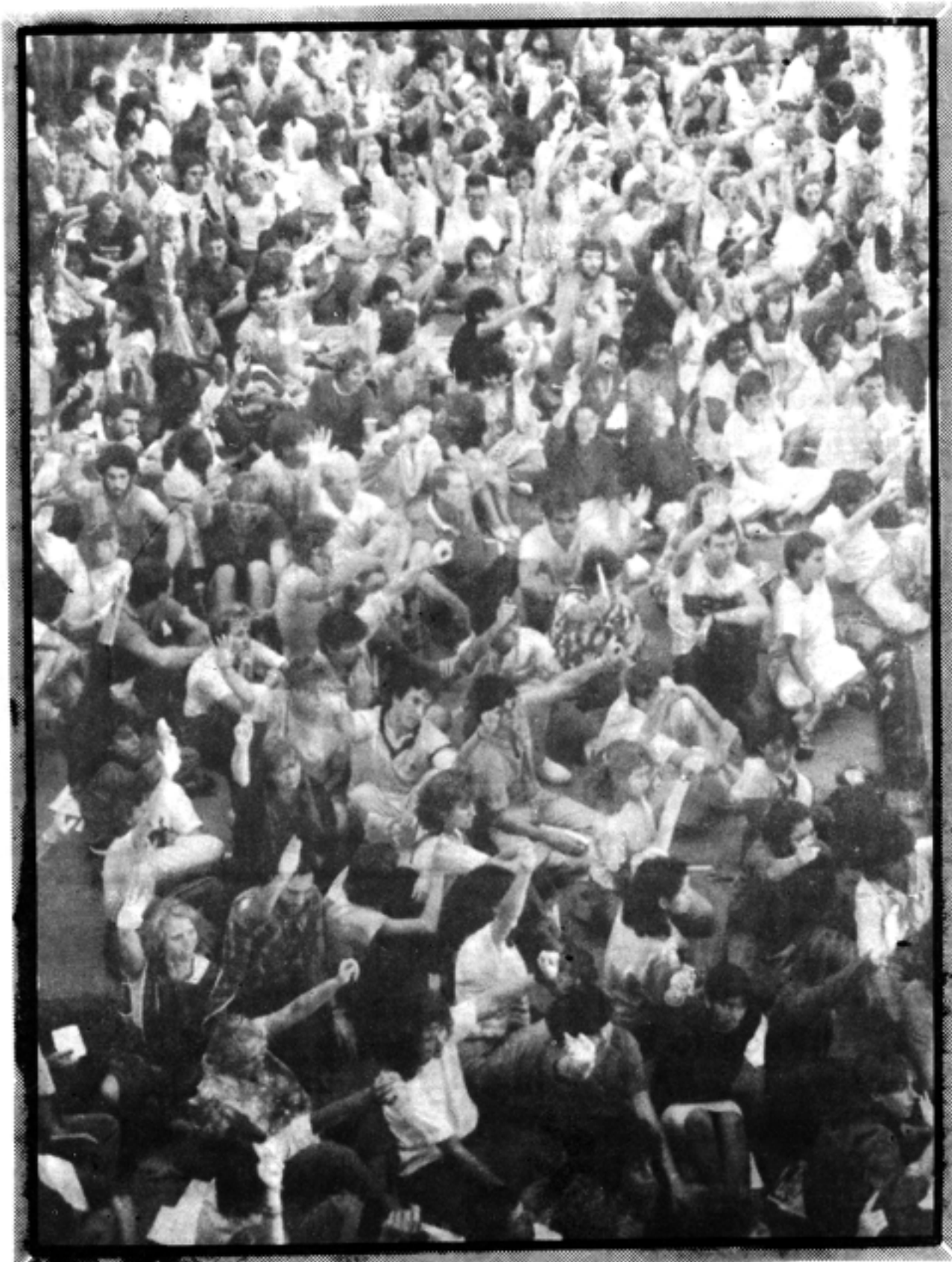

NUSAS TALKS TO THE ANC

**REPORTBACK ON MEETING
BETWEEN THE NATIONAL
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICAN
STUDENTS AND THE
AFRICAN NATIONAL
CONGRESS HELD FROM
SUNDAY, 31 MARCH to
TUESDAY, 2 APRIL
IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE**



Students at Wits vote overwhelmingly in favour of a NUSAS delegation visiting the ANC

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1. INTRODUCTION

The campaign to talk to the African National Congress was supported by 10 000 students on the English speaking universities. After what proved to be a convincing mandate from students, the National Executive Committee of NUSAS (comprising the NUSAS President and the SRC Presidents of affiliated campuses) decided to set up the meeting in great haste. A meeting was rapidly set up and a student delegation left South Africa on Saturday, March 30 and met with the ANC in Harare for three days from March, 31 to April 2 1986. The meeting was hosted at the private residence of the High Commissioner of Ghana in Harare.

Students themselves, formulated the questions and concerns which they wished to be voiced to the ANC. These were collated into a number of topics by the student delegates and formed the substance of discussion with the ANC.

