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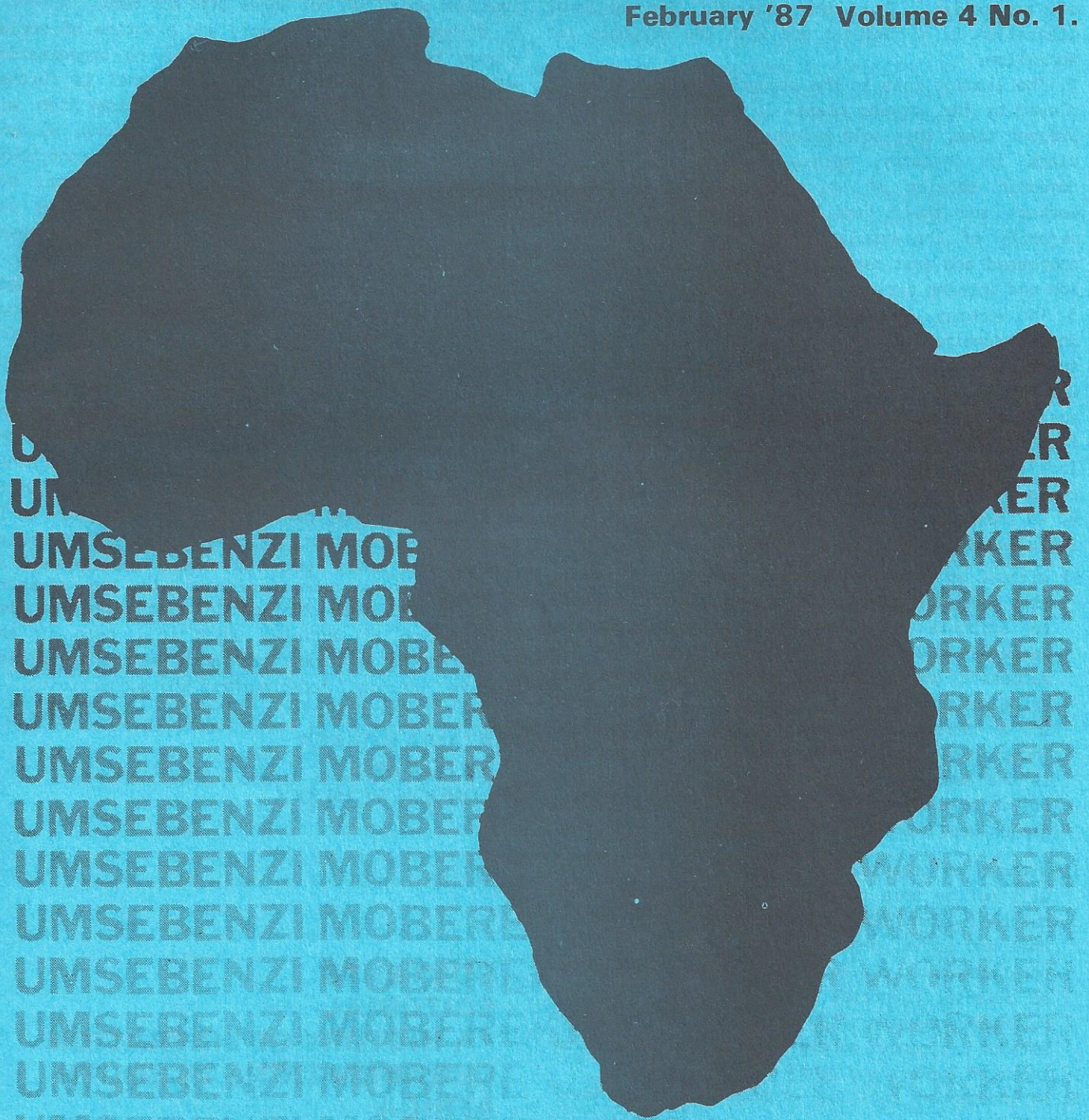

THE AIM OF AZANIA WORKER

1. The struggle for national liberation in South Africa is a struggle against white domination and racial oppression of the majority black population. White domination and racism are inextricably woven into the economic development of capitalism in South Africa. The elimination of white domination and racism can only be completed after the disappearance of capitalism. Thus the struggle for national liberation is a combined one with the struggle for socialism.

2. The leading role in the struggle for socialism is played by the working class. In South Africa at the present time, this role belongs to the black working class in industry, mining, agriculture and the domestic service of white households. The black workers and their families constitute not only a majority of the population but are also the most oppressed and most exploited section of the population and working class in South Africa.

3. The working class can only secure its leading role in the combined struggle for national liberation and socialism through its own independent political working class organisation which expresses its specific political, economic and social demands. We thus fully support the project of creating an independent political organisation of the working class in South Africa.

4. An independent political organisation of the working class is necessary because:

i) without an organisation of their own the workers will never in their own name and interests be able to struggle for, assume and maintain power; worker's power is a necessary condition for successful and meaningful social change that will bring an end to racism and capitalism and usher in a period of transition to socialism, an independent political working class organisation is the means by which the working class secures its interests and representation in any political conjucture, now and in the future;

ii) without an organisation of their own the workers will not be able to press within the popular and national liberation struggle the political, economic and social demands of the working class and other dominated classes: the example of many former colonial countries shows that the popular and national struggles often end by serving the interests of indigenous middle class elites rather than those of workers and other toiling classes.

5. An independent political organisation of the working class can only be created out of the political and trade union organisations and the various socialist currents which exist at the time. For this organisation to have deep roots and a mass base in the working class itself, it cannot be built in isolation from the working class and the organisations in which the workers presently find themselves, nor can it be built by any one socialist current in isolation from all others actively involved in workers' and mass struggles. There is a need, as a step towards the building of a working class organisation for all socialists to engage in discussion. Our journal is offered as an open medium of expression to all socialists actively involved in struggles, and remains non-sectarian in that it will publish contributions which may not agree with our own.

6. Without a relevant theory and practice of social change the working class can have no organisation worthy of its leading role. Our journal is further offered as a forum in which socialists from all political currents within the trade unions, student and national liberation movements can contribute towards the development of a relevant theory and practice of social change, and in which they can exchange experiences and lessons drawn from present and past struggles.

7. In a world dominated by capitalism the struggle against capitalism is an international one. We cannot therefore conceive of a political organisation of the working class in South Africa in isolation from the organisations, experience and history of the working class and toiling masses in other countries of the world. We offer our journal as a link between the struggle in South Africa and the struggles in other countries and, to this end, extend an invitation to socialists in other parts of the world to join us in developing a relevant theory and practice of social change and share with us their experiences of struggles in a manner relevant to the workers' struggle in South Africa. In particular we seek contribution of articles which will help in the understanding of questions such as race, class, culture, ideology, consciousness and subjectivity.

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EDITORIAL

How are we to differentiate between and make sense of the myriad organisations which are presently vying with each other for the leadership of the national liberation struggle in South Africa? During the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe a question which was frequently asked was in what ways were ZANU and ZAPU different from each other. In the case of South Africa there are not only two but many more movements which speak in the name of national liberation so that the answer to the question is far more complex. The contemporary field of political organisation is occupied by the African National Congress, the Azanian People's Organisation, the Cape Action League, the Communist Party, the New Unity Movement, the United Democratic Front and the National Forum to name only those organisations - some large, others small - which are visible to the public eye inside South Africa and, by consensus, are regarded as constituting the forces of liberation. Alongside these organisations are the trade union federations, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the Council of Unions of South Africa and the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions each playing a more or less significant role in the movement for national liberation.

The first article in this issue of Azania Worker is an attempt to explain the differences between the aforementioned organisations. The most prominent and dominant of them at this juncture is the African National Congress. It is thus appropriate that the other organisations, while not losing sight of their distinctive character, be discussed in the light of their differences or agreements with the African National Congress. To facilitate the discussion the article necessarily gives a historical sketch of the origins of some of the organisations and in this way spans a very large part of the history of our struggle - from the Bambata Rebellion of 1906 to the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions in 1985.

The author of the article, Jon Garvey, is active in the anti-racist and anti apartheid struggles in the United States and wrote the article as a contribution to a better understanding within the international solidarity movement of the various organisations involved in our national liberation struggle.

As a source of reference on South Africa's different liberation organisations, Jon Garvey recommends One Azania, One Nation, a book written by Neville Alexander under the name No Sizwe. In previous issues of Azania Worker, Alexander has contributed an artice on the National Question and other articles which have since been compiled as part of his second book Sow The Wind. In this issue we carry another article by Alexander an address he delivered to a conference at Cape Town University.

The address by Alexander is confined to a very particular history- a history of the origins of the policy of non-collaboration and its concommitant weapon, the boycott of segregated (or apartheid) statutory institutions, in the Western Cape between 1943 and 1963. Once the preserve of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM, a fore-runner of the New Unity Movement), non-collaboration with the apartheid regime is today the common policy of all the organisations which form a part of the national liberation movement in South Africa.

Alexander writes of the success with which non-collaboration and the boycott were applied against the Coloured Affairs Department and points to the boycott percentages of that time being as spectacular as those attained in the 1984 boycott of the tri-cameral parliament. Alone among the organisations of the time the NEUM waged battle against the collaborators and brought into popular usage the term quisling to describe them. For most of its life the African National Congress (ANC) was opposed to the boycott of segregated (or apartheid) institutions and up to as recently as 1980 its president could excuse the collaboration of Gatsha Buthelezi and other by dubbing it "patriotic participation." Thanks to the youth's and students' forceful intervention in opposition to participation in the institutions of apartheid, non-collaboration and boycott are now also the platform of ANC thereby lending its immense weight. So successful today is the application of the boycott that the quislings are not only exposed but stand totally isolated. But why has the Unity Movement, the progenitor of a policy so popular and successful today, not surfaced as the chief beneficiary of its own policy to become the leading movement in the present time? Alexander's address is in part an answer to this question.

A HISTORY OF LIBERATION ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

As most activists in the anti-apartheid movement realize, the largest and most powerful of the organized groups in the South African liberation movement is the African National Congress (ANC). And while some might be aware that there are other groups in that movement, their distinctive character and their differences with the ANC are seldom discussed.

This carries over to most of the practical activity against apartheid that we engage in. When we hear a speaker from South Africa, it is almost always a representative of the ANC or, recently, the United Democratic Front (which is closely allied with the ANC). On some occasions, this organizational predominance is challenged by those who support one or another of the other groups or by those who argue that it is important for the anti-apartheid movement here to extend support to the entire liberation movement. Frequently, such challenges are responded to with the advice that the ANC is the only really important group and that it will be the ANC that will 'win' in South Africa.

In addition, virtually all of the international dialogue on the fate of South Africa hinges on the demands that the South African government legalize the ANC, release Nelson Mandela and begin talking to the leaders of the Congress. There is considerable evidence that influential and powerful people inside and outside of South Africa, as well as many of apartheid's opponents, believe that the ANC will, in fact, be directly involved in the future government of South Africa. As a consequence, they would like to arrange a relatively peaceful transition and, at the same time, put the ANC in a position where it might be willing to accommodate the demands that will be placed on it by South African corporations, international investors and the Western powers.

While the supporters of the ANC see this development as a promising one and urge all anti-apartheid activists to rally behind the ANC, many of the other forces in the movement express considerable concern about it. Many of those other forces have long-standing differences with the ANC and are not convinced that submerging them in a common struggle under the leadership of the ANC would be wise.

In order to assist anti-apartheid activists to better understand the differences within the liberation movement, I have written this brief description of the history of the movement during the 20th Century. It would have been too ambitious an undertaking to chronicle the resistance of the indigenous populations to the spread of European military and economic power for the two and a half centuries prior to the twentieth. But, it should be understood that while the resistance was persistent and determined, the European onslaught was militarily superior and vicious in its brutality.

As will be clear, I have my own sympathies. I hope, however, that I have not distorted the record and I urge all who read the pamphlet to investigate the issue for themselves.

A note on sources

Although the pamphlet does contain references to various publications and documents, I have not included a bibliography at the end. Such a bibliography will be included in the next edition of the pamphlet.

I would like to recommend several of the books and other publications that I relied on in the course of researching the material.

First, and perhaps obviously, people should read the Freedom Charter. It is now in its third decade as the definitive statement of the goals of the Congress Alliance and it deserves careful reading and analysis.

Second, people should read the work of Steve Biko, one of the original articulators of Black Consciousness. Some of his spoken testimony is available in the biography written by Donald Woods, Biko and a collection of his writings has recently been re-issued under the title of I Write What I Like.

Third, I would recommend One Azania, One Nation by No Sizwe. It is published by Zed Press in England. I would also recommend as a follow-up piece a book published last year in South Africa by Neville Alexander. It is entitled Sow the Wind and was published by Skotaville Press. Readers should know that Alexander was the author of One Azania, One Nation using the No Sizwe pseudonym.

Finally, I would recommend almost everything that Basil Davidson has written about Africa but especially the book that I consulted frequently during the writing of this pamphlet - Let Freedom Come.

I'd like to thank Mike Morgan of the South African Military Refugee Aid Fund for bearing with my obvious questions and for providing me with so many un-obvious answers.

John Garvey
July, 1986

Early efforts

By the end of the nineteenth century, the white settlers in South Africa had been able to defeat all of the indigenous opposition to their steady expansion eastward and northward from the Cape province. At that point, however, the long-standing antagonisms between the Dutch and English broke out into an open conflict. The Anglo-Boer War lasted for three bloody years and in 1902, a peace treaty ended the war on terms more or less dictated by the English. However, the peace accord did grant the Afrikaners some concessions in the area of cultural equality.

Seven years later, an act of the English parliament joined the four provinces (Cape, Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal) into a Union of South Africa. However, it allowed all but the Cape Province to independently determine eligibility for voting. In the Cape, Coloureds continued to vote and some 'natives' retained the franchise.

