

UMSEBENZI

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CURRENT ISSUE

Stop SA's Savimbis...



Graphic: Courtesy of Negotiations News

... RIGHT NOW!

The Buthelezis, Mangopes and Gqozos must be stopped!

FUEL PRICE HIKE

Unilateral pricing by the minority regime must stop

The De Klerk regime has just announced another fuel price hike. This hike comes less than six months after the last increase. It also comes on top of the increase of VAT to 14% in April.

Black people in this country are, directly and indirectly, the largest

consumers of fuel. An increase in the fuel price hits the price of household fuel, it hits the price of bus and minibus transport. Fuel hikes hit transport costs and so affect the price of essentials like food.

Once more, those who can least afford it, are being made to suffer.

This latest increase is directly linked to the De Klerk regime's use of tax payers' money to protect non-viable projects like Mossgas. The present government hopes to turn Mossgas into a profitable enterprise so that it can be privatised.

This latest fuel hike underlines the need for a thorough-going restructuring, in the framework of a Reconstruction Programme, of our country's energy and transport policies:

- There must be much less

dependence on imported fuels. Our country has a surplus supply of local electricity. There must be a much more effective supply of electricity, both for transport and for domestic use in black households.

- There needs to be greater state intervention in support of cheaper, non-polluting public transport.

- There must be a move away from imports of expensive motor vehicles for private transport which only the rich can afford.

All of this can only begin to be realised effectively by getting rid of a minority regime that works hand in glove with the oil companies and other sections of monopoly capital in setting fuel prices and energy policies.

Halt unilateral restructuring! Halt unilateral pricing by this minority regime!

7000 MARCH THROUGH PIETERSBURG

The town of Pietersburg is notorious as a white, right-wing stronghold. This did not deter some 7000 people marching peacefully under SACP banners to mark our Party's anniversary on 31 July.

Organised by the Northern Transvaal leadership group, the march started at the Indian complex and proceeded to Pietersburg police station, where a memorandum was handed over. The memorandum demanded, amongst other things, an end to brutality against farmworkers by farmers, and the scrapping of VAT on basic foods and necessities. After the march, a gathering was addressed by SACP Central Committee member, cde John Nkadimeng and SACP Northern Transvaal leadership. "Every party cadre and trade union member must recruit, educate and mobilise people to vote ANC in the coming elections", SACP Northern Transvaal deputy chairperson, Kennedy Phalannwa told the gathering.

★ WINNER ★



Announcing the winner of our "Trip to China Competition!"



The winner of the SACP's Trip to China Competition is RODERICK COWIE.

Roderick is from Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape and works at the Volkswagen plant.

He is a NUMSA member. "But I am not a member of the Party", he told us. "I bought the competition ticket from my close friend, Bonani Vongo who is a Party member. We work in the same department, the body shop. Bonani helps make me politically more aware. I often visit him in Motherwell township, where he stays."

Roderick will be going to China with an uncle.

Congratulations, Roderick!

Halt unilateral restructuring!

Stop SA's Savimbis... ... RIGHT NOW!

The breakthrough in the negotiations with agreement on a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) is an important victory.

More and more we can set our sights on our first ever one-person one-vote elections on April 27 next year.

But the progress towards elections also carries us into one of the most dangerous moments in the transition process.

Those who fear the verdict of the voters are growing more desperate. The ultra-racist Conservative Party leadership is flirting with words like "civil war". Buthelezi points to Angola, and his message is clear – he is threatening to play at being Savimbi.

The Afrikaner Volksfront generals are calling on platteland whites to arm themselves (as if they weren't already armed to the teeth). Gqozo and Mangope say they won't co-operate with the TEC in the run-up to elections.

On the East Rand and in Natal, shadowy forces are fanning the flames of violence. The levels of violence for July-August are the highest ever for a two month period.

We are entering a very dangerous period.

One thing is clear. We cannot sit idly by, while the counter-



Graphic: Courtesy of Negotiations News

revolution assembles its forces. Firm action is required.

What is needed?

- We must not falter for a moment in our progress towards April 27. The slightest hesitation, the slightest sign that we are prepared to postpone the election date will fuel the ambitions of the warlords. They don't want elections, ever.

The merest sign of delay, and they will be encouraged to increase the levels of violence far into the future.