The student delegation comprised of:

Brendan Barry	NUSAS President
Meryl Plasket	Dbn SRC President
Bruce Robertson	Pmb SRC Member
Glen Goosen	UCT SRC President
Claire Wright	Wits SRC President
Barry du Toit	Rhodes SRC President
David Waddilove	Stellenbosch Local Committee Chairperson
Steve Kromberg	SASPU President

We met with an eight member ANC delegation led by ANC National Executive Committee members Mac Maharaj and James Stuart; Other



ANC representatives from the Women's, student, youth, internal propaganda, constitution and law sections and the ANC Chief Representative in Zimbabwe were also present.

The student delegation returned after a productive series of discussions, with extensive notes which were formulated into this reportback. The essence of discussions have not been changed in any way other than to fulfil legal requirements on the advice of lawyers.

In executing the mandate received from students we are here today, not to speak on behalf of the ANC, but as student representatives reporting back on our discussions with the ANC.

We believe that this reportback contains crucial information that will have great bearing on the future of our country. We hope that you will find it as educative as we have.

2. STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE ANC

Lengthy discussions were held on this topic. We were told that the ANC is a broad national movement with its goal the national liberation of the South African people.

They see their task as the mobilisation and organisation of all sectors who stand to gain from national liberation.

The ANC adopted the Freedom Charter after its formulation at the Congress of the People held in Kliptown in 1955. They emphasised that the Freedom Charter was not exclusively their document but, because of its democratic formulation and acceptance, belonged to the democratic movement as a whole.

We were told that the Freedom Charter outlines the broad perspective of their national democratic revolution, and provides the broad basis for a new non-racial, democratic constitution. The ANC programme broadly envisages the seizing of power by the majority of South Africans, the destruction of the apartheid state, and the establishment of a people's democracy.

They broadly described the South African system as a special type of colonialism: as a country where many of the characteristics of colonial power relations remain intact, in particular the exclusion of Black South Africans from exercising political power, and their exclusion from access to the national wealth of the country.

To them, apartheid South Africa is characterised by extreme racial oppression, which has facilitated a highly exploitative form of capitalism.

As a result of this social formation, they see conflict in South Africa between the oppressed masses and the oppressors; and between different classes i.e. between those who own the wealth of the country, and those who produce it. This conflict gives rise to struggle between the ruling class on the one hand, and the working class, the peasantry (especially the landless peasantry), and the middle classes on the other – all of whom suffer under apartheid. This latter alliance the ANC describes as the motor forces of the national democratic revolution.

But they argue that various groups and classes suffer to different degrees under apartheid; therefore the main content of struggle is the liberation of the African people; under the leading role of the working class, as the most oppressed and exploited sector in our society, and the sector with the most to gain from liberation. This does not exclude the participation of other race groups, which they encouraged as crucial.

The ANC argues that any future system of government must be based on two fundamentals:

1. Firstly, that of peoples' power. In the words of the Freedom Charter, "The people shall govern". The ANC sees the essence of liberation as peoples control over their lives at every level.
2. Secondly, access and control over the national wealth. Peoples' power/control they argue, is meaningless without peoples access to the benefits of the national wealth. At present they say that wealth is controlled by a handful of people – the owners of monopoly capital.

They say that a future government should not merely be based on parliamentary democracy, but should be a democracy of the working people, in which democratic structures on the land, in the communities, schools and factories give people real control over the running of their society on an ongoing basis.

The ANC argued that through the process of struggle the relations of the future are being cemented and the new SA nation is being built.

3. ATTITUDE TO WHITES

One of the key questions white students wanted NUSAS to ask the ANC was about their attitude to whites in the struggle and in a future South Africa. They said that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white and that white South Africans were welcomed into their ranks. The ANC emphasised that they reject racism in all its forms, and that their approach to struggle is non-racial, which they see as the only democratic approach. They see racism as having been used by the ruling class in South Africa to defend its position and to rally the white population to support it politically, and said they would never use it in reverse.

The ruling class, through its racist ideology has won the allegiance of the white community. But the ANC said they sought to challenge this, and did not see the white community as the exclusive domain of the Pretoria regime.

The suggested that apartheid oppression, which leads to moral indignation, the economic crisis and the intensification of the peoples' war would lead significant numbers of whites to see the urgency of participating in political struggle against oppression.

