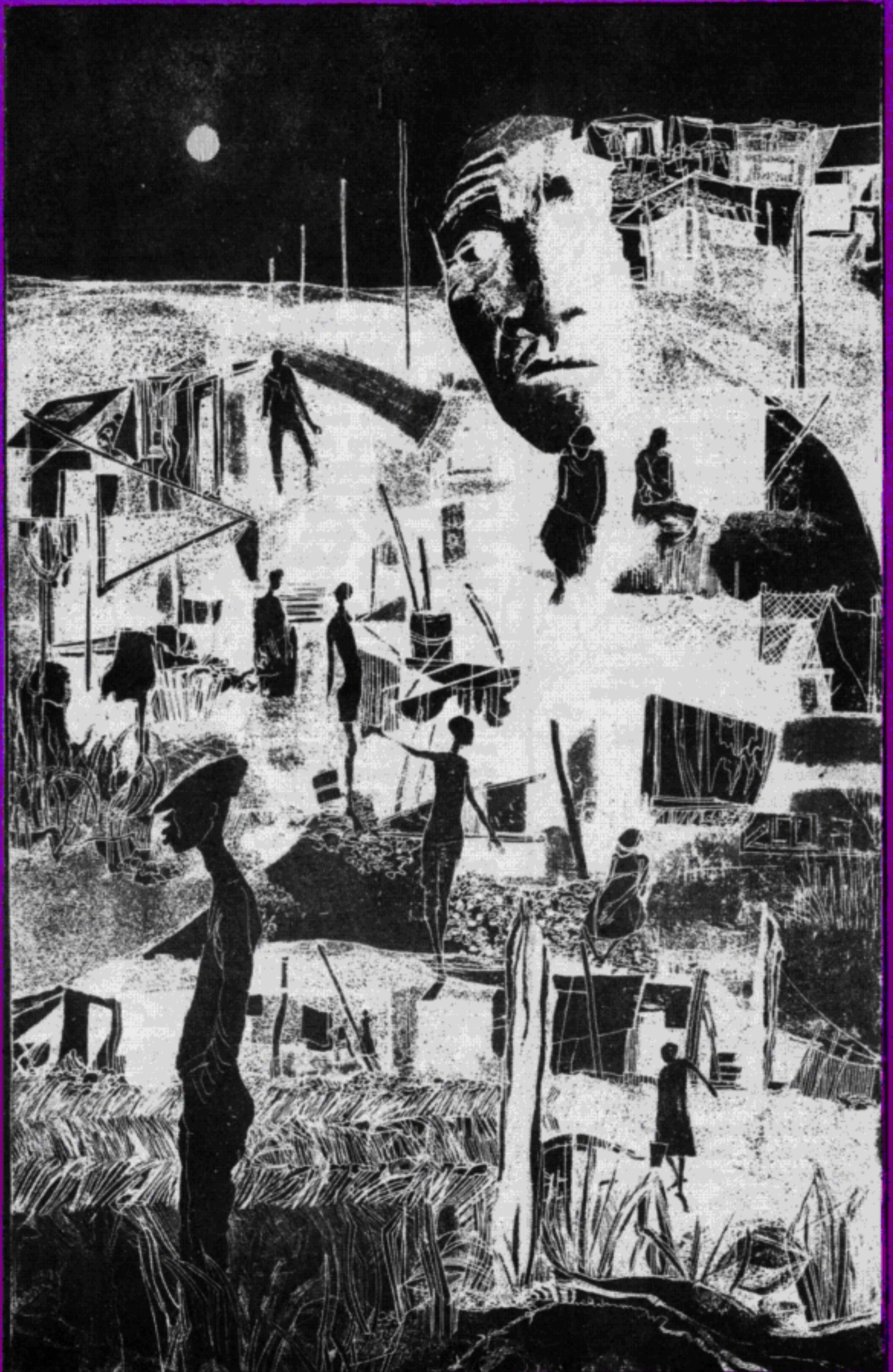




# SECHABA

official organ of the african  
national congress south africa

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Inside  
South Africa:  
The Workers  
Fight on P. 9

Release all  
South African  
Political  
Prisoners  
P. 27

49 Rathbone Street  
LONDON W 1A-4NL  
Telegrams & Cables:  
SECHABA LONDON W  
Telephone: 580-53 03

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Cover Drawing:  
**THE DUMPING GROUNDS**  
by: Hilda Bernstein

## SECHABA

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# Forward to the

**Concluding its Second Session, the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress has addressed the following views on some aspects of the internal situation in the light, particularly, of the heightened ferment in South Africa.**

The present historical moment in our struggle for the forcible seizure of power by the black majority in our country is characterised by an accelerated revolutionary upsurge of mass-based activity which has given a new impetus to the process of polarisation of forces.

This popular upsurge, which is drawing in all the oppressed nationalities and virtually all sections among them – the workers, the peasants, the middle strata and the youth and the students – is expressing itself in more or less permanent organisational forms. In the last few years, for example, there has come into being a number of black organisations whose programmes, by espousing the democratic anti-racist positions that the ANC fights for, identify them as part of the genuine forces of the revolution.

The limits of this trend are not yet in sight. It can be expected that more of such organisations will be formed as various sections of the oppressed people enter the struggle more extensively and purposively.

The people are not only creating new organisational centres aimed at greater mass mobilisation for the achievement of a revolutionary democratic transformation of South Africa, but they are also upgrading the 'neutral' (non-political) mass organisations into centres of militant struggle consistent with the enhanced revolutionary combativeness of increasing numbers of the people.

The objective basis for this upsurge is the continuing and intensified national oppression and super-exploitation of the black masses.

The deepening crisis of the apartheid economy has already resulted in an estimated one million Africans unemployed. In a country such as the United Kingdom, with a population two-and a half times that of South Africa, such a level of unemployment is

considered intolerable. Yet in South Africa mass unemployment on an ever-increasing scale is a permanent feature of the life of the oppressed people. The position of the African unemployed is made absolutely hopeless by the fact that they receive no social security benefits whatsoever.

The "solution" imposed by the Vorster regime, whose fundamental characteristic is extreme reaction all along the line, is mass deportations of the unemployed from the towns to the country-side. The foul death-camps at Morsgat, Iltinge, Dimbaza and elsewhere are the results of this policy as is the national phenomenon of thousands of landless and workless semi-peasants cramming the Bantustan countrysides today.

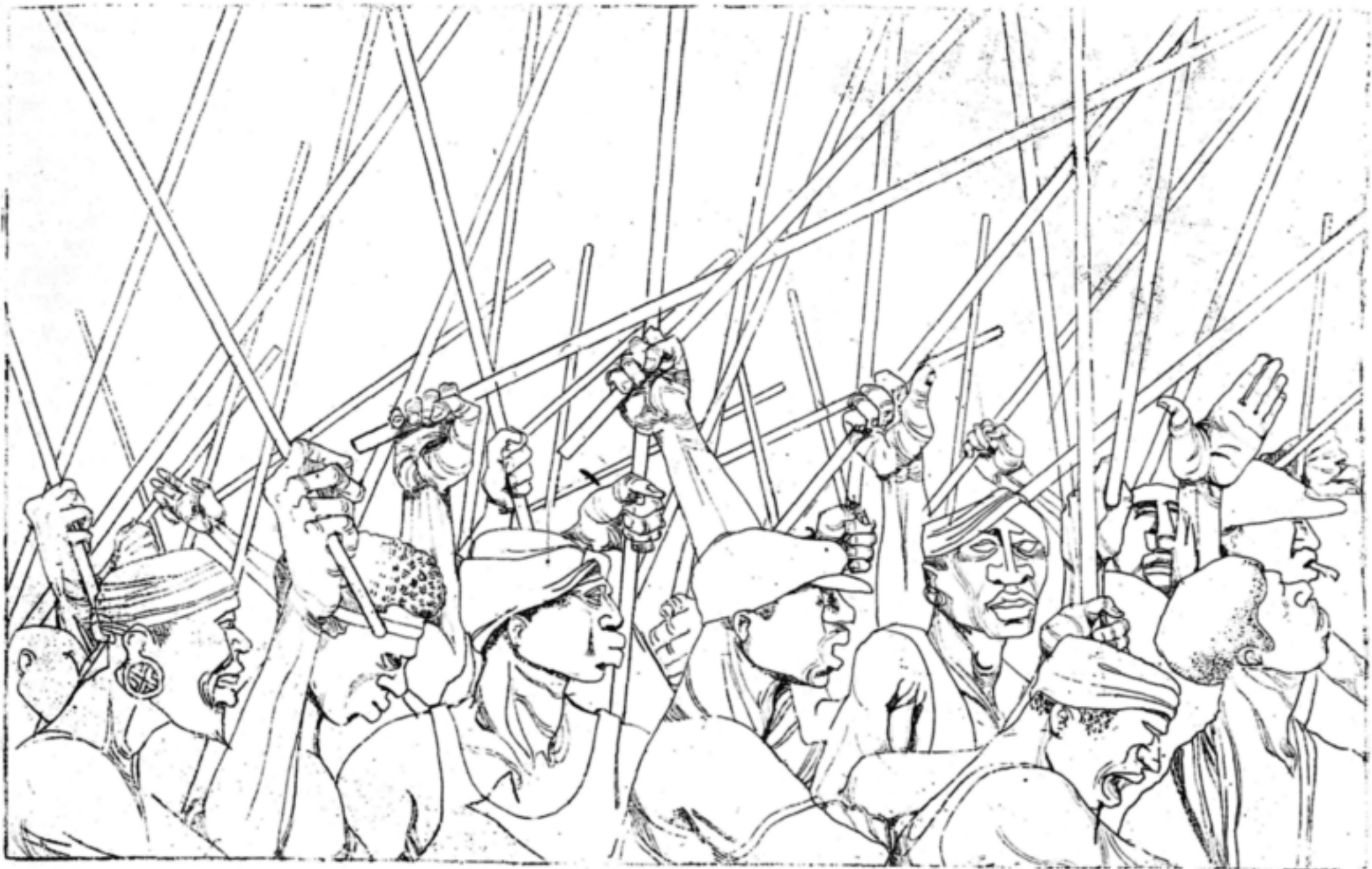
### No Land, No Food, No Jobs

Whereas the Vorster regime might, by this means, go some way in "solving" the problem of unemployment in the nerve centres of our country, the urban areas, and thus to some extent dampen the explosive situation in the towns, it, by the same token, transfers the problem to the country-side.

Moreover, in its transfer to the countryside, the problem doubles and trebles its explosive consequences. For in the countryside, poverty is all that more abject and the future all that more hopeless.

Of the estimated national maize crop of 1972 of 10 million tons, 9,8 million was to come from the white farms, whilst the rest, 0,2 million tons, was expected to come from the Bantustans. At the consumption rate of 15 bags per year for each African family, this means that Bantustan agriculture could only feed 300,000 families a year, i. e. a third of the total Bantustan population.

# ARMED SEIZURE OF POWER



Durban Strikers

By: Hilda Bernstein

With no land, no food, no jobs, the rural masses cannot but turn to a revolutionary way out of the intractable misery into which apartheid and white supremacy have cast them as a matter of policy. Inexorably, apartheid is turning the rural masses into the most inflammable material in South African politics.

Underlying the whole crisis is the fundamental question of land hunger and landlessness which remains unsolved and is continuously aggravated by natural population increases, mass deportations from the towns and farms, land fatigue and the denudation of pastures.

Land dispossession in South Africa enabled the colonisers to suck the

entire African population into the orbit of the coloniser's economy and state machinery. Not only was the African from then onwards unable to solve any of his problems without having to refer to the white coloniser, but more, he was unable to refer to the white as an equal. Rather, the white coloniser dictated his decisions to a people which had become a subject people.

Land redistribution is again taking place in South Africa. Again it is favouring the white population in general and the centres of big, white capital in particular. The African has lost even the little plot on which he was able at least to put a little shack and keep a few animals in exchange

for free labour services to the white farmer.

The process of large-scale dispossession and impoverishment of the Coloured and Indian people also continues, with the attendant loss of land, houses and businesses as well as increases in the cost of living.

The stark reality of landlessness and the pressure of the rural masses for radical change is forcing even the government appointed Bantustan heads to raise the question of land insistently but within limits which leave the burning question of landlessness unresolved.

The only just and lasting solution of the land question will be imposed on

South Africa by the dispossessed masses themselves to the benefit of the entire people of South Africa.

Strengthened and guided by the most advanced programmatic demand on the land question, that the land must belong to the toiling masses who work it, our organisation must wage the struggle for land directly, continuously and boldly, on the side of the landless masses. The rural masses who are the most directly affected by landlessness have already more than amply demonstrated their revolutionary democratic inclinations through not only the great peasant struggles of the fifties, culminating in the Pondo Revolt, but also in the contemporary period.

### Ill-gotten Offspring

In the Transkei elections, the peasant masses have consistently voted in their majority for the party of a united, democratic South Africa. Undoubtedly this experience will be repeated in all the impending Bantustan elections, unless the usual gerry-mandering and terror against the democratic forces drives the genuine voice of the people underground. The Vorster regime is forced to protect its ill-gotten offspring by imposing appointed majorities on the Bantustan "parliament" which continue to provide no solution to the problems of the people.

Already the peasants are seeking out their own solutions as in the Transkei, where, in some areas, by destroying fences, they have forced the government to abandon its "rehabilitation" scheme.

There is an urgent need to intensify this struggle by embarking on even more militant assaults on the regime of terror. We must rally all the dispossessed masses and their patriotic organisations under the banner of immediate distribution of land to the toiling masses. The organisation is equipped with the instruments of change and must therefore demonstrate to the rural masses the way out. The only correct solution will be the indissoluble link in struggle between all the revolutionary forces in our country.