- Maximum and all-round pressure must now be put on the Buthelezis, Mangopes and Gqozos. The IFP and KwaZulu "government" have recently brought an expensive court case against the multi-party negotiations. Who is paying for this case?

Is it our tax money? All of these bantustan groupings cannot survive for many days without constant financial

support from the De Klerk government's coffers. De Klerk must turn that tap off.

- Which means that pressure must also be placed on De Klerk. He is zig-zagging. As his own support base falls apart, De Klerk is more and more desperate for a political settlement. But a political settlement means elections, and for elections, De Klerk was hoping to have Buthelezi at his side. So De Klerk zig-zags. He politely tells Buthelezi to get back to negotiations – but he doesn't do much else. The time for friendly persuasion has ended. Buthelezi must get in, or suffer the consequences.

- De Klerk must also deal much more effectively with the extreme white right-wing. He is pussy-footing with this right-wing. Instead of detaining patriotic black policemen who seek to defend their communities, he should deal with the real thugs in his security forces. He should deal with those small groups of whites who strut about in Nazi uniforms.

- Those corporations that are bankrolling Bop, in particular, must also turn on the financial screws. Failure to do this must carry a high penalty. We must begin to target these

Isolate the war-mongers!

corporations for pressure, as soon as possible.

- We must build on the extremely positive experience of Peace Day, September 2. What this showed was that millions and millions of South Africans, and perhaps above all working class people, across the political spectrum, want peace. September 2 reaffirmed the need for struggle, but also for nation building.

- When we say "isolate the warmongerers", we don't just mean isolate them from us. We mean isolate them from their own potential constituencies.

- The great majority of ordinary IFP supporters in hostels don't want violence. And, surely, they don't enjoy the spectacle of their leader being a bedfellow of the racist whites.

- Ordinary Afrikaans-speaking white workers don't want a civil war. They want jobs, pensions, decent public health-care. Do white workers enjoy seeing their taxes paying for the Mangopes and Gqozos, while Rina Venter privatises health-care and George Bartlett puts up the fuel price?

When we say "isolate the warmongerers" we mean isolate them from their actual or potential followers. Those who follow the warlords do so from fear, prejudice and blindness. Let us offer all South Africans a dignified place in a democratising SA. Those who refuse must stand alone, as a few pathetic individuals.

- Above all, and once more, we must turn to our mass base.

Only mass vigilance, organisation and mobilisation can ensure an effective transition over the coming dangerous months.

In turning to our mass base, we must avoid divisive tactics, ill-disciplined actions that isolate our own forces from the main-stream. **WE are the main-**

stream. Our objectives – peace, democracy and reconstruction are shared by the great majority of South Africans.

**Isolate the war-mongers!
Deal with SA's Savimbis
now!**

The Savimbi option - Angolan lessons

There are voices in South Africa threatening a "Savimbi option" after our first democratic elections. What happened in Angola, and why? Can the same happen here?

The September 1992 elections in Angola went off very successfully. There was a very high voter turn-out. The United Nations declared the elections generally "free and fair".

MPLA emerged as the majority party in the national assembly. There was also a presidential election, with MPLA's Jose Dos Santos well ahead of second-placed UNITA candidate, Savimbi. However, Dos Santos narrowly missed getting over 50%, and a run-off

presidential election was planned.

But before this could happen, Savimbi chose the "Savimbi option". He refused to recognise the election result. By the end of October 1992, Savimbi had plunged Angola back into war. At present over 1000 people are dying daily in the war. One-fifth of the population faces starvation.

The "Savimbi option" was a reality even before it happened.

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Deal with South Africa's Savimbis now!

The Savimbi option - Angolan lessons

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UN and Western failure

In the 16 months run-up to elections both MPLA and UNITA were meant to demobilise their forces and begin the process of integrating into a single army. UNITA simply defied this UN agreement.

Worse still, the UN and the three powers underwriting the settlement (US, Russia and Portugal) chose to ignore UNITA's defiance. Why? The UN's special representative, Margaret Anstey now privately admits she expected UNITA to win the elections. Since UNITA was going to be the future government, its failure to demobilise "didn't matter".

After the election results, and after Savimbi's return to the war path, Washington took many months to recognise the new government. Clinton has now done this, but the delay was costly. It encouraged Savimbi into believing he could get away with flouting the election results.