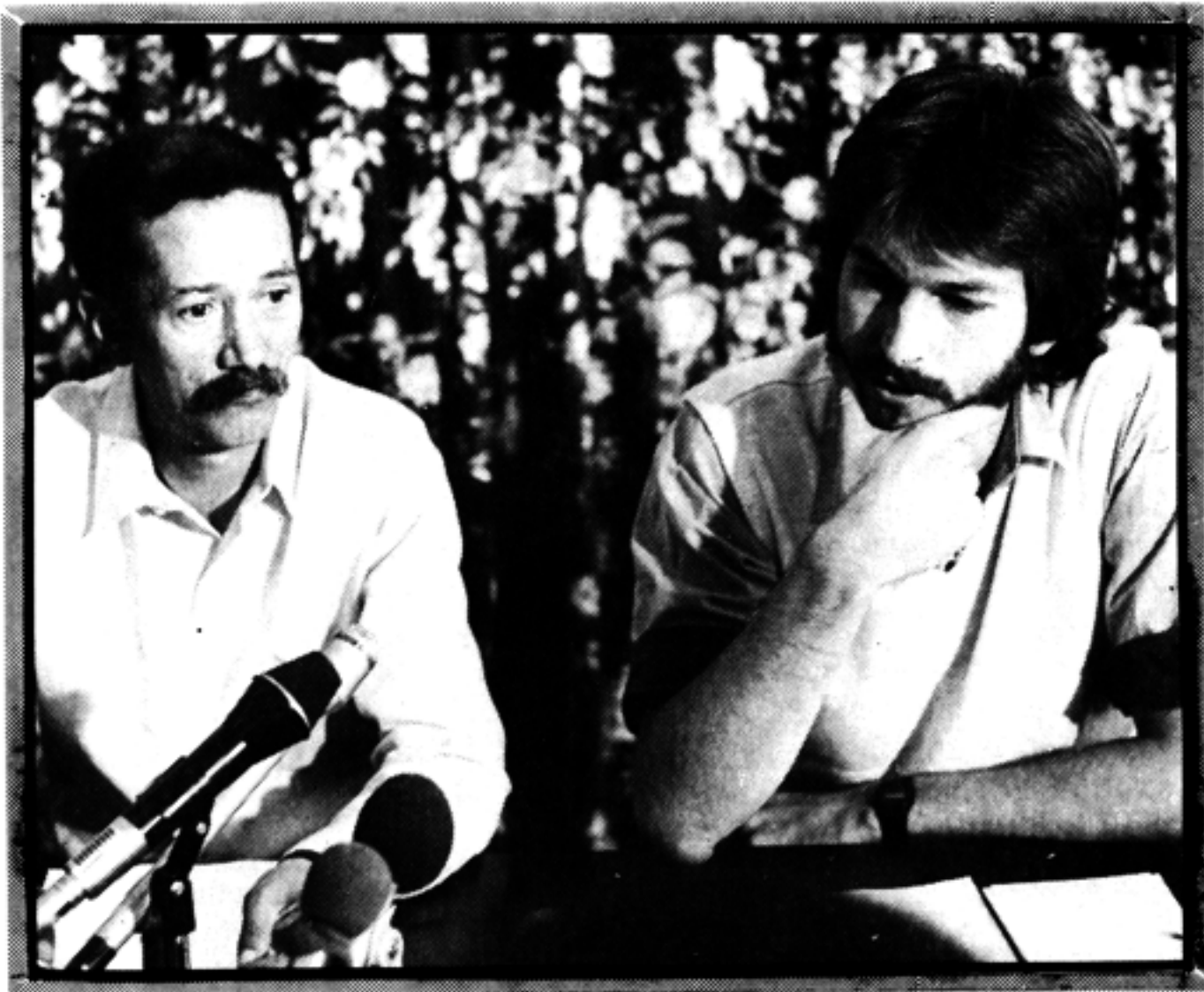
The ANC sees it as important that whites are also mobilised against apartheid, saying that the long term interests of the white community lie with the liberation of all South Africans. They indicated that white action against apartheid oppression now will ease the incorporation of whites into a non racial South African of the future.

4. HOW DOES THE ANC INTEND TO ACHIEVE ITS AIMS?

The ANC outlined what it calls the "4 pillars" of its struggle, arguing that the correct intensification and co-ordination of these pillars would liberate SA's people.

The 4 pillars were explained as follows:

1. **The underground structures of the ANC:** these are seen as giving the lead to political struggle inside the country. Their task is to provide leadership and to involve themselves in organisations and institutions in ways that make this possible.
2. **Mass action:** this involves the mobilisation of all forces who stand to gain from national liberation. These forces are to be organised into contingents to act on all fronts.
3. **Armed struggle:** the ANC intends to gradually and systematically involve the mass of people through Umkhonto We Sizwe (their armed wing) in a peoples' war against the ruling class. This combined with mass action would culminate in the overthrow of the South African state, and the seizure of power.
4. **International solidarity:** this involves winning support for the struggle in South Africa from the international community, and isolating the apartheid regime through solidarity action. The ANC also goes beyond soliciting support from other countries, giving support itself to other liberation struggles. It sees itself as part of the international movement for peace, and identifies three components of this movement:
 - 1) the socialist countries;
 - 2) the working class in developed countries;
 - 3) the national liberation movements.



MASS ACTION

The question of mass action was discussed further. The ANC told the NUSAS delegation that they see mass mobilisation as crucial, because revolutionaries alone could not bring the system to an end. The participation of the vast majority of South Africans is essential. This participation is encouraged by the ANC's underground political structures. The ANC seeks also to engage in legal methods of mobilisation against apartheid to complement the work done by underground units. The ANC says that in its mass political work, it pays particular attention

to the working class, emphasising its role as the leading force in the national democratic struggle. As a collective force, the working class has the most direct interest in the national liberation struggle, and is also the class that can ensure that national liberation develops into real social liberation they said. For these reasons, the ANC explained, the working class must seek to advance its own interests as a class in the course of national democratic struggle; at the same time, it must also advance the interests of the peasantry and the middle classes, to win their support and confidence. The working class needs to cement alliances with these sectors, because alone it cannot win the struggle.

