number injured and maimed is not known; the loss of homes, burnt and gutted, is probably not even recorded. It is not possible to sit by complacently, while the carnage continues. It must be stopped, or inevitably the people will hold the leaders of the respective movements responsible for this carnage.

It is necessary to state the facts bluntly.

Political movements are exploiting the old clan and tribal symbols to rally their followers against opponents. Whether it be the Inkatha movement, raising troops in the style of traditional *impi*, rallying around the traditional cry of *Usuthu!* and accusing the ANC of being a Xhosa movement; or whether it be the ANC levelling charges of Zulu tribalism and pretending to be free of ethnic rivalry, there is enough evidence to say that tribalism has raised its ugly head. The only people to gain from this clash are those that hold the reins of power: the government of F W de Klerk, the right wing opposition, and the generals who control the police and the army.

The ANC and Inkatha, together with many of the smaller movements, are using the frustration and despair of the black communities to whip up passions for their own political ends. They stand by cynically (or they encourage mayhem), shedding the blood of the people in order to get at the head of the queue to speak to their white counterparts.

At national and at provincial level they mobilize their supporters and urge them on to battle. They invoke the crudest slogans to spur the people and, let it be admitted, their followers are often more bloodthirsty than their leaders. In the name of liberty and freedom they slash, mutilate, maim and kill.

But the strife does not only take place in the streets and the townships. The cancer that has gripped whole communities is to be found inside the very organizations that claim to be non–tribal. The stories emerging from once loyal members of MK and the ANC is one of ethnic rivalry among the leaders, of accusations and counter–accusations about a 'Xhosa leadership', or of 'Zulu betrayal', or of similar claims and rebuttals about other peoples (African, Indian and Coloured) who make up the South African population.