Pretoria's hand

Another major factor in the "Savimbi option" has, of course, been the Pretoria regime. For years the apartheid regime has been backing Savimbi's war of destabilisation. In the months before the election, the SADF conducted a major air-lift of arms and other supplies to Savimbi's bases in southern Angola and

western Zaire.

Just 12 days before the election, Savimbi had two days of secret meetings with Pik Botha and SADF generals in Pretoria. They were confident of victory. Pik Botha did, however, advise Savimbi to consider a federal break-away in the "unlikely" event that he lost. After UNITA's election loss a major air-supply of arms to Savimbi continued from South African soil.

The apartheid regime wanted its ally Savimbi to win elections. But failing that, it is happy to destabilise Angola and send a message to South Africans: "You see - Africans can't govern themselves".

MPLA

In the months after September 1992, UNITA seized numerous towns and villages. Since then, world opinion has begun to turn strongly against Savimbi. With a general conscription process underway, MPLA government forces are beginning to turn the tide on the battlefield.

The "Savimbi option", which is costing hundreds of thousands of lives, was a reality before it happened. But could MPLA have taken political steps before the elections to isolate the war-mongers in UNITA?

It is hard to say. Some elected UNITA deputies have broken ranks with Savimbi and are serving in the National Assembly.



JONAS SAVIMBI

It is also important to remember that UNITA, although losing the election, obtained well over one-third of the vote. Those who voted UNITA, voted in their great majority for peace, not war.

MPLA and UNITA entered these elections without a clear bilateral understanding between themselves on the possibilities of some kind of transitional power-sharing... Savimbi didn't think he would lose, let alone have to share power.

The lessons for South Africa are clear:

- The war-mongers must be isolated right now;
- All forces local and international must make it very clear to those in SA talking about "Savimbi options" - You will receive no support.
- The constituencies of the war-mongers must see that there is real political space open for them. War is not the only option. ♪

Forward to Elections on April 27, 1994!



UMSEBENZI STUDY SERIES

Negotiated Transitions

Part Two

“Managing the change, without changing the management”

The neo-liberal model for transition

In Part One of this series we saw how the present South African transition process is not an exception. Similar transitions from undemocratic systems towards some degree of democracy have happened, and are happening, in many parts of the world.

In the United States the study of transitions has become a whole industry. US strategists have developed an elaborate model for “democratic transitions”. This model has many limitations, but we must not underestimate it. It has guided the strategies and tactics of many transitions. In several countries, the model has enabled pro-imperialist forces to snatch victory away from liberation and other popular movements.

Here in South Africa the model is widely accepted. It informs the strategy and basic assumptions of the De Klerk government, of numerous think-tanks, and of the liberal press. Because it is influential, and because it dominates the air-waves, it often seems like “common sense”, the “obvious”. As a result many of its assumptions have a tendency to influence our own ranks.

Main features of the neo-liberal model

a. **The aim** for the ruling bloc is: **Reform before the revolution does it to you.** The main aim of the model is to provide a reform strategy to pro-imperialist forces, to enable them to pre-empt thorough-going change. In other words, the aim is to implement top-down reform, before the change becomes bottom-up.

b. **The main danger** for the ruling bloc is what they now call the “Gorbachev scenario”. Many top-down reformers have been overthrown by the forces their attempted reforms have unleashed. According to the neo-liberal model, the main dangers come from:

- the left/popular forces. Reforms create rising (and “unreal”) expectations. One reform raises hopes for others. The reforms create space for left/popular forces to organise and mobilise. In the end each reform comes as too little too late. The result is that the “moderate” reformers are swept aside by a rising tide of popular mobilisation.
- the extreme right – those in the

ruling bloc who are unwilling to give up any of their privileges. These are members of the ruling bloc who lack sufficient strategic insight into the “need for change in order to avoid change”. As the reforms proceed, this right-wing mobilises increasingly against the emerging popular forces. It calls for more law and order, it begins to take the law into its own hands. If the “reformers” do not deal with this extreme right, they are also in danger of being swept away by these forces.

c. **The trick – Staying ahead of the game**

The neo-liberal model of transition is all about developing strategies and tactics for pro-imperialist reformers to ensure that they “manage the change”. The trick is to retain the strategic initiative at all times.