The ANC believes that the support it has at a mass level was won through action; not declaration and that to keep this support, it must be seen acting alongside and as part of the people, in support of demands being made in the factories, schools and communities.

The ANC sees the youth as a crucial force in mass mobilisation. They regard as important the moulding of the youth, students and intellectuals into a powerful collective force, whose unity could take struggle to different classes and overcome class differences in struggle. They see school students as having played a powerful role in this regard, with the advantage of the schools as a site for collective organisation.

The ANC said it supports all initiatives to unite South Africans in mass struggle against apartheid. In this regard, it greeted the formation of the UDF and of COSATU as events of historical significance.

The ANC argued that mass mobilisation is aimed at confronting the enemy on all political fronts. They see the intensification of this mobilisation as leading to "ungovernability" – a situation in which people no longer accept the control imposed on them by apartheid, and its institutions, and make apartheid unworkable. They used examples of where institutions of apartheid control – like the community councils – had been destroyed and replaced by democratic community organisation. In education, how student action had made Bantu Education unworkable, and students had asserted their right to democratic student/parent/teacher structures and to an education system that was not designed to entrench apartheid. Other examples they used were of landless peasants who had been forced off their land seizing it back, and of workers occupying their factories.

The structures being built to challenge and replace apartheid institutions now were described as part of building peoples' power, and thus laying the basis for a future peoples' democracy.

ARMED STRUGGLE

The question of armed struggle was elaborated on:

The ANC emphasised that for decades after it was formed in 1912, it had sought peaceful solutions to South Africa's problems. It engaged in petitions, deputations and then later in mass non-violent protests, and passive resistance, but the South African government's response to this was inevitably violent. When the ANC engaged in non-violent defiance of unjust laws in the 1950's, the state responded violently, imprisoning people and introducing whipping laws for offenders.

They said when the ANC was banned in 1960, the government made it very clear that it did not even recognise the right of black South Africans to use peaceful means to protest against apartheid, and non-violent resistance became futile in the face of savage and violent attacks from the government. The ANC decided that they needed an armed component with which to take the struggle forward. They formed Umkhonto we Sizwe, "the spear of the nation" as the armed wing of the ANC on 16 December 1961.

In explaining the turn to armed struggle, the ANC said they reject the assumption that the South African government has the right to stay in power by using violence and force, when it is not democratically elected by the people it rules, and has no legitimacy as a government. It is only able to remain in power and rule the country by using brute force to do so, they say.

They see it as entirely legitimate to take up arms against a government which they regard as totalitarian, unjust, and which has closed off options for change through peaceful means. They see their use of arms as retaliatory violence for the violence used against their people, by the state and believe that the intransigence of the South African government has made this unavoidable.

The armed campaign of the ANC started off as armed propaganda, but is only now taking on the embryonic form of a peoples' war. As this peoples' war spreads, the ANC believes Umkhonto we Sizwe will merge with the politicised and mobilised mass of people, becoming a "political combat army" to confront the state. They emphasised that no decision had been taken to attack white civilians and that the struggle was against the system of apartheid and not white South Africans. The growth of peoples' war is a key strategic aim of theirs at present. In this

way, they said armed struggle and mass political work will be united in a mass offensive against the ruling class.

The ANC outlined a number of problems faced in building its armed struggle:

1. The training of soldiers had to begin from scratch both inside the country and abroad after the ANC was banned. They saw Unkhonto we Sizwe as the "officers corps" or nucleus of the peoples' army, which was responsible for training greater numbers of people inside the country, and organising them into combat groups, and encouraging mass participation in these groups.
2. They located problems with the SA geographical terrain and the nature of the South African state and economy, which mean they cannot operate in terms of a classical guerrilla strategy which has been used in other liberation struggles.

For these reasons, they see their armed struggle relying fundamentally on their underground political structures and mass action. Through making areas "ungovernable", they open up the possibility of replacing apartheid control with peoples' control - with mass-based democratic structures. These areas of peoples' control already exist in some areas and townships, the ANC argues, and provide the bases from which peoples' war can be intensified.

The ANC says that people in the townships have been taking their own initiative as far as forming combat units is concerned, and have been engaging in combat against the South African security forces. They say that an organic and mutually educative relationship has developed between Umkhonto we Sizwe and the people.

The ANC said that it encourages the maximum involvement of people in the process of intensifying peoples' war, and encourages the independent acquisition of weapons, the manufacture of home made weapons.

EXTENDING STRUGGLE TO THE WHITE AREAS

The NUSAS delegation asked the ANC what their policy on soft targets was and explained how the ANC's call to take the struggle to the white areas had been portrayed inside South Africa.