One observer has suggested that the Act of Union was motivated in large part by the Bambaata Rebellion which had shaken white confidence, if not white rule, in 1906. Bambaata, a chief of the Zondi tribe of Zululand, led an armed revolt against European rule. He and his followers relied on guerrilla tactics and enjoyed a short-lived success. The rebellion cost the English authorities over $5 million. After they killed Bambaata, they beheaded him and took photographs of soldiers holding the head as a display of how the 'civilized' British dealt with the 'uncivilized' Africans. (Frank Talk, July-August 1984: 10)

No Sizwe has suggested that the defeat marked the end of any serious possibility of a military challenge to white rule and that subsequent efforts would either be religious or assimilationist in nature. While religious sentiments "kept alive the belief that Africa belongs to the Africans and that the land should be returned," they seldom took a "directly political" form. This left the field open for efforts by various 'elites' to try to secure their own political rights and freedoms within the framework of a European dominated society.

> Because of the manner in which they had accepted Christian teachings (non-violence, non-resistance to established authority, etc.), ...this class of people adopted the political methods of petition, deputation, and remonstrance and were steadfastly opposed to all talk of civil disobedience or violent resistance. None the less their political and ideological views represented the wave of the future and were to determine the organised political thought and action of the oppressed for the next few decades. (No Sizwe: 45-46)

In his book on African liberation movements, Basil Davidson tried to describe those 'elites':

> They are hard to label. The term 'elites', although they often used it about themselves, is far from satisfactory, partly because it has tended to become a mere term of abuse, and partly because these groups were far from being the 'chosen ones' of early imperialist preference. Yet it is also true that they tended to see themselves as the 'chosen ones' of history, as those who were to be the instruments of applying the European model to Africa, and therefore as the saviours of the continent. ... Perhaps they can best be called the 'Western-educated few.' (149)

Thus, the South African Native National Congress (later to become the African National Congress) was formed in 1912 at a meeting of tribal chiefs in Blomfontein as the culminating effort of a number of earlier provincial efforts. Callinicos summarized its approach:

> The SANNC aimed to speak to the government on behalf of the African people, demanding equal rights and justice for all. One of its first actions was to present a petition asking the government to stop the Land Act. The petition was politely received but it failed to change the law. Other petitions followed - to the British government, to the Peace Conference in Paris after World War I, and several to the Prime Minister. (92)

The Land Act was designed to systematically divide the nation's land in a way that would ensure white ownership and possession of the largest share. Its passage and implementation were likely regardless of the resistance offered. More important than the defeat for No Sizwe, however, was the acceptance by the educated elite of the ideological consequences of their separation into Africans, Asians and Coloureds. Those consequences included the notions of race, culture and language as appropriate grounds for political organization. As a result, the elites "inevitably formed organizations which catered for disabilities felt to be peculiar to the groups from which they themselves originated." (47)

So while the SANNC was preoccupied with questions of land rights, the African Political Organization conducted its affairs in the hope that it might persuade the government to alter its policies limiting the educational and business opportunities for Coloureds. And, during the same period, the Natal Indian Congress, organized by Mahatma Gandhi, pressed its concerns about the threat of repatriations to India and the difficulties encountered by Indian travellers. Beyond the "one common plank...for the extension of the franchise to the oppressed," the groups concerned themselves exclusively with their 'own' problems. (47)

The first exception to this pattern was the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of South Africa (ICU). It was founded by Clements Kadalie and a handful of others in 1919. Originally a dockworkers union in Capetown, it eventually claimed a national membership of 100,000 including both African and Coloured members. The West Indian historian and activist, C.L.R. James, assessed its early years:

> Without any help in finance, experience or encouragement, suffering persecution and arrest, these built a movement which matured in strikes, demonstrations and battles with the police, while white South Africa watched its incredible growth with alarm. (83)

With the coming to power of the white-worker/Afrikaner Pact Government in 1924, official persecution escalated and while the union continued to grow, the assaults and lack of support began to take a toll. After 1926, a combination of internal disagreements (especially about the role of white Communists within the union), a lack of organ-

isation and continued government persecution led to a dramatic decline. In 1938, James wrote, "Today, the two sections are but a shadow of the early ICU, and Kadalie keeps a cafe in Port Elizabeth, where formerly the workers had been shot down demonstrating for his release." (85)

The modern movement

While organised opposition was not active during the last years of the 1920's and the early ones of the 30's, many individuals clustered around various socialist and communist groups continued to meet and to discuss ways of fighting white rule. Of greater signi ficance, however, than these efforts of the left was the establishment of the All-African Convention (AAC) in 1936. This group pulled together individuals who had been in the ANC, in the ICU, and other smaller groups. In addition, it specifically accepted Coloured and Indian, as well as African, individuals as members. Basil Davidson reports that:

> Dr. G.H. Gool made history at the launching of a new organisation to promote unity among moderates and radicals, the All-African Convention. This Convention, he argued, should go beyond the tinkerings of reformism. It should 'lay the foundations of a national liberation movement to fight against all the repressive laws of South Africa.' (185)

While the African National Congress was briefly part of the Convention, it soon left to pursue a strategy of limited cooperation with governmental institutions. Opposition to such cooperation had been the central political plank of the AAC and it would have been impossible for the ANC to remain.

In retrospect, the ANC's decision to abandon the option of non-collaboration and to pursue a strategy of participation in the government's segregated representative bodies probably set the stage for several more decades of separate activity against the government. This was in spite of the fact that a concrete example of successful non-collaboration occurred during the Second World War. After the government established a Coloured Affairs Department (CAD) in 1941, an Anti-CAD Movement arose and it denied the government's plan any success. (No Sizwe: 55) To some extent, that victory was probably due to the disarray in the government resulting from the breakdown of the United Party coalition, the subsequent repression of the Afrikaner opposition and the advances made by Coloured and African workers in the wartime economy.

Nonetheless, the victory did leave an organizational legacy - the Non-European Unity Movement. That movement's approach was summarized in a 1951 document:

> Who constitutes the South African nation? The answer to this question is as simple as it would be in any other country. The nation consists of the people who were born in South Africa and who have no other country but South Africa as their homeland. They may have been born with a black skin or with a brown one, a yellow one or a white one; they may be male or female; they may be young, middle-aged or of an advanced age; they may be short or tall, fat or lean; they may be long-headed or round-headed, straighthaired or curly-haired; they may speak Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, English or Afrikaans, Hindi, Urdu or Swahili, Arabic or Jewish; they may be Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists or of any other faith. ...All that is required for a people to be a nation their country, pride in being citizens of their country. (No Sizwe: 56)

This almost over-stated insistence on the subjectivity of national identity was part of a determined attempt to reject any notion that there existed any biological/natural or even cultural reasons for groups in South Africa to organise independently of each other. It was an Africanism of a new kind - an Africanism that expanded to include all those who chose to be included. Such sentiments were bound to have an effect on the members of the ANC, which was the largest single political force operating in opposition to the racist policies of the government. One of the first indications of such an effect was the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944. At first, the younger members were hoping to promote an increased level of active opposition to the government's policies. They proposed direct action campaigns against the government and such proposals eventually bore fruit in the mounting of the 'Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign' in the early 1950's.

At the same time, however, many of the Youth League members began developing a different political and social vision than that held by the senior members of the ANC. One spokesperson for this new viewpoint, A.M. Lembede, wrote in 1946 that:

> Africans are one. Out of the heterogeneous tribes, there must emerge a homogeneous nation. The basis of national unity is the nationalistic feeling of the Africans, the feeling of being Africans irrespective of tribal connections, social status, educational attainment or economic class. This nationalistic feeling can only be realized in and interpreted by a national movement of which all Africans can be members. (No Sizwe: 58)

While these sentiments were considerably more Africanist than those which the ANC had traditionally subscribed to and while they implied a somewhat different attitude towards white participation in the movement, they nonetheless left firmly intact the notion that separate groups would have to pursue separate interests. Lembede had gone on to say:

> Cooperation between Africans and other non-Europwans on common problems and issues may be highly desireable. But this occasional cooperation can only take place between Africans as a single unit and other non-Europeans as separate units. Non-European unity is a fantastic dream which has no foundation in reality. (No Sizwe: 58)

Eventually, the differences between some of the Youth League's members and the parent organization grew so pronounced that a new, independent organization - the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) - split away in 1958.

But before that happened, several important chapters in the history of South Africa were written. Foremost among them was the proclamation of apartheid as the official government policy. In 1948, a re-united Afrikaner Nationalist Party had won a parliament-

ary majority on an explicit promise to install a thorough-going and rigid system of white racial superiority. While white supremacy had always been the unwritten law of the land and while many legislative acts had codified racial inequality, apartheid was designed to insure that there would be no loopholes in the fabric of white power. The early years of apartheid set the stage for a renewal of popular protest.

The ANC launched its new program of protest actions in May of 1950. When the first protests were met by police opposition and resulted in eighteen deaths, the ANC called for a day of mourning on June 26th. Ever since, that day has been celebrated as South African Freedom Day. And on June 26th of 1952, the 'Defiance Campaign' was begun. People openly violated laws enforcing segregated public facilities in a fashion very similar to the method which the Civil Rights movement in the United States would use almost ten years later. Thousands went to jail and a new period of opposition to white supremacy was ushered in.

The Freedom Charter

In 1955, the ANC called for a Congress of the People to be held on Freedom Day near Johannesburg. A large meeting overwhelmingly adopted the Freedom Charter, probably the single most influential document of the liberation movement. The Charter not only opposed the current state of affairs in the country but also held out a vision of a new society. Under a clause headlined 'The people shall govern,' the delegates proclaimed that:

> Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws; all people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country; the rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex; all bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

And, under a clause titled 'All national groups shall have equal rights,' they declared:

> There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races; all people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs; the preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime; the people shall share in the nation's wealth! All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.
> (See The Freedom Charter)

The Charter was ratified by the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured Peoples' Organization, the Congress of Democrats (composed of individuals of European descent) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. Since that time, those organizations have been more or less united in the Congress Alliance although the ANC is, in effect, the umbrella organization. A year after the adoption of the Charter, over a hundred leaders of those groups were arrested and charged with treason. Their trial lasted for four years and, even though they were eventually acquitted, the ability of the organizations to function openly was severely restricted.

The PAC

In spite of the ANC's conviction that the Charter represented a milestone in the South African struggle, its adoption brought to a head many of the long-standing disputes between some of the Youth League members and the parent organization. These disputes principally revolved around the role of white opponents to apartheid in the policy-making of the Congress Alliance. Youth Leaguers specifically charged that the Charter reflected the political views of the South African Communist Party.

At the inaugural convention of the PAC, Robert Sobukwe, one of its early leaders, argued that:

> We wish to emphasize that the freedom of the African means the freedom of all in South Africa, the European included, because only the African can guarantee the establishment of a genuine democracy in which all men will be citizens of a common state and will live and be governed as individuals and not as distinctive national groups.

Therefore, he said:

> We reject both apartheid and so-called multi-racialism as solutions to our socio-economic problems. Apart from the number of reasons and arguments that can be advanced against apartheid, we take our stand on the principle that Afrika is one and nobody, I repeat, nobody has the right to balkanize our land.

In other words, the PAC was charging that the Freedom Charter had, in effect, endorsed one of the ideas essential to apartheid - the idea that there were different legitimate national or racial groups. Instead,

> Against multi-racialism we have this objection, that the history of South Africa has fostered group prejudices and antagonisms, and if we have to maintain the same exclusiveness, parading under the term of multi-racialism, we shall be transporting to the new Afrika these very antagonisms and conflicts. Further, multi-racialism is in fact a pandering to European history and arrogance. It is a method of safeguarding white interests, implying as it does, proportional representation irrespective of population figures. In that sense it is a complete negation of democracy. To use the term 'multi-racialism' implies that there are such basic insuperable differences between the various national groups here that the best course is to keep them permanently distinctive in a kind of democratic apartheid. That to us is racialism multiplied, which probably is what the term connotes. (No Sizwe: 116-117)

There was a good deal of bitterness in the disputes and much of it remains to this day. In the early years of the PAC's existence, its hostility towards the ANC's relationship to communism was usually intended to be a criticism of the ANC's relationship to the Communist Party but, at other times, it represented a more general philosophical/political critique. In any case, the PAC itself eventually developed a political stance that also foresaw a socialist solution to the South African situation. Indeed, when the PAC won the favor of the Communist

Party of China, it became a proponent of the notion that the ANC was the hopeless captive of a Moscow-dominated, 'revisionist' CP and was, therefore, not 'communist' enough.

Sharpeville and sabotage

One of the earliest indications of the organizational rivalry came in 1960. The ANC had planned a major campaign against the pass laws - to begin at the end of March. But a little more than a week before the planned starting date, the PAC initiated its own 'pass ive resistance' campaign. At Sharpeville, a Black township near Johannesburg, hundreds of PAC supporters were attacked by the police and many were killed or wounded, "most of whom, characteristically, were hit in the back while running away." (Davidson: 269)

Moves and counter-moves came fast and furious. Sobukwe and other PAC leaders were jailed. Protests occurred throughout the country. On March 30, the government declared a state of emergency. Two thousand ANC members were detained and many thousands more were arrested and imprisoned. On April 8, the ANC and PAC were declared 'unlawful organizations.' The leaders of those organisations who had escaped arrest went underground and began preparations for what eventually became a clandestine strategy of selective sabotage.

But, before those chapters were written, apartheid's strategists changed some of the rules of the game. In a 1961 referendum, white voters approved the establishment of a republic, thereby severing all ties with England. Votes were cast largely along the lines of the language groups - Afrikaners voting for the republic and English-speakers against. Such a 'declaration of independence' allowed the government an even freer hand in the implementation of its policies. England would no longer serve as a court of last resort for the grievances of apartheid's victims.

Nonetheless, the ANC's armed struggle strategy was carefully calculated to exploit the broader international reaction to the events at Sharpeville. Protests had taken place in many countries and large amounts of capital had been withdrawn from the country in the aftermath. In addition to its police/military crisis, the South African government was thrown into a serious financial dilemma. Without international support and investment, the house of cards trembled.