Doing this involves several interconnected tactics:

- pro-imperialist reformers are advised to continually portray themselves as “the centre”. They are advised to continuously seek to marginalise “radicals on both sides of the spectrum”. This also involves playing the “left” and the “right”



against each other.

Here in South Africa this particular tactic is continuously in evidence. In 1990/1 the SABC did its best to establish an equivalence between the AWB and the SACP! That particular attempt has largely failed, thanks to the political intelligence of our party. But our opponents never tire of looking for (or even fabricating) "left hawks" and "right hawks". Much to their disappointment, the extreme right has tended to marginalise itself in the transition process, whereas the left has remained a key factor within it.

- the flip-side of the attempt to marginalise "radicals on both ends of the spectrum" is the strategy of building a "centrist bloc". The neo-liberal strategists stress the importance of elite bargaining and pacts. They are also very fond of the

idea of the "chemistry" of personal interaction between "moderate" elites. The intention of this is:

- to co-opt potential opponents, particularly those you cannot easily marginalise. This co-option involves making popular leaders, for instance, co-responsible for transition, but on your own terms.
- demobilising and demoralising popular forces by making the transition process lengthy, complicated and obscure.
- keeping your rivals constantly off-balance, by using some reform and some repression. Negotiate while simultaneously waging low intensity warfare. Talk over the table and kick under it. Speak with popular leaders, while terrorising their constituency. In other words, the "moderate reformers" are advised to pursue a double agenda.

Conclusion

All of this is now very familiar to us in South Africa. It is, however, very, very important to remember that while De Klerk is deploying this strategy it does NOT mean that:

- it will succeed
- that we should (or can) walk away from the transition.

The struggle in our country at present is for the strategic and tactical initiative within the transition process. We need to make the transition process our own. And for this, we need a coherent counter-strategy. This will be the subject of Part Three of this series. ♪

Chris Hani on the Neo-Liberal Model of Transition

In the last year of his life, Chris Hani devoted much attention to the neo-liberal model of transition. Indeed, comrade Chris was a prime target of this model. Precisely in line with the model, the regime's disinformation networks were doing everything to marginalise him, to portray him as a mindless hawk. Shortly before his assassination, this is what he told an audience of white Pretoria professionals:

"The essential thesis that gets quoted over and over is this: To make a successful transition from authoritarian rule to a relatively stable democracy, the moderates (the 'verligtes', the doves) on both the side of the incumbent regime and the extra-governmental forces

'have to find each other'. Some kind of elite deal must be struck. This means that extremists on either side have to be marginalised.

"I don't have to tell you into what role this particular screenplay casts someone like me.

"So where does the SACP stand in the unfolding process? We are not 'way out left', nor are we, as some of our detractors sometimes like to imagine, nostalgically 'way out East'. We are here, in South Africa, and we are part of an emergent consensus for multi-party democracy. We are reasonable.

"But to be reasonable, in our situation, requires not just an intelligent grasp of the need to make principled compromises when you have to. To be

reasonable, is not just to accept and contribute to the broad *and important* political consensus for a non-racial, multi-party democracy in our country.

"To be reasonable means thinking not just about constitutional change, but also about a major effort at social and economic reconstruction. And this means, as far as the SACP is concerned, a major effort at redistribution.

"*Within* the emergent national political consensus (not outside of it as some marginal voice, as some small little red flag flapping in the wilderness) – *this* is the perspective we are promoting, and this is the perspective we are sure will convince a large majority.

"To practise a politics that is at once *realistic* but also principled, socialist and far-reaching might not fit into the neo-liberals' schema.

"That is *THEIR* problem, not ours." ♪



A COLUMN BY
CHARLES NQAKULA
SACP GENERAL SECRETARY

ONE EASY, ONE NOT SO EASY WALK

Spare a thought for the mineworker who, for an average of 285 days a year, has to go underground to dig for gold.

That worker has to be awake by 3 o'clock each morning to prepare for the day's shift. And, whereas going underground has become routine to the experienced worker, there are serious dangers down there.

The other day I went to the Elandsrand mine, at Carletonville. The motivation for the visit was that I have addressed many meetings of mineworkers, but without being down a mine. To speak authoritatively on any aspect of the lives of our people we have to know their places of employment and conditions under which they work.