The black workers in industry, on the mines and farms continue to contribute an increasing part of South Africa's national income as their absolute and relative share of the labour market continues to rise, and greater

numbers are drawn into skilled and semi-skilled occupations, but consistently at lower rates of pay.

Yet the share of the national income which accrues to them continues to decline. Recent urban surveys show that 80 per cent of African families live below the poverty datum line.

The recent wage increase for large numbers of black workers, following the strike wave in Natal particularly, and elsewhere in the country, and, such manoeuvres as the so-called Polaroid experiment, have not improved the situation.

Rather, mass poverty persists and intensifies. A high rate of inflation which has persisted for a number of years as well as devaluation of the Rand in 1971 have combined further to reduce the standards of living of the oppressed peoples.

Pressure on schools, hospitals and other social amenities is increasing. The waiting lists for housing continue to grow longer while rents are rising. Fares take an increasing part of the workers' wage.

The middle strata, the business-men, professional men and women, civil servants find their aspirations suffocated under a system geared to benefit the white man. Even in the tribal colleges white professors, lecturers and administrators predominate. Teachers are abandoning their profession for jobs in industry, while qualified nurses are working as cleaners in white hospitals and nursing homes.

Simultaneously, the standards of living of the white population continues to rise. As a result of deliberate policy, the bulk of the country's wealth continues to be directed into the hands of the white minority.

For some time now, the mine-owners have been accumulating even greater amounts of super-profits, thanks to the higher official price of gold agreed last year, and, even more spectacularly, the "free market" price of gold which now stands at nearly double the official price.

The mine-owners have been content to pocket this increased profit as well as share part of it with the thin upper layer of mining workers - the white mine workers.

Increasingly, the black workers are rising against these conditions. Working class solidarity at the point of production is increasing. The strike movement is growing despite the absence of strong African unions and

the continued persecution of SACTU. The proposal to set up a general African trade union springs from these struggles and is a sign of the growing polarisation between the black workers on the one hand and the white employers, their white working class appendage and the white state, on the other.

A section of the white working class, organised in TUCSA, have clearly recognised the revolutionary threat which an organised black working class represents. Aiming at controlling the African workers in particular, in order to direct their anger into reformist and impotent channels and thus further activating their role as the agents of the property-owning class in the ranks of the working class movement, TUCSA decided at its last Congress to work for the unionisation of African workers and to press the government to recognise African trade unions.

Meanwhile the government itself is touting around the treacherous idea of Bantustan "labour ambassadors", each to report to his Bantustan government on the condition of his own "tribal group" of workers. The scheme must not pass, for it seeks to serve the enemy's interest by dividing the workers, setting them one against the other and immobilising them as an independent mass force of our revolutionary struggle.

We have an urgent task of ensuring that this great revolutionary force, the working class, comes into its own again, in extension and intensification of the current struggles, on a scale and a permanence beyond that of the general strike of March 28, 1960 which forced the racist government to suspend the pass laws and the end-of-May, 1961 general strike which compelled the government to put the army on full alert and directly to employ it to terrorise the oppressed working masses of our country.

### Basis of Upsurge

We have said that the objective basis of this upsurge is the continuing and intensified national oppression and super-exploitation of the black masses.

Its subjective basis is a combination of several factors:

● The upsurge is a measure of the failure of the racist government to de-

stroy the spirit of resistance through its policy of systematic brutal oppression which resulted in the imprisonment of over ten thousand patriots, of the systematic use of torture and solitary confinement and the secret murder and legal hanging of many patriots;

- it is vindication and ample fruit of efforts that our organisation and its internal operatives have put into the work of keeping the spirit of resistance alive through persistent struggle and coupled with internal propaganda work;

- It is an outcome of international solidarity with our people;

- The upsurge not only reflects the deep-rooted traditions of struggle of our people, but is also an integral part of the world-wide revolt by black peoples against racism, colonialism, a revolt which is particularly acute in Africa;

- Finally, it is a reassertion of the people's will to be free now deeply suffused with the militant example and the blood of our heroes who did battle so unflinchingly against the joint Vorster-Smith forces in Zimbabwe in 1967 and 1968.

The continuing policy of mass terror against the people, and if need be, the physical destruction of all genuinely revolutionary units and patriots, has not stemmed the will of people to organise and fight but has rather shown the necessity for the revolutionary overthrow of the racist regime; to struggle for the achievement of this goal is the urgent task facing our organisation, its leaders and its rank and file as well as all our comrades-in-arms and committed supporters.

In a struggle such as ours which pursues the strategic objective of seizure of power and not reforms of a negotiated transfer of power, the conscious and purposive participation of the masses in the struggle, on their own behalf and relying on their own strength, is of decisive importance.

It is therefore essential that at all times the liberation movement as a whole should continuously pay attention to the question of instilling into the masses confidence in their own strength and the conviction that they themselves will bring about their own liberation.

Despite the repression and the divisive manoeuvres of the enemy through its separate development policies, this re-



A family on the Slater Walker (a British Company) farm in Natal. The baby has sores on its body which are caused by malnutrition. Photo: Camera Press, London

volutionising spiritual force has again broken through into the open.

The African majority in South Africa, and the black people in general, have for too long borne the burden of extreme national oppression. Consistently the enemy has sought to destroy their independent national will, first by making them landless vagrants in their own country, by destroying the best in their historical and cultural traditions, and perverting the rest to serve the purpose of continued white domination, and by seeking to dehumanize them into a spiritually barren nation of slaves, thieves, murderers, dope-addicts and rapists.

To be effective, a break with the cultural and spiritual mode that the enemy has imposed on us cannot but be sharp and violent. This is so because in the activity, the material act of a revolutionary break with white supremacy will of necessity itself be sharp and violent.

### **Forward Move**

The assertion of the revolutionary identity of the oppressed black peoples is therefore not an end in itself. It can be a vital force of the revolutionary action involving the masses of the people, for it is in struggle, in the actual physical confrontation with the enemy that the people gain a lasting confidence in their own strength and in the inevitability of final victory — it is through action that the people acquire true psychological emancipation.

**The recent inspiring actions of the black students have taken the struggle for liberation as a whole some considerable distance forward, not only in their heroism and discipline, but also in their demonstration of the importance and the necessity of securing and maintaining the unity of the main motive forces of the revolution — the oppressed peoples — their unity in mass action.**

As the struggle intensifies, and the polarisation of forces and their confrontation sharpens, the question of dividing the enemy and of isolating the most stubborn racist elements and those most consistently interested in the continued existence of the white supremacist state, whatever the cost, will assume greater significance.

It is therefore essential that, without compromising the unity of the oppres-

sed peoples, who are the main motive force of the revolution, we must evince enough tactical flexibility to take whatever opportunity arises to bring over to our side, or neutralise, such forces as we can, from among the ranks of the enemy's social base: the whites.

On all these questions and others of a strategic and tactical nature, the voice of our organisation is still relatively weak. Yet every day it becomes more urgent that we bring to bear on the situation all the weight of the political experience and maturity of the ANC and the profoundly popular revolutionary objectives contained in its political programme, all of which are, in any case, a summation of the collective experience of the people in struggle and therefore belong to the people themselves.

Guided by the profoundly popular revolutionary objectives contained in its political programme, the ANC pursues its role as leader of the whole front of democratic antiracist forces.

Confronted with the fact of the aroused oppressed masses and a clear indication of the undying hostility of the people to apartheid, in spite of all measures to delude or terrorise them into submission, as well as the dead-ends to which the policy of apartheid has led the country, certain sections of the ruling class have been manoeuvring to force through some palliative measures.

This is leading to disarray, doubt and confusion among the ranks of the ruling class and an embryonic polarisation between the more far-sighted and the most backward sections of the ruling class, with these trends reflected among the oppressor nation as a whole.

The separate development programme represents an attempt by the enemy to still the revolutionary will of the people. It seeks to single out the temporary sectarian interests of various national, ethnic, tribal and social groups in the country, to highlight these interests, representing them as antagonistic to the aspirations of the oppressed peoples as a whole.

### **Sharpened Contradictions**

The enemy is intensifying and extending this programme at an increasing rate. This is because he is continually faced with the increasing wrath of

the oppressed peoples. The policy has solved nothing and has not improved the condition of the people. Rather it has increased the difficulties that the enemy is facing.

The regime of terror in South Africa, in its quest to blunt the effectiveness of our movement, has created institutions whose main purpose is to confuse and divert the people from the path of national liberation. The creation of these institutions, contrary to the expectations of the white dictatorship, has sharpened the contradictions in the South African society and are openly regarded as a hoax and a gigantic fraud. The oppressed are calling for their emancipation and the eradication of white domination.

The continuing government policy of creating a collaborationist African middle stratum and building up African-manned sectors of the white-dominated state machinery, particularly through the Bantustan programme, up to, and including the armed forces, has not had the intended effect of damping down popular militancy and hostility to apartheid.

The enemy thus finds that peace is not possible except on terms that genuinely favour the majority of the people. This is throwing him into confusion because he cannot satisfy both the dictates of white domination and the requirements of black, democratic majority rule, even within the terms of the treacherous formula "unimpeded progress to majority rule". An intense struggle is taking place among the ranks of the oppressor nation for a formula that would both defuse the explosive situation existing in our country and ensure the perpetuation of white supremacy. The result is a policy which, in the statements of the ruling class at least, is characterised alternately by bursts of reformist fervour and obscurantist racism and reaction.

The enemy is politically weaker now than he has been for a long time, thanks to the continuation of the struggle at home and abroad by our organisation and other patriotic forces, under the most difficult conditions.

### **Mass Action**

It is an urgent necessity that we intensify this struggle, particularly inside the country. Current developments



The bare and dismal living of a typical estate in South Africa.

Photo: Camera Press

show that this would split and confuse the enemy. Hence we must aim a series of continuous assaults at the citadel of repression. We must introduce an element of professionalism in our methods making it difficult for the enemy to cope with the increased tempo of the struggle. We must increasingly demonstrate to the white population that the regime of terror is incapable of providing security and stability.

In the legal struggle, the idea which all the forces of the revolution must pursue with consistency is mass action – mass action as the main tactic, mass action to involve the people in struggle.

The unity of the people in struggle is

a fundamental prerequisite of victory. That unity can only be built up in mass action. The process of the formation and consolidation of that unity cannot proceed in a straight line, but will follow a zigzag pattern. In all these zigzags we must consistently fight for the united action of the oppressed people and the united action of all democratic and antiracist forces.

It is important to realise the fact in practice that liberation cannot come about through the actions of only one or a few sections of the oppressed population, however militant these actions may be. The whole population has to be committed and engaged in struggle.

The speed of a column on the march is determined by the pace of the slowest and weakest soldier and not the fittest and fastest. The most advanced sections should, therefore, at all times seek to advance the least developed ones, keeping in the forefront the principle of the greatest and highest unity of the people and at all times fighting against all tendencies of seeking to "go it alone", through impatience and contempt for the less developed forces of the revolution.

The enemy consistently seeks to disrupt this unity, aiming, in the first instance, at destroying the organisational unity of the liberation movement. He realises that so long as we are

politically and organisationally united we represent a formidable force.

He uses all means and methods within his powers to throw doubts on the honesty of the organisation's leadership and the revolutionary will of its most militant cadres. Lies, calumny and distortions are his stock-in-trade. He seeks to split and demoralise us and render us impotent as a revolutionary force, remaining only a cadaver over which the remnants of our organisation will wage a self-destructive, fratricidal fight.

The biggest struggle inside our country over the last ten years, between us and the enemy, has been over the question of organisation. Systematically, the enemy sought to decapitate our organisation at both the national and local levels, ferreting out the leading activists. Many patriots have lost their lives in this struggle, fighting over every inch of ground to preserve the organisation and to reconstitute it.

Gradually we are winning this struggle. Uninterrupted work in this field and permanent vigilance against the enemy's secret police will ensure us faster progress. The many dark years of extreme persecution have steeled the people for the sharper struggles ahead, in which they, organised as an underground force, will now act again as an iron fist.

Increasingly it becomes ever clearer to the people that in the final analysis the only way out of their terrible condition is armed struggle and armed seizure of power.

The political situation inside the country, the mood of the people and revolutionary acts of violence by the people show that the people are seeking to break through the limits which legal struggle necessarily imposes on them.