The ANC emphasised that no decision had been taken to indiscriminately attack white civilians. They explained that their call to take the struggle to the white areas consisted of a number of components:

1. Strengthen the organisation of workers in the factories to engage in mass action.
2. Strengthen and spread the national consumer boycotts.
3. Engage in protest action in the white areas. They stated that people are discovering that they don't get shot as quickly in the Central Business Districts as they do in the townships.
4. Armed attacks on enemy personnel and installations in the white areas. They included white farmers who are incorporated into police and army area defence units in this category.

They argued in addition that White organisations have an important role to play in taking up political struggle in white areas.

They said that the call highlighted the need to extend the struggle to all areas and not allow it to be restricted to the townships. White South Africans cannot be allowed to live their lives oblivious to what is happening.

Although there was no policy to attack white civilians, the ANC said that it could not discount the possibility of some incidents of anger being directed at white civilians in an unplanned manner. They noted with dismay, that the broad white community never responded with outrage when black civilians were constantly killed by the government. This they said, was terroristic activity that must be condemned. The ANC stated that it was fighting a political struggle and would not engage in activities that would compromise its goals. They added however that South Africa was now in a war situation and it was inevitable that civilians would die in the cross-fire.

The ANC stated that the boundaries of struggle that it had attempted to define have never been respected by the state which has always responded with indiscriminate attacks and violence.

For the ANC, it would be easy to attack white civilians, but this they said, was not the solution. Their struggle is against the system of apartheid, not whites. Such attacks would be no way to build a non-racial South African nation.



The NUSAS delegation (left to right): Glenn Goosen (UCT SRC Pres.), David Waddilove (Stellenbosch NUSAS Local Comm Chair), Meryl Plasket (Durban SRC Pres), Brendan Barry (NUSAS Pres), Barry du Toit (Rhodes SRC Pres), Bruce Robertson (Pmb SRC member), Claire Wright (Wits SRC Pres).

5. THE ANC'S APPROACH TO NEGOTIATION

The delegation was told that apartheid is the cause of South Africa's problems and therefore the only worthwhile negotiations would be those that aimed at the total abolition of apartheid and the democratic transfer of power to the majority of South Africans.

The ANC stated that it took the question of genuine negotiations very seriously and for this reason rejected any pretence at negotiation. The question they asked was what P W Botha had done to show that he was at all serious about negotiation. They argued that he had done nothing. A statement of intent was not good enough, they said, what was required was action to dismantle apartheid.

No serious political movement could engage in negotiations unless the correct political climate was created in which negotiations had a good chance of success. They argued that no such climate had been created by the government.

While the ANC said that it placed no preconditions on negotiation it argued that a number of steps need to be taken to show that the government is serious about negotiation and to create a viable climate for negotiation.

These would include:

1. The unbanning of the ANC.

The ANC stated that it was fighting for democracy for all and did not wish to dictate from Lusaka to the people of South Africa. In this



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The ANC and NUSAS delegations

regard it would want to be able to consult all democratic forces inside the country unhindered in order to establish a common approach to negotiation.

2. The unconditional release of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela. They argued that leaders cannot negotiate as prisoners and that the release of prisoners therefore was essential.

The ANC stated that it had always called for negotiations. They gave the examples of letters sent to the government to discuss the repeal of unjust laws before they launched their Defiance Campaign in 1952. These letters were ignored by the government, which then responded violently to the campaign, they said.

The call for a national convention was also not new to the ANC, they said. Nelson Mandela first called for a National Convention to resolve South Africa's problems in 1960. This call was not taken seriously then, but now that armed struggle and mass action is intensifying the ANC said that the lesson that must be learned is that if one is serious about genuine negotiation one should combine the call for negotiation with intensification of political struggle. This they said will ultimately force the government to engage in genuine negotiation.

The ANC described its proposal of a National Convention:

1. The convention must be sovereign – i.e. there must be no higher force which wields political or military power above it.
2. Delegates to such a convention must be elected representatives. It does not see it as a gathering of interest groups. Therefore P W Botha would not be allowed to attend as State President. If he was present he would have to be elected democratically by the people.
3. The convention must be able to draw up a new constitution without any outside interference.

The ANC said they believed negotiations will arise from struggle when the state is pressured into genuine negotiation and so do not see it as a major campaign. To them, taking negotiation seriously means building unity and escalating their mass political offensive.

It suggested that the ruling class will attempt to use negotiation as a strategy to disarm and demobilise the people and to subvert the goals of struggle. This, it said, it will not allow to happen.

The ANC stressed that it will not engage in any secret negotiations and will not negotiate without consultations with all democratic forces inside the country.

6. ANC RELATIONS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN COM- MUNIST PARTY AND THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

SACP

We were told that the SACP has been integrally involved in the South African political struggle for 65 years since its formation in 1921. It had fought alongside the democratic movement for this entire period and as a result had become integral to struggle.

The SACP, they said, is an independent organisation which represents the interests of the working class whereas the ANC is a broad movement for national liberation. They said that there is no fundamental disagreement between the two organisations on the strategy and tactics of the struggle.

The ANC stated that many of the members of the SACP are also members of the ANC. This does not mean that they are SACP representatives in the ANC, they are present as South African patriots. Communists in the ANC abide by ANC policy and are bound by ANC discipline, we were told.