The ANC hoped to shake the table sufficiently that the house would fall down. In a 1964 trial for sabotage and conspiracy, Nelson Mandela was quite frank about the ANC's perspective:

> The initial plan was based on a careful analysis of the political and economic situation of our country. We believed that South Africa depended to a large extent on foreign capital and foreign trade. We felt that planned destruction of power plants, and interference with rail and telephone communications, would tend to scare away capital from our country, make it more difficult for goods from the industrial areas to reach the seaports on schedule, and would in the long run be a heavy drain on the economic life of the country, thus compelling the voters of the country to reconsider their position. Attacks on the economic lifelines of the country were to be linked with sabotage on government buildings and other symbols of apartheid. These attacks would serve as a source of inspiration to our people. In addition, they would provide an outlet for all those people who were urging the adoption of violent methods and would enable us to give concrete proof to our followers that we had adopted a stronger line and were fighting back against government violence. In addition, if mass action was successfully organized, and mass reprisals taken, we felt that sympathy for our cause would be roused in other countries, and that greater pressure would be brought to bear on the South African government. (Woods: 37-38)

Remarkably, that strategy had little or nothing to say about the development of a mass popular movement within South Africa itself. Indeed, to the extent that the sentiments of the people inside are considered, it is largely a consideration of persuading them that the ANC has become sufficiently militant - presumably to retain their loyal support in the face of challenges from forces such as the PAC. Internal protest, as such, was to be subordinated to the cultivation of international outrage. Selected sabotage and the establishment of a world-wide network of support became the defining characteristics of the ANC's organizing work for almost two decades. And judged by the effectiveness with which the ANC carried out those tasks, its strategy must be deemed a success. What remains problematical is the relationship that such successes had to the development of the internal movement.

Umkonto We Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC, has successfully attacked some of the most sensitive military and economic institutions of the South African state. While the government spared no expense in protecting its institutions or in infiltrating the ANC, it was not able to put a halt to those attacks - at least not until it concluded a series of accords with the Angolan and Mozambican governments (in 1984) which effectively denied the ANC the rear bases that it had been relying on.

At the same time that the ANC won world-wide recognition and support, the South African regime enjoyed considerable success in carrying off its plans throughout the 1960's (a boom period for the South African economy) - at least insofar as that could be measured by the level of popular activity against it. In 1962, its security forces captured Mandela and he was later sentenced to life imprisonment along with other ANC leaders.

The booming economy also allowed the government to expand its armed forces - in spite of some half-hearted international attempts to frustrate such an expansion.

> The military budget rose from an equivalent of $62 million in 1960 to $168 million in 1962. In 1963 the UN sought to apply an arms embargo. This being ineffective, it was followed by further purchases of foreign equipment; in 1964 the military budget stood at $375 million. An arms industry sprang into being, operating chiefly on licenses obtained from a variety of Western Powers; in 1972 the military budget climbed to $479 million, in 1973 to $691 million, and afterwards to more again. (Davidson: 368)

Not even the independence of the nearby countries of Zambia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland between 1964 and 1967 made much of a dent in the apparent ability of the white regime to consolidate its power. Indeed, it eventually adopted some elements of 'independence' into its own internal program. In 1963, the legislature approved the Transkei Constitution Act and paved the way for the 'independence' of that bantustan thirteen years later.

Black Consciousness

A renewal of collective internal resistance to apartheid seemed a distant prospect when a dispute broke out in the National Union of South African Students in 1968 (NUSAS). But, in many ways, the origins of the characteristic ideas and demands of the contemporary popular movement inside South Africa can be discovered in the establishment of the South African Students Organization (SASO) in 1969 as an independent Black group. Prior to that year, Black college students had joined NUSAS, a federation dominated by white English-speaking students from liberal universities. But when NUSAS did not respond to SASO's demands for a new kind of relationship between Black and white students, SASO withdrew. Ironically, this development was first welcomed by the educational authorities since they imagined that it would contribute to a consolidation of the ethnic consciousness that so much of state policy was designed to foster. (Biko,156-158)

SASO was the first organised expression of what has come to known as the Black Consciousness Movement. Its most prominent early spokesperson, Steve Biko, described Black Consciousness thus:

> Basically Black Consciousness directs itself to the black man and to his situation, and the black man is subjected to two forces in this country. He is first of all oppressed by an external world through institutionalized machinery and through laws that restrict him from doing certain things, through heavy work conditions, through poor pay, through difficult living conditions, through poor education, these are all external to him. Secondly, and this we regard as the most important, the black man in himself has developed a certain state of alienation, he rejects himself precisely because he attaches the meaning white to all that is good, in other words he equates white with good. (Woods: 188, emphasis added)

As a result of this direction, the Black Consciousness Movement developed a two-track strategy - on the one hand, opposing the institutions of apartheid, and at the same time building institutions designed to promote Black pride, self-consciousness and solidarity. Although the roots of black consciousness lay among students, it was not long before their ideas found acceptance in a more general audience. In 1971, the Black People's Convention proclaimed:

> The object of the Organisation is to unite the South African Blacks into a Black Political Movement which would seek to realise their liberation and emancipation from both psychological and physical oppression. The Convention shall operate outside the White Government created systems, structures and/or institutions, and shall NOT seek election into these. (Black Peoples' Convention: 13, emphasis in original)

The proponents of black consciousness intended the term 'black' to include not only Africans, but also Coloureds and Asians - all those who were oppressed by apartheid. In that sense, their ideas represented a return to some of the notions of the Non-European Unity Movement but with a new insistence that such unity would be forged in common activity rather than by formal analyses of the situation. And, in the thirty plus years in between, enough had changed in South Africa to make that common activity a genuine possibility.

Black consciousness' challenge to the hegemonic position of the ANC within the organised liberation movement came to international attention in the aftermath of the Soweto uprising of 1976. We will be describing that event and its significance below. For the moment, suffice it to say that the rapid pace of events within South Africa demanded that the ANC reformulate much of its theoretical and practical agenda. On the one hand, it was determined to ward off the upstarts of the black consciousness tendency and, on the other, needed to capitalise on the evidently profound shifts in mass sentiment.

The ANC launched a major campaign to recruit those who fled the country, provided many of them with military training, expanded the targets of its sabotage campaign and began hinting that the day was not too long off when sabotage would be replaced by forms of guerrilla warfare. But, it also turned to the task of creating an organizational infrastructure within the country - no easy task since it remained an 'unlawful organization' and anyone associated with it was liable to arrest.

Meanwhile, the black consciousness organizations got their first experience of sustained governmental repression. Steve Biko was detained and murdered while in police custody. The South African Students Organization and the Black People's Convention were banned. Many activists left the country and many were successfully recruited by the ANC. The arrests and exiles were severe blows to the internal movement. However, in an apparent reversal of previous patterns, the arrests and exiles did not produce a vacuum inside the country. Much of the reason for this can be attributed to a series of organisational decisions of the black consciousness groups.

During his trial, Steve Biko had been asked why he had not run for re-election to the presidency of SASO in 1971. He replied that:

> Our belief was essentially that we must attempt to get people to identify with the central core of what is being said rather than with individuals. We must not create a leadership cult. We must centralize the people's attention onto the real message. (Woods: 223)

That 'real message' of black consciousness found its way into the townships, factories and mines of South Africa through a multiplicity of organisational forms - many of which no longer exist. In comparison to the ANC, the black consciousness activists were in the country, were not necessarily prominent and were experienced in navigating the actually existing political space inside the country. They were not, however, as politically sophisti-

cated as the ANC cadre and had far less in the way of external theoretical and propaganda resources. As a result, much of the international theoretical debate took place with the black consciousness position represented by an empty chair.

For example, in 1979, an article in The African Communist, a publication of the South African Communist Party, criticised Biko's ideas in particular:

> Biko's argument is that the integration of the races is a trap, that it enables white participants to salve their uneasy consciences without losing any of their white privileges, and at the same time prevents the black participants from asserting themselves. Perhaps so, if the reference is to those 'tea-parties at home' type of liberals only. But what of other attempts at integration - the non-liberal attempts, the radical attempts made for example by the African National Congress to build up an alliance with independent white organizations in what came to be called 'The Congress Alliance'?....Or the most radical - and long-lasting - example of racial integration achieved and maintained for over fifty years by the Communist Party? On all this, Biko is silent. ("Fallen Among Liberals:: 22-23)

Although Biko had not, in fact, specifically addressed the role of the ANC or the South African Communist Party in the article being criticized, it is quite clear that he intended his comments on integration to include both the ANC and the Communist Party. He had written:

> We are concerned with that curious bunch of non-conformists who explain their participation in negative terms: that bunch of do-gooders that goes under all sorts of names - liberals, leftists, etc. These are the people who argue that they are not responsible for white racism and the country's 'inhumanity to the black man.' These are the people who claim that they too feel the oppression just as acutely as the blacks and therefore should be jointly involved in the black man's struggle for a place in the sun. In short, these are the people who say that they have black souls wrapped up in white skin.
>
> .....
>
> Nowhere is the arrogance of the liberal ideology demonstrated so well as in their insistence that the problems of the country can only be solved by a bilateral approach involving both black and white. This has, by and large, come to be taken in all seriousness as the modus operandi in South Africa by all those who claim they would like a change in the status quo. Hence the multiracial political organizations and parties and the 'nonracial' student organizations, all of which insist on integration not only as an end goal but also as a means.
>
> .....
>
> Does this mean that I am against integration? If by integration you understand a breakthrough into white society by blacks, an assimilation and acceptance of blacks into an already established set of norms and code of behaviour set up by and maintained by whites, then YES I am against it.
>
> If on the other hand by integration you mean there shall be free participation by all members of a society, catering for the full expression of the self in a freely changing society as determined by the will of the people, then I am with you. (I Write What I Like: 19-26)

The debates and opposing approaches of the ANC and the Black Consciousness organisations represent the two main political currents within the South African movement and we will return to them below.

Soweto

The 1976 rebellion in Soweto, the sprawling Black township outside Johannesburg, signalled to the world the existence of a new militance and determination in the struggle against white supremacy. While it had been preceded some three years earlier by a wave of Black strikes which had actually narrowed the wage gap between white and Black workers, those events escaped widespread international attention. Soweto was different.

The government's Department of Bantu Education had announced that the language of instruction in all Bantu (African) schools in Transvaal would have to be Afrikaans. In response, students in Soweto organised a school boycott. It led to a direct clash with the police:

> ...the school children's demonstration in Soweto on the 16th June 1976 was the outcome of a sustained protest against compulsory instruction in Afrikaans....when 15,000 students conducted a protest march to Orlando Stadium, they were intercepted by police who opened fire on them, the first victim being the thirteen-year old martyr, Hector Petersen. (Mafeje: 18)

Eventually, the students called on the older residents of the townships to join in their struggle by refusing to work. And, in spite of some initial mistrust, workers did just that at the end of August. In Johannesburg, close to 80% of the Black workers struck for three days.

At that point, the police turned to the exploitation of internal differences among the township residents. In Soweto, police encouraged migrant workers, housed in a hostel which had been set on fire by students angry at the refusal of the workers to cooperate with the strike, to attack the students. On August 24th, the second day of the strike, approximately a thousand migrant workers grabbed whatever weapons they could and began threatening students and their supporters. Over the next two days, twenty-one Soweto residents were killed and over a hundred wounded by the migrant workers.

These same migrant workers joined a later work stoppage in September, when they were approached beforehand by the students, but their actions in August brought to the fore a central difficulty facing those combatting the authorities. Why would people who are among the most oppressed (and few are worse off in the townships than the migrant workers) allow themselves to be used to defend the very system that was responsible for their suffering? Mafeje has argued that the actions of the migrant workers can only be understood in terms of their precarious personal positions, their self-identification as Zulus and the on-going ideological and practical activities of Gatsha Buthelezei, the officially re-

cognized Chief of the Zulu people. While the attacks by the hostel dwellers might not have been promoted or sanctioned by Buthelezei's organization, Inkatha kaZulu, they fit into a pattern of such actions wherein the Zulus or some other tribal group are portrayed as acting to protect their tribal interests and opposed to the efforts of those who would unite them with other Blacks.

In spite of the setbacks produced by these internal conflicts, the upsurge quickly spread across the country. While the initial protests in Soweto were in response to an issue that only directly affected African students in the Transvaal, within a couple of months thousands of others not so affected had joined in. So much so that one leaflet issued in Soweto was urging students in that township not to let down their allies in Capetown who had brought the challenge to apartheid into the city of Capetown:

> Countrymen, the liberatory struggle has brought a new base, namely, the shattering of the myth that the Coloureds are more white than black. The killing of many of them in Cape Town and their stand, together with their African brethren to rock the centre of the oldest city, that symbol of white occupation of our country - Cape Town - is the greatest victory and marks another step in the development of a people, namely, common oppression irrespective of degree of intensity has been at last recognised by the Black man. Divide and Rule has been dealt its death blow.
>
> Johannesburg or Soweto, the Capital and the supposed centre of this national drive, has already lagged behind the countryside. ...Are we made of a different metal from them? Surely not, they are mortals like ourselves. But their discontent about the present oppressive structure has made them bold. They burnt buildings, they took possession of what was forcefully raped from them a few centuries ago.....
>
> Police reinforcements were called as far afield as Johannesburg. Therefore we are in the process of selling out the countryside, which we have stirred to revolt, only two months ago. For we fail to keep busy our local police and soldiers to such an extent that they are free to plunder elsewhere. Countrymen, this is not yet the time to retreat. (No Sizwe: 195)

It is probably difficult to overestimate the impact on the apartheid authorities of the young peoples' willingness to confront their armed might. For years, the police had ruled through intimidation, brutality and arbitrary arrest. And the everyday subservience that had been exacted from the masses of Black people had convinced them that such practices were effective. Now, it all seemed to be falling apart. (See Andre Brink, A Rumour of Rain for a remarkable portrait of the white mind-set in the days before Soweto). The typical police response was to shoot first and ask no questions:

> ..... it became common practice for the police to shoot student demonstrators at will. Indeed, in the inquiry conducted by the Cillie Commission, the police admitted to having used 50,000 rounds of ammunition against student demonstrators .....and to having killed a total of 284 and injured about 2000. The press, including the pro-Government Afrikaans newspapers, thought that this was a gross underestimation and that probably the actual figure was thrice as high. While casualties among the police were nil, it is obvious that the police suffered a tremendous shock at the hands of the students who would not be cowed by the usual show of force. (Mafeje: 18)

As with many other moments of mass popular outrage, few had anticipated that Soweto was in the making. While the ANC subsequently attempted to claim much of the organizational credit for the ouburst, it was quite clear that there was little evidence to back that up. Indeed, one internally-based activist specifically criticised the ANC's approach in September of 1976:

> The former South African National Congress should stop misguiding the world, that all achievements done by the black people of South Africa are performed through influences, this not correct its chief officials had skipped the country so, they don't feel the present pinch, how can they claim the latest existence of riots, where were they when children complained about Sister language - Afrikaans! Children must be given their own phame for breaking the 'ICE'! The book containing the latest activities should be written and be used as a textbook throughout the oncoming black schools in South Africa. (No Sizwe: 192)

Book or not, the young people of South Africa learned a great deal from the experience of 1976. And, in many ways, they learned it without the help of most of the formally organized liberation movement. Mafeje has noted that many of the activists were not aware of the formal positions of those organisations and were typically not aware of the differences that existed among them. In the townships, individuals professed membership in one or more of the black consciousness groups but membership was apparently quite fluid and organisational growth was not accorded any special priority. (Mafeje)

The new apartheid

Soweto demonstrated to the world that repression had not extinguished the desire for freedom and justice in the people of South Africa. While some greeted that news with jubilation, others packed their bags to come to the assistance of the government in the development and implementation of what can only be described as a counter-revolutionary strategy.