Our movement as the vanguard of the national liberation revolution must step up its activities inside the country,

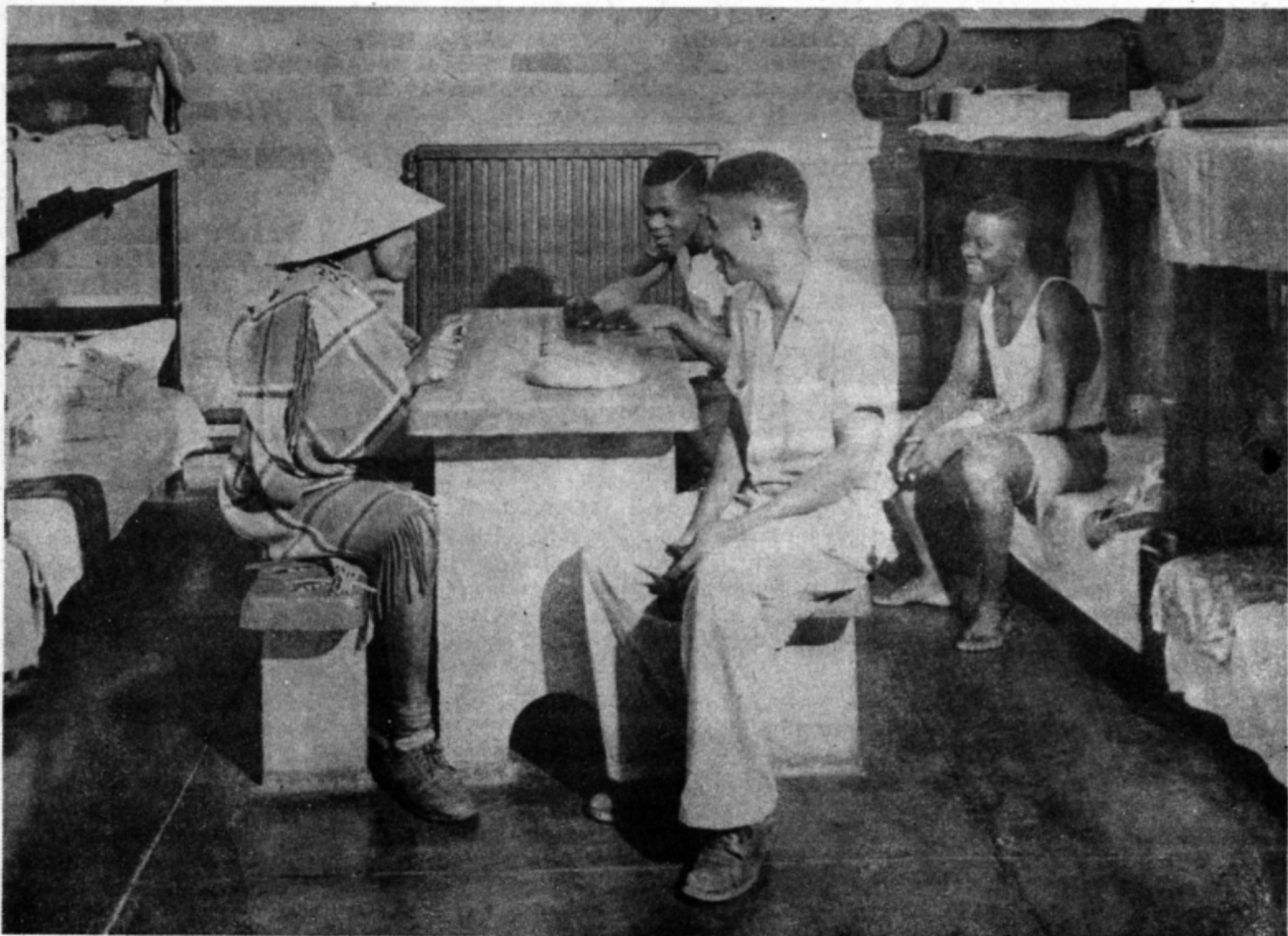
teaching the oppressed masses new and revolutionary methods of struggle. Guerilla warfare skills must systematically be made available to our underground operatives. Our movement has in the course of difficult struggle acquired valuable lessons which it is implementing in order to cope with the terror and sadism of the enemy. Harrassment of the enemy must be intensified. The violence of the white state must be answered with revolutionary violence. Greater discipline, better commitment and dedication and willingness to sacrifice are demands of the situation. The time has come for our movement to show clearly that the way out is the destruction of the white dictatorship through a protracted armed struggle that must culminate in the armed seizure of power.

**AMANDLA!**

**MAATLA!**

**POWER TO THE PEOPLE!**

Living conditions on the mines. No women are allowed here





# INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA: The Workers Fight On

The last two issues of SECHABA have been almost exclusively devoted to the growing strike movement in South Africa and on wages and conditions obtaining in the country. Once again this issue of our journal deals extensively with the strike situation among South Africa's exploited Black workers and the repercussions internationally of this action by the workers.

When one takes into account the fact that Black workers in South Africa face infinitely greater hardships than workers in the western world when on strike, only then does one realise the gravity of the problems facing Black workers in the country and their readiness to make such tremendous sacrifices to better their lot.

In the first instance, because they are denied the right to form unions that are recognised, workers do not receive strike pay while on strike as do workers in the United States or Europe or indeed, as White workers do in South Africa. Apart from this it is illegal for Black workers to strike and although, in this instance, most workers who participated in the strike (a total of 250,000 in Natal alone) were not arrested, some three hundred have been. These have been found guilty and sentenced to varying periods of imprisonment and fined. In Odendaalsrus, in the Orange Free State, a 40-year old African, Mr. Joseph Phatlane, was fined R250 (approx. £125) or 250 days imprisonment for "incitement to cause a strike" when 25 workers came out on strike at a small local firm. The remaining 24 workers are due to face charges of striking.

## Police Airlifted

Perhaps the most serious handicap the workers face when on strike is the attitude of the authorities and the police and the army.

At the height of the strike movement in Durban, the local City Council called on the State for assistance when the city's essential services were brought to a halt. A strong contingent of police were airlifted to Durban from Pretoria and the reinforced police force moved into action with

batons, sten guns, service rifles and FN rifles. Scores of workers from different factories were arrested. Tear gas was used freely in many areas and groups of workers were baton charged.

Despite this the strikes continue. At the time of writing several strikes are still on.

In Richards Bay, in Zululand, 700 aluminium workers are on strike and have been threatened with dismissal. The army has been called to keep the factory, which is controlled by the Industrial Development Corporation, a quasi-government body, going.

At a clothing factory in Charlestown in Natal, 3000 are still out on strike. The owners of the factory, Veka Clothing, have close associations with the government.

Three hundred African workers at a mill in Krugersdorp, in the Transvaal, staged a lightning strike and returned to work when they were told that the management had decided the week previously to increase wages.

## Growing Militancy

As the strike movement drags on to its third month, there is growing militancy among the workers now on strike. City Council employees for instance jeered the Acting Mayor of Durban when he told them of the decision of the Council to raise wages by 15 per cent with a minimum of R2. for each worker. While he spoke two South African air force Puma helicopters hovered over the crowd, which waved sticks and fists at them.

Subsequently the workers who decided to demonstrate their opposition to the offer by marching to the City Engineer's offices were baton charged by the police, disarmed and many were forced into two troop carriers and four pick-up vans and taken to the police station where they were all charged. In spite of this the strike continues.

It is too early to analyse the present wave of strikes or to assess the strikers' achievements in terms of actual increases they have won.

However, at a rough guess tens of thousands of Black workers have

wrung an extra R2 a week out of their reluctant employers.

In doing so they have also:

- Brought home to the employers that they can no longer get away with paying Black workers appallingly low wages;
- Proved once and for all that the government's industrial legislation is ineffective and inadequate;
- Proved that the Black workers are ripe for trade union organisations and that in many cases despite the lack of organisation they can be militant and disciplined;
- Showed the urgent need for increasing activity in organising the unorganised workers even though such unions will not be officially recognised;

Even though in many instances workers have returned to work there is no doubt that they are far from satisfied with the increases they have won.

In almost all cases, labourers who form the majority of Black workers in industry, mining and in agriculture, are, despite increases, still receiving far below the poverty datum line.

Anyone who thinks that this wave of strikes are the end, will, we predict, be rudely shocked. One thing is starkly evident: the Black workers are determined and if employers and the government do not pull their weight there is bound to be more trouble.

## White Workers Scab

Experience shows us that White workers in South Africa regard anyone with a black skin as a servant of the White man. Predictably, therefore, as in the past, White workers again sided with the employers against the Black strikers. In Durban, for instance, 150 White City Council employees and 30 White housewives volunteered to unload 80 wagons of vegetables at the City market. In addition to this, not a single White trade union called its workers out on strike in sympathy with the Black workers. Nor did they offer any meaningful assistance to the strikers even though White workers enjoy the right to strike and most have huge bank balances.

Meanwhile, the Trade Union Council



Victorious bus strikers give the banned ANC salutes: "Afrika!" and "Amandla!"

of South Africa (TUCSA), recently launched a campaign for the recognition of African unions. This move is suspect from the start. When the Nationalist Party Government came into power in 1948, one of its first acts was to revise the Industrial Conciliation Act dividing White, Indian and Coloured unions on racial lines. For African workers the government enacted the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act which denied recognition of African trade unions and made it a criminal offence for Africans to strike.

In the face of these legislation, the South African Trades and Labour Council, a multi-racial trade union federation with an all-White leader-

ship decided to exclude African workers from membership of the Council. They also decided to dissolve the Council and form TUCSA.

With the rapid growth of industries in recent years and the government's failure to get sufficient White immigrants to do the skilled jobs (which are reserved for Whites only) employers have been forced to fill some white vacancies with Black workers. This trend has been increasing in recent years and TUCSA sees this a threat to the high standards enjoyed by the White workers.

In organising Black workers therefore, TUCSA hopes to stunt the growth of this trend and keep the Black wor-

kers, mainly unskilled and semi-skilled, as at present.

A glaring example of how this is done is revealed by Jack and Ray Simons in their book: *Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950* (Penguins African Library). "A fraternal embrace could be as deadly as isolation," they write.

"Natal Indians made the discovery after being admitted to the South African Typographical Society early in 1929. White printers on strike in Durban had been kept out for six weeks because the Indians (unorganised -Ed.) remained at work, said Albert Downes, the general secretary, and he urged an open door policy. At Cape Town, he claimed, 'the number of coloured people employed in the printing industry had decreased since they had been admitted to membership.' The Durban printers, reported FORWARD, (a weekly trade union paper -Ed.) wanted to eliminate Indians from the industry. About 250 of them refused to be eliminated; therefore they had to be absorbed . . .

"Twenty five years later, Tom Rutherford, the general secretary of the Union and president at the time of the South African Trade Union Council, reported that 'one could count the number of skilled Indian printers in Natal on the fingers of your one hand. They have been almost eliminated. That happened because we took them into the union.'"

There is no doubt therefore that TUCSA wants to see the status quo remaining and it is for this reason that the African National Congress supports the rejection of any moves by TUCSA to organise Black workers or to speak on their behalf. The non-racial South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) is the only genuine trade union federation in South Africa. Despite its leaders being banned, imprisoned, deported and even sentenced to death, SACTU continues to organise in South Africa. It is not as strong as it was in the late 50s and early 60s, but we have little doubt that with the present mood of the workers it will once again grow into a powerful movement.

# INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS:

## Against Starvation in South Africa

When the BSA Company in Britain was on the verge of bankruptcy, Mini Trog of the Guardian, produced this cartoon.



Is it too late for us to open a factory in South Africa?

The international campaign against apartheid has hotted-up considerably since the strikes began. Adam Raphael, the London Guardian correspondent who was in South Africa at the time the strikes first broke out sparked off a nationwide furore when he blasted British investors in his front page lead story in the Guardian. He reported that the majority of British companies in South Africa are paying substantial numbers of their African workers below officially recognised subsistence levels.

His report stated that some prominent British companies earning large profits are paying between a third and a half of this minimum subsistence standard.

His article which named guilty companies such as Tate and Lyle (the sugar barons), General Electric, Courtaulds, British Leyland, Associated British Foods, Portland Cement and Metal Box has moved wide sections of the British public to demand action against these companies.

Spearheaded by Mr. James Callaghan, Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary, the campaign within the British Parliament for an investigation of British companies pay policy in South Africa is gaining wide support. At the time of writing it seems possible that an all-party committee will be set up to carry out such investigations. Meanwhile on the trade union front there has been widespread activity organised by the external mission of the South African Congress of Trade

Unions and the Anti-Apartheid Movement's Trade Union sub-committee. Trade Unions will pressure British firms to withdraw investments from South Africa, it was decided at the second annual trade union conference held by the Anti-Apartheid



Movement. The conference was attended by over 50 delegates from 14 major unions including those representing public employees, locomen, printers, cinema technicians, tobacco

workers, transport workers, engineers and post office executives.

The conference was addressed by experts on Southern Africa, including Ambassador E. Ogbu of Nigeria, chairman of the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid. (An abridged text of his speech is published elsewhere in this issue).

Delegates demanded that the British Trade Union Congress should break off its links with the white dominated TUCSA and recognise the non-racial S.A. Congress of Trade Unions.

### West Germany

A group of West German deputies in the coalition Government has asked for an investigation into the working conditions and wages of Africans employed by German firms in South Africa.

Frau Lenelotte von Bothmer, leader of the group, said the reason for the initiative was "the suspicion that the abuses uncovered by the Guardian could also apply to German firms." The growth of the anti-apartheid lobby in West Germany is causing much concern among leading industrialists with interests in South Africa. Dr. Werner Lucas, a former member of the Nazi Party and president of the German-South African Society in West Berlin collapsed and died due to strain while addressing a pro-apartheid meeting in the city.

Before he died he told his audience that his society was alarmed and disturbed at the increasing wave of support for the struggle against apartheid in West Germany.

Rainer Martin, vice president of the Society, which is affiliated to the All German-South African Society, speaking at the funeral of his chief said that the society will not work only with the Nationalist Party as in the past, but will also work with the United and Progressive Parties.

But, despite this, pressure from the people has forced the West German government into taking a stronger line towards firms wishing to invest in South Africa.

At least one major firm has been refused export credits for a major industrial concern it wished to establish in Namibia contrary to United Nations resolutions.

## United States

Although split between those who want complete disengagement by U.S. investors and those who want to use their "share power" in order to "bring about better wages and conditions for the Black workers in South Africa, the anti apartheid lobby in the United States is growing apace. In recent issues of *Sechaba* we published the efforts being made by the National Council of Churches in exposing such multi-national corporations as the International Telephone and Telegraph Company and General Motors. (Others in this series have had to be held up unfortunately due to pressure on space). Meanwhile in the U.S. Congress, Congressman Diggs has mounted a powerful campaign against U.S. involvement in apartheid.

Whilst the policy of the African National Congress and other organisations in South Africa such as the Coloured Labour Party, the Black Conscious Movement and the South African Students Organisation are firmly on the side of those who call for the total withdrawal of foreign investments in South Africa, we appreciate the limited commitment of some groups who feel that they can, by utilising their shares in these companies, bring about improvements for the Black workers.

The latter view in our opinion, if it succeeds (and we doubt this very much) will force foreign companies to withdraw from South Africa for two main reasons:

1. Whatever one might say these companies are in South Africa for the

profits they make and to expect them to change the system in South Africa is expecting a lot from them;

2. Locally based companies most certainly will not appreciably increase wages and improve conditions and

will therefore present stronger competition against their foreign counterparts for their products on the open market.