The delegation was told that communists have proved to be among the most worthy members of the ANC willing to sacrifice their lives for the liberation of South Africa and so have brought strength to the political struggle.

As a result, nobody who joins the ANC is asked if they are communist. They are admitted and participate on the basis of their contribution to the struggle.

In this regard they gave the example of their 2nd Consultative Conference held in Kabwe, Zambia, last year. No one nominated to the ANC National Executive Committee was asked whether they were com-

munist. Delegates voted for the NEC by secret ballot and the key posts of President, Secretary General and Treasurer were all elected unanimously.

We were told that the ruling class and imperialism has used anti-communism (along with racism and tribalism) to divide the struggle of the people against oppression.

The ANC will not allow this to happen, they said adding that there was no division between socialists and nationalists in the ANC.

They said that the SACP, since its banning in 1950, has had no right of reply to distortions about itself which have been encouraged by the ruling class. The outlawing of the SACP allows these distortions to abound because people do not know what they stand for. As a result, they said negative images of the SACP are created which do not correspond with reality.

Socialist Countries

After the banning of the ANC in 1960, the then deputy president Oliver Tambo was sent from South Africa to seek international support. The delegation was told that he campaigned for three years, from 1960 – 1963, for Western support and received none.

Thereafter he went to the Soviet Union where he was welcomed and received support without Soviet attempts to influence the policy and direction of the ANC.

The ANC stated that it has a close relationship with socialist and African countries, in particular, from whom it receives unconditional support. None of these countries have attempted to direct ANC policy or attach strings to aid. The countries have all adopted a stance of the South African people deciding for themselves how best to wage their struggle.

We were told that the ANC now gets assistance from areas in the west, but that none of the western countries are prepared to give weaponry. For arms it relies on the socialist countries. The ANC stated that it had nothing to hide in its relationship with the socialist countries.

We were told that it was the west who attempted to attach strings to its relationship with the ANC and to dictate to it how to fight its struggle.

The ANC criticised the double standards of the west who while giving support to Unita in Angola and the Contras in Nicaragua, questioned the ANC's armed struggle in South Africa.



In this regard we were told that the South African state was strengthened and supported by its links with the western imperialist world, without which it would have cracked under the peoples' pressure long ago. As a result, the ANC adopts an anti-imperialist and internationalist approach – seeking the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

The ANC stated that it would view its friends favourably after liberation and it would remember who its enemies had been. This, it said, would only be natural. In this regard it said that it would distinguish between for example, the Reagan administration, which was hostile to the struggle for liberation in South Africa, and the American people as a whole.

They argued however that South Africa would not become a Soviet client state and that no African country which had received Soviet aid had become a Soviet satellite. They used the example of Angola to illustrate this, arguing that it was a country trying to build a truly democratic state after throwing off the shackles of colonialism.

South Africa's future would be determined by South Africans, the ANC said.

7. ATTITUDE TO FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEMS

NUSAS delegates asked what future political system the ANC envisaged. We were told that the Freedom Charter provides the broad basis for the formulation of a new constitution, but that this would not be forced on people.

The Freedom Charter would have to be acceptable democratically. The Freedom Charter does not stipulate how its demands are to be implemented. This would have to be determined by democratic representatives of the people after liberation.

The ANC argues that apartheid has denied the political rights of the majority and that the centralisation of power in the tri-cameral system has even eroded the quasi-political democracy experienced by whites. This would need to be replaced by a democratic system of government. In this regard the ANC advocates a system of one person one vote in an undivided, unitary South Africa. It lays emphasis on peoples' power, i.e. the ability of people to exert control over their lives and destiny at all levels. It therefore envisages the structures of peoples power which are being built in the schools, communities and factories today, as also laying the basis for a future peoples democracy.

The ANC stated that it was not opposed to a multi-party system and that it was quite confident that under such a system it would win the mass support of South Africa's people.

However, it stated that no political party that advocated racism or war would be allowed to operate. The preaching and propagating of racism in all its forms would be outlawed.



The ANC was opposed to entrenching group rights, arguing that this was a racist approach. The right of individuals however, should be guaranteed by the state. In this regard they supported the concept of a bill of rights to provide for the protection of individual rights. The Freedom Charter provides a framework which highlights key demands, such as the right to housing, the right to education and medical facilities, etc., they said.

The ANC's problem with the American Bill of Rights was that it had not solved the problem of unemployment. A South African Bill of Rights must therefore include the right to work as a fundamental right. This would ensure that the state took responsibility to maintain those without work and to provide opportunities for work.

The ANC stated that security legislation would be abolished and that press freedom would be guaranteed. The only restriction would be on the propagation of racism. Legislation would have to be drawn up by a sovereign parliament.

The ANC said that it was in the interests of genuine national liberation that they fundamentally opposed federation, and initiatives such as the Kwa-Natal option. These they argued, only further divided South Africa, already divided by the Bantustan system and were aimed at subverting and avoiding the genuine liberation of South Africa's people.