To have any hope of success, such a strategy demanded a new labor policy, a new approach to domestic collaborators, a revamped governmental structure, a re-worked consensus among whites, a new balancing act in the whole of southern Africa and a new cultivation of international sympathy and support. A tall order in quiet times. An almost impossible order in southern Africa in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

For the rebellions of 1976 had followed, with noticeable speed, the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique. The liberation movements now had bases of support on the doorstep of South Africa. But, more importantly, the rebellions had also followed the defeat of a South African invading army in late 1975 by the new government of Angola with the aid of Cuban troops. One can interpret

the successes in Angola and Mozambique not only in terms, therefore, of the rising expectations that they might have encouraged among the people of South Africa but also in terms of a developing realisation that the regime was vulnerable. But, the lessons were there for the learning by both sides in the South African struggle. The regime wasted little time in applying itself to the task.

Labour policy

The revision of apartheid labor policy is summarised and symbolised by the Riekert and Wiehahn reports issued in 1979. The first of the two declared that "discriminatory measures should be avoided as far as possible by not drawing any distinction on the ground of race, colour or sex in legislation or administration rules." But, in case a reader might think that the report meant what it said, you can go on to read that:

> Owing to the potential extent and the nature of the migration of Blacks (Africans) from rural areas to urban areas, serious social and sociological welfare problems will arise in urban areas in South Africa for both the established populations in urban areas, White, Coloured, Asian and Black, and the new entrants, if the migration process is left uncontrolled. (Time Running Out: 89)

While the commission was ratifying the fundamentals of the existing state of affairs, its recommendations were nonetheless significant. These included freer movement for Africans already entitled to live in urban areas, a stricter enforcement of the laws against employers who hire illegal residents, an easing of the most outrageous forms of everyday harassment against African individuals and a renewed emphasis on the fiction that workers from the homelands who travelled to work in 'South Africa' (now probably a million strong) were immigrant workers.

Meanwhile, the Commission of Inquiry into Labour Legislation, chaired by Nic Wiehahn, recommended that the government register independent Black unions, a number of which had established themselves since the strikes in 1973 and proposed an end to the legal reservation of jobs for certain groups. On the other hand, the commission did not recommend the abolition of white-union restrictions on the employment of Blacks.

Since 1980, Black workers have been quick to take advantage of the opportunity for unionisation. Hundreds of unions have been organised throughout the country. Though there are important differences among them, the unions have been united in pressing economic demands against employers, especially in the mining and industrial sectors. Differences over white participation, registration with the government, participation in Industrial Councils, jurisdictional claims and forms of political activity have been debated quite openly. In addition, the unions have served as centers for wide-ranging political discussion and for organising activities outside the trade union framework.

In December of 1985, most of the Black unions came together in a new federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions. This congress is claiming a membership of more than 500,000. However, several unions refused to join. Those refusals earned this commentary by the underground South African Congress of Trade Unions, which is affiliated with the African National Congress:

> Those notable for their absence from the new federation are the Council of Unions of South Africa (Cusa)....and the small black consciousness trade union grouping, the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (Azactu). Cusa and Azactu have indicated that they are anti-racist and cannot support the 'non-racialism' policy of the new federation. Sactu cannot see any substantive difference between 'non-racialism' and 'anti-racist' and does not feel that this should continue to keep Cusa, Azactu and others from joining the new federation. (SACTU Position Paper)

But, according to partisans on the other side, the difference is indeed 'substantive' and is but one reflection of a fundamental cleavage in the contemporary South African movement.

Homelands revisited

While unionisation created expanded opportunities for Blacks to organise as workers rather than as members of one or another of the ethnic groups, the government has pursued its long-term objective of institutionalising the homelands as subordinate, but coherent, political units in order to promote exactly that kind of fragmented ethnic consciousness. While this aspect of their strategy bore a certain formal resemblance to the version introduced as part of the apartheid master plan of the late 40's and early 50's, it also represented something quite different. The homelands were now intended to have some real political and economic substance - not because the South African government wished the Africans well but because only such a substance held out the prospect of a class-based alliance with forces in the African communities. This kind of alliance was new indeed.

As long ago as 1974, Gatsha Buthelezei had advised the government to take the homelands more seriously than they appeared to be doing:

> If the authorities took advantage of the remoteness of a revolution from below at present, to make certain concessions and to move more quickly, the homelands would have greater potential as a basis of a future South Africa....Even if the idea and the system are imposed, the fact that we are prepared to make serious suggestions should be good enough to warrant our being drawn into full participation in decision-making on this policy.

The cost of such collaboration would be the extension of wealth and perhaps some share in power to the non-white elites. No Sizwe insists that these changes are of great significance in understanding the strategy of the apartheid regime and of the dangers that they pose for the liberation movements. He has argued that the package of reforms associated with the last years of Vorster's rule and the entire reign of Botha has been specifically designed to lay the foundation for this new class alliance in support of the existing capitalist state of affairs. In his argument, the white working class will be taught the wisdom of powersharing with a new African bourgeoisie - a bourgeoisie that the South African state, in cooperation with some sectors of the South African economy, will foster in a kind of hothouse fashion.

This African bourgeoisie will, however, be a homelands bourgeoisie.

Not so much because the apartheid regime can't stomach the thought of sharing economic power side by side - although there is probably a good deal of that. But rather because such a bourgeois grouping is intended to provide a significant material basis for the development of new forms of 'national' consciousness among the citizens of the homelands. No Sizwe makes that case by reminding his readers that Afrikaners themselves are the products of a sustained process of economic-political-cultural activity by people who knew what they wanted. And part of that Afrikaner consciousness was forged out of the memories of oppression suffered under British rule. Such memories did not prevent good Afrikaners from becoming good bourgeoisie. But, are there Africans ready and willing to play the parts? The evidence is depressing and convincing.

The South African government has had little difficulty in finding those who, in exchange for payment and the prerogatives of local tyranny, will dance to its tune. For example, presidents Matanzima of Transkei and Sebe of Ciskei have run roughshod over the residents of those 'nations' and have cooperated with the South African security forces in the hunting down of suspected subversives. Sebe even sent thirty of his troops to help out in one of the South African army's sweeps through Namibia. (Resister, October/ November, 1984: 17) And while Gatsha Buthelezei has played hard to get for the South African government by refusing to agree to 'independence' for a homeland in Zululand, he has built Inkatha into little more than a gang - a gang that exacts loyalty through threats and that is prepared to do the bidding of the security forces in the disruption of popular movements and in the promotion of inter-tribal tensions. (See SAMRAF News & Notes, #22)

These particular individuals are not necessarily the ones who will be tapped to become members of the new class. They, nonetheless, reveal the existence of a strata of individuals who can be persuaded that such is an appropriate destiny for them as Africans in the twenty-first century.

But, as much as No Sizwe is concerned about that development, he is probably even more alarmed at a variant scenario:

> All class alliances in South Africa are in a state of flux at the moment. What needs to be stressed is that the development of the productive forces has now faced the dominant classes with a crystal clear historic choice: either to ally themselves with the 'black bourgeoisie' and the 'white working class' to crush the revolution of the urban and rural poor in the hope that, in the ensuing period of calm and stability, they can press ahead with the balkanization and neo-colonisation of the country; or to jettison the albatross of the 'white working class' in favour of an alliance with a petty-bourgeois-led black 'nationalist' movement in the hope that the resultant change will stop short of shattering the basis of capitalism itself. (No Sizwe: 159)

In the latter scenario, the crucial question also revolves around the availability of political forces who will be expected to lead the movement to the point of political power in a unified South African state but who will go no further. Some have suggested that the history of Zimbabwe in the six years since ZANU's victory has provided all the basic elements for such a solution to the South African crisis - a solution that will change precious little in the lives of peasants and workers but that will have the imprimatur of majority rule. A dismal and disappointing prospect that we will examine more closely when we explore the strategic questions dividing the South African movement in 1986.

The whites

The regime has had little to offer its supporters in the working and middle classes. Except, that is, the warning that if they didn't go along, the alternative would be worse. In 1979, P.W. Botha, then Prime Minister and now President of the Republic, advised his followers that they would have to 'adapt or die.' Some, at least, are not yet convinced that dying is the less preferable of the two.

Every announcement of a reform of old-fashioned apartheid brought new outcries from right-wingers. In 1982, for example, Dr. A. P. Treurnicht broke away from the Nationalists with fifteen other extreme right-wingers in parliament to form the Conservative Party of South Africa. At the time, Treurnicht said:

> We reject the idea of an open society and we oppose all political pressure to enforce integration in the social and political spheres and to bring about multi-racialism in South Africa. (SAMRAF News & Notes, May, 1982)

Considering that no one in the Nationalist Party, even the most enlightened of the 'verligte' (as the 'liberal Afrikaners are sometimes called), suggested anything like integration, the good doctor could be considered either crazy or far-sighted. Three years later, the Nationalists voted to end the bans on inter-racial marriages and moved to permit inter-racial political organizations. If Treurnicht was frantic in 1982, he must have been beside himself for much of the last two years. But Treurnicht is not the most extreme of white politicians in these matters. To his right are the members of the Herstigte Nasionale Parte (HNP) who more or less openly proclaim their Nazi sympathies. And there are white resistance groupings, like the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, prepared to take matters into their own hands if the government goes too far. (Africa Confidential: October 30, 1985)

The new dispensation

In 1984, the regime turned to the white electorate for a test vote on its new apartheid. A 'new dispensation' was put forward for approval in a constitutional referendum. The dispensation in question provided for the establishment of two subordinate legislative assemblies for Coloureds and Indians and, at the same time, restructured the South African government by replacing the position of Prime Minister with a more powerful State President. Neville Alexander has argued that the constitutional amendments, in effect, were designed to nullify the possibility of any significant white parliamentary opposition to the Botha program:

> Now the majority of whites, especially the white workers are intransigently and paternalistically opposed to any such 'concession', however illusory it might be. Their racism and their fears of losing their privileged position have made them into an historical road-block, an obstruction to even the modicum of reform which the theorists of the ruling class ac-

knowledge to be necessary for salvaging the system. Parliament represents these people. Consequently, the white parliament has become a brake on progress as defined by Botha, Heunis and company. Parliament, therefore, has to be stripped of this power of blocking 'reform' and, if necessary, it should be eliminated altogether. (31)

The constitutional changes were approved only due to the favorable votes of the English-speaking whites. In Afrikaner districts, the changes were defeated. There are two ways of reading this development. The first is as yet another confirmation of the hopelessly racist views of the Afrikaners. That is, most of the time, hard to argue with. But, the second is as a revealing demonstration of the commitment of English-speaking whites to the regime. This reading goes against the grain of much common-sense wisdom about South Africa to the effect that the English-speakers really are more liberal and, in some fashion, opposed to white supremacy. But no voices in the liberation movement and very few in the entire non-white community urged support of the new constitution as a step towards reform or abolition of apartheid. The entire movement was united in characterizing the referendum and the 'new dispensation' as a charade. When whites voted to support the changes, they were voting to support white rule.

Presumably grateful for the support that it did have, the regime moved forward to carry through with the new legislative scheme. Elections were scheduled, on different days of course, for the Coloured and Indian assemblies. A major governmental effort was mounted to encourage participation by various political formations, to promote the idea that there were campaigns pitting candidates against one another and, most of all, to get out the Coloured and Indian votes. On the face of it, the effort was an almost complete failure.

In spite of coercion and threats to cut off pensions for older people, no more than 20% of those eligible cast votes. Unofficial estimates put the totals at 15%. This failure can be attributed, in large measure, to a united opposition campaign conducted by all the internally based movements. While there had been some early disagreements over the wisdom of encouraging whites to vote against the constitutional changes in the referendum and engaging in other forms of participation that would have indicated opposition to the government's plans, the predominant strategy urged complete abstention.

But, opposition to the government did not stop at abstention. Indeed, the voting more than any other specific governmental action seemed to provoke protest. According to one white opponent of the Nationalists, Di Bishop, "The reforms continue to exclude millions of blacks but they have raised expectations." (Rieder: 170) It seems more likely that, on the one hand, the reforms seemed to generate no expectations at all but that, on the other, they revealed a regime desperate for an effective strategy. Perhaps, the perception of vulnerability emboldened those who confronted the authorities. According to Solidarity News Service, on the first day of polling at least 44 clashes between police and protesters took place. And when protests spread to the townships around Sharpeville,

> The apartheid authorities were caught off guard. They banned the press from entering the area, and hospitals were not allowed to release casualty figures. It was at Sharpeville in 1960 that police fired into a fleeing crowd of people....killing 69 people. This year the 'official' death toll was 80, but other reports claimed over 300 people seriously hurt. (SAMRAF News & Notes, October, 1984)

When Botha was inaugurated, protests once again swept the country. The government banned meetings critical of the government in most of the major cities. As it happened, this order was issued the day before the anniversary of Steve Biko's death and there was virtually no chance that the memorial meetings would not be held. When they were, the police again resorted to shootings and tear gas to break them up.