And, in the long run those who opt for the use of their "share power" to im-





of the white racist rulers of our country against the Black masses who will be spearheading such a struggle. Having said this, however, we wish to appeal to all our many supporters to recognise that one may not at this stage expect the level of commitment to be the same in all circles and therefore not to fight against each other but to continue, each in his own way, to attack the enemy – white racism and apartheid.

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## STOP PRESS

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Chief Gatsha Butelezi, head of Kwa Zulu, called on all Africans to refuse to break the strike by 700 African workers at the Alusaf aluminium smelter in Richards Bay, reported earlier in this report. The company which is owned jointly by the State-controlled Industrial Development Corporation (78 per cent) and the Swiss company, Aluisuisse (22 per cent) dismissed all its African work force who were out on strike in support of a demand for an increase of 50 p an hour.

Two days later the strike was settled when the workers were offered an increase of £1.20 per week.

The use of troops in an enterprise involving a major foreign firm once again emphasises our contention that these firms are in South Africa only to bleed its Black labour force.

Chief Butelezi's call comes within 24 hours of a warning by the English-speaking Senator Owen Horwood, Minister of Indian Affairs and Tourism, that Bantustan leaders are forbidden to speak on behalf of all Africans; they must represent only the interests of their own ethnic group.

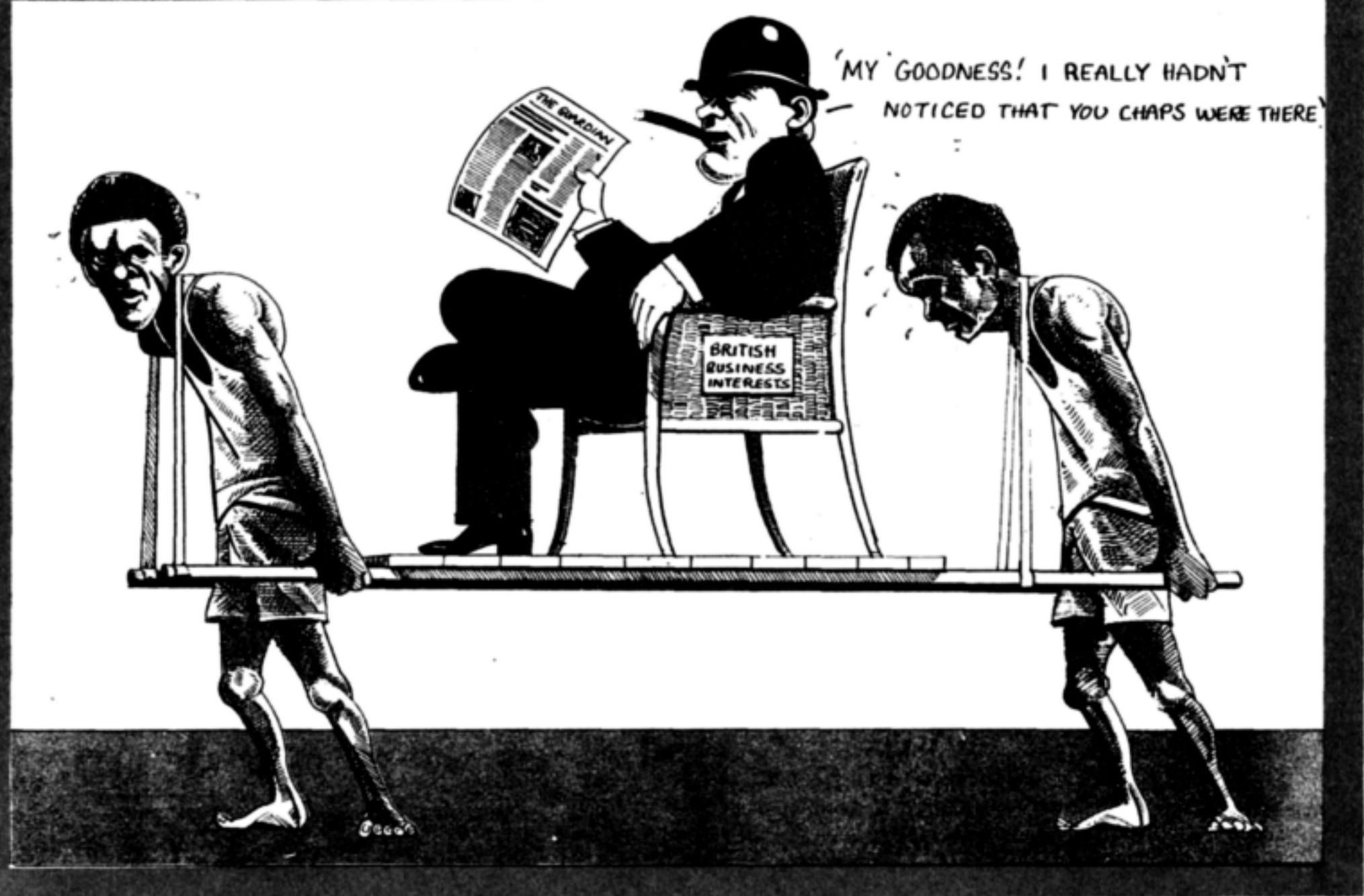
In this case the government insists that the Kwa Zulu leadership is exceeding its authority by intervening at all in the strike, even though all the workers involved are Zulus.



prove wages for the Black workers will, we hope, see the futility of their efforts and join us in the demand for the total withdrawal of all foreign investments in South Africa.

One other factor that should be borne

in mind by our friends who hold this view is that as the struggle for freedom and democracy advances in South Africa countries with large investments there will, as in so many cases elsewhere, intervene on the side



Cartoon by Peter Fluck in the Labour Weekly, London

# SLATER SLATED

ON two wattle farms owned by Slater Walker SA, (A British owned company - Ed.) I saw several children suffering from open sores, distended stomachs, and weakened limbs. A Zulu interpreter and a University of Natal lecturer accompanying me said the children had kwashiorkor, a disease caused by protein and vitamin deficiency.

THE farm manager of Newlands state near Pietermaritzburg controlled by Slater Walker's subsidiary, Natal Tanning Extract, acknowledged that malnutrition was rife. 'What can do about it?' he asked. A distraught Zulu father on Natal Tanning's Boscombe Estate, earning 24p a day said: 'My child is dying but I cannot buy milk. I must earn more money.' The farm manager dismissed the malnutrition sores as 'flea-bites' and said that he himself received plenty of milk. Any that was left over after he had fed his dogs was given 'to the Bantu'...

- London GUARDIAN 12. 3. 73

## "I KNEW NOTHING": Jim Slater

"MR. JIM SLATER, Chairman of Slater Walker Securities, saying that he was horrified to read of the conditions on wattle farms controlled by its South African subsidiary, Natal Tanning Extract, commented: 'I wish it had been brought to my attention in a less dramatic way...'

"NEITHER my colleagues nor I knew anything about conditions of South African employees of NTE and that company has been regarded by Slater Walker South Africa simply as an investment."

- London GUARDIAN 13. 3. 73

## Simply Not True

THIS is simply not true. Repeated exposures of working conditions in British-owned companies have been made by the national press in Britain. ON APRIL 18, 1971, for instance, the London Sunday Times carried a lengthy article entitled: "SOUTH

AFRICA: Do British Companies Set a Good Example or Just Collect the Profits?"

MANY of the statements made in the Guardian exposures were repeated then. Although Slater Walker was not mentioned by name, the facts contained in that, and many other such articles, must have been seen by Mr. Jim Slater.

EVEN if we accept that he did not know, we wonder where he thought the huge profits he was making at Natal Tanning came from if not from paying his workers there starvation wages.

THE argument that "I did not know" although unacceptable to us, let us see what they do to change the situation, now that British investors do know.

FOR as long as British business is in South Africa, we do not believe they can or will do much.

## STOP PRESS

Since writing, Slater Walker has made some improvements in wages and conditions of the workers employed by them.

# Wages and Conditions of...

## FARM LABOURERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The following is an extract from a paper prepared for the United Nations Unit on Apartheid by Roslynde Ainslee, a South African journalist in exile

Farm workers in South Africa are on average the lowest paid of all employees and their working conditions among the harshest. This is in a country where African wages are already notoriously low, and African working conditions notoriously harsh. Resistance by white farmers to wage increases persists, based on a deep-rooted mythology which has been argued before every Government inquiry into farm labour in the past century, namely that African needs are few, and that higher wages will simply enable workers to take more leisure, or dissuade additional members of a family from working at all. The custom of paying part of agricultural wages in kind both cuts the cost to the farmer and tends to keep cash wages to a minimum, thereby preventing the worker from saving. The effect of this is to tie him more firmly to his master.

Increases in wages have borne little relation to the rising cost of living. In the Eastern Cape, for instance, wages of farm labourers rose from approximately 10s. per month plus rations in the 1870s (1) to only 10/6d per month plus rations in 1932 (2). Thus in real terms, wages actually diminished in value. By 1958, wages had risen to 31/10d per month, and the average wages in cash and kind for a family of six or seven was calculated at £107 per annum (3).

The fact that agricultural wages are

paid partly in kind (including food, particularly maize meal, housing, clothing and the use of grazing or arable land) makes the "real" value of the farm worker's income difficult to calculate. However, the 1962 agricultural census shows that 1,397,096 African regular and casual employees received R59,881,021 (\$83,833,429) in cash wages in the year ending June 30, 1962, that is, less than R43 (\$60.23) per annum, or approximately R3.50 (\$4.90) per month. And 127,000 African farm domestic servants received R4,968,765 (\$6,956,271) just under R39 (\$54.60) per annum and R3.25 (\$4.55) per month. Together, a total of 1,524,796 employees and servants received an estimated extra total of R29,773,475 (\$41,682,865) in bonuses, payments in kind, grazing rights and use of arable land on approximately R19.50 (\$31.30) per annum, or R1.60 (\$2.24) per month. The total average income in cash and kind for agricultural workers, therefore, emerges as between R4 (\$5.60) and R6 (\$8.40) per month. These figures, of course, include the wages of women and children. In 1969, the Managing Director of Market Research Africa estimated the average wage for an adult male farmworker as no more than R7 (\$9.88) per month.

It should in addition be remembered that the 1.5 million African agricultural workers referred to above represented a total population, including

dependants, of 2.5 million persons, plus, in the case of migrant workers, dependent families living in the reserves.

The place of African agricultural workers in the economy, in relation to white agricultural workers on the one hand and African workers in other sectors is brought out by the following figures from the South African Bureau of Statistics, 1968:—

Average Annual Earnings  
(in Rands)

|                    |           | Whites | Africans |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Agriculture        | 1958      | 1895.0 | 36.7     |
|                    | 1964      | 1293.8 | 60.0     |
| Mining             | 1967      | 3668.0 | 202.0    |
| Manu-<br>facturing | 1963-1964 | 2169.0 | 413.6    |

In return for these wages, the farmer enjoys rights over his labourers not unlike those of a feudal landowner over his serfs, including the "right" to punish his employees by withdrawal of so-called privileges, fines or beatings. This "right" arises from the fact that desertion and "disobedience" are offences under the Masters and Servants Laws.

Farm labourers may work 14 hours a day or more (4). Wives of squatters and children as young as eight years of age may be called upon to work, and parents may contract their children without their consent though they may not contract them to another farmer without the consent of their landlord (5). Farmers may cancel a contract with a labourer should any member of his family fail in his obligations (6). The employee has no right of cancellation, however, and desertion under the Masters and Servants Laws is a criminal, not a civil, offence. Beer brewing, visiting on other farms or entertaining visitors, education for children, are all regarded as privileges.

Miss Roberts found in her survey that there were more literate women among the farmworkers than men, since children are often permitted to go to school only when not required for farm work. She also found that, of the 73 farms she studied, only 4 had schools on their farms, 33 had schools within 3 miles and 19 were more than 3 miles away: 17 farms had no school available. Although the number of farm schools increased since that time, there were still only 2,857 farm schools in 1968 serving 223,417 children in lower primary classes, and 30,110 in higher primary classes (7).

There is virtually no provision for secondary education, which under Government policy is being concentrated in boarding schools in African reser-

ves, though some secondary schools remain in urban areas. Since 1963, rural children have been banned from attending schools in urban areas (8). In addition, far from being encouraged to provide schooling for African children, farmers have to pay or raise the cost of buildings for lower primary schools on their property; only 50% of capital costs for higher primary schools are met by public funds. Schools are actually refused registration (i. e. prohibited) on farms of less than 200 morgen.

Education, in short, is not to be a means of escape from agricultural labour. On the contrary, should a farmer wish it, the Minister of Bantu Education made the following ruling in 1959: -

(Part of the curriculum on farm schools) must be in the normal activities on the farm, in order to encourage a feeling of industriousness on the part of those children, and particularly, to sharpen in their minds the fact that education does not mean that you must not work with your hands, but to point out to them specifically that manual labour and also manual labour on a farm is just as good a formative and development level as any other subject is (9).

Farm workers are not defined as employees under the Industrial Conciliation Acts, nor are they covered by the Unemployment Insurance Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act. There is no minimum wage, and though minimum standards of accommodation and feeding are laid down under Government Notice 63 of 1959, and Government Notice 2197 of 1953,

no statistical records on the observance of these standards are kept. Only one full-time inspector of agricultural labour had been appointed by 1970, who, with members of labour liaison offices, had inspected 8,329 farms and 5,300 smallholdings in 1969 (10).