In regard to our people whose work puts them in hostels and compounds we have to know those places they call home for 11 months in a year. We have to see the conditions of their stay, and what they eat.

A quick arrangement with that diligent organiser, Howard "General" Yawa, and we were on our way to Elandsrand. We were meant to be 12 in our group. The group of three from Head Office was supposed to

A visit to the mines

*The workers
digging and
hauling on the reef
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piece of candy.*

link up with eight NUM comrades from the Carletonville regional office.

Having to go into the bowels of the earth is not an appealing thought. So, don't worry that you were not there cdes Alfred Maseko and Menzi Mthwelu (both education officers); Thulie Dlamini (receptionist); Annah Rabotapi and Ben Felanto (both administrators), and Daniel Makhibi (organiser).

Of course, we would have appreciated your company, cdes Thulie and Annah. In the Party, we want our female comrades to be wherever we go; to lead

together the struggle for socialism in our country.

I was thinking about cde Chris Hani every step of the way underground. He would have managed that visit with ease. The trip underground needed top physical fitness. Anyone who saw cde Chris and I on the last visit to a region we made together would have seen clearly the difference between us regarding physical fitness.

Once when we were in Louis Trichardt, in the Far Northern Transvaal, I got up early and took a walk. Cde Chris followed jogging and ran past me.

At Elandsrand I tried to push my body to the limit. It was a major battle. We emerged from the last lift on level 85. The signpost indicated we were just over 2.5 kilometres underground.

The workers digging and hauling on the reef we visited went about their work as if they were dealing with a piece of candy. At one stage, when someone from management saw me staring at one worker using an hydraulic drill, he asked me to take over for a few minutes. I declined the offer.

I could understand the seriousness of the task of

drilling by seeing how the driller's face was responding to the vibration of his machine and how his muscles stood up to the pressure, the sinews on his arms bulging to bursting point.

As we made our way around the reef, crawling on knees and bellies, or sliding down on our buttocks, I continuously bumped against the props used to prevent rock falls. We were given a description of the props. There are three kinds there. Some are wooden, from the old school in mining. Then there are hydraulic ones — an old type and a new kind.

We were warned, though, that the props were not the ultimate measure to stop rock falls. In a rather casual way, we were told about "bumps". Don't be misled. Bumps are tremors! Tremors like when there is an earthquake, not bumps like what you experience on a plane flight. When these tremors happen they may cause rock falls.

Three bumps happened when we there. Luckily we were already on the surface. I never learnt what they did underground.

It was barely two weeks after the mine visit that my body had to suffer another battering. This time it was the Gandhi Peace Walk. It was a far cry from the mine visit, an easy seven kilometre walk from Lenasia to Tolstoy Farm.

When Tolstoy died in 1910, Lenin wrote that Tolstoy "succeeded in conveying with remarkable force the moods of the large masses that are

**Ghandi Peace
Walk from
Lenasia to
Tolstoy Farm**

*"...the original
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Tolstoy and
Ruskin."*

Maureen Swan

oppressed by the current system, in depicting their conditions and expressing their spontaneous feeling of protest and anger."

As we were walking to Tolstoy Farm, I was thinking about our own people "oppressed by the current system".

I was thinking, particularly, about those in the squatter camps, whose shacks are either cardboard box or tarpaulin structures. We were going past a brick dump used by Corobrik. Thousands of bricks, condemned by the company but bricks that are strong enough to build better structures for the homeless and residents of the informal settlements.

My pace kept improving with each kilometre nearer Tolstoy Farm. I thought the answer to

my question on the connection of Mahatma Gandhi to Tolstoy lay ahead at the farm.

Gandhi was a great admirer of Tolstoy. Gandhiji (the name used to denote reverence for the great Mahatma) also had thousands and thousands of admirers and followers. Among them was Herman Kallenbach, who gave the Mahatma "Tolstoy" Farm.

In her biography, *Gandhi, The South African Experience*, Maureen Swan in tracing the origin of Tolstoy Farm writes:

"Thus the original inspiration for the first of Gandhi's communal settlements is always attributed to his readings of Tolstoy and Ruskin. What has been over-looked in the past, however, is the fact that a far more immediate influence on (him) may well have been the example of the successful rural commune which predated his own settlement at Phoenix."