Why did the government go to all the trouble of implementing this constitutional reconstruction when it fanned the flames of opposition among its own supporters and apparently did so little to activate support among the non-white peoples? Alexander has argued that:

> On the one hand, they have to convince middle-class blacks that it is worth their while to 'go inside'; on the other hand, they have to get middle-class and working-class whites to accept the idea of 'sharing power'. This government strategy has been defined rather nicely as 'trying to find the secret of sharing power without losing control'. The entire purpose of this strategy is to stabilise the capitalist system of white supremacy in South Africa after the destabilising shocks of the period 1974-1980.....
> ....There can be no doubt that the elections helped to achieve the government's purpose of accustoming the white electorate to the idea of sharing power....Newspaper reports, opinion polls and actual practice clearly demonstrate this. (Alexander: 171)

In many ways, the government has attempted to develop and implement a long-range strategy. Not only did the government have a plan for its white supporters and another plan for developing the homelands, it also had a plan for cultivating international support. But, at the same time, the people in the townships and workplaces were working on some plans of their own. As is usually the case with such matters, the plans of the oppressed did not receive widespread coverage in the news media and so the rebellions of the last two years have often been greeted with surprise at the persistence and sophistication of the rebels.

UDF and National Forum

Hundreds of groups had sprung up in the years since Soweto and their members took advantage of whatever space was opened up by the government's actions in the legalisation of unions or the promotion of political activity leading up to the legislative elections. Two national opposition groups formed - the United Democratic Front (UDF), claiming an affiliated membership of almost two million and the National Forum(NF), claiming a smaller total of 600,000. The Front was and is closely identified with the political perspective of the ANC while the Forum represents the current coalescence of the black consciousness groupings. It should be noted, however, that an important component of the Forum is the Cape Action League to which Neville

Alexander belongs. The League cannot be described as a Black Consciousness grouping; usually it is described as socialist.

Both groups were specifically formed to oppose the government's attempt to recruit Indian and Coloured collaborators for its new legislative scheme. As mentioned above, there were some differences in approach to that effort. The Front, which openly proclaims its multi-racial and inter-class character, originally intended to campaign among whites for a no vote on the constitutional referendum. Under pressure from some of its members and from the abstentionist Forum, it ultimately urged a boycott of the entire proceedings.

Since the success of the boycott campaign, both groupings have continued to function inside the country although their members have been subject to frequent arrest and other forms of harassment. By and large, the Front has received the lion's share of publicity within South Africa and especially overseas. Perhaps the only occasion when those identified with the Forum got much play in the news media occurred when members of AZAPO, the Azanian Peoples Organization, protested the visit of Senator Edward Kennedy in January of 1985. That brought the simmering dispute between the two tendencies into the open since Kennedy was in South Africa at the specific invitation of UDF members.

The UDF charged, and the ANC seconded the charge, that AZAPO was acting in collusion with the government since the government was also displeased with Kennedy's visit. AZAPO responded that such a charge was nonsense - that their reason for protesting Kennedy's visit was his position as a prominent representative of imperialist interests and that any solution to the South African dilemma which would win his endorsement would be one that entrenched the rule of domestic and international capital. AZAPO insisted that Kennedy's visit, no matter how unpleasant for the regime, would distract the movement from its central tasks. Such a response was aimed directly at drawing out the implications of the UDF's character as an inter-class formation.

The UDF could not directly confront the AZAPO argument since it, in fact, had members who very much wanted a 'solution' along the lines that Kennedy would presumably prefer. At the same time, however, much of its mass base of support was not especially sympathetic to the idea that a 'solution' which eliminated the legal barbarities of apartheid but left intact the economic barbarities of life for millions of people was what they were risking their lives for. Indeed, there were some groups within the UDF that did not support Kennedy's visit. Even one of the Front's presidents, Oscar Mpetha (currently imprisoned), refused to share a platform with Kennedy when he addressed a UDF rally in Capetown. Instead, their counter-argument was that the UDF welcomed support in the struggle against apartheid from any quarter and that Kennedy had long been a forthright opponent of apartheid and, furthermore, that he could play an important role in the approval of economic sanctions by the US government.

Debate on organisation

While much of the sparring between the two tendencies continues along the lines that were first evident in the mid-1970's, the debate has also been recast as a debate on the proper organisational form for the South African movement. To some extent, this reflected the organisational challenge to the ANC represented by the formation of AZAPO in 1978 as a new and somewhat more politically sophisticated embodiment of black consciousness. In an editorial in Frank Talk, AZAPO hinted at some of its self-conception:

> ...BC takes into account that the central problem in any struggle is to find an antidote to fear. Crushed by the realities of routine, we all hesitate to participate in the liberation struggle. We fear losing our families and friends. We fear wasting energy. AZAPO is a revolutionary movement precisely because it calls for a break with routine, because it demands sacrifice in the present for a better world in the future. No doubt the sacrifice seems real and immediate while the better world appears distant and very uncertain....We must cling to each other with a tenacity that will shock the perpetrators of evil. (Frank Talk, July/August, 1984: 2)

Not exactly a prescription for a dues-paying, monthly-meeting organization.

On the other hand, ANC strategists and those allied with them have articulated the need for a national organisation to hold the reins of the movement - a movement which characteristically demonstrates unrestrained spontaneity and correspondingly narrow breadth of vision. Auret Van Heerden, a member of NUSAS and of the UDF, has argued:

> Precisely because most people are unaware and unpolitcised, the issues which they see as important are likely to be local, specific grievances, which are seldom overtly political, and their demands are unlikely to be political or even progressive. (2)

For him, 'first-level' or local popular organizations have to be linked together with each other and ultimately with a 'second-level' organisation which will provide coordination and political direction:

> If there is not a direct link between these two components of progressive activity, organisations may participate in broader national democratic struggles without the support of their members, and at the same time will not be feeding the political content of those national democratic struggles back into their first-level organisations. (Van Heerden: 22, emphasis added)

It is clear that the United Democratic Front is intended to be just that 'second-level' organisation. And, in many ways, it has been remarkably successful. Its demands have become the rallying cries of the above-ground movement in South Africa; its activities attract thousands of participants; its leaders have emerged as internationally recognized symbols of opposition to apartheid; it has earned the wrath of the government and many of its members are imprisoned - presumably because of the profound threat they pose to the authorities.

But, important questions remain about its contribution to the development of the popular movement and about its plans for that movement. On behalf of the National Forum, Alexander has tried to assess the significance of the UDF:

> The UDF, because of the hundreds of thousands of rands that back

it, has indeed made an impact on the mass movement. Because of the deliberate government policy of harassment of leaders, banning of meetings, detentions, etc., that impact appears to be a radical one in the short term. In fact, of course, the middle-class leadership can at any time use the tradition that has been created to suit its own purposes.

Although Alexander did not tie together all the strands of the argument, I would suggest that the previously cited preoccupation with national leadership and centralised organisation is intimately connected to the class nature of the UDF. Since the UDF cannot argue that it's important and correct for it to have middle class leadership (for reasons that parallel its inability to engage AZAPO frontally in debate over the Kennedy visit), it must instead be argued that the movement needs leadership and organisation. The fact that such leadership and organisation will be invariably provided by middle class individuals and organizations is, in that argument, an unavoidable necessity. At the same time, it is argued that such leadership is representing a cross-class set of interests that are united in opposition to apartheid.

It is, of course, difficult to challenge motives. In matters such as these, class designs can only be detected through an examination of specific organisational decisions and actions - such as the Kennedy visit and, on a different plane, the decision of the ANC to endorse a strategy of ungovernability for the internal movement. In an article in The Nation, Calabrese and Kendall reported that the ANC had decided on a strategy of "'people's war' aimed at turning the townships into 'no-go areas' for white authority." The 'war' would involve attacks on black policemen and township administrators who refused to resign. While many observers have cautioned that not every attack can be credited to the ANC's cadre or even to its influence, few have remarked on the apparent lack of concern for the development of the internal cohesion and self-sufficiency of the township activists.

In many ways, the ANC's approach to governability parallels its approach to the implementation of international economic sanctions and divestment campaigns. Such efforts are designed solely to exacerbate the difficulties experienced by the regime. For them, questions of internal organisation have all been answered - there should be trade union unity, all anti-apartheid organizations should belong to the United Democratic Front, multi-racial groupings are the appropriate organisational vehicle. There is, in other words, little if any need for the development of new organisational patterns which would promote both practical and theoretical activity inside South Africa. The main task for the masses is to keep up the pressure and wait for the government, or at least part of it, to yield to the combined impact of internal and external pressures and to begin dealing directly with the ANC. Thus, their most inclusive political demand at the moment is a call for a national convention of representatives of different groups to discuss a transition to majority rule. (SAMRAF News & Notes, #22)

In contrast, the National Forum has demanded:

> ...the convention of a constituent assembly elected on the basis of one person one vote, at which democratically elected representatives of the nation will decide on a new constitution for Azania. The constituent assembly will not be a gathering of representatives of so-called ethnic groups. It is also not going to be convened by the present government. It is a goal for which we shall have to struggle in the years ahead with even greater dedication than before. (Alexander: 39-40)

Some will insist that the difference is not important - that so long as the people's representatives can take part in the deliberations, the outcome will be progressive. While it might be 'progressive', the content of that oft-cited word remains elusive. The identification of precise meanings and goals, so that all are prepared for unexpected consequences, is a central task facing any movement. This is es pecially the case when a movement is torn apart by internal differences which can be manipulated by government provocateurs.

International responsibilities

Events of the last fifteen years in South Africa have significantly increased the likelihood that the African National Congress will achieve its goal of 'majority rule' in the country. While we cannot predict a timetable for that achievement, the recent treks of various elite individuals and organisations from the white community in South Africa to the headquarters of the African National Congress in Zambia and the frequently reported on proclamations by various corporate leaders should persuade us that at least some on the two sides believe they have some things to talk about. It is also evidenced by the extraordinary public attention given to Mandela. In early summer of 1986, the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons went out of its way to characterise Mandela as perhaps the one person who could put out the rebellion raging across South Africa. And recently, a prominent South African businessman suggested in The New York Times that Mandela could be South Africa's de Gaulle. While the South African government proclaims its willingness to go it alone in the face of near-universal condemnation from abroad, it is nonetheless faced with a business community, both domestic and international, that cannot in fact go it alone and still make money.

An ANC victory would represent a remarkable addition to the post-war wave of African liberation. However, a political victory by the ANC should not be identified as being the same thing as the unqualified victory of all those struggling against apartheid. As this pamphlet has hopefully made clear, the ANC is not the only organised force in the field against white rule and many individuals who are not necessarily affiliated to one organisation or another have contributed to the struggle.

Unqualified and premature endorsements from abroad of the apparent winners will make it more difficult for those who raise different views to obtain a full hearing for their case. And it might very well contribute to the eventual proscription of yet another generation of 'enemies of the people'.

Instead, we should use our resources to support the entire liberation movement in South Africa and to encourage the widest possible debate among the organised, and not so organised, forces in the South African movement. We can only provide that encouragement if we are active in the anti-apartheid movement here because it is here in this country where we can ex-

plain to others that the ANC does not stand alone. And indeed, I believe we can say, without hesitation, that the liberation movement is stronger because it includes a multiplicity of political and organisational forms.

While unity against an enemy is always desirable, premature unity around the political goals and strategies of one organisation can lead to a victory unable to withstand the pressures and strains of the years after victory. For there should be no mistake about it - the determination of the United States to protect its interests in southern Africa will lead it to use all of its economic and military resources to push a Black majority government into the directions it prefers. The new government must be able to count on the support of all of its freedom fighters. And if it is to do that, it must indeed be a government of all of the freedom fighters and not just that of the most powerful organised force.

ASPECTS OF NON-COLLABORATION IN THE WESTERN CAPE 1943-1963

Neville Alexander

Address delivered at the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, for the Conference on the Western Cape "Roots and Realities".

Introduction

The policy of non-collaboration and its offspring, the policy of anti-collaboration, have achieved an almost self-evident status among political activists in South Africa today. In the pre-revolutionary times in which we are living, certain aspects of the physical manifestation or consequence of this policy have given rise to either revulsion, indifference, or exaltation depending on one's political position. At all times, however, acts such as the calculated slaying in recent months, according to police reports of approximately 200 individuals deemed by political activists to be collaborators have inspired awe and led to a profound questioning of means and ends in the political struggle. There is no doubt at all that many of these acts are the consequence of maturing political and socio-economic conditions of heightened class conflict. At the same time, however, it has to be accepted that they are justified and intellectually triggered by the belief in and practice of the policy of non-collaboration by the vast majority of anti-apartheid political activists in South Africa today, irrespective of political tendency.

It is not to these explosive questions, however, that I want to turn your attention. Instead, I want to do what historians normally do, that is, to go back to the origins of social phenomena that are decisively influencing the shape of the present and therefore of the future. The policy of non-collaboration is clearly such a phenomenon. I hope also in the little time at my disposal to prick the bubble of sycophantic "historiography" that is being floated by all manner of circus performers in this field, in that I shall try to demonstrate critically one aspect of the contribution to the national liberation struggle made by the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM). Non-collaboration, of course, has a history since it, too, is subject to the Shakespearean law according to which nothing comes out of nothing!

The caste politics of incorporation

For the first thirty years after the infamous birth of the Union of South Africa, the policy of non-collaboration never featured as a concept or term in the political discourse of the dominant groups among the oppressed and exploited people of this country. In order to understand cleary why this was so, it is necessary at this stage to offer at least an interim definition of this policy. In its classical formulation, it described a course of action whereby the oppressed people refused to work the instruments of their own oppression. It represented the recognition of the irreconcilability of the interests of the oppressor and the oppressed and therefore excluded any "unprincipled combinations with the rulers and their agents."