As long ago as 1937-1939, Africans complained to an official Committee on Farm Labour that wages were too low, and that farm workers had insufficient opportunity to earn cash. They complained further that food, housing and personal treatment were poor; that education and medical facilities were lacking and that they were given insufficient land or time for their own farming. They complained that a kraal (farm) head could bind all members of his kraal to work for a farmer, with or without their consent (11). In 1958, Margaret Roberts registered similar complaints in the Eastern Cape: low wages, not enough schools or churches, and no freedom to change their jobs. She also found a marked tendency to malnutrition among farm workers, and a high incidence of tuberculosis.

Indeed, so marked is the resistance of white farmers to improving working conditions, and so reliant are they on Government coercive measures to remedy chronic labour shortages, that the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development was himself constrained in 1967 to protest: -

"No wonder these workers looked for other avenues of employment . . . I make bold to say that if the farmer would revise archaic conditions of ser-

vice, especially in the light of the increased cost of living, he would find that even though the wage structure might still not be competitive with industry, he could nevertheless still attract the black farm labourer. Eventually the farmer will have to do so" (12).

No Government steps have been taken, however, to compel or even encourage such improvements, except for the provision of the Agricultural Credit Amendment Act, 1968, which offers farmers loans for building housing for non-white labourers. Similarly, little encouragement is given to farmers to train their African workers in the use of agricultural machinery. Short training courses for Coloured farmworkers are held at the Kromme Rhee Training Centre, Cape, for example, but no similar facilities exist for African workers. An official of the Department of Agricultural Credits told the Boland Agricultural Union in 1968 (13) that only one in every 18 non-white farm workers had been formally instructed in the use of agricultural machinery, causing very high maintenance costs and a high accident rate.

### Abusive Conditions

Since the 1920s, there have been periodic scandals involving the prosecution of farmers for assault and murder usually arising out of beatings for disobeying orders, or attempted desertion; exposures of brutality by *indunas* (African overseers, or boss-boys) and cases of workers imprisoned in locked compounds and guarded in



African farm labourers on a SA farm. Slave-labour conditions still exist



the fields by bossboys with sjamboks (leather whips) and dogs. Conditions in the potato-growing districts of the Transvaal were so bad that the African National Congress organised a nationwide boycott of potatoes in 1959 (14).

One of the most notorious scandals emerged in the 1950s, when a Johannesburg attorney, Mr. Joel Carlson, was able to bring habeas corpus actions to free a number of workers forced to work in Transvaal and Orange Free State farms under the so-called volunteer scheme (15). Under this scheme, "petty offenders" who were arrested under the pass laws were given the option of prosecution or 6 or 12 months farm labour (The maximum fine for most of these offences was in any case only £1 or £2).

In practice, however, the alleged offenders were given no choice. They were lined up and ordered on to the farms, their thumbprints summarily attached to contracts they had not read, and hustled onto lorries for despatch. It later emerged that some of them had been in regular employment in Johannesburg at the time, and were not pass offenders at all.

A typical account of what happened was that of George Dube in the case of James Mkabela in 1959, who stated: —

"(I was) taken to a brick building with only one entrance, consisting of a door constructed from iron bars, and all the windows were barred with iron. That first evening all my clothes except my trousers were taken back by one of the bossboys, who gave me a sack and told me to wear it. I soon found that the living conditions were of the most primitive kind and worse than anything I had ever heard of. We were only allowed water to drink on our return from the fields in the evenings and before we started work in the morning . . . During the whole time that I was on the farm I was not able to wash or shower, and I never saw any other worker wash or bath himself . . . The building in which we slept was in a filthy condition. There were two half drums provided as a lavatory, and those two half drums remained inside the building where we slept. This was the only sanitary arrangement for approximately 60 workers employed on this farm. During the whole period I was there, the dilapidated blankets and sacks given to us were never washed or aired. There were bloodstains and they were infested with insects and smelled; the walls crawled with bugs and other insects, and they were never cleaned



Daily pass raids such as this one nets over 2000 prisoners, most of whom end up as slave labour on the farms. The farmers pay the State less than 10p per worker per day

when I was there . . . During the day, whilst we worked in the fields, we were continuously guarded by bossboys who carried knobkerries (clubs). They were 9 in number to guard 60 workers. The bossboys continuously assaulted the workers, more especially when they wanted the workers to do their work more hurriedly. On some occasions there appeared to be no reason whatsoever for the assaults other than to initiate newly arrived workers into a general pattern." (16).

Other allegations made in court included deliberate injuring of workers' feet with hoes to make escape more difficult; food of mealiepap (maize porridge) eaten off sacks; and deliberate underfeeding so that workers would spend their meagre earnings in the farm store.

Over 3,000 labourers were supplied to farmers in 1947-48, the first year of the "volunteer" scheme, and by 1953 this figure had risen to 32,582. The scheme has been replaced subsequently by other methods of recruitment, including the increased use of convict labour. But cases of ill-treatment of labourers by farmers continue to be reported, and some cases of assault reach the courts. In a recent case in Klerksdorp Magistrate's Court, one Schalk van Staden of Hartebeesfontein was found guilty of putting a castration ring (used on rams) around the testicles of a 14-year old African shepherd boy, alleged to have "become too much of a gentlemen". (17)

## Notes

1. Francis Wilson in *The Oxford History of South Africa*, Vol. II, 1971, p. 122.
2. Margaret Roberts, *Labour in the Farm Economy* (South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1958) p. (iii) and p. 20.
3. *Ibid.*
4. In the Eastern Cape, they work from 5 a. m. to 7 p. m. in the summer months and from 7 a. m. to 5.30 p. m. in the winter months. See *Labour in the Farm Economy* by Margaret Roberts, p. 68.
5. Bantu, Service Contract Act No. 24 of 1932.
6. *Ibid.*
7. 1968 Survey of Race Relations in South Africa (South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1969) p. 220, hereinafter referred to as Survey and the appropriate year; 1969 Survey, pp. 188, 194.
8. 1963 Survey, p. 224
9. 1958-59 Survey, pp. 260-261.
10. Minister of Agriculture, quoted in *The Star*, Aug. 27, 1970.
11. See Horowitz, *op. cit.* p. 205
12. *The Star*, Johannesburg, July 12, 1967
13. 1968 Survey, p. 103
14. Ruth First, *op. cit.* In 1947, a farmer speaking at a meeting addressed by the then Minister of Justice, Mr. Lawrence, estimated that desertion by African workers was between 25 and 50 pct. despite the severe penalties.
15. The scheme was agreed to in 1947 by the Department of Native (now Bantu) Affairs, the Secretary of Justice and the Commissioner of Police, but it was never officially publicised. After a public outcry at the scandal, the scheme was suspended.
16. Quoted in Ruth First, *op. cit.*
17. *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, May 12, 1971

# MIGRATORY LABOUR SYSTEM

**A system designed for the super-exploitation  
of Black South African workers**

by  
**JOHN GAETSEWE**  
European Representative of the South African Congress  
of Trade Unions

legislation. They grow out of one another. The South African Government has forcibly extended the migratory labour system to manufacturing because they benefit from this century-old system.

At one time it seemed that the rate of industrialisation and urbanisation should lessen the scale of migrant labour. If we treat apartheid as the simple separation of races – and this is a wrong and misleading view – then it would appear that apartheid should collapse because of the rate of African urbanisation. However, the apartheid system is not collapsing at all. In the years of economic growth since the end of the second world war and in the boom years of the sixties, there has been a tightening up of the pass laws and other urban controls and these years have been the years of greatest repression of the African and the intensification of apartheid. The migratory labour system has brought more workers into circulation from the "Homelands". The system of apartheid provides a bonded labour force without which the intensity of labour exploitation cannot be maintained.

It is important to emphasise that Apartheid is a set of laws and a control mechanism for the maintenance of a cheap labour system. It is a special form of colonialism – and internal or domestic colonialism using colour as a differential. In this situation there exist two societies, one for the coloniser and one for the colonised, created within a common system. The basis of this is the exploitation of the African majority, which runs along the familiar pattern: the alienation of the African peasantry from the land, the ruin of its subsistence economy, a system of forcibly controlled labour based largely on migrant cheap labour, which results in the super-exploitation of the Black working class.

There exists a gigantic apparatus of control to see to it that this mechanism is kept in running condition. For this purpose there exist in South Africa the pass laws, or Reference Book system. Failure to produce the Reference Book on demand by the police renders the African liable to immediate arrest and imprisonment. Under the pass laws the Africans are denied freedom of movement. They are controlled and forced to take employment only through the recording and registration agent who operates the migratory labour system. This system, together with the creation of the African reserves from which the migratory labour comes, not only provides cheap labour for industry but also saves the government and employers the expense of maintaining the workers, for example with pensions, sick benefit, hospitalisation and other welfare benefits which workers and their families are normally entitled to in the course of their employment in industry.

Migratory labour is an integral and essential part of the policy of apartheid and discrimination. One cannot separate land poverty from migrant labour, or migrant labour from cheap labour, or low wages from the use of the reserves, or Bantustans, as the ostensible agricultural base of this working force which is part peasant and part proletariat. Also, one cannot separate the employment practice in the mines and in industry from government policy and industrial and labour

## In Other Countries

Migration of workers has occurred in many countries and it is a sign that there exists some difference, real or imagined, between the economic opportunities in different regions. It is a symptom of imbalance in the rate of economic development. Workers tend to move from areas where the market value of their labour is low to areas where it is higher. The movement of workers tends to bring about

Waiting outside a Pass Office for their hated document to be endorsed





**WHERE NO MEN LIVE.** Wives, mothers and children live in conditions such as these while their menfolk work in the cities. The men only come 'home' for about two weeks in the year, if they are lucky

Photo: John Seymour

more efficient distribution of labour and movement is likely to continue until the original imbalance has been rectified and an optimum combination of factors of production achieved.

Initially it is the young workers who migrate and settle in the new areas and make their homes there, and thus a permanent shift of population occurs. So it was in the industrial revolution in Britain and in other countries which have experienced a similar flow to the towns as they in turn have become industrialised. The process of adjustment need not necessarily be brought about solely by the movement of workers, for sometimes there is a reverse movement of capital and enterprise attracted to less developed areas by the prospect of cheap labour. This appears to have taken place in certain Southern states of the United States of America and in Southern Italy. But, however it comes about, the movements generally tend to bring about a balance or a state of equilibrium which, once achieved, removes the tendency to further migration.

What is generally known as migratory labour in South Africa is, however, a very different phenomenon. It too is a movement of workers from areas of low productivity, or with no industries at all, to those areas where employment

opportunities appear to be better. But the majority of workers who migrate under the migratory labour system, which is solely confined to Africans, do not have the right to a home near the industrial areas in South Africa. They work on contract labour under which, after the end of the period specified in the contract, they have to go back to the rural areas from which they came. There is thus no tendency towards equilibrium and the migration continues in perpetuity. Mass migration has been going on for almost a century and its hardships have increased with the growth of industrialisation. The poverty and pressure of population in the so-called „Bantustans” or “Homelands” have also increased. The African migrant workers spend the whole of their working lives circulating between the industrial areas and the “Bantustan” areas. More than three million men and women are perpetually on the move — men and women of two worlds, lacking the feeling of belonging anywhere.

The story of one man will illustrate how the system operates. Like all Africans, this man starts to work when he is 16 years old. Because of the pass laws, or Reference Book system, he cannot seek work anywhere without permission from the authorities, so he

decides to enter into a contract under the migratory labour system and goes to work in one of the mines near Johannesburg. At the end of the contract he returns to his home. After a few similar periods away from home he gets married, and after a few days leaves his young wife alone and returns to the mines. He continues in this way until he reaches the age of 47, by which time his wife has borne him four children. When he returns home for the last time at the age of 50 he is too old to go back to the mines. During his working life, 36 per cent of his time has been spent at home and 64 per cent in employment away from home. He has had 34 different jobs and his average time on the job was 47 weeks. He ends his working life a jack of all trades and master of none. It is only at the age of 50 that he begins to know anything of family life. His children regard him as an “uncle” who came sometimes to visit them. This is what the migratory labour system means to a family in South Africa. This one man's story is perhaps not truly representative of many Africans since it has included no period in prison for failure to produce a Reference Book.

Imagine the situation of the only place where a European worker can get a job is in Paris, and that workers

are recruited from England, Norway, Poland, Germany, etc. to go and work in Paris under the conditions already described. What kind of life would they lead?

### The Bantustan Programme

The migratory labour system can be seen as both a symptom and a cause of most of the economic, social and political problems in South Africa. The government has used this system not only as a source of cheap labour but also, by the perpetual mass movement of these African people, to prevent them from organising against the system of apartheid and to postpone its downfall.

Under the present "Bantustan" programme, the system is more dangerous now than in the past. As I see this programme, it will separate the African workers on tribal lines. Tswana will be recruited from Tswana areas to be sent to work in a factory which is manned by a Tswana group and to live in a hostel which only accepts Tswana. And so will be Zulus, Xosas, etc. For many years this system was used by the Chamber of Mines in the gold, coal and diamond mines. The division of Black workers on tribal lines has created a big problem in organising the African workers into trade unions and it looks as if it is going to continue as long as apartheid exists.

### Reference Books

In the past few pages I have mentioned the Reference Books which are part of the application of the migratory labour system. The pass laws are an integral part of the system of apartheid and discrimination.

It is important to deal here with the Reference Book. The government uses the reference book to control the influx of African people into the towns. The pass laws are as old as the migratory labour system itself, and both have been tightened to control Africans and despatch them to the industrial areas as industrialisation has developed. The Chamber of Mines, which is the recruiting agent for the mines, has many recruiting depots in nearly every Homeland in South Africa and through this agent workers are recruited and despatched to various mines in South Africa under the migratory labour system. This has now been extended to cover other industries. No African is allowed to move from the Homeland without the Reference Book being signed and giving the worker the right to seek work in a specified area for a specific period. It is this method which, with the approval of the government, is being used to deny African workers the right to seek work where there are better opportunities. Although the pass laws have existed for a long time, the restriction which they impose on the freedom of the African people have been increasing. Under the Abolition

of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act of 1952 for the first time African women were brought under the control of the pass laws.