8. ATTITUDE TO FUTURE ECONOMIC POLICY

On this question, the ANC referred back to the two fundamentals of a democratic South Africa. Firstly, peoples' power and secondly, control over the national wealth. They said that National liberation must embrace economic liberation and social emancipation and would be meaningless without control over national wealth. The national wealth is controlled by a few in the hands of monopoly capital. This they argue is a highly unjust situation. As evidence, they cited that three monopoly companies control 75% of the shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

They suggested that monopoly capital uses the argument of "free enterprise" to rally support for the maintenance of its ownership and monopolisation of the national wealth, whereas in reality, this massive concentration of wealth destroys free enterprise.

When a new State is born, they said, it will have an obligation to fulfil the aspirations of the mass of South Africans. How is it going to solve the poverty of millions, the housing shortage, inadequate education, etc., which apartheid has created, they asked?

The ANC argued that to do this, the State will have to be in a position to command the economy, not via a taxation system (which would be insufficient) and not to stifle the economy, but in order to serve the well-being of the people as a whole.

In this regard, the Freedom Charter calls for the nationalising of the mines, banks and monopolies. The ANC therefore advocates an anti-monopoly democracy in which monopoly business is nationalised without disruption of the economy. They noted that many sectors of the economy were already nationalised, e.g. Iscor, Escom and Posts and Telecommunications. Small businesses would be allowed to operate, but would have to serve the interests of the people as a whole, they said.

Free enterprise, they argued, could never redistribute the national wealth in a manner which would benefit the people.

They said that a democratic state would have to control the mines if it were to end the migrant labour system, which they saw as one of the worst features of apartheid, and a system which has faced Southern African states with economic blackmail.

The land question, the ANC saw as crucial and the most difficult to solve. At present, black South Africans have access to only 13%, while whites control 87% of the land. As a result, millions of South Africans are landless and have little means of survival. Restriction of access to land has led to a situation where South Africa exports grain and other agricultural products while it cannot feed and clothe its own people. This, they said, was a fundamentally unjust situation.

In addition, they stated that companies like Anglo American were monopolising the land and squeezing out the small farmers.

The ANC would advocate the nationalisation and redistribution of farms owned by monopoly businesses, the Land bank and farming absentee landlords. It would want to see everyone, including the small farmers who work their land, participate in solving the land problem in a process of give and take.

Again the ANC emphasized that nationalisation would not be forced on the people but would have to be decided democratically by all South Africans.

9. ANC APPROACHES TO OTHER ISSUES

a) Cultural Identity

The ANC referred to the Freedom Charter saying that cultural identity and language would be guaranteed protection. But they added that this should be on the basis of non-racial and cultural interaction, not on exclusive preservation.

In this way, they argued a progressive national culture could develop, relying on the most positive features of diverse cultures.

b) Tribalism and Ethnicity

The NUSAS delegation was told that the foundation of the ANC in 1912 was based on an endeavour to unite the African people. Tribal differences were identified as a weakness. The ANC said that in the act of struggle, people come to identify with each other in a common struggle against a common enemy. In addition, they argued, industrialisation served as a melting pot for tribal differences. Tribal exclusiveness tended to dissolve in struggles against the bosses in the factories.

They pointed out, however, that tribalism and ethnicity has historically been manipulated both by the government and the bosses to divide and rule the mass of South Africans, through the Bantustan system, etc.

They said that there remain forces who continue to advocate tribalism such as Gatsha Buthelezi. These forces would be exposed for what they are, divisive and dangerous, they said.

The ANC was not suggesting the dissolution of national groups, but that positive elements of culture should be encouraged to forge a progressive national culture.

They said that confronting the question of tribalism did not only concern uniting the African people, there was a problem with tribalism in the white community as well, e.g. Afrikaner tribalism. Confronting the problem meant uniting all South Africans into a broad South Africanism, black and white, in one country. They saw the new South African nation being born in struggle. A nation of new South Africans, citizens of one country, one continent and one world.

c) Women's Oppression

The ANC said that it recognised the threefold nature of women's oppression in South Africa, i.e.: oppressed as black South Africans, as workers, and as women. They do not minimise the problem and so do not see women's oppression being completely resolved by the national liberation struggle. The struggle for national liberation does not shelve the issue of women's liberation however and they see it as important to engage in the struggle for the emancipation of women. They see it as important to address the issue as women, but at the same time, to be integral to the national liberation struggle. In this regard, the ANC Women's section is an important part of the ANC. The organisation and leadership of women is encouraged at all levels, we were told.

d) Gay Liberation

The NUSAS delegation explained that gay liberation organisations, where they existed on our campuses, have often supported the struggle against apartheid.

The ANC stated that it had taken no policy on the issue of gay liberation and therefore, has no position, but kept an open mind on the issue. They stated that ANC policy grows as it confronts social questions that

need to be addressed. A democratic state should restructure and accommodate issues related to oppression, they said. The ANC stated that freedom of association was enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

e) Zionism and the PLO

The ANC distinguishes between the religious manifestation, with which it has no problems, and the political manifestation of Zionism, which, they argue, has denied the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people to independence. The ANC supports the struggle of the Palestinian people to exist as a people and supports the PLO in so far as it recognises the right of oppressed people to struggle.