Now, even a cursory study of the first few decades after the Act of Union demonstrates that the material conditions for the popularisation of such a policy did not obtain. The Bambatha uprising of 1906 had been the last attempt on the part of the colonially conquered poeple to resist conquest and exploitation by military means. All serious and systematic armed resistance was stamped out for fifty years. The defeated chiefly leadership and the new breed of missionary-trained black intellectuals (teachers, preacher, a few lawyers and doctors) and a handful of small-to-medium scale black business people wwere convinced by the superior force of the colonial-imperialist masters and of the white and black allies that they would have to seek the political kingdom not in attempting to restore the status quo ante but by rising up within the hierarchical structures of the new racial capitalist order.

In this, they were behaving just as their counterparts in other African and Asian colonies had behaved. There was, however, one vital difference, viz., the fact that unlike the African middle class of the other European colonies in Africa, the black middle class in South Africa could not automatically inherit the colonial state once they had "matured" in terms of the tenets of British colonial policy after World War 2. Indeeed, in South Africa, it was the white (largely Afrikaner) middle class that was destined to inherit the colonial state for reasons that now need no elaboration. Viewed in this historical perspective, therefore, the pathetic caste politics of almost the entire black leadership of the first thirty years after Union can be said to have consisted in futile attempts to persuade the British crown and its semi-colonial political representatives in Pretoria and Cape Town that they were worthy of being incorporated into the well tried British system of exploitation within a bourgeois democratic framework.

This, in essence, is what every speech and every article of a Jabavu, a Seme, a Xuma, a Gandhi, an Abdurahman, a Gow or a Golding reduced to. Quite logically, therefore, the history of this period right into the early 50's is in one sense the history of the disillusionment of the black middle class.

Sporadic class struggles in this period by working-class people or by peasants and semi-peasants took place in spite of the abject petitionist politics of

the colour caste-orientated, communalist leadership of the African National Congress, the Natal Indian Congress and the African People's Organisation. For a few years, the ICU showed that a different kind of radical mass-based politics was possible until its leadership, too, succumbed to the prevalent middle-class, incorporationist politics. The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in all these years played a contradictory and controversial role that has yet to be assessed in a manner that does not paint it as Lucifer on the one hand or the Archangel Gabriel on the other hand.

Within the nationalist movement, the non-cooperationist tactis of Gandhi deriving from his philosophy and method of Satyagraha undoubtedly constitute one source from which later non-collaborationist ideas and sentiments took their origin. This was an essentially Hindu idea according to which absolute chastity and truthfulness free the mind from the influence of oppression and evil. The spiritual freedom generated from within, i.e., from physical and mental discipline, makes possible deliberate defiance and disobedience. Since "Ahimsa" (universal love) is an integral part of Satyagraha, however, the method forbids all recourse to violence. (See Anon 1935: 8). In this respect, it is the very antithesis of the policy of non-collaboration and, indeed, an expression of a reformist, anti-revolutionary strategy. Lest I be misunderstood, let me stress that this does not imply that civil disobedience or passive resistance tactics are necessarily and always anti-revolutionary.

Gandhi was, like all the other middle-class leaders of the time, limited by his perception of his ethnic and class interests. His concern for the Indian community in South Africa and his love-hate relationship with his British masters led him infallibly to return to India where, as is well known, he helped to determine the shape of things to come in that subcontinent. Besides Gandhi, only Dr. Abdurahman in the framework of nationalist politics before the outbreak of World War 1, when he was still projecting himself as a radical socialist, occasionally and episodically put forward ideas that can be said to have prefigured later ideas of non-collaboration (See Simons 1976: 210-211).

Origins of non-collaboration

According to the author of one of the very few systematic treatments of parts of its own history by the Non-European Unity Movement, it was the experience of the European anti-fascist resistance, the struggle against imposition of Nazi rule that can be seen as the main fount of the policy of non-collaboration:

> "This arena taught and re-taught the lessons of non-collaboration with the oppressor, the need and the advantage of resistance where the opposing force is and seems likely to remain, from a military and police point of view, far stronger than the resistance. How resistance can be, and often has to be, secret. It taught also how important the collaborators were to the enemy and how the war against them had to be as hard and unremitting as the war against the Nazis and their Gestapo. It is indicative of the significance of this area of education that Vid Kun Quisling, the head of the Norwegian puppet and collaborationist government during the Nazi occupation of Norway contributed his name to those, even in South Africa, who had acquired infamy and popular hostility by their collaboration. In 1943 the C.A.C. (Coloured Advisory Council) collaborators were branded as Quislings by the Anti- C.A.D. Movement and the term quisling is still today an important weapon in the Non-Collaborationist arsenal." (Mokone 1982: 20)

Alas, the irony of history calls for a parenthetical comment on this last point. In 1980, when some secondary school students in Grassy Park started a study group in order to come to grips with the earth-shaking events that were taking place around them and in which they were more than willing but lamentably uniformed participants, they considered inviting a number of people reputed to know something about the history of the political movement in South Africa in order to give them some guidance. The name of a certain teacher in that particular group area was mentioned and one wisp of a girl exclaimed aghast that he would not do. When asked why, she answered coyly: "He still uses words like Quisling!" I know that this sounds like an apocryphal story tailored to suit the occasion but I can vouch for its authenticity.

On a more serious note: there can be no doubt that World War 2 provided the exponents of the policy of non-collaboration with a golden opportunity to popularise the policy. It is also beyond question that the Anti- C.A.D. Movement was the main instrument of poularisation. However, it is necesssary to emphasise that the policy of non-collaboration in South Africa and in the Western Cape in particular had vital antecedents of both a theoretical and historical character. While I respect the caution of the editors of the Educational Journal of the TLSA (in which Mokone's series was printed) given the ruthlessness of the state, I believe that exaggerated self-censorship in some circles within the liberation movement has given rise to the grotesque situation in which organisations and tendencies such as the NEUM have dug their own graves, historiographically speaking. Because of a paranoiac fear of exposing the fact that some of the ideas, policies and founding persons of the NEUM can be traced back to revolutionary Marxist groups that existed in the 1930's, a blanket of silence has been thrown over much of the most important aspects of the origins and development of the national liberation movement in South Africa. One of the less felicitous consequences of this has been that all manner of academic and not-so-academic historians of the struggle for liberation have had a field day by default and have produced some of the most fantastically sectarian, one-sided and myopic so-called histories of the liberation movement especially for the period +/- 1924 - +/- 1964. Much of this historical falsification of our struggle has become unquestionable canonised fact for the younger generations, a deplorable fate that could have been averted if more leading members of the NEUM had been more willing to co-operate with genuinely motivated research scholars or had themselves published more but less contortedly defensive works on the history of our struggle. This attitude to history is significantly related to the politics of the NEUM generation of the '30's and the '40's as I shall indicate presently.

Nobody, for instance, can be endangered to-day if one revealed the fact which

is undoubtedly known to the police, that one of the main impulses for the eventual formation of the NEUM came from members or supporters of the Sparticist faction of the Lenin Club, which was a Left Oppositionist, anti-Stalinist grouping that had broken away from the CPSA shortly after the exiling of Trotsky from the Soviet Union. Whether this fact confirms the allegation that the NEUM and all its numerous offshoots were, therefore, "Trotskyist" is too contemptible a question to occupy a generation that has witnessed the ignominious exposure of the intellectual (and other) atrocities of both Stalinist and fascist manipulators. Fewer and fewer self-respecting political activists today believe that one can place an entire social movement on the political defensive by labelling it "Trotskyist."

In any case, the only reason why this reference to some of the revolutionary Marxist origins of the NEUM is essential is to get back to an important strand in its thinking on non-collaboration; it is not my intention to write some kind of "secret history of the NEUM." That, I am sure, the South African police, however inexpertly, have already done.

The Marxists in what later became the NEUM were opposed to the collaborationist and petitionist politics of the Jabavu-Abdurahman era for the same reasons that revolutionary Marxists throughout the capitalist world have opposed reformist strategies. Rosa Luxemburg's classical denunciation of (Bernstein's) first major revision of the ideas of Marx makes the point clearly:

> "...People who pronounce themselves in favor of the method of legislative reform in place of and in contradistinction to the conquest of political power and social revolution, do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the same goal, but a different goal. Instead of taking a stand for the establishment of a new society they take a stand for surface modification of the old society. If we follow the political conceptions of revisionism, we arrive at the same conclusion that is reached when we follow the economic theories of revisionism. Our program becomes not the realization of socialism, but the reform of capitalism; not the suppression of the system of wage labor, but the diminution of exploitation, that is, the suppression of the abuses of capitalism instead of the suppression of capitalism itself."

Anyone who reads the criticism of the politics and tactics of the black middle-class and tribal leadership in the pages of The Spark, which was the organ of the Sparticists from 1935 to 1937, cannot doubt that many of the people who later founded the Anti-CAD Movement and the NEUM rejected the leadership of the Jabavus and the Abdurahmans for the same reasons that Rosa Luxemburg in this passage rejected Bernsteinism. The essence of their position was the need to formulate and to translate into practice a policy of class independence as opposed to a policy of class collaboration. For the Marxists in the NEUM, the policy of non-collaboration, therefore, had a profound meaning in that it represented the path by which the workers and the peasants would be taught the politics of class independence. For, it should be understood, that the "Non-Europeans" referred to in the name NEUM consisted of (poor and landless) peasants, rural workers, urban workers, a tiny layer of petty bourgeois and a few aspirant bourgeois individuals. By uniting the "Non-Europeans", so some of the leadership of the NEUM believed, they were forging the classical alliance between the workers and the peasants that had led to victory in the Soviet Union and which was then being consummated successfully in China. The policy of non-collaboration was conceived as a strategy to keep out of the politics of the national movement of the oppressed any ruling-class influence whether from the right or from the so-called Liberal left. We shall have occasion to examine presently some of the problematic implications of the policy as translated into practice. The consciousness of the relevance of the policy derived from Marxian dialectics is silhouetted, for example, in Hosea Jaffe's assessment of the policy after the first 10 years of the NEUM.

> "...The policy of non-collaboration springs from the...basic fact... (of) the absolute irreconcilability between the Herrenvolk and the exploited and oppressed Non-Europeans. Non-collaboration expresses and formulates and gives guidance (sic) to this reality, to the fact that exploitation and oppression make collaboration between exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, something which is always detrimental to the oppressed and beneficial to the oppressor, and which preserves the misery of the people, while non-collaboration expresses and helps the daily, almost invisible struggle betweeen the masters and slaves in South Africa as everywhere else in the imperialist-dominated world." (Jaffe 1953: 22)

Historically, the policy of non-collaboration was tried, as it were, in organisations and movements such as the National Liberation League, the All African Convention (AAC) and the Non-European United Front, all of which operated spasmodically before 1943. In later years, it was particularly to the crucible of the AAC in the years 1935-1942 which both proponents and opponents of the policy pointed in justifying their respective positions. In the today virtually unknown pages of The Spark, we find what is probably the first formulation of the policy of non-collaboration in the concrete circumstances of South Africa. On the eve of the second conference of the All-African Convention in June 1936, the editors subjected the Convention to a searching historical and sociological analysis. Among many other statements which are as relevant and as valid today as they were then, the editors wrote

> "The Convention cannot under these circumstances accept the Natives Representation Bill as binding for the Bantu, cannot consent that any Bantu should assist in carrying out its provisions, should in any way aid in its enforcement. But it will be necessary for the Convention to point out that voting on a common roll in the Cape and voting in the "elections" for the Native Representative Council would mean that the Bantu were accepting the position and submitting to the dictates of the tyranny. The only way in which the Bantu now can make their voice heard is by persistently refusing to co-operate, refusing to assist. This point is of the utmost importance. The Convention will have to make up its mind." (Anon. 1936: 4)

In a series of articles over the next few months, the contributors to The

Spark exposed the NRC as a fraud and a dummy institution, called on the African people to boycott it and instead to create strong local and national organisations. In particular, they called on the people to reject the compromisist leadership of Jabavu, the chiefs and the ANC and to make the AAC into a people's assembly. (See especially The Spark 2(11)6-8).

Even the subsequent bitter polemics between the NEUM on the one hand and the ANC-CP on the other hand are prefigured in these pages. One of the earliest examples of this fateful feud will have to suffice:

> "And then there is the line of the Communist Party, the Stalinists, or rather, the new line of the Stalinists in conformity with the class collaboration policy of the People's Fronts. It is sad enough to think that this once revolutionary party has sunk as low as to go into a People's Front which excludes the Non-Europeans, which removed from its Agenda the item, "Native Policy", because, in the words of Mr E S Sachs, "a united front between black and white at this juncture was impossible" ("Forward", 9/10/1936). Can it surprise us that they are approving the line of Messrs Msixang and Selope Thema without adding any word of criticism...? Such criticism would endanger the Bantu People's Front. Yet in an "Umsebenzi"" editorial, written before the Conference took place, we find an apologetic exposition of their line. They reject the boycotting of the Council and the Electoral Colleges, and advocate that the African Convention should make use of the political avenue opened by the Bills. In other words, they also have succumbed to the bluff of the Government and its agents concerning the Council. They have fallen into line with Jabavu and the clique." (Anon. 1936: 8)

The CPSA was pilloried as a new breed of liberals who patronised the black people and distracted them from the real task of building strong working-class organisations by helping to tie them to the apron-strings of the discredited and corrupt petty-bourgeois leadership of the ANC - APO - NIC.

It is now a matter of history that the traditional ANC/Jabavu leadership of the AAC chose the path of compromise and collaboration and that the young leftists in the AAC had to rebuild the organisation laboriously until by 1943, it was ready to enter into an alliance with federal organisations representative of the Coloured and Indian communities respectively. A history of the AAC until 1950 was written by IB Tabata in his book The Awakening of a People.

The Anti-Coloured Affairs Department Movement (Anti-Cad)

Let us return, however, to the theory and practice of non-collaboration in the Western Cape specifically. Some of the men and women who were attempting to steer the AAC in a revolutionary direction were also among the group of brilliant intellectuals whose exertions gave rise to the Anti-CAD Movement in 1943. We need not deal with the history of this decisive event since both Mary Simons (1976) and Sarah Mokone (1982) have sketched that history. A useful documentary source for the period is Hugo (1978: 627-678). We should, however, underscore the vanguard role played by the New Era Fellowship (NEF), founded in Cape Town in 1937.