In his book "Migrant Labour", Francis Wilson says that in 1921-1924 the annual average number of convictions under the pass laws was 48,000. By 1940 the number was 184,000 but between 1948 and 1962 when the present government was in power, the number of convicted persons under the pass laws jumped from 176,000 to 385,000 and again the number increased between 1967 and 1970 to 621,000.

It is clear that the government will never relax either the pass laws or the migratory labour system which ensure the cheap African labour on which the South Africa economy depends.

The migratory labour system applies to nearly every working place in South Africa. Domestic workers, farm, agricultural, industrial and mine workers, all are recruited under the same system. Even those areas such as Sophiatown and Alexandra Township, which belonged to the Africans, were declared white areas overnight and Africans were moved out. African men and women who are not qualified for acceptance into the government townships are now separated, wives from husbands and husbands from wives, and live in bachelor barracks in Alexandra township and elsewhere. The conditions in some of these barracks are briefly dealt with elsewhere.

This is SADA another "township" in the Reserve from where men are recruited as migrant labourers

Photo: John Seymour





BANTOEGEDIE  
BANTUERS SAL  
VERVOLG WORD  
BANTU AREA  
TRESPASSERS WILL  
BE PROSECUTED

An African township, safely fenced off, in an urban area

In the following Press Statement, the Anti-Apartheid Movement of Britain condemns British investors in Apartheid South Africa who pay their Black workers . . .

# POVERTY WAGES

The current debate over poverty wages paid to African workers in South Africa by overseas companies, including those in Britain, has been provoked by the well-documented report of Adam Raphael in the Guardian newspaper. The debate has centred on the question of whether firms pay wages below, on or above the Poverty Datum Line calculated by various white authorities. Inevitably, since the norm is calculated from the fact that 80 per cent. of African workers are paid below the PDL those firms whose employees have earnings on or slightly above the PDL have been commended and even suggested as models for others to imitate.

We regret this development and condemn the practice of setting up the poverty line as the objective point to be reached by British firms when our concern should be with paying African employees a living wage equal to that of white employees and with the same job opportunities as whites in the same firms. Those asking for a shift in African earnings towards the PDL accompanies with minor

fringe benefits in the form of medical care etc. also go on to claim that by instituting such changes overseas capital investment can play a major if not decisive role in bringing about a peaceful solution to the South African conflict. We totally reject this claim because it is nothing more than an attempt by overseas investors in the apartheid economy to legitimise their investment, continue to draw huge dividends and consolidate their supportive links with the apartheid system.

Overseas investors know that the apartheid economy yields super profits and that is why they take the initial decision to invest in the Republic. If British investors did not receive above average rate of return amounting to over 12 per cent at present (and over 19 per cent for US investments) then we would not witness such a high flow of external capital into the apartheid economy in recent years. According to the London Times of 15th March, 1973, "70 per cent of South Africa's direct investment in 1970 came from abroad". This is an exceptionally high rate of

external investment in the apartheid economy and is only one indicator of the growing external involvement in the apartheid economic and political system.

Overseas companies and banks operating in South Africa are therefore not independent agents in a free environment: they form an integral part of the apartheid system and dependent on the survival of that system. A maze of discriminatory and repressive laws maintain that system of white supremacy and reduce the African population into sub-human units of labour controlled by the pass and other laws which make it possible for them to be moved from area to area depending on the needs of the administration of white power and showing no concern for the preservation of family life or the right to protest. To strike is illegal and on those occasions when African workers have voiced their demands by going on strike the police and security forces have always moved in with weapons to break the resolve of the workers – and in many cases the police vehicles are those manufactured by British firms locally or exported from Britain.' Thus overseas investors are just as dependent and responsible for the preservation of the apartheid state.

Overseas firms also actively recruit white immigrants from overseas rather than training and providing better job opportunities for Africans and thereby collaborate directly with the white regime in increasing the flow of white settlers from abroad to help bolster the apartheid system. They also operate all the apartheid laws which prevent African workers having equal opportunities as white workers and the deliberate restrictions placed on the promotion of African workers makes nonsense of the claim by some firms that they will work towards equal wages. Indeed, Prime Minister Heath has just repeated the Official guidelines provided for British investors in South Africa that they must keep to all the apartheid laws which exist in that country.

How then can it remotely be argued that overseas investors can act as major instruments for a peaceful transfer of power to the majority of the inhabitants of South Africa? Is it not more accurate to suggest that these claims are not only false but merely a pretext to facilitate further flow of investment into the apartheid economy which produces such handsome dividends?

The Anti-Apartheid Movement believes that all international links with the apartheid system and especially economic links play a supportive role in helping to maintain the existing order. Investors in the apartheid economy automatically develop a vested interest in preserving that system by virtue of their stake in it. Thus, when white power is faced with a serious challenge from the African oppressed population, overseas investors will side with the white regime because by their investment and links they have already intervened on the side of the status quo.

We have therefore always demanded the total withdrawal of overseas investments in South Africa because they help to sustain the present racially oppressive tyranny and will inevitably come into confrontation with the aspirations of the oppressed African people for freedom and democracy.

We recognise that due to the demands for total withdrawal by our movement and other supporting groups there have been some modifications in the operation of Barclays Bank in South Africa; the same is true of the Polaroid Corporation in the United States when the Polaroid Revolutionary

Workers Movement demanded total withdrawal. This is also the policy of the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity and last August the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches also adopted a far reaching policy of withdrawal. It is precisely because the demand for disengagement from South Africa is gaining new ground that some companies are claiming to be agents of change when they are merely concerned with diverting the demands for withdrawals.

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## AAM POLICY

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As part of our overall policy to reduce the level of international support given to the white regime in South Africa the Anti-Apartheid Movement will concentrate on the following issues in the coming months:—

1. **NO LOANS** to the South African Government or to companies operating in the Republic.
2. **NO NEW INVESTMENT** in South Africa by British and other overseas companies. Those already operating in South Africa should withhold all new investment there and others should not initiate any investment.
3. **STOP WHITE IMMIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA.** British and other overseas firms actively recruit white settlers for South Africa in conformity with the policy of the Pretoria regime. They should stop this system of bolstering the white population and preventing Africans from obtaining better job opportunities. There will also be a wider public campaign aimed at discouraging white immigration to South Africa.
4. **EXPOSURE OF COMPANIES** with a vested interest in **RACIST EXPLOITATION.** By means of annual meetings etc. we will intensify our campaign to expose the operations of British and international firms with investments in South Africa, the conditions of African workers, etc.

In the first instance we ask for public assurance from all British companies operating in South Africa and answer YES to points 2 and 3 above. Those with shares in these companies must also seek these assurances immediately. Trade Unionists must also make the same demand.

In addition to working on the above campaign through contacts and supporters of the AAM we shall be taking the opportunity of a major Trade Union Conference called by us this coming week-end to formulate a national campaign among trade unions in Britain.

Secondly, I have been invited to participate in the International Conference of Experts for the Support of Victims of Colonialism and Apartheid in Southern Africa which will take place in Oslo from April 9th to 14th and that opportunity will be taken to internationalise this campaign. The Conference is organised by the United Nations in co-operation with the Organisation of African Unity and sponsored by the Nordic countries.

Thirdly, the ILO workers section conference on South Africa which is due to take place this month in Geneva will be utilised to further our campaign with international and national trade union federations.

While the strikes in South Africa were reaching new heights, the United Nations Unit on Apartheid adopted the following paper, presented by India's representative on the Committee, Mr. Syed Barakat Ahmad. Mr. Ahmad calls for . . .



## International Solidarity with

# THE BLACK WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Earlier this month the South African Government faced its most serious crisis since the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. In January and early February of this year, there were strikes in South Africa by black workers, especially in the Durban industrial area of Natal, where some of South Africa's largest textile mills are situated. More than 100 plants and an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 workers were affected. The magnitude of the labour unrest, involving about 100,000 persons during a series of strikes since January, which crippled the city of Durban, cannot be underestimated. The strikers demanded better working conditions and an increase in wages, which were far below the "poverty datum lines" – or minimum subsistence levels. Although most of the workers have recently returned to work, with small monetary gains, the results are bound to have far-reaching implications for all South Africans.

The Special Committee has repeatedly warned of the explosive situation created in South Africa by the imposition of apartheid and all that it means. The racist regime has tried to suppress all resistance by ruthless and savage repressive measures and has so far claimed that the country was peaceful. Some Governments were taken in by this phoney peace. But these recent strikes provide yet another proof – if it was ever needed – of the tremendous explosive force building under the surface requiring urgent effective international action.

As the distinguished delegates know

only too well, African workers in South Africa have had no effective bargaining power since 1953, when the Bantu Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act decreed that black trade unions could not be registered. The Act allowed only



Ken Gill, Secretary of the Engineering Union (TASS) of Britain, expressing his Union's support for SACTU at the AAM's Trade Union Conference

for the establishment of "works committees", at individual firms under the Department of Labour officials. There are, however, little more than 30 of these works committees in existence in the entire country, which has an estima-

ted 5,800,000 economically active Africans, 30,000 registered employers and over 19,000 factories. And so labour grievances have no legitimate safety valve.

Studies by the South African Institute of Race Relations and other bodies have repeatedly pointed to the fact that over 80 per cent. of Africans live below the "poverty datum line" which is considered to be the minimum income below which health and proper living conditions cannot be maintained and which is estimated to be approximately 33 per cent. below the minimum income ideal for human beings.

The situation is bad and the living conditions have become unbearable owing to the glaring contrast between the wages of whites and blacks; this wage gap has widened in recent years. Blacks have become increasingly aware of the contrast between their poverty and the affluence of the whites, alongside whom they live and work despite the Nationalist dream of strict racial separation. The real wages of the blacks have been declining over the years, as was pointed out in a study prepared by Barbara Rogers for the Unit on Apartheid.

Last year, the Special Committee, in its report to the General Assembly and the Security Council, referred to the growing concern of a number of eminent Africans over the widening gap in living standards. Mrs. Helen Suzman, the Progressive Party's only M. P., commenting on the unprecedented labour strike in Namibia, said that a

terrible legacy of bitterness and frustration was being built up and that white South Africans would ignore these warnings at their peril. With respect to the strikes taking place in South Africa, she asked: How much does it take to agitate a black man who has to live on \$14 a week? The President of the Artisan Staff Association, representing 20,000 railway workers, granted that without basic rights of negotiation, industrial peace could not be maintained. The then Minister of the Interior, Mr. Theo Gerdener, warned late in 1971 that before anything was done to raise the already high standard of living of the whites, more attention should be paid to African, Coloured and Indian standards. He pointed out that throughout history, it had been proved that such gigantic differences in living standards could convert neighbourliness into enmity and hate. He went on to say that the situation could lead to murder and violence because the less privileged could no longer tolerate the apparent wealth, ease and prosperity of his neighbour.

His words sent a shock wave through Nationalist quarters, coming as they did from the ranks of that party of white supremacy. His statement was repudiated by other Cabinet members and Mr. Gerdener was forced to resign. The Government did not heed the warnings and the black workers had no choice but to resort to strikes despite the grave risks.

Employers are said to have been left shaken by the experience, asking themselves how they could have been caught unawares. Mr. Chairman, it is a recurring phenomena that oppressors are always overthrown by revolutions at a time when they expect them least. Given the absence of any dialogue between labour and management — that is, essentially between black and white South Africans — and the refusal on the part of white employers to pay a decent wage to blacks, who constitute the bulk of the country's labour force, employers should

rather be asking themselves how there was not bound to be widespread discontent. But that simple logic is never understood by a tyrant. The discontent reached such proportions recently that Africans braved police intimidation, criminal prosecution, the threat of dismissal from their jobs and the consequent deportation to the poverty-stricken reserves and walked out in protest.

Now most of them have gone back to work but their gains are small and are by no means adequate. For example, striking Jabourers at a brickworks factory returned to work after being offered an additional \$4 per week, bringing their total wages up to \$16 per week, still well below the poverty datum line.

Many of the strikers paid a heavy price for their legitimate demands. Over a hundred Africans were fined 30 Rand (or \$42) for participating in a demonstration. Several employers shut down plants and dismissed thousands of workers rather than meet their moderate demands. The workers who were dismissed, of course, lost their right to remain in the urban centres, and will be "endorsed out" to the reserves.

After these strikes, there have been hints by those in authority that they have learned a lesson.

The Mayor of Durban, Mr. Ron Williams, who had earlier ordered the 16,000 striking municipal workers of Durban back to their jobs under threat of dismissal, was reported to have said:—

"The biggest mistake we in authority can make now is to sit back and say everything is normal. We all know what the cause of labour unrest is. We must see to it that we remove this root cause as soon as we possibly can".

Prime Minister Vorster spoke in sombre tones about the strikes in Parliament on 10 February, and stated that there was a lesson to be learned from them by everyone — the Government,

the Government-appointed wage boards and the employers.

Yet one wonders how the Government and its boards can learn any lesson so long as they cling to the inhuman policy of apartheid and regard Africans as unskilled labour units to minister to the needs of the whites. Nor have the employers, whose wide profit margins have been based on the slave-like wages paid their black labourers, shown any willingness to learn from past mistakes.

The first lesson to be learned is that apartheid and racism are not only immoral but are bound to lead to an explosion.

But if the South African regime and the employers are unlikely to learn the lesson, let us hope that the international community will not fail to understand the significance of the situation and, at last, take all the necessary measures to change the tide of events.

It is heartening that the press in Britain, the United States and other countries has recognized the deep significance of these strikes. The illusion of South Africa, peaceful under apartheid, has vanished.

Many trade unions have expressed grave concern over the situation. They have not failed to note that some of the firms involved, which are now shown to be paying miserable wages to their workers, are owned by foreign investors who have been busy propagating the myth that economic forces would end apartheid if only foreign investment was increased.