Swan goes on to argue that John Langalibalele Dube, the first ANC president, was already running a commune at Phoenix "when Gandhi decided to buy land in the same area."

The Mahatma walked daily 42 miles to and from Johannesburg, where he had a legal practice.

When I thought about that great feat, I decided I would finish my walk. When we got to the farm, we found about 100 people already there. But, some had not walked. I was, perhaps, among the first 50 people home. I got a Mahatma Gandhi Peace Medal for finishing the walk. I treasure it. ♪



PART ONE

Marxism, Socialism and the Third World

Introduction

Tomas Borge, the only surviving founder of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, recently reacted with irritation to something written about Fidel Castro. A French leftist had written that Castro was "Trotsky, Lenin and Stalin, all wrapped up in one caudillo [military strongman]."

This is Borge's reply: "Even though Fidel has the intellectual quality of Trotsky, the integrity of Lenin and the organisational ability of Stalin, it is impossible to compare

him with those historic figures. To do so would be equivalent to continuing to use European values and processes as obligatory models, and we Latin Americans are tired of doing that.

"Fidel is Fidel. He is a 'caudillo' only in the sense that Tupac Amaru, Bolivar, San Martin, Hidalgo, Marti, Morazan and Sandino [all historical Latin American liberation leaders] were, in times of glory for Our America."

This new UMSEBENZI series on *Marxism, Socialism and the Third*

World takes as its point of departure the same sentiments. For too long Marxism has been treated purely, or largely, as a European reality. Local debates too easily get mapped on to European reference points. Different positions are supposed to be "Stalinist" or "Trotskyist", "Leninist" or "Gramscian". One argument is too easily labelled "Eurocommunist", or another a "Swedish social democratic" line.

Even within Marxism, and even within the Third World a special kind of colonial mentality has

At the time of his assassination by Portuguese agents in 1973, Amilcar Cabral was the secretary general of PAIGC (the liberation movement in Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands). Under his leadership, PAIGC had liberated three-quarters of the countryside of Guinea in less than ten years of armed struggle.

Cabral distinguished himself by the long and careful preparation which he undertook before leading the struggle. This preparation was both theoretical and practical. At the time of his death he had become one of the world's outstanding theorists of anti-imperialist struggle.

Portuguese colonialism had a devastating impact on Cabral's motherland. More than 99% of the population could not read or write. Sixty percent of babies died before

Amilcar Cabral



the age of one. There were never more than 11 doctors for the entire rural population.

As a young man Cabral was able

to study in Portugal. There he met Africans from Portugal's other African colonies – Agostinho Neto and Mario Andrade (founding members of MPLA), and Eduardo Mondlane and Marcelino dos Santos (founding members of FRELIMO). Cabral also came into contact with the underground Portuguese communist party, and he became a staunch Marxist.

But for Cabral, Marxism was never an abstract theory to be applied mechanically. Cabral took theory very seriously, but he was an enemy of empty abstraction. For instance, he studied closely the different traditions of the tribes of Guinea. Some were patrilineal,

persisted.

Do we not have our own socialist history, our own socialist culture, our own socialist theoreticians?

Who had more in common with Marxism – Boris Yeltsin when he was still the “communist” mayor of Moscow, or OR Tambo? Comrade Tambo, of course, never described himself as a socialist, but he practised a consistent and exemplary anti-imperialist revolutionary politics. Comrade Tambo always took the greatest care to apply a careful, scientific analysis to concrete political situations. There was no “marxist-leninist” rhetoric – were his politics less scientific for that?

If the models of great communists are only European models, then the stature of a Chris Hani might be obscure. Unlike Marx, Engels, Lenin or Gramsci, cde Chris has not left behind a row of Collected Works on our bookshelves. Yet Chris addressed thousands of rallies, village meetings, student marches,

workers’ pickets in the last years of his life. Chris Hani’s collected works are in the collective memories of millions of South Africans and supporters internationally. Are his thoughts less valid for that reason?

Of course, we must be careful not to carry the argument too far in the other direction. The contribution of the great European revolutionaries – Marx, Engels, Lenin and many more – is immense and irreplaceable. Their contributions were not just theoretical, they were anchored in concrete working class struggles. These struggles themselves are a great collective heritage. We are not rejecting this great heritage. We are not remotely advocating some go-it-alone Afro-socialism, or Third Worldism, or South African exceptionalism.