The coincidence of World War II fought by the Allies against the barbarism of the Nazis and the announcement by General Smuts's Minister of the Interior, Harry Lawrence, in February 1943 of the setting up of a Coloured Advisory Council (CAC) and a special Coloured section of the Department of the Interior which was supposed to become a separate Coloured Affairs Department on the lines of the then Native Affairs Department produced conditions that were exceptionally favourable to mass political mobilisation and organisation. The NEF militants immediately took the lead in calling together an Anti-CAD conference to which all bona fide organisations of the oppressed people in the Western Cape were invited. An Anti-CAD Committee was formed based on a federal structure (as with the AAC) and consisting of representatives of many different kinds of organisations.

For some four years, these young activists, consisting largely of teachers, students, a few doctors and lawyers and a sprinkling of semi-skilled workers and artisans, penetrated virtually every kind of organisation of the people ranging from trades unions to sports organisations to teachers' organisations, Church groups, cultural societies, students' organisations, benefit societies, coon carnival and Christmas Choir bands and many more. The mainstay of this movement was and remained the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA) which, from 1937 onward, had been put on "the new road" of anti-collaboration by the young men and women who entered it from the NEF and made life so impossible for the conservative reformist leaders that they broke away to form the Teachers' Educational and Professional Association (TEPA), the forerunner of the Cape Teachers Professional Association.

For a few bref years, a mass movement flourished in the Western Cape as it had never done before. The Anti-CAD movement applied the weapon of the boycott with devastating effect and literally ruined the careers and reputations of the (mainly) men who dared to work the CAC or pleaded for a CAD. The Anti-CAD attitude was eloquently expressed in an article in The Torch of 6.1.1947.

> "The only way to make any impression upon the ruthless rulers is to show that we mean business from now on. This could very well be the New Year resolution of the oppressed millions and their leaders in this country: to bring the ruling class to their knees in their atttitude towards the nine million Non-Europeans, by a policy of Non-Collaboration. And it is a resolution that can and must be carried out. Our resolution not to collaborate with the rulers on any issue designed to segregate and repress us politically must be made part of our conscious daily life. As such it can become pretty forceful. Our organisation and we as individuals should learn the lesson of the boycott of all fake forms of representation, whether by communal election or merely by nomination... By completely boycotting such bodies and exposing the few quislings who still adhere to them, we shall be doing our people and our cause the greatest service at this stage. We shall thereby be rendering the segregationist machinery of the rulers impotent. And that is one of our chief tasks in the liberatory struggle. This is the very opposite pole to assisting in the carrying out of the segregation measures of the rulers. This is the very

essence of Non-Collaboration." (Printed in Hugo 1978: 653- 654)

Some of the more immediate and undisputed features of the political exertions of the Anti-CAD and NEUM in the Western Cape may be summarised as follows:

1. There is no doubt that largely as the result of NEUM propaganda and countrywide organisation, the NRC and white MP's for "natives" elections were progressiveiy boycotted until by the early 50's fewer than 10% of eligible voters could be persuaded to cast a vote.

2. The creation of the CAD was postponed until the NP took power in 1948 to push ahead with single-minded ruthlessness.

3. The CAC was stillborn. The boycott of this institution gave rise to the most intense struggle ever conducted within the Coloured community. Collaborators and quislings were black-listed and subjected to a personal boycott in one of the most effective campaigns of its kind anywhere in the world.

4. The vast majority of literate black people in the Western Cape became politicised. The debilitating barriers of the slave mentality were gradually broken down and a new generation of young workers (artisans) and intellectuals (clerks, etc.) left the (then) few high schools of the Western Cape.

5. The TLSA became a power in the land, an organisation with branches in remote villages and dorps of the Cape Province. At its height, the TLSA embraced more than 2/5ths (two-fifths) of all Coloured teachers in the country. Because of the leverage which teachers then had in the community, this was an inestimably important fact of political organisation.

6. Hardly any young intellectual in the Western Cape entered political life but through the portals of the NEUM. Even its opponenets and rivals (mainly from the conservative "Colouredist" minority and from the ranks of the CPSA) could not escape its all pervasive influence.

7. A network of relatively strong organisations was created throughout the Cape Province and even further afield. Until 1950-51, there was, indeed, little to choose between the Congress movement and the Unity movement, as far as numerical strength was concerned.

On 27.10.1959, The Torch, in discussing the attempted formation of the Union Council of Colored Affairs (the Nats' version of Smuts's CAC), could justly boast in its own inimitable and vigorous style that

> "It is to the great credit of the Non-White oppressed that the Herrenvolk have to use the most extreme political trickery and blackmail to get their new CAC going. This is no accident. The unified struggle of the Non-White oppressed under the banner of the Non-European Unity Movement has made the critical difference in our own times. No quisling who served on the NRC from 1936 to 1948, no quisling who served on the CAC from 1943 to 1948 will ever live down the public shame that he earned. The boycott - social, personal, political and economic - sliced these leeches off the Non-Europeans' organisations with shattering effect. On this occasion, when certain quislings were asked to serve on the new CAC, their wives stepped in and warned them not to invite the boycott into their homes. They would not stand for it." (Printed in Hugo 1978: 674)

Problems of non-collaboration

But let us turn now to some of the major problems in the theory and practice of non-collaboration. In so far as the policy of non-collaboration was directed against the reactionary and reformist leadership of the Jabavu- Abdurahman era it was, of course, relatively unproblematical. There is, indeed, no sense in considering in detail the criticism of this policy as it was expressed by these gentlemen in imitation of their liberal mentors and paymasters of the Ballinger-Heaton Nicholls-Hofmeyer stripe. Suffice it to say that already in the mid-thirties The Spark was exposing the hollowness of arguments such as the claim that unless so-called 'progressives' filled these dummy bodies the government would find reactionaries to do so or the even more disingenuous idea that inside these bodies it would be easier to make them unworkable than outside them (see, eg., The Spark 2(9)5). These arguments were then already simply brushed aside as being

> "just another hopeless illusion of the Reformists, like the illusion of a peaceful Revolution, the illusion of parliament, majortity rule, education, League of Nations, pacifism, disarmament, and the rest."

In all its invective against the collaborationist groupings, the Anti-CAD activists, like their predecessors in the AAC and in the WPSA did not hesitate to accuse the men and women concerned of base venality and callous petty-bourgeois selfishness, showing them up as people in quest of soft jobs, and empty status at the expense of the working people.

Much of the vitriol of the Anti-CAD was reserved for the Communist Party simply because its members, as people who claimed to be revolutionaries and Marxists, could not but be conscious of the fraudulence of any policy of "working from within" dummy bodies. It was simply accused of the most callous opportunism and spinelessness. Examples of such criticism are legion but Mokone's concise and unreserved reckoning off with the CP (see Mokone 1982: 61-62) could scarcely be equalled for effortlessly sustained hostility. The Anti-CAD Movement, like the AAC before it, was particularly hostile to the neo-liberal tactic of putting up White CP members to stand as "Native Representatives" and later as "Coloured Representatives" to the all-white parliament. Behind this particular apparently tactical diference lay amongst other things the vast question of the conceptualisation of the people of South Africa, i.e., whether they did or could constitute one nation or whether they were and would continue to be different "ethnic" or "national" groups.

For their part, the Communist Party adherents refused to consider the question of non-collaboration as more than a tactical one. They insisted that it was a useless tactic if it did not get the support of all the people and refused to buy the AAC - Anti-CAD line that it was necessary to accept a minority position temporarily. In the words of The Spark 2(11)6

> "Yet most surely revolutionary leadership does not consist in pander-

ing to the masses when the masses must be torn away from what is definitely the wrong road. This is what we have been endeavoring to do, and will continue to do, whether it proves "popular" or not. We are not out to win cheap effects, we are not after coveted posts and vote-catching."

As against this, one may note the typical reply of CP activists, for example, in a letter from Moses Kotane to Professor Z K Matthews on 8.5.1948:

> "Their 'non-collaboration' policy is in one sense a cover or pretext for not doing any practical work. While I am strongly for the boycotting of the inferior institutions set up to perpetuate the oppression and exploitation of the African people, I nevertheless do not agree that the boycott should be carried out without regard to the support we have for it."
> (Cited in Karis and Carter 1979: 387-388)

In the Western Cape, the hostility between these two positions reached its zenith in 1958 during the elections for the first (white) "Coloured representatives" held in terms of the Separate Representation of Voters' Act of 1956. The South African Coloured People's Congress (CPC), a member of the Congress Alliance decided to support one Piet Beyleveld, a (white) member of the (white) Congress of Democrats (COD) as a "Coloured representative" in spite of the opposition to this tactic from a sizeable section of its own membership, most of whom were subject to grassroots pressure emanating from the vigorous boycott propaganda and mobilisation of the NEUM. The result was a disastrous defeat for SACPO and a resounding victory for the boycott. Of the 19 138 Coloured voters on the revised Coloured voters role (compared with 47 849 still on the "common" voters roll in 1954) under 20% voted. Of these votes, Beyleveld received a bare 813 as against Abe Bloomberg's 2 138! (see Cape Time 9 April 1958). By 1963, incidentally, only +/- 10 000 voters, less than 5% of Coloureds eligible for the separate voters' roll, were registered, a fact which, typically, moved the Nats to make registration compulsory.

From the minuscule left, also, the NEUM's understanding and practice of the policy of non-collaboration were attacked. The most systematic critique of the policy is a little known Forum Club publication by A Davids called "A critical analysis of I B Tabata's book - "The All African Convention". It would take us too far from our topic to discuss this publication in detail. Its most important contribution was undoubtedly the fact that it compelled all political activists to distinguish between what Davids saw as the principle of non-collaboration and tactic of the boycott. In a subsequent publication, The Boycott as a Weapon of Struggle, Tabata made it very clear that for him, as for the NEUM, non-collaboration was a political policy, not simply a tactical weapon, unlike the boycott. By way of showing the ongoing relevance of the debate that was then exercising the minds of the politicised youth in the Western Cape, I quote the following extract from the preface of W Greef to Davids' critique of Tabata's work.

> "What then is Non-Collaboration? Is it a principle or a tactic, ask the youth and embryonic intelligentsia. Is it identical with the boycott? It would seem to us that different people attribute different meanings to the term. Thus the SAIC and FRAC regard it simply as a weapon of struggle to be used as the occasion demands. "The Torch" seems to regard it as a political principle. And in this, it appears, they have without acknowledgement adopted Davids' position. Still others conceive of it simply as Non-Cooperation with the present government. How are we to reconcile these conflicting interpretations? Is this issue merely terminological or does it flow from deep-seated ideological differences? The movement has an indefeasible right to know. It is time for clear thought.
>
> About the boycott: is it a principle always to boycott "at this stage" as Tabata avers? Or is it a weapon of struggle to be used as the occasion demands, as Davids contends. Does the use of the boycott include schools, bioscopes and other institutions not of a purely political character? And under what circumstances? The solution to these questions is of cardinal importance to our political advance. (Davids n.d.: 2)

This brings us to the posing of a number of questions about non-collaboration as practised in the years 1943-1963 approximately, questions that need to be answered and transcended in order to make contact with the new reality of South Africa as it has become since 1976.

Let us begin by considering some of the less publicised reasons for the initial success of the Anti-CAD Movement's policy of non-collaboration. Clearly, the inspiration, for the youth especially, that went out from the titanic struggles waged by nationally and colonially oppressed peoples in Europe, Asia and Africa during World War II was a major progressive influence, one which naturally made the intellectual youth of the oppressed people of the Western Cape gravitate towards the young vanguardists of the NEF and related organisations. The Westernising aspect of Marxism automatically appealed to a youth that was being threatened with a retrogressive policy of tribalisation via the CAC and CAD. In this, they expressed not only the interests of the progressive intelligentsia but, objectively, those of the rapidly growing urban working class as a whole, i.e., they were counteracting the attempts of the ruling class to disorganise the incipient proletariat along ethnic lines.

But their parents, the older generation of Coloured artisans and professionals, teachers, nurses and clerks, as well as many unskilled workers became equally entusiastic supporters of the policy of non-collaboration. They were driven in this direction, on the whole, by very different considerations. Their behaviour is an apt example of the dialectic of history. Coloured people, like the African intellectuals of the Cape Province, valued the measly political status accorded them in such a cynical manner by British imperialism in the Act of Union. Coloureds, in the racist South African framework, were in one sense amper baas, i.e., almost white, not quite non-white. Any threat to downgrade them to the status of African peasants and workers socially, economically and politically was sure to invite the stiffest possible resistance. Appeals to their dignity and humanity - especially in the context of the global struggle against the master-race (herrenvolk) ideology and practices of the Nazis - couldn't but find an echo among them. The Golding-Gow leadership of the Coloured People's National Union and the Van Der Ross clique in the TEPA were, therefore, sitting ducks who

found themsleves on the strategic defensive from the very start of this epic battle for the hearts and minds of the people of the Western Cape. The fear of being rendered outcast forced many aspirant White Coloured persons to realise in struggle that their destiny lay with the rest of the oppressed people, i.e., with the African and Indian people. By this process the Anti-CAD movement gradually got the so-called Coloured people to cease being a mere "appendix to the White man", a surgical operation that was finally completed by the BCM in our own day.