It would seem timely and appropriate, in connection with the preparations for the international trade union conference against apartheid that the Special Committee might promote the development of an effective movement of solidarity with the black workers of South Africa. The Preparatory Meeting of the Conference on 26 February is most timely and I would venture to suggest that the Chairman be authorized at that meeting to consult with other participants not only on the arrangements for that Conference but also on urgent action to be taken on the present situation.

Tragedy has been defined as a sequence of events which lead to disaster. There is no relieving feature and the protagonist's fate is necessary, inexorable, not to be escaped. The South Africa spectacle arouses our pity and fear. True to the pattern of Greek tragedy the catastrophe in South Africa is not accidental but inevitable.

## **NOTICE TO READERS**

WE HAVE only just received copies of "YOUTH CHALLENGE" and "SEARCHLIGHT" two newsheets distributed inside South Africa. They reached us a little too late for publication in this issue but we hope to include extracts from these important publications in our next issue.





Ambassador Ogbu of Nigeria

# CALL FOR ACTION BY TRADE UNIONS

by:  
**Ambassador Ogbu of Nigeria, Chairman,  
of the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid,  
in a speech delivered at the 2nd Conference  
of Trade Unions,  
organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement of Britain**

The questions facing you at this Conference are important not only for the people of South Africa, not only for the people of Africa, but also for the people in the rest of the world, particularly in the Western countries. The trade union movement in Great Britain and in other Western countries has the possibility and the responsibility to exert great influence in the direction of peaceful and just solutions in southern Africa. Your small group must grow and we hope it will grow.

Apartheid in South Africa is discrimination, oppression and humiliation based on colour. It will not be tolerated by the African people of South Africa or of the rest of Africa. Apartheid is also, as many people have now become increasingly aware, the callous and inhuman exploitation of the working people, especially of the Black workers who are forced to remain unskilled. The trade union movement cannot tolerate this situation and remain faithful to the fundamental principles of trade unionism.

So, while apartheid is an international problem concerning the whole world – a problem of fundamental human rights and a problem of peace – it is in a very special way a problem that concerns most directly the African people and the trade union movement all over the world.

The Special Committee on Apartheid has for many years laid great stress on the importance of public action on the problem of apartheid in South Africa. Public action is particularly important in the Western countries because the Governments of these countries have been unwilling to take any action on this problem or to implement United Nations resolutions. The United Nations has to try to reach the people in these countries so that they may persuade the Governments to stop collaborating with the South African regime and take a more positive attitude towards the United Nations resolutions adopted by great majorities. The Special Committee on Apartheid has, therefore, maintained and developed very close relations with the Anti-Apartheid Movements in Great Britain and in other Western countries. It has attached great importance to the activities of these Anti-Apartheid Movements, however small they may be in certain countries.

## International Action

In the past two or three years, the Special Committee has devoted special attention to trade union action against apartheid. It proposed in 1970 to convening of an International Trade Union Conference against Apartheid in order to promote trade union action at the international and national levels. The consultations on such a conference took a long time because of various reasons unconnected with apartheid. However, it has now been agreed that the Conference will be held from 15 to 17 June in Geneva, during the International Labour Conference. The Preparatory Committee for this Conference consists of the Workers' Group of the ILO and all the main international and regional trade union federations. We expect that this will be a very significant conference. The main focus of the conference will be on action by the trade unions. **It will not be, and should not be, another conference for speeches and general resolutions.**

It is for the workers themselves to decide on the courses of action they can pursue. All the trade unions are opposed to apartheid and they know best what is feasible and appropriate in their countries. The United Nations has only indicated some general guidelines in the light of its concern over the problem of apartheid for over two decades. For instance, the General Assembly in resolution 2775 H (XXVI), adopted on 29 November 1971, appealed to all national and international trade union organizations to intensify their action against apartheid, in particular by:

- Discouraging the immigration of skilled workers to South Africa;
- Taking appropriate action in connexion with the infringement of trade union rights and the persecution of trade unionists in South Africa;
- Exerting maximum pressure on foreign economic and financial interests which are profiting from racial discrimination against black workers in South Africa, in order to persuade them to cease such exploitation;
- Co-operating with other organizations engaged in the international campaign against apartheid."

I would request you to give serious consideration to these appeals by the General Assembly.

## International Boycott

As you know, almost fifteen years ago, after patiently trying all legal and peaceful means of struggle inside South Africa, the organizations of the South African people appealed to the world for an arms embargo and for economic and other sanctions to help them achieve their rights. International assistance had become essential because the South African regime reacted to the legitimate demands of the people by increasing ruthlessness and was immune to friendly persuasion.

Many countries in Africa, Asia, eastern Europe and other areas enforced sanctions, some of them at great sacrifice. There were boycotts by anti-apartheid movements, co-operatives and some trade unions in Western countries, but the Governments in these countries and in Japan did not heed the appeals by the Black people of South Africa and began to increase their trade with South Africa. While the poor countries made sacrifices for human dignity, these rich countries even took advantage of the boycotts to increase their trade and investments.

The Governments of the Western countries tell us – and this has been said both by Conservative and Labour Governments in this country – that they cannot afford to break their economic relations with South Africa.

I can only say that some of the poor countries which responded to the appeals from the Black people of South Africa had a greater percentage of their trade with South

Zola Zembe, SACTU's representative at the AAM's Trade Union Conference chatting during a break with a delegate from Tanzania



Africa than Great Britain or the United States. Several African countries have resisted very tempting and enticing offers from the South African regime.

If Britain had a big economic stake in South Africa fifteen years ago, that stake is even bigger now. It keeps growing yearly, as profits pile up because of the exploitation of the Black workers. If it was difficult to make the sacrifice fifteen years ago, it is more difficult now and it will be even more difficult tomorrow.

## No Action, But Words

In other words, the more the companies profit from the inhumanity of apartheid, the more the Governments of these countries become reluctant to place principles before profit.

We have strong words of condemnation: it was Patrick Wall (Conservative M. P. in the British Parliament – Ed.) who made perhaps the strongest verbal condemnation of apartheid when he said in the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on 12 November 1962 that apartheid was "morally abominable, intellectually grotesque and spiritually indefensible." But the contrast between verbal condemnations and actions becomes increasingly striking.

What surprises us even more is the argument of these governments and of the friends of the apartheid regime in these countries that the workers are opposed to arms embargoes and sanctions. They even publish figures on how many workers will become unemployed if arms sales to South Africa are stopped.

I cannot imagine that the working people of Great Britain have become so morally corrupt that they would wish to become accomplices in perpetuating the slavery of the Black workers in South Africa. In fact, I am confident that if the British workers know the facts about South Africa, and are presented with a programme of action, they will be in the vanguard of the struggle to stamp out apartheid as they, indeed, took the lead in the struggle to abolish slavery a century ago.

There was a time when interested groups in Western countries used to propagate the myth that the working people would suffer if these countries gave up the so-called "white man's burden" of enslaving African and Asian colonies. But we find today that the countries which lost their colonies are prospering, while Portugal which is trying to cling on to its colonies is impoverished.

I have no doubt that the same will be true with the myth that the standard of living of British and West European workers will suffer greatly if the Governments break with South Africa. As the papers before this Conference show, whole factories are being moved from Britain to South Africa to benefit from the starvation wages of African workers. Products made in South Africa by foreign-owned firms are competing with the exports of the metropolitan countries.

I would, therefore, appeal to you on behalf of the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid to acquaint the British workers of the facts of the situation in South Africa, of the appeals of the Black people of South Africa and of the resolutions of the United Nations. I would also hope that you will consider concrete action which can be taken by the trade unions, and approach all the trade unions in this country and in other countries, especially of Western Europe.

The Special Committee would welcome information on the results of your conference and on your plans for action. If the Special Committee can assist your work in any way, please let us know.

**ALFRED NZO, Secretary General of the African National Congress of South Africa has written the following letter, enclosing a copy of a memorandum addressed to the United Nations on the pending trial of four Black South Africans and an Irish and an Australian citizen**

**(see report in the last issue of SECHABA) to 41 Governments of free and independent Africa and over 30 international organisation urging them to campaign for the demands made in the Memorandum and to make the year 1973 a year for the . . .**

# RELEASE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS



Dear Brothers:

A mighty upsurge highlighting a determined opposition to the draconian policies of the hated apartheid regime is sweeping through South Africa. Wide sections of the oppressed population, mainly the super-exploited Black workers (African, Coloured and Indian), the Black student community, various church circles opposed to apartheid and the masses of our people in the ghettos and Bantustans, are courageously raising their protest through strikes, demonstrations and boycotts.

Faced with the growing opposition, the White South African police state, true to form, is intensifying its repression of the democratic forces and has mobilised its army and police in a desperate attempt to intimidate the masses of our people. A number of courageous fighters have already been arrested and are presently facing charges of "subversion" and "terrorism" in the South African courts of law.

It is the duty of progressive public opinion to defend these courageous patriots and save them from fascist persecution; to renew with increased vigour the demand for the release of political prisoners and finally to assist in all possible ways, the leading political force, the African National Congress, to consolidate and develop still further the political upsurge which must lead, employing all possible methods, including armed struggle, to the eventual overthrow of the hated fascist regime.

We are enclosing a copy of a memorandum we addressed recently to the U.N. Secretary General and the Secretary General of the OAU in which we are highlighting the recent

developments in South Africa. We urge that a campaign should be commenced immediately centered around the demands made in our memorandum.\*

We are confident that your government and people will, in alliance with other democratic and peace-loving forces the world over, rally to the defence of the persecuted patriots in apartheid South Africa.

Yours for the total liberation of Africa,

Sgd. Alfred Nzo

Secretary General:

**African National Congress of South Africa**

The demands made in the memorandum, the main contents of which were published in the last issue of SECHABA, are as follows:

- to call on the government of South Africa to implement all U.N. resolutions on the subject of political prisoners in the country, failing which South Africa should be expelled from the United Nations Organisation;
- to call on all member nations, especially those who have diplomatic and trade relations with South Africa, to bring pressure to bear on the government of South Africa to release all political prisoners;
- to initiate a world-wide campaign to make 1973 a year for the release of all South African political prisoners; and,
- to call for the immediate withdrawal of all South African troops, police and security agents, from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mocambique.

# THE PRETORIA SIX

Here under are brief biographical notes on the six militants now facing charges under South Africa's notorious Terrorism Act. In a letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations, ALFRED NZO, Secretary General of the ANC, who provided these biographies stated that these men had been held in solitary confinement for 265 days before being brought to trial and urged the U.N. to initiate a world-wide campaign for the release of all South African political prisoners

## **Sandi Kitchener Gardener Sejaka (Douglas Nene)**

Born in the Transkei at a place called Ncambedlana in the out-skirts of Umtata in May, 1942, Sandi grew up like any average African boy – herding cattle, helping at home and in the fields. He has a number of brothers and sisters. His parents lived partly by eking out a miserable income from the land and partly by migrating to industrial "White South Africa" for cash wages.

He attended school at St. John's College where he obtained his Secondary Education about 1957–58. He was and still is a keen student and a hard worker. But like all African children coming from the poor sections of the South African society, he was compelled to abandon his studies despite his thirst for knowledge. However, leaving school did not mean an end to his academic progress. His educational attainments are indeed high in a number of fields which he achieved through self-study. An avid reader, he studied all the fields he regarded beneficial to himself and to the oppressed people of South Africa. He excelled not only in theoretical subjects but also in technical ones. One of his close associates once described him as "energetic, fearless and technical-minded".

The general hardships, poverty and disabilities suffered by the African masses drew him into the fold of struggle. Thus he joined the ranks of the African National Congress whilst still a student at St. John's College. Very fond of political discussions, he

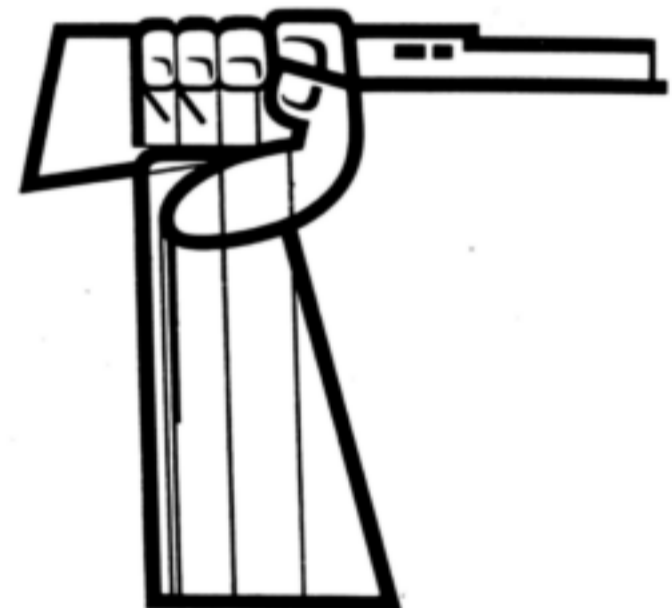
also turned out to be a good organiser for the Youth League. Ever since, he has consciously and consistently broadened his political understanding and grasp of the South African situation and international affairs.

## **Petrus Temba Mthembu**

Although he grew up in Natal, he was born in Kliptown near Johannesburg into a family of workers. In the family of two sisters and a brother, he is the eldest of the children.

For the greater part of his life, his father was a worker but later took to shoe-repairing in an attempt to make ends meet. His father's meager income was supplemented by the earnings of his mother who worked as a "washer-woman".

Coming from a poor family, he could only study at school as far as Standard II and had to look for employment at a tender age. He worked in a number of firms and factories. Nevertheless, he managed to improve his education through self-study. His hobby was football.