They noted that the present Nationalist party had aligned itself with the Nazis during the Second World War, and had adopted an anti-Semitic stance. Yet now, there was extensive co-operation between Israel and South Africa, in particular on a military level. Israel acts as a third party for the Imperialist powers in supporting the South African government and other repressive states, they said. The ANC condemned Israel for this and for its attitude to the Palestinian people, arguing that the experience of the Jewish people should have made Israel realise that these were incorrect steps.

The ANC stated that it was opposed to anti-Semitism and any form of racism and was not antagonistic to the Jewish community in South Africa. It noted that the Jewish community had offered up many white democrats who actively opposed apartheid.

f) Churches

The ANC stated that religious freedom was guaranteed with the proviso that racism and militarism was not propagated.

g) Nuclear Power

The Freedom Charter emphasises the building of peace and friendship, we were told. The delegation was told that the ANC sees itself as part of the non-aligned movement and fully supports nuclear disarmament and progress to bring about world peace. It argued an anti-war, anti-militarist emphasis, but would support any scientific endeavour which furthered peace and developed the well-being of South Africa's people.

h) Conservation of Natural Resources

The ANC stated that the conservation of natural resources would be an overriding component of all government policy-making. This consciousness pervades ANC thinking, they said. Conservationist groupings could not only expect to be supported by a post-apartheid state, but also to receive government financial aid.

i) Education

The delegation was told that students had played a crucial role in putting the issue of freedom on the agenda in the 1970's. Since this time, they said, students had continued to play a central role in destroying apartheid and their courage had earned them the name of "Young Lions" in the eyes of the people.

They said that the struggle for a new education system was not a struggle for the same education received by whites. White education was supremacist and militaristic and had created a situation where whites were prepared to take up arms in defence of apartheid privilege against fellow South Africans.

A future education system would be non-racial, democratic, and non-militaristic and should be determined on all levels by the needs and aspirations of the South African people. This, they said, should apply to all levels of education, including the universities.

A new education system would need to stress a progressive and common South African culture and a common history and would play a key role in building the new South African nation, they said.

They argued that the slogan "Liberation before Education" should not be interpreted narrowly as the schools were an important site of organisation for the students. They also stressed the importance of students seeking support for their struggles from other sectors of the community.

(j) Pan African Congress

We were told that the PAC had broken away from the ANC in 1960 as a result of ideological differences.

The ANC did not regard any alliance with the PAC, in the immediate

future as viable. A fundamental policy of the ANC remained the projection of the future South African as non-racial. White racism must never be replaced by black racism, they said.

We were told, that in building one South Africa, the ANC saw the unity of all forces in struggle as crucial. Historical differences should be put aside if common ground could be reached in the present, they said.

The ANC outlined a test which could determine the progressive potential of organisations.

Firstly, is the organisation active and engaging in mass action against the system of apartheid?

Secondly, does it encourage unity in struggle?

And thirdly, does it envisage a future non-racial South Africa based on the will of the people?

In so far as this was the case, the ANC fully supported such organisations.

In this regard they stated that Gatsha Buthelezi had defined himself out of the democratic camp. His divisive politics had defined him in the same trend as P W Botha, they said. They argued that events in Natal were undermining his support base and that he was becoming more desperate as a result.

The ANC suggested that members of Inkatha should be treated differently to Gatsha Buthelezi, arguing that many had joined Inkatha, especially in the rural areas, unaware of the divisive direction of the organisation.

k) Reform

The ANC argued that apartheid could not be reformed, but had to be abolished.

Reforms, they said, were aimed at streamlining the system of oppression and exploitation and winning over sections of the oppressed, not abolishing injustice.

They stated that the capitalist sector was proposing minor changes, which do not affect the foundations of the system. As examples they cited the Business charter and initiatives of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Gatsha Buthelezi.



The ANC argued that reformists still saw the political initiative as emanating from the white elite aimed at preserving the present structure of capitalism.

They said that in addition, the reformist emphasis on a regional and confederal approach aimed at defending white interests and the interests of the ruling class and in no way at the genuine liberation of South Africa's people.

CONCLUSION

It is the belief of the student delegation that the outcome of the meeting with the African National Congress was particularly positive. The delegation was able in discussion to have most of the areas of concern raised by students, answered by the ANC. We hope that the reportback has reflected this.

We believe that the ANC was honest and direct in the answers it gave to student concerns and made no attempt to hide its attitudes and positions.

The students present at the meeting were impressed by the clarity of the ANC delegation and its up to date and detailed knowledge and understanding of events and trends in South Africa. We were left with little doubt that the ANC's networks and support within South Africa were extensive. They were confident of their prospects of victory over P W Botha's government.

The student delegation was made to feel very welcome by the ANC, and the meeting itself was conducted in a friendly atmosphere. We left Harare with the overriding feeling that the meeting had been highly successful. It was a meeting of fellow South Africans, with totally different experiences of life but with a common concern for humanity and the resolution of conflict in South Africa.

We believe that through the meeting with the African National Congress and the reportback of discussions to students, an important contribution has been made towards understanding the policies and direction of an organisation that is playing an increasing role in all of our lives.