Socialism is and needs to be a truly internationalist task.

What we are rejecting is a Eurocentric approach to socialism. We need to challenge those models

which make the socialist contributions of an Albert Nzula or an Eddie Roux, of a Moses Kotane or a Comrade Mzala invisible, or, at best, minor tributaries of some European tradition.

Events of the last several years challenge us to renew, consolidate and deepen the Marxist heritage. Part of this process is to rediscover ourselves in South Africa, in Africa, in the Third World.

This series will take up many different subjects within this broad theme – like the historical relationship between the Internationals and the Third World, or profiling outstanding Third World revolutionaries like Cabral or Le Duan. Different subjects will be taken up in an open-ended way. No attempt will be made to write a complete history of socialism in the Third World. The aim is to provoke discussion and thinking – RE-thinking. ☉

– Tell no Lies

some were matrilineal with queens. Some had strong feudal features, others were more egalitarian.

One of Cabral’s central concerns was culture. Colonialism, he argued, involved the suppression of a people’s culture. As the armed struggle in Guinea unfolded, Cabral came more and more to recognise that this attempt to suppress had not completely succeeded.

“At the outset of the struggle”, he wrote, “both the leadership of the liberation movement and the militant and popular masses have no clear awareness of the strong influence of cultural values in the development of the struggle...how

much culture is for the people an inexhaustible source of courage, of material and moral support, of physical and psychic energy which enables them to accept sacrifices – even to accomplish ‘miracles’.”

But, and this is typical of Cabral, he immediately recognises another side to the people’s culture: “But equally, in some respects, culture is very much a source of obstacles and difficulties, of erroneous conceptions about reality, of deviation in carrying out duty, and of limitations on the tempo and efficiency of a struggle that is confronted with the political, technical and scientific requirements of a war.”

For Cabral, then, the liberation struggle reveals the enormous strength within the people’s culture (a strength that has gone unnoticed) and it reveals limitations in that culture. The struggle draws from the people’s culture, and it transforms that culture. “The ...liberation struggle is not only a product of culture but also a determinant of culture.”

Amilcar Cabral is the author of the words so often quoted: “Tell no lies, claim no easy victories”. One of the great revolutionary figures of our century, Cabral would have been the first to insist that his contribution to Marxism derived from careful study and a practical involvement in a mass struggle. He understood that Marxism meant teaching the people, and learning from the people. ☉

Latin American left consolidates

The Sao Paulo Forum met in Havana in July this year. This is the fourth annual meeting of this major forum of Latin American and Caribbean national liberation, democratic, popular, leftist and socialist forces.

Each year the number of participants has increased. This year no fewer than 112 member organisations from throughout the region were involved. The SACP and ANC had observer status.

The meeting this year was deliberately and symbolically located in Cuba. The Forum has consistently condemned the US blockade, and it committed itself once more to increased political action against the blockade.



The Forum committed itself to increased political action against the US blockade of Cuba.

The Forum also noted the rejection of neoliberalism in Uruguay, where in a referendum, 72% of voters opposed the privatisation of public enterprises.

Local similarities

It is encouraging to find that many of the issues we are grappling with in SA were echoed in the Forum. For instance, in line with our view of a Reconstruction Programme, the Forum stressed the necessity, in the face of massive social misery, to move "beyond denouncement and

resistance to concrete proposals and alter-native actions."

"We urge, therefore, the creation and implementation of development models which, expressing the interests and the organised power of mass movements, move towards sustained and ...environmentally balanced economic growth with equitable distribution of wealth, within the framework of strengthening democracy in all areas".

The Forum harshly criticised the formula, familiar to us here in SA, of 'growth first, distribution second'.

Representative and participatory democracy

The Forum also underlined the importance of combining representative, participatory and direct democracy. It "affirmed the need to strengthen democracy through a combination of representative means and participatory and direct forms of democracy, integrating institutional struggles with social struggles."

Faced, like us, with the onslaught of neo-liberalism, left and democratic forces throughout Latin America are grappling with the challenge of combining political organisations and social movements, without undermining the autonomy of either.

BUILD THE UNITY OF LEFT AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES!

Forward with the unity of the left and democratic forces!