He joined the African National Congress in 1958. Though a fine football-player, he devoted most of his time to the Movement. He was at one time an Assistant Branch Secretary of the ANC Youth League. In the sphere of political activity, he distinguished himself as an organiser – relentlessly moving from house to house preaching revolution. He himself participated in local and national campaigns launched by the ANC. He also took an active part in the selling and distribution of the ANC publications and various propaganda materials.

## Ranka Theophilus Cholo

Comrade Ranka was born in Pietersburg at Chief Matlala's village. His father was a blacksmith. He attended school but went only as far as Standard IV.

On leaving school, he went to Johannesburg where he found employment as a domestic servant and thereafter as a worker in a shop. The general conditions of the Black workers in South Africa made him realise the importance of the trade union movement which he joined and rose in its ranks to become a shop-steward. Not long, he was elevated to the Executive of the Shop and Office Workers Union. During his lunch hour breaks, he worked for the strengthening of his union by organising more workers. He was a member of the ANC and at one time was Chairman of a local Branch in which he was active.



Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, Secretary General of the ANC on Robben Island Prison where they are serving life sentence

ced of the need for the improvement of the lot of the African worker in South Africa, Justice found the answer in joining the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

He joined the African National Congress in 1956. Because of his outstanding organising ability and sheer hard work, he rose to become Chairman of a local branch of the ANC Youth League. In time, he also became the ANC local organiser. Since then, he participated in all the activities and campaigns of the ANC and as a result was arrested on a number of occasions for taking part in political demonstrations.

Gizenga is a man regarded by comrades and colleagues alike as having the courage of his convictions and, as a person with an indomitable faith in

the ultimate victory of the just cause of the oppressed people of South Africa.

His disposition is marked by a strong sense of good fellowship and amiableness. He threw himself into a variety of activities including traditional dancing, volleyball, singing, the recitation of Zulu poetry and praises of African heroes.

## John William Rosey

John Rosey is 23 years old and came with his family to Coventry in Britain from Ireland at the age of 11. After completing his studies he moved to Birmingham in 1969 and, after some 12 months, went to London. As member of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs Union he was particularly successful in winning young people to the trade union movement. His father has been, for many years, a senior Transport General Workers's Union shop steward at Triumph Motors, Coventry.

## Alexander Moubaris

Mr. Moubaris is an Australian citizen who was arrested with his wife. The latter was released after being held in solitary confinement for four months. She was seven months pregnant at the time of her release. Alexander and his wife were living in London for some while before their arrest.



We are convinced that no amount or form of brutality will break this fine militant and the very fact that he is at present undergoing torture at the hands of the South African gestapo is a convincing demonstration of the unflinching courage and dedication of the unflinching courage and dedication of Comrade Ranka.

## Justice Mpanza (Reuben Ntlabathi)

Justice, popularly known among his colleagues as Gizenga, was born in Groutville, Natal in 1934 of a devout Christian family. His father owned a small sugar plantation where Justice used to work after school, helping his parents.

On completing Standard VI, Justice went to work at a sugar refinery in Durban. Dissatisfied with the poor pay and working conditions, and convin-





- Her one son is serving 10 years on Robben Island.

- Another was detained for four months in solitary confinement.

- Her two daughters are living in exile.

- Her father-in-law was jailed 14 times.

- Her mother-in-law gave birth in jail.

- Both she and her husband have been in prison.

**Profile ...**

**MRS. MANONMONEY NAIDOO**

Her daughter Shantie left on an exit permit for London after being detained for a year and a week in solitary confinement. There she joined her sister, Mrs. Ramnie Dinath, who has also left the country for London to join her husband who had skipped the country after being detained for four months.

Mrs. Naidoo's son-in-law, Issy Dinath, escaped after being detained with one of her sons, Murthie. Another son, Indres, is serving a 10-year sentence on Robben Island for sabotage.

In a recent interview she said:—

"Perhaps the whole thing started with my father-in-law, Mr. Thambi Naidoo, a close friend of Mahatma Ghandi and president of the Transvaal Indian Congress. He was jailed 14 times for passive resistance. His wife, Veeramal, gave birth in prison while under arrest for passive resistance. My husband, Naranswami, who was also president of the Indian Congress, served two jail sentences during the Defiance Campaign in 1952".

"I also served a 30-day sentence at Durban and another at Germiston during the same campaign".

Later this year Indres will be released after having served the full 10-year sentence imposed on him in 1963. No remission is allowed to political prisoners. Rapists, murderers and other criminals are all entitled to a remission of up to a third of their sentence. But, not those like Nelson Mandela and others who, incidentally are serving life sentences.

Help in the campaign for the release of all political prisoners in South Africa.



# THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONNECTION

by Ruth First, Jonathan Steele and Christabel Gurney

No country is tied to South Africa by closer economic links than Britain. British investment represents an accumulation of over a hundred years of British involvement in South Africa, without which the country and its white minority could never have prospered as they have.

This book reveals the effect of British investment on the lives of Africans and on the political scene. It shows that Africans are not bene-

fitting from the industrial boom and that the gap between white and black wages is growing wider.

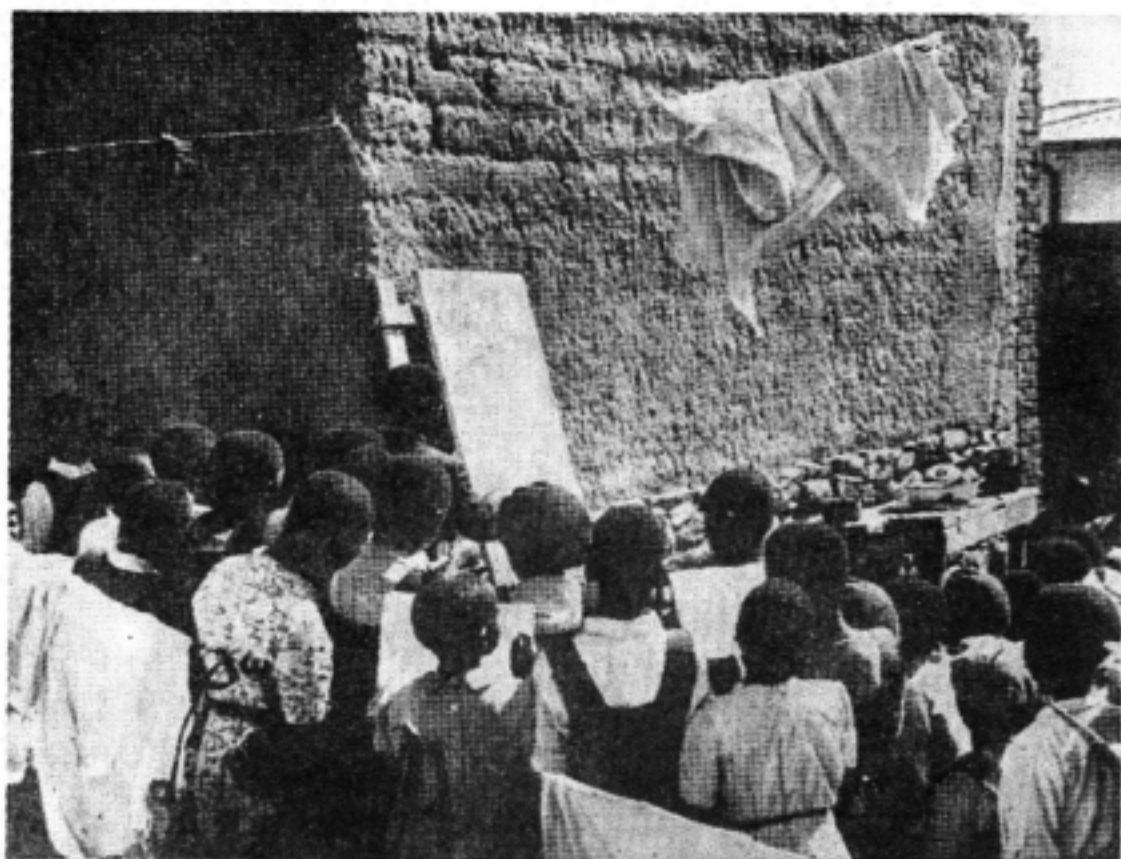
It destroys the illusion that apartheid, with the help of outside investors, will reform itself and produces one more argument for supporting the South African freedom struggle.

Published by Maurice Temple Smith, 37 Great Russell Street, London WCI. £3.50

British investors in South Africa are as responsible as the South African government for workers living in conditions such as this



**While Black children study under conditions such as this . . .**



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## NOTICE TO READERS

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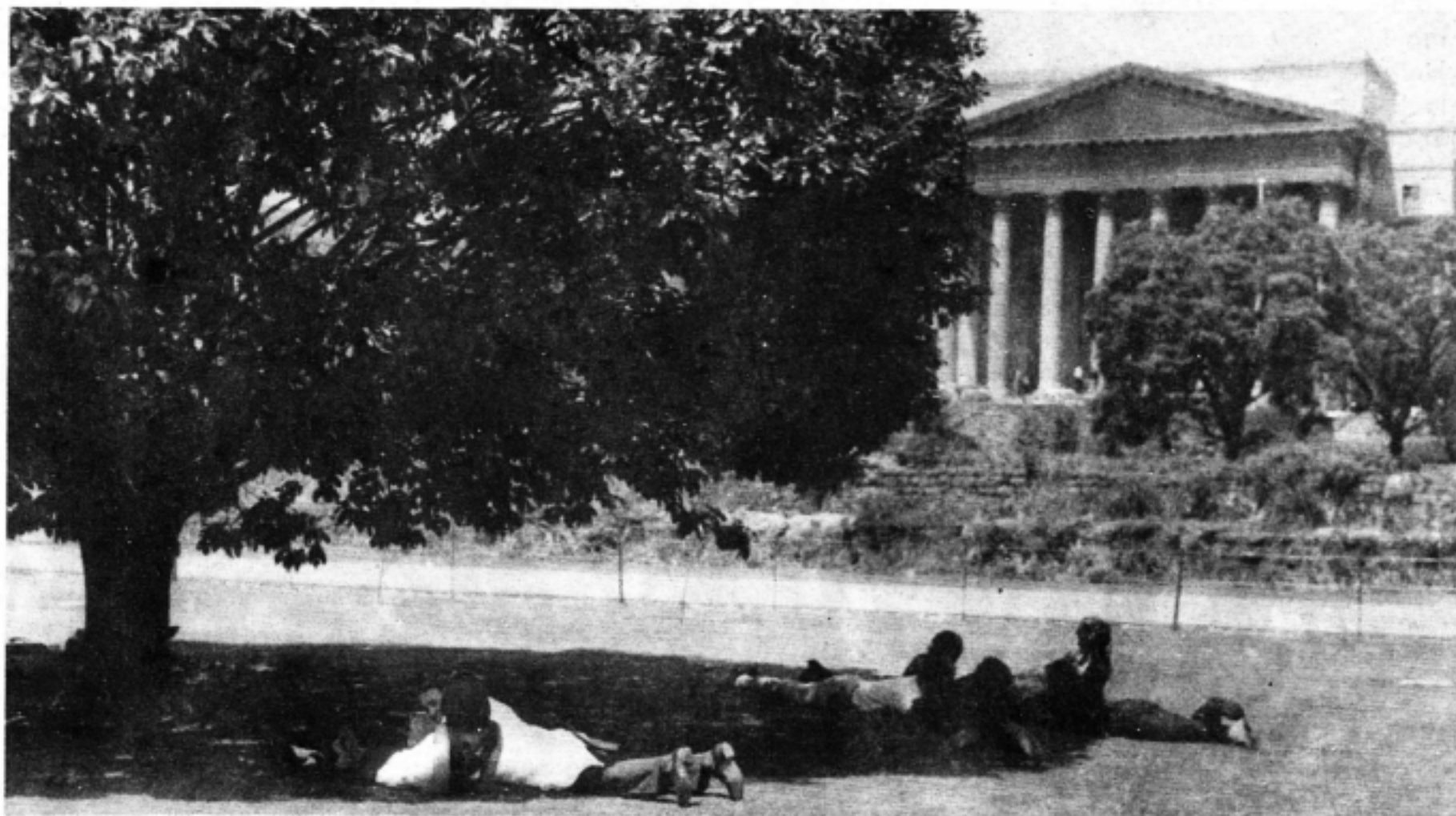
### More Pages

Readers would have noticed that like the last issue, this issue of SECHABA, contains more pages than usual.

This has been necessary to give greater coverage to the strikes that have, and are taking place, in South Africa.

In view of the extra costs involved, we regret to announce that we shall not be publishing the October issue of the journal.

**. . . White students study in schools such as these.**



A fuller report on this, and on the banning of the entire executive of the Black South African Students Organisation (SASO) and leaders of the White National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) will be published in our next issue.

### Namibia Erupts

Black opposition to the joint plan of Prime Minister Vorster and the United Nations' Dr. Alfred Escher for a proposed multiracial Advisory Council resulted in wild rioting in Windhoek's Katutura Compound, when damage of over R20,000 was done to municipal buildings and 118 Africans were arrested. A fuller report on this will also be included in our next issue.

### Was He Murdered?

Mtuli Shezi, 25-year-old vice-president of the Black People's Movement and past president of the Students' Council at the University of Zululand, died on December 17, last year, five days after being run over by a train at Germiston station.

SECHABA has just received a report on the circumstances of his death which suggests that Mtuli was murdered.

The full report will be published in the next issue of this journal.

### NOTE:

The stories mentioned above have had to be held over due to pressure on space in this issue.

### Special Issue

The next issue of SECHABA will be a special one for the youth and students on the occasion of the 10th World Festival of Youth and Students which, this year, will be held in Berlin from July 28 to August 5, and the Pan African Youth Festival in Tunis in July.

### Police Spies Assaulted

Nine African and Indian students were detained at Natal University after an African detective and three White security policemen were assaulted at a student meeting held to commemorate Sharpeville massacre.