It is important to note, however, that the conservative base on which much of the Anti-CAD's popularity rested was an essentially petty-bourgeois one. There was no guarantee whatever that this base could be moved to support the radical consequences of some of the leadership's understanding of non-collaboration. Indeed, it is my contention that this conservative weight eventually became a brake on the NEUM's progress so that the once vibrant mass movement gradually lost the momentum of the 'forties and early 'fifties. In its initial phases, the NEUM and its constituent bodies insisted that the policy of non-collaboration implied mass struggle, mass mobilisation and the building of independent organisations of the people. According to Mokone, for example, referring to the treachery of the old Convention leadership:

> "...(T)he sole obstacle to unity was not rivalry in the leadership, as some said then and others have said since. It was the old and the continuing question of collaboration versus non-collaborationism. With which, then as now, there walks hand in hand the question of whether there should be an all-embracing mass struggle of all the oppressed and exploited people until final victory, or ad hoc protests and isolated gestures and passive resistance delusions." (Mokone 1982: 64)

Similar statements from the early political documents of the Anti-CAD Movement could be cited almost at will. There is no doubt, however, that from the time the National Party came to power in 1948 a rapid decline in militant tactics of struggle took place. In fact, the change can be dated exactly. After the experience of the NEUM - Anti-CAD during the campaign of the Train Apartheid Resistance Committee (TARC) in Cape Town in 1948, the NEUM generally adopted a dismissive but tragically erroneous policy towards what it called ad hoc campaigns. Without going into detail (see Mokone 1982: 64-66 for one version of the campaign and its demoralising outcome), let me say that this was a local defiance or civil disobedience campaign launched by a combination of progressive anti-apartheid groups in which it was expected that thousands of people would volunteer to defy the NP regulations which imposed train apartheid in the Peninsula. The TARC Reports issued in 1948 made it clear that

> "(The TARC) was formed to organise ACTIVE, DISCIPLINED, MASS RESISTANCE by boarding the marked coaches on the trains and making the regulations unworkable. It was formed to DEFEAT the regulations by every means at our disposal..." (Cited in Mokone 1982: 65)

Because only 450 people had volunteered instead of the thousands who were expected to do so and in spite of well attended mass meetings, the committee resolved to delay the action. Moreover, it was convinced that trade-union, i.e., worker support for the action was essential to its success and had to admit that "the majority of the organised workers are still standing aloof, outside the TARC." (see Mokone 1983: 65)

Bitter recriminations between the NEUM and the CPSA ensued, the latter accusing the former of shilly-shallying and of political cowardice, the former, in turn, accusing the latter of irresponsibility and adventurism. In reply to the CP accusations, the NEUM majority in the TARC replied that

> "We were not prepared to send into action the few volunteers whose self-sacrifice would not make any impression on the train-apartheid issue, as their small number could only lead to their imprisonment WITHOUT anything being achieved thereby, except the fizzling out of the movement in a miserable defeat. The issue is much too big and much too important for all the Non-European oppressed, for any display of individualistic heroics. And as responsible leaders, we can think only in terms of MASS resistance, Mass action..." (Cited in Mokone 1982: 66)

From this time onwards, a consistent and fateful confusion of two very different questions took place in the strategic and tactical perceptions of the leadership of the NEUM. I can do no more than to state the matter here since this is neither the forum nor the occasion to analyse the question in detail. Until the late 1970's, the NEUM refused to distinguish between economic, political and social struggles initiated outside of the collaborationist framework as the result of the pressures of the class struggle, and those initiated within that framework by reformist leaders. The tendency to dub everything and every person that had at one time or another been involved or somehow connected with collaborationist tactics as "collaborationist" became the besetting sin of the NEUM, and especially of the Anti-CAD Movement. It painted itself into a corner and dragged at least two generations of young people in the Western Cape into a political cul-de-sac.

The Movement failed to distinguish between the workers' and peasants' organic struggles for reforms on the one hand and the reformist illusions of many of their leaders on the other hand. Non-collaboration came to mean abstaining from any struggle that did not somehow immediately challenge the "fundamentals" of the South African establishment as understoood by the leadership of the NEUM. The policy of non-collaboration, one of the most significant gains of the liberation movement in South Africa, in later years was often interpreted in a sterile, ritualistic manner so that any mass action that was not directed against separate political institutions (except, notably, for struggles in the educational sphere and, less consistently, on the land in the "reserves") was denounced as reformist, economistic, opportunistic and treacherous.

The results were disastrous on all levels. A whole generation of young intellectuals, eloquent and sometimes even erudite, was reared who could spit venom at any non-NEUM initiative on the part of the people but seldom got involved in the much-revered "mass organisation" and "mass mobilisation". The policy was often transformed from being one of the most creative ideas of the South African struggle into a pharisaical cliche which was used to assassinate the political characters of any who did not agree with the leaders, whether they were genuine collaborators or not.

From having been a method of uniting large masses of people in positive action it often became in later practice one of the most divisive and sectarian responses within the South African liberation movement. More and more the policy of non-collaboration came to be identified with the tactic or weapon of the boycott. In the simplest possible formula - it became the practice to behave as though all those who boycotted certain government-created institutions were non-collaborationists, whereas those who opposed the boycott were seen and pilloried as collaborators. No distinction was made in practice between the reformist leadership and those workers and others whom they deceived.

At a deeper level, of course, it is now abundantly obvious that the politics of the NEUM, despite the progressive, often overtly socialist rhetoric, was petty-bourgeois politics. Most of its activists in the urban and rural areas were teachers, i.e., civil servants; many were preachers, some were lawyers, doctors, students, and so forth. The petty bourgeoisie with its property ethic cannot, in general, jeopardise its property or its position. In a violently repressive society such as apartheid South Africa, the boycott slogan could become (as it did in the Western Cape) the ideal disguise for political abstentionism and more-revolutionary-than-thouism. The more so since the execution of boycott campaigns in later years (after 1958 approximately) came to mean no more than a series of indifferently attended public meetings. The boycotters, in effect, came to do precisely what they were not supposed to do according to I B Tabata's celebrated pamphlet on The Boycott as a Weapon of Struggle, i,e., sit down and fold their arms and refrain from action! An almost Calvinist fear of disporting themselves in the streets seems to have seized the leadership of the Anti-CAD Movement and political action was confined to municipal or church halls except sometimes in the rural reserves where the harsh reality of life determined otherwise.

But the point goes even deeper. I have already spoken of a political cul-de-sac. The inexorable logic of class analysis, given the class basis and class interests of the majority of the members and leaders of the NEUM made the latter formulate a position of almost total paralysis. For, non-collaboration in theory must needs lead to the overthrow of the state (and in the writings of the WPSA during the 'thirties - when this could still be said openly - the point was made quite straightforwardly). A policy of class independence presupposes a Leninist theory of the state which means, crudely, that when the relevant social forces have reached a certain state of readiness, when certain conditions prevail, the movement resorts to armed struggle or, at the least, neutralises the army which protects state power. Now, since such a "perfect moment" was never identified, since the conditions never seemed to ripen adequately, this meant that you were trapped between "violence" and "non-violence" (which you rejected on principle).

This was an Aristotelian logic: Either unacceptable non-violence OR non-collaboration (implying some violence at some stage). The consequences of non-collaboration could not be spelt out because of the repressive response from the state. Hence the membership were prepared neither for the one nor for the other. Non-collaboration became simply and precisely the anti-septic, "negative" boycott of one government institution after another, a kind of conditioned reflex whereby one maintains one's political "purity" without, however, growing at all on the superficial or deeper organisational levels. Instead, the Anti-CAD and the AAC lost members all the time because there were no short-term gains in the struggle, because the so-called ad hoc struggles - which are in most cases facets of the class struggle between the exploited and the exploiters and which always involve large numbers of workers - were boycotted and sneered at in the most superciliously pontifical manner. The only people who continued to cling to the organisation were petty bourgeois intellectuals and professionals who could, quite literally, afford to harbour such idealistic notions. For the perfect moment (for a general strike or an armed insurrection) never turned up. The "movement" was frozen into a marginalised, finger-pointing pose that has no more historical relevance.

What Trotsky once described as "revolutionary fatalism" became the hallmark of the NEUM in the Western Cape and elsewhere. In a parody of the kind of mentality described by this phrase, Trotsky characterised it as follows:

> "The revolution is on the way, the revolution is nigh, the revolution will bring with it the armed insurrection and give us power and the party...will, in the meantime, carry on revolutionary agitation and await the results..." (Trotsky 1982: 144)

Mary Simons (1976: 225) correctly lays much of this latter sterility at the door of the teacher leadership of the Anti-CAD. It is certainly indisputable that

> "Dependant on a monthly salary ... they could either support the government or express their political frustration in militant language and political inaction...They could give vent to their political resentment and frustrations...and abstain from positive action and confrontation with the authorities."

The boycott and non-collaboration discourse of the NEUM suited the teaching corps perfectly. After 1964 when Coloured education was finally handed over to the CAD, large numbers of former Anti-CAD teachers emigrated to Zambia, Canada, Australia and to other Commonwealth sanctuaries. This act of desertion was, paradoxically, possibly the most striking testimony to the deep-rootedness of the non-collaborationist ethic among the Coloured intelligentsia. Rather than have their children grow up under a separate and inferior syllabus, rather than themselves teaching such a syllabus, they voted with their feet.

But we have to dig deeper still. The entire nomenclature of the anti-fascist resistance (Herrenvolk, collaborator, quisling, etc.) was based on the reality of nation states conquered by the Axis powers. For reasons that are obvious, this terminology underplayed the class cleavages that existed within the conquered nations. To transplant these concepts holus-bolus to a South Africa where you accept the ruling caste as indigenous, or at least naturalised, must needs lead to very serious analytical and, therefore, strategic-tactical confusions. What tended to happen in fact was that the original impulse against class collaborationism from which, as I have shown, the policy of non-collaboration derived, came to be obscured and confused by a two-nations approach in practice. According to this view, the venal collaborationist elements were betraying "their people" (even if you called them "the oppress-

ed") rather than diluting and deflecting the struggle of the exploited classes. While undoubtedly many leading NEUM people saw the struggle in class terms, in practice the rank-and-file and many in the leadership approached the matter no differently from the early Black Consciousness Movement. Through insisting on the analogy with the European resistance, the real analysis of the NEUM became more and more nationalist in tone and content and, after the repression set in, its writings became so encoded that sometimes only those who belonged to its innermost circles could guess at their meaning.

Be that as it may: the point is that the policy of non-collaboration translated invariably as the boycotting of government-created political and quasi political institutions became a kind of formula for all seasons, one which explained (quite correctly) why it was necessary to boycott the school boards and school committees set up under the Bantu Education Act and its fillial acts and simultaneously why the workers should not participate in stay-at-home strikes, certain bus boycotts and Train-Apartheid-Resistance-type ad hoc defiance campaigns. The result was that after 1952 approximately the Anti-CAD and the NEUM did not participate in any mass struggles of the working class. When one reads the pamphlets and analyses of yesteryear one cannot but marvel at the fatal consistency with which the exponents of the Anti-CAD and the NEUM again and again reinforced the narrow minded myopia that, after 1948, destroyed any revolutionary potential which their movement might have had. The approach to the complex contradictoriness of social processes which tries to read these off from one or another theorem, as it were, failed to utilise many opportunities for translating the explosive ideas of the NEUM into material forces. Listen, for example, to Jaffe's triumphalist assessment in 1953 when the NEUM was about to begin its descent as an organised force:

> "We have seen our basic policy, our fundamental method of struggle, non-collaboration, in action often in the last decade. Mostly this method was applied in the form of the boycott, which worked wonders in raising the political consciousness of the people, whether it was the boycott of the Van Riebeeck Celebration, which even the BBC had to acknowledge as a success, or the successful boycott of the CAC, or the partly successful boycott of Separate or inferior elections, or of the Rehabilitation Scheme, or the Land Tenure Board. We have made a laughing stock of those who ridiculed the boycott as "negative" and have done a thousand times more practical work and more useful work than the stunters, adventurists and opportunists with their tragic and farcical Days of Mourning, Pass Burning, Defiance Campaign, One-Day Strikes and the rest of the ragged arsenal of worn-out, backfiring and noisy blunderbusses." (Jaffe 1953)

It is not so much that Jaffe was wrong as the fact that he saw that part of the picture on which he focused his gaze as the whole of the picture. In this kind of writing one searches in vain for a historical materialist approach to the analysis of social processes. Aristotle, not Marx, is the inspiration for this method.

Conclusion

And yet the NEUM has left a legacy, one which only an ignoramus or a knave would deny or try to minimise the significance of. In the Western Cape, up to this very moment the ethos of the NEUM is all-pervasive. So much so indeed that even the delivery of this lecture from this platform had to be decided upon as a matter of deliberate tactics since in the extreme sectarian interpretation of the policy of non-collaboration I could, with a few deft phrases, be written off as a collaborator and a sell-out for having chosen to speak here tonight. Because most of its active members were teachers, the ideas and attitudes of the NEUM in the Western Cape have been and continue to be transmitted to one generation of high-school pupils after another. Those of us who lived through the mid-forties to the mid-fifties can never forget what a sense of power and of pride this movement imparted to the intelligentsia and to large layers of the petty bourgeoisie in the Western Cape.

These were the people who, by and large, shaped political events in the community. Working-class political action was no more than incipient and sporadic. The NEUM was never a workers' movement and did not pretend to be one although it always used a certain socialist rhetoric. In practice, it consequently made very little connection between the day-to-day struggles of the urban poor and the medium-to-long-term objectives of the political struggle. For it to have made that connection it would have considered as reformist and even counter-revolutionary. Many of its most eloquent writers and speakers disarmed the movement through their sectarian, narrow-minded interpretation of the policy of non-collaboration. But this was no accident. It was a disarming that expressed all the class prejudices, fears and vacillations of the petty-bourgeois leadership and membership of which it was largely composed.

The period 1964-1974, approximately, saw an an even greater prestige accrue to the policy of non-collaboration in the Western Cape. This was not only because of the indisputable dominance of the NEUM in this region. It was a general result of the total lack of legitimacy of the Verwoerd-Vorster government during the trough of repression in those years of silence. It was no accident, therefore, that the watershed events of 1976 inaugurated a decade of non-collaborationist political mass struggles. The economic, social and political policies of the National Party saw to that. It was significant, however, that these struggles were neither inspired nor led by the NEUM, not even in the Western Cape. Other organisations and tendencies took the lead, often in physical ways such as deliberate confrontationism that were alien to the NEUM's approach. Today, the policy and ethos of non-collaboration is so integral to our struggle for national liberation and emancipation that any hint even of talks with the present government raises the politcal temperature particularly of the black youth and of organised black workers. I hope you will not see this last statement of mine as an easy cop-out if I ask: does this mean that the entire liberation movement is heading for the same cul-de-sac as the NEUM did, or is there another way?

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